

FIG GARDEN HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER AND SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends & Neighbors:

No time is prettier than Fall in Old Fig Garden. Sit outside and read. Notice the hummingbirds. Dig in the garden. Take a walk with your family. Bicycle to Fig Garden Village for a pastry at La Boulangerie, a great cup of coffee at Patio Café, a burger at Elbow Room or crunchy sweet grapes at Whole Foods Market.

Let's cherish our community.

A new neighbor asked about the idea of annexing Old Fig to the City of Fresno. Families who have lived in the area for generations understand its uniqueness. And the City of Fresno ~ as an entity ~ has a less than stellar record when it comes to preserving historic elements of our community, let alone its historic neighborhoods.

There is a concern that annexation would lift zoning protections provided by Fresno County policies that accommodate rural areas like ours. Neighborhood preservation is crucial to the of Old Fig.

Also, county counsel has indicated that annexation would result in the dismantling of the Fig Garden Police Protection District. For decades, Old Fig residents have paid an assessment fee for enhanced police protection. The neighborhood sees measurable results with the proactive style of the Fresno County Sheriff's Department.

The Fig Garden Homeowners Association reviews all public policy proposals on merit. Our nine-member Board of Directors does not automatically view contracts with the city ~ such as the pilot project to combat graffiti ~ as a move toward annexation. Some services can be better provided to urban areas by the city.

On other issues ~

- Money for tickets to the Annual Dinner has been steadily arriving in the Fig Garden Homeowners Association mailbox. [Remember, there are no paper tickets. Instead, names are put on a master list at the front gate.] The Sun., Sept. 25 event will be catered by Cosmopolitan Tavern and include wine. Hosts Becky and Barry Barisic will welcome residents of the neighborhood to their beautiful home on the northwest corner of Van Ness/Ashlan. Lisa's Big Night Out is providing an encore jazz performance. The event has sold out over the past three years. Tickets cost \$30. RSVP is required. Note: RSVP is provided with ticket purchase. Mail checks to FGHA, PO Box 5796, Fresno, 93755.

- Dean Alexander is pulling together the Christmas Tree Lane team now. Families are needed to set up barricades for the two walk nights and clean up litter afterward.

The lane opens with walkers on Thurs., Dec. 1 at 6 p.m. The second walk night is Wed., Dec. 7. Van Ness is closed to vehicles until 10 p.m. The trio of Lauri Stine, Jeanie Cooper and Stan Cooper will coordinate the walk nights this year. It is so important that families commit to one of two nights. [My daughter, my husband and I plan to work the second walk night. We await our marching orders!]

Please contact Dean Alexander at dalex215@aol.com or 225-9088 to add your name to the list. Sunset magazine is planning to feature Christmas Tree Lane as a hot holiday destination and together we can make everything run smoothly ~

- Please take a minute to remember neighbor Robert F. Egan. He died on May 15 at age 83. The son and grandson of police chiefs in

Providence, Rhode Island, Robert Egan served in the U.S. Army and moved to Fresno in 1949. He established Central Supply Company/San Joaquin Hydraulic, Inc. Until his death, he worked six days a week in the family business with his son Richard. Robert Egan loved spending time at the family cabin he built in Fish Camp and sparring over politics. He proudly watched his daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Egan, get elected Fresno County District Attorney. A lifetime public servant, Robert Egan also served on the Fig Garden Police Protection Board. His family asked that remembrances be sent to the CA Cancer Center (Nursing Education Fund), 7257 N. Fresno St., Fresno, 93720 or the Salvation Army.

- Congratulations to Fresno County Sheriff's Capt. Colleen Mestas who recently earned recognition from state Attorney General Bill Lockyer for her innovative approach to balancing urban and rural demands while developing crime prevention strategies.

- As you've read in the newspaper, an official recycling program is not scheduled to begin in Old Fig until 2006. However, many neighbors have found competitive rates and recycling service with Western Waste. Until Old Fig has an official recycling program, you might consider the options.

- Construction has begun on a new water main and new water services for residences on Van Ness Boulevard, between Ashlan and Gettysburg. Scott Krauter of the Fresno Public Works Department says work will continue for about four weeks. As a result, residents will get new water service to their homes. Service has been located to minimize impact to existing yards and driveways. Also, the contractor will be required to replace any surface that is disturbed due to pipe installation. When the work is done, city crews will connect each house to the new service and abandon the present connection to the old main in the backyard. This is similar work to the project completed last year on the adjacent Wilson Avenue. For more information, call 621-5606.

- If you want to receive time sensitive e-alerts that involve law enforcement issues and notice of public hearings that impact Old Fig, email phoebe@phoebehoward.com

- Thank you for supporting the Fig Garden Homeowners Association. Anyone who supports our neighborhood is welcome to be a member. [\$52/year. Mail to FGHA, PO Box 5796, Fresno, CA 93755] Unlike most homeowner groups, our dues are voluntary. The dollars spent on public projects designed to maintain the integrity of the neighborhood. We also monitor permit requests for commercial activity and work to prevent actions that could hurt the neighborhood. Board members attend public hearings and encourage elected officials to adopt and maintain policies that protect Old Fig and other established neighborhoods. Find information at www.oldfig.org

Stay involved ~

Respectfully,

Phoebe Wall Howard 225-3116/daytime

FIG GARDEN WOMAN'S CLUB UPDATE

*by Linda Lucido
Club President*

Dear Homeowners,

Greetings from all us at Fig Garden Woman's Club. We have been neighbors since 1921. There were 13 charter members who met in the Bullard Elementary School auditorium from 1921 to 1925. The clubhouse was built in 1926. We are members of the California Federation of Women's Clubs and the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

You may have walked by and received coffee, hot chocolate, and cookies during the first night of the annual Christmas Tree Lane walk. In 1928, club members asked people on Van Ness to light deodora trees. There were ten trees decorated. We invite you to come by for free coffee, hot chocolate and cookies this year on Thursday, December 1st.

We would also like to invite you to other events. Please mark your calendars:

December 4, 2005,

"Christmas at the Club" 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

February 3 – 4, 2006,

"Trash and Treasure Days"

March 16, 2006,

"Pre-Party" to our annual "Antique Show"

March 17, 18, 19, 2006

Antique Show

More details will be available.

We have met many of you at our free events and fund-raisers. Many of the Fig Garden women are in our club. We would like to meet you all and show you this wonderful old building, show you the many contributions we make to our community and have fun!

Don't hesitate to call if you want to support our projects. My home number is 439-3389.

We look forward to another year as good neighbors.



MAIL & IDENTITY THEFT

*By Louise Yenovkian,
Fig Garden Resident*

Mail and Identity theft is America's fastest growing crime. As residents of Old Fig Garden, we are not immune to such activity. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service is the lead agency in investigating incidents of such theft.

Add these tips to your "must do" list to protect yourself:

1. Deposit outgoing mail at a Post Office or a blue U.S. Postal Service box. Never place outgoing mail in your box for pickup.
2. Shred unwanted documents that contain personal information.
3. Do not leave your mail uncollected in your mailbox. Pickup your mail daily. Place your mail on vacation leave during your absence. Notify your postal service of the stop and start date of your vacation.
4. Consider purchasing and installing a locking mail box.
5. Report any suspicious mail activity to your nearest U.S. Postal Service located on Griffith Avenue West of Blackstone or call Mr. Ben Romero of the U.S. Postal Service at 435-4360.

LET'S TALK TRASH

*By Louise Yenovkian,
Fig Garden Resident*

Trash pick up, that is. It looks like the Old Fig Garden area may be serviced exclusively by Allied Waste, formerly known as BFI. A contract is scheduled for implementation in 2006. In the interim, each homeowner has the choice to be serviced by various trash hauling companies.

1. Western Waste Management 834-4070
2. Sunset Waste Services 275-2900
3. Allied Waste 275-1551

Western Waste and Sunset currently offer recycling services. The hauling rates per company will vary so be aware of your trash/recycling needs when you make arrangements for pick up. Typically one 96 gallon container with wheels is provided to each residence. Additional containers may be requested as needed. Recycling/green waste containers are also provided by the two companies that currently offer such service.

If you have any questions regarding the eventual transfer to a single trash provider, you may direct your concerns to Richard Gilbert. He is the Solid Waste Coordinator for Fresno County and may be reached at 262-4259

Remember – Let's keep it clean out there.



DOGS AND CATS

*By Suzanne Pashayan
Pashayan Foundation
Fig Garden Resident*

For the safety of your dogs, it is always a good idea to keep them confined behind a fence in the front or backyard. This keeps your dogs from roaming the neighborhood and possibly getting into fights with other dogs, from causing auto accidents by suddenly running into the road or getting injured or killed or becoming aggressive and biting someone.

It also makes it much safer for those who choose to take a walk or run or bike with their dogs. If you plan on doing the latter, make sure your dog is on a leash. Actually whenever your dog is not confined to your property it should be on a leash.

For cat owners it is suggested that you keep your cats confined to your household. That is why they are called house cats. If you have to let them outside you might consider getting a very large walk in cage. (As a suggestion you might call CD & E Ent. At 800-528-2243) This way you can put them in there with all of their goodies....cat box, toys, food, water bowls and cat trees and not worry about them getting tangled up with feral cats (cats that are not social to humans).

The last reminder is most important. Please, please get your dog or cat neutered/spayed. It is a fact that even people that can well afford to do this ARE NOT GETTING IT DONE. We have a very big problem in Fresno County with dog and cat overpopulation. There is truly no valid excuse for not getting your animals done. All of the organizations are overwhelmed with too many animals and not enough home causing a vast majority of dogs and cats and yes puppies and kittens having to be destroyed.

Please be a responsible owner and strongly consider all of the above reminders and suggestions. You will be doing your pet(s) a big favor if you do.