



SPRING 2019

# GERSTLE PARK Neighborhood Association



## GPNA Calendar

- 4/6 READY Gerstle Park CPR Drill
- 4/13 Spring Fling Egg Hunt
- 4/27 Albert Park Re-opening for Neighbors
- 6/15 Garage Sale Day
- 7/20 Park-A-Month Gerstle Park Cleanup
- 8/6 National Night Out
- 8/8 Outdoor Movie Night in Gerstle Park
- 9/22 PorchFest

## Spring Fling

Saturday, April 13th at 10 am sharp  
Gerstle Park Playground

Be there by 9:30 AM with your baskets, cameras, parents, grandparents and extended family to join us in this Gerstle Park ritual. Our Bunny will visit and pose for photos with the children, and have already sprinkled the park with candy-filled eggs and special prize notes. This is a fun activity for children 9 and under. Younger children (up to 5 years old) will gently search the playground while older children carefully comb the upper level of Gerstle Park, including the Redwood Grove. This very special Gerstle Park tradition is not to be missed. It's a great time to see old friends, meet new families, and renew your membership. Join us for fruit, coffee and pastry! Donations gladly accepted. Volunteers for set-up, egg coloring, serving, and cleanup would be most appreciated! [Click here](#) for photos of last year's Spring Fling! Please contact: [info@gerstlepark.com](mailto:info@gerstlepark.com)

## Albert Park is Reopening!

Opening Celebration For Neighbors

Join the B Team, GPNA & City of San Rafael  
Saturday, April 27th from 10am-12noon

**SAN RAFAEL**  
THE CITY WITH A MISSION  
**ALBERT PARK**  
618 B STREET

**LET'S CELEBRATE OUR NEW PLAYGROUND!**

**ALBERT PARK PLAYGROUND RE-OPENING CEREMONY**  
MONDAY, APRIL 29  
3:30PM-5:00PM  
COME RECOGNIZE OUR COMMUNITY & CITY PARTNERS  
EVERYONE WELCOME!  
REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

**NEIGHBORHOOD OPENING CELEBRATION**  
SATURDAY, APRIL 27  
10:00AM-NOON  
BREAKFAST NIBBLES COFFEE  
HIGH FIVES LAUGHTER

YOUR MEASURE A FUNDS AT WORK

HOSTED BY CITY OF SAN RAFAEL

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:  
San Rafael Community Services Department  
(415) 485-3333



SAT 4/13

## egg hunt

For kids under 9  
10am sharp start!



- GERSTLE PARK PLAYGROUND
- ✦ Egg Dyeing
- ✦ Golden Egg Prizes
- ✦ Muffins + Coffee



A free community event hosted by your  
**NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**  
Powered by Volunteers



# President's Column

by Gina Silvestri



My lilacs are back! If you haven't taken a walk around the neighborhood lately, you absolutely need to. Everything is blooming and coming back to life after the very wet winter. I don't know about you, but I sure had a hard time focusing on anything I needed to do inside my house last weekend, that glorious first weekend of Spring.

Take a look at the calendar on page one. It is FILLED with great spring and summer activities here in Gerstle Park. We promise there will be a little something for everyone!

Do you know anyone in the market for the crown jewel our neighborhood? The Landecker home at 127 San Rafael Avenue is officially on the market. The blue Victorian home was lovingly and historically maintained by Hugo and Cynthia Landecker for 30+ years. We wish Cynthia well as she moves to her new home Santa Rosa, where she will be closer to family. Spring Fling will always remind me of my annual "date" with Hugo, blowing up balloons in their basement with his air compressor the night before the egg hunt! Cynthia – we love you, we will miss you, and we thank you for all you and Hugo did to make the neighborhood a better place for generations to come. Mille grazie!!

## READYgerstlepark

*Emergency Preparedness Drill*

*With the San Rafael Fire Dept.*

*Saturday, April 6th*

*9-10am Gerstle Park Playground*

SRFD will instruct CPR - hands only

Join your GPNA Radio Team and others to practice this life-saving skill!

Please email Amy Likover [alikover@aol.com](mailto:alikover@aol.com) for more information or to reserve your spot at this (free!) CPR drill with SRFD.



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# 2nd Annual PorchFest

*Sunday, Sept 22nd 12-5pm*



Due to the overwhelmingly positive feedback from the inaugural San Rafael PorchFest last fall, the GPNA is pleased to announce that PorchFest will be happening again in our neighborhood. Mark your calendar for Sunday, Sept 22nd, 12-5 PM. The GPNA will be the official organizers of this year's event. A committee has been formed and is already working hard to make sure that this year's event will be even better than last year. This is a free event featuring local musicians performing on your neighbor's porches and front yards throughout the Gerstle Park neighborhood on a Sunday afternoon. San Rafael PorchFest is looking for volunteers, musicians and porches for the event. GPNA is a sponsor and we're looking for additional businesses to participate. We're creating a family-friendly, neighborhood day of music and fun. Sign up now to volunteer ([sanrafaelporchfest@gmail.com](mailto:sanrafaelporchfest@gmail.com)) and be a part of the fun!

Visit [www.sanrafaelporchfest.com](http://www.sanrafaelporchfest.com) or like us on [Facebook here.](#)



Photos by Bruce Forrester

[www.gerstlepark.com](http://www.gerstlepark.com)





# Meet the Neighbors

Jane Middleton & Simon Tarlen

by Sandra Luna



Last week special people crossed my path, and I was excited to learn that they are longtime Gerstle residents. I met with them in their home and got an earful of history.

Jane came from Iowa, “in 1967, with the hippies, on a Greyhound bus.” They are the third owners of their home on D Street, having purchased it from the former Tax Collector of Marin County in 1975. At the time they met, Jane was the proud co-proprietor of the much loved toy store, Where The Wild Things Are, on Fourth Street near the Rafael theater. Simon came into the store one year to Christmas shop and soon Simon (Si) and Jane were married and combined families. Si had two daughters, Alicia, age eight and Leah, age five and Jane had one daughter, Della, age two. Together they had a son, Jonas, who was born in the home. Today, all three girls and three of the four grandchildren live in San Francisco. Jonas has a ski business in Bend, Oregon and they have a great-granddaughter in Los Angeles.

During those early years, Si and Jane were on the original committee that started the very first after school day care program in Marin County. As part of a group, they fought hard in 1978 to save Short School which was scheduled to close due to declining enrollment. Because of their work, a one year extension  
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and eventually Short School came to include one of the after school day care programs.

After the toy store, Jane re-invented herself by joining the nursing program at College of Marin and once employed at Marin General as a registered nurse, would walk over Wolfe Grade to get to work. At the same time, though meant to be a summer job, Si was a driver for AC Transit for 34 years. Later, after earning degrees from both UC Berkeley and San Francisco State University, he eventually taught for 13 years at the Orientation Center for the Blind in Albany, retiring in 2014.

Today, Simon volunteers with Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program, with its adaptive cycling program for persons not able to ride a regular bike, volunteers on kayak trips with Environmental Traveling Companions, and has been in a memoir writing class for several years. Jane does some private case management for Eldercare Specialists (helping seniors stay in their homes), belongs to a knitting group, and they both love to watch Warriors games.

Jane and Simon stay young and fit by riding their bikes. “We have a little problem with bicycles...between the two of us, we have nine bikes!” They belong to the Oakland Yellow Jackets Bicycle Club and ride quite often from Spring to Fall. They have road bikes, folding bikes, a purple tandem, and now electric bikes. In their front yard you’ll notice the “junk art” by Sebastopol artist Patrick Amiot, a custom art piece showcasing them riding their bicycle with their yellow jackets and a cat in tow.

While many folks have sold their homes and moved on, Si and Jane can’t think of anywhere else they’d like to be. One thing they miss most is their neighbor from across the street, Phil Soldavini. Phil came to the U.S. as an eighth grader with an Italian father and a German mother. Eventually he married a girl all the way from C Street. Phil was a gardening teacher, a “security system” watching from his front porch, a teller of their children’s misdeeds, and a good friend to them. Phil was charmingly referred to as the Mayor of D Street. They became great friends with Phil. Jane even cared for him when he became ill. This loss, and the loss of Hugo Landecker has left an impression on their hearts that won’t soon fade. Their faces become forlorn as they remember Hugo and Phil, and I can tell they feel that neither Phil, nor Hugo, can ever be replaced. And I intuitively know that my new, active and gutsy friends Jane and Simon are also simply irreplaceable.

# Sad News: Short School Set to Close in 2020



At their March 11th Board Meeting, the San Rafael School Board announced that due to declining enrollment, they plan to close Short School after the 2019-20 school year.

Incoming kindergarten registration has shown that the enrollment patterns have continued to level off for next year and are projected to remain flat or slightly decrease over the next several years.

Given that Short Elementary School is not a “neighborhood school”, they are the elementary school most impacted by a change in enrollment. Currently for the 2018-19 school year, Short has grades 1-5 and a transitional kindergarten (TK). (There were not enough students for a K this year; the TK class is not expected to become a K class next year, as students are expected to attend their residence area school.)

The District presented a recommendation that Short Elementary School remain open for the 2019-2020 school year with grades 2-5 and TK, which the Board accepted at its March 25 meeting. Additionally, it was discussed that a merge with Laurel Dell Elementary may be the best option for a future school year.

The Board announced that “A group of families, teachers, staff, neighbors, community members and others will convene early next school year to brainstorm, discuss and plan a recommendation to the Board about the transition as well as the potential future use of the Short School facility.”

The GPNA will follow this discussion closely and will report any and all updates.

## Treasurer's Corner

by Tom Heinz

- Beginning balance (1.1.2019) \$16,401.02
- Expenses \$800.10
- Income \$1,521.80
- Ending balance (3.31.2019) \$17,122.72
- Marin Link balance \$13,490.00  
(not included in Bank Balance)

# Sidewalk Update

Update from the City of San Rafael on 3/21/19



The City scheduled and notified three properties on the 600 block of E Street in Gerstle Park that work will commence week of 4/1. They will continue to ramp up work in the neighborhood as they wind down in Sun Valley. Work is dependent on weather, and right now it's unfortunately looking a little wet. The City is making every effort to catch up on work missed due to the recent storms and will continue to update locations on their website as they are scheduled. The city is excited to start work in Gerstle Park as well as announce that they are accepting applications online now through Friday, May 17th for the 2019 Sidewalk Repair Program. <https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/departments/sidewalk-repair-program/>

## Note from the GPNA:

The city's Sidewalk Repair Program is a voluntary program, offered by and organized 100% by the City of San Rafael. Unlike the 2015 program, this is not a partnership with the GPNA. To date, approximately 50 homeowners have signed up to repair the sidewalks adjacent to their properties, making for safer sidewalks in the neighborhood. In addition to the City sponsored program, there remains ongoing litigation challenging the City's position that sidewalk maintenance and liability should fall fully on the shoulders of the adjacent property owner. For more information on the litigation, email [GPSidewalks@comcast.net](mailto:GPSidewalks@comcast.net).



## How do you feel about short term rentals in San Rafael?

The City of San Rafael is looking for input from residents as they look at short term/vacation rentals in the City. The 25 question/10 minute survey will be on the city's website until April 21st. Go to <https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/short-term-rentals/>.

According to a recent article in the Marin IJ, in the last three years the number of online listings in the city has





increased from 150 to 286. “The survey is to collect info on the reason people do and do not support short-term rentals,” said Ethan Guy, the principal analyst for the San Rafael Community Development Department. “It’s mostly to figure out what people are experiencing: what are your concerns? If you’re a host, why are you hosting short-term rentals?”

In February, the council directed staff to study the impacts of short-term rentals on the city’s housing stock, determine the frequency that accessory and junior accessory dwelling units are being used as short-term rentals, and to get public feedback on regulations and options. The City currently has no short-term rental regulations.

## \$\$\$ Rebates - Convert Your Fireplace to Gas Available to Gerstle Park Residents by Alicia diVittorio



Removing your old wood stove and making your house more energy efficient might save you some cash. The Marin County Sustainability Team works in tandem with city and state agencies to find ways to help Marin County residents save money while making our air cleaner and our homes more energy efficient. Currently, Gerstle Park residents are eligible for several rebate programs.

### Spare our Air, and Remove Your Wood Stove.

In Marin, communities that reside in valleys tend to collect more particulate matter (PM) pollution from residential wood smoke burning during the winter than hillside and coastal communities. The San Geronimo Valley is a famous case where the geographical characteristics lend to higher concentrations of PM pollution than San Jose, West Oakland, and Livermore, despite having a small population. High concentrations of PM can trigger asthma attacks and aggravate other lung diseases, and negatively impact heart healthy, ultimately leading to increased risk of heart attack, heart failure, and stroke.

The County of Marin provides a rebate of \$250 for removing a wood stove or decommissioning (rendering inoperable) a fireplace, and a \$325 rebate for replacing a wood stove or fireplace with a gas or electric-powered option. Interested?

Learn more at [www.marinegreenbuilding.org](http://www.marinegreenbuilding.org)

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The Bay Area Air Quality Management District still has funding for homeowners in Gerstle Park to remove their wood-burning stoves and fireplaces or replace them with gas-burning stoves or inserts or electric heat pumps. The rebate starts at \$1,000 for a removal and replacement project. If you have been thinking about a project like this, sign up with the Air District ASAP at <https://grantapps.baaqmd.gov> (funds may run out soon). You must sign up with the Air District before starting any work.

Make your Home More Energy Efficient, and Save \$\$\$ If your home is too cold in the winter, look into improving the insulation and air sealing first and foremost. An insulation and air sealing project is the most cost-effective project you can do to improve your home’s comfort. The Bay Area Regional Energy Network provides rebates for insulation, air sealing, furnace upgrades, hot water heating upgrades, and other energy efficiency improvements for single family homes. Learn more at [www.bayrenresidential.org](http://www.bayrenresidential.org) or call a Home Energy Advisor at (866) 878-6008.

A quick summary:

- Wood smoke is bad for air quality and public health.
- If you must burn wood, use best practices like burning only dry, seasoned wood (more at [www.epa.gov/burnwise](http://www.epa.gov/burnwise)).
- Rebates are available for decommissioning or replacing wood burning stoves and fireplaces through Marin County and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.
- Residents in parts of San Rafael, Sausalito/Marin City, and most of West Marin are eligible for larger rebates starting at \$2,500; apply ASAP at <https://grantapps.baaqmd.gov>.
- Additional rebates for home energy efficiency project are available. More info at [www.bayrenresidential.org](http://www.bayrenresidential.org) and [www.marinsustainability.org](http://www.marinsustainability.org).

## Board Members

Gina Silvestri, *President*

Alicia diVittorio, *Vice President*

Tom Heinz, *Treasurer*

Denise Van Horn, *Recording Secretary*

Sandra Luna, *Corresponding Secretary*

Josselyn Robertson, *Member*

Jennifer Horta, *Member*

Odessa Shekar, *Member*



[www.gerstlepark.com](http://www.gerstlepark.com)





NEIGHBORHOOD  
ASSOCIATION

Annual Neighborhood

**G A R A G E**

**S A L E**



**SATURDAY**  
**June 15th**  
**9-2**

Register your sale at

**gerstlepark.com**

Registration:  
At your home (\$20)  
In Gerstle Park (\$30)

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE FOR MAP**  
**TUESDAY 6/11**



# Gerstle Park

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### Annual Membership Form

Membership year runs from January 1st - December 31st

One vote per individual - \$20/year (\$10 seniors age 65+)

**Renew your membership online at [www.gerstlepark.com](http://www.gerstlepark.com)!**

**NEW MEMBER**

**RENEWAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*all GPNA correspondence is via email*

Payment Type:  CHECK  CASH

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### The GPNA is powered by volunteers!

### Interested in Volunteering for the following events or committees?

If so, please indicate with one or more checks.

Descriptions can be found at [www.gerstlepark.com](http://www.gerstlepark.com)

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

**GRAPHIC DESIGN**

**EVENTS**

- Spring Fling Egg Hunt (weekend before Easter)
- Neighborhood Garage Sale (June)
- National Night Out - yearly neighborhood potluck in the park (2nd Tuesday of August)
- PorchFest - 50+ bands play on porches throughout the neighborhood (September)
- Halloween Decorating Contest (Judging)
- French Broom Pull in the Open Space (December)
- Christmas Caroling

**NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCACY IN SAN RAFAEL**

- City Planning
- Park Beautification
  - Gerstle Park
  - Albert Park
- Planning & Development

**NEWSLETTER (QUARTERLY)**

- Writing
- Distribute newsletters to neighbors

**COMMITTEES**

- Ready Gerstle Park, Emergency Preparedness
- Community Tree Committee
- Food Committee - help with planning, preparation & service for GPNA events

### Welcome to the GPNA!