

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

www.oldfig.org



FIG · GARDEN
HOME · OWNERS
ASSOCIATION

Annual Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 2, 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. Nominations of Directors and elections
5. Discussion of matters of general interest
6. Adjournment

*Come to our annual meeting. Hear the news,
meet neighbors, ask questions of
County and Law Enforcement officials.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Angie Hyatt

It is hard to believe that we are already in a new year. Last year seemed to fly by... thankfully, without any major neighborhood issues.

I was asked by my colleagues on the board to continue as President for another year at our January Board meeting. They tried to tell me I did a good job last year and that was why they asked me to continue; however, I know better—it is because no one else wanted the position :). Whatever the reason, I am happy to continue serving each of you as President of the FGHOA, along with the entire board of wonderful neighborhood volunteers: Alison, Dan, Dean, Jack, Magda, Mike, Merilee and Tony. We all look forward to another good year. Do not hesitate to contact any one of us with questions or concerns.

Last year's County election brought a new Supervisor to our area, Garry Bredefeld. Supervisor Bredefeld and his Chief of Staff, Daniel Gai, have already been very accessible and attentive to our concerns. We look forward to seeing Daniel at our monthly meetings, as his schedule allows, and Supervisor Bredefeld at our Annual Spring Meeting on April 2, along with other officials and staff.

One of the projects for this spring is planting the beautiful Deodora cedars that Greg and Dana Pratt propagated from the first cedar decorated on Christmas Tree Lane. Sadly, Greg passed away in December of 2024. Our condolences go out to Dana. Thank you, Dana,

for your gift to our neighborhood, and assisting in continuing the project.

The Tree Committee, as Phase 1, will begin planting trees at the beginning of March along Van Ness in blank areas where the trees have died. Some of you may have already been contacted by Board members Dan Gallagher and/or Magda Gilewicz regarding a tree being planted in front of your home. They are making sure that owners are aware of the planting and will commit to water the trees themselves. It's essential that all the neighbors participate in watering so that the newly planted trees will survive. Thank you all in advance for your cooperation.

I would also like to remind everyone that trees along all our streets need water. Please water the street trees in front of your homes at least monthly by giving them a good, deep soaking. Many of our trees are over 100 years old and approaching the end of their lives. Hopefully we help them survive longer.

I would also like to thank the neighbors who have stepped up and volunteered to be on various Committees to assist the FGHOA with neighborhood issues. We will send out an E-Alert with the Committees and the Chairs for each, so if anyone has an interest in joining a committee, contact any of the committee chairs. Consider getting involved. It is also a great way to meet neighbors. Stay tuned for the E-Alert.

Continued on p. 2

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 5796, Fresno, California 93755 · www.oldfig.org · March 2025

It is that time of year again that we send out the Membership Dues coupons and envelopes with this newsletter. I encourage everyone to send in your annual dues for 2025. Our dues were raised slightly to \$90 per year at our last meeting. We have not raised dues for almost 10 years! We send out around 1800 newsletters and currently have about 250 paying members. Please help us increase this number. It is a small price to pay to help the FGHOA keep our neighborhood informed and vibrant and a desirable place to live. The Board agreed that we need to build our reserves so that we are not short of funds in case we need any special assistance at any time, such as legal advice, rising insurance costs, website redesign, etc. Also, the mailing of the two newsletters annually costs the FGHOA about \$6,000.

Please consider becoming a dues-paying member. You can send a check with the coupon and envelope provided or pay by Venmo at [@fig-garden-HOA](#). Paying annual dues allows you to be a voting member at the Spring Meeting; however, to be eligible to vote at the Spring Meeting, you must have paid dues for the previous year. The dues that you pay now from this newsletter begin the 2025 fiscal year.



Cuttings from the original Christmas Tree Lane Deodara Cedar are taken for propagation in March 2022.

On a final note, please strongly consider supplying us with your email address so that we may keep you apprised of any neighborhood updates, including Sheriff's crime reports, and meeting agendas through our **E-Alert program**. We currently have about 50% of neighbors signed up. Let's get it close to 100% participation. Maybe if we get a higher number of participations, we can send out the newsletter via E-Alert and save on the high cost of mailings!

Please go on our website, oldfig.org, and sign up for E-Alerts, or you can also add your email address to the enclosed payment coupon when you send in your dues. Mike will add you to the E-Alerts.

Old Fig Garden is a unique community, not just a neighborhood. We are all fortunate to be a part of such a special place to live. Help us to keep it this way.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter, and hope to see you all at the Spring meeting on April 2!

Respectfully,
Angie Hyatt
Board President



Deodar cedars ready for planting on Van Ness this spring.

SUPERVISOR BREDEFELD'S LETTER TO THE FIG GARDEN COMMUNITY

by Garry Bredefeld

Hello,

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today through your newsletter and, quite frankly, I'm honored to represent you. The campaign is thankfully over now. After having walked precincts for a year and a half, walking 35-40 miles every week, going to 21,000 homes in the district, it is now time to govern and work on your behalf as I promised I would do.

As I said during the campaign, your neighborhoods are unique and beautiful, and Old Fig Garden's history and charm must be preserved and I intend to ensure that happens. We will also ensure that Code Enforcement is responsive and effective in dealing with issues that arise in the neighborhood. The best way to assist me and my office in addressing concerns and issues is to contact my Chief of Staff, Danny Gai, at his direct phone line (559-600-2001). My other assistant is Jennifer Ortega and she started her employment with my office on 2/10/25. Both will be available and always responsive to you.

I have excellent relationships with our phenomenal law enforcement and will assist them in any and every way possible to ensure they have every resource they need to keep Old Fig Garden safe, healthy, and vibrant.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. Together, we will make sure that Old Fig remains a wonderful and safe community for you and your families.

Sincerely,
Garry Bredefeld
Supervisor, Fresno County

CHRISTMAS TREE LANE

by Dan Gallagher

Christmas Tree Lane celebrated its 102nd year last December. Our neighborhood has been putting this event on for over a century and it continues to be one of the many things that make Old Fig special. There is no other two-mile-long lighted Christmas Lane anywhere in the world, so thanks to the many neighbors who work to bring the Christmas spirit alive each December. 102 years is quite a wonderful legacy.

For over 20 years we've also opened our neighborhood to our fellow Fresnans for Walk Nights. Tens of thousands of people love and look forward these events each year. Unfortunately, unless the City of Fresno and the County Board of Supervisors pass new ordinances that will stem the tide of vendors on and around the Lane during these nights, the HOA Board feels that the situation is just too harmful to our neighborhood to continue. This is a huge disappointment for me personally. I've spent the last eight years helping put these Walk Nights on, and our family and friends love it.

Though there are several reasons Walk Nights are a challenge, the main reason we may need to discontinue them is that our neighborhood is inundated with vendors. This is especially bad south of the canal in the area of the Lane that lies in the City of Fresno. Up and down the Lane, vendors have taken positions on residents' private property, blocked driveways and side roads, and have been aggressive to residents who asked them to leave. Overriding all this is the effect they have on the Walk Nights' atmosphere. These nights are meant to be a celebration of Christmas—a time for families, where people from all over the Valley can walk shoulder to shoulder experiencing the beauty of our lights and the atmosphere of joy and peace. Walk Nights have increasingly taken on a carnival feel and vendors are a main reason for that. If allowed to continue, that carnival atmosphere will be less about the peace and joy of Christmas and devolve more and more into Fresno's Mardi Gras. That would lead to unsafe conditions to prevail, and we simply cannot let that happen.

This year we, along with the Sheriff, Fresno PD and CHP, worked hard to try to stop vendors from taking over. We tripled the number of private security guards. The Sheriff dedicated deputies specifically to ask vendors to leave, and City Code enforcement officers were out. The problem is, vendors are allowed in the City of Fresno and even though deputies ask vendors to leave, without an ordinance that allows them to cite and/or confiscate their equipment, the vendors simply move to a different location, or ignore the requests altogether.

This is why, unless specific plans with consequences are made by the City and County governments, the Board of the Fig Garden Home Owners Association will have to stop hosting Walk Nights in our neighborhood.





Fire Captain Pete Martinez, Engineer Craig Netzley, and Firefighter Cory Kalanick are on staff at Fig Garden Fire Station 20 on Wishon Ave and are one of the three shifts working there.

OUR FIG GARDEN FIRE STATION

by Mike Chen

Fig Garden Station 20 Firefighter Cory Kalanick has a longer commute to work than most when he shows up for his 48-hour shift. It's a long drive back and forth to his family in Ventura, but for him it's been worth it the last eight years.

"That sense of community is huge in this area, not to mention it's just a beautiful area. That part is really cool and unique to this district, and is why I chose to stay here," said Kalanick.

"Fig Garden is a highly desirable place to live and it's a highly desirable place to work and in order to work at this station, people have to have very high seniority," explained Fire Captain Pete Martinez.

"The great thing that the people of Fig Garden have is... they usually have high seniority firefighters, so there's a lot of experience."

The Fig Garden station is staffed by a crew of three: a Captain, an Engineer and a Firefighter. The staff does a continuous 48 hour shift and then another three person crew

comes in for the next 48 hours, so the work week is 48 hours on and 96 hours off.

Engineer Craig Netzley has been a firefighter for 26 years, and was inspired by his father who talked about firefighting while he grew up. His father worked as a firefighter in Fresno for 28 years. For Netzley, it's his first stint in Fig Garden, as he had preferred working at busier fire stations nearby, but with more years under his belt, "you kind of slow down a little bit."

The three firefighters share the living space in the fire house, where they sleep, cook, and have a living room area for relaxation. So, do they often have the traditional firehouse barbecue that firefighters are famous for?

"We're not a typical shift because Cory's a vegan, I'm gluten intolerant and Craig has some food allergies, so all of us bring our own food and we cook individually, but we eat together," said Martinez. "But we have barbecues, too, and cook chili." "I barbecue wild caught tofu," joked Kalanick.

“He’ll volunteer his cooking skills and we’ll have to eat vegan, and I’m not gonna lie, but his lasagna is the best lasagna I’ve ever had in my life, even though it was all vegan,” added Martinez.

All firefighters are also trained as EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians), so they can stabilize people until they can receive treatment from a Paramedic, who has more advanced medical training, and can work under a doctor’s advice until reaching a hospital.

Most calls the station receives involve medical emergencies, so their work as first responders along with accompanying ambulance crews, are critical in reaching victims in a timely manner. The station is located on Wishon Ave., right in the center of Old Fig.

Also on staff at Station 20 is Fire Investigator Mike Brodbeck, who resides in a separate building on the premises. His job is to investigate arson and he’s called out on any suspicious fires.

Fig Garden residents may also see another staffer who can be seen walking around the neighborhood with Fire

Investigator Lee Wilding. Shilo is not what you’d expect for the typical firefighting crew. That is, she’s not that black and white Dalmation mascot you see riding on the Fire Engine. Shilo is an Arson Dog and is trained to find ignitable liquids.

“On any scene we have a tool that we use, called a “sniffer” that tells us if there’s flammable liquids in the area where the fire burned,” said Brodbeck. “But, we like to use the dog because the dog has a stronger nose, and she picks up stuff we’re not able to find and she can cover a much larger area more quickly.”

With Fig Garden being such a well forested green area within the urban area, one would think there are significant fire dangers, especially in light of the wildfire that devastated parts of Los Angeles recently.

“Homeowners in Fig Garden do a really good job of keeping their properties landscaped well” said Martinez. He notes that there are “areas where you just have older homeowners that allow their property to go – maybe don’t



Fire Captain Pete Martinez, Engineer Craig Netzley, and Firefighter Cory Kalanick share the kitchen area at Fig Garden Fire Station 20 with two other shifts rotating there during the week.

have the money to keep them up like they used to when they were younger – and grasses and trees are a little overgrown, and then we start getting into things we start worrying about.”

Martinez points out that it is “Zone Zero” which is the space adjacent to your house extending out five feet, that is critical. “That’s where you want to keep all your landscaping well-maintained: no dead pine needles, grasses.” Embers from other fires can blow into that area and then cause larger fires.

“You keep the shrubbery down to have that defensible space that wouldn’t allow fires to grow to the point they would transmit to the house.”

Most recent fires in Fig Garden, Martinez says, are secondary to vehicle accidents that get into a yard. “A hot muffler comes in contact with leaves or pine needles and those end up catching fire, and spread laterally towards the house.”

So, if you have mulch, “keep it 3-4 inches—once you get past that it becomes a big fire load we don’t want to contend with.

The other common fire hazards involve bad wiring, cooking fires – someone answers the phone and forgets they have something on the stove and they walk away. It helps to maintain one’s chimney to get it swept out every few years.

Martinez strongly recommends that every homeowner have a “Fire Exit Plan” that everyone in the house knows. When the fire alarm goes off, can everyone get out of the house in 30–60 seconds, and in 90 seconds at night? Then call 9-1-1 and don’t go back in and try not to put it out yourself.

Have a place where the family will meet, and have all your important documents (identification, financial policies, insurance, etc.) in one location, such as a binder in a convenient place that you can grab to take with you as you leave. Also have your medication easily reachable, and anything you need for your pets.

There is information on the Fresno Emergency Preparedness page for safety tips: www.fresno.gov/prepare as well as on the FEMA website: www.ready.gov

“If you have a fire extinguisher, it’d be great, but it’s more important to get out of the house quickly.” Martinez recommends having dry chemical fire extinguishers with a rating of “2A:10B:C” that you can buy at most household goods stores, and keep in the kitchen/cooking area and one in the garage and to make sure they are easily accessible.

The Fig Garden Firefighters carry extra batteries and smoke alarms to give out when they visit homes and notice homes without them. Fresno Fire Community Outreach Specialist McKenzie Dern wants the public to know, “A good rule of thumb is to change and check your smoke alarms for Daylight Savings.” That starts March 9 and ends November 2 this year.

The firefighters have noticed that when they go to fires or to a medical call there’s only about a 50% chance the home has a working smoke alarm. “That’s something big: smoke detectors definitely save lives—it’s not the fire that kills people, it’s the smoke, and it just takes one bad breath that could incapacitate someone and could lead to death,” said Martinez. But, he recommends not placing the smoke alarm next to the stove in the kitchen. “Really, it’ll go off all the time. Some people use it as their timer that their food’s done,” joked Martinez.

Fresno Public Information Officer Josh Sellers also notes that many modern smoke detectors have 10-year lithium batteries and do not need to be changed as often as the ones that use 9 Volt batteries. “But, the general rule of thumb is that the detectors may have a lifespan of 10 years and if your smoke alarm is older than that, it’s time to replace it—even if it seems like it’s working properly.”

Sellers also states the importance of having carbon monoxide detectors, which will alert you to the presence of the invisible, odorless gas that is a by-product of fire combustion such as furnaces, stoves, and fires.

A big challenge for firefighters now involves the increasing number of electronics being used with high capacity batteries. While electric vehicle cars with large lithium batteries pose a special hazard because they cannot be extinguished easily with water, there are many other things around the house that have batteries that can overheat and catch fire.

These include e-bikes, golf carts, e-scooters, battery-powered tools and electronic devices that are subject to malfunction. Sellers warns not to overcharge these devices—including cell phones.

The Station 20 firefighters are responsible for checking all the fire hydrants in the area, which includes over a hundred in Fig Garden and a total of 232 in their district. While this keeps them busy while they are not on an active call, they also welcome the Fig Garden public to come in to tour their firehouse. Next time you walk past, take a few minutes to drop in and say “Hi” to our Station 20 firefighters.

OLD FIG GARDEN HOME SALES for July 1—December 31, 2024

by Angie Hyatt

Third and Fourth Quarter Sales in Old Fig were down just slightly in number, actually 2 fewer sales overall for the 6-month period, compared to the first half of 2024.

In 2024, interest rates remained fairly stable, averaging in the high 6% range.

The neighborhood is divided into three areas. On the west side of the neighborhood the borders are Palm to Fruit and Shaw to Ashlan. 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.) The third section is Shaw to Ashlan and Maroa to almost Blackstone.

Now for the 2024 statistics from July 1 thru December 31, 2024:

2024 STATISTICS			
LOCATION	# OF SALES	MEDIAN SALES PRICE	AVERAGE SQ. FT. COST
Palm to Maroa and Shaw to Lansing /Circle Dr.	10	\$638,000	\$276.88
Shaw to Ashlan and Palm to Fruit	5	\$390,003	\$269.28
Shaw to Ashlan and Maroa to Blackstone	5	\$557,000	\$268.38

All areas combined:

The highest price home sold was \$1,015,000

The lowest home/condo price was \$220,000

The highest s.f. cost was at \$393.52

The lowest s.f. cost was \$161.29

Homes sold for an average of 100.04% of their asking prices.



FIG GARDEN HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS & DIRECTORS FOR 2025

President	Angie Hyatt	angie@hyattre.com
Vice-President	Tony Pings	Anthony@pings.com
Treasurer	Dan Gallagher	Dan.Gallagher@fresnounified.org
Secretary	Jack Jensen	Roy_jensen@comcast.net

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dean Alexander	dalex215@gmail.com
Merilee Amos	merilee.214@gmail.com
Mike Chen	mikechenfgha@gmail.com
Magda Gilewicz	mgilewicz@gmail.com
Alison Uremovic	alison@realtyconcepts.com

Slate of Directors

The Board of Directors nominates the following people for three-year terms on the Board:

Magda Gilewicz, Angie Hyatt and Alison Uremovic (all are incumbents)

To be eligible to vote for the Directors at the Annual meeting, members must have already paid their 2024 FGHOA dues.

SAVE THE DATE:

Annual Dinner

SEPTEMBER 28

Fig Garden Swim and Racquet Club

This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know your neighbors and hear from government officials

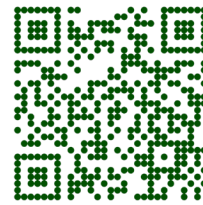
THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING OLD FIG!

Please join the Fig Garden Home Owners Association. We work to protect and strengthen our unique neighborhood. The dues are **\$90/year**. Please mail your check payable to:

**FGHOA
PO BOX 5796
Fresno CA 93755**

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.

Dues can also be paid through Venmo by clicking this QR code or by searching for Fig Garden HOA



Please list your name(s) and address in the “What is this for” box so we can correctly update your membership for the upcoming year. You can also make the payment “private” if you do not want it visible to others.

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