

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 150644 • San Rafael • California • 94915-0644 • <http://www.gerstlepark.com>

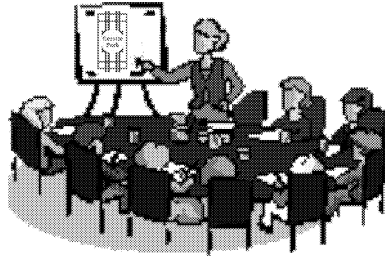


Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2007

ANNUAL MEETING RECAP AND NEW NEWS

It is the beginning of a new era and things are going swimmingly well for the Gerstle Park Neighborhood



Association! Our membership numbers have never been higher; we have money in the bank and great new and seasoned talent on the board. There are exciting ideas on how to improve the community and interesting plans on how to execute them. Now is an excellent time to get more involved in our community, should you choose to do so.

This year's Annual Meeting reflected change as we kicked off with pizza, cold drinks and yummy goodies. Attendance was so good that we had to add extra rows of chairs. Guest speaker, Duane Elgin, stimulated our minds on ways to utilize the GPNA and our tools, such as the web, to develop a more cohesive and creative community. Each of our committees gave reports, amazing all of us at how lucky we are to have such knowledgeable and devoted volunteers looking after our neighborhood. Topics like disaster preparedness, traffic flow and making sure an Easter Bunny shows up for the Spring Fling represents countless volunteer hours spent nurturing and attending to this unique part of San Rafael that we call home. An exciting part of the evening was the election of four new board members—each one with talent and competencies that will allow us to do some excellent work together.

In an effort to inspire even greater community participation, we have been circulating a priority survey at events to get an idea of what YOU think is important. Here are your top four priorities for the Board (so far!):

1. To represent GPNA interests to the City of San Rafael City Council, City Staff and Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods.
2. To encourage the protection of existing open space near Gerstle Park
3. Encourage safe and calm traffic for automobiles and pedestrians
4. Clean-up and beautification efforts along neighborhood streets (including planting trees.)

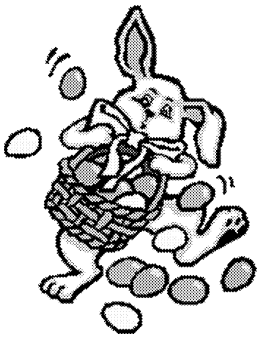
Excellent choices and we will focus on these items accordingly!

"As the new board President, my primary objective is to organize and solidify our volunteer base and develop the new Ambassador program. Having witnessed first hand how few are carrying the load for so many, I believe we can do better. 'Many hands make light work,' my grandmother always said. To this end we are offering clearly defined volunteer opportunities that can be as simple as one job at one event annually, if that is all the volunteer cares to do. Once we have 'rallied the troops' and hooked volunteers up with ways they can most happily contribute we will focus on effective strategies to address the many items on our to-do list. If you feel inspired, please send a simple email to me at: Muriel@gerstlepark.com with 'GPNA Volunteer' in the subject line. Someone will then call you to discuss how you can get involved. So, look forward to some exciting changes as the year progresses. And, please, jump in and lend us a hand. We have a great neighborhood and together we make it even better! Thank you in advance!"

-Muriel Ballard, GPNA Board President

SPRING FLING: APRIL 14

GPNA is proud to once again host its Annual Spring Fling Event! Hop on over Saturday, April 14, for egg hunting, treats, and a chance to meet the Easter Bunny. The Egg Hunt will begin at 10:00 a.m. sharp! If you would like to volunteer or donate plastic candy-filled



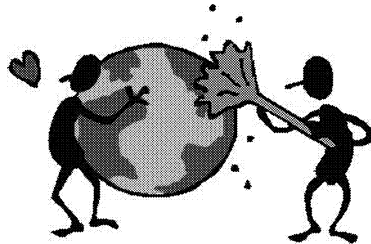
eggs, please contact Jordis Weaver at jordis.weaver@gerstlepark.com or 415.497.7450.

Important Note: The Easter Egg Hunt is geared toward young children, up to eight years old. Older children are too much competition for the younger kids. Please help us

keep the spirit of this event by respecting the age limit. We can all look forward to watching the tots have a good time. Thanks!

EARTH DAY: APRIL 22

Join your neighbors on April 22 for the Stick Your BUTTs out Earth Day event. The emphasis this year is on getting the message out that (cigarette) butts are bad for the environ-



ment. Your GPNA will be organizing beautification activities such as this in conjunction with city-wide clean-up efforts and activities. The details are still percolating but the date is set. If you have ideas or can volunteer with planning or on the day of the event, contact GPNA's Event Coordinator, Jordis Weaver at: jordis.weaver@gerstlepark.com or (415) 497-7450. You'll get a reminder email about this event in April.

KIDS AND PARENTS CONNECT

Thanks to volunteers, a great idea that circulated last year has resulted in a new group in Gerstle Park: Kids Connect. They are online for easy communication and to share information and resources. The response has been great and we have ten members already!

The group is as strong and productive as its members. If you'd like to connect with neighbor families and benefit from shared knowledge, resources and friendship, please consider joining the group. Feel free to be creative and don't be afraid to post what

might seem to be a silly question or a funny story! You never know when a resource, a local tip or even a silly story might come in handy or help a neighbor!

We look forward to more families joining. To join or to share this group's info with a neighbor, the Yahoo Group information is below. Simply click a button on the home page that says "join this group":

Group home page: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gerstleparkkidsconnect>

Group email address: gerstleparkkidsconnect@yahoogroups.com

to be invited, send an email to: KidsConnect@GerstlePark.com

We hope that soon, we'll have a fun family event for all of us to take part in!

HOLIDAY DECORATION WINNERS

Gerstle Park neighborhood was brightly lit this Holiday season which made for a festive atmosphere. It was difficult to choose the best, but the board has decided on three winners for the house decorating contest:



127 San Rafael * 508 D St. * 337 C St.

Congratulations and thank you to the winners for contributing so much towards our festive neighborhood. A \$25.00 gift certificate donated by the Panama Hotel will be given to each of the winners. A special note that Greenwood and Antonette Street were noticed as many home were decorated there. A big thanks to all that participated.

THE GPNA BOARD

We thought you'd like to know a little about the GPNA board. These are the people who keep our Association and the many activities going all year long:

The GPNA Board (continued)

Muriel Ballard, President

Muriel Ballard first moved to Marin in 1995 and lived in the Oakhill Apartments on Marin Street. She now owns a home with her husband Timothy and daughter Eden on Reservoir Road. Muriel is a Realtor with Frank Howard Allen and is also a Professional Life Coach, having worked for six years with clients from around the world and in a broad spectrum of industries. Muriel's hobbies include writing, public speaking, entertaining and self improvement. Muriel's goal with GPNA is to inspire greater interest in membership for the sake of community relations, civic empowerment and social enjoyment

Nancy Otto, Vice President

Nancy has lived in Gerstle Park since 1986, and loves the neighborhood. She was the newcomer on the block; now all the homes around her have changed hands, and she is one long-timer. Nancy is a retired nurse who loves to travel, read, garden, and hike. She is interested in retaining Gerstle Park's character and in fostering a sense of community for the neighborhood.

Lori Schifrin, Treasurer

A longtime (over 20 years) Gerstle Park resident, Lori has been a Citizens' Advisor to San Rafael's Police Chief, and has completed the Citizens' Police Academy and DART (Disaster Area Response Training). She is also part of the Neighborhood Emergency Service Team (NEST). Lori is very interested in neighborhood traffic and parking problems, which includes the comfortable flow of cars through our neighborhood and surrounding areas as well as doing what she can to alleviate bottlenecks. This year Lori will be in charge of Crime, Disaster and Emergency Awareness. She also wants to get as many Gerstle Park Neighbors to attend the DART training class which teaches us about Emergency preparedness and how to help ourselves and others in cases of emergency.

Mary Ann Stich, Corresponding Secretary

Mary Ann Stich has lived in Gerstle park with her husband, Jon Haveman, since April of 2002. She works as a Vice President of Business Develop-

ment for M Squared, a consulting company headquartered in San Francisco. Prior to her career in Sales, Mary Ann practiced law in Minnesota and worked in sales in the legal profession in California, Virginia, and Washington, DC. She likes to garden, run, bike and swim and takes advantage of the masters swim work outs at Marin Academy and the beautiful running trails on Mount Tam. Mary Ann and Jon appreciate being able to walk to downtown San Rafael to enjoy a movie or visit one of the many restaurants as well as the easy access that living in Gerstle Park provides to 101 and the ferry. That Gerstle Park provides a traditional neighborhood environment is very important to Mary Ann.

Brigitte Waterbury, Recording Secretary

Brigitte Waterbury is a longtime resident of San Rafael since 1970 and a graduate of both Davidson Jr. High and San Rafael High School. She and her husband Brian bought their home in Gerstle Park in 1994 and enjoy the close knit feeling they share with their immediate neighbors and the overall sense of community within the Gerstle Park area. She volunteers her time at Sun Valley School, through her Rotary club and also her Brownie troop that meets at Trinity Lutheran Church.

Bob Beyea

Bob has lived in Gerstle Park since 2000. His wife Amy Monteleone has lived here much longer. Bob is a Realtor with Avalar Real Estate right here in San Rafael. Bob has always felt strongly about living and working in the same town. With regard to real estate, Bob always puts Gerstle Park homeowners on the top of his priority list. Bob has been involved with the Marin County Breast Cancer Council, Rebuilding Together, San Rafael Little League, CYO Basketball, San Rafael High School Sports Boosters and the Chamber of Commerce. It's not uncommon to see Bob walking his Basset Hound, "Gracie" around our fine streets.

Samantha Cichon

A native of the Bay Area, Samantha Cichon is new to Gerstle Park but knows the neighborhood well and loves it. Samantha lived in San Rafael while

The GPNA Board (continued)

attending college and is glad to call Marin County home. Her passion is home renovation and landscaping, and she is taking on the project of restoring the Victorian that she, her fiancée, and her mother live in, and giving it the love it needs. Samantha is very hands-on and likes to do as much of the work as she can herself. She would like to see Gerstle Park retain its character while promoting ongoing beautification. She is interested in participating in the community activities, supporting the feeling of community, and helping represent the voice of the neighborhood.

Tiffani Lenschmidt

Tiffani was raised in Marin County, and is a stay-at-home mom for her 4 children. She is a runner, and loves to run on local trails and through the neighborhood. She is interested in using her position on the Board to reach out to more families, the elderly and folks who are new to the neighborhood.

Dan Miller

Dan is the owner and proprietor of the Panama Hotel and Restaurant. He is a longtime Gerstle Park resident, and loves to garden and collect antiques. He has a special interest in retaining character of old places, and this is evident everywhere in his lovely B&B hotel. He lives in a cozy vintage home close to the Panama, and can frequently be seen walking his little white dog, Monica in the neighborhood.

David Simonini

A native of San Rafael and a Gerstle park resident since 1982, David is an attorney in Sausalito specializing in plaintiff civil litigation. He is interested in neighborhood preservation and improvement, and in working with the community. His hobbies are travel, motorcycles, and water sports such as boating and scuba diving. He recently married Carol Tulipani who has been a Gerstle Park resident for eight years and is a native of Marin County.

Jordis Witter Weaver

Jordis and her family have lived here for 6 years.

She started involving herself with neighborhood issues when she joined the GPNA Traffic Committee in the summer of 2005. Jordis has served as the GPNA board's recording secretary for the last year and hopes to focus her energies and time toward coordinating new and exciting events for the neighborhood this year. In addition to bringing more events to the neighborhood, she will still be actively involved with solving pressing traffic, congestion, and development issues. She is interested in preserving and improving the quality-of-life of the people living in our neighborhood.

GPNA WEBSITE

ENHANCEMENTS ON THE WAY

The GPNA is growing and members are talking so we're going to enhance the website to make it even easier to connect. Years ago, we had a "bulletin board" component but at the time it wasn't used enough to offset the effort to keep it going. A suggestion from the 2007 Annual Meeting caused us to revisit the idea and it appears the timing is perfect to launch the GPNA online bulletin board! One of our new Board members, Samantha Cichon, has volunteered her technical skills to help grow our online presence. Currently we receive great ideas, feedback, and reports about our neighborhood via email. But sharing the info while it's current is challenging with just our email bulletins and quarterly newsletters. The website should bridge that gap. Along with broadening the site's content and relevancy, we hope the interactive addition will be useful and effective in linking our neighborhood together. More on this soon; meanwhile, take a look at the website at www.gerstlepark.com and please keep your emails coming to info@gerstlepark.com

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The San Rafael Fire Department offers a course called Disaster Area Response Teams (DART) to city residents. Participants learn what to do for themselves, family, friends, and pets in preparation for a disaster or when one should occur. For more information, see the city website here: http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/Government/Fire/Emergency_Preparedness.htm

The GPNA recognizes the value of having as many of our residents DART trained as possible.

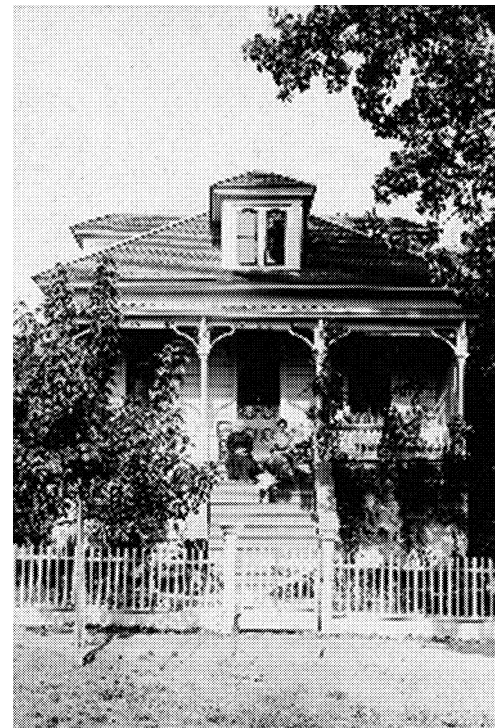
Therefore, we have agreed to put GPNA funds to work towards this important cause and will reimburse members for 50% of the course fee. The next available class is expected to be in June 2007 and the fee is \$60. This class is starting to fill up so please call Anna at the SR Fire Department 485-3488 to reserve your place. Please mention you are from Gerstle Park at the time of enrollment. Reimbursement is contingent upon completion of all eight sessions. If you are not currently a member of the GPNA, here's yet another reason to join now!

NEW NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL NEWS: INTRODUCING LAURA DELL

Laura Dell Elementary school is now one of our "neighborhood schools" following a recent San Rafael district boundary change. Essentially, the east side of D Street and areas eastward are affected by the attendance area change. Laura Dell's principal, Bob Marcucci provides the following introduction to Laura Dell, and encourages our residents to come and see him and the school!

Laurel Dell Elementary School, the San Rafael City School District's smallest school, with an enrollment of 170 students, is now enrolling Kindergarten students for the 2007/08 school year. Laurel Dell serves students in the Bret Harte, Picnic Hill, and East Gerstle Park neighborhoods, and throughout the district. The school has eight classrooms, a library and computer lab, an outdoor amphitheater, and a beautiful school garden. Laurel Dell Elementary provides its students with many opportunities to grow academically, artistically, and socially. Laurel Dell offers students a challenging classroom experience and an extended-day kindergarten program. The curriculum is delivered through developmentally appropriate practices that meet the needs of the school's diverse population.

All classroom teachers provide quality, standards-based programs in literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies. Through partnerships with Youth In Arts, YMCA, and Heads Up, students experience vocal and instrumental music, movement and dance, visual arts, and sports. Laurel Dell enjoys and celebrates a diversity of cultures among the student body. The PTA/SELAC is very active and supports the school community, sponsoring special events and coordinating parent efforts such as creating a school garden, the Harvest Festival, The Human Race, Dollar Days, and Fiesta Del Sol. Laurel Dell is truly a small, community-centered school. For information or tours please contact Principal Bob Marcucci at 485-2317 or email rmarcucci@srcs.org



THE STORY OF AN OLD HOUSE CONTINUED

In a previous issue of our newsletter, we featured the lovely Victorian house at 255 D Street, where Miss Evelyn Fletcher was born in the late 1800's, and where she lived almost until her death in 1991. Thanks to many artifacts (photos, documents, etc.) we were able to tell a story of her life in that house. The house itself, however, and its rich architectural detail, were not prominently featured. However, Kathleen LaRusso, the present owner, was kind enough to open the main part of the house and share all the restoration work she's done. To read about this work, go online to www.gerstlepark.com and find the full article there.

GPNA 2007 CALENDAR

April 5	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
April 14	Saturday	Spring Fling
May 3	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
June 7	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
June 16	Saturday	Annual Garage Sale
July 5	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
August 2	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
September 6	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
September 13	Thursday	Annual Picnic
October 4	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
October 27	Saturday	Make A Difference Cleanup Day
October 31	Wednesday	Halloween Decorating Contest
November 1	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
December 6	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
December 13-18 (tbd)		Holiday Caroling
December 18-25		Christmas Decorating Contest

* Guests are welcome! If you desire to address the GPNA Board of Directors, wish to attend a meeting or need more information on Gerstle Park Events or Community Meetings, above, please contact Muriel@gerstlepark.com