

San Antonio Conservation Society THE PRESERVATION ADVOCATE



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Managing Change Through Preservation

Vincent Michael

Preservation is about managing change, and San Antonio is changing faster than anywhere else in the United States. 66 new people each day. There are more construction cranes downtown than we are used to and they are cropping up in the neighborhoods along major corridors. This will continue for the next generation.

You can see it in places like Tobin Hill, Dignowity Hill and Government Hill, where perfectly fine bungalows and houses are lost to multi-story corrugated metal behemoths, and 4 to 8 units occupy a single-family lot. While the scale and pace of growth can be hard to stomach, the challenge for preservation is two-fold: First, preserve historic districts, and Second, to help determine where growth makes sense. Two areas where there is room for growth include the forty percent of downtown that is surface parking, and large industrial sites like the Lone Star Brewery – at 35 acres one of the largest downtown development parcels in the country. Development of sites like this displace no one directly, and take advantage of existing infrastructure. Recent plans for industrial sites at Dean Steel, 400 Probandt and West Cevallos cause consternation with their density, but do not threaten historic resources.

I wrote a blog this summer in reaction to a Rivard Report opinion piece that said: "Zoning decisions shouldn't be based upon answering the singular question of whether an infill project fits in with the neighborhood." Indeed, zoning decisions never answer singular questions. The whole point of zoning is that it is a site of negotiation of complicated, multi-layered questions, like should this site be residential, how should it address the street, how much parking does it need, how dense should it be, and yes, also, how does it fit into the neighborhood?

The great virtue of zoning and historic districts is that they create a place to negotiate these multiple

questions. They give people a voice. Some urbanists long for the dictatorial ways of Baron Hausmann (Paris) or Robert Moses (New York), but most people are more sympathetic to Moses' nemesis Jane Jacobs, whose grassroots neighbors defended both their community and their place at the bargaining table.

In San Antonio this year we have seen community organizations broken into factions considered pro- or anti-development. Preservation is development. It is the decision to develop what we already have rather than chucking it into the landfill. Planning and preservation laws tend to lead to better design. This is not "either-or" as much as "both and."

When we looked at these lovely bungalows on Euclid Avenue, we suggested preserving the street frontage while allowing higher density in the rear of the site along St. Mary's Street. Sadly, smart design thinking did not take place here, and the beautiful bungalows were ravaged.



Euclid Avenue bungalows

The challenge for the coming decades is how can San Antonio maintain its architectural, natural and cultural heritage in the face of unprecedented growth? The answer is not "either or" – it is "both-and." We do not simply say no to change, but we think, design and advocate in a creative manner that recognizes that preserving the past is always and clearly a decision about the future. The San Antonio Conservation Society will continue to fight for a future that includes our rich built, natural and cultural heritage.



Susan Beavin

From the President

Susan Beavin, President

At a recent meeting of the San Antonio Conservation Society Board of Directors, someone handed me a piece of paper on which was written:

“San Antonio Conservation Society...How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone

better off?”

I have contemplated these questions daily in relationship to our mission – the preservation of the architecture, natural beauty and cultural heritage that makes San Antonio unique.

As a former middle and high school teacher, I annually reviewed the past year’s curriculum – what worked, what could be improved and what novel approaches could be implemented the up-coming year. In preparation for the Board Orientation, I felt the same process was necessary. As the Society president, I have a distinct advantage – input from the knowledgeable, patient staff, Executive Committee, and Board of Directors.

It is never good enough to continue to do things because they have always been done a certain way. As times change, it becomes essential that we keep current and evolve. That includes fresh ideas and new people.

How much did we do? In addition to making statements at all City Board, Commission and Council meetings, plus our normal committee work, we set new goals – increased name recognition and public outreach and communication with our membership. We continued to send an informative weekly e-blast to our membership and entered into a marketing plan with Immersive Content, resulting in a new Society promo video and a prominent place in the San Antonio Stories seen on TV and in the newspaper. We created the Save Alamo Plaza petition, developed new innovative membership opportunities and programs, and have taken the “show on the road” with our Membership Development Committee’s presence at major civic events. At the city level, we partnered with historic neighborhood groups and the Office

of Historic Preservation. We also hosted the first Congress of Cultural and Historical Organizations at the county level. Some programs, such as NIOSA®, Heritage Education Tours, and Historic Preservation Month, continued as usual, although in each of these we sought new ways of doing things.

The San Antonio Conservation Society has generously committed funding for numerous educational scholarships and grants, together with community projects, such as the Brackenridge Pump House #1 and the Canary Islanders descendants’ statues, to name just two. Our sponsorship of symposiums, including Save Texas History, the Living Heritage Symposium, Power of Preservation, Brackenridge Park Conservancy, World Heritage Festival, and Mission Heritage Partners, promotes our vested interest in the cultural heritage of San Antonio.

How well did we do? If you consider the goals of name recognition, transparency, and information, I feel we were successful. Our petition has secured over 6,000 signatures and we are mentioned in news media almost weekly. Membership numbers have remained consistent, so there is room for improvement and/or a different approach. We continue to be considered a stakeholder in planning and development decisions throughout the city.

Is anyone better off? The San Antonio Conservation Society is more relevant than ever. With the rapid pace of inner-city and mid-town development, SA Tomorrow and “crane watch” (multi-story building around downtown) it is imperative we keep a close watch and weigh in at the appropriate times, so that buildings may be repurposed, rather than demolished; that historic neighborhoods do not suffer infringement from inappropriate development; and that the advantages of designations and historic tax credits are utilized. Internally, we continue to evaluate our committees, so that each has a defined purpose that enhances the Society’s mission and goals.

The watchful eye of the San Antonio Conservation Society has a broad reach. It takes the dedication of our membership, Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and devoted staff to fulfill the diversity of our mission. Please remember that the membership is ***you!*** We always need and welcome your help and whatever time you may have. Feel free to call the office to volunteer. This is ***your*** organization!



Please welcome Leticia Diaz to the Board of Directors. This is her first year serving as the Yturri Edmunds Historic Site - House Museum Chair. She has been a member of the Society for over 30 years and has been involved with NIOSA® just as long. She started as a volunteer in Chinatown and is the current French Quarter Area Chairman.



Linda Alwine is also new to the Board of Directors. She is the Hospitality and Special Events Committee Chairman. She has been a member of the Society since 1996 and plays an active role as a NIOSA® volunteer. She is also a life member of the San Antonio Live Stock Association.

From the Executive Director

Vincent Michael, Executive Director



Vincent Michael

At the end of July, the San Antonio Conservation Society made a significant offer to purchase the property on South Nogalitos at San Pedro Creek. Our reason: to save a 1936 Pure Oil gas station, a remarkable Tudor style house and canopy structure that is also the only surviving San Antonio site of this San Antonio company. It was one of 30 gas stations proposed for landmark status last year, but the owners and their attorneys objected. Earlier this year, District 5 Councilwoman Shirley Gonzales gave us six months to negotiate directly with the owners through their attorneys. So we did.

Not only that, we worked with Alamo Architects to come up with a plan that showed not only the restored gas station, but also a vibrant new residential community on the site. The gas station only occupies about 12% of the Creekside parcel in the fast-growing Collins Garden neighborhood adjacent to Lone Star. Sadly, the owners declined the offer on August 15. Still, we hope our plan has changed their minds about the value of the gas station.

The greatest irony of the owners' earlier desire to demolish the gas station is that it clearly adds value to the site. There are at least six

restored gas stations on Presa between Alamo and Florida, including one of the fanciest restaurants in town. In addition to restaurants, gas stations have become high-end boutiques, banks and offices. When the National Trust for Historic Preservation held its "This Place Matters" photo contest a decade ago, the nationwide winner was a San Antonio gas station.

The next step is to encourage the owners and the city to protect the station by allowing the landmark status to proceed. I am very proud of our Conservation Society because we acted proactively – not simply saying "no," but actually coming up with a concrete, fundable and feasible plan to save a landmark while helping San Antonio to grow and develop.



NOGALITOS STATION APARTMENTS - LOOKING SOUTHWEST

CONCEPTUAL MASS MODEL - SAN ANTONIO, TX

NIOSA® Update

Margie Arnold, 4th Vice President

In September, most people's thoughts turn to school and the upcoming fall. However, at the NIOSA® offices, we are already laser-focused on "A Night In Old San Antonio" 2019 from April 23-26, with the selfless assistance of NIOSA Treasurer Jackie Fellers, the four NIOSA Vice Chairmen (Jana Foreman, Sharon Hearn, Julie Terrill and Dolores "Dee" Wright), the incomparable NIOSA staff (Director of Operations Audrey Haake, bookkeeper Lisa Schneider and Administrative Assistant Mandy Rodriguez) and the hard-working NIOSA warehouse crew, led by Nic Yanes. I thank them all, in advance, for the miracles they will mastermind for 2019! We are reviewing all orders for 2018 and forming orders for 2019; looking at our balance sheet and finding payments that could be lessened; discussing what went right and what can be improved; and then we discuss that all over again.

Speaking of what went right, I have a few wonderful kudos to share about the 2018 NIOSA, thanks to the 10,000+ volunteers who put on NIOSA: first and foremost: we were able to send \$1.6 million to the San Antonio Conservation Society as profits from the 2018 presentation of NIOSA. How fabulous is that? With the proceeds, we are able to provide resources to the Society for the restoration and rehabilitation of historic properties, and its education, outreach, and assistance programs. Other kudos from 2018? NIOSA was voted the number one Fiesta event by readers of

mysa.com AND the Best Fiesta Event by readers of *San Antonio Current*. It won Gold Awards for Best Pin and Best T-Shirt design from the Texas Festivals and Events Association. The 2018 NIOSA medal was named one of the top three best Fiesta medals for a nonprofit by the *San Antonio Express-News*. Speaking of



our award-winning 2018 medal, there are still some available online at <http://www.niosa.org/p/things-to-do/294>.

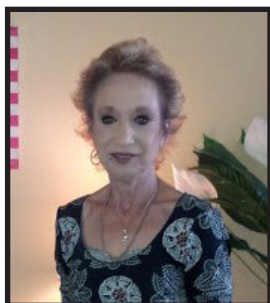
I am honored and excited to be back again, leading a group of wonderful, dedicated, hard-working volunteers as we prepare for the 71st presentation of NIOSA. The team works hard year-round to ensure the best possible event and also to raise funds through other private NIOSITA events throughout the year. NIOSA started 71 years ago with five Conservation Society members making money to save our city's historic heritage. Some things have changed, but so many things are the same: NIOSA still raises funds for the historic preservation efforts of only the Conservation Society (no vendors nor restaurants nor other organizations sponsor or run or benefit from NIOSA); it is presented by volunteers; nearly all foods are made by volunteers; decorations (14,000+ tissue paper flowers), signs, and cascarones (approximately 53,000) are still hand-decorated by volunteers.....and therein lies the magic of "A Night In Old San Antonio!"

VIVA NIOSA!



NIOSA Chariman, NIOSA Vice Chairmen, and NIOSA staff

Sandy Garza is another new Board Member. She is serving as the Heritage Education Tours Training Committee Chair. Sandy has been a member of the Conservation Society since 2005. She has been a NIOSA® volunteer for over 12 years in the Haymarket area. Sandy is also an active volunteer in the San Antonio community as an Ursuline History Museum Docent at Southwest School of Art and as a Gallery Host at The Southwest School of Art.



Isabel Pruneda is also new to the Board of Directors. She is serving as the Heritage Education Tours Planning Coordinator Committee Chair. She is a retired federal law enforcement officer and currently owns a small business. She has been involved with NIOSA® since 1995, working in Chinatown and is the current Chinatown Area Chairman. She has also served on several Society committees over the years. Isabel is an active volunteer with the San Antonio Livestock Rodeo and many other organizations.

September means a few things in San Antonio – football, “cooler” weather, and the Conservation Society gearing up for our annual Heritage Education Tours. Our tours, in their 58th year, are held the first two full weeks of November, but we start planning months in advance. Tailored to the Bexar County fourth-grade curriculum, Heritage Education Tours are offered to local elementary schools on a five-year rotation. The San Antonio Conservation Foundation covers the cost of transportation, puts on a mandatory teacher workshop, and provides volunteers and docents at all the sites during the days of the tours. Members and professional tour guides make up our volunteers and docents. Students visit two local heritage landmarks on the day of their tour. Last year, we had over 2,500 students go on tours during the two weeks.

As you can imagine, these tours take a lot of manpower and money to pull off. Funding is provided by member contributions, funds raised during NIOSA®, and through grants received from the Edouard Foundation and the Society of Architectural Historians. This year we are asking members to ‘buy a bus’ for Heritage Education Tours. Your \$500 contribution would cover the cost of one bus during the tours and you would become a member of our Capital Club. You will experience the unique benefits of Capital Club for the rest of 2018 and all of 2019.

Help support our 58th annual Heritage Education Tours – sign up to volunteer or buy a bus today!

2018 Heritage Education Tours Volunteers Needed

This is our 58th annual Heritage Education Tours. Sign up today and help fourth graders learn about historical sites in San Antonio!

- Choose the historical site where you will volunteer
- Information for each site is provided!
- Time commitment is only 3 hours a day! (8:30 am to 11:30 am)

**The tours are November 5 - 9, 2018 &
November 12 - 16, 2018**

For Questions or to Volunteer, Contact:

Rosanna Luke: 210.224.6163 or
conserve@saconservation.org



BUY A BUS AND JOIN THE CAPITAL CLUB. BECOME A CAPITAL CLUB MEMBER THROUGH DECEMBER 2019!

***ENJOY UNIQUE CAPITAL CLUB BENEFITS**

***HELP LOCAL STUDENTS EXPERIENCE LOCAL LANDMARKS**



BECOME PART OF THE TRADITION TODAY!

Donations to the San Antonio Conservation Society Foundation and Capital Club may be tax-deductible.

Meet Our Wulff House Staff



Kathy Bailey, Secretary, just celebrated her 34th year with the Conservation Society. She has an Associate of Arts from San Antonio College and attended The University of Texas at Austin. She is most proud of helping save the 1898 two story building designed by Alfred Giles at the corner of Houston and St. Mary's. Her favorite restaurant is La Fonda on Main and she orders the great frozen margaritas.



Rosanna Luke, Membership & Communications Coordinator, has worked at the Conservation Society for 2 years. She has a BA in History & Anthropology from Texas A&M University and an MA in Anthropology from UTSA. She is most proud of our annual Heritage Education Tours and our weekly e-blast to members. She loves Senor Veggie and its poblano corn fritters.



Ron Bauml, Properties Restoration Manager, has worked at the Conservation Society for 31 years. He has a Bachelor of Environmental Design and a Master of Architecture, both from Texas A&M University. He is most proud of the Alaskan Palace rehab. His favorite restaurant is Teka Molino and he always orders the bean cups.



Brandi Hayes, Administrative Assistant, has worked at the Conservation Society for 2 years. She has a BA in Historic Preservation from Savannah College of Art & Design and an MS in Historic Preservation from Columbia University. She is most proud of the database of all the structures we have been involved with saving and its integration with Google Earth showing all their locations. She loves ChaCho's and always orders the beef fajita tacos, fiesta style.



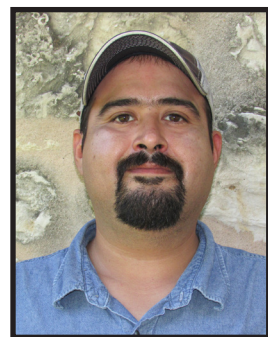
Beth Standifird, Librarian, has worked at the Conservation Society for 17 years. She has a BA in History from Trinity University and an MS in Architectural Studies and an MS in Library Science - both from The University of Texas at Austin. She is most proud of our on-line exhibits on Alamo Plaza and Hemisfair Park - both illustrated with items scanned from the library's collections. Her favorite restaurant is Shang-Hai Chinese Restaurant and she always gets the twice-cooked pork with hot and sour soup.



Gilbert Moreno, Properties Maintenance Foreman, has worked at the Conservation Society for almost 2 years. He has 6 years of building maintenance and repair experience. He is proud to work for the Society and with historic buildings. His favorite restaurant is Olive Garden and he always orders the lasagna.



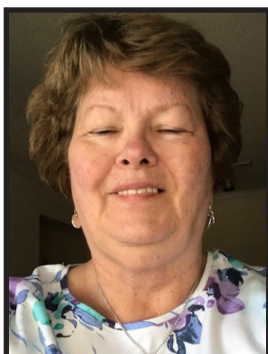
Tammy Dorsey, Director of Operations, has worked for the Conservation Society since 2014. She has a Bachelor of Business in Marketing. She enjoys being a supporting part of our amazing team and the never ending search for opportunities. She loves Paesano's Restaurant and its shrimp paesano.



Alberto Alambar, Courier-Porter, will celebrate 1 year at the Conservation Society at the end of September. He has 4 years of building maintenance experience. He is most proud of maintaining all the Society properties. His favorite restaurant is Golden Wok and enjoys the dim sum noodles when he goes.



Cole Murray, Intern, began his internship this summer. He has a BA in Urban Studies and Political Science from Trinity. He is proud of his Urban Studies Capstone project about O'Neil Ford's work at La Villita. His favorite restaurant is Mama's Kitchen and he always orders the barbacoa tacos.



Barbara Weaver, Bookkeeper, is our newest member - she started her position full time this August. She has a bachelor's degree from Lindenwood University. She is proud of her work on a nationwide conversion from a batch accounting system to an online real time system. Her favorite restaurant is Paesano's and she always orders the shrimp paesano.

Fall 2018 Donations

Donors

\$5 - \$99

Mr. Alberto Alambar	Mrs. Christina Gomez-Terry	Ms. Mandy Rodriguez
Ms. Nancy Avellar	Ms. Audrey Haake	Mrs. Lisa Schneider
Ms. Kathy Bailey	Mrs. Brandi Hayes	Mrs. Rollette Schreckenghost-Smith
Mr. Ron Bauml	Mrs. June Kachtik	Ms. Linda Skop
Ms. Lynn Bobbitt	Ms. Rosanna Luke	Mrs. Beth Standifird
Mrs. Kathleen Carter	Mrs. Rose Moran	Mrs. Virginia Van Cleave
Ms. Allison Chambers	Mr. Gilbert Moreno	Mr. Gerald Walsh
Ms. Leticia Diaz	Mrs. Virginia Nicholas	Mrs. Jody Williams
Ms. Tammy Dorsey	Mr. John Nicholls	Mr. Nic Yanes
Dr. Jan Evans Patterson	Ms. Joanna Parrish	Mrs. Patti Zaiontz
Ms. Concepcion Fitzgerald	Mrs. Sue Ann Pemberton	
Mr. Bruce Gill	Mrs. Paula Piper	

Supporters

\$100 - \$249

Mrs. Margie Arnold	Mrs. Terry Schoenert
Ms. Barbara Banker	Mrs. Torrey Stanley Carleton
Mrs. Shirley Dyer	Mr. Fernando Villarreal
Mrs. Gemma Kennedy	Mrs. Margaret Winn
Ms. Margaret Priesmeyer	

Welcome New Associate Members

Ms. Elizabeth Bobbitt	Mr. Tim Kelcy
Ms. Maura Bobbitt	Mrs. Kristin Kellum
Mrs. Martha Bock	Mrs. Felicia Khan
Mr. David Bogle	Mrs. Diana Larson
Ms. Peggy Brimhall	Ms. Prentice Miller
Mrs. Andrea Castaneda	Mr. John Nicholls
Mr. Robert Downey	Dr. Thomas Patterson
Dr. Jan Evans Patterson	Ms. Judi Pianta
Mrs. Frances Fowler	Mrs. Michele Ramon
Mrs. Nancy Huber	Ms. Bonnie Rivera
Mr. William Huber	Mrs. Rebecca Smith
Mrs. Melody Hull	Ms. Rebecca Stewart
Ms. Sonia Keepper Ojeda	Mr. Daniel Terrill

Don't forget to sign up your child or grandchild for Junior Associates! Our 2018-2019 year kick-off is Sunday, September 23, 2018 at the River House. Come hear about our exciting year!

The Preservation Advocate is published by the San Antonio Conservation Society.

Send letters, articles, or comments to: conserve@saconservation.org.

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Submission deadline for the Winter Newsletter is Friday, November 9, 2018.

The purpose for which the San Antonio Conservation Society was formed is to preserve and encourage the preservation of historic buildings, objects, places and customs relating to the history of Texas, its natural beauty and all that is admirable and distinctive

to our State; and by such physical and cultural preservation to keep the history

of Texas legible and intact, to educate the public, especially the youth of today and tomorrow with knowledge of our inherited regional values.

Publications Committee

Paul Ringenbach, Chair

Susan Beavin, Ex Officio

Rosanna Luke, Staff Support

San Antonio *Conservation Society*

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'Here it is, I helped to save it' - Miss Anna Ellis (1927)



In 1988, the Conservation Society purchased the Aztec Theater with nearly all the original fabric intact. The Society operated it as a movie theater until 1989. In 1992, the National Register of Historic Places listed the Aztec as the only surviving example of a Mayan Revival

style theater in Texas. The Conservation Society sold the property in 1993 with a preservation easement that covers the façade and some interior features.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, September 29, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Historic Homeowners Fair, Pearl Stable

Sunday, September 30

Siclovía

Sunday, October 14, 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Archaeology Day, Institute of Texan Cultures

Saturday, October 20, 10:00 am - 4:30 pm

Founder's Day, San Pedro Springs Park

**Monday, November 5 - Friday, November 9 &
Monday, November 12 - Friday, November 16**

Heritage Education Tours

Tuesday, November 13 - Friday, November 16

**National Trust PastForward Conference,
San Francisco, CA**

Thursday, November 22 - Friday, November 23

**Thanksgiving Holiday, Society Offices
Closed**

Wednesday, December 5, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

**Annual Weihnachtsfeier Party & General
Membership Meeting, Steves Homestead**