



BelAir Neighborhood Communicator

Neighborhood Web Site
<http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/phoenix/belair/>

We are a Fight Back Neighborhood!

Thank you to all our neighbors and city officials who attended G.A.I.N.

Thank you to our supporters!

Thanks also to Rochelle for organizing our event!

***Happy Holidays from the
BelAir Board***



WE NEED COURIERS TO DELIVER NEWSLETTERS. CONTACT BOYD PUFFER IF INTERESTED. REQUIRES 30 minutes to 1 hour of time per month.

P r e s i d e n t ' s M e s s a g e
B y S u s a n T h o m p s o n - M c H u g h

Dear BelAir Neighbor,

So far this has been a busy fall for the BelAir Neighborhood. September was the General Meeting where we announced that BelAir has been recognized as a Fight Back Neighborhood and will be receiving additional funding and support from the city to help reduce crime and improve quality of life in our neighborhood. Thank you to Tom Simplot and Lisa Huggins-Hubbard for all their work to help improve our neighborhood. October started with the Neighborhood Clean-up, our annual GAIN event and ended with the first Fight Back Meeting. Thank you to everyone who attended this year's GAIN event and Fight Back Meeting. Your participation helps create a sense of community. I would like to thank Roshelle Johnson for all her hard work organizing the GAIN event and Mark Day for all his work coordinating the Fight Back Meeting.

In November, we will see the different Fight Back committees that were formed conducting their first meetings. There are four different committees. The **Crime Prevention Committee** will work with the Community Action Officer on issues covering Block Watch, Neighborhood on Patrol, and networking with other Neighborhood organizations.

The **Preservation Committee** will work on issues covering the overall appearance of BelAir such as blight, and graffiti

The **Community Enhancement Committee** will work on building a sense of community in the BelAir Neighborhood.

The **Traffic Committee** will work on the issues of speeding, cut through traffic, alleys and easements.

If you would like more information, contact your BelAir Neighborhood Board Members.
 Have a safe and happy holiday.

G e n e r a l M e e t i n g M i n u t e s

The fall general meeting at the American Evangelical Lutheran Church began at 7 p.m. with a brief treasurer's report by Mark Day. Roshelle Johnson followed with a description of the upcoming G.A.I.N. event on October 20th. Virginia is to lead a Point of Pride walk between the three houses providing food, ending at the Lutheran Church for cake and ice cream to celebrate our neighborhood.

City Councilman Tom Simplot opened the next portion of the meeting, which focused on the new Fight Back grant from the City of Phoenix. Each councilman can designate a neighborhood for a FB grant project during his or her term. He chose BelAir this term. He told the attending neighbors that his office will work closely with us and with Lisa Huggins-Hubbard and Victor Harris of Neighborhood Services to manage the grant process.

Chris White from the Planning Department presented the City's statistical analysis of our area. Officers O'Connell and Stevens from the Phoenix Police Department were on hand to answer questions. Tony Hernandez, from the City's Neighborhood Traffic Management Team also answered questions.

Fight Back overview: The grant period is 18 months. The budget is \$54,000.

BelAir's boundaries are: 15th to 19th Avenues, Indian School Road to the Canal. The City of Phoenix, through Lisa Huggins-Hubbard's office, manages the grant. Unlike the BlockWatch Grant, the money *does not* come directly to the BelAir neighborhood association. We can also leverage the total amount available by partnering with other organizations, such as the Lutheran Church in the neighborhood, or another Community Development Block Watch Grant (CDBG). (Cont. on Page 4)

DESERT WILDFLOWERS

By Mark Day

While spring may seem a long time away, now is the time to sow wildflower seeds so that you can enjoy beautiful wildflower blooms in the springtime. Wildflowers can be sowed through November and do best in an area that receives full sun.

I've had good luck with just scattering the seeds among the crushed rock in my desert landscaped front yard. Otherwise, you can till the top two inches of your soil and then scatter the seeds. Cover them lightly with some compost.

You will need to water the seeds daily until they sprout. Make sure the ground remains moist. Once they sprout, you can reduce the watering to once or twice a week.

Wildflower seeds can be purchased at local nurseries, such as Bakers at 40th Street and Osborn or ordered on various web-sites.

Happy planting!

(General Meeting Minutes Continued)

The four committees:

1. **The Crime Prevention Committee** – will work with the Community Action Officer on issues covering Block Watch, Neighborhood on Patrol, and networking with other Neighborhood organizations
2. **The Preservation Committee** – will work on issues covering blight, scheduling clean-ups, rental property, graffiti.
3. **The Community Enhancement Committee** – will work on building a sense of community in the BelAir neighborhood.
4. **The Traffic Committee** – will work on the issues of speeding, cut through traffic, alley and easements.

General Limits: The money is not to be used for individual property enhancement. It cannot pay for any trips. The money is to be designated for *public access projects only*.

Fight Back is resident-driven, based on ideas and recommendations determined in four committees made up of resident volunteers, including BelAir board members. Whatever projects have been agreed upon, through committee process and that are accepted by the City of Phoenix oversight will be accomplished. If an agreed-upon project takes longer than the 18 month designated period, the City of Phoenix works with the neighborhood for as long as it takes to complete it.

Councilman Simplot's watchword for identifying what we have accomplished at the end of the grant period: Can we "Touch it. Feel it. See it." In other words, quantifiable, visible changes that we can see improve the quality of life for the residents of Bel Air. This may mean speed humps, closing access to alleys, attaching new signs to street signs that identify the Bel Air neighborhood. These and other suggestions will be formalized and presented by the four committees to the City for review.

GAIN Kudos

By Roshelle Johnson

Thank you, thank you, thank you to each and every person that made a point to participate in the GAIN event last month. We had a wonderful time celebrating the successes of BelAir Block Watch as well as recently receiving a Block Watch grant. The evening began with chips and dip at The Johnson's; followed by BBQ and hot dogs at The Harmon's, pizza at The Brown's, and hardy helpings of warm pie and ice cream at American Evangelical Lutheran church. There were lots of free giveaways, a raffle, informative booths supported by the City of Phoenix, and neighborly fellowship. Although GAIN (Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods) is a statewide event, not every neighborhood participates. I am so glad BelAir is one of the few that does. It is our connection with each other and involvement in the neighborhood that makes BelAir unique and events like GAIN successful.

Again, thank you.

Roshelle Johnson,

BelAir board member and GAIN 2007 facilitator

Yard Art

By Virginia Clifford-Anders

There you stand, looking happily at your growing garden. The rains this summer helped everything grow and allowed you to turn the hose and sprinklers on less often. Now what? Time to trim. You can trim pretty much any time of the year in Phoenix, because the temperatures do not shift dramatically often. Before you take out the tree trimmers or shears, ask yourself a few questions.

Am I trimming a bush or a tree? How do I trim a bush? Is it different from trimming a tree? Is there a best time of day to trim? Why should I trim? Why not just let the tree or bush grow as it will?

I love to trim bushes and trees because I feel as if I could create something to enhance the look of my yard. However, I don't just start whacking away at the bougainvillea. I follow some general ideas I've found useful by trial and error. Sharp trimmers help. Dull trimming shears tear the ends of the branches, which may look ragged and may take longer for the branch to heal. Choosing which branches to cut and how far back to cut them matters. The farther back you trim, the longer it takes to recover, and it may look pretty naked for awhile. I may not want that.

A branch is part of a bush or a tree. When most people trim a bush, for instance, they are imagining a shape for that bush. Each branch contributes or detracts from that image, so when you cut, think of the overall shape you want, not just the individual branch.

A tree may have one or more branches growing over a power line to your house. It also may grow onto the roof. Pay attention to such issues. An overlong branch can cause damage in a wind as it rubs the power line or your roof tiles. Roof rats can find access to your home by climbing over from nearby branches too.

Branches can weigh down a power line, disrupting service or even starting a fire.

After trimming your yard, water the bush or tree immediately— from the top down, not just at the base. In a time of rare rain, this replaces the water that would otherwise come from the sky, watering the leaves and branches, not just the roots. I trim at night during the spring and summer, and before the warmest part of the day in the cooler months. This way, my bushes and trees have the best chance to use the water before it evaporates in the sun or is too cool at night.

Sometimes people plant too much in their yards. This can create several problems. An overgrown yard that isn't cared for looks scruffy and untended. Anyone looking for unwanted access to your house knows the homeowner isn't paying attention. Depending on where the bushes, etc are in your front and back yards, they may also provide enough cover for that person to enter your home unseen.

Because Arizona is in the middle of a long drought, our personal water use for our properties and activities affects others' available water, in the long run. Also, if you don't water enough – and in a drought it will take more water than when the weather provides rain - the shrubbery dies which looks unattractive, which can negatively affect property values on the whole street.

So, ask yourself a basic question: Am I prepared to give whatever I plant the time and attention it deserves? With sharp tools, some time and effort, a cactus garden or a carob tree beautifies a property and a neighborhood. What a lovely trade-off for a little work. Happy gardening!

Vector Control

Roof Rats

For more detailed information on how to prevent roof rats from making a home on your property, or what to do if they already have, just point your web browser to:
<http://www.maricopa.gov/envsvc/WATER/VECTOR/roofrats.asp>

OR

Call 602-506-6616

FOR SITUATIONS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

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days, Neighborhood Events)

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2. Contact Sherri about how to submit your payment.