Garfield residents attend 11th Street celebration

In early March, Garfield neighbors attended a community celebration as city officials dedicated the recently completed 11th Street Pedestrian and Transit Improvement project in the historic Garfield Neighborhood Initiative Area. The project is along 11th Street and spans between Washington and Moreland streets. It was completed with input from the Garfield community and years of planning. Project enhancements include:

- Wider sidewalks with new accessible ramps to meet ADA specifications
- 114 pedestrian-level street lights
- 18 LED street light fixtures
- Shade trees to reduce radiant heat along the entire corridor
- Upgraded bus shelters with new seating, trash receptacles and bicycle racks
- Specialty pavement with 10 historical elements respective to the historic Garfield Neighborhood near six bus stops and four seating areas
- Upgraded landscaping and irrigation system throughout corridor
- New bike paths on 11th Street, running the entire length of the project

The project was funded by a $2.4 million Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Discretionary Grant through the Bus & Bus Facilities Livability Program with a local match of $600,000. In addition to NSD, special thanks much be given to the following city departments – Street Transportation, Public Transit and Historic Preservation - for working closely together to support this community enhancement project. The improvements definitely make a difference in the lives of our neighborhood residents.

NSD call center ready to assist residents

NSD has dedicated staff to assist residents when they call with a question, report blight, sign up for a Neighborhood College workshop or have other inquiries. There are nine dedicated employees who work in the call center who serve more than 82,000 customers each year. They are courteous and always willing to assist our callers with information and answers.

Most recently, Mindy Davis, who supervised the call center, took another position with the city’s Human Services Department. She spent nearly 20 years in the Preservation Division of NSD. We wish her well in her new job and we’ll miss her leadership for this great group of employees who are the “voice” of NSD!
Yard sales are an easy way to clean out your closets and make a little extra cash. But did you know that residents are only allowed to have two yard/garage sales every 12 months? Here are some additional guidelines to keep in mind if you plan to have a yard sale:

- Each yard/garage sale may not exceed three consecutive days.
- Yard sales can’t be on the street, sidewalk or a vacant lot. They should only be conducted on residentially zoned properties.
- The purpose of a yard sale is to allow residents to dispose of household items, clothing, furniture, etc. Residents may not use yard sales to sell vehicles, new or commercial items not intended for household use.

• Community yard sales can take place at an apartment/condominium development as long as it's conducted in an approved common area with the permission of the property owner or homeowner's association (HOA). The landscaped area surrounding a development is not an approved common area. Anyone interested in having a yard sale at a multi-family development should coordinate with the property owner and/or HOA since only two sales every 12 months are allowed per property.

If your neighbors are having frequent yard/garage sales, complaints can be reported to NSD by calling 602-534-4444 or emailing blight@phoenix.gov.

Code Compliance 101

Are you worried about trash/litter, high weeds, dead trees, graffiti, deteriorated fences, open/vacant properties or cars parked on non-dust proofed surfaces in your neighborhood?

The city of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department is hosting a free presentation on how the code compliance process works to address violations in the community. The presentation will be from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, May 1, at Phoenix City Hall, 200 W. Washington St., first floor. Come meet code compliance staff and learn how to identify and report common violations and other important ways to get involved in the process.

Attendees who join us will learn the step-by-step code compliance process and timeline, what happens if a case goes to court, how to use free mobile phone applications to report blight and more.

A great neighborhood starts with you! Please bring your neighbors and join us. To register, call 602-534-4444 or visit phoenix.gov/nsd/neighborhoodcollege.

On the Job

Two NSD employees were recently highlighted in the city’s “On the Job” segment with City Manager Ed Zuercher. Both were personally selected by the City Manager after seeing both of them in action while “on the job.”

Kudos to Neighborhood Specialist Roberto Frietz and Graffiti Buster Roy Plunk for their hard work organizing neighborhood groups and removing graffiti around the city. Both segments can be viewed on NSD’s Facebook page or on YouTube.

The “On the Job” series features city employees from various departments to provide a glimpse into the services employees provide for residents. To view additional segments, visit phoenix.gov/11 and click on “On the Job”.

NSD's Roberto Frietz with City Manager Ed Zuercher. His segment can be viewed at youtube.com/watch?v=FbQ2jUXyQM.

NSD's Roy Plunk with City Manager Ed Zuercher. His segment can be viewed at youtube.com/watch?v=ATSgM3RsMK.
New Phoenix City Council members were sworn in during a Jan. 2 inauguration ceremony at the historic Orpheum Theatre.

Four council members who were elected late last year – Jim Waring, District 2; Laura Pastor, District 4; Sal DiCiccio, District 6; Kate Gallego, District 8 – took their oaths of office. During the ceremony, the re-elected and newly elected councilmembers gave remarks and were presented with an election certificate.

The inauguration ceremony can be viewed on demand at phoenix.gov/11.

Meet your new councilmembers

District 2 Councilman Jim Waring taking the oath of office.

District 4 Councilwoman Laura Pastor taking the oath of office.

District 6 Councilman Sal DiCiccio taking the oath of office.

Newly elected District 8 Councilwoman Kate Gallego taking the oath of office.

Going green has never been easier with help from NSP

If going green has crossed your mind, you will be happy to know that homeowners, who have purchased green certified homes, would highly recommend it. According to a study of 187 green homeowners, “94 percent of the homeowners would recommend a green home to a friend and 92 percent would purchase another green home” (NAHB, 2014).

“Not only is my home brand new and immaculate, but I can feel great about living in a home I know uses less energy and reduces my carbon footprint,” says Juan Villagomez, a proud owner of a newly built green home in the city of Phoenix.

Villagomez purchased one of fourteen newly built, solar-powered green homes in a South Phoenix subdivision, known as Gordon Estates. Formerly a defaulted subdivision, abandoned during the housing crisis, the city of Phoenix Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) and developer partner, Mandalay Communities acquired the subdivision and built the homes to meet the National Green Building Standard Gold performance rating.

At Gordon Estates, the key design objective was to build homes that produce high energy efficiency and performance output without sacrificing innovation and value, resulting in as little as $50 per month to operate a home of 1,990 square feet.

The benefits of buying a green home at Gordon Estates include:

• Advanced energy and water efficient systems resulting in lower utility costs
• Healthier indoor air quality for improved comfort
• Central location with access to resources, transportation, schools and shopping

While in the past, green technology was seen as over-priced and out of reach for average American families; a starting price in the 170s proves that going green can be affordable and attainable.

In addition to the great value of purchasing a green home, eligible NSP homebuyers can receive $15,000 in program assistance to use toward a down payment and closing costs at Gordon Estates.

Currently, three green homes are available for sale at Gordon Estates. To learn more about the homes features and how you can become an owner of an affordable green home, call 602-262-6602 or visit phoenix.gov/nsp/home.
Connect with NSD on Nextdoor.com

NSD is expanding the ways in which it communicates important information with residents and now has a presence on Nextdoor.com, the private social network for neighborhoods. Similar to other social networks, city departments will have the ability to post relevant, neighborhood-focused information and answer residents’ questions generated by their posts. Besides the city’s main page, Nextdoor participants also will receive timely messages from the city and Police and Public Works departments.

The growing social network on Nextdoor encourages and helps facilitate communication among neighbors. Already, more than 400 Phoenix neighborhoods have joined and actively participate on Nextdoor.

“Neighborhood Services already communicates with active neighborhood leaders by distributing neighborhood-related news, events and workshops through our neighborhood notification office listserv,” said Chris Hallett, director of the city’s Neighborhood Services Department. “Nextdoor will allow us to target messages to specific neighborhoods as well as notify all members instead of just the organization’s leadership.”

In addition to Nextdoor, NSD also shares news and updates on Facebook and Twitter. For a complete listing of the city’s social media accounts, visit phoenix.gov/socialmedia. We want to hear from you!

Spring showers bring May flowers …

Spring is a beautiful season in Phoenix. The much needed April rain can bring May flowers, but with the flowers come the unsightly weeds. Weeds can be one of the biggest eyesores to our neighborhoods. Not only are they unattractive (and a pain to pull), but they are a violation of city code. Weeds, tumbleweeds, grass and dead vegetation more than six inches tall are a violation of the city code. This includes weeds on the property and on any adjacent right-of-way sidewalk, alley or street.

In addition, during hot summer months, the once green weeds become combustible dry vegetation and can present a fire hazard to the community. When dry vegetation catches fire, they can become spot fires that spread to neighboring structures and foliage.

Take steps now to stay in control of weeds and to keep them from growing and spreading. One resource available to assist with the removal of weeds is NSD’s Tool Lending Program. Neighborhood groups listed with the department can borrow tools free of charge for cleanup efforts. For more information on this program or to list your organization, call 602-534-4444.

If you observe weeds, grass and other vegetation more than six inches tall, report it as soon as possible. Call 602-534-4444, email blight@phoenix.gov along with an address of the property, use the free, downloadable “myPHXAZ” application on your smartphone or complete the online reporting blight form at phoenix.gov/nsd.

To RSVP, view class descriptions or for more information on any of the Neighborhood College Workshops offered below, call 602-534-4444 or visit phoenix.gov/nsd/neighborhoodcollege.

APRIL

17 Landlord/Tenant Workshop: Know Your Rights
6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Washington Activity Center, 2240 W. Citrus Way

MAY

1 Code Compliance 101
6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Phoenix City Hall, 200 W. Washington St., first floor

7 For The Record
Learn about the various types of official records stored by the city, how long records are kept and how to find and request an official record.
9 a.m. to noon Wednesday Burton Barr Central Library, Lecture Room

10 Paint Sprayer Training (Hands on!)
8 to 10 a.m. Saturday, NSD West Facility, 3325 W. Flower St.
A pril is National Volunteer Month and NSD would like to thank all of our volunteers for their support throughout the year. We have many working as neighborhood leaders, blight buster volunteers and others who volunteer regularly for community cleanups.

Did you know that NSD’s Blight Buster volunteers removed graffiti from 8,113 neighborhood locations and removed 5,099 illegal signs, along with other fighting-blight activities for a total of 2,408 volunteer hours last fiscal year? How impressive!

We appreciate everything that all volunteers do to help keep our neighborhoods clean and beautiful. If you are interested in volunteering, let us know and we’ll connect you with opportunities to lend a hand in your area or share when the next Blight Buster volunteer program orientation is. Call 602-534-4444 or email bbv@phoenix.gov today!

Blight Buster Suzanne Thraen shares best practices with new Blight Buster volunteers.

Volunteers help with an alley cleanup.

Blight Buster volunteers (Class 10) are ready to hit the streets for blight busting.

Volunteers wipe out graffiti during a citywide graffiti removal event.

Residents at the Reinvent PHX community kickoff volunteered their time to share their feedback to help shape a walkable future for Phoenix by attending a community design workshop.

New chair of Neighborhoods Subcommittee

D istrict 8 Councilwoman Kate Gallego is the new chair of the City Council’s Neighborhoods, Housing and Development Subcommittee. Additional councilmembers on the subcommittee include: Laura Pastor, Sal DiCiccio and Daniel T. Valenzuela.

This subcommittee provides policy guidance on issues related to: neighborhoods; housing; homelessness; historic preservation; and planning, zoning and development processes including site plan, permitting and inspections. The subcommittee meets at 10 a.m. on the third Tuesday of the month and can be viewed live (and on demand) at phoenix.gov. Tune in if you can!