

# SIN VACAS

P R O P E R T Y O W N E R S A S S O C I A T I O N

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## Calling All Knitters

Whether you are experienced or a novice, it's more fun to knit with other knitters—compare projects, help one another and meet and make new friends in the process.

If you would be interested in joining a weekly knitting group in Sin Vacas, please call Laraine Brokaw at 232-0606.

## President's Report | by Ron Bornstein

I'm honored to have been elected by my fellow Board members to serve again this year as president of the Sin Vacas Property Owners Association. Other officers elected by the expanded, seven-member Board were Cynthia Fern as vice president, Mike McAuliffe as treasurer and Peggy Bognanno as secretary.

Kimble Cohn will act as the Board's liaison to the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) and will serve as the Committee Vice-Chair. He will be joined on the ARC by SVPOA Board members Cynthia Fern and Dan Whelan. The ARC will be chaired by veteran Committee member Bill Hubartt. Other community members on the Committee will be Laraine Brokaw, Terry Lewis and Hal Stratton.

The ARC meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the clubhouse of the Villas at Sin Vacas. The ARC members have been hard at work developing an updated comprehensive set of design guidelines. The new guidelines will help to clarify property owner requirements and facilitate the ARC submission, review and approval process. Kimble Cohn has provided more detailed descriptions of the ARC actions and initiatives in this newsletter.

Dan Whelan will chair the Web site Committee. You can learn more about the Web site's resources and opportunities from Dan in this issue. An expanded Landscape Committee will be chaired by Cynthia Fern and will have as members Peggy Bognanno, Jay Lipman and Mike McAuliffe. Mike also has agreed to chair the Streets Committee and will be assisted in that endeavor by Jay Lipman and Dan Whelan.

In the event that you would like to attend and observe the Board's proceedings, you're always welcome to do so. The Board meets on the third Monday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the clubhouse of the Villas at Sin Vacas. Minutes of each SVPOA board meeting will be posted on [www.sinvacas.org](http://www.sinvacas.org).

The SVPOA Board and its committees are, as you know, an all-volunteer effort. I hope that you will consider sharing some of your time, effort and expertise on behalf of your community, and that you will contact me via e-mail if you have interest in serving on one of our committees. We welcome your participation in our association activities, so let me know whether you would like to "join the cause."

The Board members sincerely appreciated the good turnout at the SVPOA annual meeting in December and the opportunity to hear about and learn better the concerns of property owners. We plan to discuss and address each of them in the coming months, and hope that you will feel free to contact any of us to let us know about continuing community matters of interest. We want to stay in touch! In that spirit and for your convenience, the SVPOA board's e-mail addresses are listed at the end of this column. One concern raised at the annual meeting was about the potted cacti in the turnaround area south of the gatehouse. The Landscape Committee's good intent was to provide a turnaround barrier at that location to prevent vehicles from accidentally hitting and damaging the exit lane bollard (post) or an exiting car—a too regular and costly occurrence. (Continued page two)



## President's Report | by Ron Bornstein

continued

While successful operationally, a number of property owners subsequently expressed disapproval based on aesthetic concerns.

Following up reactions heard at, and since, the annual meeting, the new Board revisited the matter at its January meeting. Under the leadership of Landscape Committee Chairperson Cynthia Fern, action has been initiated to request proposals from a number of established area firms for design concepts that might be more aesthetically pleasing and in keeping with the character of the Sin Vacas gatehouse area. We will keep you posted on the outcome of this process, and we appreciate the candid feedback.

Another concern expressed at the annual meeting by a number of homeowners was a safety hazard caused by construction truck traffic and parking on a steep hill and curve on Calle Sin Vacas, north of Calle Sin Desengano. Stratford Management has contacted the involved construction company and property owner. They have been asked to minimize construction vehicle street parking and to address traffic safety concerns through such measures as traffic cones, a-frame warning signs and the stationing of a flag person to signal and alert drivers during periods of heavy construction traffic and street blockages.

Shortly after the first of this year, you received notice of the 2007 SVPOA dues assessment. If you have not already done so, we would appreciate your cooperation in prompt and full payment so that we can keep to budget and avoid charging overdue interest penalties to late payers.

Remember to note on your calendar the Sunday afternoon, April 29, Sin Vacas Mexican Fiesta. There will be great food, fine music, your choice of beverages, an opportunity to meet and know better your Sin Vacas neighbors and a good time in store for all. You will be receiving special mailings and more details about the Fiesta event from Chairperson Susan Lipman.

Once again this year, Judy Volpe and Angelica Rivadeneira-Whelan have graciously agreed to assume responsibility for arranging the very popular monthly neighborhood coffees. The coffees are

great social events and provide a chance for participants to renew old friendships and to meet and greet new neighbors. A complete schedule for the coffees can be found on the Sin Vacas Web site [www.sinvacas.org](http://www.sinvacas.org). I sincerely appreciate Judy's and Angelica's leadership in this effort.



### [www.sinvacas.org](http://www.sinvacas.org)

### Is It Listed Among Your Favorites? | by Dan Whelan

And what is better than listing our own Sin Vacas Web site among your favorites in Internet Explorer? Have a Sin Vacas shortcut icon on you Windows Desktop. I do, and it really makes it easy to keep up to date on what's happening in our community. Need a map of Sin Vacas to print or e-mail to visitors, just click **COMMUNITY** on the menu and select **COMMUNITY MAP**. Or better yet, your visitors can access our Web site and download a map for themselves.

As the new Board member responsible for Web site liaison, I am busy learning more about the site and the process for getting our information up-to-date. So please bear with me and send me your issues and suggestions.

We are blessed to have a very good webmaster, Ken Purnell, located in Glendale, Arizona, who is very responsive to our requests and suggestions. So let's hear your thoughts and ideas.

During 2006 we had 793 visitors to our Web site who accessed it 18,521 times. Have you? For those registered members (82 to date) who have access to the members-only section, I have just begun a process to get the recommendations you have already posted

to the appropriate committees and getting responses posted back to you. So be sure to check back soon.

If you are a registered member who elected not to be included in the member directory, but now want to, just use the "contact" link and tell Ken to add you to the directory.

If you are not registered yet, it is a simple process. Just go to [www.sinvacas.org](http://www.sinvacas.org) and click on the **MEMBERS ONLY** menu and fill in the blanks. And don't forget to select your desired option for being included in the member directory. The directory (includes name and email address only) is part of the password protected portion of our site.

But you do not have to be a registered member to use the site. All but the members-only section is available to the public. So give it a try, go to [www.sinvacas.org](http://www.sinvacas.org). Don't forget, we are a ".org" site, not a ".com" site.

If you have problems with our site or want to make site related suggestions, you can contact me at directly at [dannwhelan5005@hotmail.com](mailto:dannwhelan5005@hotmail.com).

## Treasurer's Report

### | by Mike McAuliffe

Thanks to everyone who sent in their homeowner's dues by the end of January. It makes the board and our accountants very happy.

We don't have any major projects scheduled for this year so we are hoping to end the year with about \$75,000 to add to the capital fund of \$102,000.

This amount, \$177,000, plus some funds from the 2008 budget should allow us to finish our repaving project. As I am now the streets committee chairman as well as the treasurer I will be ecstatic if this all comes to pass.



## Landscape Matters...

On behalf of the Landscape Committee, we wish to bring a few matters of concern to the attention of all property owners within the Community. With the advent of spring weather and the growing season upon us, we would like each property owner to take a moment to inspect their trees that grow along the road. The Association has received numerous calls from Waste Management and other vendors that visit the neighborhood with large trucks regarding overhanging tree limbs and the potential hazard they pose. Many trucks and high profile vehicles either scrape the limbs of the trees or attempt to swerve around them.

*Furthermore, fire codes stated that roads should have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches.* Therefore, in the interest of safety and in consideration of the drivers of large trucks and vehicles, we respectfully request you have your trees trimmed. While you are inspecting your tree limbs, please also be on the look out for mistletoe infestation. To our newest residents, mistletoe is a parasitic plant that obtains its nutrients from a host tree (usually a Palo Verde or Mesquite) and is spread via the wind or our feathered friends. The infected branches must be removed, as it spreads quickly.



## Don't Forget!

Under the category of "some problems that never go away," here are some community concerns and reminders:

- Pet owners should be sure to walk their dogs on a leash (a Pima County ordinance), and "pick-up" after their pets and properly dispose of pet feces—as a matter of sanitation and basic courtesy to your neighbors.
- Another recurring problem is mistletoe, the unsightly parasitic plant that infects trees and that can spread easily from one tree and home-site to another. Pruning infected branches kills the mistletoe and helps avoid more drastic measures and infections. So, check trees on your property to be sure that they are mistletoe-free, and take necessary action to remove the parasitic plants.
- Call the gatehouse in advance to notify the attendants when expecting visitors or service personnel. This will help avoid long waits at the gatehouse entrance, reduce delays necessitated by attendants having to call homeowners, and help to maintain reasonable community security.
- A number of property owners continue to express concern about drivers who exceed the 25-mile-per-hour Sin Vacas speed limit. Residents and visitors need to observe the speed limit and watch out for the

many runners, walkers and cyclists in Sin Vacas. If you note a speeder, please take down as much information as possible, including the date, time, vehicle's make and model and (if possible) the license plate number. Share the information with the gatehouse attendant, who will forward it to Stratford Management for follow-up.

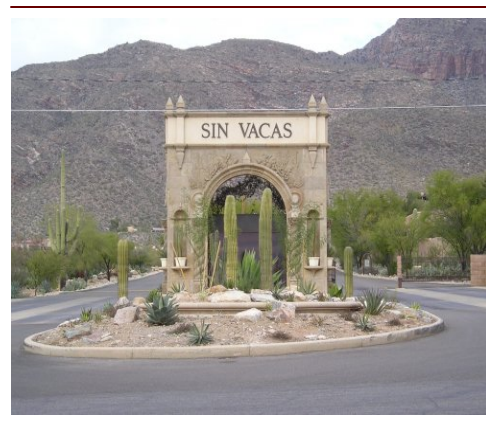
- We have many visitors and workers who frequent Sin Vacas on a daily basis. There have been several recent incidents of attempted and actual property theft of items from construction and home sites. You can help safeguard our community (and your property) by being alert to suspicious individuals, vehicles and events that are out of the ordinary in and around your neighborhood. If you sense somebody or something out of place, take down a license plate number, date, time and other relevant facts. Let the gatehouse attendant or one of the board members know about it so that we have accurate background information about the incident for the record—should that be needed.

Your board sincerely appreciates your continued interest and support, and looks forward to working with you on behalf of our great Sin Vacas community.

## Enhanced Contractor Access Controls

At its January meeting, the Sin Vacas Property Owner's Association Board of Directors endorsed a plan to better coordinate contractor access at our gateway with the project approvals of the Architectural Review Committee.

The plan is intended to address the occasional incidence of unauthorized, exterior work to our buildings and lots and to encourage all our residents to undertake their projects in accordance with our deed restrictions, the design guidelines and review procedures with which we all have agreed to abide.



# From My Desk...

## | by Cherie Hewitson

### Speaking of Trash...

We have received complaints from the residents at the Villas at Sin Vacas townhomes concerning the use of their dumpsters by people who do not live within their community. Please remember that these dumpsters are for the use of the Villas residents only.

Also, please remember to remove your trash receptacles from the curb after pick up. During a recent inspection of the community, I noted that numerous residents have been storing their trash receptacles adjacent to their garages or in other areas of their property where they are visible from the street and/or neighboring properties. Please be a good neighbor and help us to maintain the beauty of our beautiful community by removing your trash receptacles on pickup day.

## Sin Vacas to Publish Updated Design Standards Manual

Since its inception in 1978, Rancho Sin Vacas has prided itself in offering a neighborhood of cohesive, high quality housing opportunities within a protected, natural desert landscape. In order to assure that new residences and additions to existing residences continue to meet high quality standards and conform to the character of neighboring structures, the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is charged with reviewing all proposed, exterior components of new construction. This authority stems from the recorded deed restrictions (CC&Rs) of Sin Vacas and requires that all new construction, additions, modifications or improvements to buildings or lots receive prior approval from the ARC before they are implemented.

For the last year, the ARC has been working to update the Sin Vacas Design Standards booklet, which was first

### And yet another concern...

We wish to reiterate and amplify the concerns expressed by Ron Bornstein in his President's Report regarding motorists speeding within the community. Not only is speeding against the law, but extremely dangerous on the narrow, winding and hilly streets of Sin Vacas. Many residents enjoy taking a walk on the roadside not on "the wild side," so please slow down. As my grade school teacher said, "It is better to be Mr. Doe late, than the late Mr. Doe."

produced several decades ago. The goal is to create an updated, user friendly manual presenting the environmental philosophy and objectives of Sin Vacas together with an easily accessible list of guidelines defining the criteria which the ARC uses in reviewing proposed projects. It is intended to give guidance to existing and prospective property owners and their architects as their projects are planned and designed and to further promote a fair, consistent, and efficient project review process. These standards and procedures flow out of the Sin Vacas CC&Rs together with such additional standards as the ARC has established, in accordance with its legal mandate.

## Spring Neighborhood Coffee Schedule

The monthly neighborhood coffee get-togethers continue to be a great success thanks to all you wonderful neighbors who have graciously opened your homes to us. For those of you who have just moved into the community, these coffees are open to all Sin Vacas residents. We meet on the **second Wednesday of each month from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M.** It's a casual gathering of friends and neighbors and a great way to welcome our newcomers.

Here is the Spring schedule and as always an RSVP would be appreciated. This enables the hostess to pass along any changes in the schedule:

### FEBRUARY 14, 2007

HOSTESS:

Amber Allen, 797-3669

ADDRESS:

614 N. Camino Sin Vacas

### MARCH 14, 2007

HOSTESS:

Barb Curcio, 797-1221

ADDRESS:

7557 N. Camino Sin Vacas

### APRIL 11, 2007

HOSTESS:

Claudia Johnson, 229-8502

ADDRESS:

7641 Calle Sin Controversia

### MAY 9, 2007

HOSTESS:

Peg Bognanno, 575-9757

ADDRESS:

7580 N. Calle Sin Controversia

Coffees are not held in June, July, August or September. Call Judy Volpe (742-1140) or Angelica Whelan (229-3113) with any questions or comments.

# Keys to Neighborhood Harmony

| by Todd E. Linaman, PhD

Reprinted, with permission, from the Nov. 2003 issue of *Arizona Community*

Everything was just fine until the day Mr. Smith brought home little Fido, the adorable pooch who incessantly barks every time he sees his own shadow. Or perhaps the relationship began to go awry when you complained to the homeowner association when Mrs. Smith left her car parked on the street overnight, and she retaliated by reporting that your trashcans were blocking her driveway. Whatever it was, the neighbors who used to politely smile and wave, do not even acknowledge you now. To make matters worse, they now place their annual Girl Scout cookie order with the little girl two streets away.

If you want to minimize, or even prevent, another Hatfield and McCoy type of conflict with your neighbors, here are some important strategies to keep in mind.

## Focus on Building the Relationship!

Get to know your neighbors personally. Strong relationships create a greater level of patience and tolerance in people. It is easier to become angry and resentful toward a complete stranger than someone you personally know and value as a friend or neighbor.

Make new neighbors feel welcome. First impressions are important, so get the relationship with your new neighbor started on the right foot by taking over a plate of brownies and introducing yourself and your family. A person who feels accepted and valued<sup>3/4</sup>as if they belong<sup>3/4</sup>is more likely to be willing to live within the standards and values of your community.

Initiate and/or participate in neighborhood block parties. Active participation in neighborhood gatherings can be very enjoyable; plus, it sends a positive message to those who live nearby that you value them as well as your community. Remember, the absence of a positive relationship can more easily open the door to real or imagined criticism.

Offer your services when a neighbor is working on a special project. One great way to build a good relationship with your neighbor is by offering to help them with

special projects like building a patio, painting the house, setting up a basketball court for the kids, etc. Going out of your way to help not only builds your relationship, but it is also a great way to get some help when you start that special project of your own.

Attend association meetings and volunteer to help with special committees or projects. It has been said to never complain about something before you have made a reasonable effort to change it. This principle certainly applies to living in a community with a homeowner association. Active participation in your association not only offers you an opportunity to build relationships with your neighbors, but it also gives you a voice in important decisions affecting your community.

## Keep the Molehill from Becoming a Mountain

Making an effort to build positive relationships with your neighbors is one of the best ways to minimize or prevent conflict within the community, but sometimes things can occur that trigger annoyance and frustration. Here are some suggestions to keep in mind when your neighbors do not always behave in a neighborly fashion.

Make every effort to resolve concerns directly with your neighbor before taking the matter to your association. Approaching your neighbor in a non-critical, non-threatening fashion will often result in a receptive and cooperative spirit. Let them know that your intent is to work together to solve a problem and create a win-win situation. Working out the problem on your own often leads to a lack of trust and hard feelings.

Don't let annoyances fester<sup>3/4</sup>address potential problems in a timely fashion. If you are annoyed by the actions or neglect of a neighbor, it may be wise to exercise patience before lodging your complaint. However, if you wait too long, you will run the risk of becoming resentful and bitter. Resentment can build, resulting in the possibility of blowing the situation out of proportion.

Resist the temptation to share or listen to complaints about your neighbors. It can feel

good to have others support your position when you have a complaint or concern about a fellow neighbor, but if they are not actually a part of the solution, you are just gossiping. Gossip is often listened to, but rarely trusted or respected. Besides, what will keep them from talking about you when you are not around? The goal of your communication with the neighbors should be to create unity, not division.

Learn how to respond instead of react. Reactors ask the question, "How can I get my circumstances and/or the people in my life to change in order to make things better for me?" They rarely consider how others are impacted. Responders ask, "How can I make this situation better for everyone involved?" They are in control of their emotions and take time to think through their actions while maintaining a concern for the welfare of others. Reacting breeds anger, negativity, and bitterness. Responding breeds hope and creativity and stimulates positive action.

Try to understand the other person's point of view: "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." —*Stephen Covey*

It is human nature to try to defend yourself or your interests if a disagreement arises, but an objective attitude will be much more helpful in solving neighborhood conflicts. Most problems arise from misunderstandings that can occur naturally when several families with very different backgrounds, values, beliefs, habits, expectations and lifestyles are sharing a small section of real estate. It is rare that one person is clearly all right and the other is clearly all wrong. Try to maintain an open mind when hearing what your neighbor is concerned about and be willing to compromise. A positive response from you will likely create a positive response from him or her as well.

Therefore, the key to neighborhood harmony is building positive relationships with open, honest, respectful communication. Good communication can lead to satisfactory conflict resolution, maybe even a great friendship that could last a lifetime.

SIN VACAS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
c/o Stratford Management  
Post Office Box 40790  
Tucson, Arizona 85717

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## Your Stratford Management contacts

*At Stratford Management, your community is represented by a team of professionals who are committed to ensuring that SVPOA is properly managed and that residents enjoy their membership in their nonprofit corporation. If we can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us!*

**Cherie Hewitson**, Community Manager

cherie@stratfordmanagement.org ext. 1035

**Michael Marrama**, Assistant

michaelm@stratfordmanagement.org ext. 1023

**Carlos Zapata**, Accountant

czapata@stratfordmanagement.org ext. 1020

**Joseph O'Hagin**, Director of HOA Services

josepho@stratfordmanagement.org ext. 1017

**Les Krambeal**, General Manager

lkrambeal@stratfordmanagement.org ext. 1012

**Phone:** 520-822-8080

**Fax:** 520-822-8083

**Mail:** PO Box 40790, Tucson, AZ 85717

**Street:** 1790 East River Road, #101—The Cambric Center

### Your SVPOA Board and Their E-Mail Addresses:

Peggy Bognanno [mbognanno@csom.umn.edu](mailto:mbognanno@csom.umn.edu)

Ron Bornstein [rbornstein@aol.com](mailto:rbornstein@aol.com)

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