



# The Polaris Beacon



Star Valley Estates Newsletter  
July 2012

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A publication of the Star Valley Estates Home Owners Association Webpage: [www.starvalleyestates.org](http://www.starvalleyestates.org)  
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## Next Meeting

Thursday, July 12, 2012  
6:30 pm  
Ryan Airfield Conf. Room

## Meeting Schedule Set for The remainder of 2012 Please Mark your Calendar

The normal starting time of 6:30 pm may vary and will be announced prior to each meeting:

2012: July 12 September 13  
November 8

## Distribution of Credits to Homeowners

It was announced in the May Polaris Beacon that excess funds that had been set aside to cover expenses associated with the maintenance of the Common Area would be returned to our HOA membership. The refund will be based on total quarters of paid assessments up through 3/31/2012. Each refund will be reduced by any outstanding HOA indebtedness.

Susan Rodriguez, Director of Finance and Kathy Thygersen, Association Manager will be handling the distribution. Considerable attention has been given to assuring correct assessment of both the length of ownership and payment record of each homeowner. Distributions will be based on these records and will be final. Payments will be made to the homeowner of record as of 3/31/2012.

Ms Thygersen has advised the Polaris Beacon that checks should be mailed before Friday, July 13. That should be a good luck day.

This is your Board of Directors working for you.

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## Weeds and the Monsoon

Finally we are seeing some moisture in our neighborhood. The landscaping plants will love it, but so will the undesirable ones we know as WEEDS. If you have not yet applied a weed preventer (such as WeedStopper II – for informational purposes, the editor finds it available only at Home Depot) you still have some time left, but not much. In the absence of the application of a pre-emergence chemical, you will be left with the option of applying a weed killer, such as Round Up, or eliminating the weeds by hand. Pulling weeds after a good rainfall is a good time since the ground is soft and even deeply rooted weeds can be extracted.

Let's all work to keep up the appearance of our neighborhood.

## Dead Trees In Your Front Yard

Many homes in Star Valley Estates have Acacia Willows (acacia salicina – a native of Australia and hardy to 20F)) planted in their front yard. Unfortunately, many of these trees suffered badly in the last deep freeze (18F) we had in 2010. The damage varies from partial to total kill. Letters have been sent to homeowners

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with damaged/dead trees in their front yards requesting that the damaged trees be trimmed and that dead trees be removed. Some homeowners have already responded positively to the request. Some have even had the tree along with its root system removed and have replaced it with a more hardy variety.

If you still have a dead tree in your front yard, please remove it for the betterment of the appearance of the neighborhood. As a result, your property value will appreciate (eventually).

### Traffic Light at Wade and Valencia

In a note from Carol Bricter, Program Coordinator for Pima County DOT, to Star Valley Estates resident, Gene Hugelen, she explained that there had been a misunderstanding in the time frame for the installation of the traffic signal. The estimated time for installation was three months instead of three weeks.

Mr. Hugelen has informed the Polaris Beacon that the county reports that they are working on the final design and have ordered the equipment. DOT now anticipates installation of the signal light by the end of July or early August.

Early morning traffic should appreciate this change. Thanks to Gene Hugelen for this information.

### The Ten Year Flood – for the DIY Crowd

Surely, all Star Valley Estates residents know that we live in an area designated as a 100 year flood plain (some of the homes have been removed from this designation, but that is not the point of this subject). The hundred-year flood primarily affects your outside property. The Ten-Year Flood will, however, definitely affect the interior of your home. How can that be? What is a Ten-Year Flood?

The culprit waiting to fill your home with water and to do damage to your flooring and baseboards is hiding in your dishwasher and in your washing machine. I will only address the dishwasher issue.

Most, if not all, of the houses built by US Homes in Star Valley came equipped with a dishwasher.

Most of these dishwashers are now over 10 years old. There is a little critical part that is wearing out. It is the tiny rubber seat of the solenoid valve that controls the water flow into the dishwasher.

For those interested in technical things, the control is supplied by differential pressure across a diaphragm. When the solenoid valve is closed, the pressure across the diaphragm equalizes and the water valve remains closed. When the solenoid valve is opened, it allows a tiny leak to upset the equalized pressure and the main water valve opens. When that little rubber seat becomes worn by multiple uses – like over a 10-year service period – water will leak by and the main valve will open and remain open. If you are not at home or you are not paying attention, the dishwasher will overflow and water will continue to flow even when the dishwasher completes its cycle.

Flooding an area with carpeting or with laminated wood flooring will be a major disaster. Those homes with tile will suffer less, but the flooding will still occur. The flooded area can easily extend beyond the kitchen to include the family room, the laundry room and adjacent areas and bedrooms. The water (from personal experience) readily passes under the baseboards to adjacent rooms.

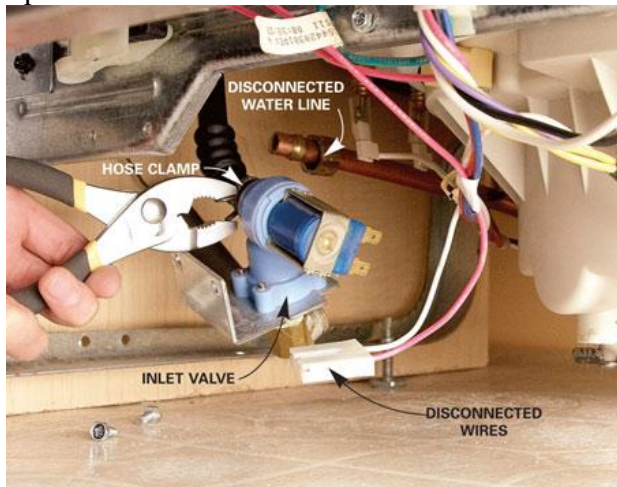
It is better to be proactive. This aging water valve (see diagram) is easy to replace and costs around \$50.



That is a lot cheaper than having to replace carpeting and flooring. The replacement, however, involves working with both plumbing and electrical services. If you DIY, use caution and

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disconnect both the water supply and the electrical power before removing and replacing parts. The valve is located behind the kick panel of the dishwasher on the left side. The panel is removed from the front, and the valve is easily accessible. See photo below:



If you choose to wait to replace the valve until it actually fails, be aware that failure can occur and that running the dishwasher while you are not in attendance is a potential risk.

In some homes, the main shutoff valve for the dishwasher water supply is behind a disposal and is not readily accessible. I personally removed our disposal (it just adds solid waste that will eventually plug the drain lines) and replaced it with standard drain plumbing and inexpensive sink strainers. The accessible space under the sink is increased with this change.

All the above also applies to washing machines, which use the same sort of valve. A double shutoff valve is recommended for the water inlet lines (both hot and cold) to minimize or provide emergency control of this problem.

### ARC Requests Are No Joke

When you bought your home in Star Valley Estates you were told that there was an HOA and that there were certain rules that had to be followed. For most of you this was your first association with an HOA. HOAs, in and of themselves, do serve the community in a mostly unseen fashion. One of the things that the Board of Directors of the HOA is

bound by law to do is to enforce the rules. One rule I would like to mention today is the obligation of every homeowner to submit a request for any and all improvements that you would like to make to your property.

The process goes mostly like this;

1<sup>st</sup> You must submit an application, complete with drawings, particularly including your lot lines, showing what you would like to do.

2<sup>nd</sup> Your request is given to the Architectural Review Committee for consideration and it is either approved or denied based on the rules that apply to your request.

3<sup>rd</sup> You are then notified of the results.

If approved you may commence with construction, and remember that Pima County building permits are **YOUR responsibility**. If denied, you must re-apply and address all appropriate objections

The point I want to make with this article is that just because your plans were approved doesn't give you Carte Blanch to build whatever you want. **You must build according to the approved plans.**

There are numerous violations in Star Valley Estates in which the construction is either not in compliance with the approved plans, or not even approved. A couple of examples are: walls, which were approved with a 15-foot setback, but which were built encroaching on neighboring properties; colors that do not match the application; locations of sheds not matching the applications and various other violations. I simply want to explain to you that you must make an ARC request, and then be responsible to see that it gets completed the way it was requested.

One last note about rules enforcement. One of my pet peeves is cars parked on the rocks in front yards. This brings down the ambience of the entire neighborhood. It looks trashy and devalues all of our properties. If you don't want a letter about it, don't park on the rocks in your front yard, it's against the rules.

Dave Blankenbaker  
President Star Valley Estates HOA,  
Chair of Architectural Review Committee

# **The Polaris Beacon**

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## **Notice:Next Board Meeting**

Thursday, July 12, 2012; 6:30 PM

Conference Room  
Tucson Airport Authority Building  
Ryan Field  
Near intersection of Valencia and Ajo

## **Input from Homeowners is requested.**

Homeowners – This is your Newsletter.

Your input is requested. If you have an item of interest to the community, please send it to the editor either in WORD format, or just as email text to the email address shown in the title header.

Let your feelings and input be heard.

Please report any evidence of criminal activity. Details will be kept confidential.

**This is YOUR NEWSLETTER**

Looking forward to hearing from each of you.

The Editor