



FIG · GARDEN
HOME · OWNERS
ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 5796, Fresno, California 93755 · www.oldfig.org · March 2019

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2019

www.oldfig.org

Annual Membership Meeting

Wednesday, March 13th 7:00pm

Fig Garden Swim and Racquet Club

4722 N. Maroa Ave.

Meeting Agenda:

1. Call to order
2. Introductory Remarks
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Nomination of Directors & election
5. Discussion of matters of general interest
6. Adjournment

Come to our annual meeting. Hear the news, meet neighbors, ask questions of County and City officials, and show that you are a part of Old Fig.

Message from the Outgoing President

OLD FIG TURNS ONE HUNDRED

By Dan Gallagher

This year, Fig Garden turns one hundred years old. It was in 1919 that J.C. Forkner and Wylie Giffen subdivided the area we now know as Old Fig. The vision they had for homeowners living on large parcels, growing figs and living a semi-rural life with the benefits of close proximity to the city has influenced the feel of our neighborhood to this day. One hundred years later, Old Fig is no longer on the edge of the city of Fresno but a desirable neighborhood that serves to anchor its core.

In 1947, a group of forward thinking residents of Fig Garden created a corporation whose mission was to encourage, protect, improve and maintain the neighborhood. This corporation became known as The Fig Garden Home Owners Association, and for the last 72 years it has worked to coordinate such things as special police and fire protection districts, as well as coordinate with county government on zoning ordinances, traffic studies and projects.

2018 was a busy year for our Home Owners Association and those of us on the board. The traffic calming project at Ashlan and Van Ness was started, and, though it is not yet complete, has already had one of its desired effects in that the speed limit on Ashlan has been returned to 30 miles per hour in addition to making pedestrian crossing of Ashlan much safer. We will continue to work with the County to see that the project is completed this year with the addition of lighting elements, thermoplastic road surface and island planting.

As you well know, what makes our area distinct are the gorgeous, mature trees lining the streets. We've begun 2019 by hiring two arborists to make an assessment of the health of our neighborhood's trees. John Pape will be doing an in-depth study of the Deodar Cedars along Van Ness. Susan Stiltz will be creating a survey and inventory of the trees throughout the rest of Old Fig. When these are complete, we will get that information to you through our Fall Newsletter and on our website.

So, as we begin our 100th year as a neighborhood, I'd like to encourage everyone to continue their support of Old Fig by joining our voluntary Home Owners Association. Together, we can continue to make this a wonderful place to live and keep alive the vision that J.C. Forkner had one hundred years ago.



THREE CANDIDATES FOR COUNTY SUPERVISOR DISTRICT 2

We asked the three candidates running in the March 5th special election for the District 2 County Supervisor position to answer the same three questions related to our area. Below are their responses:

Nasreen Michelle Johnson:

What are your thoughts on the position Old Fig holds within the Fresno metropolitan area, and the supervisor's role in supporting our historic neighborhood's integrity?

Old Fig is a special neighborhood in the Fresno area that holds so much of Fresno's history and heritage. It is a slice of country life in the middle of the city and has the best of both worlds. Since Old Fig is not within the City of Fresno limits, the Board of Supervisors holds a special role, ensuring the residents of Fig Garden receive needed services, such as Sheriff's service, road maintenance and flood control. I fully support the wishes of Old Fig Garden residents to remain in the county and preserve this jewel of a historic neighborhood for our community. As Supervisor I will defend old Fig Garden from any encroachment from the City of Fresno.

The Fig Garden Police Protection District contracts with Fresno Sheriff's Office to police a portion of Fig Garden. The cost paid per deputy is dictated to the Sheriff's Office by the County Supervisors, and includes costs not associated with the policing of Old Fig. What are your thoughts on renegotiating those costs when the contract is renewed?

The residents of Old Fig Garden should not be expected to bear more than their fair share of the burden for county-wide Sheriff's services. As Supervisor I will actively champion renegotiating the contract, guaranteeing the Fig Garden Police District only covers the costs related to its operations.

The neighbors of Old Fig have worked to establish relationships with both our supervisor and county staff, so that together, we can work on proposed variance requests, code enforcement issues, and zoning ordinances. How will you continue that tradition?

My door will always be open because, as Supervisor, I will be your public servant. I am not a career politician, I have spent my life in the private sector and really enjoy serving my community. That is why I am providing you my private cell phone number (559) 230-9739. You may always call me personally at any time about any concern. I will ensure county staff addresses the issue, and I will keep you updated about the status of the case. Elected officials and government can only can work well with a strong relationship with the people they serve.

Nasreen Michelle Johnson
www.JohnsonForSupervisor.com

Steve Hosey:

What are your thoughts on the position Old Fig holds within the Fresno metropolitan area, and the supervisor's role in supporting our historic neighborhood's integrity?

Fresno County Supervisor's role is to listen to concerns of the community and make decisions to ensure public safety, all while helping the community maintain its integrity and the characteristics. Decisions by the Supervisors should be well thought out and should be made with the community that will be impacted by its proposals to ensure minimal disruptions to the residents' way of life, and to maximize benefits for all involved.

The Fig Garden Police Protection District contracts with Fresno Sheriff's Office to police a portion of Fig Garden. The cost paid per deputy is dictated to the Sheriff's Office by the County Supervisors, and includes costs not associated with the policing of Old Fig. What are your thoughts on renegotiating those costs when the contract is renewed?

The contract entered into by the Fig Garden Police Protection District with the Fresno Sheriff's Office plays a significant role in ensuring the public safety in Old Fig through round the clock vigilance and increased monitoring by the officers. The costs associated with the approved contract can and will be negotiated in good faith and will take into consideration all costs associated with the responsibilities and desired outcomes requested by the Fig Garden Policy Protection District Commissioners.

The neighbors of Old Fig have worked to establish relationships with both our supervisor and county staff, so that together, we can work on proposed variance requests, code enforcement issues, and zoning ordinances. How will you continue that tradition?

It is very important for county Supervisors, county staff, the Fig Garden Home Owners Association, and community members to work together to ensure the continued success of Fig Garden. Success and sustainability will only occur if we maintain open lines of communication, are readily accessible, and have honest and fruitful conversations on the issues impacting Old Fig.

Steve Hosey
www.stevhosey4fresno.com

Three Candidates for County Supervisor District 2 continued.

Steve Brandau:

What are your thoughts on the position Old Fig holds within the Fresno metropolitan area, and the supervisor's role in supporting our historic neighborhood's integrity?

I believe that Old Fig holds a special place in our community. It certainly has its own "sense of place." We have some similar areas of town; Huntington Blvd and the Tower District are a couple of examples. I have the honor of representing Pinedale. Although completely different than Old Fig, there are some similarities. They hold regular monthly meetings to which I either attend or send a staff person. They are proud that they are Pinedale and mail sent to them even carries a Pinedale (not Fresno) address. I appreciate this pride in both Pinedale and Old Fig. As I have done with Pinedale I will protect Old Fig's ability to keep its neighborhood special.

The Fig Garden Police Protection District contracts with Fresno Sheriff's Office to police a portion of Fig Garden. The cost paid per deputy is dictated to the Sheriff's Office by the County Supervisors, and includes costs not associated with the policing of Old Fig. What are your thoughts on renegotiating those costs when the contract is renewed?

I have spoken to Sheriff Mims in regards to the cost of Police protection in Old Fig. She believes that extra fees should not be added to the actual cost. I tend to agree with her; however I have not heard why this is the current practice county wide. I am completely open to having this discussion.

The neighbors of Old Fig have worked to establish relationships with both our supervisor and county staff, so that together, we can work on proposed variance requests, code enforcement issues, and zoning ordinances. How will you continue that tradition?

I have often found that listening to my constituents leads me to bring forth policies that can improve the entire City. This was the case with my No Camping Ordinance. That policy was my response to an outcry from regular citizens, not government bureaucrats. I often spend hours working on solutions for even the smallest problems brought to me by my constituents. I prefer a creative and common sense approach to getting from Point A to Point B. I don't believe a cookie-cutter approach works best for historic neighborhoods like Old Fig.

Steve Brandau
www.brandau4supervisor.com

FIG GARDEN 2018 HOME VALUES AND SALES

By Angie Hyatt

Our neighborhood remains a vibrant, unique place to live. People desire to live here not just because of the proximity to Fig Garden Village and our mature trees, but mainly because of the homes—the character, charm, quality, lot sizes. But all of you know that. The quality of the area is also increased by the renovations that had been in progress are completed, with new ones beginning.

I break down the neighborhood into three areas. On the west side of the neighborhood the borders are Palm to Fruit and Shaw to Ashlan (West Wing). The middle section (Core Area) is Shaw to Lansing (South of Lansing is the City of Fresno, although Circle Drive is included in our map) and Palm to Maroa. (minus a small area of homes south of Griffith and east of Wishon to Maroa, which are in the City of Fresno, but again considered to be a part of expanded Old Fig.) The third section is Shaw to Ashlan and Maroa to Blackstone (East Wing).

During 2018 there were 61 home sales in the expanded Fig Garden Area. 2018 was a good real estate year for Fresno as a whole. Inventory has been low and interest rates have also remained low, with only a short time when they did rise but then came back down. Below is a breakdown of sales in the areas I identified above.

As always, in marketing a home the things that help in selling it quickly and for the most money are the condition of the home and, of course, the pricing. A fresh coat of paint and sprucing up the landscaping are a plus. New bathrooms and kitchens play a huge role in pricing, as those two rooms are the most expensive to renovate and a buyer will usually pay more if those are updated. 2019 may bring steady interest rates, which will have a positive effect on our market.

2018 STATISTICS

LOCATION	# OF SALES	MEDIAN SALES PRICE	AVERAGE SQ. FT. COST
Palm to Maroa and Shaw to Lansing /Circle Dr.	31	\$530,500	\$209.59
Palm to Fruit and Shaw to Ashlan	17	\$319,500	\$161.61
Maroa to Blackstone and Shaw to Ashlan	13	\$300,000	\$146.07

The highest price home sold: \$1,420,000

The lowest home price: \$123,000

The highest s.f. cost: \$295.57

The lowest s.f. cost: \$86.70

Homes sold for an average of 98.68% of their asking prices.

We live in a neighborhood where people walk and stop to talk to their friends and neighbors. We are truly fortunate!



FIG GARDEN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

To the residents of the Fig Garden Fire Protection District:

Calls for Service

In 2018, Fig Garden Fire Station 20 responded to 1,889 calls for service. This included 268 fire calls. Medical-Aid Incidents continued to be the greatest demand for services with 898 incidents. With all of these calls, your Fire Department was able to meet our response time goal of less than four minutes 87% of the time within the district, with an average time of 3.6 minutes.

Station Remodel

The remodel work has been extensive but it is finally completed. The station has improved greatly in its functionality for the crews and great esthetics for the neighborhood. We are looking forward to bringing back the "Open House" on the first walk-night of Christmas Tree Lane now that the remodel is completed.



Below we have placed pictures showing the completion of the project. We are confident residents of the Fig Garden Fire Protection District area will be proud of the newly remodeled fire station.



CHRISTMAS TREE LANE – A FIG GARDEN MAGICAL JEWEL

By Dean Alexander

Last year Christmas Tree Lane celebrated its 96th year of operation. Shawn Caglia, our longtime electrical contractor, decorated 300 Deodar cedars, as he has done for over 20 years. Shawn's multiple years of experience have allowed him to create the wonderful Christmas light experience. Each year our residents decorate their houses with elaborate displays to make Christmas Tree Lane a wonderful event, which has become an icon, not only for our Fig Garden neighborhood, but also for the San Joaquin Valley.

Christmas Tree Lane started in 1920 by decoration of a tree located at Van Ness Boulevard and Pontiac Avenue. This tree and many other of our Deodar cedars are over 100 years old. It is very special when you walk or drive down Christmas Tree Lane having these 100-year-old trees decorated with lights. The LED lights are the most energy efficient lights we can buy.

Last year Christmas Tree Lane was a successful event. With the help of Fresno Police Department, Fresno County

Sheriff's Office, and the California Highway Patrol, traffic flows smoother and with minimal traffic delays. However, our visitors still experienced over a one-hour wait to enjoy the Christmas Tree Lane event on busy nights. Visitors don't complain; they are with family and friends, and the experience is well worth the wait.

Christmas Tree Lane has a special place in the hearts of several residents and visitors. Every year, this year included, we had visitors proposing marriage on the Lane. We open our neighborhood so families and friends can share the magical moments of celebrating Christmas. What a special thing our neighborhood does for our community!

Over 200,000 people visited Christmas Tree Lane this year. I would like to thank all of our residents for allowing the event, so we can share the Christmas magic with our community. I am looking forward to another great year in 2019 as we are on the road for a 100-year Christmas Tree Lane celebration.

FIG GARDEN POLICE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The Fig Garden residential area is one of the safest places to live within California. With that being said, we still have crime within our neighborhood. The most tragic incident that we had was Nick Kauls being shot to death on June 24, 2018. It was a horrible crime and rocked our neighborhood. Our Sheriff's Office was very diligent, and, with the help of the Fresno Police Department, apprehended the individual suspected of the crime. Our neighborhood came together and collected \$8,000 of personal donations and an additional \$5,000 from a business donation. The Fig Garden neighborhood is a close-knit family and we try to protect our own. This protection takes several forms, from the Fig Garden Neighborhood Watch Program, close interaction with our Sheriff's Deputies, being observant of our surroundings and supplemental police protection provided by our Fig Garden Police Protection District.

Residents located within the heart of the Fig Garden neighborhood (the Core Area) created the Fig Garden Police Protection District back in the 1950s. These residents pay a

supplemental tax to fund the District. The District contracts with the Sheriff's Office for supplemental deputies to patrol the Core Area neighborhood. In addition, the Fig Garden Police Protection District hires Fresno County Private Security to provide supplemental patrol service to enhance safety in our neighborhood. Currently, the Fig Garden Police Protection District is exploring different options to increase police protection within the area. This year we will be reaching out to our neighbors to evaluate potential options for additional police protection services.

Our Neighborhood Watch Program is one of the best programs within the State. Please use it to its fullest extent by sending your email address to: **FigGardenWatch@gmail.com** to be added to the Fig Garden Electronic Watch Program. You will receive time-sensitive neighborhood crime alerts and crime statistics compiled by Sheriff's Deputies serving the Fig Garden Police Protection District. Let's be diligent and continue to make Fig Garden one of the safest places to live within the United States.



FIG GARDEN HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS & DIRECTORS FOR 2019

President	Dean Alexander	dalex215@gmail.com
Vice-President	Tony Pings	Anthony@pings.com
Treasurer	Valerie Lemay	vlemay@hotmail.com
Secretary	Jack Jensen	roy_jensen@comcast.net

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Merilee Amos	merilee.214@gmail.com
Dan Gallagher	dan.gallagher@fresnounified.org
Magda Gilewicz	mgilewicz@gmail.com
Angie Hyatt	angie@hyattre.com
Prudence Zalewski	pru@softsyn.net

Slate of Directors

The Board of Directors nominates the following people for three-year terms on the Board (*all are incumbents*):
Merilee Amos, Tony Pings, Valerie Lemay

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Special Election for District 2 Fresno County Supervisor
Tuesday, March 5

FGHOA Annual Meeting
Wednesday, March 13
Fig Garden Swim and Racquet Club, 7:00pm

FGHOA Fall Dinner
Sunday, September 29
Fig Garden Swim and Racquet Club, 5:30pm
More details will be posted in our Fall Newsletter and on the www.oldfig.org website

THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING OLD FIG!

Please join the Fig Garden Home Owners Association. We work to protect and strengthen our unique neighborhood.
The dues are \$70/year. Please mail your check payable to:

FGHOA
PO BOX 5796
Fresno CA 93755
or pay on our website: www.oldfig.org

Unlike most homeowners groups, our dues are voluntary and we depend on the generosity of our fellow neighbors.
Dues money goes to pay fees associated with filing documents that protect the quality of life and integrity of the neighborhood, printing and mailing newsletters to keep you informed, and running the www.oldfig.org web site.

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

Sheriff's Dispatch:	600-3111 (for emergencies call 911)
Fresno Humane Animal Services:	600-7387 (PETS)
Fresno County Code Enforcement:	600-4550
24-Hour Domestic Violence Help:	233-4357 (HELP)
Building Permit Info:	600-4540
City of Fresno Water Division:	621-5300, 621-5480
Fig Garden Fire Station (non-emergency):	621-4320 (for emergencies call 911)
Fresno County Library Information:	600-7323 (READ)
Fresno County Public Health:	600-3200, 600-6449
Graffiti Abatement:	600-8107
Fresno County Road Maintenance:	600-4840