

# ALTA VISTA Neighborhood Association Newsletter

**NEXT MEETING**

March 26th, 6:30 PM  
Mark Twain Middle School Cafeteria

Topic:  
**Public Safety**

**2014 MEETING SCHEDULE**

April 30th  
May 28th  
September 24th  
November 19th

**CONTACT US**

- avna@ymail.com
- altavistasa.com
- facebook.com (search for "Alta Vista Neighborhood Association")
- District 1 Field Office 210.207.0900

**CRIME PREVENTION TIPS**

Leave your porch lights on at night • Stop or arrange pickup of mail and newspapers when out of town • Let a neighbor know you'll be gone so they can keep an eye on things for you • Report suspicious activity to the police non-emergency number, (210) 207-7273 • Trim back heavy shrubbery close to the house to reduce cover that prowlers might use • Know your neighbors

**2014 AVNA Board**

**President**  
Erin Zayko

**VicePresident**  
Ben Judson

**Treasurer**  
Alma Noriega-Sothiros

**Secretary**  
Claudia Guerra

**Members at Large**  
Peggy Howe  
Maricel de Leon  
Stephen Elizabeth Allen

## It Takes A Village

By Elizabeth Allen & Erin Zayko

At last month's meeting we discussed the neighborhood's first and second 2014 priorities, community review and more community building activities. For updates on these priorities, see the related articles in this newsletter, then join us at the March 26 General Meeting where we'll delve deeper into the neighborhood's third priority, Public Safety.

At the meeting we'll layout recent crime stats and discuss what they mean. We'll review and discuss the topics submitted by residents under the Public Safety priority (see list at

right) and solicit new ideas for how to make our community a safe and secure place to live. And, as usual, our SAFFE Officer, Felipe Santos will be on hand to answer questions and relay specific information about crimes in our neighborhood.

It's been said that our neighborhood has "low" crime, but do we know what this means? For certain, this idea is no consolation for victims in our neighborhood, and, it could be argued that it keeps us from working harder as a neighborhood to keep crime at bay. We hope you will join us for this important meeting. It takes a village.

If you can't make it to the

meeting but feel inspired to volunteer to help the neighborhood association develop ideas for public safety, please contact us at avna@ymail.com.

**At the March meeting, join us to discuss Public Safety**

The main topics AV residents listed under the Public Safety umbrella are:

- ★ Neighborhood crime watch
- ★ Graffiti control
- ★ Police presence
- ★ Student loitering
- ★ Code compliance



## Next Steps for Community Review

By Claudia Guerra

The Midtown Neighborhood plan was developed in 1998 by many citizens and community leaders in Alta Vista and Beacon Hill. It was updated in 2005 and can be found at [www.sanantonio.gov/planning/neighborhoods/Midtown\\_Plan.asp](http://www.sanantonio.gov/planning/neighborhoods/Midtown_Plan.asp)

Sixteen years later, we continue to be concerned with many of the same issues and challenges as then.

Over the years, we have pro-actively met many of the concerns our neighbors foresaw nearly two decades ago. One immediate result of the Midtown Plan was that Alta Vista became a Neighborhood Conservation District. This served to protect our neighborhood character while allowing our community to develop; but as our city continues to change and evolve, so do our needs.

Setting our 2014 priorities has brought forth from residents many considerations which recall the Midtown Plan: protecting our neighborhood character, consideration of historic designation, improved zoning, community building, economic development and promoting the neighborhood identity.

In order to move the community forward and build upon the Midtown plan, we will be hosting a workshop in May, date TBD, for all Alta Vista neighbors to come together. The goal is to gather information from residents—your opinions, your questions, your recollections of the past, and hopes for the future—to help shape our next steps towards ensuring the well-being of our neighborhood.

This will be an informative, yet also engaging and fun process. We will delve

into oral history, memory mapping, and platicas (community conversation) to come to an understanding of our neighborhood character and what we as a community want to protect and conserve. Ultimately, we all want to create a neighborhood that thrives. We will continue to provide more details in next month's newsletter and other forms of communication, including Facebook. Please take time to think about what you love about our neighborhood, what pieces of information you might know about or want to know, and who in the neighborhood might have been a witness to the evolution of our community. Please feel free to send ideas to AVNA secretary and Community Review Committee Chair, Claudia Guerra at [claudia@syncrostudio.com](mailto:claudia@syncrostudio.com).



# We make good neighbors!

## ALTA VISTA - A Neighborhood - - Conservation District -

### KIDS' DAY IN THE PARK



Activities!  
Giveaways!  
Family Fun!

Saturday, April 5  
10AM to 2PM  
San Pedro Springs Park

### Meet Daniel Tiger from Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood!



The 2014 Kids Day in the Park, presented by KLRN

### GROW LOCAL! Alta Vista Micro-Garden

It's time to start spring plantings! If you'd like some sun-soaked space to garden alongside your neighbors, join us at Alta Vista's Micro-Garden - 3301 N.Flores.

We have created several new beds ready for this year's bounty, everything from tomatoes, squash & kale to beets, beans, & onions.

Email [jenkhoshbin@gmail.com](mailto:jenkhoshbin@gmail.com) or check AVNA Facebook page to receive schedules and updates.

### Familiar Faces - Our Neighbors in Profile

by Peggy Howe  
*An Interview with Jay LeSuerer*

Jay lives with his partner, Michael Crittall, in a charming bungalow on W. Gramercy that they initially leased. Jay said it took a year to convince their landlord and friend, Brian Murphy, to sell them the home. They had no choice but to wait, because as Jay said, the moment he stepped across the threshold he knew the cottage was meant to be his and Michael's first home.

Jay is a general contractor specializing in residential rehabs. Michael works for the City of San Antonio in the Department of Economic Development. Michael also attends UTSA where he is pursuing a Masters of Business Administration.



Jay LeSuerer, right, & Michael Crittall

Jay is a transplant from Phoenix and says he doesn't really mind the Texas heat. The humidity on the other hand makes him want to run for the nearest personal fan.

Michael is a San Antonio native. He attended the Health Careers High School in San Antonio, a charter school created for students who show an aptitude for health and medical professions.

I asked Jay if there were any pets in the household ... wow! Jay and Michael are the proud parents of a baby sulcata tortoise named Walter White (hah hah). Mr. White, as I came to find out, is an African desert tortoise that will grow to be between 350 and 400 pounds. The sulcata is known for its longevity, often reaching 100

years of age and almost certainly outliving its keepers, Jay



Walter White catches a ride on Dash

and Michael. They also own a 5' iguana named Dash. What else? At the end of our interview I told Jay that the AVNA was in the midst of a "visioning campaign" and would welcome any suggestions he might have for improving the neighborhood. Jay said that he sees how difficult it is for his neighbors who are elderly or unwell to keep up with home repairs. A solution he says (and one that he would like to be a part of) might be a group of Alta Vista volunteers focused on making home repairs for those who are not able. The AVNA is happy to get the word out on that idea.



### San Pedro Springs Historical Walk March 29

by Jennifer Khoshbin

For thousands of years the San Pedro Springs have been a source of fascination, beauty and survival, yet few know the details of

their extraordinary story. If you'd like to learn more of the rich history and ecological importance of this neighborhood treasure, please join us for a guided walking tour by local experts Hector Cardenas and Gregg Eckhardt.

This free 90-minute tour begins on the steps of the San Pedro Playhouse on Saturday, March 29th at 10:30am.



SAN PEDRO SPRINGS



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