

Alta Vista

Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Alta Vista is bounded by Hildebrand on the North, San Pedro on the East, the Union Pacific railroad tracks on the west, and Myrtle on the South
 PO Box 15033 • San Antonio TX • 78212

NEXT MEETING

March 25th, 6:30 PM
 Mark Twain Middle School
 Library
 2411 San Pedro
 (parking off Breeden)

TOPICS:

San Pedro Park
 Meet the SAFFE Officer
 Prop 1 & 2 Presentation
 Updates on Patsy's, Quiet
 Zone, Rose Shop

2015 Meeting Schedule:

May 27
 September 30
 October - National Night
 Out
 November 18
 December - AVNA
 Holiday Party

CONTACT US

- avna@ymail.com
- altavistasa.com
- facebook.com
- District 1 Field Office
 210.207.0900

2015 AVNA Board President

Erin Zayko

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Elizabeth Allen

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 Maricel de Leon
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AVNA Newsletter Squad Needs YOU!

The AVNA needs Newsletter Block Captains for Craig, Gramercy, and Mulberry.

Block captains deliver about 70 newsletters, once a month, to the homes and businesses on their assigned street. You don't have to live on a street to be the block captain, and it's a great way to get out in the fresh air, see your neighbors, and further enjoy Alta Vista!

If you're interested, contact avna@ymail.com today!

Neighborhood Changes

By Elizabeth Allen

Our neighborhood is changing.

That is not news. Alta Vista has been changing since the first house was put up, since before people passed through rocky pasture to reach San Pedro Springs, since before they were called San Pedro, since before they were Yanaguana.

But the changes that are happening now are particularly exciting to those of us who live here. At the same time we would be wise to help shape those changes so that what we most value is protected, while at the same time we open ourselves up to the best, most dynamic, most beautiful of the new.

This is a big statement to make without some sort of preface, so I will back into it here: I'm sitting at Press Coffee, loading up on high-quality caffeine. Everything is beautiful – the space, the light, the coffee, the magazines. Some faces are familiar, while others are drawn to the neighborhood by this beautiful unique space that can only exist in this spot: a modern coffee house inhabiting the gracious bones of the Gilded Age carriage house behind the old Frost mansion.

As more people like Press Coffee partners Bronson Holbrook and Natalie Nazarewicz see opportunities here, and

more customers patronize the businesses, more will want to move here to enjoy what we have and bring their own unique energies and visions to their homes and businesses.

So the question is this: how do we welcome them and make room for this investment while protecting what we love, and keeping a place for the families who have lived here for so long? Because more investment will make values go up. That makes things more expensive, and it has been happening already.

The residents have begun to tackle that question, first with a Saturday workshop last year at EcoCentro to define what makes our community special. It's partly the physical fabric of the place, but it's also its history and shared experience. Longtime residents and newer ones love the same places in the same way. It was a good conversation, but only a first one.

We haven't yet tackled the question of how to protect Alta Vista without stifling it. The work is slow, in part because we're all volunteers, but in part because this is an important and complex conversation, and we've seen how it can inflame communities. It's important to us to do our best to maintain the relatively happy-go-lucky amiability of our little 'hood.

To do that we can't be passive or reckless. We should neither plunge headlong toward historic designation nor set our heels reflexively against any discussion of regulatory options. We have to be slow and thoughtful and patient, and we have to have open minds, and we have to make sure everyone is heard. And whatever we decide will still not be the end of it, because the residents and the economics of the area will continue to change as they always have.

All that may sound overly idealistic, but you don't achieve a great neighborhood by setting low standards. And the high standards I think we are setting have to do with communication and respect, so that when those hot-button issues come up, we can have rational conversations about them – and go home feeling like neighbors.



Real Estate Corner

The commercial property at 2625 N. Flores St., currently Little Sam's #2, is for sale or rent. The owner, Sam Virani, is offering the entire property for sale at a reduced price or offering two of the three spaces for affordable rent as-is or with tenant build-out. His business benefits with more customer traffic in the area.

If interested, contact Sam:
 (210) 725-7860.

Traffic Calming Update & Request for Help

by Erin Zayko

At January's general meeting, possible solutions were discussed to address two of the traffic concerns prioritized by members at the November 2014 meeting: 1) Safer crossing into San Pedro Park; and, 2) Speeding between San Pedro and Flores on Craig, Elsmere, French, Magnolia, and Russell.

The AVNA board and city representatives are discussing possibilities for creative crosswalk art on Ashby and Flores adjacent to San Pedro Park. A project of this nature would be the first of its kind in San Antonio. We're excited to be pioneers, but understand that

novelty means details are slow in coming. Only recently have tentative options begun to emerge, and the board anticipates a more complete update by May.

However, the time is now to begin work on speeding on the cross streets. The first step is to demonstrate need. This is done by a traffic engineering study conducted by the City's Traffic Calming Program. Studies can only happen when enough neighbors agree. Specifically, this means that signatures from two-thirds of residents on each affected street must be collected. When all signatures are collected, a traffic study may commence and if speed-

ing is a problem, measures introduced if funding is available.

Only stop signs may be installed without further neighborhood input. No worries, speed-humps are controversial and the City won't install them without further neighborhood discussion and support.

If you live on one of the cross streets mentioned above and would like to learn more about gathering signatures for the traffic calming application to the City, please contact avna@ymail.com. This project can only happen with neighbor support.



ALTA VISTA

-A Neighborhood Conservation District-

We Make Good Neighbors!

Familiar Faces - Our Neighbors in Profile

By Peggy Howe

I love going into Henry Carrera's Hair Salon (the colorful victorian that sits on the corner of San Pedro and West Russell Place). It makes you smile the minute you walk up with its rich, brick walkway and shady portico. Once inside, you're still smiling as you relax on the comfy furniture and take in the original fireplace, windows, wood floors and dreamy,

Sinatra-esque soundtrack.

Henry Carrera and his wife, Alicia have been the proprietors of the salon for the past 35 years. They must enjoy the long, steady path...they've been married 53 years.

As it turns out Henry Carrera is a man of more than one career. I asked him how he came to be in the hair business and he explained... For 50 years he has been in



beauty college. She attended the famous Monticello School of Beauty in Buena Park, CA while he attended barber school in Anaheim, CA. For years Henry continued to gig in California and Las Vegas but a return to their San Antonio roots became imminent as their family grew to include 3 small ones; Henry Jr., Johnny and Cynthia. Back in San Antonio Henry has continued to play bass with a variety of bands and inspired all his children to enjoy the pursuit of music as well. He still travels, though not in a band. He travels to teach in the salon industry doing what he tells me is called "platform work". This is beauty industry lingo for instructing hair stylists from an elevated platform. It occurs to me that Henry was destined from the start to be a man on stage. ★

the music business, playing at one time with the notable bands, Tobias, the Dell-Kings and Roadapple. As a successful bass musician he traveled from San Antonio to California to Las Vegas, but noticed along the way that even the most popular acts had no guarantee of consistent employment. This uncertainty, he decided, was not the life he had planned. So his wife, Alicia and he enrolled in



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