



## 2018 Neighborhood Calendar

### EVENTS

Chili Cook-Off	7/14
Movie Night	8/18
Oktoberfest	10/13
Holiday Party	12/9

### GENERAL MEETINGS

Summer Meeting	7/12
Fall Meeting	10/11

### GARAGE SALE WEEKENDS

Sept 1 & 2 Dec 1 & 2

### IN THIS ISSUE

Neighborhood News 2  
Chili Cook-Off Info 3  
Neighborhood Hero 7  
DTSA 8  
Going to the Dogs 10

## Summer in The Square -- WSNA President Dave Dethloff



Hello Neighbors! Summer is upon us again. Are you ready for the heat? Try a mist system or a pool party! (hint hint, nudge nudge)

Now that school is out, we all need to be more aware of kids in the Square. Please obey the stop signs and avoid tragedy. Summer is also a time when crime goes up so be aware of what's going on around you.

My Eagle Scout nephew, Zach Dethloff, will be at the next general meeting with some fellow scouts to give you an opportunity to retire your old and tattered flags. They will talk about flag etiquette and how they give your flag a proper retirement.

Chili Cook-Off is coming up fast! So dust off those crock pots and brush up on your killer recipes! Last year's champion Chris Manning will be back to defend his title so bring your "A" game! We are looking for 15 Washington Square chili cooks to bring their creation to 920 Louise Street, no later than 5:45pm on July 14th. Sign up for both chefs and tasters is on the WSNA website.

"Coco" will be the animated feature for Movie Night so grab the kids & a stack of \$1's because Sam & Carol will be grilling hot dogs and the WSNA ladies will be making popcorn and serving treats. This is always a great event for a warm summer evening!

Oktoberfest just keeps getting better every year. This year I'm hoping for a few more home brews, so we can be tappin' the keg's "like the mayor of Munich!" Probst!!

Remember if you have an idea for an event please let us know but also be prepared to head it up but don't worry because there's always plenty of help. That's it for now folks! Have a great summer! Stay safe, stay cool and I'll see you in the Square!!

## Valerie Boulter Wins City of Santa Ana Most Beautiful Yard Award *by Bobi Keenan*



Valerie Boulter lived in a very big, 2 story house in Villa Park. With her 3 children grown and on their own, she was wanting a smaller, one story house, one with character, and in a place that had a "real neighborhood" feel. After months of searching, she found it in Washington Square. She bought 920 Louise Street and moved in on November 9, 2017.

She wasted no time in becoming part of the neighborhood, hosting an open house in December and our Wine Walk in May. She will also host the upcoming Chili-Cook Off in July. Watch out neighbors...she is a retired Executive Chef, with years of experience in high-end catering!

The house, custom built for a doctor and his wife in 1936, had been carefully maintained and was already a terrific place. In fact it won the Alan Anderson Award a few years ago. But Valerie had new visions for the property.

An avid gardener since childhood, she has been

working relentlessly on adding plants and lighting and sculptures to front and back yards. She has an artist's eye and great attention to detail. For example, she takes "curb appeal" to a new level with the beautiful ceramic planters in the parkway filled with a variety of succulents, some of which trail over the sides. All around the yards, there are a seemingly endless variety of plants, in beds and planters. Year-round, something is always in bloom.



*continued on page 5*

# Washington Square is Fun!

and a little work  
now and then

## Neighborhood General Meeting Thursday, July 12th, 7PM SAPD Community Room



Join us for the July meeting! We'll have updates on neighborhood issues and events. Since Wilson School is closed for the summer, the meeting is in the community room of the police station. That's just south of our neighborhood across Civic Center on Boyd Street. There is parking in the structure to the east. At press time it's unknown whether the City will pick up the parking fees. Car pool or walk to keep the cost down. Our speaker is our Chief of Police, David Valentin. David was confirmed as permanent Chief on February 20th of this year after serving as Acting Chief for eight months. He is the first Chief to be raised in the city and he worked his way up the ladder from Officer to Chief.

In addition to having the Chief as a speaker we will also have a tour of the police facility. We had a tour several years ago for our summer meeting and anyone who attended that meeting will tell you it was a fascinating night. We'll see the dispatch center, the jail, the crime lab, and the vehicles that the department uses for SWAT and patrol. It's a unique opportunity, don't miss this meeting! Plus bring your old tattered American flags for proper disposal by a Boy Scout. (see President's Letter)



## 16th Annual Wine Walk Wrap Up

This year's event sold out the 75 spaces in 6 days! Sorry for those who were unable to attend. We had a beautiful evening of cooler than normal weather. The three homes on Louise provided a wonderful forum for the event.

The Jazz Quartet, organized especially for this event to entertain us, was a great backdrop for tasting a variety of wines and, most especially, the great array of food offerings. A new spin for the event was the distribution of red noses to acknowledge Red Nose Day which is a fundraising campaign run by the nonprofit organization Comic Relief Inc.



Thanks to all who contributed and to the great showing of volunteers who helped to set up and tear down, and to the Orange County Wine Society for offering their expertise and pouring award-winning wines. We had numerous wine baskets donated, as well as contributions of discount cards from local businesses, contributions from neighborhood artists and special bottles of wine. Remember that next year's event will be the 3rd weekend in May (approx..) so mark your calendar once our 2019 calendar is posted in the newsletter or on the WSNA website so you are able to attend.

## 10th Annual Movie Night Saturday, August 18th 16th Street Cul de Sac at Dusk



Can you believe it's our 10th Annual Movie Night? This year we're featuring Coco, a 2017 Academy Award winning animated feature that should be fun for kids & grown-ups alike. Despite his family's generations-old ban on music, young Miguel dreams of becoming an accomplished musician like his idol Ernesto de la Cruz. Desperate to prove his talent, Miguel finds himself in the stunning and colorful Land of the Dead. After meeting a charming trickster named Héctor, the two new friends embark on an extraordinary journey to unlock the real story behind Miguel's family history. The show begins at dusk in the 16th St. cul de sac near Towner. Chairs are provided but you're welcome to bring your own. We'll have popcorn, hot dogs and drinks as always. Please join us!!



The Washington Square Neighborhood Newsletter is published quarterly by the Washington Square Neighborhood Association. WSNA is a non-profit mutual benefit community association established in 1985. Washington Square is an officially recognized neighborhood by the city of Santa Ana, California. The volunteer Newsletter Committee is looking for neighbors who want to contribute! If you have suggestions or story ideas, or know InDesign and want to help with layout, you can email us at [newsletter@washington-square.org](mailto:newsletter@washington-square.org)

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## WASHINGTON SQUARE

CHILI

Second Annual

COOK-OFF

Saturday July 14th

6:00 to 9:00PM

920 N. Louise







**Bring your best recipe!**

15 great Washington Square chili cooks needed. Sign up to compete now at [www.washington-square.org](http://www.washington-square.org) by July 8th. The \$20 PayPal entry fee will be refunded when you bring your pre-cooked chili by 5:45PM to the cook-off in a crock pot.

Make 6 to 8 quarts for tasting. You and one other family member will get free admission and the chance to win a trophy and bragging rights to the best chili in the Square! Judging will be "people's choice". Call Dave Dethloff (714)721-8124 with questions.



*One of the hottest events of the year! Whether you want to cook & compete or just want to eat, you're bound to have a whole lotta Fun!*

-  Chili samples plus cornbread and fixins, veggies, chips & salsa, fruit.
-  Plenty of beer, soda and water
-  This is a 21 and over event.
-  Like our Wine Walk, we have to limit the number of guests to 75.
-  Get your tickets now on the WSNA website or bring a check to Dave Dethloff 1016 N. Westwood by July 8th.
-  Volunteers needed for setup and teardown, call Dave at 714 721-8124 or check our Facebook group to join in.

**Tickets available now at [www.washington-square.org](http://www.washington-square.org)**



## City Contact Information

Police Services West End Office	647-5062
Police - non emergency	834-4211
Police admin. business	245-8665
Police and Fire Emergency	911
Animal services (lost pets, barking)	245-8792
Code Enforcement	667-2780
Graffiti Hotline	877-786-7824
Obstructing Trees & Bushes	647-3380
Permit Parking-Frank Orellana	647-5614
Permit Parking Complaints	245-8225
Potholes (Public Works)	647-3380
SAUSD School Police	558-5535
School Traffic Concerns	647-5619
Street Cleaning	647-3380
Street Lights (Edison)	800-655-4555
Street Lights (City)	647-3380
Traffic Engineering	647-5619
Traffic Signals	647-5620
Trash Pick Up (Waste Management)	558-7761
Tree Trimming	647-3380
Vector Control (County)	971-2421
Water Bill	647-5454
Wilson School	564-8100

all numbers (714) unless indicated otherwise

A more complete listing can be found on the WSNA website.

If you have a smartphone or a tablet, you'll want to download the free "My Santa Ana" app from the Apple App Store or Google Play. With it you can report graffiti, street light problems, potholes, tree issues, water wasting, etc as well as get phone #'s

## Now Enrolling 2 year olds

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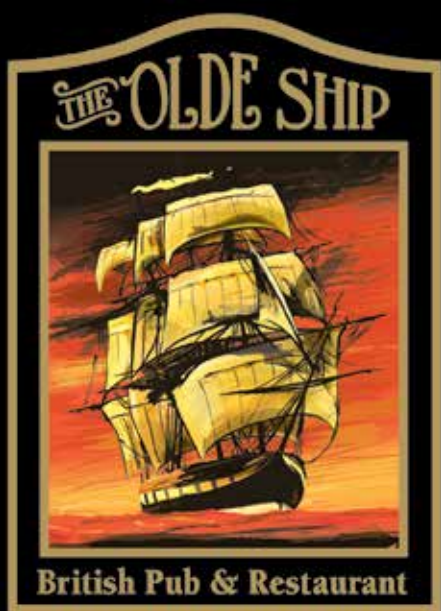


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## Meet Your Friends for an Evening at Washington Square's Neighborhood Pub

**Happy Hour Monday through  
 Friday 3:00PM to 6:00PM**

**Late Night Monday through Wednesday  
 9:00PM to Close  
 All Day Sunday**

**\$7 Imperial Pints**

**\$5 Well Drinks**

**\$5 Glass of La Terre Wine  
 Chardonnay, Cabernet, Merlot and  
 White Zinfandel**

**\$4 Baskets of Chips or Basket of Onion Rings**

**\$6 Garlic Mushrooms**

**\$8 Fish Bites or Calamari**

*Most Beautiful Yard continued from page 1*

Valerie has completely redesigned the back yards (there are two of them), making them wonderful outdoor places to relax and to entertain. She added a Quonset Hut to the "back" back yard for storage and as an art and work room.



She installed custom-made solid steel gates across the driveway, to keep her dog secure and had a small wall built of the same steel that separates the "front" back yard from the driveway and the garage. The steel oxidizes over time to become a rich golden brown textured surface. It is a work in progress; It is a labor of



love. Congratulations to Valerie for winning recognition for what she's done in such a short time. Make sure to get your reservations in soon for the Chili Cook-Off and see her home first-hand.



### Did you know?



You can recycle those 20 year old stacks of paint cans in your garage. You don't have to go all the way to the hazardous waste facility in Anaheim. Just take them to Dunn Edwards Paints, 521 W. 17th Street during business hours (6:30-5PM M-Sa). There is a 20 gal limit and the cans must have the original labels. They can't accept paint thinner, spray paint or leaking containers. More info at [www.paintcare.org](http://www.paintcare.org)

## Washington Square's 2018 Officers & Board of Directors

<b>President</b>	Dave Dethloff	721-8124
<b>Vice President</b>	Bobi Keenan	206-2530
<b>Vice President</b>	Javier Garcia	836-8128
<b>Secretary</b>	Jeff Qualey	721-5333
<b>Treasurer</b>	Don Harvey	308-4425
<b>Treasurer</b>	Carlos Araujo	308-4425

### Board Members

Keren Clark	(928) 830-6306
David Jirik	543-9079
Jean Poppa	836-6430
Tony Michalski	315-2778
Kirsten Sketch	721-8795
Ivana Unger	972-8503
Susan van der Roest	319-4457

### Committee Chairs

Com-Link Rep	Diane Morter	814-4326
Membership	Kirsten Sketch	721-8795
Hospitality	Nancy Lutz	836-9110
Newsletter Editor	David Jirik	543-9079
Website	David Jirik	543-9079
Ad Manager	Martin van der Roest	834-1200

all numbers (714) unless otherwise indicated

### First Presbyterian Church Santa Ana

600 N. Main St.  
Santa Ana, CA 92701  
714-542-7253  
[www.fpcsac.com](http://www.fpcsac.com)



## Sunday Worship:

### Traditional Service @ 10:00 a.m.

- \*English service held in our main Sanctuary.
- \*Spanish service held in McFarland Hall
- \*Children's Sunday School and Nursery available during service.
- \*Worship includes hymns & praise songs
- \* Communion the first Sunday of the month

Join us this Sunday,  
we would love to see you!



# Sarah's Neighborhood News

homes for sale:	beds	baths	Sq.Ft.	list/sold Price	DOM*	Sale Type
1604 N. Towner	3	2	1493	\$629,900.	7	Standard
1523 N. Freeman	2	2.5	1573	\$719,000.	6	Standard
1107 N. Westwood	3	3	1722	\$749,900.	64	Standard
homes in escrow:						
1116 N. Olive	2	2	1050	\$550,000.	29	Standard
1326 N. Westwood	3	2	1304	\$589,900.	56	Standard
welcome to our new neighbors at:						
1134 Bomo Koral	4	3	1459	\$580,000.	10	Standard
1412 N. Louise	3	1	1872	\$600,000.	7	Probate
926 N. Olive	3	2	1385	\$633,000.	29	Standard
per MLS and the County Recorder for the period 3-26-2018 to 6-19-2018 * = days on market						

## HAPPY SUMMER EVERYONE!

When I meet people who are looking to purchase something or interested in refinancing their home, the first question is usually, "What's the monthly payment?" This is really a complicated question, as there are many factors that determine the answer. Down payment, credit scores and loan amount are the biggest factors. But just to give you an idea of what a payment would look like on a purchase price of \$600,000 and with a credit (FICO) score of 720:

With an FHA loan requiring \$21,000 down payment, the total monthly payment would be approximately \$4005.16; interest rate 4.25%

With a conventional loan and 10% down, the total monthly payment would be approximately \$3642.19; interest rate 4.75%

With a conventional loan and 20% down, the total monthly payment would be approximately \$3203.91; Interest rate 4.75%

As you can see, home prices continue to be strong in Washington Square. You will notice, though, that there hasn't been a huge turnover in the 2nd quarter—low inventory. If you are thinking of buying or refinancing, now is the time. Interest rates just went up, and are expecting a couple more increases this year! If you have any questions about this or other real estate issues, please contact me.

The winners of the Valentine Day, Mothers Day and Fathers Day drawings are Mark and Anna Robinson, Jan Pekarek and Mike Evron. Congratulations and thank you for your continued support!



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## Diane Morter is Our 2018 Neighborhood Hero *by Laura Garcia*

The Neighborhood Hero Award was established by the Santa Ana Communication Linkage Forum to honor individuals that have shown enthusiasm as well as commitment to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. This award is given annually.

This year, WSNA's recipient of the award is Diane Morter. Diane has lived in Washington Square since 2010. Diane's enthusiasm was evident from the jump. She was brand new to the neighborhood and offered drinks and glasses for our very first Progressive Dinner. Shortly thereafter, she began attending board meetings. When she first pitched the Oktoberfest idea to the board, they loved it. However, they let her know she would be chairing the event. Diane willingly accepted, and the event was brilliantly executed. This was no small undertaking as it required months of planning, coordination and procuring the necessary items. Certainly, there were plenty of volunteers but it was her vision that came forth. Oktoberfest is now one of our most successful events and is the model for other city neighborhoods that started doing their own Oktoberfest. She continues to chair this event.

Diane has also served as a board member, Hospitality Chair, and Comm Link rep. She regularly attends the monthly board meetings. Her enthusiasm seems to be infectious. She has managed to bring several new neighbors to the board meetings as well as

neighborhood events. Consequently, the number of attendees at our meetings has significantly grown. In addition to her enthusiasm and commitment to the neighborhood, Diane is warm, friendly and an all-around good person. We are very fortunate to have her as a neighbor. If you run into her while walking her dogs, Sugar and Rocky, do congratulate her.

### Did You Know?

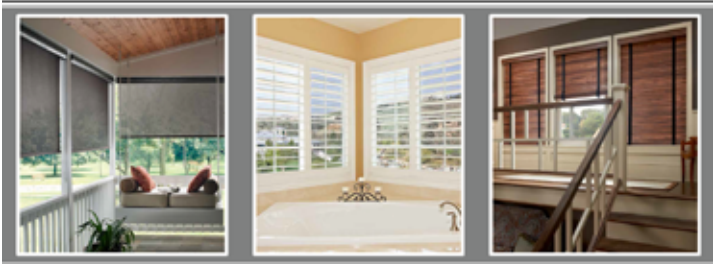
The City Public Works Agency is the agency to contact to remove shoes or other foreign objects from overhead wires.

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## Connie's Pottery is Flying *by Sylvia Salenius*



"Clay is clean dirt and I love to play in it," says Washington Square resident Connie Major, the featured ceramic artist in the John Wayne Airport Community Space from May 21, 2018 – June 14, 2018. Her unique pieces were on display in the Departure (upper) Level near the security screening areas and on the Arrival (lower) Level.

"Ms. Major creates art that is beautiful and skillfully engineered, with amusing design and color," said OC Board of Supervisors Chairman Andrew Do.

Connie has been working with clay since she created her clay snail family in fourth grade. While that, or the 8-inch curled up cat from junior high, weren't on display at the airport, her works for this show intended to draw in the viewer, and have them think carefully about what they were seeing. Pieces touched on male-female roles, surveyed the California landscape, incorporated illusions and also included utilitarian objects. Fourteen of the 23 pieces were created in 2017 and 2018.

Ms. Major earned her Bachelor of Arts in Jewelry and Metalsmithing from CSU Long Beach in 1974. While raising her three children, her love for ceramics continued and often took classes at Santa Ana College.

Her pieces frequently incorporate a hidden laugh or a second, deeper interpretation. Reflected by the sheer variety of her work, she doesn't have a particular procedure, technique, or approach and often hand makes the tools needed to achieve a desired effect.



# Whazzup?

## in Downtown Santa Ana

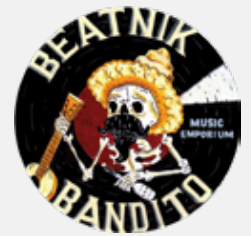
What's going on in DTSA? -- By Sam Puzzo

Food music, art and culture in one form or another describe DTSA as never before. For this month's report I will focus on music as well as food related events and resources.

**4th Street Market:** For the past few months my wife and I have tried to stop by 4th Street Market on a Thursday evening for food and stayed for a kind of open mic night. Music can range from jazz to folk to hip hop/rap at least to the extent I understand hip hop. A very good core band plays for those signed up for the night. This all happens on the outdoor patio. Also on the patio the last Wednesday of the month is a free movie on the patio movie screen preceded by a trivia contest. This all starts at 7PM. The movie for July 25th is *Deadpool 2* and is done in association with the Frida Cinema. For future events check their website [www.4thstreetmarket.com/market-events/](http://www.4thstreetmarket.com/market-events/)

**McFadden Public Market:** Music can be found here as well usually on weekends where a DJ provides music on Friday and Saturday after 9:00 PM in the Arcade area. During Art Walk music can also be heard downstairs. I will add if you are still young at heart the Arcade has a fun array of pinball and other games. Are you a pinball wizard?

More music can be heard in Santa Ana's version of a coffee house in **Beatnik Bandito** located at 417 N. Broadway. A record store by day and a music stage by night with small concerts. Go to the website [www.beatnikbandito.com/](http://www.beatnikbandito.com/) to get on their e-mail list or see them on Facebook. Beatnik Bandito has made the list for best folk music venues in Orange County from CBS Los Angeles. If the music is in you and you enjoy coffee house size performers give them a try.



Savor Santa Ana events have been very popular and a chance to sample foods from numerous restaurants. The next one is coming up in September. If you have been you know what I mean but if not give Savor SA a try. My suggestion to avoid potential long lines at favorite stops is to go early

I welcome feedback from WSNA residents on foods they have tried and enjoyed as well as other DTSA experiences to let other neighbors know what to do or try. There are many things going on in Downtown Santa Ana; food and drink events, cooking classes, art shows and event gatherings. I can use all the help you can contribute to raise the neighborhood's awareness. Help get the word out on your favorite find in DTSA. Email me with your experiences and suggestions. [DTSA@washington-square.org](mailto:DTSA@washington-square.org)

## Jon Wilson and Tony Michalski Complete AIDS/LifeCycle Ride *by Bobi Keenan*



Jon (holding bike), Tony (center) and some of their team

WSNA residents Jon Wilson & Tony Michalski rode their bikes from San Francisco to L.A. to raise funds for those affected by HIV/AIDS. The money funds the direct care, HIV testing, counseling and education on prevention provided by San Francisco AIDS Foundation and Los Angeles LGBT Center. This year there were 2300 riders and 600 "roadies" who helped out along the 545 mile route. The 2018 Ride raised \$16.8 million dollars and awareness of the cause in the many communities they traveled through over seven days in June.

This is Jon's 4th year riding and he has raised over \$20,000 in that time.

Jon was profoundly impacted by volunteering with people suffering from AIDS before effective treatment was found. Many of them died of the disease, several with their

hand in his as they passed away. The Ride is his way of honoring them and carrying their legacy into the future that AIDS took from them.

This is Tony's first ride. He signed up at Jon's urging. Tony was motivated by the many people he has met over the years, in this country and abroad, who have been impacted by HIV/AIDS.

He raised \$7,000 for his efforts. There is still time to donate at [www.aidslifecycle.org](http://www.aidslifecycle.org). You can find Jon and Tony's fundraising pages by entering their names after clicking DONATE.



L to R Juan Carlos Ochoa, Jon, Tony





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W. Civic Center Drive

Juan Carlos Ochoa



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## The Square is Going to the Dogs

by Pat Lenahan



Many WS residents have been unhappy about seeing “dog deposits” in their yards recently. Thanks to Mailiee Doan of Bomo Koral, and her idea of a “Doggie Depot”, we have our first dog bag dispenser on the northwest corner of Towner and Washington, funded by your membership dues. Response has been positive and in the coming weeks, it will be joined by a few additional

“Depots” stationed throughout Washington Square.

As part of our acknowledgement of the Washington Square canines and their human partners, we are beginning a new feature in the newsletter: The Dogs of Washington Square. If you are interested in seeing your dog(s) pictured in upcoming newsletters, please submit a clear photo, name and brief information about your pet (and you) to [dogs@washington-square.org](mailto:dogs@washington-square.org).

This month’s “dog star” is Mocha, Karen and Ben Weavers’ dog. Many of you may remember when the Weavers (devoted



Karen, Ben and Mocha

cat people) adopted Mocha. It was a Sunday in November 2014 when a neighbor posted about dogs running loose. Their owner had died and Mocha and two other dogs were found homeless and hungry. Neighbors quickly organized a foster home for the two smaller dogs. Since it was Sunday, Animal Control was not working and Mocha, a Doberman/pit bull mix, was placed in the back of a police car. Ben Weavers remembers seeing “this big, beautiful dog with brown eyes” staring at him. Ben knew the next stop for the dog was euthanasia.

At that point, Ben walked up to the officer and said: “We’ll take her.” Ben told Karen: “Love is love. If it isn’t a good fit, we’ll find her a home.” Mocha introduced Karen and Ben to a subculture of dog people in Washington Square who mobilized and delivered food, collars/leashes, medicine and funds for veterinary care. Ben smiled and added: “Dog people are so amazing.

Needless to say, Karen and Ben fell in love with Mocha who, in turn, loves people. Now the Weavers are both dog and cat people, although Karen describes Mocha as more “cat-like”. Many neighbors know Karen and Mocha from their long walks through Washington Square. An instant decision proved that love is love.



## Fly It Proudly This Fourth!

by Tom Lutz



I noticed the flags on Freeman St. in the above picture with the morning sun hitting them making them so brilliant and thought we don’t see enough of our county’s flag flown on special holidays. It made me think just what are the proper holidays and occasions we should fly our flag. In doing some research I found the web site; <https://carrot-top.com/flag-holidays> which was very informative on flag etiquette and how and when to display the flag. Let’s start by celebrating July 4th by flying our flag in Washington Square. At our July 12th General Meeting a local Boy Scout troop will offer the proper disposal of worn or damaged flags.

### Your WSNA Block Representatives

<b>Area 1 Louise North of Washington</b>	
Randy & Tracy Simons	(724)423-0810
<b>Area 2 Louise South of Washington</b>	
Bobi Keenan	953-9516
<b>Area 3 Baker North of Washington</b>	
Laura Ruiz	568-1660
<b>Area 4 Baker South of Washington</b>	
John McGuinness	836-1971
<b>Area 5 Rosewood</b>	
Josie Martinez	481-3871
<b>Area 6 Westwood North of Washington</b>	
Noe Vasquez	851-6767
<b>Area 7 Westwood South of Washington</b>	
Karen Blue Wevers	(949)295-4979
<b>Area 8 16th/Towner North of 15th</b>	
Gil Melendez	542-3398
<b>Area 9 Towner North of Washington</b>	
Russ Bartlett	564-9080
<b>Area 10 Towner South of Washington</b>	
Ivy Poggi	(925)354-2214
<b>Area 11 Freeman North of Washington</b>	
Margaret Klase	972-8951
<b>Area 12 Freeman South of Washington</b>	
Jason & Elise Athas	270-4654
<b>Area 13 Lowell South of Washington</b>	
Carina Franck-Pantone	675-3653
<b>Area 14 Lowell North of Washington</b>	
Laurella Stearns	542-0219
<b>Area 15 Olive North of Washington</b>	
Adriane Givant	264-9200
<b>Area 16 Olive South of Washington</b>	
Connie Major	547-7404
<b>Area 17 Bomo Koral</b>	
Juan Miramontes	309-6491
<b>Area 18 Washington St.</b>	
Kurt & Jen Preston	547-4895
<b>Area 19 10th between Westwood and Baker</b>	
Cheryl Yarnall	542-7512
<b>Area 20 Flower St. between Wash. and 15th</b>	
Delilah Mendez	725-6357
<b>Area 21 Flower St. between 10th and Wash</b>	
Maco Long	(949)387-4446
<b>Area 22 Flower St. between Civic Center and 10th</b>	
Jose Palcacios	835-0980

All numbers 714 unless otherwise indicated



## Our Garden; Our Labor of Love

by Lubna Debbini

### pH Balanced, For It (your garden)



Does your garden have the right pH? How do can you test it? If it's not in balance, how do you restore it?

Most plants thrive in pH between 6.0 and 7.0. Your garden is probably happy at 6.5, essentially neutral or slightly acidic.

DIY: You can test your soil with a simple solution of Vinegar and Baking Soda. Collect a cup of soil from various parts of your garden and divide them into two parts. Then, add 1/2 cup vinegar to the soil. If it fizzes, you have alkaline soil of 7-8 pH. If it doesn't fizz, add enough water to the other container until it's muddy. Then add 1/2 cup baking soda to the second batch. If it fizzes, they you have acidic soil somewhere between 5-6 pH.

Gadget Test: You can buy a test probe from your favorite garden store (clean between tests to enhance accuracy). Dig a hole in your garden, fill it with water, insert the probe in the muddy mess, and wait 60 seconds. Take several measurements in different parts of the garden to get an average reading. They're inexpensive, costing between \$5 and \$13.



Breaking Bad: Another method of testing is the use of pH test strips (purchase at garden store or Amazon). You can mix soil in a glass of water then dip the pH strips into the mixture, sort of like a pregnancy test. After 20-30 seconds of eager anticipation, you can match your resulting color with the pH scale on the test kit key.

If your soil is too acidic, you can add components such as dolomite or quick lime (just ask the big box garden employee and they'll point you in the right direction).



If your soil is too alkaline (greater than 7 on the scale), you'll need to add peat moss or pine needles to raise the acid level.



If you haven't amended your soil in some time, a serving of gypsum will do it well. You can pick some up at OC Farm Supply. Gypsum is a calcium sulfate (a naturally occurring mineral). adding it to your soil will help break up compacted clay soil and restore overused soils. It will reduce excess sodium and add calcium. Furthermore, it will reduce crusting, improve erosion control, and assist with seed emergence. It will even do your laundry; just kidding on laundry.

A lot goes into keeping your garden well balanced and thriving, kind of like raising children (not that I know anything about that). Sometimes, they thrive despite our neglect, but we know for sure, they do better when we attend to them. Greatest gardening advice I ever received: The best thing for your garden is you in it. Thrive!



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