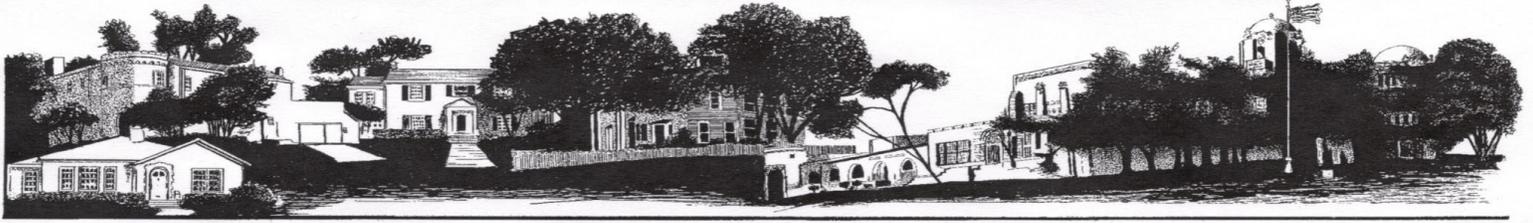


Monticello Park NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



MPNA is a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization

January - February 2021

Neighbors, there will be a Zoom General Assembly on Monday, January 25th, 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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Keep Monticello Bello

MEET THE NEIGHBORS

By Jan Peranteau

Just look at this gorgeous piece of architecture. It reigns like a king on Mary Louise with the queen castle being diagonal to it across the street. The castle home, owned by Gary Hudman, is being restored to its' original glory and more. Speaking with Hudman on a sunny, relatively mild winter day, he explained the reasons for such destruction before reconstruction.

"The walls had to be taken down and stucco removed because the wood beneath was rotten, especially at ground level where dirt had been built up for various landscaping projects from nine different owners." A concrete trough has been built in front of the wall to prevent future damage. Hudman added, "Stucco was peeling away from the building."

The house, built in 1928 under supervision of Frost-Carvel Architectural Firm, and received the first owner, the George Morgan family that year. The entry way had familiar multi-colored broken tile pieces we see today on many porches and sidewalks in the neighborhood. "Over the years it had been covered with a variety of materials including Saltillo tiles. When removed, Hudman found many drill holes throughout the floor. He said, "Maybe to treat for termites. I don't think we'll be able to use it."



"The Castle" of Monticello Park

Hudman purchased the house December 2009. "I wanted to restore it back to the original." He began doing research on the home at the Texanna Room of

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President's Message

Friends, it is an honor to serve as president of MPNA's Board of Directors for 2021. I would like to take this opportunity to thank last year's Board members for their service to the neighborhood and welcome the new and returning members. In particular, I want to thank Cathy Teague for her two years of Board leadership. Your steadfast commitment to bettering our neighborhood, everlasting patience and grace, and words of encouragement have not gone unnoticed. I hope I am able to walk in your shoes with at least half as much grace.

I know we are all eager to put 2020 behind us. Before we do, let us take this moment to reflect on the good that was accomplished and on some projects that remain pending.

First, the good: Your overwhelming care and concern for neighbors has been heart-warming. Neighbors have shared so many stories of checking in on each other; shopping for those who have been house-bound; even writing letters so that there is something other than bills to look forward to in the mailbox. I see us as a neighborhood coming together in ways not seen before. Also your creativity in helping neighbors find fun and beauty, even in relative isolation, is so appreciated. Where else but Monticello Park would we be gifted with quilt shows, gardening demonstrations, socially distanced parades, and a showcase of pets and mascots.

Now, a few updates on projects and/or initiatives that remain pending as of the end of 2020. The Furr Drive reconstruction has gone well beyond the initial completion date of November 2020 to mid/late February 2021. A huge debt of gratitude to those neighbors who reported quality concerns; Public Works has taken steps to ensure the contractor addresses the quality issues. The updates to the Pocket Park gazebo are complete, but the new sign has been pending installation since November. The sign should be in place by the time you receive this newsletter and trees can be expected to be planted sometime this spring.

As we look towards 2021, please consider how you can be a part of MPNA's legacy of service. Volunteer opportunities abound - you can deliver newsletters, review grant/scholarship applications, coordinate trash pick-up, help with the Home Tour (more on this to follow). Don't have time? That is okay. One simple way to help that takes just a few minutes is to pay dues. As a voluntary neighborhood association, dues are not required, but one of the few sources of revenue available to us as an organization. Dues are \$15 per year per household; \$10 for households of those 65 or older.

I look forward to seeing you at our Zoom General Assembly meeting on January 25th.

Drea Garza
President, Monticello Park Neighborhood Association

President: Drea Garza
Vice President: Gary Hudman
Secretary: Pamela Carpenter
Treasurer: Larissa O'Connors

Board Members:
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or

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[Facebook.com/groups/MonticelloParkNA](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MonticelloParkNA)

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For ad pricing information,
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MPNA

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San Antonio, Texas. 78201
email: BoardMPNA@gmail.com

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	report@sapreservation.com

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the Central Library, finding original architectural drawings, facts about construction and photographs of the various rooms featuring homeowners and guests.

Jan Peranteau: When did you begin in earnest?

“We started work April 2020, but before that, the casement windows were restored.”

After applying and receiving a grant from The San Antonio Conservation Society in 2013, Hudman began the project of removing windows. Hudman said, “A company in Salado, Texas did that and then restored them to their original position on site. “The grant paid for about a third of the windows, but six windows were missing. I replaced those six windows as well, using my own money to complete that project.”

While continuing research, interviewing contractors, meeting with an architect, and gathering building materials, Hudman continued to work at his job as Director of Ecommerce for H-E-B. He also traveled back and forth to Houston to see about his aging parents. He served as Vice President and President of the Monticello Park Neighborhood Association and worked on various committees including being chair of the MPNA Tour of Homes. Meanwhile, the project inched forward.

J.P.: What are some of the problems that have slowed the construction?

“One of the most challenging aspects has been the choosing of contractors and various workers who want to work on such an extensive project. Most builders are interested in building new homes. It is much more difficult to get people who are dedicated to restoration. Materials have been hard to find and much more expensive during the Pandemic. The replacement casement windows came from New York and came at a very high price. Lead times from ordering to receiving materials has increased. For instance. A vent hood ordered should have taken a month to arrive. It has been three months and we are still waiting. Also, many people took on remodeling projects during the Covid shutdown--so fewer qualified workers to do all the jobs.”

J.P.: Have you ever done anything like this before?

“I renovated a house in Alamo Heights in 2003, but it was just a house. It was no way near the magnitude of this house. I was just bringing things up to date.”



**1947 Photograph of Original Fireplace
Prior to Remodel in 1953**

Hudman related a massive addition and remodel had been done in 1953 to the Mary Louise home. At that time the pool was added with a giant Polynesian statue casting a tropical eye over the back yard. An outside patio was enclosed creating another living space. An elevator near the kitchen carried occupants to the second floor skipping the hike up the wrought-iron railed staircase. The shell alcoves by the fireplace were covered in the name of modernization. Hudman said, “The fireplace with the shell alcoves and original mantel will be restored to their former grandeur.”

More renovation in the 70's and 80's created a throw-back to the “Rock and Roll” era complete with brightly lit juke boxes in an adjacent room playing 45 rpm record singles.

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KEEP MONTICELLO BELLO

by Mark A. Peterson

Project Coordinator - Conservation

San Antonio Water Systems and GardenStyleSanAntonio.com

Working with a Landscape Designer

December and January are an excellent time to put your thoughts down on paper and begin researching resources. Even now when most of my communication with customers happens via email, one of the most frequent requests - sometimes desperate pleas - I get is how to find the resources and professional help to design a landscape.

I completely understand why this is a common request as it can be quite bewildering to begin such a project. Taking the first step is often the most difficult.

Fortunately, after many years of pondering these same questions, one of my colleagues finally embarked on her landscape redesign journey. I thought it would be helpful to hear her story and eventual success via this quick Q&A.



View of Existing Yard Before the Project

DESCRIBE THE ORIGINAL STATE OF YOUR BACKYARD.

I'm lucky enough to have more than 30 large cedar elms and live oaks in my yard. That's great for shade, but not so much for a lawn or even most flowering plants. By the time I re-landscaped, my backyard had dirt, trees and some overused hardscape. It really needed help!

WHAT WAS YOUR VISION FOR THE BACKYARD?

I've lived in this house for about 25 years and raised children here.

We've had inflatable pools, swing sets and dog runs, but I felt it was time for a more grown-up approach. I frequently entertained friends and family, and enjoy a fire pit and Adirondack chairs, but it was situated in the middle of dirt.

WHAT DID YOU USE AS INSPIRATION?

GardenStyle San Antonio, of course. There were plenty of great design ideas for low water use landscapes and hardscape. I also saved photos from WaterSaver Landscape tours and curated a Pinterest board with hardscape and garden ideas.

HOW DID YOU FIND AND SELECT A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT?

It wasn't easy. I wanted someone with strong experience in developing a plan to work around my trees and shade, and still incorporate plants that would be low water use, and low maintenance. Someone who would let me add my personal touch to the design was also important to me. I wasn't in a hurry so I took time to read Yelp reviews, talk to several potential landscapers and looked at their websites.

HOW DID YOU WORK WITH THEM TO INCORPORATE YOUR VISION?

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I expressed how I wanted the yard to feel - lush, in a low-water use way, and private. At the same time, I wanted to have a little grass for my dogs. I also learned from **GardenStyleSA.com** to aim for 1/3 hardscape, 1/3 grass and 1/3 garden beds. Finally, while the designer would handle the perennials, bushes and trees, I wanted space to plant fun annuals in the front of the flower beds.

HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE PLANTS FOR YOUR DESIGN?

The landscaper measured and sketched out my yard and came up with a list of plants that work in the shade. We discussed it and modified the list with some plants I preferred, but I really loved most everything he selected. We also decided on a drip irrigation system. I wanted something I could use often enough to keep the plants alive, but not waste water.

THE RESULTS?

I love my backyard now! Working from home, I look out at it every day. The plants and grass are all settling in, and I've added some flowers that are looking great. I've also made a mini-pond from a large pot with a splashing fountain to add some sound and light - the birds seem to be enjoying it. I can even sit outside by the fire pit and enjoy family, at a safe distance of course. I've spent more time outside in the last few months than I have in the 25 years I've lived here.

HAVE YOU NOTICED A CHANGE IN YOUR WATER USE YET?

It's been a little high, but primarily because I've been getting my new plants established. I've backed off the time and frequency the irrigator programmed in. And I use a Flume water flow sensor to see how much water I'm using and when.

That's Anne's success story. It takes patience and diligence, but it can be done. And December and January are an excellent time to put your thoughts down on paper and begin researching resources.

Of course, you can always visit GardenStyleSA.com for weekly watering amounts and landscaping tips to keep your yard looking great using less water.



Views of the Completed Project

MPNA Membership and Dues

MPNA is a volunteer neighborhood association and dues are not required for you to participate in the many activities and resources that we, as an organization, provide. Why then is it important that we collect dues? Beyond the revenue collected by ad sponsors in our newsletter, dues are one of our only funding sources that we can depend on year after year, and especially this year. The home tour, while a great funding source, takes place only every other year, and had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic. We are hopeful that we will be able to hold a home tour this year, but it remains too early to count on a December 2021 tour for operating expenses throughout the rest of 2021.

What operating and administrative expenses does MPNA need to plan for each year? If you are reading this newsletter, please consider the costs incurred to print the newsletter six times a year for each of the more than 700 homes that make up our neighborhood association. If you have decorated wagons and bikes in red, white, and blue streamers for a 4th of July parade, enjoyed a paleta in the middle of a Pink Flamingo social, or received a prize at a National Night Out gathering or contest, you have enjoyed just a few of the benefits that MPNA has to offer.

Every year, we award one or more restoration grants to homeowners who have made improvements to the exterior of their homes (with OHP approval, of course!). We also offer scholarship funding to graduating seniors attending Thomas Jefferson High School or the Young Women's Leadership Academy. We are beginning 2021 with less funding than prior years, which limits the reach of these programs.

Finally, paying your dues by January 31st of every year is the only way to take full advantage of your MPNA membership. While our bylaws open membership to anyone owning homes or residing within the boundaries of the neighborhood, only those households who have paid dues (\$15 per household; \$10 per household if over 65) by the January deadline are eligible to vote during MPNA meetings.

Last year, less than 10% of eligible households paid dues for 2020. Imagine the possibilities of the beautification projects, neighborhood improvements, and social activities we could host if even half of the households within the MPNA boundaries submitted dues.

So how do you remit your dues? You can mail a check payable to MPNA to MPNA, P.O. Box 100315, San Antonio, TX 78201, or contact Ressie O'Connors to make arrangements to drop off your dues. Additional donations are always welcome!

General Assembly Dates for 2021

Remember to mark your calendars now so you do not miss a MPNA General Assembly in 2021. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM on the last Monday in odd number months, except when there is a conflicting holiday weekend:

January 25th
March 29th
June 7th*
July 26th
September 27th
November 29th

* Avoids conflicting with Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 31st, 2021.

Zoom into the General Assembly Without Leaving Home

General Assembly Meeting is on for Monday, January 25th, 2021 at 7:00 PM
Safe Distancing Means Time to Zoom Again

Our Monday, January 25th 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.
2. Look in the upper right corner for "Join a Meeting" and click on it.
3. A screen will ask for your **Meeting ID (826 3734 4627)** and then a **Passcode (652569)**.
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.

Announcing the Winners of the 2020 Monticello Park's Holiday Decorating Contest

Thank you to all neighbors who participated in the dazzling display of holiday lights and decorations. Our streets were merry and bright, and homes were a delight to walk or drive past. The winners of the 2020 contest are:

1st Place

501 Club Drive (Tom Simmons)

2nd Place

205 Donaldson (Emma Chamberlain)

3rd Place

34 Cromwell (John and Diana Granato)

A special thank you to the members of the judging panel!



HISTORY CORNER

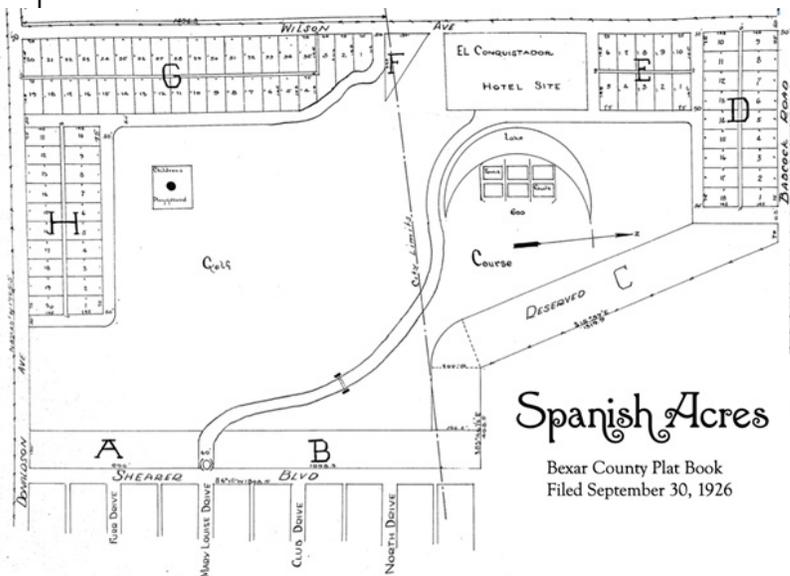
by Gary Hudman

Grand Plan for Spanish Acres and El Conquistador Hotel Never Realized

The neighborhood we now call Monticello Park is actually a combination of multiple subdivisions built during the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, including North Woodlawn Terrace, English Village, and Monticello Park. Perhaps the most grandiose development planned during that period was the never-built Spanish Acres, which featured a golf club, tennis courts, and a magnificent resort hotel, El Conquistador. Mary Louise Drive would have led directly to the entry of this hotel complex.

In 1926, local developers formed the Monticello Land Company and filed plans for Spanish Acres with Bexar County. This 103-acre development included 98 homesites in addition to the country club amenities and the hotel, and stretched from Donaldson to Babcock, bounded by Wilson and Shearer.

The eight story El Conquistador Hotel, the crown of this development, designed by local architects Adams and Adams, would have been a magnificent example of Spanish Revival architecture. Advertised as costing \$1,771,000, the hotel and resort were designed to appeal to tourists coming to San Antonio to take advantage of our mild winters. In September 1926, the San Antonio Light reported that the El Conquistador would open sometime after January 1, 1927, an incredibly aggressive plan, and just a few months following the openings of the Gunter and Plaza Hotels downtown. All three were focused on luxurious lodging for winter Texans and were advertised in multiple areas of the country.



Residential lots in Spanish Acres were widely advertised for a number of months, but apparently sales had little success. In 1929, the developers sold the southern 33 acres to the San Antonio school district as a site for the city's third major high school, Thomas Jefferson. Like the proposed hotel, the school was also designed by Adams and Adams and incorporated many of the same amazing design elements.

By 1934, it appears the developers still clung to their vision to build El Conquistador. When they

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updated the plat after selling an additional 38 acres for housing, they kept the remaining acres for the hotel. Within a few years, however, that dream was apparently abandoned, and the remaining land was turned into a new sub-division, Monticello Park, roughly bounded by Club, Shearer, Wilson, and Babcock.

Many know the name Monticello Park refers to President Thomas Jefferson's magnificent home, Monticello, and some may have assumed that the neighborhood was named as a reference to the school. Yet the Monticello Land Company existed as early as 1926, well before the land was sold and planned as a school. I believe the naming may have been the other way around, with the Monticello Land Company influencing the school district to name the school after Thomas Jefferson! I plan to continue investigating this theory and hope to report back to the neighborhood at a future date!

I hope you enjoyed hearing about this proposed luxury resort and unbuilt neighborhood. Wouldn't it have been great to have that golf course in our own backyard?



DISCOVERER OF A NEW WORLD OF PLEASURE

EL CONQUISTADOR



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: Artist David Guerrero's "Smoke Stacks" in the triangle park at Fredericksburg Road and North 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

Buy five ads and get a sixth one free!
Call 210-734-2445 or visit monticelloparkna.com for more information.

Call for Newsletter Submissions

Have a personal story about our neighborhood, an event to promote, a community member you wish to honor, or a topic of interest to our community you wish to share?

You are invited to submit announcements, articles, or even just ideas for future issues of the MPNA Newsletter.

Contact Pam Carpenter at 210-241-7490 to find out more information.

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Back to the current project by Hudman, “The kitchen complex is really composed of six separate rooms. First there is the main kitchen with a Blue Star Chef’s Range and refrigerator, bar area with bar stools for casual eating while overlooking the family room and pool, breakfast room, walk-in pantry, wine cellar, butler’s pantry, and storage hall.” He will have a commercial ice maker, two dishwashers, and two refrigerators for ready use at social gatherings. Sounds like the neighborhood will be ready for the next Flamingo Party once we get past Covid!

J.P.: This Reporter wants to know about the cabinet space.

Hudman pivots and turns around and gestures, “There are cabinets everywhere--in the breakfast room, walk in pantry, and hall. Cookbooks and equipment will be stored in the hall. The butler’s pantry will house fine china, serving pieces. Everything I’m doing will be very utilitarian--designed to work well.”

A previous owner had the elevator removed about 15 years ago so we climb the stairs to the second floor for a view of future bedrooms. He said, “The upstairs will have four bedrooms and three bathrooms. Every bedroom will have a window. A previous owner enclosed a space to make a bedroom, but it had no window. Fire Code requires a window for every bedroom.”

Arriving at the master bedroom and looking inside, one sees vaulted ceilings, five windows and a large opening leading to an outdoor area. “This will be a roof-top patio.” Hudman says.

What a way to see the evening come on!

As for when the project will be completed, Hudman estimates, “I am hoping for mid-summer this year.” He did say he expected the project to take a year to a year and a half. But when complete, the castle house with its’ crown tower will be fit for a king.

THOSE WHO LIVED AMONG US

Have Special Members of Our Community Passed Away Recently?

The members of the Monticello Park Neighborhood Association extend their deepest sympathies to our neighbors during these trying times. Help us honor their lives and accomplishments by contributing your cherished memories and their life stories with your neighbors through the MPNA Newsletter. Need assistance in writing a fitting tribute to your departed loved one or neighbor? Feel free to contact the Newsletter Editor at 210-241-7490 to provide a submission or receive assistance in writing your special article. Let us celebrate together those amazing members of our community who lived among us!