PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Dan Gallagher

Dear friends and neighbors,

I am honored to be serving as the incoming president of the Fig Garden Home Owners Association, and am determined to work towards keeping our wonderful neighborhood the kind of place that people seek out to put down roots in. Over the years there have been many dedicated people who’ve held this position and whose hard work has made Fig Garden what it is today—*the best neighborhood in Fresno*. It’s my goal to keep up that tradition. I’d like to especially thank Dean Alexander, our previous president, for his tireless effort on our behalf. He, along with previous presidents, board members and neighbors, has set things in motion that will greatly benefit Old Fig for years to come. As you may remember, The Fig Garden Home Owners Association applied for and received a Caltrans Grant that for the study and development of a plan for improving transportation through our historic neighborhood. I’m excited about the prospects of implementing some of the projects laid out in this plan. It will all come down to finding funding for the larger proposals, but we are currently working towards implementing a few of the smaller ones.

The Fig Garden Home Owners Association helps keep our area a place people want to live in. It helps provide protection for our neighborhood, and is a voice that is respected by County officials who often use it as a sounding board for proposed developments and changes. Membership in our Association is strictly voluntary, but the nominal dues do assist in providing a strong voice for our community. More importantly, it’s the fact that we have an involved community that gives our issues a larger voice. This sense of community and the willingness of neighbors to get involved have led to positive initiatives like, among other things, the Neighborhood Watch program. This program is another way each of us can be involved: it takes very little effort but pays big dividends in helping keep our neighborhood safe.

I start and end most days by walking our dog through this beautiful place we live in. My wife and I both love this historic neighborhood with its large estate lots, gorgeous tree-lined streets, and closeness to Fig Garden Village. We enjoy chats with the neighbors we encounter, and the sense of community we feel here. Longtime residents of Fig Garden are greatly aware of the benefits of living in Old Fig. And if you talk to some real estate agents, they’ll tell you that Fig Garden is a highly desired place to live in. They have people on waiting lists who hope a house in our neighborhood becomes available so they too can enjoy what no other neighborhood in Fresno has to offer.

Our neighborhood continues to change. It’s my belief that because this is such a truly special place and filled with dedicated neighbors those changes will be good ones. I know that your Fig Garden Home Owners Board continues to work towards this, and appreciates your helpful involvement in making sure that our neighborhood continues to be the unique and desirable place that it is.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, March 16, 7pm
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.
Address Plaques are Back!

That’s right. Those beautiful diamond-shaped address plaques—the ones with the figs and leaves—are back. David Roberts, a local artist and contractor, has been working on crafting them for our neighbors. He has created a new mold, and is refining the production process so that he can make limited production runs for those of us who want a plaque. You may have seen these on your neighbors’ homes and mailboxes and wondered how to get one. Your wait will soon be over. Pricing and ordering details are yet to be developed, but we will have samples at our annual spring meeting. When details are finalized, we will place information on our website, so stay tuned.
Electronic Neighborhood Watch Prevents Fig Garden Crime

If you would like to get emails informing you about crime happening in this area, send a message with your email address to FigGardenWatch@gmail.com to be included on this list. You will receive time sensitive neighborhood crime alerts, monthly crime statistics compiled by the deputies on duty through the Fig Garden Police Protection District within the “core” area as well as the “wing” areas east of Maroa and west of Palm, notices about missing and found pets, etc.

Sheriff’s Deputies give Safety Tips

The Fresno County Sheriff’s Office, including Deputies Andres Solis and Alexander Sosin, along with Property Detective George Razo, would like to offer Fig Garden residents tips in order to avoid becoming targets/victims of thieves.

☐ Remove your garage door opener from your car if it is parked outside your garage.
☐ Remove all valuable items from inside your vehicle.
☐ Always lock doors and windows to your home and vehicle.
☐ Activate your home security system if one is installed.
☐ Keep your property well lit. You may consider purchasing motion activated lights, which help to deter criminal activity.
☐ Keep bushes and trees trimmed back to limit hiding places around your house. Criminals tend to hide in these bushes to gain entry into your home.
☐ Stay aware of activity in your neighborhood and report suspicious persons or suspicious activity to the Sheriff’s Office.
☐ If you go on vacation, do not publicize it (i.e., Facebook). Keep the circle of people you notify to a very small number.
☐ Before heading out of town, arrange for a trusted friend to retrieve your packages and newspapers upon delivery.
☐ Contact the Sheriff’s Office for a “House Check” if you go on vacation: http://bit.ly/1QaX3cJ
☐ Keep a record of serial numbers to items such as bicycles, televisions, computers, and tablets.
☐ Take photographs of your jewelry or unique items for reporting purposes.
☐ Get you know your neighbors. Exchange phone numbers and email addresses to stay informed.
☐ Join http://www.nextdoor.com and use the app to keep in touch with your neighbors. The Sheriff’s Office recently joined Nextdoor and is using it as a valuable tool to pass along important information to Fresno County residents. We are NOT permitted to read the neighborhood forums. We can only respond to messages and send out blanket information. We can also message the neighborhood “Leads.”

Transportation Study provides vision for Old Fig Garden

In 2013, Fig Garden Homeowners Association, Caltrans, the County and City of Fresno and the Fresno Council of Governments sponsored the preparation of a transportation study for our area to enhance and protect the unique nature of Old Fig Garden. The Homeowners Association initiated this process to address local urban design and transportation concerns associated with an increase of traffic in and around Old Fig Garden and the planned land use changes along Blackstone and Shaw Avenues—two of the boundaries of the community. Several community meetings were held and surveys conducted to solicit input from the residents of Old Fig Garden.

The Study identified the following major transportation issues and needs:
☐ Increased pedestrian safety and comfort on Fig Garden neighborhood streets (including Gettysburg, Maroa, Wishon, and other local streets).
- Increased bicycle safety and comfort on Fig Garden neighborhood streets.
- Safe access to transit stops along Fruit and Palm Avenues.
- Safe access to schools in the study area.
- Reduction of automobile speeds on Fig Garden neighborhood streets.
- Moderation of the attractiveness of Ashlan Avenue as a thoroughfare for automobiles.
- Reduction of automobile speeds on Ashlan Avenue.

The Old Fig Garden Community Transportation Study recommends a multimodal approach and street improvements that address pedestrian and bicycle facilities, traffic calming, safe routes to school, and urban design transitions from the established residential neighborhoods to adjacent major transportation corridors. Recommendations also touch on signage, pedestrian-scale lighting and Old Fig Garden’s urban forest.

The FGHOA Board recently began to develop a list of priority projects that might implement many of the recommendations in the study. Next steps will include meetings with the original sponsoring agencies listed above to collaborate on an approach to move implementation forward.

A link to the complete Old Fig Garden Community Transportation Study is available on the Fig Garden Home Owners Association website at www.oldfig.org

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**Change is in the air…**

Dear Fig Garden Friends,

Fresno County is experiencing significant change. By next January two new members will occupy a position on the Board of Supervisors, as Supervisors Poochigian and Perea have decided not to seek re-election. This shift means the Board of Supervisors will have completely changed in four short years.

Along with a new Board, we welcome Jean Rousseau as the new County Administrative Officer (CAO) for the County of Fresno. Mr. Rousseau served as the Administrative Officer for Tulare for seven years. Previous to that, he was employed by the Fresno County’s Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector’s Office for 15 years. In addition, to our new CAO, the County has welcomed 6-7 new department heads and a District Attorney.

Change has also taken place in our District Two office. Chief of Staff Heather Elkins has recently left my office to dedicate her time to her family as well as return to school on a full-time basis to obtain her Master’s Degree. We would like to recognize Heather for her dedication to both the County of Fresno and the City where the two of us worked together over the past five years. We will definitely miss her lively personality around the office but wish her much luck with her future endeavors.

Finally, we are excited to announce Sandra Seely has recently joined our team as my new Chief of Staff. Sandra Seely joins District 2 with extraordinary enthusiasm, bringing nearly two decades of public service leadership and experience in government and the not-for-profit sector to her role as Chief of Staff. She is a long-time resident of Fresno and has received her bachelor’s degree in Health Administration. Sandra’s passion is community service. She serves as Chair on the Girl Scouts Central California Gold Award Advisory Committee where she provides guidance and support to girls working toward the Gold Award, the highest award available to a Girl Scout. Please join us in giving Sandra a warm welcome!

I hope you will continue to partner with us as we discuss issues relevant to all living and working in Fresno County. As always, please feel free to contact me, Chief of Staff Sandra Seely or Constituent Relations Manager Michelle Asadoorian at 600-2000 or by email at district2@co.fresno.ca.us with any questions or concerns. We look forward to hearing from you and hope you can attend the annual Fig Garden Homeowners Meeting on March 16, 2016.

Warm Regards,

Andreas Borgeas
Fresno County Supervisor
Magical Lights on Christmas Tree Lane

By Dean Alexander

Last year marked our 93rd year of decorating the Deodar Cedars with lights. The Christmas Tree Lane event is very popular with our community and has become nationally recognized. The most recent notoriety came when the San Francisco Chronicle listed Christmas Tree Lane as a Christmas attraction.

Last year we made changes within our traffic flow patterns to allow for smoother flow entering Christmas Tree Lane along Shields Avenue. During walk nights, mitigation measures were performed to help reduce pedestrian traffic on residential lawns and driveways. The Christmas Tree Lane committee and our residents picked up trash within Van Ness Boulevard and side streets after the events. The Fresno County Sheriffs, Fresno Police Department and California Highway Patrol provided a huge presence during our walk nights and no major criminal incidents were reported. That is no small feat for events of this size.

Christmas Tree Lane is a very special and unique event which touches the hearts of Fresno residents. Multiple marriage proposals occur on the Lane each year. This year, a couple got married in front of my residence. There are a lot of difficulties and time constraints that come with putting on this type of event. Our residents are inconvenienced for nearly the entire month of December. The event is solely directed and produced by the Fig Garden Home Owners Association. The City and the County are not involved with its coordination nor do they contribute monetarily. The Fresno County Sheriff, the Fresno City Police Department and California Highway Patrol provide traffic control at no charge to its residents. Without the law enforcement support, we could not put on this magical Christmas Tree Lane event. I would especially like to thank the law enforcement agencies for their support.

I look forward to another great magical year for 2016. We live in a great historical neighborhood and Christmas Tree Lane is truly a legacy of our neighborhood.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The Fig Garden Woman’s Club 43rd Annual Benefit Antique Show and Sale
March 11-13, 2016
4550 North Van Ness Boulevard

Friday-Saturday 10 am–6 pm
Sunday 11 am–3 pm

Donation is $5.00 and luncheon and desserts will be available.
The Silent Auction will take place Sunday afternoon.
For more information please contact:
Marsha Wagner at mgwagner@comcast.net

The Fig Garden Annual Dinner
Sunday, October 2, 2016
Fig Garden Swim and Racquet Club
Details about the fall dinner will be announced in our Fall Newsletter and on the www.oldfig.org website
The Fig Garden Police Protection District commissioners as well as our neighbors are concerned about vehicles speeding through our neighborhood. One of the main roads where speeding occurs is Ashlan Avenue. The Fig Garden Community Transportation Study provides recommendations to calm traffic flow along Ashlan Avenue, and measures are being set in place to get these mitigation measures enacted. However, the cost to implement these measures is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, so it will take time to get these measures fully implemented.

Meanwhile, to help slow traffic along Ashlan Avenue, the Fig Garden Police Protection District has purchased two radar feedback signs which display the driver’s speed and the posted speed limit. In other jurisdictions feedback signs have been effective in reducing overall vehicle speed. One radar feedback sign will be installed on the north side of Ashlan Avenue between Wishon and Van Ness Avenues, and the other will be placed on the south side of Ashlan Avenue between Wilson and Van Ness Avenues.

The signs are scheduled to be installed this month. They will be a great benefit to our neighborhood.

—Dean Alexander

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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 $60/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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Useful Contact Numbers</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheriff’s Dispatch:</td>
<td>600-3111 (for emergencies call 911)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fresno Humane Animal Services:</td>
<td>600-7387 (PETS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fresno County Code Enforcement:</td>
<td>600-4550</td>
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<td>24-Hour Domestic Violence Help:</td>
<td>233-4357 (HELP)</td>
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<td>Building Permit Info:</td>
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<td>City of Fresno Water Division:</td>
<td>621-5300, 621-5480</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fig Garden Fire Station (non-emergency):</td>
<td>621-4320 (for emergencies call 911)</td>
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<td>Fresno County Library Information:</td>
<td>600-7323 (READ)</td>
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<td>Fresno County Public Health:</td>
<td>600-3200, 600-6449</td>
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<td>Graffiti Abatement:</td>
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