

State of the neighborhood

by Peter Feibelman

What can be more pleasant after a car commute or a bike ride on the hot, dry streets of Albuquerque than to come home to our neighborhood's welcoming green canopy! And yet, it is not hard to find dead or dying trees and grass in what once seemed a verdant oasis – even in our city-maintained park. We are all aware that the region is enduring a major drought, and are forced to consider whether trying to maintain the landscape is “selfish,” as recently proclaimed in the ABQ Journal. But before we kill our trees in an effort to expiate guilt, it is worth visiting [cabq.gov](http://www.abqwua.org/content/view/540/199/), the city's web site, for a look at what our leaders think is important. There [See <http://www.abqwua.org/content/view/540/199/>] you will discover that “a new *“Save the Trees”* rebate pilot program (began) in 2012, aimed at preserving trees during the current drought. It (offers) 25 percent off the cost of tree irrigation equipment, fertilizer or professional tree care up to \$100 per residential account and up to \$500 for other accounts.”

So, our city fathers want us to *preserve* our urban forest, not to let it die, even offering a rebate in the name of tree maintenance. Why that? To no great surprise, trees keep us cool, and thereby, for example, they reduce demands for home cooling, whether by swamp cooler or refrigerated air. Both use plenty of water. (Producing electricity for refrigeration uses it at the power plant, if not locally.) Thus, letting our trees go is not a sound response to the drought after all. Replacing a lawn with xeric landscaping seems a good idea. Replacing a tree with nothing is not.



Easter Egg Hunters

Within, you will find - another article on our neighborhood's cultural legacy – this year's by Mary Power on renowned author and former neighbor, Conrad Richter, and an appeal for donations to and volunteers to help with our August Yard Sale. There is also practical information on the Tuesday morning Grower's Market in Presbyterian



Solar eclipse watchers at the west end of Las Lomas (5/20/12)

Hospital's parking lot, and from APD, on dealing with door-to-door solicitors. There is a discussion of doings at the community garden, and an exclusive (!) report from a neighbor participant in the Boston Marathon.

Spruce Park Community Garden News

By John Egbert

Now in our fifth year, 18 households are participating in growing food and flowers at 615 Cedar NE. Since our start up in 2009, almost 30 households or 12% of the neighborhood have been involved in one year or another. A core group of nine have been involved each year.

Last year's highlight was the super harvest of peaches, nectarines, and plums. A series of March and April frosts this year means our trees will be putting more energy into stems and leaves than the little crop we anticipate. We were able to harvest a significant number of table grapes last year, too. We also added annual flowers to our front row last year in an effort to beautify the landscape. We will repeat this plan once again.

Three 2103 changes this year are:

1. We planted three apple trees: a Pink Lady, a Winecrisp, and a Honeycrisp.
2. To build a stronger community spirit in the garden group, we now require our members who happen to be in town, to attend Saturday morning workdays at the beginning of each month from March through October. Already we are seeing a higher level of overall participation not only in our group workdays but in the overall maintenance of each individual row and the enthusiasm people are investing in their own planting and care as well as taking care of our orchard, vineyard, compost piles, and community rows.
3. Last year we suffered a serious disruption in our tomato crop throughout the entire garden as a result of a second year infestation by spider mites. Spider mites

enjoy hot, dry conditions and given more than a half a decade of drought, spider mites have become happy campers in our

neighborhood. If you see the leaves of your tomato plants, other annual or perennial plants, turning yellow and then crispy brown, there is a good chance that if you will use a magnifying glass and an infected leaf over a white sheet of paper, you will find these tiny eight legged critters. If a tick is a noxious animal to us mammals, spider mites are the equivalent for leafy plants. Hence we have reorganized our community rows this year so that all six of them are centralized near our water faucet so that we can gently and quickly spray the



undersides of the tomato leaves on a daily basis throughout the summer. We have a special nozzle for this treatment. Being an organic garden, and still mindful of our need to conserve water, we are using this technique by necessity. Spider mites can best be controlled in this way. We hope this strategy works as well for us as it has for Tucson community gardeners who have used this practice for years. Our community tomato stewardship must be diligent every day in order to enjoy a successful tomato crop. Thus we have scheduled ourselves in pairs to take responsibility for individual weeks for the tomato growing season.

All of our 17 varieties were grown for us by one of our member's uncles. This generosity typifies our emphasis on growing locally and buying from locally owned greenhouses.

If you would like to visit the community garden, contact John Egbert at 341- 9753 or Diane Glenn at 246-0067.

Spruce Park's Cultural Heritage: Conrad Richter

by Mary Power

The fiction writer Conrad Richter lived at 1421 Las Lomas Road from 1928 to 1950 . He was prompted to move to New Mexico from Pennsylvania because his wife suffered from tuberculosis. Long before he came West , he had determined to spend his life as a writer. He had a background in journalism, and like many writers of his generation including Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, and Sherwood Anderson he wrote short stories for periodicals such as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *Colliers*. For Richter, it was, especially at first, a sometimes risky way of making a living and supporting a wife and daughter.

In Pennsylvania, Richter had accumulated a storehouse of knowledge about regional history, and his fiction succeeded in conveying a strong spirit of place . He saw what he had described in Pennsylvania differed from the reality of New Mexico, and spent his first five years here gathering material from newspapers, books and interviewing his neighbors about the interaction of the three cultures, pioneers on the frontier, and just plain good stories. Another major theme he looked into concerned how people could most appropriately and sensibly live in nature. While racial violence occurs in some of his stories such as "Early Marriage," the writer's focus is on its effects on its victims. With a sense of understanding , readers here may identify with the characters in his story, "The Long Drouth" (sic) --- a five year rainless stretch which delayed a marriage and kept a young and loving couple apart geographically. More than this, Richter 's stories are carefully planned and tightly written, and some have served as the basis for his major novels.



Conrad Richter

wife

& daughter

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Richter's first novel, *The Sea of Grass* (1937) was a great success. It concerns disputes between ranchers about the need to keep the grass growing on open land—free range land -- and not to cut up patches for cattle to graze or to plow it for personal agriculture use. The short novel emphasizes that to farm this kind of land is self-defeating because of the climate and lack of rain as well. In other words, crops die, and dust storms worsen. The action takes place over twenty five years 1885-1910, in which the open land disappears. It features the Brewton family who have just been exonerated for shooting at a settler on the open land. The wife, Lutie, finds no comfort in this victory, and decides to leave the frontier, her husband and her children, for a place that will offer a more exciting life. Richter is here showing the reader that some pioneers cannot see a way to adapt to a simpler and harder way of life. Over the next fifteen years, her husband's devotion to 'the sea of grass' is rewarded. He has suffered disappointment and family tragedy – but he has endured, and that is the important moral point. As the critic Edwin Gaston says, Richter "pack(s) into a few pages a quarter-century of historic change. This alteration – the passing of free range land – follows in the wake of processes of 'westering' from frontier to ranch to community." * This novel was successfully made into a movie starring Katherine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy.

In *Tacey Cromwell* (1941) Richter shows a new take on the use of stock characters. He examines whether a prostitute and a gambler from the White Palace in Socorro can make a fresh start as a couple and consider family life in moving to Bisbee, Arizona. While the enterprise is not completely successful and has mixed results, it gets away from the overworked theme of the fallen woman, and gives some hope to characters trying their best to change.

Richter was able to live in two imaginative worlds. He wrote the three volumes of *The Awakening Land* trilogy about pushing the frontier from Pennsylvania to northwestern Ohio, while living in New Mexico. The first volume , *The Trees*, appeared in 1940, followed by *The Fields* in 1946 and *The Town* in 1950 --- the year he left New Mexico and returned to Pennsylvania . In 1951 he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for *The Town*. He was in good company: Herman Wouk won it in 1952, and Hemingway in 1953. In 1958 he received an honorary degree from UNM, crowning two awards previously given him by other universities.

*Gaston, Edwin W., *Conrad Richter*, New York: Twayne Publishers Inc. 1965 (p.77)

REPORT FROM BOSTON: A Neighbor at the 2013 Marathon

Claudia Crawford and Lynn DeFrees

Did you see the article about twins, Jane Farris and our neighbor, Lynn DeFrees, in the Albuquerque Journal on April 11? The story, "Going the Extra 26.2 Miles," focused on their membership in the Albuquerque FIT running group and on how excited they were, finally, to be participating in the Boston Marathon.

The Marathon is the largest spectator event in New England, with 500,000 attending each year; and it owns the world record of entrants, with 36,748 in 1996. (That was special for the 100-year anniversary; the race is usually limited to about 20,000 qualifiers.)

Says DeFrees, "after you've run a couple of marathons, and you find that you can train and reach certain goals, you start hearing about *BOSTON*." Boston is different. You can't just register and run, but have to *qualify*. That makes it special ... at first, too unattainable to think about, then a bit of a dream, and finally, maybe, within reach.

How did our twins get to Boston? DeFrees says, "it's not because we're so talented. It's more because we finally got OLD enough to be able to qualify!" Boston has different qualifying times for different age groups. "So, by the time we reached 55, we saw that we were within shooting distance of making the 4 hours, 15 minute time needed to qualify." Hoping to sign up for 2012, they ran a marathon in California and qualified with 15 seconds to spare!

But things were about to change. At the signups for 2011, the 20,000 spots were filled in just 8 hours and 3 minutes. As a result, the rules were altered. Now, even if you hit the qualifying time, preference was given to the fastest. And so, the race was full before DeFrees and Farris could register. Adding insult to injury, qualifying times were also changed. For 2012, they had to finish in *4 hours, 10 minutes!* Notwithstanding, last October, they qualified for 2013!

That brings us to this year's experience... At the starting line, feeling good, it seemed a perfect day! The twins' wave started at 10:40. DeFrees reported, "We were just thrilled to be there! I was strangely nervous on the long bus ride to the start. I told myself there was no reason to be nervous, because the real victory was actually *GETTING* there. But I was all tingly anyway. Maybe it was just excitement."

"The race started on time, and we were cheered on by the 100s of thousands of people lining the road throughout the entire race. We

were on a pace to finish in the time we had set as our goal (about 4:20-ish). We were tired, but enjoying the experience. And then, 25.5 miles into the race, we were stopped ... about 0.7 mile from the finish." The runners all bunched up. 'What happened? We're at a complete stop,' Jane texted. "Cell phone service had been shut down, but we found we could get an occasional text through. Our friend replied, 'I think it's a bomb scare.' We didn't know for maybe a half hour or so that there were a couple of explosions and people had died. I found

that out from a call that got through on my cell phone - from a friend calling from Houston. She'd been tracking my progress, and knew I hadn't finished, and she was worried. So she called. An hour passed, and yet, we all just stood there, I think in denial... *we're OK, so just let us finish*. A man with a megaphone made a couple of announcements, but we couldn't hear what he said, and since no one else looked like they were leaving, we all just stayed... still faintly hoping we would get to finish."

"Finally they sent us on our way ... We'd finally realized we wouldn't be finishing. We didn't know where to go. There were no taxis, the subway wasn't

running, and all the restaurants had closed up. It wasn't until a couple more hours had passed, and we'd wandered a couple more miles, that we got to a restaurant with a TV on and finally got the whole story (or at least what they knew at that point). We were so shocked when we learned about the cowardly attacks, but we were finally able to contact our friends, so we could be grateful that no one from our group had been injured."

But DeFrees said they couldn't feel sorry for themselves, in light of what happened to others, just disappointed. And she said that the Boston Athletic Association (BAA), who put on the race, was great; volunteers were caring and supportive. They allowed the runners to pick up their finishers' medals the next day.

So, what's next? Many runners want to qualify to express their solidarity with the race and in defiance of these sorts of acts. And of the 5,000, who like DeFrees and Farris, did not get to finish? The BAA is giving them another opportunity to run next year. "Oh boy," says DeFrees, "I get to run it again ... oh dear, now I have to train for another marathon!"



APD Crime Prevention: Door-To-Door Solicitation

Illegal or unauthorized door-to-door solicitation presents a possible unsafe situation in the residential setting. Individuals who represent themselves as a legitimate business are often times conducting fraudulent or potential criminal activity. This type of enterprise is less prevalent today so individual citizens should consider any unexpected knock at the door to be potentially suspicious. The following are suggestions about how to create and maintain a safe and secure residential environment and how to handle the unwanted or unauthorized solicitor.

- The average citizen can define and describe normal behavior and activity in their immediate area or block. Citizens should apply this knowledge to persons walking the neighborhood. Strangers or those people that do not belong should be noticed and observed for suspicious activity. If a person's behavior is deemed to be abnormal or suspicious the citizen should call the non-emergency number **242-COPS**. If someone witnesses a crime in progress dial **911**.

- If the resident receives any knock at the door they should **ALWAYS** observe the area through a window or eye-viewer prior to opening the door – even if they are expecting a visitor. If an unfamiliar person is observed outside the residence the occupant should be very cautious about opening the door. If there is a security screen door with a deadbolt lock in place and the citizen feels comfortable with opening the door they should not engage the individual; rather politely ask them to leave. In the absence of a security screen door, they should notify the visitor they are unwelcome and ask them to leave the premises via the locked door and should never allow entry for any reason. Once the person is asked to leave the resident should observe them leaving and be prepared to report suspicious activity to the police.

- It is important to note that a knock at the door should not go unanswered in some manner – whether through the security screen door or the main door. Criminals posing as a legitimate solicitor are looking for an empty house to eventually commit residential burglary. If the criminal breaks into an expected empty residence and finds an occupant the probability of a violent encounter is high.

- Home Invasions can be the result of a door-to-door solicitor. The criminal knocks on the door and through a variety of techniques persuades the resident to open the door. Once the door is open other individuals appear from obscured locations and force their way into the residence. If someone is at the door claiming to require assistance or some type of help especially late at night **NEVER OPEN THE DOOR** – call **911**.

- Citizens who have experienced an illegal solicitor or suspicious person should alert other neighbors in the immediate area.

- It is recommended that no one engage or enter into a discussion about the purchase of items or services from anyone who initiate contact with them. If items or services are needed citizens should pursue the purchase through established businesses. All frauds and scams originate from contact initiated by someone else.

- How to verify a solicitor's legitimacy – All legitimate businesses in the City of Albuquerque must have a permit to operate, this includes the door-to-door solicitor per City Ordinance 13-3-1-1. *The Ordinance requires the individual to have on their person a permit that can be produced on request which includes photo identification. Any solicitor that claims not to have one or has left it in another location should be considered illegitimate. If you desire the right of privacy, posting a No Trespassing or No Soliciting sign on your premises must be observed by the solicitor. Solicitation is permitted only between the hours of 9 a.m. and sunset.*

From the City of Albuquerque March/April 2013 Neighborhood News - Submitted By Steve Sink



The Spruce Park Neighborhood website

At our website, Spruceparkneighborhood.com, you can connect to your neighbors, city and SPNA Board Members. You can also view this newsletter in full color. Please sign the guestbook, and leave ideas on anything pertaining to our delightful neighborhood. We are always in the market for newsletter articles. You can volunteer for a committee, or add pictures. Check us out!

Yard Sale in the Park - August 3, 2013

On Saturday, August 3, starting at 8 AM, you will once again be able to pick up a bargain, and at the same time benefit your Neighborhood Association, at a SPNA Yard Sale in Spruce Park. The late afternoon and evening before, you can drop off your donations of goods, from used paperback books to furniture at the big truck you will see parked across from the park. Early Saturday morning, the 3rd, volunteers (and you are invited to be one of them!) will move them to the Park in preparation for the sale.

This year we will also have storage available for things you would like to drop off earlier; for that option, please contact Bart Chimenti, at 505-293-6734.

Do participate! It's an opportunity to unburden yourself of items that are just taking up space, to fill a need for your home at a very affordable price, and at the same time to help us fund our SPNA activities: our parties in the park, defending the neighborhood before the Environmental Planning Commission, printing this newsletter, and more.

We look forward to seeing you there, as a donor, a volunteer and/or a buyer!

Tuesday Morning Growers' Market

Presbyterian Hospital Parking Lot

Hello everyone-

We thank you all for not objecting to our move across the street this year. We loved that little lot we were on last year, but it is not available this year and we are grateful to the hospital for making room for us in their parking lot.

We open the last Tuesday in June, the 25th, and will be there every Tuesday morning 7 am until 1 pm through the month of October. We hope you would include this information in your newsletter as often as possible during our harvest season. The fresh fruits and vegetables that are available at the market change throughout the harvest season, so we suggest if possible people visit the market each week for best selection.

For our first market in June and possibly into early July, I would expect mostly spring greens, like kale, chard, lettuce, spinach, some fresh herbs, garlic and maybe shallots and for those that arrive at opening time, a few tomatoes. By mid July the tomatoes will be prolific along with squash, cucumbers, corn, melons, peppers and many others. We also have local raw honey, some great breads including gluten free, soaps and local crafts. We are still registering vendors, and expect new ones throughout the growing and harvest season.

Please stop by often for some of the freshest, most delicious food available and encourage your family, friends and neighbors to do the same.

We also have some beautiful and colorful posters advertising the market, if you have local business contacts that would be willing to put one up.

Thank you again for your support,

Nancy, Andy, Ken and Joe

[505 865 3533](tel:5058653533)

<http://www.abquptowngrowersmarket.org/index.html>

ABQ Uptown Growers' Market

Saturday Mornings 7am - Noon

At ABQ Uptown, NE Parking Lot

Tuesday Mornings 7am - 1PM

Presbyterian Hospital on Central

Roster of SPNA board officers and street representatives:

Ash	Valerie St. John, 441 Ash, 275-3931, SPNA board president
Maple	Claudia Crawford, 433 Maple, 242-7081
Sycamore	Ann Cloud, 431 Sycamore, 507-4924, SPNA board vice president
Spruce	John W. Rebstock, 619 Spruce, 244-1005, SPNA board treasurer
Ridge	Volunteer needed
Cedar/Mulberry	Volunteer needed
Roma, East	Al Paxton, 1603 Roma, 244-0980
Roma, West	James W. Carroll, 1116 Roma, 242-4068, SPNA board secretary
Marquette	Ed Sullivan, 1301 Marquette, 842-8589
	Gerald Simmacher, 1220 Marquette, 407, 764-0447
Las Lomas, West	Peter Feibelman, 1309 Las Lomas, 242-1946, newsletter editor
Las Lomas, East	Volunteer needed
Sigma Chi, West	Robert Westfall, 1329 Sigma Chi, 764-9087
Sigma Chi, East	Volunteer needed

Join SPNA or renew your membership by completing this form, clipping and returning it with a check to SPNA treasurer, John Rebstock, 619 Spruce.

Member Name: _____ Member Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone Numbers: _____

Email addresses: _____

Members in household: _____ x \$12.00 = \$ _____

Also, here's a donation to support SPNA activities \$ _____

Total for Membership and Donation \$ _____