

# The Conservation Society of San Antonio THE PRESERVATION ADVOCATE



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## Woolworth Building on 2020 World Monuments Watch List

by Vincent Michael

Every two years, the World Monuments Fund releases a list of 25 heritage sites around the world threatened by decay, demolition, climate or commerce. This year's list includes Notre Dame in Paris, Easter Island, Machu Picchu, and...the San Antonio Woolworth Building. Thanks to the work of the Coalition for the Woolworth Building, Conservation Society Librarian Beth Standifird, and others, our successful site nomination recognized the importance of "underrepresented narratives," specifically, San Antonio's unique response to the lunch counter sit-in movement of 1960.

The Woolworth Building stood out as one of only three sites chosen in the United States, and one of only seven featured on the World Monuments Fund video announcing the Watch List on October 29. CNN and the *New York Times* featured the building in their reporting that same day, followed by extensive media coverage, including radio spots on WOAI, TV spots on Channel 4 with President Patti Zaiontz and on KENS 5 with President Patti Zaiontz and Coalition member Everett Fly. A detailed article appeared November 6 in the *Toronto Star* highlighting the first-person memories of another Coalition member, Nettie Hinton. The San Antonio *Express-News* ran an article about the listing and another appeared following Judge Nelson Wolff's letter to GLO Commissioner Bush urging preservation and pedestrian access. Judge Wolff's advocacy led to a flurry of coverage and a San Antonio *Express-News* editorial in favor of saving the building on November 24, followed by an open letter to Phil Collins from *Express-News* staffer Elaine Ayala.

Just two days before the October 29 announcement, the Coalition for the Woolworth Building- now in its second year - won second place at Muertos Fest in HemisFair for our ofrenda honoring Mary Lilian Andrews, the 17-year old Our Lady of the Lake college student who led the effort to integrate the lunch counters and was pictured at the Woolworth's lunch counter in the March 31, 1960 issue of *Jet* magazine. Beth Standifird recruited artist Chris King and other volunteers from the Coalition, the NAACP, the Alpha Tau Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha and the Conservation Society to design, construct and staff the ofrenda during the two-day event, the largest ever held in HemisFair with some 100,000 attendees.



Despite the scrutiny and advocacy, the Alamo Trust still refuses to say whether the Crockett and Woolworth buildings will be saved. You will recall the Conservation Society released a plan last May that illustrated how the Crockett and Woolworth Buildings could be incorporated into a new Alamo museum, carving an arcade through the buildings so pedestrians can see where the (long gone, not even archaeology left) west wall of the mission/fort was. Judge Wolff endorsed the plan in his public comment following the World Monuments Watch List designation.

Next, the Coalition for the Woolworth Building will work with the Society to develop Watch Day events in the coming months, so please keep an eye on our website and our weekly e-blasts! Your membership support makes important efforts like this possible.

Now, we need your help. This is the time to save the buildings of Alamo Plaza. Help fund our ongoing advocacy efforts, be a part of this effort to save history! Please give what you can and encourage your friends to join the Conservation Society by visiting [www.saconconservation.org/donate](http://www.saconconservation.org/donate).

# From the President

Patti Zaiontz, President

**W**ow! I can't believe how quickly time passes. This year has gone by in a flash and so much has transpired. I'm amazed at how efficiently the staff works and how talented and innovative they are. I'm also impressed at how well the committees function and how committed our volunteers are.

**S**aving Places: There has been a whirlwind of activity surrounding the Woolworth Building. Not only did the Texas Historical Commission recognize the building with Texas Antiquities Landmark status a few months ago; recently, the building was named to the 2020 World Monuments Watch List of endangered places by the World Monuments Fund. To be named on this global list highlights the importance of preserving this building and its role in the Civil Rights movement. It's more important than ever to support saving this building in order to interpret all three hundred years of San Antonio's history on Alamo Plaza.

Both the Woolworth and the Crockett Buildings are incorporated in a plan commissioned by the Society to show how they could be repurposed into the proposed museum included in the Alamo Plan. There will be several opportunities coming up in the new year to participate in activities showcasing the Woolworth Building. One of our recent opportunities to showcase the Woolworth came with a display at MuertosFest in HemisFair. Our very talented Librarian, Beth Standifird, worked with Woolworth Coalition members, artist Chris King, along with other staff and friends to create a very impressive ofrenda. It was so impressive that it won second place in the competition. Kudos to Beth and her "team" for an outstanding job!

On a sad note, we lost one of my favorite places in the early morning hours of December 1<sup>st</sup> to a fire. Some may recall the old Buckhorn Saloon/Hall of Horns at the old Lone Star Brewery off Mission Road. Many of us have fond memories of going there as children and drinking root beer as our parents sat at the bar and drank beer. There were high divers performing swan dives and flips from the high boards at the pool. And if you've been around long enough, you might have attended the NIOSA volunteer "Thank You" party that was held there for many years. All we have are our memories now. Sadly, the proposed redevelopment plan for the property didn't materialize soon enough to save the old saloon. But the loss of this site should strengthen our mission to preserve and protect the historic buildings and culture that are so much a part of San Antonio and its charm.

**A**dvocacy: A big "Thank you!" goes out to Jackie Epstein, her Heritage Education Tours Committee, and staff support Brandi Hayes, for another successful year of taking local fourth-grade students and educators on guided tours of the World Heritage Missions and other selected sites, including

the newly opened Bexar Heritage Center. (Thank you, Judge Wolff!) Thanks also to Society members Beth Hollowell, CPG, and Irene Rendon, CPG, who helped with scheduling the volunteer tour guides from the Professional Tour Guide Association of San Antonio who volunteered their time for this

endeavor. A word of appreciation also goes out to our Society Board members, staff and volunteers who participated as docents and guides. We are also grateful to our partners who generously support this project financially: HEB Tournament of Champions, The Edouard Foundation Inc. and the Mirza Trust of San Antonio. The Heritage Education Tours are one of the most important activities we do for the community to educate the children and youth of today about preservation and history. It takes a lot of time and talent to make it happen and Jackie and her team did an outstanding job!

**M**embership: If you were unable to participate in the Membership Opportunities Tour to Victoria, you missed a great day trip. We visited the Museum of the Coastal Bend and saw interesting artifacts from the sunken ship, *La Belle* as well as lovely historic homes in Victoria. We had a great lunch at the Pump House, an historic pump house building situated along the river, and concluded the afternoon with a self-guided tour of the ruins of Mission Espíritu Santo which is located on a private ranch. A great time was had by all! Thanks to Lynn Bobbitt, her committee, and staff support Kathy Bailey for planning such a delightful experience!

As we look back over 2019, we celebrate several successes and mourn a few losses in the world of preservation. In reflecting, I've determined that it is becoming more and more of a challenge to convince others outside the world of preservation of the importance of preserving historic structures and culture. San Antonio is such a unique city; I cannot help but think that the efforts of the Conservation Society over the past 95 years have helped to shape what our city is today. With the influx of new residents expected in the coming years, it becomes more important than ever to promote our purpose with determination. These are challenging times and we must persevere. As I learned in a workshop years ago, preservation is about managing change. Change will come inevitably with growth, but managing that change while preserving our history and culture will determine what San Antonio looks like years into the future.

May the holiday season be a joyful time for you and yours.  
Merry Christmas, Feliz Navidad, Happy Hannukah, Happy Kwanzaa and Happy New Year!





# From the Executive Director

Vincent Michael, Executive Director

Recently the City Council passed a resolution that would require that any amendments to the Uniform Development Code be analyzed to see how much cost they would add to new developments. The intent was to identify extra costs that would be passed on to consumers, but community activists were concerned it would stifle public input.

My first reaction: Why is the question of economic impact always on the side of the developer? For centuries there has been debate over the issue of “takings.” “Takings” is when the government takes your property and is then required to pay you for it. About a century ago, some clever lawyers came up with the idea of “regulatory takings” – whereby you put so many regulations on a property you effectively stripped it of all its value. As with most clever concepts, it hit a hard stop in reality when even the prohibition of all development on a beach site in the Carolinas did not zero out property value (*Lucas v. South Carolina*, 1989).

Why doesn't anyone talk about “givings?” Like when New York City doubled the zoning envelope in 1961, effectively giving every landowner a massive boost in asset value. Chicago did the same in 1957 – we were all going to be living on Mars by 2000 anyway, so it didn't matter. Every bit of IDZ spot-zoning is a public “giving” to a private property owner. That's what needs to be quantified.



One house become four! It's a 'Giving'!

“Givings” are in fact central to the entire history of real estate. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, canals and railroads were financed by the sale of public land along their routes. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was hard roads and then interstate highways and then urban renewal, where the government actually took the land and gave it to developers. Today it is tax increment financing, bonds and incentive packages.

The entire history of real estate development is a history of chasing public subsidies, primarily transportation. You hear “Location, location, location” and what that really means is “transportation, markets, infrastructure.” Two-thirds of

that recipe is public.

This is not to say public support is bad. We often support public subsidies of private developments that really make a difference. I'm just saying you need to count on both sides.



Aerial photo of San Antonio

Back in the 1980s, there were so-called “impact fees” that municipalities would assess on residential developments that required new sewers, schools, streets, sidewalks, security, etc. That led to whining, which led to the era of “property rights” and by the 90s there were attempts in Congress to compensate owners for the reduction in the property value caused by regulations. That silliness aside, the question has always been formulated on only one side of the equation: What are they taking from the property owner?

I would like to see a strict accounting of what we are GIVING.



## 59th Annual Heritage Education Tours - Fulfilling Our Mission

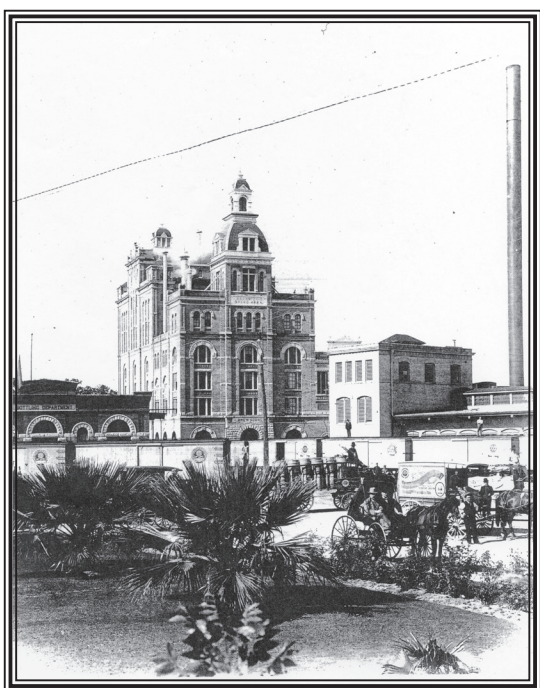
Our annual Heritage Education Tours fulfill an important part of our Mission Statement: “...and by such physical and cultural preservation to keep the history of Texas legible and intact to educate the public, especially the youth of today and tomorrow with knowledge of our inherited regional values.” This year was no exception!

Twenty-five schools, over twenty-two hundred students, one hundred and forty teachers and dozens of volunteers participated this year (thank you all!). We saw a lot of new faces this year, including some of our participating schools and some new sites! In addition to Brackenridge Park, the Briscoe Western Art Museum, and returning site Fort Sam Houston, we were able to take the students to the newly opened Bexar County Heritage Center. If you haven't been yet, it is well worth the visit!

Students visited two of thirteen historical sites, including The Alamo, Missions San José, Espada, San Juan, and Concepción, the Spanish Governor's Palace, Casa Navarro, the Yturri-Edmunds Historic Site, and the Edward Steves Homestead. Many of these fourth-graders had never visited

even one of these sites, but it was evident their teachers had been preparing them for the visits in class with materials obtained through our Teacher Education Seminar, taught by Bill Perryman, M. Ed. It was exciting for both students and teachers to see the places they had been learning about, and wonderful for us to see them engaged with history.

This year we partnered with the Professional Tour Guide Association to provide guided tours at many of our sites and they did an incredible job handling large classes and inclement weather. We would like to thank Ken and Bea Erfurth, who manned their fresco table at Mission Concepción and provided tours there nearly every day. We also had help from the San Antonio Food Bank at Mission San Juan, bringing that extra something special for our students on these tours. We can't forget the generous contributions from our sponsors; H-E-B Tournament of Champions, The Edouard Trust and The Mirza Trust of San Antonio, Inc. It takes a village to pull this program off every year; we thank each and every one of you for helping us fulfill this integral part of our mission.



### Lecture: Pearl & Hotel Emma; Adaptive Reuse of the Historic Brewery

Wednesday, February 12, 2020 – 5:30 pm  
Steves Homestead River House  
509 King William, San Antonio, Texas 78209

Join The Conservation Society for a lecture by guest speaker, Jeffrey Fetzer, FAIA – President of J. Fetzer, LLC.

Cost: \$10 members; \$15 non-members

Register online at: <https://www.saconservation.org/pearl/>  
or reach us at: [conserve@saconservation.org](mailto:conserve@saconservation.org) or by phone at 210-224-6163

Deadline for registration: Friday, February 7, 2020  
Registration is non-refundable after: Friday, February 7, 2020  
Presented by the Membership Opportunities Committee

# NIOSA® Update

Terry Schoenert, 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President

While most of you have “visions of sugar plums dancing in your heads” at this time of year, in the NIOSA® office, visions of anticuchos and Mr. Chicken are dancing in our heads. But no one is complaining; we all love giving our time to “A Night In Old San Antonio®” because the funds raised at NIOSA enable The Conservation Society of San Antonio to preserve properties in San Antonio and the surrounding areas.

What’s happening at the NIOSA headquarters, so far?

- \* The Conservation Society is not the only one to get a new name and logo; check out our new logo; it will be prominent in NIOSA souvenirs and notices this coming year!
- \* We are finalizing the 2020 NIOSA medal design and it’s a beauty! Mark your calendar for January 29<sup>th</sup> when it will go on sale on the NIOSA website.
- \* One thing that is just as in past years? NIOSA’s Frontier Town area will definitely be held in Maverick Plaza with such small changes that most people will not catch them. Some booths may move in the area though. You may have read that our NIOSA footprint in La Villita will change in 2020, but it won’t!
- \* We are extremely proud of the newest initiatives we put in place last year for our recycling efforts to ensure NIOSA remains a very Green event. We worked with a new contractor, Venue Smart, that specializes in special event clean up and recycling, and made numerous changes this year that improved our clean up and trash collection/recycling practices even more. Sustainability practice we use include (but aren’t limited to):

- ★ Trash is cleared from the areas and removed nightly by our contractor. Two (2) 6-yard dumpsters designated for recycle and two (2) 6-yard dumpsters designated for trash are on the grounds. These dumpsters are emptied twice a day.
- ★ After trash is removed the areas are washed down. The area will be power washed when the event is over. Gray water from each of these operations is captured by the contractor. Additionally, boom lines, furnished by the Solid Waste Department, are placed at storm water drain locations to prevent any debris or sludge from entering the drains.
- ★ Six of our areas offer premium beer from a can. Bottled beverages are also offered in many of the areas. Recycling containers are placed in these booths to capture the cans and bottles for recycling.

I repeat the pledge I made when I was made chairman of NIOSA; to work hard, keeping the purpose of NIOSA and The Conservation Society in mind with all that I do. NIOSA is a premier event of Fiesta and I want to keep it that way. I love being a part of NIOSA and raising the funds for The Conservation Society to use for preservation. By serving on the Board of Directors, I also have a say in how those funds are spent. What a wonderful way to help preserve the history and culture of San Antonio.

I look forward to a very successful NIOSA next spring from April 21-24, 2020. Make plans now to join us.

**VIVA NIOSA!**



## “Village People! A Historical Journey of La Villita” Teacher Education Seminar - Calling All Educators!

Saturday, February 22, 2020, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Steves Homestead River House, 509 King William St., San Antonio, TX 78204

Bill Perryman presents this intriguing interactive workshop focusing on San Antonio’s historic La Villita. Teachers earn six hours of Continuing Professional Education credits. The cost of the seminar is \$30 (includes lunch). The deadline to register is Friday, February 14, 2020 and space is limited, so sign up now! Teachers of all subjects and grades are welcome to attend!

Techniques demonstrated during the session seamlessly combine English Language Arts and Social Studies content. The strategies presented are fun, highly engaging and promote the use of visual analysis, writing, language and summarization in the social studies classroom. The techniques presented are applicable to any content or grade level.

Register online at: <https://www.saconservation.org/tes2020/> or reach us at: [conserve@saconservation.org](mailto:conserve@saconservation.org) or by phone at 210-224-6163

\*Registration fees will be refunded in full for all cancellations made prior to 4:30 pm on Friday, February 14, 2020. After this date, no refunds will be made for cancelled registrations.



# Membership Update



## Winter 2019 Donations

### Preservation Cornerstones

Mr. Carlos Castaneda  
Mrs. Lia Horton  
Ms. Elizabeth Galliher



### Foundation Builders

Ms. Jerrie Bethel  
Mrs. Kay Day  
Mrs. Stella Tenorio-De La Garza



## Winter 2019 Honorariums



**In honor of Dr. Vince Michael**  
First Presbyterian Church

**In honor of Ms. Loretta Huddleston**  
Ms. Jeanette Pierce



## Welcome New Capital Club Members



### Keystone Level

Mrs. Jeanne Albrecht  
Ms. Susan Beavin

Mr. & Mrs. Martin & Frederica Kushner  
Mr. Ron Stinson



## Welcome New Associate Members



Ms. Mary Helen Acosta Lopez  
Ms. Diana Barcellona  
Ms. Betty Coble  
Ms. Cristina Colunga  
Ms. Joan Duckworth  
Ms. Yvette Eddleton  
Ms. May Felix Marin  
Mr. Michael Flores  
Ms. Elizabeth Galliher

Mrs. Lia Horton  
Ms. Cindi McBride  
Miss Miranda McCardle  
Mr. Nickey McCasland  
Mrs. Kindall McMillan  
Ms. Janelle Moore  
Mrs. June Moore  
Mrs. Teri O'Neal  
Mr. Eddie Paniagua

Ms. Sheryl Parker  
Ms. Lydia Peacock  
Ms. Joan Plotnick  
Mr. Donald Plotnick  
Mr. Bill Simons  
Ms. O'Lene Stone  
Mr. Jesus Trevino  
Ms. Mary Esther Valdez

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

**Send letters, articles, or comments to: [conserve@saconservation.org](mailto:conserve@saconservation.org).**

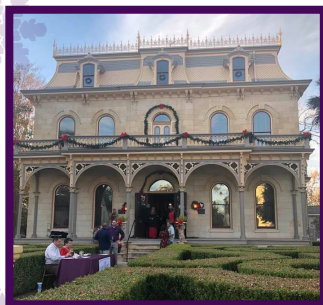
**Submission deadline for the Spring Newsletter is Friday, January 31st, 2019.**

*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

Christina Forestier, *Chair*; Patti Zaiontz, *Ex Officio*; Dr. Paul Ringenbach; Brandi Hayes, *Staff Support*

# Happy Holidays from the San Antonio Conservation Society



*\*Who is this familiar face?\**

## Give the Gift of Membership this Holiday Season!

The holiday season is in full swing and that means you're looking for unique gifts for family and friends. Consider giving the gift of a Conservation Society membership and give your family and friends the chance to be a part of the best preservation organization in the city. You can fill out the form below or visit us online at [www.saconservervation.org/gift](http://www.saconservervation.org/gift) and we'll send the gift membership to you or your designated recipient just in time for the holidays.

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Gifted Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please send the gift letter to me

☐ Please send the gift letter directly to the recipient indicating who gave the gift

Mail this completed form and \$35 membership payment to:

Conservation Society of San Antonio

107 King William St.

San Antonio, TX 78204

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

Heidgen-Zilker House, 121 Starr Street



This limestone house was constructed around 1882 by the owner, Johann Heidgen, a stonemason by trade. The house stands on the eastern edge of the central business district in an area once known as the Irish Flats neighborhood, originally settled by Irish and German immigrants.

It is one of the few surviving

examples of a two-story, stone, I-plan house. The Acequia Madre, the first irrigation canal built by the Spanish to supply water to Mission San Antonio de Valero (now the Alamo), runs along the west property line.

Charles A. Zilker acquired the property in 1909. His estate donated the house to the Conservation Society in 1968. In 1970, the Society deeded the property to the Alamo Council of Campfire Girls, Inc. for use as its headquarters. The deed included a preservation easement on the house and the acequia, binding on all successive owners. When the local council disbanded in 1987, it conveyed the property back to the Society, which sold it to new owners. The Heidgen-Zilker House received listing on the National Register of Historic Places in June 2004.

## Upcoming Events

Tuesday and Wednesday, December 24 and 25

**Christmas Holiday** - *Offices closed*

Wednesday, January 1

**New Year's Day Holiday** - *Offices closed*

Wednesday, January 24, 5:30 pm

**General Membership Meeting - Bylaws Consideration;** *River House*

Wednesday, February 12, 5:30 pm

**Pearl Lecture by Jeffrey Fetzer, FAIA;** *River House*

Saturday, February 22, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

**Teacher Education Seminar;** *River House*

Wednesday, February 26, 5:30pm

**General Membership Meeting - Guest Speaker Kay Hindes, former City Archaeologist;** *River House*

Thursday, March 19, 6:30pm

**Historic Preservation Awards Gala;** *San Antonio Country Club*

