



P.O. Box 280482
Lakewood, Co. 80228

Green Mountain Civic Association News

VOLUME 22 NO. 1

DECEMBER 2015

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To register: for
GMCA Bulletins
and news online, go
to:

About GMCA

The Green Mountain Civic Association (GMCA) is a state of Colorado certified non-profit community organization. **GMCA is not a homeowner's organization.** GMCA does not have any covenants or restrictions that homeowners must abide by. Instead, GMCA follows all city of Lakewood building, housing, parking and noise guidelines and restrictions.

The boundaries of our GMCA community are **both sides of our Alkire Street** from W Cedar Drive (on the north) to Alameda Parkway (on the south) and **all houses west of Alkire** "on the hill". This area is comprised of approximately 1,100 homes. **Anyone who lives in a home (owns or rents) within our boundaries is automatically a member of GMCA.**

Building and Maintaining Community Spirit

Because we live "on the hill" of Green Mountain, most of our area has restricted street access. This restricted access provides invisible security and implicitly makes our area a community. **The focus of our GMCA organization is to support and enhance the spirit and feeling of community and to protect property values.**

Activities of GMCA

Each year, GMCA sponsors and provides a wide range of community oriented activities. They include:

- Free Spring and Fall house and yard "Clean-up" days with free use of large capacity dumpsters.
- Free annual **Easter egg hunt** party for children with candies and toys (held at Foothills Park).
- Free annual catered **community picnic** with children's activities including games, face painting and a Jump House.
- Free annual neighborhood **garage sale with broad advertising and maps to all included sales.**
- Summer neighborhood **yard enhancement contest and awards.**
- **Winter** neighborhood **lighting contest.**
- "Adopt a Family" – support to neighborhood families who need holiday gifts, clothing, and food.
- A **comprehensive website** with an activities calendar, features and current "bulletin" email messages of significant neighborhood and community events (No advertising allowed).
- Significant support of our **local Foothills Elementary School, Dunstan Middle School, and Green Mountain High School.**
- Encouraging and Supporting Lakewood Police **Neighborhood Watch** blocks.
- Formed a **Parents Club** to organize children's play dates and activities.
- Are **Contacting and Welcoming** new residents.
- **COMING SOON: COMMUNITY GARDEN** at Foothills Elementary School!

Please Support GMCA – It's Your Community

All the above services are provided for the small **voluntary annual dues of only \$25.00 per year.**



www.greenmountainstates.org

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Board Meetings: ALL RESIDENTS are invited to attend the GMCA Board meetings, held at Green Mountain United Methodist Church (GMUMC), 12755 W. Cedar Drive. Guests are invited to speak first, if they choose to speak, and/or stay through the meeting. This is a way for you to meet your Board members and hear what is going on with your Association. In addition, all residents are invited and encouraged to participate in GMCA-sponsored activities!

2016 Scheduled Events for Green Mountain Civic Association

JANUARY	7th	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	GMUMC
MARCH	3rd 19th	Board Meeting Easter Egg Hunt	7:00 PM 11:00 AM	GMUMC Foothills Park
APRIL	7th	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	GMUMC
MAY	5th	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	GMUMC
JUNE	3rd & 4th 5th 11th	Garage Sale Days Entrance Signs Cleanup Spring Cleanup	8:00 am—5 pm 10:00 AM—Noon 8:00 AM—11:00 AM	All of Green Mtn Estates North and South entrances GMUMC Parking Lot
AUGUST	4th	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	GMUMC
SEPTEMBER	17th 18th	Fall Cleanup Entrance Sign Winterize	8:00—11:00 AM 10:00 AM	GMUMC Parking Lot North and South entrances
OCTOBER	6th	Annual Meeting	6:00 PM to introduce candidates 7:00 PM—GMCA meeting	GMUMC
NOVEMBER	3rd	Board Meeting—Elect Officers	7:00 PM	GMUMC
DECEMBER	1st	Board Meeting Newsletter Santa Visit Adopt-a-Family Holiday Lights	7:00 PM Last day of school before Winter Break	GMUMC Foothills Elementary

**You're a member of GMCA!
Be informed! Participate!**

2016 Membership Coupon

Dues are only \$25/year allowing neighborhood improvement and a voice in our community

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____
 Email Address: _____
 Address: _____

Yes! I want to keep Green Mountain Estates a Wonderful Place to Live

Check box to receive newsletters by email only. GO PAPERLESS!

Enclose your \$25 check to GMCA and mail to: GMCA, PO Box 280482, Lakewood, CO 80228
 or go to www.greenmountainstates.org to pay on-line

President's Message

We have had many homes in Green Mountain Estates with **For Sale** signs in the past few years. In 2014, there were 45 homes sold and so far in 2015, 40 homes have sold. I have had eight sell within three blocks of my house!

GMCA would love to encourage each new resident to visit our web site at www.greenmountainestates.org. See what we do! Become part of our association! One of our board members, Dave Murphy, spends hours keeping our website updated and informing us of anything new going on in our neighborhood, items of interest, area news. He does this by sending updated information called "Bulletins" through our emails and we would like to have your address. Your email is private and we do not share it with anyone! Welcome to Green Mountain Estates! It is a great place to live!

Our next exciting project that we are working on is our Community Garden! This garden will be at Foothills Elementary School and is right in our neighborhood (Ohio and Alkire). The site has been approved by Jefferson County and will be placed behind the school on the west side of the playground. We are working with Denver Urban Gardens to get this project started. Many of you have already volunteered to help with the garden. I will need every one of you to help make this happen. I am so excited to get started! If you have not volunteered yet and would like to, please email me at dirho@comcast.net or call me at 303-986-9400.

Thank you to all our board members and community for all you do to make Green Mountain Estates a great place to live!

Sincerely, Diane Rhodus

Welcome to the Neighborhood!

During this year (2015), we've welcomed 40 new households into Green Mountain Estates. This is about the same as 2014, when 45 homes were sold. Home prices also continued to rise in 2015. On average, homes have gained 9.6% in value in the last year. The average price of homes sold in 2015 was just under \$400,000, and the median price was similar at \$390,000. In 2014, those numbers were just over \$365,000 for the average, with \$341,500 being the median sold price.

It took an average of 21 days to contract in the last year (vs 39 days in 2014), and we too experienced the Spring and Summer frenzy of homes going under contract in a weekend. The typical seasonal slowing has begun, but buyers can still be seen throughout the neighborhood and at open houses. Even though a bit more inventory has come to market in the past two months, we're still seeing low inventory as levels remain well below the 6 month benchmark signaling a balanced market. Overall, an investment in Green Mountain Estates is a strong one.

Visit Our Website: www.GreenMountainEstates.org

Our website continued to grow in 2015. There are a lot of menu choices to explore. The most popular are the following.-

- The "**New Neighbors**" tab covers all of the topics we think are most important for new arrivals.
- All of our "**Events**" and "**Activities**" are detailed in their respective drop-down menus.
- The "**Our Neighborhood**" menu which covers topics like security, lost animals, snow removal and problem properties.
- The "**Our Mountain**" menu includes a trail map of Hayden Park, articles on the animals that visit us from their homes on the mountain, and a link to our neighbor-authored Green Mountain wildflower blog.
- There is a new menu item on the web site called "**Neighborhood Services**". It is an effort to make it easy for you to find the things that neighbors have brought to our attention from real estate agents and tree services to handymen and businesses owned by our neighbors. Take a look.
- The "**About GMCA**" tab includes the upcoming meeting agenda, our Bylaws, and recent financial statements. We, of course, have "**Contact**", "**Subscribe**" and "**Donate**" functions available on the website.
- "**Parents Club**" contains the contact information for our spin-off **Parents Club Mail List** and **Facebook** page.

How Did GMCA Come About?

It is our understanding (from some of the original residents living on Green Mountain) that our Civic Organization was originally formed to try to leverage the original developer of the area to install street lights on W Cedar Drive. Then, as the newly formed City of Lakewood was beginning to create building and other codes, problems arose that the residents opposed and our GMCA organization worked with the city to create sound, and reasonable, codes and guidelines.

Building and Maintaining Community Spirit

Because our area “on the hill”, with somewhat restricted access creates a somewhat unique area, it somewhat naturally forms a natural community. From the beginning of the area, **the focus** of our GMCA organization has been to **support and enhance the spirit and feeling of community**. A **secondary goal** has always been to both **enhance and protect property values**.

What is Your Vision and Desire For A Community?

Currently there are nine Board “Directors” who have, for many years, been doing almost all of the work of keeping this organization going and staffing each of the activities. Several of us are in our late 70’s and 80’s and eventually will not be able to continue keeping this organization going. **We want and need you!! Please Participate**

We Want to Hear from You!

There are 1,100 households within the GMCA boundaries. We know a good number of you, and, as our mission is to be a neighborhood resource, we want to know more of you. What are you looking for in a neighborhood association? What would you like to see more of? What would it take for you to stop by a meeting, or join us at our events? There’s no obligation, and we think you’ll find your experiences very rewarding. Thanks for your input – you are all part of what make this neighborhood a great place to live!

We Would Like Your Email Address

Why? What is the benefit to you? Answer: When we have your email address, **we can send flash bulletins to you.**

For example:

When a neighbor asks us to “**Please get the word out...**” about a ***mischievous or crime-related activity*** in our neighborhood or possibly an animal situation, we can alert you or suggest you prepare for it.

A second reason is **safety issues** of which we become aware. We are very happily repopulating our hill with new “little” people (kids). Take care; ***watch our driving speed; or look out for a particular violator.***

Third would be the **cry for help** in finding a lost pet. This doesn’t typically take any effort, just the standard watchfulness.

Last but not least, we might be **drawing your attention to news** described in short in the bulletin with a reference to the website for more details. This could be ***Lakewood events, GMCA events,*** or even a particularly ***beautiful property.*** Maybe even a ***GMCA board meeting.***

We try to write ***short, compact*** email bulletins so you can quickly determine if there is anything of interest in it for you. Check it, and in under 10 seconds you should either find something important or delete the email. Easy as that.

BUT it all comes about when we have your email address. Simply go to the website, GreenMountainEstates.org and hit the “**Subscribe to Bulletin**” menu item. **We NEVER share your email address. Period!! (And no advertising)!!**

Action by Association Neighbors

Recently, Lakewood City Council passed **restrictive marijuana residential growing codes** that radically limits the growing of marijuana within residential neighborhoods.

During the GMCA annual meeting at the end of 2014, we learned that a **medicinal marijuana “grow house” existed in our neighborhood** that followed the then current laws that allowed the cultivation of as many as 99 plants at one time. This residential “grow facility” utilized a covered outdoor swimming pool. Growing even half that many plants is more than a nuisance with **strong smells and significant amounts of foot traffic of back-pack carrying “delivery agents”** associated with such an operation.

What GMCA did: We invited **Lakewood’s Code Enforcement** and our **Police Liaison Officer to public meetings** to discuss this. And we **spoke directly with our Lakewood Ward 4 councilmen.** As a result, strong City codes were enacted because Lakewood City Council said **citizen input was overwhelming.** Strong measures were passed **limiting residential growth to 6 plants total and only indoors within the residential house structure.** **Enforcement clauses also exist.**

Our association can, and does, make a difference.

Parents Club

Our Parents Club, which formed in Spring of 2015, is off to a good start. We've had a few opportunities to meet one another at Foothills Park. The most recent event was at an Art Party at our neighborhood art studio, Little Red Hen Creative Studio. Several children ages 2 and up painted their own trees on canvas. It was a great space for an event, so stay tuned for a neighborhood Parent's event to be held there as well. Even if your schedule doesn't work with our get-togethers, our online forum has been useful for info ranging from local kid-friendly events, where to get swimming lessons, to growing raspberries on the hill. For an invitation, please send Lora.Koenig@gmail.com or Mary.Kealey@8z.com. All are welcome!

We're going to be working on History in 2016

A planned emphasis for 2016 will be our "History" collection. Because the website is a great place to permanently store information of interest to our neighbors, **history** is a perfect section.

The hill is seeing a good influx of new neighbors, and while that goes on, we will be trying to tap the knowledge of our long time neighbors to document our history. ANYBODY with pictures or stories, we'd love to post them in our online history files. Our guess is that our residential area started around 1960, about 55 years ago, and we would not want to lose forever our beginnings.

If you know some of our history or can refer us to someone else who lived "on the mountain" or in Lakewood as long time ago, please let us know. Call Carl Worster at 303-986-3605.

Watch for Children Playing in or Near our Streets!

Adopt-A-Family

During the holiday season, GMCA helps neighborhood families in need. Foothills Elementary School gives us a list of needy families. Consider adopting a family or donating to this very rewarding GMCA project. Contact Diane Rhodus for more information (303.986.9400)

Whiz Kids at Foothills Elementary

Our Foothills Elementary (located on Green Mountain near Alameda and West Ohio Ave) is in need of more tutors for the after school WHIZ KIDS program.

What is it?

WHIZ KIDS began in 1990 through the collaborative efforts of church, community, school and business leaders in Denver. Their desire was to bring resources into neighborhoods where there was a need to bridge the achievement gap. WHIZ KIDS began as a city-wide outreach by partnering suburban and urban churches with urban schools. This partnership led to one-on-one tutoring with elementary-age children. The result was a program called "Wise Guys," with three locations and 60 kids.

Eventually, the name was changed to WHIZ KIDS Tutoring and today, WHIZ KIDS is a 501 (c)3 non-profit with over 50 sites that serve more than 800 elementary and middle school students throughout the metro area. Our goal is to reach 1,000 kids annually by 2020.

Mission statement:

To reach children who fall below the literacy line and poverty line AND to serve them in the Spirit of Christ AND to ensure that no child misses the grace of God.

At our Foothills Elementary, the kids are from 1st grade to 6th. The Whiz Kids sessions are on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3:45 to 5:30. Usually about an hour or less of preparation a week beforehand gets you ready. Its a "faith based" group. So there's usually a biblical parable and quick prayer at the end at what they call "Club Time". Its optional and if the parents want to opt out their child they may, although I don't know that any did. I'm not very religious and was skeptical at first but have to admit I was won over because the "Christian" stuff was not heavy handed and overall I believe in the value to the kids. If the church is the only one doing it and it works for the kids, then it seems right to me.

The main emphasis is usually reading and math. They have lots of learning resources and help with lessons. Books, exercise materials and learning games are all provided for the appropriate grade levels. You may chose to assist either Tuesday or Thursday. That would be one day a week from about first week in October to second week in April. The days off are the same as the Jeffco Schools schedule. There are a couple of special events like a Sunday night at a Nuggets game and the Kids Rodeo at the Western Stock Show Arena.

If you like kids, like to see them smile and would like to help in a small but meaningful way to give them a boost in school and social achievement, then WHIZ KIDS should be for you. Check out the program at:

<http://www.whizkidstutoring.com/> .

We are always in need of more volunteers! You would help a child one-on-one with prepared lessons in reading, writing and math Tuesday and/or Thursday afternoons from 3:45 to 5:30. Please contact Linda Rickstrew at [303-204-3263](tel:303-204-3263) or Diane Rhodus at [303-986-9400](tel:303-986-9400)

The second best value for GMCA residents

The Federal Center to Union Station light rail puts the world of downtown Denver at your fingertips. With round trip tickets available for less than \$10 and senior and student fares half of that, a trip downtown is a simple and economical adventure. Recent fares allowed Nana, Papa and two grandkids to go to Denver for an outing for just \$16 total.

If you head west from Union Station, you can have a very nice walk "doing the bridges". The first crosses the railroad track for both the frequent freight trains and the light rail. The second bridge crosses the Platte River. And the third crosses the Valley Highway. The walk features Downtown residences, shops, parks and restaurants with the westernmost end of the walk ending in the Highlands neighborhood and the Little Big Man Ice Cream stand.

But that only describes one direction. You can visit the Union Station and the Crawford Hotel; take the free shuttle up 16th street to enjoy the city life, the Brown Palace and the State/City/County buildings; walk to Coors Stadium and the surrounding entertainment or shop Larimer Square. It's all good.

Getting downtown is so much easier (dare I say fun?) thanks to the light rail, especially for those of us who don't like to navigate the traffic or parking downtown. The **airport light rail** is scheduled to open in April will be so helpful now for travelers who live in or visit our area. It can be a tough commute to the airport in the winter or during rush hour, so this will go a long way to alleviate the stress of getting to the airport on time.

(What's the best value? Supporting GMCA and all the activities with your \$25.00 ANNUAL donation, of course.)

New to Lakewood Politics?

The City of Lakewood is divided into 5 Wards. Each Ward elects 2 representatives to the Lakewood City Council. The Mayor is elected at large from the entire city. The 10 representatives plus the mayor make up the Lakewood City Council. They, in turn, hire a city manager.

If you search Lakewood.org for the "Ward Map", you will see that our ward, Ward 4, is pretty large. Comparing it to the map for Green Mountain Civic Association, you will see that GMCA is perhaps 10% of the geography of Ward 4. That said, our association is very active with our city representatives on council, Police, Code Enforcement, Parks, Building, and other departments. We encourage all of our members to use Lakewood.org as a great resource to know what's up in the city.

By the way, Ward 4 councilors meet on the second Saturday of the month at the Green Mountain Presbyterian Church and the city council meets every other Monday and that meeting is even broadcast on the public service cable channel.

A Sad Cautionary Note

All of the benefits and services we try to provide for our community cost some amount of money. At the current rate of participation with barely 30% of the homes in Green Mountain Estates paying a mere \$25 per year, our treasury is being steadily depleted. If we don't have an improvement of income we will have to pare back on services and activities or increase "dues". The latter is not a viable proposal because its simply not fair for 2/3 of our residents to continue a "free ride" at the expense of the others. If you haven't contributed to GMCA recently, please do it this year.