

# 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)

### 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

### Vice-President

Elizabeth Allen

### Treasurer

Alma Noriega-Sotirhos

### Secretary

Jennifer Khoshbin

### Members at Large

Peggy Howe  
Maricel de Leon Stephen  
Claudia Guerra

### The Next Goya?

Ten students from Mark Twain have been gifted the opportunity and tools to oil paint at the new art studio located at 615 W. Ashby as part of Coppini Academy's program, One Day I'll Paint. Their works will be exhibited at 115 Melrose Place on March 15 at 3:30pm.

by Elizabeth Allen

It's planting time in San Antonio. The risk of a freeze is, well, mostly past, and it's high time to clear out dead growth and make room for the new. Maybe a bit past high time, but if you're like me you don't tend to remember it's spring until these 70-degree days come along.

Hardy perennials like lantana and edibles like rosemary are low-growing, and good for near the street and corners to

By Claudia Guerra

Researched by Steve Alvarado

Did you know that the blue building on the corner of Russell and N. Flores is a deep part of Alta Vista's history? The building we affectionately call "Patsy's" at 2602 N. Flores was known as the "Liberty Service Station" when it was first built in the mid-1920s. While it isn't yet proven, this may have actually been the first gas station to be built in Alta Vista!

Historic maps show a house existed on this site in 1911, but by October 1926, the drive-in filling station, owned and operated by a young Russian immigrant couple, was open for business. Bella and Samuel Erlich and their three children, Morris, Jeannette and Lillian, recent transplants from Chicago, lived at this location after purchasing the property. The deed doesn't

## A History of Patsy's

indicate a filling station existed on the premises, but by October 18, 1926 an article in the San Antonio Light regarding a petty theft on the site clearly indicates the filling station was in operation.

Later that month, a sale notice for a "high-class" filling station at 2602 N. Flores was listed in the paper. This may have been motivated less by the burglary than by city council resolutions to pave Ashby and to allow Humble Oil to build a gas station at the corner of N. Flores and Ashby Place, the place we now know as Pho Sure. Two full service drive-in stations within two blocks of each other reflect the fast-paced rate at which gas sta-



Patsy's circa 1989

tions replaced curbside pumps in San Antonio.

Bella and Samuel Erlich were part of the entrepreneurial spirit influenced by the automotive and petroleum industry. Despite the for-sale ad in 1926, the Erlichs did not sell the filling station. They continued to operate it, built and operated another at Broadway and Post Rd., and were involved with other petroleum-related facilities, mainly on the Westside of San Antonio. ★

## Quiet Zone Update from District 1

District 1 shared this update with the AVNA Board earlier this month

It was understood that Transportation & Capitol Improvements (TCI) submitted the Notice of Establishment paperwork for final approval from The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) near the end of 2014. Unfortunately, the paperwork was not submitted during a staff transition. The new Quiet Zone contact person from TCI, Bianca Thorpe, is

reassessing the situation. Ms. Thorpe must first verify that all of the previous recommendations from the FRA have been corrected or installed. Once she confirms that all recommendations have been made, TCI will file the paperwork. The current filling timeline is by the end of February. The FRA will have 30 days to either approve or deny the paperwork. If the applica-

tion were to be denied, it should be followed by more recommendations by which the city must abide. If approved, the Quiet Zone would then go into effect. As usual, should residents have more questions or need to voice their concerns about the process, please refer them to our office (207-0900). ★

## Good Neighbors

maintain visibility for automobiles. (Several neighbors listed visibility problems at street corners as a traffic safety concern.) They're also drought- and heat-tolerant and last for years.

But there are hundreds of good options, depending on your taste, your shade and your drainage. SAWS has a list of recommended water-conserving plants you can peruse here: <http://www.gardenstylesanantonio.com/find-plant>

Speaking of edible, seems like Alta Vista's own community garden always has something good growing, thanks to the leadership of Jennifer Khoshbin. Right now several types of greens and herbs continue to produce – I love to munch on some fennel fronds while loitering among the flowering cabbage, watching the bees do their work.

And you are welcome to do so, too. Jen says, "We always have neighbors come by to plant,

weed, harvest, or just enjoy the garden at any time." So drop by and pull a weed.

If anyone would like some space in the beds to plant this spring, please contact Jen on the AVNA facebook page or by emailing her at [jenkhoshbin@gmail.com](mailto:jenkhoshbin@gmail.com).



# ALTA VISTA

## -A Neighborhood Conservation District-

### We Make Good Neighbors!

## Familiar Faces - Our Neighbors in Profile

By Peggy Howe

There seems to be no end to the talented, passionate individuals who call Alta Vista home. Our neighbors, Kelly Lyons and Stuart Allen, a couple with differing but equally erudite interests, would be no exception. Stuart is a visual artist drawn to such subjects as “how our perception of time can be manipulated by photography” and “the importance of kites as they relate to life”. (It’s not all serious ... flashlights, driving while shooting time lapse photography and bellydancing have their place in his work.) Stuart’s art is shown and collected internationally, but can also be seen right here on the Riverwalk! That’s right, those fantastic color changing, stainless steel pan-

els that hang from beneath the McCullough and Brooklyn Avenue underpass are one of Stuart’s contributions to San Antonio culture.

Kelly and Stuart’s careers could not be more divergent. (Stuart offered that the similarities in his wife’s scientific mind and his own analytical one, make up for any differences posed by their dissimilar professions.)

Kelly is an associate professor of biology at Trinity University. She has spent the past 18 years studying and publishing work as it relates to invasive plants and the conservation of biodiversity. She has been the recipient of many prestigious awards and grants, not the least of which would be a USDA CSREES



I’m considering enrolling at Trinity just to attend her latest class, “Sex and Conflict”. As explained to me the class covers topics such as “ovulation, estrus and promiscuity” along with discussions on why human beings love weddings, Valentine’s Day and marriage but statistically are not so big on monogamy.

The limited space in our newsletter does not do these two justice. To learn more about this interesting duo check out [www.stuartallen.info](http://www.stuartallen.info) and look up their PechaKucha talks on YouTube. ★

National Research Grant to study the “Use of Plant Traits to Design Invasion Resistant Communities” and a Fulbright-Garcia Robles Scholarship through the U.S. State Department to conduct research in Mexico.

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**A special Thank You to Arthur Pfeil for donating poinsettias for the AVNA Holiday Party**

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