

Hillcrest IX Highlights

Newsletter of the Hillcrest IX Homeowners' Association Winter 2021

2021 Annual Meeting Recap



Due to the ongoing pandemic, the Annual Meeting was moved outside to the front patio of the church where

there was plenty of room to social distance. It was a beautiful day, if just a little chilly. 16 members were in attendance. We received 62 ballots, mostly via U.S. Mail, which ensured we met quorum.

Board President, Jesse Culty reported that it was a quiet year overall, with only routine activities being conducted.

Secretary/Treasurer, Ryan Hildreth presented the year over year budget with projections for 2021. A majority of spending categories in 2020 came in on target or just under budget.

Landscape Director, Keith Kennedy reported on the invasive Stinknet weed, also known as “globe chamomile” that has now migrated to North Phoenix and through our desert arroyo. Once taking root, the weeds are perennial, can choke out native vegetation and are highly flammable. Pre-emergent, once only applied to the outer perimeter common areas, will now have to be applied to the arroyo. Keith also reported on an irrigation leak along Hearn that led to a high water bill, and asked everyone if they notice water over-pooling or running excessively in the common areas on the perimeter, to please notify the Board so that we can have the leak assessed and repaired.

David and Anne Dudley reported on the progress of the Governing Documents

Review Committee, which they have been Co-chairing with Jesse and Ryan. The full Committee, which is comprised of the Co-Chair Team and 4-member household Review Team led by Kayla Vronoski, George Poetzl, Ray Medina and Tracy Hare, met in the fall and submitted their suggested updates to the HOA Attorney for legal review. The full Committee met again in late January to discuss and revise proposed amendments based on legal recommendations and resubmitted the package to the attorney. Once the proposed amendments are finalized in draft form, they will be posted on our Association’s website. Paper copies will also be made available upon request. The Committee will host forums via Zoom and direct outreach so that all homeowners can weigh in on the proposed amendments prior to a vote. A vote to update the Governing Documents is anticipated to be held this year.

Two outgoing Board members, Barbara Gearhart (2016-2020) and Ryan Hildreth (2019-2020), were presented gifts from their fellow Board members to thank them for their service to our community. Barbara, always appreciated for her wisdom, graciousness and willingness to lend a hand whenever needed, was presented with a beautiful orchid, a box of See’s Old Fashioned Chocolates, and a homemade bookmark which has a photo of Lookout Mountain on one side, and the arroyo bridge on the other. Ryan Hildreth, a New England transplant from Maine with an affinity for 2-story homes, recently bought himself one out in Arrowhead. Although he will no longer be living in our community, he enthusiastically volunteered to stay on as Webmaster of our Association’s website and

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will continue to post updates and facilitate web-based communications as needed. Ryan was presented an American flag to thank him for his service to our community and to wish him well in his new home.

David Dudley and Thom Berger volunteered to tally ballots and announce the results of the election:

Directors Elected

Jesse Culty
Daryl Davis-Ferra
Michael Hinson
Keith Kennedy
Jeremy Kuhn

The 2021 Board of Directors looks forward to continuing several ongoing projects: the Governing Documents update, converting the Association records to electronic form, and bringing a viable resolution to maintenance of the trail easement between Hillcrest IX and Pointe Mountainside Golf Community.

Homeowner Q&A



The 2021 Board of Directors would like to thank the Association members who submitted kudos, suggestions, questions and concerns

along with their ballots. Most came in the form of statements, but we will address them in the Q&A format for ease of reading. If you would like to comment on the Q&A or have other questions or suggestions, please email the Board at hoaboard@hillcrest9.org. We would love to hear from you!

Q: *I feel that in the future residents should be asked (by mail) to run for any open Board positions, submit their name and brief resume' THEN submit the names to the*

community for a vote. That is the correct way to do it.

A: Elections in our Association are held each January at Annual Meeting, at which the membership elects 5 Directors. The terms run one year, giving the membership a choice to retain a Director who is running for reelection, or to vote in a new candidate who is running for the first time.

Nominations may also be made through write-in on the ballot or from the floor. Any member at any time may submit their name and a brief bio to be placed on the ballot for the community's consideration at the upcoming annual meeting. It's been our practice to put out a call at the fall picnic (cancelled for the first time in 2020) and the fall newsletter asking members to volunteer for Board service. The fall newsletter also includes a description of duties the Board carries out and the approximate volunteer time commitment involved. Thank you for the suggestion. An announcement going out with the fall dues letter may certainly be another way to reach members who may have missed the picnic or have not read the newsletter. Everyone should consider serving at least a one year term on the Board of Directors. It's guaranteed to increase pride in the community and foster an appreciation of the amount of work it takes to effectively run an association, especially a self-managed association like ours.

Q: *Wildflowers are not weeds. Instead of negatively affecting home values, they do the opposite. Additionally, leaf blowers should be banned or at least limited. Many HOA's have this rule. Rakes and brooms do not cause air and noise pollution. Small steps to make our environment cleaner.*

A: What appeared to be beautiful wildflowers throughout the arroyo last spring turned out to be Stinknet, an invasive

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weed that is native to South Africa. Since then, the noxious weed has spread throughout the state of Arizona and more recently has spread to our area of North Phoenix. Unlike the “desert daisies” we see each spring; Stinknet can choke out native vegetation and is highly flammable. One effective way to control it is through application of pre-emergent. Articles regarding this invasive weed and its spread can be found at the Arizona Cooperative Extension. <https://extension.arizona.edu>.

With regard to leaf blowers our contracted landscape company, South Mountain Landcare, blows the arroyo walking path once a month and has been instructed to blow debris toward the wash, rather than homes. Since the remaining Eucalyptus trees were taken out in 2019, leaf blowing on the perimeter common areas has been greatly reduced. Rakes and brooms are certainly an option, but likely would require an increased amount of man hours to cover our large common areas, as well as homeowners to cover their yards.

Q: We are concerned about excessive speed in our community; speeding up and down 12th Place and 13th Street. Could the HOA consider speed bumps?

A: Most neighborhoods that have incorporated speed mitigation have speed humps installed which has a softer impact on vehicles while achieving the desired effect of slowing speed. Speed mitigation within our subdivision is an idea that has been considered at various points throughout our history. It requires a certain number of favorable votes from the residents directly impacted and the HOA to absorb a portion of the cost of the materials and installation in order for speed humps to be installed. We haven't experienced success on these initiatives in the past but that does not mean

that will be the case in the future. If, after discussing with your neighbors there is sufficient concern and interest in having speed humps installed, the Board can assist in streamlining the request to the city. More information on the city's speed hump program can be found at [Street Transportation Speed Hump Program \(phoenix.gov\)](https://www.phoenix.gov/transportation/speed-hump-program).

Q: Ask owner who is parking on Acoma/12th at entrance to park elsewhere ... Dangerous.

A: The Association only regulates on street parking within the subdivision between the hours of 2AM - 5AM. Vehicles may park on our subdivision streets outside of those hours anytime, as well as on streets outside of our subdivision where there are not any No Parking signs. Residents concerned about vehicles that are parked too close to intersected streets, causing a visual obstruction, may report the issue to the City of Phoenix Police Traffic Control Hotline at **602-534-7733** or via email at traffic.complaints@phoenix.gov.

Q: Annual Meeting could have been held virtually for those who are unable to attend the gathering.

A: The Planned Community Act at this time requires homeowners' associations to have a physical meeting site. Virtual meetings have been justified only in the case of the Governor's shutdown order and when there has been wide community spread of Covid-19 resulting in high case counts and hospitalizations. Because of the requirement for a physical meeting location, the Board is working to develop a hybrid platform that will allow for both physical and virtual attendance for those who desire to participate virtually. Technology, as we all know, is not perfect. In some cases virtual and or call in attendees have been delayed in

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connecting or been unable to connect altogether due to technical difficulties. At its February meeting, the Board voted to approve a year subscription to Zoom, which is a higher quality platform than the Free Conference Call platform we initially used. Jeremy, our Treasurer, donated his personal Bluetooth microphone/speaker device for use at meetings so everyone present physically can hear and speak to attendees participating virtually. Notice of the virtual connection information will be emailed to all homeowners in advance of the meetings, starting in March.

Q: Please, no agreement with Pointe Mountainside Golf Community (PMGC) regarding maintenance of the eastern adjacent area.

A: Potentially partnering with PMGC on some maintenance aspects of the Multi Use Trail Easement is an issue supported by some residents and not others. Those in support see the issue as one that protects Hillcrest IX's home values and ensures all of our homeowners' access to Lookout Mountain Preserve, stipulations made by our community in 1987 before we signed off on Gosnell's development. Another positive is a well maintained walking trail has the effect of reducing safety hazards and crime. Other homeowners have focused on cost and potential liability if our community was to partner with PMGC. The Governing Documents Review Committee is planning homeowner forums over the next few months on this issue and others that are being considered as part of the Governing Documents amendment process. Everyone's participation is encouraged to weigh in on these important issues.

Q: I would like to suggest that an amendment to the CC&R's be considered by the membership to require that the annual

assessment may only be increased via an affirmation vote by two-thirds (2/3) of the members. Additionally, any non-emergency exception should require an affirmation vote by two-thirds (2/3) of members.

A: Under the Planned Community Act, state statute sets out the formula for assessment increases. Part of the process of updating Governing Documents is to ensure that the Documents are consistent with state law. It certainly is in every association's best interest to avoid steep and or constant increases in assessments. The Board believes that can best be accomplished by planning at a minimum, 5-year budget projections updated annually, maintaining a healthy reserve fund to avoid special assessments and not waiting too many years in between increases, like the 16 years we waited last time.



Sunshine Committee in need of volunteers

The Sunshine Committee was established at Annual Meeting in 2014 when some members suggested it may be beneficial to have a welcome wagon of sorts reach out to new homeowners to help them feel part of the community. Since then, the Sunshine Committee has delivered welcome baskets and visited with a number of new homeowners, shared information regarding our association and the various businesses, restaurants and features in the wider community. The members have also had a lot of fun getting to know each other, having occasional coffee visits at each other's homes and meeting out for impromptu breakfasts. The pandemic has unfortunately curbed many of these activities for now, but looking ahead to late 2021 and 2022, the Committee hopes to resume activities and

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would love to have new members join. If you are interested in being part of the Sunshine Committee or just have questions regarding its mission and activities, please contact Committee Chair, Kathy Neuroth at **602-509-1023**.

Block Watch News



Hillcrest IX Block Watch has a Google Groups distribution list. If you would like to be added to that list please send an email

request to Anne Dudley, at annedudley1@gmail.com.

In addition, the city hosts several Block Watch meetings per month around the community. Dates, times, and locations can be found at the Black Mountain Community Alliance website and the Phoenix Block Watch website. Contact Michael Hinson if you would like to learn more about the meetings.

Please be alert and aware of the following:

- ✓ Keep your garage door closed. Suspicious vehicles have been seen canvassing homes in several communities in our area and there have been recent reports of break-in through open garages and theft of items.
- ✓ Keep you vehicles locked. There have been reports of stolen vehicles and items stolen out of unlocked vehicles.
- ✓ Mail and package theft has also been reported. Please check your mail often and retrieve packages as soon as possible.

Some tips to consider for home security:

- Keep fences, gates, and garage doors locked
- Keep all doors and windows closed and locked at all times
- Install motion sensor lighting around your home, especially at entrances.
- Keep shrubbery around entrances and walkways trimmed
- Get to know your neighbors and trade phone numbers with them so they can alert you if you inadvertently leave your garage door open or they notice anything amiss at your property.

Hillcrest 9 is registered with the City of Phoenix as a Block Watch Group. The contacts are:

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Michael Hinson | 206-913-9486 |
| Alice Couto | 774-526-0617 |
| Cheryl Joseph | 602-448-3619 |

Home Improvements/Architectural Guidelines



Please review the CC&R's Architectural Control sections 4-6. Many exterior changes require an Architectural Change Application.

Both the CC&R's and applications are posted on our website for your convenience, or you may request a copy from any Board member. The purpose of the review process is to ensure that improvements are made in harmony with existing structures, height of structures, and location with respect to topography and finished grade elevation among other requirements. Applications are reviewed monthly, but if you are concerned about the timing of getting your application reviewed and approved, you may wish to

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submit it well in advance of commencing your project.

Parking Restriction Reminder

Our CC&R's prohibit parking on street between the hours of **2:00 – 5:00 AM**, but does allow for an occasional parking variance. Should you have overnight guests in town and need a parking variance please call any Board member. We will be happy to work with you on short term parking arrangements.

Arroyo Trivia

A small falcon, hovering over the arroyo... it must be an ***American Kestrel***. Facing into the wind, they flap their wings and use their tails to hold their position, while surveying the desert flora for insects, small mammals and reptiles. About the size



of a robin, they are fierce hunters. Using their notched beaks, they quickly subdue their prey by severing the spinal cord at the neck. Nicknamed "Sparrow Hawks," you might find them eyeing your backyard feeder for small birds as well. They are built for speed, with long pointed wings, often bent back at the tip, which enables them to overtake their prey quickly. Not one to be picky for perches so long as they have a falcon eye view, you might find them atop Saguaro cactuses or telephone wires.

Falcons and other raptors, such as Hawks and Owls, provide natural rodent control. It is important to consider alternatives to poison when attempting to control rodent nuisances. Secondary poisoning poses threats to raptors and their nestlings, as well as other wildlife and household pets. Please check with your local pest control company for non-poison rodent control options.

Fun Facts about AZ

1. There are 22 national parks and monuments in Arizona.
2. There are more than 100 wineries and 22 varieties of wine produced in Arizona.
3. Arizona is home to 75+ licensed craft breweries (and growing).
4. Arizona chefs and restaurants have received more than 50 James Beard nominations since 2010
5. Arizona's Sonoran Desert is the only place on earth where the iconic saguaro cactus grows.
6. Arizona has 35 state parks and natural areas preserving the state's natural, cultural and recreational resources.
7. The Arizona Trail is 800 miles long and is dedicated to hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding and cross-country skiing.
8. Two of the top-rated waterfalls in the United States are located in Arizona: Grand Falls and Havasu Falls.
9. The Grand Canyon National Park is one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World, and the only one located within the United States.
10. According to Travel + Leisure, three of the 10 world's best destination spas are in Arizona (two in Tucson and one in Sedona).



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Homeowner Highlights ~ The Wallace Family

If anyone isn't quite sure who we are, we are Harley's people: Chris, Wyly and Maxx. Harley, short for Harley Quinn, is the blonde lab mix who loves, no LIVES to bark at whoever is walking past our house. We're grateful to those who think they can sweet talk her into silence, but rest assured, your simple presence on that trail is making her day. Whether she knows you or not, she will bark until you're out of site or she gets scolded. And if you could see the pride in her expression when you are out of site, as if she had something to do with it, you might run back by one more time just to get her riled up again! She truly loves it! Rest assured that she is not just taking care of her people, she is watching out for you, too. She has chased out of the arroyo many coyotes, a few strangers and even a small herd of javelina. She's looking out for all of us.



We've been residents here in Hillcrest IX for almost 30 years. We bought our very first home right here in February of 1993. It's hard to believe so many years have flown by. It seems like yesterday. Chris really liked Moon Valley and since he was born and raised in the city (a true Phoenician) I deferred to his opinions on the matter. Unlike Chris, I was raised in a small Arizona town that borders California along the Colorado River. If you don't think you've ever been to Parker, you may have just not realized it. It's a blink right before you hit the California border on highway 95, just 20 minutes south of Lake Havasu. Hillcrest IX was an easy sell for me with all the local hiking, wildlife and seclusion. It reminded me of home. In truth, I had my eye on a little beauty in Arrowhead. I was easy to convince though once I saw Lookout Mountain, the walking path and realized what a convenient location this was. Our initial idea was to buy this home as an investment. So, we went to work updating it with new flooring, new paint and some landscaping touches. We stayed for a few years hoping for a nice increase in home values. We finally agreed to put it on the market in 1998. The sign went up and that very evening, when I came home from work, I drove around the corner from Canterbury to 12th Place and I saw that FOR SALE sign for the first time. That's when it hit me. I called Chris, crying like a baby, and begged him to have our agent come and take the sign down. I wasn't ready to leave this little house or our little neighborhood. So instead of selling that year, we planned our remodel. By 2000 we added about a thousand square feet of living space, a block wall and a play pool. 5 years later, we added Maxx.

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There are so many things to love about living here. We can walk out the front door in any direction and get a great workout with a scenic walk or hike. Chris can jump on his mountain bike and hit a local trail within a couple of minutes and ride literally for hours. We can ride our bikes to breakfast at the Moon Valley Diner. And when you add our amazing neighbors into this mix, it's hard to imagine finding a better place to live. Hillcrest is a big extended family. I remember watching Sally and Peter take walks around the arroyo when Sally was pregnant with Dominique. I remember thinking, wow; there will be a baby in the neighborhood! Because I don't recall many if any, little ones around back then. Then Alexander came along and I loved hearing the kids play across the arroyo. By then, Chris and I were planning our own family. Our wonderful neighbors dropped gifts off at our front door when Maxx was born. We were blessed with amazing holiday treats for Maxx every single year, beautiful Christmas decorations that we cherish to this day, and so many delicious desserts! I can't begin to thank those who have offered their support with Maxx's Boy Scout events. From popcorn to flags to holiday wreaths and donations, you've all been so wonderful to him. I think living in Hillcrest has helped shape Maxx's sense of duty to the

community. In fact, he's now planning his Eagle Service Project and is working with the city of Phoenix to clean up and improve areas surrounding the North Mountain Visitor's Center. It takes a village!

It wasn't always easy for us here; for a few years we were the youngest folks in the community by ten years. It took us a while to gain the friendships we have today which makes them that much more special. There has always been an open line of communication to the board and we were always encouraged to reach out when we didn't understand something. Today, I feel a strong sense of responsibility to my neighbors and I feel safe here knowing that others are looking out for us as well. So, if you do take a walk around the arroyo, and see us out in the back playing ping pong, tiki toss or splashing in the pool with Harley, we hope you'll say hello. Even if Harley beats you to it!



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Board Contact Information

Jesse Culty- President
602-882-9027 (call/text)

Michael Hinson - Vice President
206-913-9486 (call/text)

Jeremy Kuhn – Treasurer
602-677-4266 (call/text)

Daryl Davis-Ferra - Secretary
623-533-2282 (call/text)

Keith Kennedy – Director
602-809-2741 (call/text)



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Annual Picnic
Saturday, November 6

Annual Meeting
Saturday, January 22, 2022

Bulk Trash Pickup 2021
Hillcrest 9 falls in Area 11 (South of Bell Rd, North of Cactus Rd, between 12th and 24th Streets)

Placement begins on **April 24**
Collection begins on **May 3**

Placement begins on **July 24**
Collection begins on **August 2**

Placement begins on **October 23**
Collection begins on **November 1**

2021 HOA Board & Architectural Committee Meetings

HOA Board and Architectural Committee meetings are held at 5:00 p.m. at the Fountain of Life Church (in the foyer where Annual Meeting is held), 1055 E. Hearn Road. Virtual meeting connection via Zoom will be sent out via email to all members in advance of the meeting. We look forward to seeing/hearing you there!

Monday, March 1
Monday, April 5
Monday, May 3
Monday, June 7
Monday, July 5
Monday, August 2
Tuesday, September 7
Monday, October 4
Monday, November 1
Monday, December 6
Monday, January 3