

## State of the neighborhood association

by Peter Feibelman

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is not an accident that membership in the Association is on the increase. Although neighborhood associations can be about little more than standing in the way of change, to preserve property values, we can be proud that, under the leadership of current President, Valerie St. John, SPNA represents much more. Our recent Halloween and Easter parties were fun once again for kids and adults alike, and our September “grown-up event,” a delightful feast. Our community garden thrives. Our new website, [Spruceparkneighborhood.com](http://Spruceparkneighborhood.com), (to which you are, of course, invited to contribute) is now a bulletin board for neighborhood events, a source of contact information and a repository of newsletters, historical information and photographs.

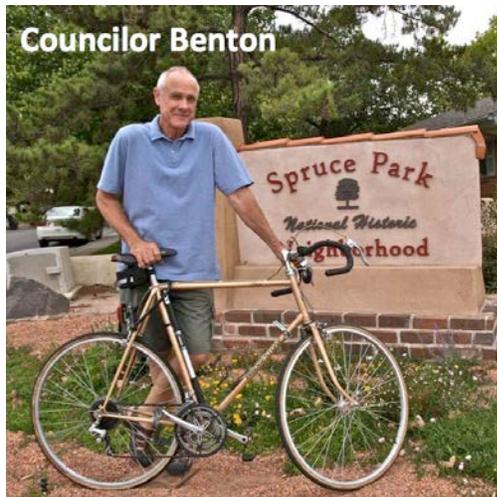
As a neighbor to UNM, it is perhaps not surprising that Spruce Park has been a home to many artists and writers. In this letter and in issues to come, we are excited about the chance to highlight our neighborhood’s many cultural contributions, past and present.

Needless to say, we do have a few worries. Because of population growth on the West Side, Albuquerque’s City Council has been redistricted, with the result that our very supportive councilor, Isaac Benton, no longer will have a home in our district. Accordingly, we will have to make our needs known to a new



representative. And there will be new needs. Notable in this newsletter, for example, is the proposed

development of the Lomas Corridor, to our north. It will bring many new people to the area, increase traffic, and possibly interfere with mountain views. On the other hand, it will bring stores, maybe a supermarket we can walk to, or a theater, or a bar. In each case, we will have to think about our interests and express them effectively.



# Spruce Park Community Garden News

By John Egbert

The Spruce Park Community Garden has begun its fourth year of operation. Thanks to the beneficence of landowner Julie Bohan, twenty households continue to work the soil on her land and grow high quality organic produce. Since our beginning in 2009, twenty-eight households have participated for one or more years, which is roughly 10 percent of the neighborhood total.

The main growing “events” continue to be Spring salad greens, tomatoes, green beans, onions, Swiss chard, and other greens. A close look also reveals additional individual choices: okra, chile, green peppers, anise, dill, fennel, potatoes, sweet potatoes, squash and melons, and herbs. A smattering of zinnias, cosmos, and sunflowers grace the landscape.

Preparation begins in late winter with an all-member work day when community gardeners prepare the soil with a shallow turning of each row with the addition of our own compost. We also prune our ten fruit trees, restore our drip watering system by treating the holes with vinegar, make sure the plastic pipe fittings are tight, and conduct a brief water workshop on conservation and emergency repairs.

**Compost:** This year we collected about 100 bags of neighborhood leaves and pine needles plus a truck load of local manure to build the new “food base” for the garden. Conveniently, last year's organic materials had recycled by February and were put to good use. We also add gypsum and iron to each row. Two gardeners volunteer to keep the piles turned and moist. “Green” additions of chemically free grass clippings are added during the growing season.

**Water:** For 22 families over 8 months in 2011, we spent \$492 for water to drip-irrigate 675 feet of mainly vegetable rows, plus twelve fruit trees

(plums, cherries, nectarines, peaches, pomegranates) and eight table-grape vines. The water bill includes some handwatering to help start plants and to supplement the bubblers on our fruit trees during

hot weather. We average slightly more than \$50 a month. The key to conservation is humus-rich soil, setting the drip system timer to meet demand but not exceed it, and proper mulching with alfalfa hay. Sunlight management is becoming increasingly important, too, as our local environment experiences warmer average 24 hour temperatures. The trend in the Southwest and practiced here will be using sunflowers, cane trellises, and metal cages to buffer harsh sunlight and keep plant root temperatures moderated with stable moisture.

**Plant Problems:** 1. Hot dry conditions have spawned spider mite invasions the last two years. Leaves suddenly appear mined, spotted, and drying. Wetting leaves prior to the sun hitting them discourages spider mites. Spider mites are almost microscopic and symptoms are necessary telltales. If you grow beans, be especially careful. Bush beans seem less susceptible and are prolific producers here. 2. Squash bugs decimated our crop last year. We will try again but not plant until after July 1. We hope that date allows squash bug migrants to miss us as they typically settle onto area crops earlier. Attacks require aggressive daily hand picking of eggs, larvae, and adults. Watch the undersides of leaves and stems. 3. Tomato viruses may be a problem this year. Last year we did very well because the 2010-11 winter was so dry that wintercress mustard was non-existent in the alleys and yards of Spruce Park. This year this weed has been rampant and it carries the leaf hopper that hosts the devastating virus. The leaf hopper quickly moves from the dying mustards in late Spring to summer tomatoes. The best option in a year like this is to plant VF\* tomatoes rather than low-resistant heirlooms.

\*VF = *verticillium and fusarium-wilt resistant*



# Spruce Park's Artistic Heritage: Van Deren Coke

by Christina Rosenberger

“In studying the photographs of Van Deren Coke one becomes intensely aware of the autobiographical nature of his art,” wrote Gerald Nordland, former Director of the San Francisco Museum of [Modern] Art. “Whether he is working in Kentucky, Indiana, or Florida, the Southwest or California, he reflects the stimulus and the experience of his environment.” For residents of Spruce Park, the autobiographical nature of Coke’s photography is resonant—he lived at 1412 Las Lomas Road in the 1960’s, in a house designed for him by UNM Architecture Professor Don Schlegel.

Born in 1921 in Kentucky, Coke was on a summer vacation with his family in California when he met photographer Edward Weston. Taken with photography and Weston’s modernist ethos, Coke met Paul Strand and studied with Ansel Adams during two summer workshops. The Second World War derailed Coke’s plans to be a photographer, and he served in the Navy as a commanding officer. After the war, he first worked in the family business, but then left Kentucky in 1956 to pursue a master’s degree in sculpture at Indiana University. Coke noted that his “viewpoint began to change when I went back to school at the age of thirty-five to study art history in preparation for a new career as a teacher and scholar.” He began his career in academia as an assistant professor of fine arts at the University of Florida, while contact with the work of Odilon Redon and Max Ernst encouraged him to think about the roles of fantasy and chance in photography. “Central to any consideration of my work is the fact that I am an art historian as well as a photographer,” Coke observed. After a brief teaching job in Arizona, Coke was hired as Chairman of the Department of Art and Professor of Art History at the University of New Mexico as well as Founding Director of the University of New Mexico’s Art Museum—an impressive academic trifecta for a junior professor.

During his time in Albuquerque, Coke wrote two books, *Taos and Santa Fe: The Artist’s Environment, 1882-1942*, an early synthetic study of artists who had worked in New Mexico, which was published in 1963, as well as *The Painter and the Photographer: From Delacroix to Warhol*. He also continued to experiment with his photography, manipulating found negatives in the darkroom to achieve spectral effects. “Coke has balanced the mechanical objectivity of his traditional work with a new subjectivity that is poetic in quality, crisp and controlled as photography—an original amalgam of discipline and feeling,” Nordland observed of Coke’s experimental work in 1973.

Coke left New Mexico for two years in 1970 in order to act as Deputy Director and then Director of The International Museum of Photography at the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, one of the premier photographic institutions in the United States. He continued to teach art and photography at UNM upon his return from Rochester. From 1979 to 1987, Coke was Director of the Department of Photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, curating a number of important exhibitions during his tenure. He returned to Santa Fe upon his retirement in 1987.

In addition to his legacy as artist and educator, Coke became known as a patron of the arts in New Mexico by donating 1,200 works to the University of New Mexico Art Museum. Many of these treasures, among them photos by Ansel Adams, Henri Cartier-Bresson and other prominent artists, can be seen in the exhibition catalog available at the University’s Fine Arts Library.

Coke is just one of many artists who have called Spruce Park home, and we hope that the neighborhood will continue to foster and appreciate creative pursuits long into the future.

(All quotations are taken from essays by Van Deren Coke and Gerald Nordland in *Van Deren Coke: Photographs, 1956-1973*. University of New Mexico Press, 1973. The portrait of Coke, kindly provided by the University of New Mexico Art Museum, is by Ben Blackwell Photography.)



# STATE AND FEDERAL FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES

by John W. Rebstock

As many Spruce Park residents are aware, much of our neighborhood is included in the Spruce Park Historic District. Homes in the District qualify for State of New Mexico tax credits and low interest loans if the property is individually listed in, or contributing to, a Historic District. The property may be a personal residence or an income-producing property (such as an apartment building or office).



The State of New Mexico Income Tax Credit for Registered Cultural Properties program was created on January 1, 1984. Tax credits may be available to owners or long-term lessees who accomplish qualified, pre-approved rehabilitation on a historic structure. Application for the program is a two-part process. The State Cultural Properties Review Committee (CPRC) must first approve the proposed rehabilitation work prior to the beginning of the project. This step involves completing and submitting a Part 1 form describing the work. All aspects of the project must be described in Part 1 of the application, including those components that may not be eligible for credit, e.g. a new addition to the structure. The project term expires 24 months from the date of the Part 1 approval. The second step of the process involves completing a Part 2 form for the project, which documents the actual costs paid for the work and presents these to the CPRC for certification. Project expenses must be fully described, and proof of payment furnished, with the Part 2 form. A maximum of \$50,000 of eligible costs may be submitted for consideration for each project, even though the total project costs may exceed this amount. Maximum credit is 50% of eligible costs of the approved

rehabilitation or \$25,000 (50% of project maximum) or 5 years of tax liability,

whichever is least. The credit is applied against New Mexico income taxes owed in the year the project is completed. The balance may be carried forward for up to four additional years. Typical work items whose costs may be eligible for credit are:

- New roofing or repairs to roofing, eaves and fascia.
- Repairing deteriorated woodwork
- Stabilizing foundation and structural elements
- Repairing windows
- Restoring interior and exterior finishes (including paint and stucco)
- Repairing or replacing utility services to conform to applicable code requirements

Costs for items such as interior furnishings, new construction, minor repairs and demolition are generally not eligible for tax credits. Specific details and more information about the state program, along with application forms, may be obtained by calling the State Historic Preservation Division in Santa Fe at (505) 827-6320 or by visiting their website at:

[www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/PROGRAMS/creditsloans\\_taxcredits.html](http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/PROGRAMS/creditsloans_taxcredits.html)

The State Historic Preservation Division also has information about a federal income tax credit, which may be available for certain projects in the District.

# Party in the Park

by **Bart Chimenti**

Members of the Spruce Park Board had long been asked why there were so many kids' events at the Park and so few grown-up ones. Without a really good answer, other than that's how it's always been, we decided to hold a first-ever potluck/cookout last September.

The event featured our own John Thayer and *Hungry Mungry* making their special brand of music. Hamburgers and drinks were provided by the association. But the real highlight was the fabulous food brought by the neighbors. Great dishes kept coming in.

Our city councilor, Isaac Benton, was a special guest. We took the occasion to thank him for his many contributions in our neighborhood. An architect by profession, he spoke of the value historic neighborhoods are to the vibrancy of the city and how important it is to retain a seat on the council. After his comments, we gave him and his wife a framed photo of the neighborhood sign and a Proclamation granting them honorary residency in Spruce Park.

Classic cars added to the color of a beautiful fall afternoon. About one hundred neighbors attended the event, plus one very hungry college guy. Rumor has it that another such party is planned - stay tuned.

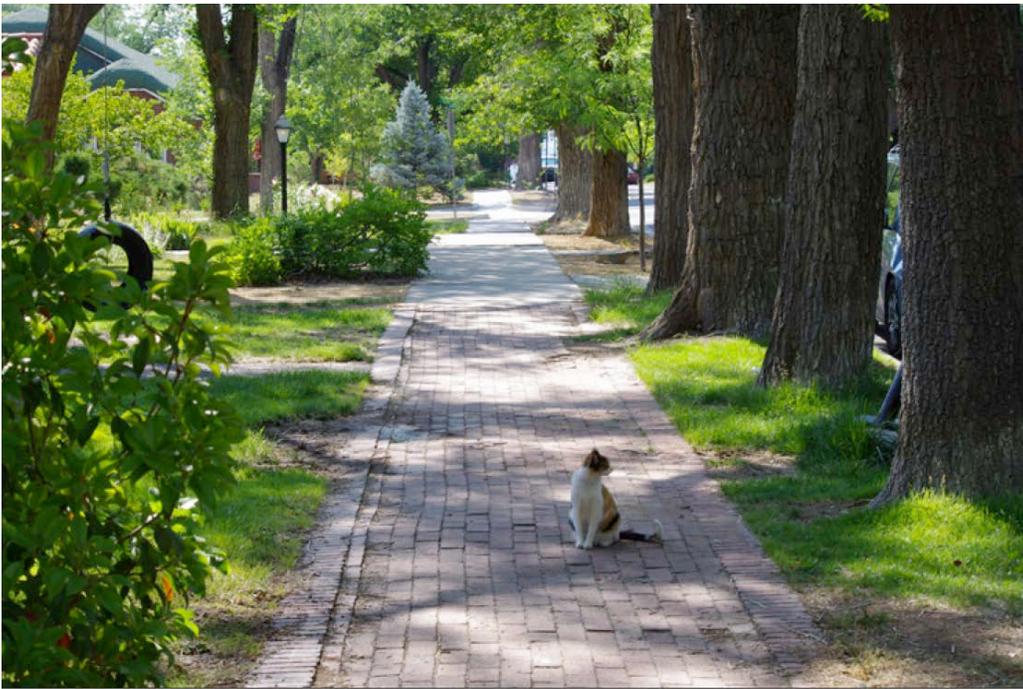
# The “Lomas Corridor”

by **Robert Westfall**

Lomas Corridor is the term used by UNM's Lobo Development Corporation for a plan of for-profit commercial development of UNM and Sandia Foundation properties north of the Spruce Park Neighborhood (SPN). This land includes property north of Lomas, but the primary focus for commercial development is the area north of SPN and south of Lomas, between University Blvd. and the freeway.

The Sandia Foundation and Lobo Development Corp. (LDC) engaged the services of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to convene an advisory services panel in Albuquerque to make recommendations for best use of these lands. ULI is a nonprofit education and research organization that fosters and encourages high standards of land use planning and development. ULI was established in 1936 and is a respected and widely-quoted source of objective information on urban planning, growth and development.

The ULI panel made its report on Nov. 11, 2011 (11/11/11). The basic proposal was for a mixed-use campus neighborhood of rental housing, office space and retail storefronts surrounding a 1,000 car parking garage. While most recommendations were general and not specific, it was proposed that the housing component be two-story townhomes adjacent to SPN, transitioning to three and four story apartment buildings further down the hill. ULI was paid \$120,000 for its study and recommendations. The entire 86-page report is available online. Go to [www.uli.org](http://www.uli.org) and search Lomas Corridor.



Spruce Park Kitty, [www.fotofeed.com](http://www.fotofeed.com) © John Hamilton Farr

## The Spruce Park Neighborhood website

Thanks to the efforts of SPNA Vice-President, Ann Cloud, we have a new website, a place to connect to your neighbors, your city and your SPNA Board Members. You are invited to sign our guestbook, and leave ideas on anything pertaining to our great neighborhood. We are always looking for articles to add to our newsletter. You can volunteer for a committee, or add pictures. Check us out at [Spruceparkneighborhood.com](http://Spruceparkneighborhood.com).

## Curbside Recycling With A Cart

In November of 2011 the City of Albuquerque signed a 12 year agreement with Friedman Recycling. The agreement is in step with the Integrated waste Management Plan.\* Cart-based curbside recycling and a larger variety of acceptable materials are both realities to the new partnership.

Beginning in March 2012, the Solid Waste Management Department will distribute 21,000 carts to preselected areas of the City. Those that receive the new blue carts and the previous 10,000 recycling pilot program participants will be allowed to recycle the newly approved materials in their carts. The complete city-wide cart distribution roll-out is scheduled to take place toward the end of 2012. To learn when you will receive your cart check <http://www.cabq.gov/gis/swdpickup.php>.

\*To read about the Integrated Waste management Plan, go to:

<http://www.cabq.gov/solidwaste/albuquerque-integrated-waste-management-plan>

# HELP FROM OUR CONGRESSMAN

Dear Friend:

I am honored to represent you in Congress, and am here to assist you and your family. I can help break through the bureaucracy when you are having problems with your Social Security, Medicare, veterans benefits, or issues with other federal agencies. I can help you find federal grants for your community project, assist you in ordering a flag, secure various tours in our nation's capital, and help you start a career with a military service academy. My staff and I are here to serve you, and I urge you to call me if we can be helpful.

Sincerely,

Martin Heinrich  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Downtown Albuquerque Office  
505 Marquette Ave NW, Suite 505  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
505-346-6781

South Valley Office  
3211 Coors Blvd SW, Suite B3  
Albuquerque, NM 87121  
505-877-4069

<http://Heinrich.house.gov>

**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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## 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	Harry Dickson, 407 Ridge, #B, 243-1181
Cedar/Mulberry	Carol Belcher, 501 Mulberry, 803-8506
Roma, East	Shane Muth, 1425 Roma, 244-8816
Roma, West	James W. Carroll, 1116 Roma, 242-4068, SPNA board secretary
Marquette	Ed Sullivan, 1301 Marquette, 842-8589
	Gerald Simnacher, 1220 Marquette, 764-0447
Las Lomas, West	Peter Feibelman, 1309 Las Lomas, 242-1946, newsletter editor
Las Lomas, East	Sylvia Dorato, 1524 Las Lomas, 730-3131
Sigma Chi, West	Robert Westfall, 1329 Sigma Chi, 764-9087
Sigma Chi, East	Christina Rosenberger, 1524 Sigma Chi, 433-2010

### And don't forget:

