



## GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING

Monday, 3/27/23, 7 PM  
Grace Presbyterian Church  
950 Donaldson  
Speaker: Police Chief  
William McManus

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*The impersonal hand of  
government can never  
replace the helping hand of  
a neighbor.*

Hubert H. Humphrey

## MEET THE NEIGHBORS

# Simpson Family Feels Right at Home in Monticello Park

by Jan Peranteau

Sunshine, a yellow door, and the happy face of Barbara Simpson greeted me as I went searching for new neighbors to interview. Turns out these neighbors aren't so new. As Barbara welcomed me in the door, her husband, Mike Simpson, stood wiping down the kitchen counter. "We bought the house in May of 2020 and moved in October of that year," Mike said.

Previously they lived in Shavano Park. "We had a big house over there and one of our boys and his wife lived with us after he retired from the military." Barbara added, "We lived in the little apartment out back built for Mike's mother. Isaac, our son, and his wife and children lived in the big house." But Isaac and his wife wanted to buy a house and found one on Quentin Dr.

When asked why they moved to Monticello Park, Barbara smiled and said, "Mike fell in love with having the grandchildren nearby and I loved the different architectural styles, the diversity of the neighborhood and the history here. I like old places better than new ones. I enjoy being near downtown." But Shavano Park and Monticello Park are quite different.

Mike reminisced. The houses in Shavano Park are big and there are lots of trees. I had my own office." Mike



Barbara and Mike Simpson at their house on Quentin

continued, "The biggest adjustment is getting used to smaller spaces and the closeness of the houses to one another." Barbara added, "I like my neighbors close

*"I loved the different architectural styles, the diversity of the neighborhood, and the history here."*

by and we both love having the grandkids right across the street."

Growing up in Lubbock, Mike talked of an early job at Texas Tech. "I installed one of the first elevators at the law school." Both he,

his mother, and Barbara all have degrees from Tech. He has a BS in Political Science and History, his mother got her PhD there, and Barbara got a BS in Education, with specialization in English and Theatre.

After getting his degree, Mike joined the Green Berets for a 24-year career. He also managed a law degree from St. Mary's University after his

**Continued on page 3**

# Spring is Here and Our Neighborhood is Busy

by Drea Garza

Neighbors,

Happy Spring! We have much to look forward to in the coming weeks—the return of the neighborhood Pink Flamingo socials, Fiesta, the On and Off Fredericksburg Tour, and even kayaks on Woodlawn Lake. Gather some neighbors and have fun!

If you missed last month's General Assembly meeting, you may not be aware that FEMA's flood plain maps are changing and there will be a significant impact on homes along and near Kampmann. Are you now within the flood plain? Will you need flood insurance? Visit the MPNA website at [www.monticelloparkna.org](http://www.monticelloparkna.org) for more information and a copy of the presentation, or attend one of the City of San Antonio workshops on this topic.

Neighbors on Quentin, North, and Club, you will be receiving a postcard or door hanger from SAWS regarding upgrades to existing sewer lines. SAWS anticipates little to no service disruption, and the majority of the work will be done in the alleys, but some sections of streets along Club and North will be affected.

The project includes other area streets outside of Monticello Park, and an exact timetable will not be available until May or June. Any updates will be published in the newsletter and the MPNA website and SAWS will be sending a representative to the June General Assembly meeting to address any questions and/or concerns.

Traffic concerns continue on our neighborhood streets—speeding, failure to stop, aggressive driving. We have repeatedly expressed concerns about this issue to the District 7 Office for well over a year, and it appears Public Works finally has a response on this matter.

The traffic studies requested last September for four area intersections were to have been completed last month. We are still pending those results, as well as their response to the possible traffic calming options that MPNA presented, but are scheduled to meet with Public Works within the next two weeks. We will share any new information on this matter during our upcoming General Assembly meeting.

Finally, thank you to all of the new and renewing neighborhood memberships; if you have yet to pay your annual association dues, it is not too late! A membership form is included in this newsletter and can be turned in at the next general assembly, mailed in, or dropped off with any board member. You can also pay online at [www.monticelloparkna.org](http://www.monticelloparkna.org).

Be sure to join us for the General Assembly meeting on Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM. Our guest speaker will be Police Chief William McManus, addressing the recent murder by a 19 year old homeless man. In addition to updates from our SAFFE Officer Cano and District 7, we will share the latest on short-term rentals, the District 7 Candidate Forum, traffic calming, and other neighborhood news. This meeting is also an opportunity to get to know your neighbors.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming General Assembly meeting!

## MONTICELLO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

MPNA serves the interests of nearly 650 households in the Monticello Park Neighborhood and is recognized by the City of San Antonio.

We are a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation devoted to promoting, preserving, and enhancing the values and quality of life within our neighborhood. MPNA was founded in 1983 and this year we celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

President Drea Garza  
Vice President Gary Hudman  
Secretary Robin Foster  
Treasurer Ressie O'Connors

Board Members Marti Campbell  
Bianca Maldonado  
Carol Rea  
Tom Simmons

[www.monticelloparkna.org](http://www.monticelloparkna.org)  
[facebook.com/groups/MonticelloParkNA](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MonticelloParkNA)

### HELPFUL CONTACTS

District 7 Council Office 210-207-7044  
SAFFE Officer Vincent Cano 210-207-0803  
cell 210-394-1398  
SAPD, West Substation 210-207-7420  
SAPD, Non-emergency 210-207-7273  
SAISD Police-24 hrs 210-354-9000  
SAWS 210-424-7097  
CPS Energy 210-353-2222  
VIA Transit 210-362-2020  
Office of Historic Preservation 210-215-9274  
Historic Enforcement 210-219-2093  
City Customer Service 311  
(Animal Control & Code Compliance)

## MONTICELLO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is published six times per year (January, March, May, July, September, & November) and delivered to nearly 650 households in the Monticello Park Neighborhood free of charge.

Neighbors are encouraged to submit articles (125-250 words) by the 5<sup>th</sup> day of each publication months to be considered for publication. We reserve the right to edit all materials for content, length, and style. All materials submitted become property of MPNA and may be reproduced in all MPNA communications.

Opinions expressed are those of the authors and MPNA is not responsible for that content or opinion.

Editor Gary Hudman  
Committee & Writers Marti Campbell  
Drea Garza  
Bianca Maldonado  
Jan Peranteau  
Carol Rea  
Tony Sanchez  
Barbara Simpson

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## MPNA General Assembly Meeting

Monday, March 27, 2023, 7 PM

Grace Presbyterian Church Community Room, 950 Donaldson Avenue



Guest Speaker:  
**San Antonio Police Chief  
William McManus**

to Address the Recent Murder by a  
Homeless 19 Year Old Suspect.  
Don't Miss It!

**Neighbors from page 1** career with the military. He was recalled into active duty, serving three more years in Iraq. Together they had four children, three boys and a girl. One of the boys was killed in Afghanistan serving as a Green Beret.

As for interests, Barbara loves theatre and is artistic director of Extended Run Players, a group of seniors who entertain with readings of humorous, tragic, and poignant literature. She leads a group once a month on the UIW campus. Mike helps her as a stagehand with lifting and behind the scenes production. At the writing of this article, Extended Run Players, were working on the production of *Aging Ain't for Sissies*.

The group performs at UIW, senior living facilities, schools, churches, libraries, theaters, and art museums. Other activities include attending a Pilates

class at the Quarry. Barbara previously worked for Oasis, teaching “Sit and Be Fit,” low impact aerobics, yoga, Pilates, and water aerobics. She sings with Beethoven Damenchor. In the summer, she enjoys aerobics at the Woodlawn Pool.

Mike named various interests: “I’m an elder at Faith Presbyterian Church on Blanco Rd. I still practice a little law, mostly mediation, and enjoy being a grandfather. I teach karate with my

son, David, at our church.” Mike also has been active as a legal advisor for the Republican Party of Bexar County.

As we ended our interview, Barbara and Mike walked me to the door. We looked across the street and Barbara smiled and said, “When those boys come over, it is a little whirlwind—all boys, ages 5, 6, 8, and 12.” Perhaps maybe it’s a little twister—but so much fun!

## Remember, We are in Stage 2 Water Restrictions

**STAGE 2 WATER WISELY**

**CHECK THE TIME**  
7AM Mornings 11AM  
7PM Evenings 11PM

**KNOW YOUR DAY**  
M T W T H F  
0 2 4 6 8  
1 3 5 7 9  
last digit of address

**KNOW THE RULES**

**WATER ONCE A WEEK**

## 2023 CALENDAR

### MARCH

- Contemporary Art Month
- 12 Move clocks forward
- 13 MPNA Board Meeting
- 17 St. Patrick's River Parade
- 20 1<sup>st</sup> day of Spring
- 25-26 On & Off Fred Road Studio Tour week 1
- 27 MPNA General Assembly
- 30 D7 Candidate Forum

### APRIL

- 1-2 On & Off Fred Road Studio Tour week 2
- 8 MPNA Pink Flamingo Social Free Landfill Day
- 10 MPNA Board Meeting
- 14 Scholarship Applications Due
- 20-30 Fiesta San Antonio
- 22 Earth Day, Woodlawn Park

### MAY

- National Preservation Month
- 6 COSA Municipal Election
- 8 MPNA Board Meeting Brush pickup week
- 15 Last day to protest property taxes

### JUNE

- 5 MPNA General Assembly
- 12 MPNA Board Meeting

### JULY

- 4 MPNA July 4th Kids' Parade
- 8 Free Landfill Day
- 10 MPNA Board Meeting
- 24 MPNA General Assembly

### AUGUST

- 14 MPNA Board Meeting

### SEPTEMBER

- 11 MPNA Board Meeting
- 25 MPNA General Assembly
- 29 SA Conservation Society Grant Deadline

### OCTOBER

- 3 SA Neighbors Together (was National Night Out)
- 9 MPNA Board Meeting

### NOVEMBER

- 7 Texas and National Elections
- 13 MPNA Board Meeting
- 27 MPNA General Assembly

### DECEMBER

- 3 MPNA Home Tour
- 11 MPNA Board Meeting
- 16 MPNA Holiday Party



## Safety Tips

The San Antonio Police Department will NEVER contact residents over their financial status or ask residents to pay a fee over the phone. Scammers are known to ask victims, over the phone, to purchase gift cards to pay a “fee” or “fine.” Suspects may ask victims to pay using a payment app or via a gift card.

SAPD will never ask for personal identifying information over the phone—Drivers License numbers, Social Security numbers, etc...

Be mindful of who you may be speaking to and verify how the caller got your information.

Suspects are also known to “spoof” or disguise phone numbers to make the caller ID appear to be a legitimate phone number.

If you believe you are a victim of a scam, please call SAPD’s non-emergency number, 210-207-7273, to file a report.

# Short-Term Rentals Operating in Neighborhood

by Bianca Maldonado

The Monticello Park Neighborhood Association has received many calls about the operation of short-term rentals in the community and we felt it would be beneficial to share information published by the City on STRs.

Operating a STR requires obtaining a permit from the City and for the property owner to report and pay Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) monthly. HOT tax funds historic preservation and the arts.

Type I STRs are owner-occupied. This could be renting out a casita or room at the house where you live. Type II STRs are non-owner-occupied, meaning the owner does not live on the property.

At the right is a list of permitted STRs within MPNA from the City database ([www.sanantonio.gov/DSD/Resources/Short-Term-Rental](http://www.sanantonio.gov/DSD/Resources/Short-Term-Rental)). A part of the City's STR permit process requires a 24-hour point of contact, also included here.

If you have concerns with noise, trash, or parking at a STR, please see the information at the right to report the problem to the proper channels.

Address	Permit type	Permit issued to	24 hrs. Emergency contact #
125 Leming Dr. (3)	Type I	Juan Morin	469.528.5105
228 Quentin Dr.	Type I	Ed Buys	210.224.2349
314 Quentin Dr.	Type II	Alexandra Lowe	904.501.9695
311 North Dr. (3)	Type I	Diego Hernandez	702.606.8677
130 Club Dr.	Type I	Patrick Putze	210.288.9370
247 Club Dr. (4)	Type II	Sudharmi Martin	210.982.9000
417 Club Dr.	Type II	Anastacia Sandoval	210.883.6169
211 Mary Louise Dr. (1)	Type II	Robert Varela	815.210.2533
222 Mary Louise Dr. (1)	Type II	Natalie Holzem	214.212.9159
255 Mary Louise Dr.	Type I	Liza Negron	210.241.5356
222 Furr Dr	Type I	Michele English	210.705.3584
354 Furr Dr	Type I	Richard Weik	512.748.2609
511 Furr Dr (2)	Type II	Daniel Kang	210.672.3343
342 Donaldson Ave	Type II	David Garza	281.408.9756
344 Donaldson Ave	Type I	David Garza	281.408.9756
440 Donaldson Ave (1)	Type II	Angela Sanchez	210.306.6747

- (1) New and not advertising on a platform  
 (2) One apartment may be used for a STR  
 (3) Accessory Dwelling Unit may be a STR  
 (4) Not an active STR listing at this time

**TO REPORT A PROBLEM WITH A SHORT-TERM RENTAL**

**Noise** 210.207.SAPD (7273). Obtain case number and email to: <https://www.sanantonio.gov/DSD/About/Contact-Us?sendto=DSD-STR>

**Trash** 311


**Parking** 210.207.SAPD (7273) for street parking concerns, blocking driveways, parking on private property, parking too close to intersections, and parked vehicles impeding traffic on city streets.

**Monticello Park Neighborhood Association**

## General Assembly Meeting

Monday, March 27, 2023, 7 PM  
 Grace Presbyterian Church Community Room, 950 Donaldson Avenue

**Featuring San Antonio Police Chief William McManus  
 Addressing the Recent Murder by a Homeless 19 Year Old Suspect**



**Additional Topics**

- SAFFE Officer Vincent Cano
- District 7 Updates
- City Departments addressing problems with Homeless
- Short-Term Rentals
- District 7 Candidate Forum

**Please Join Us and Help Build a Stronger Neighborhood**

# Now Taking Applications for 2023 Scholarship

by Drea Garza

Every year, MPNA offers scholarship opportunities to high school seniors graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School (TJHS) and high school seniors who reside within MPNA boundaries, but attend other schools.

In 2022, we granted two awards. Adam Rangel, MPNA resident and graduate of BASIS Shavano Park, and Tristan Sipes, MPNA resident and TJHS graduate, each received \$1,500.

MPNA contributed half of the funding and Camille Rodriguez Brigant, of Motif Boutique Brokerage, generously contributed the additional funding.

The application for the 2023 MPNA Scholarship can be downloaded from the MPNA website ([www.monticelloparkna.org/scholarships](http://www.monticelloparkna.org/scholarships)) and a complete application must be submitted by April 14, 2023. Please review the application instructions for rules and eligibility.

If you are interested in serving on the MPNA Scholarship Committee or you wish to make a donation to the scholarship fund, please contact Drea

Garza at [boardmpna@gmail.com](mailto:boardmpna@gmail.com). We'd love to have you participate.

Good luck to all of the applicants and congratulations to the Class of 2023!



Adam Rangel



Tristan Sipes (right) and father Rob, former MPNA President

**Apply for the 2023 MPNA Scholarship Today!**  
[www.monticelloparkna.org/scholarships](http://www.monticelloparkna.org/scholarships)

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MPNA AT WORK

# Join MPNA Today to Build a Better Neighborhood!

by Carol Rea

Join Us!

No doubt about it, Monticello Park is a great place to live. History, charming homes, and a nice eclectic vibe are just part of what makes it special. But it doesn't just happen to be that way; your Neighborhood Association has worked for forty years to make sure our neighborhood is the best it can be.

Every member of the all-volunteer Board of Directors works many hours every month, attending their own and city meetings, putting together a newsletter, and monitoring issues like accessory dwelling units and

unpermitted short-term rentals.

The MPNA Board has successfully advocated for and received millions of dollars in street, alley, sidewalk, and drainage improvements for our community. They raise funds to award scholarships to local high school graduates, provide educational information to homeowners, and plan many events in the community. All residents benefit from these efforts to ensure that our more than 650 households can have a better quality of life here.

You are always invited to actively participate by volunteering alongside the

board and others or simply show your support by becoming a member of the Monticello Park Neighborhood Association. For only \$15/year or \$10 for anyone over the age of 65, you're assisting our efforts by helping to cover costs of printing, events, scholarships, and more.

Please consider joining today. You can join online at [monticelloparkna.org](http://monticelloparkna.org) or fill in the form below and send it with a check to MPNA, PO Box 100315, San Antonio 78201. We are a 501(c)3 organization. E-mail [BoardMPNA@gmail.com](mailto:BoardMPNA@gmail.com) if you have any questions.



Doranne Bakiewicz Ehmer and Adam Ehmer enjoyed the MPNA Holiday Party



Longtime member Gail Collins (L) enjoyed her chat with more recent neighbors (L-R) Adelita Cantu, Marti Campbell, Barbara Hudman, and Carol Rea at the MPNA Holiday Party



## Monticello Park Neighborhood Association Membership Application

Memberships are available online at [Monticelloparkna.org](http://Monticelloparkna.org); click on "Store."

Or, please complete this form and mail with check to MPNA, PO Box 100315, San Antonio, TX 78201. You can also bring cash or check and form to the next MPNA General Assembly Meeting, March 27. Membership runs January 1 – December 31. Dues must be paid prior to February 1 in order to vote. The MPNA is a 501(c)3 organization.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount included with application  \$15 per individual.  \$10 if over 65.  Additional Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in Volunteering with:

- Alley/Graffiti Cleanup  Newsletter Delivery  Host a Social Event  Home Tour  Board Secretary

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

# Join a Committee and Help Build Monticello Park

by Gary Hudman

MPNA supports the neighborhood through the work of a number of committees. We are always looking for additional neighbors to join these committees and help us build a more engaged neighborhood.

Here is a list of current committees and members. We would love to have you join any of these committees, or if you have an idea for another committee, we'd love to work with you to set it up. We can sign you up at our

Historic
<b>Architectural Review</b>
Bianca Maldonado
Tom Simmons
Robin Foster
Jason Vasquez
<b>Restoration &amp; Beautification</b>
Bianca Maldonado
Tom Simmons

next General Assembly Meeting on March, 27<sup>th</sup>. Or email your interest to boardmpna@gmail.com.

Community
<b>Scholarships</b>
Drea Garza
Ron Hubbert
Bianca Maldonado
Charlie O'Connors
<b>Home Tour</b>
Gary Hudman
Marti Campbell
Pam Carpenter
Michelle Casarez
Robin Foster
Kathy Hernandez
Carol Rea
Ressie O'Connors
Tony Sanchez
Barbara Simpson

Neighborhood
<b>Membership</b>
Marti Campbell
Carol Rea
Ron Hubbert
<b>Communications</b>
Marti Campbell
Carol Rea
Ron Hubbert
<b>Socials</b>
Ressie O'Connors
Tom Simmons
Tony Sanchez
<b>Newsletter</b>
Gary Hudman
Carol Rea
Marti Campbell
Jan Peranteau
Bianca Maldonado
Drea Garza
Tony Sanchez

## OUT AND ABOUT

# Kayaks Mean Summer Fun at Woodlawn Lake

by Barbara Simpson

"We look forward to seeing people of all abilities kayaking and enjoying outdoor activities at Woodlawn Lake Park and Elmendorf Lake Park," said Homer Garcia III, Director of Parks and Recreation. On weekends, beginning the weekend of March 11 and 12, from 9am to around 6pm, the city will be renting canoes, single and tandem kayaks, and paddle boards with adaptive paddles for those with disabilities at Woodlawn Lake and Elmendorf Lake. See details at [www.saparksandrec.com](http://www.saparksandrec.com).

Paddlers are allowed to bring their own gear, private non-motorized aquatic vehicles, to the lakes. Now the city of San Antonio has contracted for the next three years with the Expedition School (512-922-6724/[www.expeditionschool.com](http://www.expeditionschool.com)) to offer outdoor structured programming. Included is adaptive paddling, health and wellness programs, camps, and professional water safety courses.

The Expedition School is "committed to providing adaptive paddles for intellectual and developmentally disabled populations, blind and visually impaired and deaf populations, said Kimery Duda, founder. "Both locations will serve as outdoor schools for youth, provide professional and transformative outdoor education programming, and custom-tailored adventure team building for events or groups."

Private lessons in paddling will be offered. Rental prices for vehicles: canoes, \$25/hour; paddle boards and tandem kayaks, \$20/hour; single



kayaks, \$15/hour.

Recent water testing has shown that both lakes are safe for water sports. For information on testing see San Antonio River Authority website. [www.sariverauthority.org/public-services/environmental-sciences](http://www.sariverauthority.org/public-services/environmental-sciences).

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# Tip Top Cafe Celebrates 85 Years in 2023

by Gary Hudman

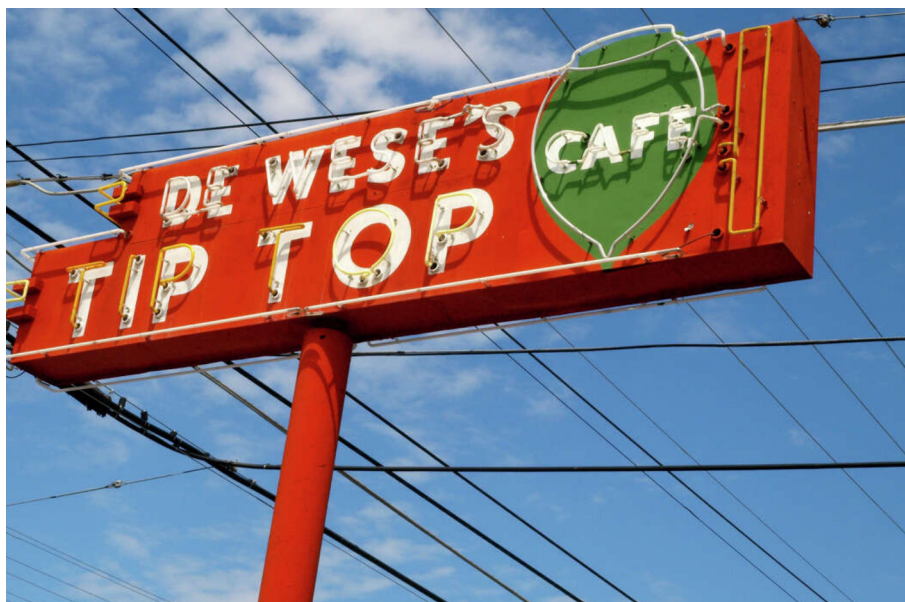
Several weeks ago, I noticed that Tip Top Cafe had closed, with a very ambiguous reopening date noted on their sign. A number of old San Antonio restaurants, such as Karam's, Mexican Manhattan, and Jacala, have closed in recent years, and I was concerned that another favorite might soon join that list.

I first ate at Tip Top when I moved to Monticello Park in 2009. I am a sucker for fantastic onion rings, and Tip Top certainly delivered. In fact, I was so impressed, a couple of years later I took my steel casement contractors there for lunch to seal the deal on restoring my original windows. They also fell in love with the onion rings. Over the years, I found that Tip Top also made a great hamburger and chicken fried steak. I learned to arrive hungry and usually did not eat for the remainder of the day!

This icon of San Antonio opened for business in 1938 as Tip Top Sandwich Shop at 1940 Fredericksburg Road, several blocks south of the current location. Proprietors Winnie and J. A. "Pappy" DeWese advertised that they had a complete fountain service, and they were known for "The Superior Sandwich." Just a year later, they moved the business to its current location and kept the same name. But



The author's onion rings at a recent dinner at Tip Top



bad luck would soon change this young shop's fortunes.

In 1940, Tip Top caught fire, and since the location was then outside the city limits, San Antonio refused to send a fire truck. Just six weeks later, the building had been enlarged and rebuilt, into approximately the structure we still see today.

The San Antonio Express ran an article about the reopening and stated that Tip Top "specializes in fried chicken prepared the modern way...and [also features] sandwiches, steaks, and drinks of all kinds."

DeWese's Tip Top prospered, and Pappy DeWese was soon elected as president of the San Antonio Restaurant Association. By the 1950s, they had changed the name to Tip Top Café and were advertising "Tops in Everything. Steaks, Fried Chicken, and Mexican Foods." Eventually the business passed to son Ancel DeWese, and finally to Pappy's granddaughter Linda in 1981.

During her tenure, Tip Top gained national recognition when it was featured on Guy Fieri's Diners, Drive-ins, and Dives. And she made headlines again in 2014, when Tip Top started taking credit cards!

During these years, Tip Top amassed numerous "Best Onion Rings" and "Best Chicken-fried Steak" awards.

In 2016, Linda DeWese retired and sold the business to partners who have kept everything just the same. Same food, same décor, same ambiance. Of course, the COVID pandemic was hard on all restaurants, including Tip Top. They closed down for a while, but eventually reopened with curbside service and eventually with full inside service again.

Neighbors have relayed that "the ambiance and waitresses [are] what made it enjoyable." "Been going there for over 30 years. It is iconic." "Everything from pie to fried chicken to the best chicken-fried steak in town." Clearly, the neighbors of Monticello Park love this comfort food gem.

So back to the original concern. I was extremely happy to see that Tip Top reopened the last week of February with a number of areas spruced up, including some new bright highlights on the building facade. But I'm equally happy that the inside has lost none of its charm. This made me, and I am certain many of my neighbors, very happy.

The Office of Historic Preservation lists Tip Top as an official Legacy Business for the City of San Antonio, and 2023 will mark the 85th anniversary of this classic cafe. I know I speak for so many when I say we all look forward to seeing Tip Top continue to prosper.

## HOLIDAY HOME TOUR

# Home Tour is Returning and Needs Your Help

by Marti Campbell

Congratulations to Ricardo Martinez and his husband, Crispin, who signed in at our display at the recent Historic Homeowner Fair and won two free tickets to the December 3 event. The pair moved to San Antonio from Austin three years ago with their two pups, appreciating the respect for history here and the way homeowners restore their homes.

They often ride their bikes through Monticello Park admiring our historic homes. Roberto looks forward to “seeing inside some of the historic homes and how they may have incorporated some modern aspects to it,” and Crispin loves holiday decorations and “can’t wait to see how people decorate their homes for Christmas.”

This will be Ricardo and Crispin’s first time at the Holiday Home Tour and our neighborhood’s first time back after a lapse resulting from the

pandemic. To make it even more noteworthy, it is the 40th anniversary of the Monticello Park Neighborhood Association.

Planning has begun for the extra special event and the Home Tour Committee is considering which homes will be honored to open their doors for the day. If you would like to have your home considered or if you would like to volunteer in the planning process or on the day of the event, please email [MPNAHomeTour@gmail.com](mailto:MPNAHomeTour@gmail.com).

The Holiday Home Tour, to be held this year on Sunday, December 3, from 11 am until 5 pm, will open some of the best homes in historic Monticello Park to the public and a Holiday Street Fair



Holiday Home Tour Tickets Winners Ricardo and Crispin Martinez with pups, Georgina and Harley

will offer an opportunity to buy unique holiday gifts. Tickets are \$20 in advance or \$25 on the day of the event. Proceeds fund neighborhood preservation efforts and scholarships for local high school students and even the printing of this bimonthly newsletter!

## HOLIDAY HOME TOUR

# Home Tour Started in 1995

by Gary Hudman

I recently met with Gail Collins, a former Board Member and longtime member of the Home Tour Committee. Gail very graciously gave me a container full of records from the earliest years of the Home Tour and I wanted to share some of that early history.

The Home Tour began in 1995 as a way to celebrate the designation of the Monticello Park Historic District that same year. The tour was on Mother’s Day and included an Art, Antique, and Craft Fair housed at Monticello City

Park on Club Drive. It featured eight stunning homes plus the architecturally significant Thomas Jefferson High School. Over 1000 people from across the city attended the tour that inaugural year!

The tour was held annually until 2000, irregularly through 2008, then it was held every two years starting in 2008. From the beginning, the event was designed as a neighborhood fundraiser, with proceeds dedicated to beautifying the neighborhood and general expenses of the neighborhood association. Since then, we have added a high school scholarship to that list, and we are proud to support recent graduates in their quest for higher education.

Our last Home Tour was in 2018, since the pandemic made touring homes difficult after that. I am proud to say “We are back” in 2023, and we look forward to celebrating MPNA’s 40th Anniversary with the best Holiday Home Tour we have



Maria Guerrero showing some of her unique artwork to visitors at the 2018 Holiday Home Tour

## Holiday Home Tour at a Glance

- December 3, 2023
- Tour 6-8 of MPNA’s amazing historic homes
- Food & Gifts at the Holiday Street Fair
- MPNA’s largest fundraiser; generated \$9,457 in 2018
- Back again after COVID hiatus
- Began in 1995 at inception of historic district
- Funds scholarships, beautification grants, newsletter, website, social events, and more.

ever produced.

We’d love to discuss having your home featured on the tour. If you are interested, reach out to me at 210-920-5526 or [MPNAHomeTour@gmail.com](mailto:MPNAHomeTour@gmail.com). And we hope to see the entire neighborhood on the day of the tour.

# Tips for Protecting Our Sidewalks and Streets

by Gary Hudman

During the past decade, MPNA has successfully worked with the city to prioritize improvements to many of our sidewalks, alleys, and streets. And all of that work has paid off. We have seen street improvements on Furr, Donaldson, Mary Louise, Shearer, Lake, and Vollum, plus additional work on our park, alleys, flood control projects, and more!

Much of the street and sidewalk infrastructure had deteriorated over time and needed to be replaced, but did you know these structures can last longer with some simple lawn care tips? Yes, that's right. Using the right techniques when you mow your lawn can actually extend the life of the streets, curbs, and sidewalks.

We can help maintain the health of our streets with a few very simple steps. Water is the single most damaging element to street pavement. When it is allowed to get into the pavement

through cracks, it deteriorates the base, causing the pavement to shift and fail. That speeds up the deterioration of the street and curbs and shortens their lifetime. Now that the weather is warming up, this is the perfect time to remember these tips.

## KEEP GRASS OUT OF THE STREET

DON'T allow dirt and grass to accumulate on your curb. Accumulated dirt allows grass and weeds to grow into the pavement. The roots of the plants work their way through the pavement, causing it to crack or break into pieces. Water can then get under the pavement and cause premature failure of the street.

DO keep your curb clean and clear. Keep your grass edged so that it doesn't grow into the street. Sweep up the grass clippings and either place them in your organics cart or put them on your lawn. Clear out any growth between

the concrete and the asphalt pavement. Sweep up any dirt, and put it back on your lawn, so that weeds don't have a chance to grow.

## KEEP CURBS CLEAR FOR WATER

DON'T allow debris to block the flow of runoff. Water can damage pavement. Curbs protect pavement by channeling water runoff. It is important to minimize curb blockage so that water can drain freely off of the street.

DO keep your curb clean so water flows and doesn't pond. When you keep your curbs clean, you help to keep water off of the pavement and out of the base material. This helps to extend the life of the street and will keep our neighborhood looking as nice as possible.

Thank you, neighbors, for focusing on these simple tips. They will help maintain our infrastructure, plus make your yard look even better!

**DON'T** allow dirt and grass to accumulate at your curb.

**DON'T** put debris over the curb and into the street.

**DON'T** allow debris to block the flow of water runoff.

**DO** keep your curb clean and clear of all debris.

**DO** keep yard waste and bulky trash off of the curb.

**DO** keep your curb clean so water flows and doesn't pond.



This curb is not properly maintained. Roots will weaken the structure and water will pond.



This curb is well maintained and allows easy water to easily run off. Plus, it looks great!

# Should You Protest Your Property Valuation...Yes

by Ron Hubbert

It is the beginning of spring, and many have started a “to-do” list. Hopefully, your list includes many fun and relaxing items—planting flowers, getting ready for Fiesta, and taking a trip, are just some possibilities. Realistically, that list includes things that you have to do. It also includes ones you want to do but have excuses for why you do not do them. One item, protesting your Property Values for 2023, probably falls into that category of “I want to do it, but I have my reasons, so I do not protest.”

The reasons that many people do not protest their proposed property values vary from household to household. Some of the most common are:

A. I don't know how to start, and I will do something that will make me feel foolish.

B. It will take too much time, or it is too complicated, and they will only go up next year, so it is not worth the effort.

C. My property value and my taxes go through my mortgage company and it takes care of everything for me.

D. If I protest and lose, they can raise my value even more.

E. My value and taxes were frozen when I turned 65, so why bother.

All of the above have two things in common. They are excuses that cause an aversion, keeping you from protesting your property values. They also allow you to stay within your own comfort zone instead of facing any fear that may be an underlying factor.

Hopefully, as you read the rest of this article, you will find something that helps you get rid of your excuses and helps you realize that protesting your property values is always a good thing to place on your “to-do” list.

The easiest way to start is to read through the papers that the Bexar County Appraisal District, BCAD, will send you this spring when they notify you of your Proposed Property Value. As you read through them, keep the following in mind. First, realize that the proposed value is not the same as the actual value of your house. Those are **TWO DIFFERENT** things. BCAD considers the proposed value to be the minimal value of your property so taxes can be generated to operate the county entities. The actual value of your home is what you agree to sell it for IF and WHEN you choose to sell it.

This is probably a much higher value. When you protest the proposed value, you are NOT lowering the value of your home. You are ultimately challenging the minimal taxes the county thinks you should pay.

BCAD uses Mass Appraisal when evaluating your property. That means that they start over each year and determine the proposed value of your home based on the current sales that have occurred to properties that are like yours and as close to your home as possible. They also use the existing equity values of the houses near you that are similar to your home. These current equity values are the value of your property and your neighbors'



properties that taxes were paid on from the year before. Hence, if you and your neighbors did not lower your individual proposed values from last year, you are both part of why your proposed value for this year has gone up.

Here is another way of thinking about it. Generally, you pay about \$25 for every \$1000 evaluation of your property. Assume your property value went up \$5000 for 2022, and that caused the amount of your property taxes to go up \$125. You decided it was not worth your time to protest because it only increased your taxes by \$125 from the previous year.

Now move forward with your decision. You have given BCAD a higher amount for their equity rate for the proposed value of your home for 2023. Not protesting last year directly increases your proposed value for this year. Also, think of it in terms of money. That extra \$125 you paid last year is now part of the overall taxes you will pay for as long as you own your home. So, if you own your home for the next 15 years, you have paid an extra

\$1,875 for that year. Think how much you pay extra over the years if you only occasionally protest your proposed value. If you have an Over 65 Exemption, think how much you could be helping your younger neighbors by protesting your Proposed Value as well as helping your children if they are the ones who will inherit your house one day.

Now that you have started reading through the information that BCAD has sent you and better understand why you should protest your proposed property value each year, pick a starting place and start the process.

I suggest that you start with the Proposed Value that BCAD has recommended and work backwards to a value that would reflect what is happening to your house. Remember that BCAD knows nothing about your house except what they can see from the street. Look around your home, see what should be done, and take pictures. This will be your evidence of why your value should be lowered.

For example, take pictures if you have a crack(s) in your ceiling, wall, or floor. It shows you have some foundation issues. Perhaps you had a plumbing issue that has been fixed, but now the wall where the issue was needs to be repaired, or the floor was damaged and still needs to be fixed; take a picture to show the problem so they can see it for themselves. These are only two examples. Look for ones that are needed in your house in terms of what should be done to correct something wrong. Do not think about what you need to do to remodel the home.

If you get an estimate to fix the problem(s), that is great, but you do not have to do that. Remember you are working from the minimal amount that your house is to be taxed on; do not expect to have the proposed value lowered by an exact amount in an estimate. It would help if you thought in terms of proportionate amounts.

Now that you have what you believe to be a reasonably proposed value, fill in the form that BCAD sent you. Read it carefully. Fill in everything the best you can and

1. Definitely mark the box under Section 3: Reason for Protest that says,

*Continued on page 15*

# Alley Maintenance is Up to Each Resident

by Cathy Teague

What? That was my first reaction upon finding a code violation tag stuck on my front door. I had been in my home for less than 60 days. As a first-time owner, one of my first purchases was an electric lawnmower and modest weed-eater. Good for me; however, it wasn't my front lawn that had Code Enforcement shaking their finger at me. It was alley maintenance.

That's right, all of us who live in neighborhoods with alleys are responsible for the maintenance of the area directly behind our home. What does that mean? In simple terms, it means cutting the grass, trimming the trees and vines and removing the obstacles that would prevent the city (trash, organic and recyclable collections) and utility services from being able to drive down the alley and do their job.

But, that's not my rug! That's not my mattress! Doesn't matter. Even if these items have been dumped in the alley behind your home they need to be removed. Those are not the neighborhood association's rules, but are the rules of our city.

Failure to keep your alley clean of debris, tall grasses, or overhanging tree limbs can result in your collection

services being moved to the front of your home for the entire block. Moving those large collection containers to the curb is a chore and one we want to help you avoid.

Many alleys have neighbors who go beyond what's required and pick up trash, straighten fallen cans and even cut limbs behind vacant homes or for elderly residents. Thanks for being so neighborly!

Once Code Enforcement misidentified a weedy alley site as being

directly behind my home. Mistakes can happen. Simply notify Code Enforcement and give them a chance to re-survey the area.

If you find drug paraphernalia or items that look like they may have been stolen, please report to 210-207-7273, SAPD non-emergency. A clean alley makes it less likely that it can be a place mischief takes place.

Thank you for cleaning your alley and doing your part to keep Monticello Park beautiful.

## Property Owner Responsibilities

Mow the alley to its center and keep it free of debris and other obstructions; your neighbor is responsible for maintaining the other half.

Maintain clearance of at least 14 feet high by 15 feet wide for vehicles to enter the alley. The alley surface must be reasonably free of debris and passable for vehicles.

Do not obstruct the alley with plants or stored items, such as brush or trash.



Alley at left is well maintained.

Alley at right has overgrown bushes, which may cause the city to suspend alley trash service for the entire block.



# District 7 Candidate Forum

**Thursday March 30<sup>th</sup>**

**6:30PM - 8PM**

**Grace Presbyterian Church  
950 Donaldson Ave, 78228**

**Join us for a San Antonio City Council District 7  
Candidate Forum to hear the candidates talk about  
the future of our community, their priorities, and ask  
questions on issues important to you.**

**The program will be moderated and hosted by:**

**Jefferson Neighborhood Association  
Monticello Park Neighborhood Association  
Woodlawn Lake Community Association**



## Valuation from page 12

“Incorrect appraised (market) value and/or value is unequal compared with other properties.”

2. Fill in Section 4: Additional Facts and Hearing Type—tell them about the evidence you plan on showing them. Decide which way to make your appeal—if it is In Person, you will have to go to the District office at a specified time during the week. If you choose Remotely by Zoom, you will be given a time and day for your Zoom meeting. If you decide by Telephone Conference, you will be given a time and day for your phone meeting. Regardless of which way you choose, you will need to follow up at a later date to send your picture evidence.

3. The last and most important thing you should do is to check off the red box that says: EVIDENCE

REQUESTED. This is your way of placing the burden back on BCAD. They must send out their evidence/ reasons for increasing your Proposed Value. When you receive this information, you can use it to help with your reasons as to why their Proposed Value should be closer to your reasonable value. How to do that is another article.

Remember, by law, BCAD cannot raise their valuation once it is sent to you, even after you protest. BCAD can only keep it the same or lower it. Next year this will all start again for them and you. Each year stands by itself. Their Proposed Value will change because the sale price of homes will change throughout

*Remember, by law, BCAD cannot raise their valuation once it is sent to you, even after you protest.*

the year, and they will deal with new equity values. The value you seek as a homeowner will also vary because maybe you fixed one of your problems, or perhaps there is a new problem that you need to bring to BCAD's attention.

This is no guarantee that you will successfully lower your proposed value, but it is a start. Remember that if you are dissatisfied with the Bexar County Appraisal District, you can appeal their decision through the Appraisal Review Board. The Appraisal Review Board is independent of BCAD. Its decision is based upon the evidence you provide, and the evidence provided by BCAD.

For more information, visit [www.bcad.org](http://www.bcad.org)

## BEAUTIFUL NEIGHBORHOOD

# Brush Collection Set for Week of May 8th

by Gary Hudman

The City of San Antonio provides our community with brush collection twice a year. The next service for the MPNA neighborhood is scheduled for the week of May 8, 2023.

Please wait for the door hanger confirming this date before placing brush on the curb. Collection may take the entire week and will eventually include your home.

If you trim your oak trees, please remember to paint all wounds to prevent the spread of oak wilt.

### Accepted Materials

- Leaves (paper bags, no plastic tape)
- Shrubs
- Tree branches
- Woody vines

### Guidelines

The door hanger states when your pile should be set out. It is NOT the actual day of collection.

Your pile should be ready for pickup no later than 7 a.m. on the Monday of your scheduled collection week.

Piles should be no more than eight cubic yards and placed within eight feet of the curb.

Piles should not be obstructed, in front of parked cars, or under low-hanging tree limbs.

If your pile contains non-brush

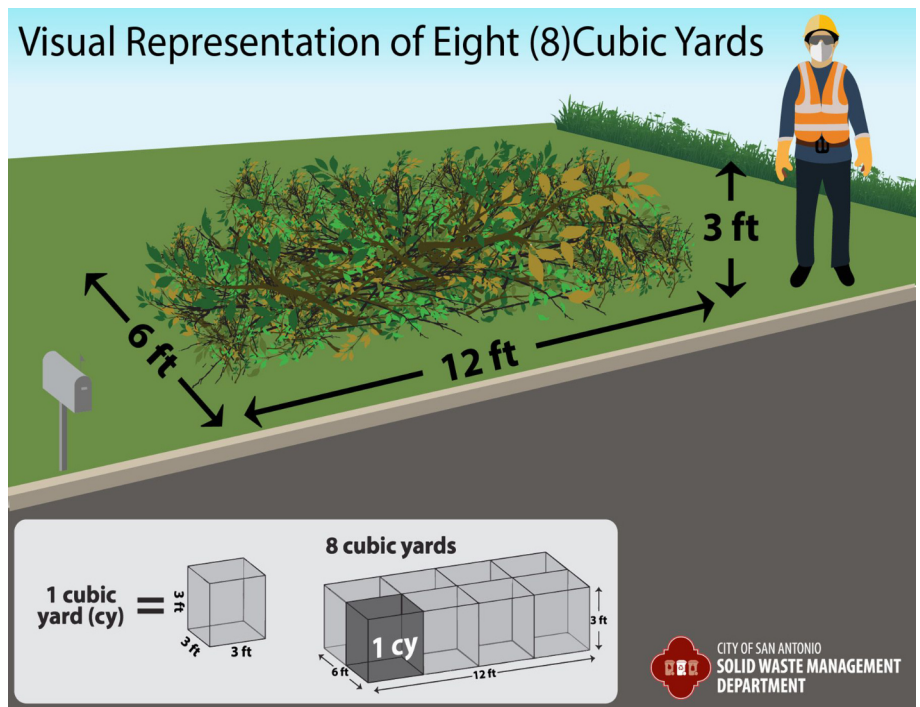
material, is obstructed, or set out after crews have passed, you could receive a fine of up to \$2,000 per day.

### Year-Round Options

Remember that grass clippings, leaves, and small branches can be disposed of in the green cart each week. Also, the city will collect up to 50 paper

bags of leaves twice a year simply by calling 311.

For more details, we have a handy link on the MPNA website, near the bottom of the home page, which will show you all upcoming service days for your address, including bulky, brush, trash, organics, and recycling. Visit [www.monticelloparkna.org](http://www.monticelloparkna.org).





*You're  
Invited!*

**Monticello Park Neighborhood Association**

# Pink Flamingo Social

**SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2023, 6 PM  
245 MARY LOUISE, FRONT YARD  
PAM & SCOTT CARPENTER, HOSTS**

**JOIN THE FLOCK!**

**Bring a chair, a snack, & your  
favorite beverage to share.**

**Super Casual and Family Friendly**

**Join us and meet your neighbors!**

