



MAY PUBLIC MEETING FOCUSES ON QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

Our next Public Meeting will begin at 6 p.m. on May 24, 2012 in the Community Room of the new **Broadway Bank**, located at 1100 McCullough (Lobby Level).

The major focus of this meeting will be to discuss police issues such as crime, prostitution, and noise, code compliance and animal control. We will be inviting representatives from City Offices to update us on their activities in our neighborhood and listen to our concerns. The THCA Board knows that these are important topics to each and every one of us and believe that an on-going dialogue between residents, businesses and our public officials will go a long way to keep Tobin Hill as safe and pleasant place to live, work and play. So please mark the date on your calendar.

We are excited that **Broadway Bank** is partnering with THCA by offering us this meeting space free and hope you will attend this important meeting.

PROPERTY TAX APPRAISALS PUBLIC MEETING

The goal of THCA is to provide service to the Tobin Hill neighborhood and one of our most important methods is to offer informative, time sensitive Public Meetings. This was certainly achieved on April 26th at the Metropolitan Methodist Hospital. The topic was "*Property Tax Appraisals - How they are established and what you can do about them.*" featured two experts who provided us with a wealth of information. The meeting started off with a presentation by State Representative Mike Villarreal, who discussed the property tax system in Texas and potential changes he hopes to see. He pointed out that we should look at our annual appraisal notice as an "invitation to have a conversation with a Tax Assessor to discuss the value of our homes". Our second speaker was Mr. Kevin Sullivan, an expert on arbitration and assisting individuals and business at Appraisal Review Board hearings. Mr. Sullivan works for the property tax firm of Popp, Gray & Hutcheson located in Austin. He provided detailed information on how to review a appraisal notice, how to file a protest and prepare for both an informal and formal protest hearing. His presentation was detailed, practical and allowed plenty of time to answer individual questions.

(Please turn to Page Three for pictures of our speakers)

NEWSLETTER TO BEGIN ACCEPTING ADVERTISING

A number of Tobin Hill (and other) businesses have asked if the THCA Newsletter accepted paid advertising. At its April Board meeting, the THCA Board voted to begin accepting a limited number of paid ads. While we want to be sure that the major focus of your Newsletter does not become one of collecting ad revenue, a limited number of ads will not detract from the look and feel of the publication. Importantly, it will bring THCA a needed source of revenue.

The size of our ads will be limited to 1/4 page or 1/8 page, at a monthly cost of \$25 for a 1/4 page and \$15 for an 1/8 page. There will be discounts for multiple month placements. Ads must be in PDF format and may be in color or grayscale.

If you are a potential advertiser, we would love to talk with you. For further information, please contact Martin Kushner at (210) 223-2814.

Tobin Hill Upcoming Events

MAY 17, 2012

THCA Monthly Board Meeting
Location D.R. Semmes Family
YMCA at TriPoint

Contact Braxton Clark for info
Time: 6 p.m.

MAY 20, 2012

Our Lady of Sorrows Church
Parish Festival

Location: Church Grounds
Contact: ourladyof sorrows-sa.org
Time: 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

MAY 24, 2012

THCA Public Meeting
Location Broadway Bank
1100 McCullough

Contact: Martin Kushner for info
Time: 6 p.m.

June 14, 2012

Tobin Hill Arts Alliance
Second Friday Art Walk
527 E.. Dewey and other sites in
Tobin Hill
Time: 6 to 10 p.m.

JUNE 21, 2012

THCA Monthly Board Meeting
Location D.R. Semmes Family
YMCA at TriPoint

Contact Martin Kushner for info
Time: 6 p.m.

**THE THCA
WEB SITE IS
NOW ALIVE and
up to date!**

**GO TO
TOBINHILL.ORG
and take a look.**

FROM THCA PRESIDENT MARTY KUSHNER



When a community is growing and prospering everyone jumps on the bandwagon and exclaims with pride “I’m from xxxxx. This is natural and reasonable. More people participate in events and volunteer to be part of the good news. That has certainly been the case for Tobin Hill recently. We have seen more people buy and take on the task of restoration of historic homes. Almost every week THCA receives information from the City about zoning requests from land owners that could have an impact on our quality of life (both good and no so....). Businesses are moving into Tobin Hill as well. While often a good thing, there are situations that can cause issues. One “issue” that has come up recently is noise and foot traffic coming from new bars that have located on commercial corridors.

Tobin Hill is unique in that we are a residential neighborhood, but there are also a significant number of entertainment establishments (bars and restaurants) here. Both are here to stay, so it is important that we have consideration for each other and find a way to coexist. That is where THCA can come in. While we are not a policing organization, we can, and should serve as a go between to open dialogues. Our next Public Meeting on May 24th will focus on noise, crime, code compliance, and animal control. Please come, participate, and share your thoughts and opinions.

One other thing. If you are reading this Newsletter and this article you have shown your interest in Tobin Hill. The question is, are you a MEMBER of THCA? Our organization is growing every month, but we are still only reaching a small percentage of our potential membership. We all know that there is strength and power in numbers, and the more members we have the louder we can speak. If you haven’t done so, please become a THCA member. It isn’t expensive (see membership form on PAGE EIGHT), and you will be making a major contribution to your community.

DATES OF FUTURE THCA PUBLIC MEETINGS

May 24, 2012

July 26, 2012

September 27, 2012

November 15, 2012

January 24, 2013

Each Public Meeting will include general THCA business, but there will also be one featured topic that we hope will be of interest to all of our members. All meetings and subject matter will be announced in the THCA newsletter well in advance of the meeting date.

TOBIN HILL HOUSE RESTORATION



Work continues on the beautiful home of Lori and Greg Yanez located in the Tobin Hill Historic District’s **300 block of Myrtle**. Thanks to the Yanezes for their hard work and commitment to Tobin Hill.

Are YOU working on the restoration of your Tobin Hill home?

We would love to feature it in a future issue of the Tobin Hill Newsletter. Just let us know.

OUR PUBLIC MEETING SPEAKERS



Rep. Mike Villarreal



**Kevin Sullivan
Popp, Gray & Hutcheson**

FROM THE OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

May is National Preservation Month

Join the City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation as we once again participate in National Preservation Month in May. Across the United States communities will celebrate historic preservation through outreach and educational programs. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has chosen the theme “Discover America’s Hidden Gems” for 2012. San Antonio’s hidden gems are more than historic properties. They are historic neighborhoods that create an inviting place to call home. They are downtown San Antonio’s historic Houston Street, Main and Military Plazas, and the scenic River Walk that are all part of our city’s charm. San Antonio is full of wonderful, unique places. National Preservation Month gives us the opportunity to celebrate San Antonio’s treasures and recognize the historic places that make our city special.

For a complete listing of activities go to the Office of Historic Preservation Web Site (www.sanantonio.gov/historic) and click on Events and Announcements then OHP Newsletter

Reporting Potential Violations to the Historic Building Enforcement Officer

To help protect the City’s historic resources, residents are encouraged to notify the Office of Historic Preservation of potential violations. To report a concern:

1. Gather information. Be prepared to provide the address of the property in question and a brief description of the potential violation or concern. Photographs are helpful but not necessary.
2. Call 210.219.2093 or email Ron Meyers, Historic Building Enforcement Officer, at ron.meyers@sanantonio.gov or OHP@sanantonio.gov during regular business hours (7:45am - 4:30pm) to report your concerns. After-hours complaints should be registered by phone through 311 or by email at OHP@sanantonio.gov.
3. You can report potential problems anonymously or provide contact information for follow-up.



THE GARDEN VIEW

by Melissa Miller, Garden Raconteur

Natural Selection

You are not going to believe this. This is a picture of my friend John's front yard this March. He has larkspur, bluebonnets, toad flax, black foot daisy and several other wildflowers blooming in profusion. But that's not what's unbelievable. He swears he did not plant most of them. I keep asking him in different ways the same question. But he insists he doesn't know where they came from. Several wonderful plants in his back yard have the same mysterious origins.

I told you that you wouldn't believe it. I hate it when something doesn't fit my reasonable expectations. It is reasonable to have flowers in your front yard when you plant them and nothing but weeds when you don't. Right? So I moved in for a closer look at the situation.

First, witnesses say that they see John out in his garden often. OK, so there is some selection going on here. But in order to select you have to know what you are seeing. So some knowledge is also called for. But the clincher was when John confessed that he had learned that the previous owner had had native plants in his yard. But when he was going to sell the house, the realtor said that the price on the house would be lower if he kept the natives. So he removed his natives and planted the standard fare of expected exotics.

Fast forward less than 10 years later and you have a "mystery" with at least a glimmer of an explanation. Native plants are made to endure, including their seed. If you take a damaged pasture with non-native grasses and over grazing and just burn it or treat it to get rid of the aliens and woody species, one strategy is to then just wait and see what comes up. Often enough, there will be live roots of native grasses just waiting for the chance to thrive. And seeds will be waiting in the ground for the right opportunity to sprout. John's garden appears to be an example of that. Go Natives Go!!!



Melissa Miller lives in her great-grandmother's home in Tobin Hill graced with heirloom irises, snowdrops, and fig tree and a huge, peculiar pecan tree. She has added about 100 species of native plants, vegetables, fruits, and heirlooms. A member of the Native Plant Society and co-founder of their Native Landscape Certification Program, she is also a nonprofit consultant, grant writer, and landscape designer.

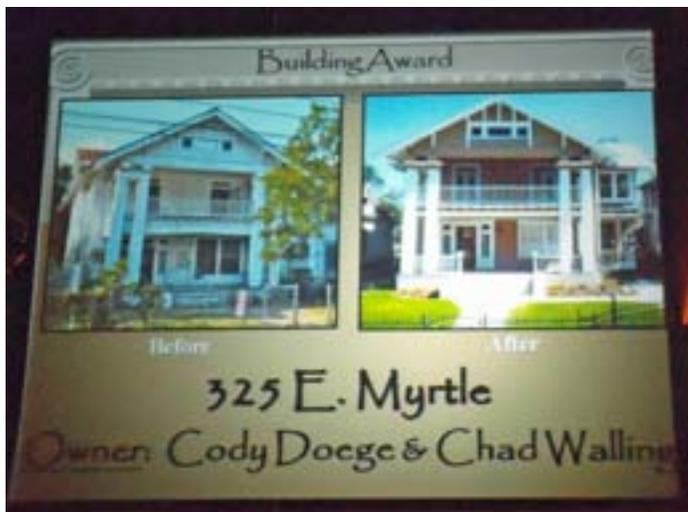
DOEGE AND WALLING WIN AWARD

The San Antonio Conservation Society Historic Preservation Awards Banquet was held at the Pearl Stable on March 28th. We are happy to announce that one of the Building Awards was presented to Mr. Cody Doege and Mr. Chad Walling for the beautiful restoration of their historic home located in the Tobin Hill Historic District at 325 Myrtle Street. The Conservation Society's Award is highly prestigious, and is only given after a vigorous process that includes a detailed nomination application that included a complete scope of work of the restoration project and supporting before and after pictures. Ricki Kushner, the Chair of the THCA Historic District Committee, worked with Cody and Chad on the application.



The many applications received were reduced to the most worthy, and an independent committee of preservation experts from out of town visited each site and selected the winning entries that would receive the 2012 Awards. Much to our joy, Cody and Chad's home was selected to receive an Award.

Several hundred people attended the Award Banquet and Ceremony. Joining Cody and Chad from Tobin Hill were Ricki and Marty Kushner. Among the attendees were a number of distinguished guests, including three past City of San Antonio Mayors (Peak, Cockrell, Hardberger) staff from the City's Office of Historic Preservation, and many members of the San Antonio Conservation Society.



ANOTHER STREET IMPROVEMENT

FROM



The 300 Block of East Myrtle Street receives new sidewalks and curbs

Slowly but surely, Tobin Hill's infrastructure is improving.

TO



A LITTLE BIT OF TOBIN HILL HISTORY VOL. 8

by Ricki Kushner

Historic Delgado-Harris House at 305 E. Euclid Avenue

(Excerpt from an article on the San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation website, titled Hidden history: searching for the structures of slavery in San Antonio / by Nicholas Fuqua and Edna Campos Gravenhorst)

The property on which the Delgado-Harris House is located was purchased by Nathaniel Lewis in 1852 from Ygnacio Perez. The property was part of the Manuel Delgado Spanish land grant from the 1700s and has been locally known as the Delgado House, believed to date to the late 18th century [i.e., late 1700s]. The suggestion that the Delgado-Harris House was constructed in the 18th century was investigated through an archival review and site visit by City Archeologist Kay Hindes in ca. 2004. Hindes found no definitive evidence at that time to support that the house dated to the Spanish Colonial period. Rather, preliminary archival review, architectural components, and some limited artifactual material uncovered by the owner during the course of stabilization lent support that the little house was built in the mid 19 century [i.e., mid-1800s]. It is then possible that the house was built after the property was purchased by Nathaniel Lewis. A more accurate date of construction would require an archaeological excavation. Regardless of the exact age of the house, the question that has surfaced recently is: Could the little house have been a slave dwelling?

It is difficult to discover the histories necessary to tell the stories of former slaves. Additional research needs to be done, but the following information suggests that this property may have been a slave dwelling associated with the Nathaniel Lewis family and a former slave, Lucinda Harris.

According to the 1850 and 1860 slave schedules for Bexar County, Nathaniel Lewis was a slave owner. [...] In 1860 he owned eight slaves including a 65-year-old black female, a 60-year-old black male, a 45-year-old mulatto female, a 45-year-old black female, a 12-year-old black male, an 11-year-old mulatto male, an eight-year-old mulatto male, and an eight-year-old mulatto female. Newspaper archives and photographs of Nathaniel Lewis' estate reveal that there were slave quarters in proximity to his mansion at the corner of Lexington and N. St. Mary's [demolished 50 years ago to build the El Tropicano Hotel]. The Delgado-Harris House at 305 E. Euclid is about a mile away from where the Lewis mansion once stood.

The earliest documented history connecting Lucinda Harris with the house dates to 1870, when she purchased the house from Nathaniel Lewis for \$860.00. Lucinda had a grown son in 1870, and the title from the purchase of her home mentions that the house would go to "Henry Selby" after her death. The history of Nathaniel Lewis and his family is well documented, but who was Lucinda Harris and where did she come from? Was Lucinda a former slave of Lewis's and was the house she bought from him her former slave dwelling?

What is known about Lucinda Harris in San Antonio has been identified in the 1870 census records by researcher Larry Kirkpatrick. Lucinda was part of the Nathaniel Lewis household. She was listed in the census as a 51 year old mulatto female cook born in Mississippi. Her son Henry, the next listed entry in the census record, was identified as an 18 year old mulatto male barber also born in Mississippi. The Nathaniel Lewis household included a total of 25 people. Only three of these, Nathaniel, wife Fannie, and son Daniel, were members of the Lewis family. All other members of the household were servants, laborers and their families, and the cook Lucinda and her son. Lucinda's son, William Henry Selby later married Maria Chavez and they raised a family in their own home. The little house at 305 E. Euclid was deeded to Henry Selby in 1896. Lucinda signed the transfer by marking with an X.

The connection is clearly established between Lucinda Harris and Nathaniel Lewis in San Antonio, but what about her earlier life? Had Lucinda been a former slave? A research tip came from Sylvia Reyna at the Central Library in the Texana Department. Sylvia discovered the book compiled by Ed Johnson, African Americans in the Bexar County Deed Records. The book identified a slave woman named Lucinda and child who had been part of the estate of Daniel W. Ragsdale from Goose Pond Plantation in Mississippi.

In 1850 Daniel W. Ragsdale owned 69 slaves. When he wrote his will in 1851, Ragsdale stated that each family member was to receive an allotment of slaves from his estate. Upon his death in 1856, slave lot 8 was allotted to his son, Daniel H. Ragsdale. The slaves included "[...] Lucinda and child, [...]." In the late 1850s, Daniel H. Ragsdale came to Texas and settled in Frio County, presumably bringing his slaves with him. Ragsdale later left to fight in the Civil War and was killed in 1863 in Louisiana. A missing piece of the puzzle is what happened to Ragsdale's slaves after his

Continued on PAGE SEVEN (TOBIN HILL HISTORY)

TOBIN HILL HISTORY (Continued from PAGE SIX)

death? Was the “Lucinda and child” mentioned in his father’s will the same Lucinda Harris who was later part of the Nathaniel Lewis household? Circumstantial evidence seems to lend some credence to this hypothesis.

Daniel H. Ragsdale and Nathaniel Lewis had business dealings together as determined through research done at the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library. However, since a probated will for Daniel H. Ragsdale has not been identified, it is not known what happened to his slaves. Documentation exists of Nathaniel Lewis buying and selling slaves, but a bill of sale for Lucinda and her child has not been discovered.

Until additional research is done to determine if Lucinda and her son came to the Lewis estate as slaves or laborers, the question of the house at 305 E. Euclid being a former slave dwelling remains unanswered. The house is, however, definitively associated with African American Lucinda Harris and is protected as a local historic landmark.

AN LETTER FROM VIRGINIA (THE STATE, THAT IS)

Coming to Texas and Tobin Hill



Some like it hot. Others like to ski, snowboard, and ice skate. Our personal experience is that all reported joys of shoveling winter from the driveway are vastly over-rated. It doesn’t snow all that often in Virginia, close to Washington, D.C., but the snow that does fall, along with some of the worst traffic in the nation, is enough to have us head to warmer climes, and we have some specific reasons for selecting Texas, San Antonio, and Tobin Hill in particular.

Texas has the best slow-smoked brisket in the world – it’s so good we can almost smell it from where we are in Virginia! We crave brisket, and want to do our small part in the search for the best –we know it will take years and hundreds of tastings but we’re ready to make the sacrifice!

With Texas as our possible home-to-be, both San Antonio and Austin were prime possibilities. Austin has the music scene, and some fantastic food trucks, but San Antonio is the home of some very close friends. Marty and Ricki Kushner have lived in San Antonio for 10 plus years, and have extolled the wonders of River City for all that time. And only San Antonio has the Riverwalk; one of the greatest municipal draws of all.

So we’re settled on Texas, and on San Antonio – but where? One of the things we do love about our area of Virginia is the incredible cultural diversity. We want some of that, and we really don’t want to spend a lot of time on the beltway: not in Virginia and not in San Antonio. Tobin Hill has the diversity, and it’s well inside the beltways, and it has some really interesting properties that are almost affordable.

We wanted to live in a house with a fenced in yard for our dogs. We wanted a garage for a workshop, a big kitchen (or one that could be made big) for entertaining, a front porch for morning coffee and afternoon libations, and proximity to the Riverwalk for both its nightlife and scenic beauty. We found all of that on Park Avenue.

Our American Foursquare home has great bones, some interesting architectural details, enough yard to construct a garage, and a perfectly lovely front porch. Our intent is to restore it with a traditional looking exterior but a more modern interior; we like air conditioning, new appliances, and bathrooms with showers. We’re working with a local architect and contractor. We hope to start the rehab this summer. Once the house is done we’ll settle things in Northern Virginian, pack up the wagons and follow the advice of Davy Crocket; “You may all go to hell; I shall go to Texas.”

We’re looking forward to moving and becoming active members of the robust community in Tobin Hill. We have our Tobin Hill T Shirts, and our Tobin Hill Street Signs, and are dues-paying members of the Tobin Hill Community Association. As you walk or drive by the house remember it will be fixed up soon. Once we’re living in Tobin Hill we hope you’ll stop by and say hello; have some morning coffee or an afternoon cocktail on the porch with us.

Elyse and Richard Galik

Future Residents of Park Avenue, Tobin Hill, San Antonio, Texas

NEW TO TOBIN HILL OR HAVEN'T RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP? COMPLETE THE APPLICATION AND MAIL IT IN. THANK YOU.



The Tobin Hill Community Association is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit association. Its mission is to facilitate implementation of the Tobin Hill Neighborhood Plan; protect the Tobin Hill Historic District and other Tobin Hill historic buildings; and improve quality of life through the collaboration of those who live, work, and contribute to the social fabric of Tobin Hill.

TOBIN HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP YEAR IS JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31

Please enroll me as a member of the Tobin Hill Community Association.

- \$15 Resident Household Member.** Limit 2 votes per Household. \$15 per voting member. (If there is one voting member in your household, your membership is \$15. If there are two, each pays \$15, for a total of \$30 per household. Must live in Tobin Hill.
- Business Memberships.** Limit - one vote, designated business representative, and alternate per business. Must have a business or nonresident property located in Tobin Hill.
 - \$29 Small business – income up to \$1 million**
 - \$99 Medium business – income from \$1 million + 1 dollar to \$5 million**
 - \$259 Large business – income more than \$5 million**
- \$25 Associate Membership.** For interested parties outside of Tobin Hill. Nonvoting.

Membership fees: \$_____. I wish to make a donation to THCA: \$_____. Total Check Amount: \$_____

Date: ____/____/____

(Please make your check payable to THCA and mail to: PO Box15946, San Antonio, TX 78212)

**THIS INFORMATION IS FOR THE SOLE CONFIDENTIAL USE OF THE
TOBIN HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION TO COMMUNICATE WITH ITS MEMBERS**

Name: _____

Address: _____ (ZIP): _____

Telephone: Day: (____) _____ Home: (____) _____

Mobile: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

If business or associate business member, please give designated representative's information above. Please also designate an alternative representative. Name: _____

Day Phone: (____) _____ Other Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

- I would like to receive updates and news through my e-mail address.
- I would like to be included in the THCA membership directory, for members only.
- I would like to volunteer. Please contact me using information above.
- Unique skill(s) I have to offer, if any: _____

Thank you for Joining the Tobin Hill Community Association!

Please go to tobinhill.org for pictures, events and important community information

WHAT IS THE TOBIN HILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION?

The Tobin Hill Community Association (THCA) began with seven neighbors around a dining room table. Each of them held the belief that something great would begin in Tobin Hill if they could create a non-profit community association that, for the first time, would be able to bring resources into our community, operate transparently and be inclusive of all Tobin Hill's stakeholders. THCA received its status as a Texas Corporation in September 2008, approved bylaws and elected its first Board of Directors in January 2009, and received its federal nonprofit status in May, 2009.

The mission of the THCA is to facilitate implementation of the Tobin Hill Neighborhood Plan; to protect the Tobin Hill Historic District and other Tobin Hill historic buildings; and to improve quality of life through the collaboration of those who live, work, and contribute to the social fabric of Tobin Hill.

Your THCA Board:

Martin Kushner, President	mfkushner@sbcglobal.net (210) 223-2814
Bo Brockman, Member	bbbrockman@yahoo.com
Braxton Clark, Vice –President	abrax10@sbcglobal.net
Kathy Cron, Secretary	klippcron@yahoo.com
Randy Cunnif, Member	randy@heatsa.com
Luis Elizondo, Member	lumax@grandecom.net
Eddie Garza, Member	garza.eddie@sbcglobal.net
Gabriel Sanchez, Member	gabesanchez81@hotmail.com
Lori Yanez, Treasurer	loriyanez@yahoo.com

Monthly THCA Board meetings are open to THCA members. They are scheduled for the third Thursday of each month at the D. R. Semmes Family YMCA at TriPoint. Of course times and dates are subject to change, so if you have something you would like to discuss with the Board, be sure to contact Marty Kushner to confirm the meeting and make your interest known in advance. Thank you.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

City of San Antonio - Office of District One Councilman Diego M. Bernal

City Hall Office: 100 Military Plaza, SATX 78283 - (210) 207-7279

Field Office: 1310 Vance Jackson Rd. SATX 78201 - (210) 207-0900

E-Mail: district1@sanantonio.gov

Code Enforcement Services: www.sanantonio.gov/ces - Call: 311

Police Department: www.sanantonio.gov/sapd/contact - Emergency: 911 - Non-emergency: 207-7273

Tobin Hill's SAFFE Officer: Robert Rodriguez - 260-7479

San Antonio Water System: www.saws.org/service- 704-7297

City Public Service: www.cpsenergy.com - 353-2222

This is YOUR newsletter and we would like to include articles and features of interest to you. So, if you have any suggestions for articles or an on-going column, please let me know. Are you aware of any upcoming event that has an impact Tobin Hill? We certainly would like to include it in our Calendar of Events. Also, where appropriate, we would consider publishing appropriate non-political thoughts from THCA members and friends. You can contact me at 223-2814 or at mfkushner@sbcglobal.net

Marty Kushner, Editor