

# Monticello Park NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



## MEET THE NEIGHBORS

by Jan Peranteau

The 12<sup>th</sup> annual “On and Off Fredericksburg Road Studio Tour” has come and gone with our neighborhood being well represented. North Drive was a hub of activity with cars bumper to bumper looking for places to park. Maria and David Guerrero not only showed their art but welcomed Edith Cuellar with her weavings, and Fran Rich with recycled wooden chairs made useable again with new seats made from neckties and leather belts. The show also featured guest artists Claudia Langford and Barbara Garstecki. Across the street, Vickie and Mike Owens created an art space under their massive oak tree with Vickie’s quilts waving in the breeze and Mike’s pendulum pieces bobbing back and forth. They also had guest artists who shared this outdoor space.



*A few of Katrina Cook's books*

At Katrina Cook’s house, the shopper stepped into the world of hand-made books. As I spoke by phone with Katrina Cook, about to board an airplane to London, she talked about her journey in book-making. “I took a class at Southwest School of Art.” It wasn’t in book binding, *per se*, but introduced her to the process of creating books.

She said, “I use the Coptic stitch and can use hard pieces of wood and mostly anything found for the covers.” On this trip to London she will meet with a niece who lives in Germany

and they will see *Hamilton* as well as take a tour of “Harry Potter’s London.” And they will go to the flea markets in London to look for “stuff” to be used in future books. This is not her first flea market—she has been to markets in Paris, Athens, and Edinburgh. In Scotland, she found antique wax seals. Asked where she would put these treasures, she replied, “I put a bag inside my suitcase for bringing things back.” She also spoke of creating Junk Journals. These journals generally have a theme. She said, “The theme can be anything you want it to be. It is a way to organize the bits and pieces of our lives and save things we cherish.” She has been

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# President's Message

Welcome to that time of year where we're not sure whether to put away the sweaters or keep them handy. The good news is that our mild winter is bringing south Texas and Monticello Park a bounty of bluebonnets and other blooming plants to brighten our yards. Check out the piece in today's newsletter about how to grow a Mountain Laurel.

Along with flowers, city election signs are also popping up in yards. MPNA will co-host a candidates' forum in April, ahead of city elections in early May. Read about the details that we have available as we go to print.

If you attended the recent On/Off Fredericksburg Road Art Tour in February, no doubt you were pleased to see the works of many of our creative and imaginative neighbors. While we couldn't profile every one of our artists living in MP, Jan Peranteau introduces you to several in her article this month.

There's also a Pink Flamingo Party to attend in April! If you're new to the neighborhood, please come and get to know everyone. And, we hope you'll also attend our neighborhood's next General Assembly on Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. You'll hear a re-cap of the Community Informational Meeting held the prior week to inform Furr Street homeowners about the upcoming street and sidewalk improvements from the city's TCI (Transportation & Capital Improvements) Department.

It is that time of year to gather up your receipts, get your photos in order and fill out an application detailing a 2018 improvement project on your home's exterior. As you know, some of the monies raised from our Monticello Park Holiday Home Tour and Christmas Market are awarded to MPNA families who have beautified the exterior of their home over the past year. An application can be found in the newsletter. Remember, the more details, the better. Please follow the directions for assembling your submission. We'd like to have all applications in hand for Committee Review no later than April 30, 2019.

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Or

Check us out on Facebook  
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## Newsletter Committee

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Historic Building Enforcement Officer  
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*...PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued from page 2*

Much of our neighborhood, as you know, belongs in an historic district. With long “to do” lists made over the winter months, it’s time for many of us to tackle a variety of improvement projects which may need approval beyond a city permit to accomplish. In this newsletter, as well as at our next General Assembly, senior staff with the office of Historic Preservation will share their guidelines, answer questions and tell us about a new initiative underway in San Antonio to give new purpose to old things. Curious? Look for the Question and Answer section of the newsletter.

Cathy Teague  
President  
Monticello Park Neighborhood Association

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participating in the tour for about 4-5 years.

Moving away from North, this participant went to Donaldson to see the cat lady. Yoko Misu said, “I ‘ve been drawing my two cats, Kuma and Tora, since they came into my life. She said she has more than 3,000 drawings of cats and it was evident as one walked into her house. Cat prints covered the walls and were piled on display tables. She said she creates the works first on paper and then uses a combination of printmaking and multi-medium painting. The pictures have a whimsical quality and one feels the cat is about to pounce off the page or else curl up and want to be petted. Misu was born in Tokyo, Japan, and came to the U.S. after marrying a US military man stationed in Japan. Arriving in the US in 1983, they moved to Corpus Christi, Texas. where she got a MA from Texas A&M University. She received her BFA from Tokyo National University of Arts and Music. She moved to San Antonio in 2012 after the death of her husband. She visited the Monticello Park Neighborhood, going on the studio tour four years in a row. She decided after touring that she wanted to move to this neighborhood. She found a house on Donaldson and moved in during the last part of September 2018. She said, “There are so many artists here and I wanted to live around artists and be in a community that supports the arts,” This is the first year she has been on the tour.



*Yoko Misu, the Cat Lady*

Robin Gara exhibited at Deco Pizzeria, but this particular day she was at her home on Summit Avenue. Growing up in Ohio, she got a BA in art and English from Ohio University. “As a child, I drew all the time. My dad took me to museums everywhere. The big changing experience of my life came when I was in college. I was part of a study abroad program and got to spend a semester in Florence, Italy. When I saw the unfinished Pieta in the Duomo, I started crying.” She met two friends that semester and they vowed to go back to Italy someday. In the early 1980’s her friend convinced her to go back. “We sold everything we owned and moved to Florence. We got a place to live and we painted watercolors and sold them each week at the Uffizi. You had to have a spot.” Well somehow, they got one and painted all week, then on the weekends, sold their paintings. She said they were rewarded when they got to have a good meal and enough money to pay the rent. Somewhere along this path, she became a Vista Volunteer. “I was assigned to Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

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**Need Assistance with Potholes, Stray Animals, Garbage, and more? City help is at your fingertips.**

# **DOWNLOAD THE 311 APP**



**3-1-1 is APP Your Fingertips  
A new way to reach city hall**

Later this year, MPNA will host our city's 311 Customer Service office for a demonstration of the city's new 311SA Mobile App during a General Assembly meeting. For those of you more comfortable calling the city to report a pothole, find out about trash collection or report a code violation, you can still call 3-1-1 or 210-207-6000.

For those who would like to go ahead and give the city of San Antonio's new mobile app a try, go to your iTunes or Google Play market stores and download it. The app is a red square with a blue flag flying. Give it a try and help our city by becoming another set of eyes or ears helping our city be the best it can be.

And remember, if it's an emergency, call 9-1-1.

## **Signs, Signs, Everywhere A Sign Not all of them are legal**

With the coming of warmer weather, many MP families are likely to consider holding a garage sale or begin a summer lawn mowing business. Please remember, street signs and utility poles should not be used to post any advertisement, whether it's in an effort to find a missing dog, notify the neighborhood of a garage sale or realtor advertising an open house nearby.

There's a city ordinance which took effect roughly a decade ago which forbids street posts and utility poles from being used for free advertising. This ordinance had broad support from citizen groups tired of the visual clutter and litter that used to cover our neighborhoods.

So please keep "Monticello Bello" by using a small number of temporary signs (don't forget to pick them up when you're finished with your event) to bring people to your home. And, of course, Facebook is an effective and free way to share news of a lost pet, found pet, and an upcoming garage sale as well as other news.

## **Living Historically**

### **A Question and Answer about the ins and outs of living in an historic district**

With new families living in Monticello Park and the renovation season fast approaching, we're inviting the COSA's Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) to attend our March 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. In advance of the meeting, Cathy Teague asked Stephanie Phillips, Senior Historic Preservation Specialist with OHP to answer a few questions about life in an historic district.

1. What is the boundary of the MP Historic District?

The boundary of the Monticello Park Historic District is irregular, but is roughly bounded to the north by Quentin Dr, to the west by Wilson Blvd and Kampmann Blvd, to the south by W Mulberry and W Woodlawn, and to the east by San Antonio Ave, N Elmendorf, and Fredericksburg Rd. A portion of the Monticello Park Historic District is located within the Jefferson/Woodlawn Lake Neighborhood Association boundary. A boundary map is available at [www.sanantonio.gov/historic/historicsites/HistoricDistricts/MonticelloPark](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/historicsites/HistoricDistricts/MonticelloPark). To check if your property is within the district, you may also type in your address using the OHP Address Search Tool, available at [www.sanantonio.gov/historic](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic).

2. If my home is in MP but just outside the boundaries of the historic district can I do anything I want to my home?

While your home will not be subject to the Historic Design Guidelines, your property is still subject to the city's Unified Development Code (UDC) and property maintenance code. Certain scopes of work require that permits be pulled from the Development Services Department (DSD). For permitting requirements and questions, please call (210) 207-1111 or visit [www.sanantonio.gov/dsd](http://www.sanantonio.gov/dsd).

3. Does the OHP regulate interior renovations?

No. The Historic Design Guidelines and OHP review apply to exterior work only, including landscaping, hardscaping, and fencing. Certain types of interior renovation work, including plumbing, electrical, load bearing wall removal, and more, require that a permit be pulled from the Development Services Department (DSD) to ensure quality and safety of work. For permitting requirements and questions, please call (210) 207-1111 or visit [www.sanantonio.gov/dsd](http://www.sanantonio.gov/dsd).

4. Where can I find the guidelines I need to follow prior to doing work on my home?

The Historic Design Guidelines, adopted by City Council in 2012, are available in full on our website at [www.sanantonio.gov/historic/Resources/HistoricDistrictGuidelines](http://www.sanantonio.gov/historic/Resources/HistoricDistrictGuidelines). Hard copies are also available at the following public libraries: Central Library, Landa Branch, San Pedro Branch, Mission Branch, Carver Branch, and the Bazan Branch. You may also visit our office at 1901 S Alamo St to view a hard copy.

The Historic Design Guidelines provide historic district residents, property owners, and professionals working with historic properties a background history of the City's historic districts, an understanding of architectural design principles, and guidelines which promote predictability and ensure compatibility between new development and the existing historic environment. The Guidelines used in the review process are flexible and adaptable to the unique characteristics of each individual historic structure and neighborhood.

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The primary role of Office of Historic Preservation staff is to serve as a resource for you to be successful in your next project and help you understand what to expect in the design review process. If you have questions about the Historic Design Guidelines or design review in general, including the administrative approval process or the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) process, please visit our website or contact our office at (210) 207-0035 or

[ohp@sanantonio.gov](mailto:ohp@sanantonio.gov).

5. What happens if a homeowner performs work on their home and did not receive an approval from OHP?

The Office of Historic Preservation’s letter of approval is called a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). COA applications are completely free for residential properties. If a property owner performs work on their home prior to obtaining a COA, the work may be subject to compliance measures, including a violation notice or stop work order; required reversal of work; and/or a \$500 post-work application fee. If the work performed also requires a permit from the Development Services Department (DSD), double permit fees may also apply, along with other compliance measures as determined by DSD.

A great rule of thumb is to check with us before you begin work! Our design review team is always happy to answer questions.

### **Pink Flamingo Time**

We don’t have to wait for Fiesta to have a great time in Monticello Park, that’s why we hold Pink Flamingo parties! Our next event will be held on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:00 p.m. at 128 Furr Drive, the home of our MPNA President, Cathy Teague.

Bring your favorite side dish to share and a beverage, if you’d like. Chairs are always welcome for an evening of food, fellowship, corn hole games and lots of conversation. Local musicians are also welcome to bring a guitar and serenade us under the stars. If you’re new to Monticello Park, this is a great way to meet your neighbors!

Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> is also Thomas Jefferson’s birthday so, how fitting that Monticello Park neighbors should gather on this day and lift a glass. Look for the pink flamingo and follow the sounds of laughter and a good time!



## How Hard Could It Be? Growing mountain laurels from seed



Mountain laurels are the harbingers of Spring in South Texas. This hardy evergreen surprises and delights us with its oh-too-brief cascades of purple blooms and the heady grape juice scent that accompanies their arrival. When those flowers fade, trees are left with clusters of seed pods which eventually fall to the ground. So, have you ever tried to grow your own tree from these seed pods? Want to try?

Crack open the pods. Sometimes you might have to soak them in warm water to allow you to get to the seed inside. These seeds are red/orange/maroon in color and are hard. By the way, the seeds are also toxic so, if you have small children in the house, keep them away from the seeds.

The experts say you should collect more than one pod because not all seeds will successfully germinate. Once you collect your seeds, scarify them with a knife before planting them in seed trays. A mix of good potting soil and garden soil is necessary.

Keep the soil moist but not saturated until you begin to see the sprouts. This can be the frustrating part because often, the experts say, less than half of the seeds will germinate. You can transfer your sprouts into larger pots as needed but, like any plant, don't go too big on your pot too quickly. You'll get a lot of root and very little plant if you do so.

Patience is key to a successful planting. Patience in that a Mountain Laurel is a very slow growing tree and therefore, you might have to wait a year before you can plant your small tree from its pot and into the ground. Remember too that Mountain Laurels love the full sun and well drained soil. So, after the chance of ground frost has passed and our days have warmed up, dig your hole, add some compost to the soil and plant your hardiest seedlings. For more tips on growing a Mountain Laurel from seed, visit [www.plantanswers.com/texas\\_mountain\\_laurel.htm](http://www.plantanswers.com/texas_mountain_laurel.htm). Pssst, don't want to try this, you can find small mountain laurel trees on Etsy and at nearby nurseries



## E-scooters and Other Things That Go Zoom!

By Cathy Teague

Everyone in Monticello Park was caught off guard last June when we began to see rows of electric scooters parked at strategic corners of our neighborhood. Some unfortunately were parked blocking commercial driveways and handicapped ramps while others simply blocked sidewalks and other important paths.

Well, if you felt discombobulated in our neighborhood, a trip downtown would have left you feeling even more frustrated at the proliferation of a variety of e-scooters and dock-less bikes weaving through crowds on sidewalks, in Alamo Plaza, the Riverwalk and major downtown streets. Sixteen thousand permits had been issued and new companies, some locally owned, seemed eager to increase their presence.

City Hall certainly took note and in October 2018 began to study the matter in earnest under a 6-month pilot program designed to determine how best to regulate e-scooters and dock-less bikes for the safety of passengers, pedestrians and the driving public. During one meeting of association leaders led by District 7 City Council member Ana Sandoval, then-leading city manager finalist Erik Walsh (he's now officially San Antonio's new City Manager) admitted to the audience that while he had yet to try and ride one, he had narrowly missed a e-scooter and its driver while trying to leave city hall one evening.

In February, immediate changes took place when the City Council approved a moratorium on permits, determined hours of operation, deployment and pick up regulations. Council also discussed other regulatory ideas such as increasing permit fees, limiting speed limits and even GEO-fencing, which would effectively "shut off" the e-scooters should they move from streets and sidewalks and on to the Riverwalk, for example. Already Alamo Plaza is off-limits to e-scooters and dock-less bikes as is the Pearl and a few other venues. How they are handled at convention facilities, during Fiesta and other considerations is still under study.

The pilot program ends in April and additional action from City Hall is expected to follow. So far in Monticello Park it appears that the market has spoken. There are far fewer e-scooters in the neighborhood than last June because, I suspect, there are far fewer consistent riders in our part of the city.





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That is where I met my future husband, Chris.” He also worked in Vista. He had a master’s in social work from Ohio State. “We married and lived in Ohio for a while.” Her first teaching job was in Columbus Ohio. Moving to San Antonio, Gara taught English and Art in the Edgewood District. After 30 years of teaching, she retired and decided to devote her time to art again, calling it the “Me Period.” She took some painting classes from Elizabeth Rodriguez at the Bihl Haus. Rodriguez encouraged her to figure out what she wanted to do. “I love color and the way colors interact with one another.” Gara has been a part of the On and Off Fred Tour for 3 years.

No story about The On and Off Fredericksburg Studio Tour would be complete without talking to Kellen Kee McIntyre, one of the founders of the Bihl Haus Arts. Sitting down with her at the Bihl Haus, she said, “You really can’t talk about the tour without talking about how the Bihl Haus came into existence.” Previous owners did not know what to do with the property. KB homes wanted to build little houses here. Southwest Housing bought the building and restored it. When they finished the renovation, they came to McIntyre and said, “Here are the keys.” Southwest built a retirement community around the building. From the beginning, McIntyre wanted it as a community art space. Working as an art historian with UTSA, she had many ideas. In 2005 Bihl Haus had a soft opening with round table discussions, inviting local artists and residents such as RitaMaria Contreras, Maria and David Guerrero, Dale Jansen, Stacy Parten, and Beverly and George Prado to brainstorm about possibilities for the Bihl Haus. The focus was to bring art in all forms together to create a supportive program for the community. In 2007, the first On and Off Fredericksburg Road Studio Tour featured 20 artists. Also, in 2007, classes began at the Bihl Haus. Today The Bihl Haus Go! Arts Program offers four to five classes weekly to residents of the Primrose Retirement complex and older adults living in the surrounding communities. All classes are free and include materials. The residents of Primrose Retirement Community serve as docents for the Bihl Haus. McIntyre said, “This year we had 70 plus artists at 44 locations covering seven neighborhoods close to Fredericksburg Road. The catalog is something we want people to keep and refer to later.” It is a way for neighbors to meet neighbors and learn about nearby neighborhoods. “We invite our neighbors to visit us for both performances, art, live music and food. We feature mostly local people, but we do have artists from various parts of the world—Cuba, New Zealand, Japan and Belgium.” She pauses and raises her hands, “It’s all free.”



*Robin Gara, artist in the neighborhood*



*Bihl Haus Art, a beautifully restored space within the grounds of the Primrose Apartments*

## When Service Station Meant Something

Who remembers the good old days when gas stations gave full service?

This amazing photo shows J. L. Clark's Gulf Super Service Station Number One all decked out for the Christmas Holidays in San Antonio, circa 1939. The station was located at 1739 Fredericksburg Road, at the confluence of Zarzamora, Fulton, West Gramercy, and Fredericksburg Road. Look at the details and the fantastic lighting! It's almost like a Hollywood movie set, it's so good.

The station was later owned by Z.F. Guest, and sold to Joe Nigro, a former Merchant Marine, in the 1970s.

This sensational photo is from the digital archives of UT San Antonio.

The same site today:



Following is an article from the *San Antonio Express*, May 8, 1927, announcing the original sale of the site to the Gulf Refining Company.

*San Antonio Express*  
Sunday Morning, May 8, 1927

## ***Pay \$10,000 For Woodlawn Area Oil Station Site***

A corner of Fredericksburg Road and Zarzamora Street in the Woodlawn district, offering unusual advantages, has been purchased by the Gulf Refining Company from N.S. Dickinson.

Ten thousand dollars was the consideration.

This property is located at the southeast corner of the intersection.

The Gulf Company will erect a service station costing approximately \$10,000.

## **Holiday Market Raffle**

Did you enter the 2018 Holiday Home Tour's raffle? If you did, please don't miss our next General Assembly meeting – we will be drawing raffle tickets for over a dozen prizes. Each of the vendors that participated in the Holiday Market either donated one of their crafts/products or offered a gift certificate valued at \$25.00. All of the prizes, which include original art works, handmade soaps, paper goods, textiles, ceramics, hand-crafted jewelry, and gift certificates will be on display during the meeting. Thank you once again to not only our local vendors, but also to those sponsors who contributed gifts, to include gourmet coffee and gift certificates. You do not have to be present to win; if your name is drawn, but you are not able to attend, we will contact you to make arrangements for you to collect your prize. For those prize winners who are present, please join us after the meeting for a group photo!

Lots of information and this newsletter, in living color, can be found on our Facebook page,

### **Monticello Park Neighborhood Association**

You must live within the boundaries of Monticello Park and/or be approved to join the group.

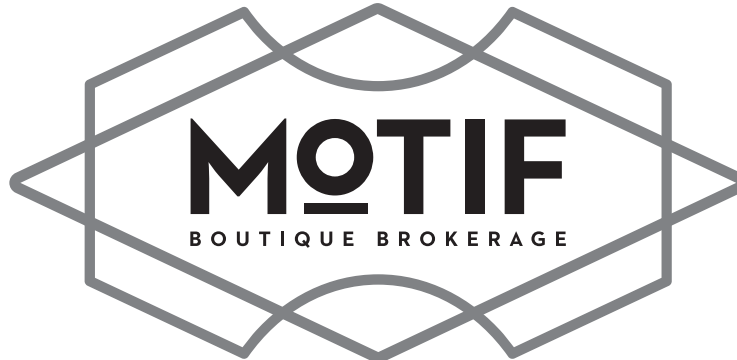
Check our website too!

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**Cascarones, brought to Europe from Asia  
by Marco Polo, were originally filled with what?**



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*Answer: Perfumed powder.*

## Save the Date

San Antonio city elections will take place in early May. Once again, the Monticello Park Neighborhood Association will join the Jefferson Neighborhood Association in hosting a candidates' forum. Mark your calendars for Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:30 p.m. Details regarding the location are still being ironed out so, be sure and check Facebook for updates and please, plan on attending! This is a great opportunity to meet candidates and ask questions.

## Brush Collection is Right Around the Corner

Spring typically brings thunderstorms and high winds to Monticello Park. If you have old trees on your property, you get your fair share of downed tree limbs after such storms.

The good news is that the next brush collection period for Monticello Park takes place in early May. While an exact date hasn't been announced yet, look for the door hanger the city provides in advance giving everyone the exact dates when you can place brush near the curb for free pick-up.