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# Chronicle

Country Club Neighborhood Association

Lincoln, Nebraska • November 2010

## New Neighbors Polish Gem in Country Club page 3

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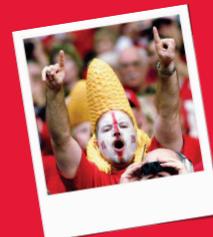
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# Feature Story

Country Club Chronicle

## New neighbors relish polishing their new gem in the Country Club

By Deena Winter

The first time Bev Wassung saw the house, she was not impressed. Her husband, Doug, had told her to check out the house in the Country Club Neighborhood, at 3170 Van Dorn Street.

After marrying five years ago, they lived in a duplex at 40th and Sheridan and were looking for a home in the Country Club area. They had both lived in new houses elsewhere in Lincoln, but gravitated toward historic Lincoln.

"You could build a new home but you don't have the trees, you don't have the established neighborhood," Bev says. They liked the peaceful, quiet, shaded streets.

He thought it was perfect; she disagreed. But this house -- looked like it needed more fixing than Bev had anticipated.

"I don't have any idea what he saw in it," she says. "I really couldn't see the potential."

It didn't have air conditioning. The floors were weathered from years of windows left open to

**During renovations, they found a newspaper from 1917 underneath a hardwood floor – so they figure that's the year the house was built – and have learned it is a Sears Craftsman home – one of many of the simple kit houses that were built in the neighborhood.**

the elements. Upstairs, four bedrooms had been converted into one. The bathroom was straight out of the 1950s. The windows were painted shut in eggshell blue. Only the kitchen was "livable," Bev says.

They bought it four years ago for \$159,000, and have since given it much more than a fresh coat of paint. They've replaced the gutters and eaves, installed air conditioning, put in 54 new storm windows, refinished the floors, built a retaining wall, put in new front porch, put up a fence, put in a new foyer, replaced all the wiring,

FEATURE STORY continued on page 14

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## A Message from FocalPoint Publishing

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Magazine content is provided by your neighborhood Homeowners Association Board. We welcome your thoughts and input, and appreciate new ideas for stories, recipes, holiday traditions, arts and crafts and other topics you would like to see featured. We aim to provide information that is useful and relevant to you, so your feedback is important. Please email [designer@fppub.com](mailto:designer@fppub.com) to submit your idea for the next publication!

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## President's Message



As the new president in CCNA, I thought I would pass on the experience of my first meeting. It was early in the 1990s and as I was driving home from work down 27th Street, there was yellow caution tape strung on the trees from South Street to Calvert.

The newspaper had written a story about how the neighborhood association had put up the tape to alert people about a proposal that would have taken out hundreds of trees along the street and pushed the road right up to the doorstep of many homes. We had a couple of young kids then, and I asked my wife, Donna, if it'd work out to go to the neighborhood meeting that night. That meeting turned into the first of many.

The meeting was at St Matthews Church. I had expected a larger group but only about ten were there. Hal and Bobbie Allan, Linda Wibbels and Jonathan Cook were there. The one person I did recognize was Vivian Whipp. Vivian had worked with Donna at the downtown Miller & Paine. Vivian had been the treasurer for CCNA for about five years and I was the fresh face at the meeting.

I learned that the by-laws then limited officers to five years of service and that that Vivian had been treasurer for about six. Shortly thereafter, I was named treasurer of CCNA.

I've watched a number of presidents serve CCNA and each has made quite a contribution to the neighborhood. The Country Club has been our home since 1985. It is a beautiful, safe and walkable neighborhood. Our kids have gone to and go to the schools in the neighborhood. Bike trails, neighborhood shops and close proximity to the downtown make the Country Club a special place.

Earlier this year, Paul Vaccaro was voted in as president. In Paul's short tenure he established a system of committees for the neighborhood: Activities & Special Events, Special Projects & Beautification, Communications & Membership and the Community Relations Committee. As you read the newsletter, we hope to keep the neighborhood informed of their activities and accessible to input from our neighbors.

Some time back, Bob Beecham stopped by. Bob was president prior to Paul. Bob dropped off a number of CCNA presidential items that have been passed down from president to president over the years. Among them was a large roll of yellow caution tape. I'll keep that around for the next president.

## Give Art for the Holidays



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# Country Club

Neighborhood Association

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Dan Marvin, 2523 Woods Blvd.  
dmarvin@neb.rr.com

### Vice President

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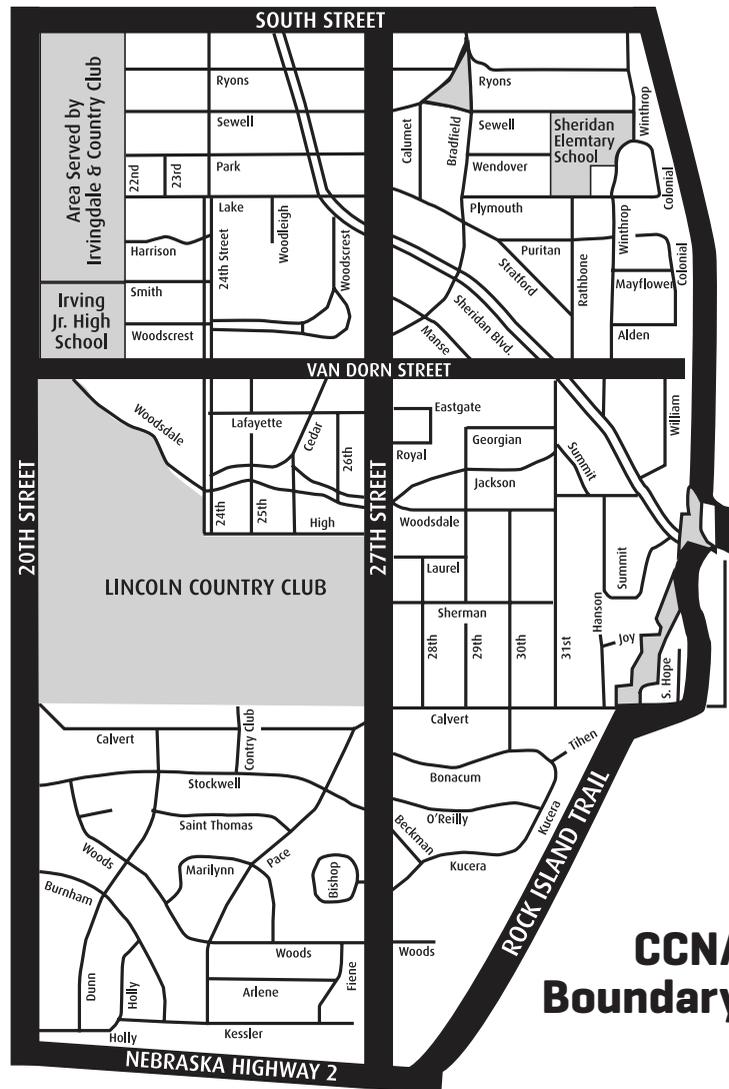
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## Thank you for serving your neighborhood!

### CCNA Chronicle Publishing Schedule

February, May, August, November

The CCNA Chronicle is the official publication of the Country Club Neighborhood Association (CCNA). The CCNA Chronicle is published four times a year by the CCNA and every address in the CCNA boundaries is mailed a copy. Statements of fact and opinion made are the responsibility of the authors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of the officers or members of CCNA. While this publication makes a reasonable effort to establish the integrity of its advertisers, it does not specifically endorse advertised products or services unless specifically stated as such. All correspondence regarding this publication should be directed to: Country Club Neighborhood Association, Attn: CHRONICLE Editor, PO Box 21953, Lincoln, NE 68542.



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# Committee Reports

## Community Relations Committee

by Sue Van Horn

From the mayor's roundtable meeting... besides the mayor urging support for the city charter issue on the ballot that would allow biennial budgeting, the entire meeting was spent presenting the study currently being done on the Antelope Creek watershed, specifically that part that exists from the old State Fairgrounds to Highway 2. This area includes 48,000 residents of which CCNA is a part. Information was presented by Ed Kouma of the watershed management office.

As consultants have walked this area, they have determined that there are 196 places from which water flows into Antelope Creek, only 17 of which are "dry weather" flows, meaning they are constant and not run-off. The mantra for run-off control is "Slow it down, Spread it out, Soak it up." Neighborhoods can help in the effort by using rain barrels and rain gardens, cleaning up our property's curb gutters, sidewalks and driveways, and cleaning up our backyard pet waste frequently.

For those interested in the concept of a rain garden (a planned landscape area to slow rain run-off), the city is now sponsoring a 50/50 cost share to install one. Up to \$1000 can be re-imbursed.

## Membership and Communications

by Alice Epstein and Will Stahn

The Membership and Communications Committee is cochaired by Will Stahn and Alice Epstein. Members include Shelby Byler, Steven Haudrich, and Bryan Sypal.

We meet on a monthly basis. We have worked to welcome new neighbors who have moved into the Country Club

Neighborhood by going to their homes with a welcome packet. So far, we have visited 41 new neighbors.

Will has redeveloped and maintained a database of the membership of CCNA. The database also records member interests in participating in committee work. To date, we

have over 600 members. We will redesign the next membership form that is sent out in January to reflect the five committees that have now been formed. Emails of the chairs of these committees will be indicated so members can contact chairs directly.

An editor of the Chronicle was needed so this Committee has recommended and the board has approved Deena Winter as the new editor.

The board and membership will still be responsible with ideas and providing information for articles but Deena will edit, make contacts with members about articles and assist Focal Point in the layout of the Chronicle. Deena formerly worked for the Lincoln Journal Star for nearly six years before leaving to do freelance writing. We welcome her to her new position. Steve continues to update CCNA's web and Facebook pages.

## Social Activities Committee

by Kay Maxwell

Our first project was Back to School Night to introduce the Country Club Neighborhood Association to the parents of young students at Sheridan, Beattie and Rousseau elementary schools.

Glow bracelets were given to the students as they left their school room visit. Due to construction at Rousseau, we did not have our Back to School Night, but we will be at their Fun Night later in the school year.

The committee is focusing on the Spring Home Tour, which will be the big event of the year. We will need more volunteers to make this the success it has been in the past. The homes have not been chosen and we would appreciate any suggestions.

Several things are on the back burner. A Valentines Dance in February; small special interest groups such as a bridge club; a book club; a gourmet dining club; a singles group; a hobbies group. We are sending out feelers to see if there is any interest. If you have any interest in any of these groups or you have an idea for some other group, please call Kay Maxwell at 475-3613.

Committee members are: Kay Maxwell, Joyce Norris, Lisa Sypal and Kathy Beecham.

## Webmaster Report

by Stephen Haudrich

In the month ending October 10, 2010 we had 55 visits to our website from 46 unique users. I continue to slowly add business cards to the BizLinc section as memberships trickle in. If you ever are in need of services in the neighborhood, either your home or business, consider browsing the business card section of the website. With 77 cards posted, you are likely to find what you need among our own membership. And please be sure to enclose a business card when you renew your membership for 2011. One card is free for each member.



We are up to 24 members in our facebook group. That is nearly double what we had prior to the last edition of the Chronicle. For those interested in joining, please visit our website at ccnalinc.org. A link to the facebook group is conveniently located on the index page there. Thus far, I am using the facebook group to remind members of current events, but you are free to post your thoughts about our neighborhood or organization or any other topics of interest.

As ever, if you have any suggestions or comments about the website or facebook group, do not hesitate to contact me at haudrich@pol.net.

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## Holiday benefit for Matt Talbot Sunday November 14, 2-4 p.m. At the Home of BJ and Doni Hirt

BJ and Doni Hirt are hosting a Holiday Benefit for Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach on Sunday Nov. 14 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at their home, which is located at 2330 Woodscrest Ave.

They will be offering a home tour featuring antiques, a silent auction on several items including a 1800s One Horse Open Sleigh, the sale of fresh greenery and boughs and coffee and cookies. Tickets are available in advance or at the door. All proceeds will go to Matt Talbot's Witness to HOPE campaign.

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## What to do about problem properties

by Peter Frazier-Koontz

The vast majority of property owners in the Country Club Neighborhood take pride in the appearance and upkeep of their homes. However, from time to time, homes begin to fall into disrepair and the property begins to impact on the value of nearby homes and on the peace of mind of their owners.

Property neglect can have various causes. Sometimes, it may be due to factors outside the control of the owner, such as an aging neighbor who is no longer physically able to maintain the property. Unfortunately, there are other times when the neglect is fully within the owner's control, such as when a property is owned by an absentee landlord who lets the house sit empty, sometimes for 25 years or longer. Vacant houses can quickly fall into extreme disrepair, a distressing situation for those who have to look at them every day. In addition, vacant houses attract squatters and crime—two things we all need to be concerned about. Other owners seem to love to collect clutter, add to it often, and

**A new city ordinance requires an inspection at the landowner's expense if code violations are found. The property is then automatically re-inspected at six month intervals and the owner is subject to fines and must pay the cost of each additional inspection.**

let it sit for years, refusing to clean things up. Again, these properties take a toll on neighbors who must constantly see them, cause declining property values, and attract pests such as vermin and insects.

A new city ordinance requires an inspection at the landowner's expense if code violations are found. The property is then automatically re-inspected at six month intervals and the owner is subject to fines and must pay the cost of each additional inspection. If the owner fails to comply with orders to remove the clutter or repair the property, the city can take action in civil court. Complaints about clutter or structural code violations can be submitted to John Boies at the Lincoln Building and Safety Office (441-7521).

The CCNA Community Relations Committee has been actively involved in working with concerned neighbors, the Lincoln Policy Network, the Building and Safety Department and representatives from the mayor's office in addressing this problem in the Country Club Neighborhood. We are aware that for those neighbors living close to neglected properties, patience is wearing thin because of years of attempting to bring about changes with little result.

We are hopeful that the steps that the city is taking now will lead to much needed improvement in the speed in which these issues are addressed.

For information about specific properties or for assistance in dealing with problem properties in the Country Club Neighborhood, e-mail Peter Frazier-Koontz at peterfraz@neb.rr.com.

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## Bodhi Imports Features Art and Handicrafts From Both Nearby and Around the World

article courtesy [starcityblog.com](http://starcityblog.com)

If Jennifer Bratcher's car hadn't broken down one June night, she'd never be the owner of Bodhi Imports.

For more than ten months, Bratcher had worked at the import store, located at 1645 S. 17th St. All the while the store had been for sale, but she didn't have the funds to purchase it — or a business background.

The store was floundering, and Bratcher quit; one day, when she was lugging her hand-made clothes to sell at Jazz in June, her car broke down right beside Bodhi Imports. She went back the next day to collect her car, and the then-owner of the store offered her a deal she couldn't refuse. They shook hands, and Bodhi has been Bratcher's ever since.

A lot has changed in the five years Bratcher has owned the store.

"At first, I had to be conservative with the inventory," she said. "I couldn't hire any help. I worked around the clock and had my babies with me at work."

Now Bratcher has the freedom to purchase what she wants where she wants. She travels to exotic locales to pick up the intricate woodcarvings, garden statuary made of black stone, colorful clothes, furniture, and tapestries. The store carries items from all over the world, including Tibet, Nepal, India, Thailand, Indonesia, Chile and Peru; Nag Champa incense come from India, while Shoyeido incense are Japanese. Colorful woven wallets are crafted in Guatemala.

She went to Indonesia a couple of months ago.

"I love Indonesia. This is the fourth time we've been there," Bratcher said. "The last time we took the kiddos — I wondered what I was doing, taking the kids on a 28-hour plane ride, but they were fantastic, they were so good."

"We've been there long enough to feel comfortable there. Now we can take an idea to the artisans and they can use our designs and ideas. If we want to put the om symbol on a piece, they can. We also designed a layered, family-tree wood carving."

On the island, Bratcher now has enough connections to freely purchase what she wants. She makes a deposit from 50 to 100 percent, depending on how well she knows the artists, then

brings her receipts to the shippers. Within ten weeks or so, the art objects from across the world are arranged in the store on 17th Street. But Bratcher's also committed to featuring the work of local artists, including jewelry (paper bead jewelry, gemstone, hemp and feather earrings), CDs by Nebraska musicians, candles, soaps, knit/crocheted hats and mittens and tie-dye clothing.

Crystals and geodes are also a source of inspiration to Bratcher.

"I love the rocks," she said. "It's one of my favorite parts of the store. It's something that comes out of the earth that's made its way to our store. And the stones bring great happiness to people. I hand pick each stone, each piece of calcite, each geode. I don't just go and pick a huge amount. Each stone has to be special."

Just as each stone is special, Bratcher said she views each customer who walks through the store as unique. Bodhi Imports attracts a wide array of people — men and women, teenagers and kids.

One loyal customer is Tim Pickrel, 53, of Lincoln. He said he frequently shops at Bodhi Imports for the stones.

"I come to Bodhi as often as I can," he said, holding out a small pyramid amethyst. "I find stones here that will relate to me, stones that open my mind and work on my intellect and stones that bring love into my life — sometimes I'm drawn to a shape or some other property in a stone. This is a great store to come down to. I've never seen so many stones in one shop."

Bratcher said she's committed to making the store available to everyone. Although some of the stone statues can sell for as much as \$200, there are strings of beads to be purchased for \$1 and "evil eye" charms for \$2.50. Slices of decorative soaps with ladybug, rainbow and smiley-faced patterns sell for \$6.50.

"I have people who shop for the whole family for Christmas for \$10," she said. "Everyone is welcome here. We want every person to feel valued."

Although it is sometimes hard to balance everything — family, kids, work — Bratcher said she has found great joy in running the store, and in the camaraderie of the four employees she's hired (they share lunch together most days).

"When I was in Colorado at the gem show last week, I saw a heart stone," she said. "For some reason I just felt I should purchase it. I don't know why. The next day, a woman held it in her hand, and felt that she just had to have it."

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We are creating a new neighborhood snapshot page and we need your help!

Beginning in February, look for photos of your friends and neighbors to be featured in this magazine. Each issue will have a theme and we're asking for you to send us your family photos that relate to the theme.

The theme for this issue is **"Husker Fanatics."**

Take a picture of you, your friends or your neighbors in your Husker gear and send it to photos@fppub.com [make sure you include "Indian Village" in the subject line]. It could be at a tailgate party, a watch party, or cheering in the stadium.

Each person who submits a photo will be entered into a drawing for a **\$25 gift card to Texas Roadhouse.**

The winner will be announced on the February snapshot page.

The submission deadline for this issue's contest is **January 15th, 2010.**



## Select the BEST Christmas Lights for Your Display This Holiday Season

The smell of Christmas cookies, garland, sight of the great Christmas tree and the sound of Christmas carols serenading us are signs that Christmas season is coming near. Households are getting busy with all the preparation for this special time of the year.

Decorating the house is one of the hardest things to do and being creative is the key for a successful Christmas decoration. Using Christmas lights can brighten your home and make your Christmas decoration more lively which is the true meaning of the season. This holiday season should be a joyous time to share with your loved ones.

In this season you can find many types of decorative Christmas lights in many home improvement centers. You can find icicle lights, the conventional mini lights and mesh style lights that are used to wrap around a tree trunk.

There are also many colors available that will suite your taste from clear white to colored bulbs and those that blink, chase and stay lit. The right decoration and style of home will depend on your taste and what look you want. It also depends on how much you want to spend on your Christmas lights and other decorations.

Nowadays mini lights are more popular because of their power, inexpensive cost and also because of their tiny lights unlike a C-9" and C-7" that have 5 to 10 watts similar to the bulbs of those conventional ones. They also consume a lot of energy because their bulbs turn very hot when used for a long time unlike the mini light's 1.5 or 2.5 volt bulbs. In other aspects C-9" and C-7" are more reliable when it comes to durability

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS STORY continued on page 17

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## Lincoln No. 3 on the list of perfect spots for young families

article courtesy journalstar.com

A new survey by Parents magazine lists Lincoln as the third best city in the country to raise a baby.

What makes Lincoln great? Top cities were ones that combined affordable housing, safety, good neighbors, access to pediatricians and babysitters and plenty of baby swings at the park.

The first-ever survey by Parents found that Scottsdale, Az. was the best place for young families, followed by Fort Wayne, Ind., and then Lincoln.

Parents found that Lincoln is a breath of fresh air, literally. It was the only city in the survey not to exceed the ozone or particle pollution thresholds on any day in 2009. Healthy air adds up to a lower rate of childhood asthma, according to Parents. The survey gave Lincoln the following grades:

Child care, A-  
Family safety, B-  
Fun for you and baby, A+  
Infant health, B-  
Money matters, B+

"Babies aren't fussy about their zip code. But for moms and dads, their hometown during those important early years of parenthood can make a big difference in quality of life," said Dana Points, editor in chief of Parents.

Other cities rounding out the top 10 are: Pittsburgh, Pa.; Portland, Ore.; Madison, Wisc.; Phoenix, Az.; St. Paul, Minn.; Oklahoma City, Okla.; and Boston, Mass.

Omaha ranked 12th overall.

To conduct the survey, Parents used U.S. Census information to assemble an initial list of the 100 most populated U.S. cities. Each city was then assessed using 35 predetermined factors pediatricians, child development experts and mommy bloggers said young families should consider when deciding where to live. The magazine then contacted government sources and non-profit organizations and conducted independent reporting to obtain the data for each city. The overall rankings represent how well the cities met the magazine's family-friendly criteria.

## Fruit-at-the-bottom Yogurt Pops

Makes 4 4-ounce yogurt pops

Creamy, vanilla-y and with a fun fruit surprise at the bottom, you won't believe this is yogurt.

2 cups plain yogurt  
¼ cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla  
24 frozen raspberries (see note)

In a medium bowl, whisk together yogurt, sugar and vanilla. Pour into the ice-pop molds only until 2/3 full. Now add the raspberries, gently pushing them down into the yogurt mixture. Make sure there's enough yogurt mixture to "hold" the raspberries and that it comes all the way up to the top (if it doesn't, just spoon a little more yogurt mixture into the mold). Slide into the freezer for a few hours. *Note: You may use any fruit that you like, but blackberries, blueberries and small strawberries work best because you don't need to cut them up.* Nutrition per yogurt pop: 141 calories, 2 g fat, 24 g carbohydrates, 7 g protein, 7 mg cholesterol, 86 mg sodium, 2 g dietary fiber, 13 percent of calories from fat.

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## St. Michael's Parish Hosts Holiday Tour of Homes

St. Michael's Parish invites you to attend their 1st Annual Holiday Tour of Homes on December 2nd, from 5 – 8:30 pm.

The tour will include four featured homes in the Wilderness Ridge Area, as well as holiday refreshments, carolers, and a string ensemble.

There are four Wilderness Ridge families that are generously opening their homes to guests for the evening. One of the featured homes, 9340 Whispering Wind Road, is owned by Jeffrey and Gail Keown. Guests will notice immediately that Christmas is a time of tradition for this family. The centerpiece of their decorations is a 12' Christmas tree that showcases ornaments that have been collected over the years. A nativity scene nestles next to the tree. Throughout the house red poinsettias are used to create a festive atmosphere. The dining room features a snow village to reflect childhood memories of living in a small rural community and a table set with china that has been used by several generations of family members. Roofline lights will welcome visitors to the home and reflect the joy of the season.

### Home Locations:

- 1) 9340 Whispering Wind Road
- 2) 9551 Wildfire Circle
- 3) 9435 Hollow Treet Court
- 4) 9543 Hollow Tree Place

The second home on the tour, 9551 Wildfire Circle, is the home of Caroline and Butch Hug. Visitors will be sure to notice the holiday elegance spread throughout the home. The formal dining room showcases the family's holiday "Christmas Tree" pattern dishes by Spode, while the great room features an elegant Christmas tree decorated with memorable ornaments from the family's travels. The family room includes stockings which are hung over the glass tile fireplace, and a second family Christmas tree reflects holiday memories made over the years. Christmas villages can be seen throughout the house. The Hug's village collection started from a single purchase of a Dickens village piece, and has expanded of the years.

The third home on the tour, 9435 Hollow Tree Court, was built in 2004 and is owned by Kathy and Blake Collingsworth. This is the family's second home in the Wilderness Ridge neighborhood. Located on the 9th and 10th hole, they are now living in what they once envisioned as their dream house. Kathy and Blake both come from large families, and it was important to them to build a home in which they had room for all of their family to gather together. You will notice the large kitchen includes ample space to accommodate large groups. Blake and Kathy tragically lost their son Joshua in a drowning accident two years ago, and have dedicated their lives to try and save the lives of children through early education and water awareness. With the ongoing support and love from their family, friends, neighbors, and community, they welcome you to enjoy their home this holiday season.

The final home on the tour, 9543 Hollow Tree Place, is owned by



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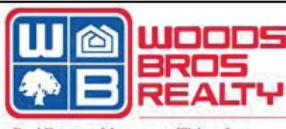


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Paul and Concetta Black. During the holiday season, they showcase the Christmas decorations that have been collected over their 31 years of marriage and various travels. The Christmas tree, located in the upper family room, features Angela, a homemade angel that Paul and Concetta made 31 years ago. The fireplace garland includes a set of Santas that were passed down from grandparents to grandchildren. The lower family room features a tree decorated with traditional ornaments. Look closely and you will find a wedding picture of Paul and Concetta, as well as pictures of their children throughout the years.

Tickets for the Holiday Tour of Homes are \$10 each, and can be purchased by contacting Pat at 327-8761, or via email at [christmasholiday-homes@gmail.com](mailto:christmasholiday-homes@gmail.com).

*Special Thanks to Saint Elizabeth Hospital for sponsoring this event.*

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## 2010 YMCA Turkey Trot Nov 25 Benefits the Strong Kids Campaign

The 2010 YMCA Turkey Trot will be on Thursday, November 25th at the Cooper YMCA. This event includes a 5K, Turkey Leg 3 X 1 Relay and 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk. Bring the whole family out for a great time benefiting a great cause, the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign. Race Prizes, Door prizes, Costume Contest, Relay Team "Baton Design" Contest and more!!

The first male and first female to cross the finish line of the 5K will each receive a frozen turkey, courtesy of Super Saver. Every registered child who participates in any of the races will receive a finisher's ribbon! The 1-Mile Run/Walk Begins at 8:00 AM with the 5K and 5K Relay following at 8:30 AM. To register, visit the Lincoln YMCA website at [www.ymcocalincn.org](http://www.ymcocalincn.org). Deadline for registration is Friday, November 19th.

## Lincoln Safari back for 4th year under new name

article courtesy [journalstar.com](http://journalstar.com)

Lincoln Safari is coming back for an encore.

In February, organizers of Lincoln Safari – in which families go on an outdoor treasure hunt and learn about their environment --announced that 2010 would be the last year for the popular event. By then, 36,100 people had taken part in Lincoln Safari.

"We thought it would be the last year," said Nancy Furman, director of the Pioneers Park Nature Center.

But thanks to some grants and funds from Healthy Families Play Outside Partnership, Lincoln Safari will be back for a fourth year, Furman said Thursday.

Healthy Families Play Outside Partnership is a local organization that encourages families to get outside and explore the city's parks and other outside spaces as a way to increase their physical activity and learn about the environment.

Organizers also have given the event a new name: "Safari Advanced."

Furman said they chose the name because there will be more "rubbing" posts than in the past and participants will get the opportunity to go farther afield in their search for those posts.

"Some of the places will be in some of the state parks which are 30 to 40 miles outside of Lincoln," she said.

Here's how it works: Families can sign up for "Safari Advanced" at any public library, free of charge. They will get a book with instructions and a map. The book will contain descriptions of each place and how to participate in activities at that location. Families are encouraged to take photographs, write in a journal or make drawings.

Safari Advanced begins Jan. 1 and ends Dec. 31.

Organizers announced the event Thursday at the Pioneers Park Nature Center. Hayrack rides and campfire activities were offered to about 250 participants who signed up early.

Aimee Johns, education director with the Lincoln Children's Zoo, said Thursday's event was billed as a celebration of the three-year history of Lincoln Safari and the announcement of a fourth year was a surprise.

The zoo, the principal sponsor of Lincoln Safari for the first three years, will remain a partner, Johns said. However, principal funding for the fourth year will come from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District.

"The whole impetus for this is to get families outside to enjoy nature," Furman said.

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**FEATURE STORY** continued from page 3

remodeled a bathroom and installed sod, underground sprinklers and landscaping.

Doug fell through the rafters twice while pulling nails in the gutted upstairs bathroom.

And they're not done yet.

"It's still a work in progress," Bev says. "A lot of work."

Particularly upstairs – which they've converted back into four bedrooms. They also plan to renovate the kitchen and garage, expanding it and connecting it to the house.

During renovations, they found a newspaper from 1917 underneath a hardwood floor – so they figure that's the year the house was built – and have learned it is a Sears Craftsman home – one of many of the simple kit houses that were built in the neighborhood.

Doug said initially they thought it might be a good house to "flip" (fix up and sell for a profit), but they've changed their minds and plan to stay put.

"The longer we're there, the more we love our home," Doug says.

Their house has become a magnet for their children and grandchildren.

"Everyone has everything here now," says Bev's daughter, Aubrey Kuchta. Including what is becoming an annual tradition: a parade of costumed kids down Sheridan Boulevard during a Halloween themed birthday party.

"We love it here," Doug said.



## Don't Be a Victim of Burglary This Holiday Season

*News from the Lincoln Police Department*

The number of residential burglaries has gone down by about 17% when compared to the previous year but in February there was an upswing in how many reports the police department received. A number of the most recent burglaries to homes occurred during the daytime hours when residents were away from their house. LPD would really like to increase the level of awareness in neighborhoods and emphasize that residents be alert to suspicious people or behavior in their area. We would also like neighbors to focus on watching out for each other by communicating with one another and keeping an eye out for everyone's property. Garage doors left up, entry doors left unlocked and property left out unsecured continue to be the main targets for the burglars and thieves.



By following some simple rules, you can reduce your chances of being the victim of a crime:

- Lock your doors! Unlocked doors are an invitation for a thief to commit a crime.
- Draw your shades at night, and leave a few lights on if you are going to be gone.
- Keep valuables out of sight. Close the curtains so that you can't see the Christmas tree with all the presents underneath it.
- It's a bad idea to hide presents in your garage. Garage locks are usually the weakest locks you have.
- Keep in mind that thieves and burglars have been known to follow delivery trucks as they leave packages on doorsteps. Try to make arrangements to have boxes delivered to a neighbor if you think you won't be home when they come.
- Ask for identification from all repair persons or any non-uniformed police officer. Call to confirm their employment if you are uncertain.
- Never park in an unlit lot, no matter how convenient, and shop before dark if possible or go with a friend. Always lock your car and close the windows.
- Keep store packages in the trunk so they are out of view. You don't want to leave them in the seat, tempting potential thieves. Also, avoid setting packages on the ground as you get into your car.
- To discourage purse snatchers, don't carry too many bags at one time. You don't want to appear overburdened and look like an easy victim.
- If your home has been broken into, don't go in. Call the police from a nearby phone and wait for them to arrive.

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## Energy-Saving Tips For Winter

### Home Improvements

Adjust your humidity. A well-humidified house at 68 degrees Fahrenheit is as comfortable as a dry house at 75 degrees. Aquariums and house plants can add humidity.

Insulate your attic with a minimum of 6-12 inches of insulation.

If you have an older home or office, consider replacing older windows that allow air drafts. If that's too expensive, consider initially replacing the draftiest windows first.

Install weather-stripping along cracks located at windows and doors.

Install water flow restrictors and aerators. There are different types of flow restrictors for showerheads and aerators for other faucets.

### Maintenance

Close any openings, such as fireplace dampers, when they're not in use.

Clean your furnace filter (monthly is a recommended practice) and follow any other routine maintenance procedures described in the owner's manual.

Prior to the start of the heating season each year, have a professional check your furnace. A professional can keep your furnace operating efficiently as well as spot and correct any potential safety problems.

Keep radiator surfaces clean. Like anything else, a radiator works better when it's cleaner. Try to avoid painting your radiator, too. If your radiator is against an exterior wall, put aluminum foil behind the radiator to reflect heat back into the room.

### Living Habits

Adjust your thermostat in the morning and evening. If you don't have a clock thermostat, at least turn down your thermostat regularly. Set it at about 68 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and 55 degrees at night.

Dress warmly in your home. Wearing sweaters or other warm clothes at home can really help.

## Resident Business Listing

Introducing the Resident Business Listing - available to Country Club residents only! Advertise your business and expertise to your neighbors!

Listing includes your business contact information for up to five lines. \$10 per issue or \$28 for 4 issues. Contact Melissa Person at [melissa.person@fppub.com](mailto:melissa.person@fppub.com) or at 202-7435 to sign up!

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**CHRISTMAS LIGHTS STORY** continued from page 10

and reliability. When a bulb is missing, broken or twisted, all bulbs on the string will not work. A C-9" and C-7" will continue to operate when a bulb is broken.

It is most convenient to look for light strings that have male and female receptacles in both ends. In this way it is easier to route because you can plug two strings from end to end.

In the case of a mini light, it is better to choose strings that have 50 bulbs than those with 100 to 200 bulbs because you can replace a string when defective or not working well. Regardless of what kind of Christmas lights you'll choose, remember to go for those that are UL-approved and take extra care on manufacturer's directions on the package.

Here are some creative tips on how you can hang Christmas lights:

1. Find a suitable electrical receptacle for the lights and use a heavy duty extension cords that are 120-volt electrical outlet and protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter. Use a controlled switch outlet with an automatic

timer that turns on at dusk and turns off late night.

2. Use a long measuring tape, measure the length of the house from the ground and its height or trees and bushes you intend to put your lights on. Measure the needed length of strings that you need to use.

3. Before plugging your Christmas lights visually observe and inspect

them for broken bulbs and defective wires. If there are broken bulbs, replace them with new ones. Remember to use safety gloves and long-nose pliers when pulling out a bulb. After replacing the bulbs you can now plug them and test the string again. If the string didn't work, check if the fuse had blown.

4. Use a step ladder if your home's eaves are low or you may also use an extension ladder. Remember to place it firmly on the ground and against the eaves so that it will be sturdy and can support your weight.

5. Hang the lights along the eaves and use plastic clips, these clips grip gutters and have a hook that holds a light string or a wire.

6. When attaching light strings to a window trim or any other vertical places, remember to use plastic clips that have screws and put them 12 inches apart. Do not use nails and staples because it can harm the wires which might cause electrical hazards.

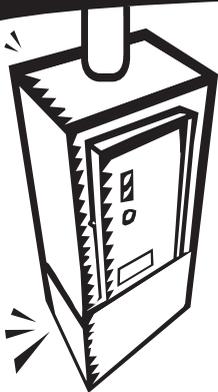
Christmas is a time to shine. Make sure to be creative when choosing and decorating your Christmas lights. Make sure to fill your home with Christmas lights and make it the shiniest home around your community.

*Dave Poon is an accomplished writer who specializes in the latest in Christmas Decorations. For more information regarding Christmas Lights, visit <http://www.christmasworldbest.com>.*



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## Energy Efficiency: Audits can determine where your home is losing energy

Every year, just when it starts to get cold, homeowners start to think about staying warm.

Jay Stoa knows this because he is the Lincoln Electric System energy services representative - aka "the audit guy."

Stoa walks into a house -- new or old -- and knows how to spot leaky windows, open fireplace dampers and under-insulated attics quicker than a snowstorm can blow up over the Plains.

It's the thought of snow, after all, that gets homeowners in energy-saving mode.

"When the first high bills go out, my phone starts to ring," Stoa said.

Since last January, Stoa and others in his department have done about 165 energy audits. There is no charge for this LES service, but the audit is only the first step, said Marc Shkolnick, manager of LES energy services. "The customer needs to take the initiative after that."

Stoa's audits usually include the obvious, but sometimes it doesn't seem so obvious, he said.

For instance, one woman had her fireplace damper wide open in the winter, Stoa said. She admitted she hadn't had a fire in the fireplace in the past two years. "That is like leaving a window wide open," he said.

Every house is different, but some problem spots are predictable, Shkolnick said. Depending on the age of the home, attic insulation, window caulking, weatherstripping and thermostat setbacks are easy fixes.

"It's about what you can do to improve deficiencies," he said.

Stoa's No. 1 easy energy tip is to check and regularly replace furnace filters.

"We have been in between the air conditioning season and the heat system, so this is a great time to check on filters," he said.

Stoa works to educate consumers in all kinds of ways. Go to the LES website, [www.les.com](http://www.les.com), and click on "home" to find dozens of tips for energy savings. There are also YouTube videos starring Stoa. The two-minute clips feature Stoa in a handyman persona, and he actually walks you through the process of easy fixes.

There also are some energy myths that need to be clarified. For instance, electric space heaters won't save you money unless they are in a small area and you aren't expending your regular heat source.

And if you have a heat pump, don't set back the thermostat 10 degrees during the day. A two- to four-degree setback is actually more energy efficient in that case, Stoa said.

Early next year, LES will launch an e-newsletter on energy efficiency, Shkolnick said. The company also is working to include information on whom to contact to take care of deficiencies.

"Now homeowners are kind of left on their own," he said. "We'd like it to be more convenient."

## Did You Know?

Though many competing claims exist, the most familiar story of the first Thanksgiving took place in Plymouth Colony, in present-day Massachusetts, in 1621. More than 200 years later,

President Abraham Lincoln declared the final Thursday in November as a national day of thanksgiving. Congress finally made Thanksgiving Day an official national holiday in 1941.

Sarah Josepha Hale, the enormously influential maga-

zine editor and author who waged a tireless campaign to make Thanksgiving a national holiday in the mid-19th century, was also the author of the classic nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

In 2001, the U.S. Postal

Service issued a commemorative Thanksgiving stamp. Designed by the artist Margaret Cusack in a style resembling traditional folk-art needlework, it depicted a cornucopia overflowing with fruits and vegetables, under the phrase "We Give Thanks."

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# Chronicle

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