This past April, when Audubon Texas announced its 2017 Terry Hershey Awards for outstanding contributions to conservation by Texas women, King William neighbor Susan Hughes was one of the four awardees. The honor recognizes decades of public advocacy by Hughes as naturalist, activist, public advisor — and elected official: elected to the board of the Edwards Aquifer Authority at its inception in 1996, she has been returned to that role by District 6 voters ever since. But King William residents may also know her and her husband Bruce as the people on Guenther Street with all those purple martin houses.

A San Antonio native — she grew up on the near north side and got her undergraduate degree at Trinity University — Hughes remembers growing up exploring nature with her father. Interested in the wild, but not initially drawn to political activism, she chose the Audubon Society for its non-confrontational, collaborative approach to challenging issues. Downsized out of a corporate job in the early 90s, she was encouraged by her family to focus on her conservation interests and has served on the boards of Bexar, Texas, and national Audubon organizations until recently.

“As my understanding grew, I realized that if I was interested in protecting endangered species in Texas, that meant protecting our springs,” Hughes said. That, in turn, implied managing human use of groundwater and protecting its sources. Around this time a friend told her, “The best way to influence decision makers is to become one.” Hughes followed this advice to run for, and win, election to the newly created Edwards Aquifer Authority.

She also credits her time in King William with spurring her activism. Living in the suburbs in the 90s, she and Bruce got to know our neighborhood through attending the King William Fair. When an historic house backing up on the San Antonio River came on the market, they moved quickly. The house was on the upper end of what would become the Mission Reach, a section of river that had been harshly channelized in the 1960s but was becoming a focus for redevelopment for habitat restoration and recreation. Learning that there was to be a citizens’ committee advising city government on the Mission Reach project, Hughes called her councilman and was appointed to the Mission Trails Oversight Committee. With fellow committee members including Ed Day and Irby Hightower, she helped guide the reclamation of what was, quite literally, the Hughes’s back yard.

Through her elected and appointed positions, Hughes has led or facilitated a host of aquifer protection and other conservation initiatives with local governments and private landowners. She co-founded an ad hoc working group for Sustainable San Antonio and helped lead the ongoing protection, by conservation easements or parkland acquisition, of Edwards Aquifer watershed — more than 146,000 acres to date. Through Bexar Audubon, she helped create the Master Naturalist program to train and certify volunteer naturalists. And she led creation of the South Texas Farm and Range Forum to build common ground between urban conservationists and rural landowners.

Besides these activities, Hughes has maintained a freelance writing and editing business as well as an online Etsy.com storefront called BatsAboutBeads (soon to be more active). And then there are the martin houses. She continued on page 3
Hello, Neighbors,

We are already past halfway through the summer, and I hope it is going well for you and your family.

Neighbors and friends celebrated the July 4th holiday with our annual King William Regatta and picnic in Upper Mill Park. Thanks to all the participants in the regatta, and congratulations to our new champions in the canoe division: the father and son team of Bradley and Alec Toland! We had a great turnout for the picnic after the regatta. Thanks to all who attended and for the delicious food everyone brought. I also want to thank Brad Shaw and his volunteers who made the picnic such a success. If you were not able to attend this year, we hope to see you at next year’s regatta and picnic. It’s a great way to celebrate Independence Day with family and friends.

If you live on one of the streets that is involved in the city’s pilot parking program, please come by the KWA office and sign up for permits and parking side preference. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

I hope to see you at our next General Membership meeting, Wednesday, August 2, at 7:00 p.m. at the KWA office.

103 City Street is Beckmann – not Gordon

After the article about 103 City appeared in last month’s newsletter, I received information from Marita Emmett which established that Albert Beckmann was the architect. Her fascinating email follows:

Many years ago Maria Pfeiffer found the booklet “Architectural Beauties of San Antonio,” published in 1896 by architect Albert Beckmann, that has a photo of my house. Beckmann was son-in-law to the Guenther family. Armed with that book, I began identifying other Beckmann houses. Mine at 303 Adams is different because, unfortunately, somebody painted the brick. Most of the other houses still have the sand-colored brick with red brick accents and limestone accessories. Beckmann used the same exterior materials on most of his houses. Bulk buying isn’t such a new trend after all.

I suspect that Beckmann was the architect of 103 City Street. The exterior is certainly comparable to, say, the Walker house at 523 King William, the Cabrera house at 219 Guenther Street, the Price house at 331 Adams, and the Williams/McDonald house at 133 Crofton. The interiors of Beckmann homes also are formulaic, not identical, but most are based on an identifiable template as varied by budgets and personal choices. I don’t know if the interior of 103 City Street fits the Beckmann formula layout.

Marita and I worked together to see if Beckmann’s “Architectural Beauties” booklet included the home at 103 City Street. Sure enough, there is a photo of that home as originally built and identified as the “residence of Mr. Rud. Staacke.” Interestingly, we discovered that another City Street home also is the work of Beckmann. What is now the Mason’s Lodge at 212 City Street was built by Beckmann as the “residence of Dr. Jules Braunnagel.”

- Jessie Simpson
Like an elegant lady who’s ready to show her face again, 202 King William sits proudly on a prominent corner opposite the King William Park. She definitely commands a second look.

Augustus Koch’s 1873 Bird’s Eye View map shows Malvina Nelson’s house at 202 King William to be a one-story structure. In 1883, Nelson sold the house to Francisco Ruiz and by 1889, the house had been enlarged, clad with brick, and had gained a second story.

The Ruiz family lived in the house until 1903 when it was sold to D. J. Woodward, owner of the Woodward Carriage Company. Woodward added elaborate porches across the front and also a rear addition as evidenced by the 1904 Sanborn Fire Insurance map. When the house was sold at public auction in 1971, those fine porches were long gone. The new owner remodeled the house into six apartments.

Forty-three years and several owners later, the old mansion had fallen into disrepair and was suffering serious neglect when, in 2014, it was purchased and beautifully restored by Juan Fernandez to be his family’s home. Today, the house looks exactly as it did in 1904 after Woodward’s porches were added.

- Bill Cogburn

Sources: The King William Area, A History & Guide to the Houses by Mary Burkholder, KWA archives

Water Conservation Pioneer

“inherited” her first martin house from a neighbor even before the Hughes moved to King William and have added and regularly reorganized housing at their Guenther Street home. While these houses have been very successful, with martins nesting each year, Hughes notes that maintaining them requires substantial commitment.

After a quarter century in King William, Susan and Bruce (currently a business consultant at the UTSA Institute for Economic Development) are preparing to move. They have bought a 1938 bungalow in Olmos Park Terrace adjacent to the home of their daughter and son-in-law and look forward to settling into their grandparental roles. And, yes, they’ve found a new and dedicated home for the martin houses!

- Jack Kent Jr.

Links:
Terry Hershey Award announcement: tx.audubon.org/conservation/2017-terry-hershey-award-honorees
BatsAboutBeads: https://www.etsy.com/shop/BatsaboutBeads
One last look. I’m standing in the now empty house that I’ve loved and labored over for almost eleven years. It looks for all the world like the last scene from Chekhov’s Cherry Orchard. There is the shadow of a banjo clock on the wall at the landing where its rhythmic ticking acted as the beating heart of the place. The chandelier with its Edison bulbs in the dining room now floats over empty space, no table to illuminate. The built-in china cabinet is void of its contents, its mirrored back reflecting nothing but daylight filtered through lace curtains.

Chekhov himself startled his critics by describing the play about the decline of a land-owning family as a “comedy and a farce.” I’d like to think he was musing about the mixture of comedy and tragedy that marks all lives, which, after all, are made up of successions of experiences, the good and the bad.

I’m neither laughing nor crying. I’ll miss the house but not all the effort it took to keep it up. One of the droll persons who first saw it after I’d settled in quoted one of my favorite lines from the film “Dr. Zhivago” on first seeing it. The good doctor has struggled through a harrowing return from World War I and the ongoing revolution to find his family’s Moscow townhouse filled with peasants and workers housed under their roof by revolutionary edict. One of the new occupants stands at the foot of the stairs with the barely-first-foot-in-the-door Zhivago and declares. “Zhivago, there was room for twenty families in this house, TWENTY! Is that just?”

Very funny, my friend. But it is more than I need. I’m already completely unpacked and settled in the new place, a spacious downtown loft with high ceilings, a balcony large enough for all my outdoor furniture, and huge windows framing theatrical views of the Art Deco towers that are the ornaments of the city. At night they look like a movie set, their black silhouettes punctuated by rectangles of yellow light. I won’t be too surprised if the ghosts of Fred and Ginger will be tapping along the pavement in front of them.

The neighbors had been enjoying the same spectacle I presented in all my previous big-city moves in Philadelphia, Rome and London, and even, originally, in San Antonio, where I tied up the Casino Club’s elevator for a day of relocating. Through half-opened doors they have been inventorying every stick of furniture and, finally, the show-stopper, the partially disassembled piano. Its strings were clanging in protest, as if to say, “What are you looking at?”

I said at the time that if the rental apartments in the riverside building were for sale, I’d still be there. Now I’ve found a place to make a new home that I can own. It is the same age as its companions on the downtown streets, formerly a 1920s department store with an over-designed structure that won’t groan under the weight of my books and piano. Everything I enjoy about this city is a short walk in any direction: theaters, the River Walk, restaurants and shops...and my new office (we’re moving our firm, too), soon to be a seven-minute walk from the front door. My commute will be a diagonal stroll across a 19th century downtown park. I’m happy to trade my house for freedom from traffic jams.

When I first started writing this column, and called it City Lights, it was because I had a distant view of the Tower Life Building from my second floor front porch. I had no idea at the time that I’d eventually become some of the lights that I was referencing.

Michael Guarino

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City Lights

Newsletter Improvement Plan

Do you have a story to tell? A neighbor to praise? News to share? A general interest column to launch? Submissions and contributions to the KWA newsletter are welcome!

Please send to info@ourkwa.org.
The 85th legislative Session was certainly challenging; however, our office had some victories, two of which I want to share with you here.

SB 725, also known as the Student Fairness in Feeding Act, was developed as a result of my visits with educators from all 55 public schools in my district. No matter which school district, these educators identified chronic hunger of students as a problem, yet ripe, edible, and wrapped food was being thrown away daily. Schools want to give their kids this food, but fear of violating policy kept them from doing so. The bill permits schools to have an on-campus food pantry that allows schools to collect the food that would have previously been thrown away to give to their hungry children. I will continue to fight for Texas children, especially those most vulnerable.

Another positive piece of legislation from the regular session is HB 658. I received countless calls from folks in line to vote during the last presidential primary who had limited mobility or a medical condition. The extensive wait in long lines in the Texas heat put their health at risk. This bill allows election officials to escort these individuals to the front of the line so they can exercise their right to vote without risking their health.

Our work is not over. The Governor called a special session that began on July 18. I will continue to fight for you and the issues that matter most.

More soon,
Diego Bernal

If you are looking for ways to keep your kids engaged during the last days of summer, then come on down to Blue Star Contemporary for H-E-B Family Saturday on August 26 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Family Saturday, sponsored by H-E-B’s Tournament of Champions, is a day of hands-on art activities in the galleries for kids of all ages. The art-making activities for this day are inspired by Blue Star Contemporary’s current exhibitions: Augmented Reality, Insurrection and Echo and Narcissus.

These exhibitions-related programs are intended to encourage kids to draw connections between themes, methods and materials present in BSC’s current shows and their own art through fun, hands-on projects. There will also be a screening of the film WALL-E in BSC’s Art Education Learning Lab, home to the monthly Film Friday screenings and artist talks, as well as activities to promote engagement with contemporary art. Complimentary snacks and refreshments will be provided. The event is free and open to the public. Please call (210) 227-6960 to register or visit bluestarart.org for more information.

Starting in August, Blue Star Contemporary is extending its hours and will now be open from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays, and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

First Friday falls on August 4 this month. On this day, BSC will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and admission is free. This is a great opportunity to come out and see the summer exhibitions before they close on September 3.

Please visit bluestarart.org/calendar for information on all upcoming events.

- Katy Tuck, BSC Visitor Ambassador
The EAGLE REPORT

Brackenridge High School Army Junior ROTC Senior Army Instructor Johnathan Ladson reported that 18 cadets from Brackenridge participated in the San Antonio ISD Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps Cadet Leadership Challenge at Camp Bullis in June. The cadets participated in a number of leadership, teamwork and confidence-building events. The conditions were difficult and the weather topped 100 degrees almost every day, but they all successfully completed a grueling obstacle course, land navigation training, leader reaction course, survival training, First Aid training, aquatics training, and negotiated a single rope bridge and 60-foot rappel tower. Ninety-five cadets from 10 schools were in attendance, with a Brackenridge cadet selected to serve as the Battalion Commander for the week-long camp.

- Letie Wawrzyniak

Cadets wind down the week at a picnic planned as one of the culminating events.

Plaques Mark 20th Anniversary

In 1986 the King William Association announced in its newsletter that it wanted to mark its 20th anniversary with house address signs which included “Est. 1967.” The original oval plaques were designed and custom made by KWA member Bob Bradley using wood and silkscreen printing.

The design and material has changed over the years as different contractors were selected. The “Est. 1967” remains on the plaque to remind all of our Association’s beginnings. The KWA currently has plaques available for $60 if you would like to purchase one for your home.

- Cherise Bell
August is Here, and Back to School is Near

Students worked on academics, Spanish fluency and having fun this summer during our first ACE summer program. Ms. Rodriguez is our ACE facilitator and Dr. Kennedy was the facilitator for the Spanish instruction section. The ACE program is funded by a state grant that allows our school to offer no-cost after school care and summer academics. Back to school signs have sprung up around the city. The first day of the 2017-2018 school year is August 14. School begins at 7:55 a.m., dismissal is at 3:20 p.m. New beginnings and sharp pencils will be ready to take on the challenges of this school year.

We will continue morning drop-off and afternoon pickup on Cedar Street this year. Students may enter campus from the Cedar Street gate and proceed to the cafeteria or gym in the mornings. When parents notify their child’s teacher that they will be a car rider, the children will wait on campus for their name to be called on the radio and then walk to the Cedar Street loading area. This should ease traffic on S. St. Mary’s Street at dismissal time.

Every year, Bonham Academy’s students receive support from our local Kiwanis chapter in the form of school supplies. The Kiwanians provide filled backpacks and other supplies for students who need a little assistance getting ready for back to school. In addition, throughout the school year, our Kiwanians act as reading mentors to our first graders. Once each week, the members of the Kiwanis club come to Bonham to read to and with students. At the end of the school year, they celebrate the success of the children in developing and honing their reading skills. This is but one more example of the importance of our community to Bonham Academy.

At Bonham, education is a community affair. From the opening of the Garden Street School over 125 years ago, which would become Bonham Elementary, this school at 925 S. St. Mary’s has been an integral part of the King William community. Many thanks to our community for supporting our school and our children.

Let’s have a great school year filled with learning and adventure! Go Bobcats!

- Principal Will Webber

Garden St. School News

Steel City Pops opened at the end of June and is one of the new businesses at 812 S. Alamo Street (behind Credit Human). Originally started in 2012 by Alabama native Jim Watkins, the business is still family-owned and branched out to Texas. A new King William neighbor, Ben Cleveland, is the General Manager. Ben is from Alabama but married to a San Antonio native, so moving here was an easy decision.

Boasting fresh local ingredients one can have a cream pop or a fruity pop, plus choose to have your treat dipped, dredged, dusted or drizzled with chocolate, nuts, coconut, spices and other delights. The pops are yummy! Perhaps I am not the best judge, because the only ice cream I have not liked in my life was durian fruit I had in 1998.

Pops’ array of flavors will appeal to all palettes. Don’t worry durian fruit is not on their menu, but avocado currently is and the flavors change seasonally. Popsicle production occurs on site with a large window for viewing. The restaurant is designed for patrons to hang out with an outdoor space for dogs. Catering is available, so the next time your office or birthday party needs a treat, perhaps Pops is the way to go.

- Cherise Bell
The dog days of summer are here. We have already had days of 100-degree weather, and maintaining the garden gets more challenging. To conserve water, it is time to consider if some potted plants and annuals should be discarded.

Lawns take most of our water usage. To determine how often to water grasses, walk across the lawn in early morning, and if you can look back and see your footprint, it is time to water. About one inch of water is enough to maintain most grasses. Put a tuna can or similar container where the sprinkler spray hits, and when the water is one inch deep, turn it off. Many container plants will wilt and show signs of stress in the afternoon but only water them when they are wilted in the cooler morning air.

August is a good time to trim evergreen shrubs and perennials to keep them in bounds. Trim roses back by one-fourth to bush out, and, in the case of repeat bloomers, have more fall flowers. DO NOT trim climbing roses now. They bloom on “old wood” and should be trimmed only after they bloom in the spring.

Garden Tips:

- Continue to add mulch to flower beds to conserve water and keep plant roots cool. Maintain a depth of 3 to 5 inches.
- Fertilize flower beds and lawns with an organic fertilizer if it has been more than 3 months since the last application.
- Fire ants have not been much of a problem this year but may come back when it rains. If they do, drench the mound with a mixture of 2 ounces of orange oil and a tablespoon of molasses in a gallon of water. Orange oil can be found at most good nurseries.
- For a fall flower show, plant seeds of zinnias, bachelor buttons and marigolds in sunny areas.

A used but usable garden hose is needed for the neighborhood tree project. If you have one to donate, please call and leave your name and number at the KWA office for pickup.

_Garden Note: As the garden grows, so does the gardener._
BuenaVida is a proven diabetes prevention and obesity control program recognized by the CDC. It is right in your neighborhood and it works!

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Stephen W. Yndo - Owner/Broker
Our very dear friend and neighbor, Robbi Boone, was taken from us in a tragic collision on Friday, April 21, 2017. I can find no adequate words to express the tremendous loss that Robbi’s family and friends feel. We continue to mourn the death of her husband, Dan Boone, just four months before.

Robbi’s smile could light up a room and brighten the heaviest of spirits. No matter the challenges she was dealing with in her life, she focused on you, sharing your joys and sorrows. She was loving and thoughtful and I never heard her say an unkind word about anyone. She possessed lots of energy, and Robbi used her great intelligence, passion and leadership skills to make a positive difference in our world. Our loss is our community’s loss as well.

Growing up near Chicago, Robbi’s personality was evident at an early age. She was a twirler with her high school band and she was named Miss Park Ridge. According to her sister, Caryl, Robbi was the president of every group she joined, including the Panhellenic Association while she attended Northwestern University. As a teacher, her passion for educational opportunities for all began.

Robbi and Dan were a perfect match. They were loving parents, entrepreneurs, avid travelers and active members of the greater San Antonio community. Robbi helped to establish a Newcomers Club in 1981. They owned an antique store in King William in the early 90s, and then proceeded to save a derelict, but historic, two-story house from demolition by moving it from downtown San Antonio to 951 Alamo Street in 1997. They moved their antique store, A King’s Attic, to this location. Robbi’s and Dan’s efforts exemplified Historic Preservation at its best.

In 2002, they opened the Alamo Street Victorian Inn in place of the antique store. They welcomed guests from around the world, introducing them to the King William District. As fellow innkeepers, our friendship grew with our memberships in the San Antonio Bed & Breakfast Association. When Robbi and Dan purchased a ranch in Canyon Lake, they added that property to our association.

Robbi and Dan became restaurant owners for a time, opening Aardvark Annie’s in Canyon Lake. Their interest in educational opportunities in Texas led them to become active in politics. Robbi was a tireless supporter of Dan in his runs for U.S. Congress and for representative of Comal County. Robbi led the Comal County Democratic Party since 2010, working to encourage people to vote and support their causes.

Robbi showed great courage and devotion to Dan as he struggled with pancreatic cancer in the last year of his life. She was devastated when he died in December last year. Now our deepest sympathy goes out to their children, Carrie, Todd, Darcy and Angie and their spouses, their grandchildren, extended family and many friends. We are so very saddened to say goodbye to our best friend.

- Nora Peterson
Hooray for another great July 4th Regatta in King William! The Regatta is organized by the near-mythical King William Yacht Club for the happy purpose of enjoying our neighbors and our neighborhood by cruising our portion of the San Antonio River. The canoe and kayak races kicked off the festivities, but just-for-fun paddlers were the heart of the celebration. Mike Casey was the only original KW Yacht Club member who participated in the paddling this year. Mike brought his singular style and grace to the canoe he shared with new neighbor Monica.

This year’s Regatta participants included young Maddie Toland as Wonder Woman, her mother Dina as golden Queen Hippolyta, and “Uncle Sam” Shawn Bradford paddling a couple of Lady Liberties. Glittery tutus, stars-and-stripes tiaras and stovepipe hats mixed with aquatic skills in a strange King William amalgam. Anne Toxey, Patrick McMillan and Sasha Nelipa were accomplished first-time kayakers. Kayak-race king David Murphy chose not to defend his title so that he and son Grayson could make paddle boarding look easy. Grayson will have a special “what I did this summer” story when he starts kindergarten in the coming weeks.

We had an upset in the canoe race (no, not that kind...). Bradley and Alec Toland, in Jack Kent, Sr.’s classic Grumman aluminum canoe, prevailed in our one semi-serious race, edging out multi-year reigning champion Bryce Milligan and fending off challenger Luke Laborde. All were gracious in victory and defeat, with promises to try again next year. Best of all, Patricia Garcia Duarte is our first kayak-race queen, so she will have perpetual regatta bragging rights. Mercifully, she planned ahead and brought her own tiara.

We had a high bar for the Style award. Shimi and Oscar Alvarado bedazzled with patriotic glamor in a glitzy kayak. Theirs was an action entry with Shimi blowing bubbles and Oscar providing the propulsion. Somehow their fancy kayak also included martinis. Face it: everyone was a winner in the Style category. Shimi and Oscar, however, went home with the style trophy once again.

The KWA Social following the Regatta was also a big success. Thanks to Brad Shaw and all of the Price family for the hard work of planning and staging the event in the shade of Upper Mill Park. Fried chicken and cold beer, plus potluck offerings from neighbors and friends, gave everyone something to celebrate. Rudi Harst and his group captured the spirit of the event with their charming music and commentary.

This holiday distills the reasons and opportunity to celebrate our special community. We created another fabulous 4th of July in King William with lots of paddling, fun, food and music. Thanks to all for making it happen. We’ll do it again next year. Contact the Commodore if you want to get on the notice list for next year’s Regatta.

- Commodore Marita Emmet

Photo: Johnny Martinez

Patty Duarte was victorious in the kayak race.

Photo: Dina Toland

Alec Toland and his dad Bradley prevailed in the canoe race.
August Calendar

2  General Membership Meeting - KWA Office - 7:00 p.m.
14  First Day of School!
15  Deadline for September newsletter
16  KWA Board Meeting - 6:30 p.m.
21  Solar Eclipse!

eclipse2017.nasa.gov