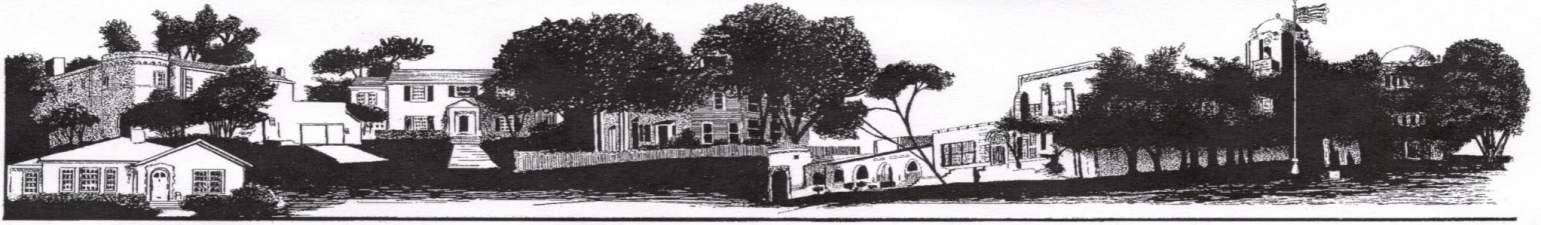


# Monticella Park NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



MPNA is a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization

March - April 2021

Neighbors, there will be a Zoom General Assembly on Monday, March 29th, 2021 at 7:00 PM as per the annual schedule. It will be held online because your health and safety continues to be the Board's priority.

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## THE "SNOWVID" CHRONICALS

By Jan Peranteau



It began like a fairy tale or a Currier and Ives painting. We watched from our warm and cozy kitchens and sitting areas as the snow softly blanketed our lawns and shrubbery. Green peeked through and we assured ourselves that we had covered everything, brought some things inside

and stacked firewood in a dry place. People ran out to take pictures of the snow and animal tracks crossing the totally white world. Children saw their first snow and made snow angels. Then the blizzard hit, and things were a bit more rustic. No electricity and we sat by a fireplace in drafty rooms or stayed in the kitchen if we had gas burning stoves and cooked. At night there were candles and early bedtimes. No TV, no lights, no heat, and for many no water.

A few neighbors shared their stories about the storm. George Negrete, on Club Dr. said, "I lost most of everything. We were in California at the time visiting my mother. When I heard the weather reports about Texas, I started gathering cuttings from my mother's yard to bring back." When asked about breaking pipes, he said. "Yes, I had PVC pipes feeding outside lines to break as well as a line to the apartment. There was no electrical or gas line damage other than temporary outages."

Omar Esparza and wife Hilary moved into a house on North Drive about six years ago. During that time, they installed many new plantings. The yard is neat and tidy, and one would think nothing had happened other than a normal winter freeze. Surveying his already trimmed vegetation, he said, "I've already trimmed everything--agapanthus, firecracker plants. The redbuds are already in bloom and the wisteria are also coming out.

*...continued on page 3*

## President's Message

Friends, I hope this newsletter finds you recovered from the bitterness of last month's winter storm. All of us suffered through the cold and dark, but just as I have seen you band together over the last year to help each other through the isolation and uncertainty of the pandemic, you once again came to each other's aid. You shared food, water, flashlights, batteries, and blankets. You trudged through the snow to help turn off water for neighbors who were unable to do so, and in at least one instance, returned home from fixing a neighbor's broken pipe, to find your own pipes needing repair. Seeing what we, as a community, did to help each other when faced with such a challenge, brought me much warmth and comfort.

With the storm now weeks behind us, many of us face the expense of broken pipes, as well as damage to the exterior and/or interior of our homes. For those needing assistance with broken pipes, the City and SAWS has established a Community Pipe Repair Program. Please visit [saws.org](http://saws.org) for eligibility requirements or to donate to the program fund. In the event you need to work with a plumber or contractor to address repairs, please ensure they are properly licensed before you begin any work and that applicable permits are obtained! If any of that work includes exterior modifications, be sure to also obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Office of Historic Preservation before you begin any repairs or improvements.

Our yards are also in dire need of clean-up to remove frozen plants and shrubs. Please consider helping those neighbors who are unable to clean and weed out their own yards. Don't forget to use your green bin for all of your organic material. Brush pick-up is just around the corner in May, and while we do not yet have a definite date, now is the time to start planning for alley clean-up in late April. Safely work with your neighbors to keep Monticello Bello!

Now is also the time to look around and identify community needs; remember, there is an upcoming bond cycle. What do you see as our most important needs? This is our chance to speak up for street and sidewalk projects, drainage projects, and park improvements. Although we experienced significant delays, and for some of us, a little heartburn, over the Pocket Park and Furr Drive bond projects, we should not let that stop us from pursuing other projects in our community. Speaking of Furr Drive, on March 9, 2021, representatives from Public Works, Councilwoman Sandoval's office, the

**President:** Drea Garza  
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Bianca Maldonado  
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Tom Simmons  
Tony Sanchez

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### **HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS**

District 7 Council Office	210-207-7044
SAWS	210-424-7097
CPS	210-353-2222
Officer Vincent Cano	210-207-0803
	(Cell) 210-394-1398

SAPD, West Substation	210-207-7420
SAPD, Non-emergency	210-207-7273
SAISD Truancy Office	210-223-2360
VIA Transit	210-362-2020
Code Compliance	311
Animal Control	311
Office of Historic Preservation	210-215-9274
Historic Building Enforcement Officer	
<a href="mailto:report@sapreservation.com">report@sapreservation.com</a>	



**Dedicated neighbors gather for the dedication of Monticello Park's new park sign**

construction contractor, and the engineering design contractor, met with MPNA board representatives to conduct a walkthrough of the 100-500 blocks of Furr. We met with residents, some pleased with the work and others airing concerns, to determine what items remained incomplete and/or had been overlooked. Questions still remain regarding the lack of clear communication between the City's project staff and residents and we continue to hold Public Works accountable for all remaining quality concerns. We anticipate an updated timeframe for project completion in the coming days.

I hope to see you at our next Zoom General Assembly meeting on March 29th.

**Drea Garza**  
**President, Monticello Park Neighborhood Association**

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Bridal wreath speaks with tiny new green leaves from the side of the porch. He seems to have picked good plants for his newly established yard.



**George Negrete cheerfully rebuilds his garden after the brutal freeze**

Tony Sanchez and neighboring Tom Simmons are a different story. Sanchez said, "I filled both my green bins and black bags too with dead plants. Sanchez had a plan. An avid grower of orchids, he built a greenhouse a couple of years ago complete with air conditioning and heater. The heater was of no use without electricity. He had moved a few orchids inside that were blooming. He said, "I had about 150 orchids. I lost most of them. The six in the house lived. Tony volunteers at the Botanical Gardens twice a week. He said, "The Botanical Center brought me six new orchids to help me start over."

He and his son, Marcel, built another makeshift greenhouse behind the garage. This had always worked before. "This is for the big plants." Most of them appeared not to have made it. As Sanchez walks through his devastated paradise, he talks with each of his plants. This one," I got from my mother in Puerto Rico. Please make it", he whispers as he holds this plant. Willow, the cat, walks beside him. She meanders through mottled leaves and stays close to Sanchez legs. He mutters and tells her to get away, and yet Willow appears only trying to comfort.

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Tom Simmons can be seen every day on hands and knees out in his yard. He writes a gardening column for the newsletter. "People keep stopping by and asking me what to do." He shrugs and says, " I don't know myself. I am just cutting everything back and adding composted manure enriched topsoil." He bought two pallets from Home Depot. He's also uses a special stiff metal rake to thatch his grass--that is remove the dead grass and expose the green new grass. Seems sorta like scratching the grass's back!

Finally, my story on Furr Drive: On February 16th, a friend and I were making dinner. It had been sleeting and raining during the day. Suddenly I hear water running. I look out back and see no drops or pellets on the pool's surface. I decide to look out front. Walking into the living room, I am greeted with a waterfall coming out of my light switch. It is from the bathroom above. This 1934 house has no insulation. There is the outside siding, the outside wall and the inside wall with solid wood paneling --facing north. Screaming for help, my friend comes, and we run to cut off water at the main. There is a misstep or two as I first direct her to a cut off valve to the irrigation. With the use of a hammer, we cut off the main. Lynne Wilkerson and Basil Scaljon come to the rescue to help us move furniture and mop up water.

My water was finally restored on March 2, 2021. It is a good thing I have a swimming pool. It was my source for toilet flushing. Bianca Maldonado brought lots of water, both bottled and tap. Joe Simpson brought water. Wilkerson brought water. Niece Amy let me fill up empty jugs at her house and brother, Phil Hardberger and wife Linda, brought food and water. Kathy Hernandez brought food. Why so long was the water off? Solid wood paneling had to be removed. After first exploring a ceiling entry to the plumbing, three different plumbers said it couldn't be repaired that way. What to say after all this drama--My reply is "This dear old house."

*Editorial Note: We are so very grateful for our neighbors and the way we all looked out for each other during the challenging weather conditions and power outages. As spring arrives, let us continue to find ways to assist one another as members of the Monticello Park neighborhood family and friends.*



***Willow Sanchez does her part to assist in the restoration of the family garden***



***Tony Sanchez and Tom Simmons bring wisdom and patience to their landscape recovery efforts***

## Zoom into the General Assembly Without Leaving Home

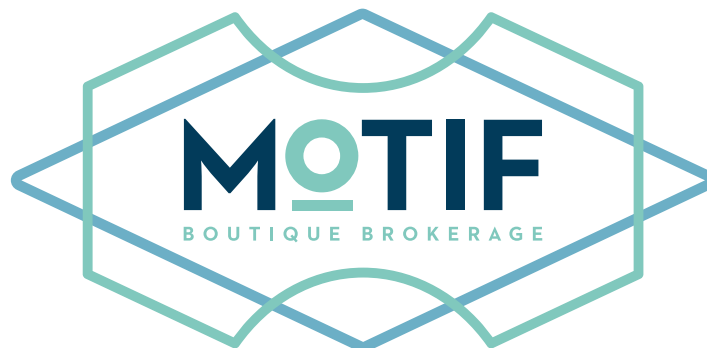
General Assembly Meeting is on for Monday, March 29th, 2021 at 7:00 PM  
Safe Distancing Means Time to Zoom Again

Our Monday, March 29th meeting will be held again using the Zoom platform. Anyone with a smart phone, a computer, laptop, tablet, or a hardline phone will be able to access the meeting by following the instructions below.

1. Open your Internet browser and go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us).
2. Look in the upper right corner for "Join a Meeting" and click on it.
3. A screen will ask for your **Meeting ID (862 2874 9445)** and then a **Passcode (676293)**.
4. If you would like, join with both audio and video.
5. Please enter your name when prompted so we know who is attending.
6. If you want to use a cell phone or landline (wired home phone) you may do so by using the phone number 1(346) 248-7799. Please follow the prompts and enter the Meeting ID and Passcode when asked to do so.

Even though the meeting will begin at 7:00 PM, please join the meeting a few minutes early. If you have questions regarding Zoom, please reach out to a Board member for assistance.

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## San Antonio's First Drive-In Theater was Popular in Neighborhood



San Antonio's first drive-in theatre opened on October 23, 1940, just north of our neighborhood, at a time when there were only around 400 drive-ins nationwide. Since it was such a new phenomenon, its owners must have felt a descriptive name was enough to help differentiate the theatre and named it simply Drive-In Theatre.

The Drive-In was located just outside the city limits at 3602 Fredericksburg Road, immediately north of the American Legion Hall, which by the way, was originally a night club called the Kit Kat Club. This area must have been quite an entertainment hub.

The Drive-In was very popular with the residents of our neighborhood, and both families and high school kids on dates drove the short distance north where they often filled the 482-car theater to capacity.

On opening night, the Drive-In featured "The Life of the Party" starring Joe Penner and Gene Raymond, along with an extra feature titled "Gateways to Panama." This double feature was advertised as a way to "laugh" and "forget the war." I would imagine this message was well-received because,

while the U.S. would not officially enter the war for another 14 months, by 1940 we were supplying our European Allies with arms, and the population must have understood that our entry into the war was inevitable. Prices were 30¢ for adults and 10¢ for children, quite a bargain given today's exorbitant ticket tab! Interestingly, there were no small speakers for inside the cars. Each car parked over a large grate which housed speakers, and the sound resonated up through the floorboards.

By 1946, the speakers were upgraded to the new in-car technology, and the Drive-In was renamed the Fredericksburg Drive-In Theatre, when two additional drive-ins opened in the city.

This location prospered throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and the capacity was increased to 544 cars. The somewhat creepy looking actress on the mural painted behind the screen in 1940 was replaced by a picture

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of a laughing clown, and then by some geometric shapes, as the theater continued to reinvent itself for succeeding generations.

However, beginning in the 1970s, and as neighborhood residents continued to move to the newer suburbs, old drive-ins such as this one saw fewer and fewer customers. By 1982, the old Fredericksburg Drive-In Theater closed. The structures were razed in 1986, and the site is now occupied by an apartment complex and a small shopping center. The only artifact remaining of the old drive-in is the original roadside marquee, which now lists the tenants of the strip center instead of those glorious old movies.

How many of you might remember the Fredericksburg Road Drive-In?



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You pass them every day; architectural features that make Monticello Park unique. Enjoy looking for these unusual elements as you walk or bike through our streets. Do you know where to find this one?

(Last Hidden Corners Answer: "Lawn Jockey" at the 200 Block of Mary Louise Drive)

**HIDDEN CORNERS**  
by Len McClure

## **Gentle Reminders About Living in an Historic District**

### **Check Before Making Changes**

Whether you're repainting the trim on your home or have grand designs for a new addition to your home, remember that there's more than a city permit to secure before the hammers and paint brushes swing into action. All exterior home improvements, especially those which can be seen from the street, must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) or approval from the city's Historic Design and Review Commission (HDRC) BEFORE the work begins.

Nothing is worse and potentially more expensive than finding yourself reading a Cease and Desist message from Code Enforcement because of your failure to follow the rules. The color of our street signs (brown as opposed to blue) is a sign that you live in a historic district. Such information is also a part of the listing information you received when you bought your home.

Please contact the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) at 210-207-8316 and discuss your plans. The application takes minutes to fill out and you will need a scanned copy of your property survey as well as the types of materials you will be using (images help) to share with the reviewer. In most cases, simple routine maintenance work can be approved immediately by OHP staff without having to attend an HDRC hearing.

You can also [visit www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic) and there are a variety of resources such as the Rehabber Club and the Application Portal making a drive downtown, in most cases, unnecessary.

Keep in mind that if caught, you and your subcontractor can be fined for failure to secure the necessary permits prior to beginning your home improvement project. Preserving the exterior charm and character of our homes is something the city and your neighbors take seriously so please, just do the right thing and get that COA!

### **2021 Newsletter Ad Prices to Remain the Same as 2020**

The COVID-19 global pandemic has imposed many hardships and tragedies on our community, city, and nation. Knowing that some of our local businesses are struggling just to keep the doors open and their employees paid, the MPNA has decided to keep ad prices for our bi-monthly newsletter at the same rate as 2020. This provides local businesses in our community a very cost-effective way of reaching out to our neighborhood and reminding us of the great products and services they provide. The following pricing schedule will remain in effect for 2021:

Full Page Ad	\$100
Half Page Ad	\$50
Quarter Page AD	\$25
Business Card	\$15 per issue

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## BUILDING A BRIGHTER, HEALTHIER SAN ANTONIO

Dear Neighbor,

When I was first elected to represent District 7, little did I know I would be applying my public health training in response to a global pandemic. Right now, our community needs steady leadership to keep our families safe and guide our economic recovery. We must emerge from this pandemic a stronger, healthier city. If re-elected, I will continue to champion health and opportunity for all.

Councilwoman Ana Sandoval

**Early Voting:**  
Monday, April 19<sup>TH</sup> - Tuesday, April 27<sup>TH</sup>

**Election Day:**  
Saturday, May 1<sup>ST</sup>

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