

# FALL NEWSLETTER 2023

[www.oldfig.org](http://www.oldfig.org)



FIG · GARDEN  
HOME · OWNERS  
ASSOCIATION

## Annual Fig Garden Dinner

Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> 5:00pm, dinner served at 6:00pm

Fig Garden Swim and Racquet Club

4722 N. Maroa Ave.

RSVP with check by Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup>

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear friends and neighbors:

We have survived another scorching summer. Now it is time to enjoy the wonderful fall days and nights. I totally believe Fresno's fall season with its medium temperatures rivals any other living destination. So, neighbors and friends, let's relish these days and get out and savor the changing of the colors.

Some of my friends who live outside Fig Garden ask me why I love our neighborhood and why is it such a great place to live. I tell them it is several things, like the historical homes and park-like settings of our streets but predominantly it is the Fig Garden neighbors. We really do have a close-knit neighborhood. Without good neighbors, no matter where you live, you won't have a great neighborhood. Our Fig Garden neighbors are friends and let's continue on with that tradition. When you see neighbors outside wave and say hi. There is no better way of getting to know neighbors than walking our streets, and striking up conversations with them.

Continue to be respectful with your neighbors. Treat your neighbors the way you want to be treated. Care for your property because it reflects on the neighborhood as a whole. If you are going to have a large event at your house, let your neighbors know of the event to minimize the impact on them, which may include loud music and traffic congestion. Please be considerate and not only will your neighbors love you for it, they will give you the same consideration in return.

Look out for your neighbors' properties. Keeping a safe neighborhood makes building relationships so much easier. Joining the Fig Garden Neighborhood Watch Program is an easy way to stay in contact with the neighbors and is a formal system for keeping everyone safe. A great benefit

to uniting about safety is that neighbors can bond over protecting their homes and families. Let your neighbors know when you are gone for an extended period of time. I know that I feel safe heading out on an extended vacation knowing our neighbors are watching after my house and recognize what is typical versus what would be suspicious behavior. Stay informed on community issues and get involved.

Be a good neighbor with random acts of kindness, like assisting your neighbor by bringing in their garbage when they are on vacation or may need extra help, or, in my case, lending out a ladder to a neighbor for putting up holiday lights for the Christmas Tree Lane event. Help a neighbor if they are sick or struggling. You might consider it "paying it forward." If you know a neighbor needs help, try to provide it. It might be as simple as repairing a broken sprinkler or, in my case, decorating someone's yard for Christmas.

On another note, when I travel down our wonderful tree-lined streets I see some trees in need of maintenance that may become a hazard or have a shortened life. Conversations with Fresno County staff indicate that while these trees are within the public right-of-way, maintenance is the responsibility of the homeowner. Fresno County does not maintain the trees, but will remove dead trees within the easement if they impact the roadway – however, the County will not replace the trees. I recommend all residents check their trees and, if required, do some maintenance so you can enjoy their beauty. After all, these mature trees make our neighborhood unique in Fresno. Let's maintain them so we can enjoy them for a long time to come.

-Dean Alexander

# NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 5796, Fresno, California 93755 · [www.oldfig.org](http://www.oldfig.org) · September 2023

# NO CHANGE IS THE RIGHT CHANGE

by Tony Pings

What has the Fig Garden Home Owners Association Board done for you? Our most important efforts are often unseen, as the Board's most important goal is to protect what our neighborhood already has in a world that is intent upon changing us.

Government is always wanting to change things and we have always worked with them to find the best outcomes to protect our unique historic area. In the last few decades we have gone from a period of reacting to those who govern us to working with those who govern us. This has been a critical and positive change. I've worked with many County Supervisors and each has brought his or her own strengths. We have worked together to help them understand what it takes to maintain the unique positive things that are Old Fig Garden.

Here are some of the highlights of changes we have dealt with, both in and out of the public view:

- Stopping the widening of Ashlan Avenue: You may recall the public efforts from the 1990s, but more limited approaches to widening have occurred since then. We have actively reclassified this street designation to make a widening effort very difficult to pursue.
- Three times, we stopped efforts to annex us into the City.
- Stopped a previous effort to make our area accept all the county's state density requirement increases. This would have effectively caused our area to automatically be rezoned, parcel by parcel, into multi-family residences. We were one vote away from this happening, but we prevailed.
- Stopped an effort to have the Fresno Police Department take over our metropolitan area, thereby removing the area from the County Sheriff's jurisdiction.
- Worked to increase the minimum lot size in order to stop inappropriate parcel splitting under the previous zoning code

And there's so much more.

Our position within the government, City and County, has changed significantly. In years past, we were viewed as an "elitist" area that needed to be converted into a "standard" area. Introducing curbs, streetlights, commercial activity, convenience stores, office buildings, etc., to our neighborhood was viewed by the various governmental entities as being the vehicle to accomplish this change. It was a very difficult and dangerous time for our future. The Fig Garden Home Owners Association Board has been at the forefront of changing the view the public has of our unique and important historic area, allowing it to be appreciated for those qualities and attributes that make it such an important part of Fresno.

Today we are recognized as a unique historic area to be preserved—a welcome and important change. Today we work interactively and proactively with the County and City for a better outcome. Our area is now viewed as something to protect, not to degrade.

Yet the forces of change loom over our area as strong as ever. This time, efforts are being pushed by State laws, not local actions. Our efforts have to be focused and are needed now more than at any time before. The stakes are higher than ever. Your Board is continuing to evolve in terms of the focus of its efforts to address inappropriate change being forced in our area. I am as concerned today as I was thirty years ago when I joined the Board.

What I want you to know about the Fig Garden Home Owners Association Board is that during the past several decades it has been successful in keeping what we have always

had here—the beauty, tranquility, and unique qualities that we love about our neighborhood. We will stay committed to continuing to protect these differences that define our historic Fig Garden area. The testament to our success lies more in what has been prevented from happening than in anything else.

When you think of the Fig Garden Home Owners Association Board, think of us for what we have done so far and for what we will continue to do to maintain Old Fig Garden.

# CHRISTMAS TREE LANE

by Dean Alexander

Christmas Tree Lane will be celebrating its 101st season this year. We are planning to have walk nights this year, if permitted by the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, the City of Fresno Police Department and the California Highway Patrol. We will meet with law enforcement within the next month to confirm that they can provide traffic control for the Christmas Tree Lane walk nights. The law enforcement staffing is extensive for walk nights, and will include dozens of officers and deputies. The cost for the law enforcement is covered by their departments. If the Fresno County Sheriff's Office, Fresno Police Department and the California Highway Patrol agree to provide traffic control, we will have the walk nights.

The walk nights require extensive staffing and volunteer help in order to put on the event and your help is absolutely needed. Without enough volunteer help from our neighborhood community to coordinate the work required to set up, provide security, and clean up an event that attracts tens of thousands of people, it will be impossible to hold walk nights. Such a large scale event does not just happen with a snap of a finger. It requires the dedicated work of volunteers, such as you and your neighbors, to continue to put on walk nights, otherwise it cannot happen.

As indicated in previous newsletters, I will not be in charge of the walk nights this year. Dan Gallagher has volunteered to manage the events and I will be assisting Dan. We also need your help with the work that involves some of the following:

- Constructing donation booths and placing booths out on the Lane
- Overseeing the donation booths during the walk nights
- Placing out lighted trash cans before each walk night
- Trash cleanup during and after the nights
- Trash cleanup of side streets
- Placing barricades with lights around houses to limit foot traffic into yard areas
- Placing barricades and removing barricades for street closure and reopening
- Overseeing the temporary port-a-potties during the walk nights
- Patrolling the Lane during the walk nights for vendors selling items
- Disassembling the donation booths after the walk nights.

If you can help with any of these tasks, please contact Dan Gallagher at: [Dan.Gallagher@fresnounified.org](mailto:Dan.Gallagher@fresnounified.org)

The Christmas Tree Lane opening night will be Saturday, December 2. The Lane will be open through Christmas Day, December 25th. Our tentative dates for the walk nights will be Saturday December 2nd (Opening Night) and Tuesday December 12th. We will confirm the walk nights after we meet with Law Enforcement. Let's mark our calendars and enjoy another magical year.

# ANNUAL DINNER

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8<sup>TH</sup>

5:00 - 8:30PM

FIG GARDEN SWIM & RACQUET CLUB

4722 N. MAROA AVE.

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO INVITE YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS TO THIS DINNER—IT'S A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO COME TOGETHER AND CELEBRATE OLD FIG.

## CATERING BY:

FIG GARDEN SWIM AND RACQUET CLUB

SOCIAL STARTS AT 5PM - DINNER WILL BE SERVED AT 6:00PM

As in the past we have invited Fresno County officials and law enforcement serving our area to attend the dinner and answer your questions.

**\$60 per person**

Includes dinner, wine and dessert

RSVP by sending a check in the envelope provided  
in the Fall Newsletter by September 29<sup>th</sup>

Questions? Contact Valerie LeMay @ 559.779.8691

*Casual Attire | Adults only*

## FIG GARDEN HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS & DIRECTORS FOR 2023

President  
Vice-President  
Treasurer  
Secretary

Dean Alexander  
Tony Pings  
Valerie LeMay  
Jack Jensen

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## OLD FIG GARDEN HOME SALES FOR JAN 1–JUNE 30, 2023

Old Fig Garden home sales continued to be brisk through the first half of 2023, in spite of the rising interest rates and the low inventory. As everyone has noticed, there are many homes with major renovations. This continues to be proof that our neighborhood is still thriving and people are continuing to invest in its future.

In 2023, interest rates have remained fairly steady, although higher than we have become accustomed to in the past many years. The inventory of homes has remained low, making for a continued competitive market for buyers.

In reporting the sales, the neighborhood is divided into three areas: (1) On the west side the borders are Palm to Fruit and Shaw to Ashlan. (2) The middle section 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.) . (3) The third section is Shaw to Ashlan and Maroa to Blackstone.

Now for the 2023 statistics from January 1 to June 30, 2023:

	# of Sales	Median Sales Price	Avg. Sq. Ft Cost
Palm to Maroa and Shaw to Lansing /Circle Dr.	25	\$655,000	\$268.45
Shaw to Ashlan and Palm to Fruit	3	\$435,000	\$275.86
Shaw to Ashlan and Maroa to Blackstone	5	\$610,000	\$249.09

The highest price home sold was \$950,000.

The lowest home/condo price was \$333,250

The highest s.f. cost was at \$363.35

The lowest s.f. cost was \$139.20

Homes sold for an average of 101.32% of their asking prices.

Have a wonderful remainder of 2023. Stay safe and be well!  
Your neighbor and Board member, *Angie Hyatt*

### FIG GARDEN E-ALERT

Join your neighbors in receiving timely e-mail alerts on safety issues, community events, crime log updates, Fig Garden Home Owners Association meetings and other neighborhood news. If you are not already on the mailing list, send an e-mail to:

[oldfigalert@gmail.com](mailto:oldfigalert@gmail.com)  
to be placed on the mailing list.

## OLD FIG GARDEN ADDRESS PLAQUES

Old Fig Garden Address Plaques are still available for ordering. You may have seen them on many houses in our area. They are designed and made by one of our neighbors David Roberts, a local artist and contractor. The concrete plaques come in Brown Stone or Tumbled Stone. Price \$250. Install price \$85. If install takes longer than one hour then priced at \$85 plus \$85/hour after first hour. If you would like to order one contact David at (559)709-8702, or email [robertsedavid@gmail.com](mailto:robertsedavid@gmail.com)



Brown Stone



Tumbled Stone

### 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** and go to fees associated with filing documents, projects that protect the quality of life and integrity of the area, printing and mailing newsletters to keep you informed, and running the [www.oldfig.org](http://www.oldfig.org) website. Please mail your check payable to:

**FGHOA  
PO BOX 5796  
Fresno, CA 93755**

Unlike with most homeowners groups, our dues are voluntary and we depend on the generosity of our fellow neighbors. The Board of Directors and Officers receive no payment for their work on behalf of the Fig Garden Home Owners Association.

### USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

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