

NEWSLETTER



Woodlawn Lake Community Association

January - February 2009

San Antonio, Texas

SAISD BOARD CANDIDATES SPEAK AT JAN 27th MEETING

Two WLCA members, Ed Garza and Michael Soto, are seeking to represent District 7 residents on the San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) Board of Trustees. Both of these gentlemen are highly qualified and competent for this position. They will speak at our next WLCA meeting on January 27th.

Our local school district is the largest recipient of our property tax dollars. The SAISD has been facing declining enrollment over the past several years, going from 80,000 students at one time to 55,000 students today. As a result, SAISD recently closed six campuses, including Mann Academy in our area, and may yet close other campuses. At the same time, SAISD is looking at innovative approaches to public education, including the recent opening of the Young Women's Leadership Academy at the Mann Academy campus, and an Early College High School, in conjunction with San Antonio College, at the former Travis Elementary campus.

Ed Garza was our District 7 Councilman from 1997 to 2001 and served as our Mayor from 2001 to 2005. He grew up in this community and he and his wife Anna Laura reside on W. Magnolia. He most recently served as the District 7 representative on the City's Historic and Design Review Commission. He has a master's in urban planning from Texas A&M and is involved in area redevelopment and public transportation issues.

Michael Soto, his wife Celina Peña and son Alejo, reside on W. Kings Hwy. Michael is the product of South Texas public schools, graduated with honors from Stanford University, and received a Ph.D. degree from Harvard University. He is now an English professor at Trinity University. His goals are to raise academic standards, build community support for neighborhood schools, and bring fiscal responsibility to school governance.

Dr. Robert Duron, SAISD Superintendent, had been scheduled to speak at this meeting. Unfortunately, he will be away from the City on business on that evening. We hope to have him at one of our future meetings.

CFF CHIEF AT SAME MEETING

Hugh Hawthorne Farr, Executive Director of the Lone Star Chapter of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (CFF), will tell us about his organization at our January 27th meeting. The purpose of the Foundation is to raise money to fund research into finding a cure for cystic fibrosis, a fatal lung disease affecting about 30,000 people across the United States.

There are about 350 to 400 families in the San Antonio area dealing with cystic fibrosis. Despite the fact that the disease affects so few, there are over one million carriers of the gene and if two carriers come together and conceive a child, there is a 1 in 4 chance that child will have cystic fibrosis.

CFF raises money largely through putting on special events. Hugh will tell us about two of these, the 2009 Tower Climb and Run on Saturday, February 28th, and Great Strides San Antonio, a fundraising walk that will take place on Saturday, May 2nd.

Hugh is a WLCA member. He is a graduate of Central High School and has a BA and an MA degree from St. Mary's University. He worked on environmental issues at the former Kelly AFB and was Chief of Administrative Services with The Salvation Army before taking on his current job.

EXECUTIVE BOARD RE-ELECTED

At our November 25th meeting, all WLCA officers and board members were re-elected and will serve for the 2009-2010 term. The Executive Board is listed on page 2 of this Newsletter.

On January 4th, Trey Martinez Fischer and Liz Provencio welcomed Francesca Maria Provencio Fischer into this world, our neighborhood, and their lives. Congratulations to Liz and Trey!

Basura Bash for Woodlawn - see page 3

Citizen Academy - see page 3

Television Conversion - see page 4

WLCA OFFICERS & BOARD

President: Alejandro Soto.....733-5755
asoto682@earthlink.net

Vice Pres: Rodolfo Flores.....733-5101

Secretary: Esther Soto.....733-5755

Treasurer: Mary Lou Reyna.....771-7174

Board Members:

Lou Kaplan.....735-8884

Lucy Phalen.....733-8858

Gene Herrera.....735-8528

Anita Valencia.....734-6282

GETTING THINGS FIXED

WLCA members learn of local problems ahead of City officials because we live here. We then work with our District 7 Councilman Justin Rodriguez and his capable staff to get things fixed.

WLCA board member Lucy Phalen was trying to get the City to resume alley trash pick up on her block. The practice had stopped several months ago with no explanation. Working with Cris Medina, Senior Council Aide for Councilman Rodriguez, the cause of the problem was found and was taken care of.

The intersection at Woodlawn and Zarzamora was in bad need of striping. Woodlawn has left-turn-only lanes that no longer showed. Cris followed through on our concern. The lanes are now clearly visible and the intersection is safer.

A home on W. French across from the Park appears vacant. The lot became overgrown with weeds and brush and was unsightly. After being informed at our meeting, Cris was able to get the City to clean up the property.

Those of us who enjoy our Park had seen deep cracks and unevenness develop all around the footpath, creating a dangerous condition for walkers and runners. Alejandro Soto and Joe Alderete (WLCA member and Woodlawn Lake Park Planning Team Chairman) brought this to the attention of our Councilman and City Park Officials. The City is now compacting and repaving the trail for a smooth, long-lasting surface.

Happy Birthday to

January: Tina Aguilar, Laura Bustos, Gerard Bustos, Janice Clayton, Carlos Flores, Patti Garcia, Red Garcia, Edward Garza, Consuelo Gonzales, Marcella Gutierrez, Jorge Herrera, Victoria Herrera, Esther Llamas, Roland Rodriguez, Francesca Stevenson, Dr. Bernard Weiner

February: Laura Codina, Mary Ann Contreras, Darlyne Cox, Luciana Cristadoro, Frederick Garcia, Anna Grasso-Gay, Zach Greene, Marguerite Nemky, Sandra Pamplin, Leonela Silvas, Elena Valenzuela, Alfred Villarreal, Leo York

PLAN, PROMOTE, & PROTECT

Alejandro Soto, WLCA President

I am beginning my fourth two-year term as WLCA president. When I was asked in late 2002 if I would consider running for association president, my response was, "I don't even know what we do." I had lived in the area less than 2 years. In looking at our area history, working with our members, and dealing with the public and with government officials, I believe that WLCA has a purpose and a program for improving while preserving our community and our Park.

Like most City residents, we are concerned about the services we receive from the City, as police and fire protection, trash pick up, and proper streets and drainage. As residents in an older neighborhood, we also take a special interest in keeping up the character of our community. It may be that we feel that the character gives our property its value, but more likely it is the character that enticed us to move into the neighborhood and we do not want to see it changed.

We have seen changes not far from us. At Zarzamora and Commerce, a long-standing and well known restaurant was demolished to make way for a national chain drug store. Across the street, the childhood home of a celebrity was moved to allow a barbecue restaurant to expand. Although the residents of the area will most certainly patronize the new establishments, that crossroads has lost its uniqueness and history and now appears more as an intersection in any part of this (or any other) City.

When we consider what changes we would like to see in our community, we have to be mindful of how it affects who we are. Sometimes we feel that the choice is between better services and keeping the ties with our past and our environment. That being the case, we have to look at alternatives. The choices on the table might not be the only ways in which we can proceed. We have to be open-minded, creative, and sensitive in how we combine better services with a historic neighborhood.

WLCA has done much to better our community. We have participated in Park and graffiti clean-ups. We have been vigilant in reporting code violations, burnt out street lamps, and suspicious activity. We have been involved in various City boards and commissions, with our school systems, and with charitable organizations. We reach out to other area associations, whether or not they reciprocate. Once again we are involved in the expansion of the local historic district. Being a part of an older community requires work and dedication. That is what WLCA is about and why I am proud to be a member.

Next Meeting: January 27th, 7 pm

Salvation Army Peacock Center, 2810 W. Ashby, Bldg 2
Meetings in 2009: Feb 24, Mar 31, Apr 28, May 26,
Jun 30, Jul 28, Aug 25, Sep 29, Oct 27, Nov 24

Woodlawn Lake Community Association—Membership 2009

Name: _____ DOB Mo & Day: _____

Name: _____ DOB Mo & Day: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Membership type: _____ Individual [\$5.00 per year] _____ School/Non-Profit [\$25.00 per year]
(please check) _____ Family [\$10.00 per year] _____ Business [\$50.00 per year]

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Make your check payable to the Woodlawn Lake Community Association

TIME TO RENEW. It is now time to renew your WLCA membership for 2009. If your personal information has not changed, just send your payment annotated “2009 dues.” If it has changed, or if you are a new member, please send the Form above with your dues to WLCA, P.O. Box 28374, San Antonio TX 78228; or bring the Form with your dues to our next WLCA meeting. If the address page of this Newsletter shows that you have paid for 2009, or if you get an email saying that you have paid, please disregard this reminder.

BASURA BASH AT WOODLAWN LAKE

The Basura Bash is the annual clean up of the San Antonio River. (For the uninformed, basura means trash.) This year, for the very first time, it has been extended to Woodlawn Lake Park and will take place on Saturday, March 7th, from 8 am to 12 noon.

WLCA member Ashley Hernandez is the Tributary Leader for Woodlawn Lake Park. She will organize volunteers for this event and for other event activities. Each person who participates will be given tools and supplies and will receive a continental breakfast, barbeque lunch, tee shirt and tote bag. There will be a press conference to announce the event and a website specifically for Basura Bash Woodlawn Lake will be set up. We will give you details on these as they develop. You can volunteer online and also through Ashley and WLCA. Let's get a great turnout from WLCA for this first-ever event!

SPUR 421 PROGRESS

Contributed by Maggie Rios, TxDot

The widening of Spur 421 (Culebra-Bandera) from IH 10 west to Benrus continues. The contractor has finished the north half of the roadway from IH 10 to Navidad. Crews are working on reconstructing the south half of Culebra between IH 10 and 22nd Street. This includes cutting and filling, hot mix asphalt, curb, sidewalk, and driveways. The rebuilding of the south half of Culebra should continue for two more months. The south half of the Alazan Creek Bridge has been demolished and the contractor is now building the south half of a new bridge. When the reconstruction of the south half of Culebra is complete, the contractor will work on rebuilding the north half of that street.

All the gas, water, and sewer lines are underground from IH 10 to 24th Street. The gas line is being installed from Woodlawn to Quill on Bandera. The sanitary sewer line is currently being installed from Woodlawn to Quill on Bandera. Crews are also installing new water lines from General McMullen to Quill on Bandera. This work from 24th Street west should continue for another 6 months.



Studio Tour

Sat., Feb. 14, 11:00 am to 6:00 pm
Sun., Feb. 15, Noon to 5:00 pm

Self-guided tour of art studios and galleries located in the neighborhoods on and off Fredericksburg Rd. between Vance Jackson and Culebra. Organized by Bihl Haus Arts.

www.onandofffred.org
210.383.9723
kellenkee@swbell.net

CITIZEN ACADEMY APR 25th

The City's Housing & Neighborhood Services Department is hosting a seven-hour educational seminar covering specific city department operations and services. These include Housing & Neighborhood Services (Code Compliance and Graffiti Abatement), Police, Animal Care Services, Solid Waste Management, Public Works, Planning and Community Development, and City Attorneys.

All 400 neighborhood associations registered with the City are invited to attend this training. It is being held monthly at the different council districts. The District 7 seminar will be on April 25th at St. Mary's Center, 3141 Culebra Road. Registration is from 8:30 to 9 am and the seminar is from 9 am to 4 pm.

WLCA would like to send at least 5 members. Please let Alejandro Soto know if you wish to attend.

Woodlawn Lake Community Association

P.O. Box 28374
San Antonio TX 78228



☐ A check mark here shows that you have paid your 2009 dues. Thank you.

A GREAT CHRISTMAS PARTY

Last December 7th, we held our annual WLCA Christmas Party. Over 75 members and their families came together for our end-of-year celebration. This was the largest turnout that anyone in attendance could recall and evidence of how much WLCA has grown and how united we have become.

We thank Lisa's Mexican Restaurant (815 Bandera Road), Sea Island Shrimp House (822 W. Rector), and Garcia's Restaurant (842 Fredericksburg Road) for donating gift certificates that we gave as door prizes. Please consider them when dining out.

Our thanks also go to the many members who helped make our party a huge success. Those who donated door prizes and other goods: Trey Martinez Fischer, Justin & Victoria Rodriguez, Ed & Anna Laura Garza, Gene & Isabel Herrera, Richard Holgin & Yolanda Santos, Anita Valencia, and Marcos Serda; the party committee members who gave their time and efforts: Esther Soto, Mary Lou Reyna, Anita Valencia, and Isabel Herrera; others who gave their time in setting up and cleaning up: Rodolfo Flores, Gene Herrera, Richard & Brittney Reyna, Fred & Sylvia Ayers, Ashley Hernandez, George & Pam Martinez, and Alejandro Soto. We finally thank Gerard & Laura Bustos for bringing and setting up the karaoke system, and Cris Medina and our talented members and their children who entertained us.

TELEVISION CONVERSION

Contributed by U.S. Rep. Charles A. Gonzalez

On February 17, 2009 (unless delayed by Congress), full-power television stations will convert from transmitting analog signals to digital-only signals. People who receive their television programming over an antenna, and those who do not have a digital TV set, cable TV service, or satellite service, will require a converter box to receive television signals. The switch is necessary to free up needed communication channels for police and fire emergency personnel. An added benefit will be higher quality picture and sound.

The federal government has established a converter box coupon program that allows each household up to two coupons worth \$40 each to be used toward the purchase of a converter box. Although the program has reached its funding ceiling, it is recommended that interested households apply for the coupons. These late requests will be filled as funds from expiring coupons become available. Please check your coupons for their expiration dates as they are limited.

To apply for a coupon, fill out an application on-line at www.dtv2009.gov, or by telephone at 1-888-DTV-2009. [If you do use a television antenna, the site at www.antennaweb.org will guide you in how to position it for the best reception.]