



Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael, Ca 94915

<http://www.gerstlepark.com>

Summer, 2000

News

*The 6th Annual Neighborhood
Garage Sale is just 3 weeks away!*
- see the center page for more information -

The Latest on 523 D Street (The house that is a wreck!)

Back in December 1999, the Planning Commission decided to require an Environmental Review Report (EIR) - a process that was expected to take 6 to 12 months. It is now 5 months later and the 6 to 12 month process hasn't started yet. In the meantime the property looks worse and worse. Here is what is happening:

The GPNA formed a committee to specifically look into this issue and get a clearer understanding of what is holding up the process and what the GPNA can do to get the city to proceed more quickly. After three meetings with the city and numerous phone calls and emails we are clearer on the issue, but no less frustrated.

Along with keeping pressure on the city to get the EIR started and moving along, we are also working to persuade the city to take some actions that would improve the look of the site in the interim:

- 1) Get a demolition permit issued to the owner.
- 2) Clean up the site regularly and possibly replace the screen on the fence, and
- 3) Take quick action to begin the EIR process and remove delays.

We are having some success in getting the city to pay attention to this problem - they clearly understand that we are upset about this blight to our neighborhood and that we are demanding some action. We will continue to have meetings with the city and we hope to have something to show for our efforts soon.

Clean Yards, Clean Streets

The annual GPNA Clean-Up Day was a smashing success. This year we had two dumpsters at Short School and one on "B" Street near the bocce ball courts. All three boxes were full by Saturday afternoon and we experienced none of the unwanted trash of previous years.

Thanks to the volunteers who assisted at the two locations. A special thanks to Supervisor Hal Brown for sponsoring the event for the 11th year. Yo, Hal! Patty Garbarino and Joe Garbarino, Jr. of Marin Resource Recovery worked with Hal to provide freshly painted dumpsters for GPNA. Joe is committed to recycling and is using recycled paint on the dumpsters to keep them looking great. Keep up the great work, Patty and Joe.

Thanks again to everyone involved for the wonderful effort to help GPNA keep ours the best-looking neighborhood in San Rafael.

Spring Fling Wrap-Up

Gerstle Park families were out in full force to enjoy what has become a neighborhood tradition each Spring. Over 1,000 multi-colored eggs were tucked away in all the great hiding places our beautiful park provides. Thank you so much to all who brought dozens of colored eggs.

Special thanks to Melissa Daly for baking the beautiful cupcakes, to Carol Hughes and the 4H for once again providing the children with an opportunity to look at and hold those sweet bunnies, to Jan Bishop for donating her face painting skills, and to her beautiful daughter Caitlyn for wearing the bunny suit and thrilling the little ones.

Thanks to all of you who made this such a great event once again.

Open Space Update

This winter, the main fire road in the open space above Gerstle Park from D St to Makin Grade and to Grove St has been cleared of French broom. Well, at least we managed to remove the plants with the bright yellow flowers that would have gone to seed this year. Next winter's goal is to remove the younger plants that didn't bloom this year. If left unchecked, the French broom would quickly make the road impassable, choke out native grasses, and create a serious fire hazard.

Have any of you noticed the fallen trees in the open space? We have lost many mature oaks due to "sudden oak death." This disease has become common in Marin. Unfortunately, the cause is not known and trees are dying as horticulturalists race to solve the riddle. See below for more information on saving the oaks.

With fire season upon us, all those using the open space need to keep an eye out for any unsafe or illegal activities. If you observe any potentially risky situations, such as signs of illegal camping or careless smokers, please call the open space ranger, Mark Hedeem (485-3000) and leave a message with a description of what you saw. Officer Hedeem works nights, so don't expect a call back during the day. If it is a matter that needs immediate attention, then call the same number and leave a message with the dispatcher.

Save the Oaks

In an effort to protect the beautiful oak trees in our neighborhood, the GPNA is working with County Supervisor Hal Brown's office to sponsor an evening presentation regarding Sudden Oak Death. An oak tree expert from the University of California Extension will present the most current information available on prevention and treatment and will be available to answer your questions. This event is tentatively scheduled for this summer. The exact date and time will be posted on our website, or you may call Rhonda Kutter at 457-5528.

Short School Controversy

Attention, all neighbors concerned about child care issues or about the fate of the Short School facility. As many of you know, the school district has given the preschool and daycare programs currently housed at Short School notice to vacate by the fall of 2001 so the district can reclaim the building for its own use. The city of San Rafael has drafted plans and committed funds to build a new 2.3-million-dollar facility, to be called the Parkside Children's Center, within the confines of Albert Park. Unfortunately, controversy has arisen because the proposed facility is considerably smaller than the current space available at Short School. Concerned parents and others have formed an activist group, Big People for Short School (BPSS), which is trying to get the city to either expand the proposed facility or to make changes within the footprint to make the existing space more usable.

So far, however, despite several meetings with the city's community services and park and recreation departments, BPSS has had only limited success in influencing the interior design of the new facility and no success in persuading the city to expand its overall size. Gerstle Park neighbors should be concerned about this situation for two reasons: 1) the Short School preschool and afterschool programs are top quality programs and are one of the reasons Gerstle Park has become such an in-demand neighborhood for young families. The new facility as currently planned will be rather cramped, which could compromise the quality of these fabulous programs. 2) The fate of the Short School building is now in question; while the school district originally said they were evicting the child care center in order to reopen Short School as an elementary school, they have since changed their minds and now say they will probably use it for district offices, at least for a few years.

The obvious question is, if the district does not urgently need Short School to accommodate enrollment, then why the rush to evict the preschool and childcare programs? Why not give the city adequate time to design and raise funds for a facility big enough to preserve the high quality of these programs? The city council is scheduled to vote on the Parkside Children's Center plans at their second June meeting. Members of BPSS and other concerned folks plan to attend and try to influence the city's decision. Anyone who wants more information about this issue or who'd like to get involved is invited to contact BPSS spokesperson Paula Kutansky by email at: kutansky@marin.cc.ca.us or call Melanie Haiken and Eric Schurig at 454-5848.

Save the Date: Saturday June 24th For the 6th Annual Gerstle Park Neighborhood Garage Sale

Done your spring cleaning, have you? But I'll bet you haven't found a new place to stash all that stuff you haven't used, much less seen, for the past couple of years.

Well, we've got the place! Saturday, June 24th GPNA once again presents the annual neighborhood-wide garage sale at Short School. Of course, if you just have too much great stuff to truck it all down to Short School, you can sell it right out of your own garage or front yard and still participate in this highly publicized and always anxiously awaited community event. Not only that, it's a great deal!

For your \$20 contribution, you get:

- your address and location printed on the official GPNA Garage Sale Map
- a brief description of your key items offered for sale
- a GIANT ad placed in the IJ, & Chronicle/Examiner
- a BIG bright sign for your house or apartment building

And, for an additional \$5 you can have a spot for your sale at Short School, the designated starting point and hub of the entire event.

Take this opportunity to participate in what has become a Marin County tradition. Just fill out the registration form below and send it in along with your check.

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

Garage Sale Registration Form

Please complete the information below and return with your check (payable to GPNA) to:
GPNA, Attn: Tina Yesson, P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael, CA 94915

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____ Date: _____

I plan to hold my garage sale:

- At my home or apartment building (\$20)
- At Short School (\$25)
- I cannot participate, but would like to make a food/drink/baked goods contribution.
- I cannot do any of the above, but would like to make a donation to GPNA! My check for _____ is enclosed.

List of items you want to include on the map (4-5 items maximum please!)

If you're not already a current member of the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association, you may want to take this opportunity to become a member (or renew you expired membership) — Thanks!

New Member Renewal

Annual donation: **\$10.00** per household (**\$5.00** seniors) - 1 voting member
Term of membership is from November 1st to November 1st

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: FOR GARAGE SALE _____
FOR MEMBERSHIP _____
TOTAL \$ _____

Remember your garage sale registration fee is per family not per household and should be returned no later than June 16th to be included on the official map. Hope to see you there!

All proceeds go directly toward funding more neighborhood events courtesy of GPNA

Volunteers and donations needed for Garage Sale

As in past years, we will be manning tables at Short School to distribute the official maps, which show the locations of all participants in the sale. We will also be selling snacks with all proceeds going to the GPNA. This is an important fundraiser for us and we can use all the help we can get. So if you can volunteer your time or make a contribution of food, we'd very much appreciate the help. Items needed include home-baked or store-bought cookies, cupcakes, chips, pretzels, fruit, hot dogs, buns, condiments for the hot dogs, and soft drinks. Please call Tina Yesson at 455-8671 (between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. only please!) if you can contribute food or volunteer your time to help out.

2000 Calendar of Events

June 24	Garage Sale
September 9	Annual Picnic
October 25	Annual Meeting
October 31	Haloween Decorating Contest
December 14	Christmas Caroling
December 25	Christmas Decorating Contest

Landscaping Committee Seeks Members

The Landscaping Committee will hold its first meeting on Monday, June 19th at 10:00 AM. This meeting will be held to discuss and prioritize goals for the committee (Tree planting, oak tree protection, specific site improvements, etc.). Please join us! If you are interested, call Rhonda Kutter at 457-5528. Location to be announced.

Membership Update

While there are a reported 1200 residences in the Gerstle Park neighborhood, our current roster shows a paid membership of only 124 households. We know there are more of you out there who meant to send in membership checks — please don't forget!! Don't be shy, we have many fun events coming up and want your participation. Our activities and projects are for the benefit of all neighborhood households. Take a moment to fill in the application (on the garage sale application on the other side of this page or the membership application below) and send in your check today. Annual dues are \$10 per household, \$5 for seniors. The annual membership period runs from November 1, 1999 to October 31, 2000.

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

Membership Application

Please complete the information below and return with your check to:
GPNA, P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael, CA 94915

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

ok to include your address on our mailing list?

Email Address: _____ Date: _____

New Member Renewal

Amount Enclosed*: \$ _____

*Annual donation: **\$10.00** per household (**\$5.00** seniors) - 1 voting member

Payment Type: _____

Term of membership is from November 1st to November 1st

How did you hear about GPNA? Friend Newsletter Other: _____

Welcome to GPNA!

This newsletter has been gladly sponsored by Vince Sheehan Realty & Ross Valley Mortgage.

Vision Quest

Gerstle Park is a unique neighborhood. Our tree-lined streets, beautiful old homes, and cultural diversity are known throughout Marin and make Gerstle Park a very desirable place to live. We are also known for our strong, organized neighborhood association — the GPNA.

In the past, the GPNA has performed many civic duties in response to neighborhood concerns. We were responsible for working with the city to get a stop light on D Street. We've painted the guardrail on Wolfe Grade when it needed it as well as made it possible for the Head Start building at Short School to be painted. We also hold many annual events you're all familiar with and manage to put out a quarterly newsletter. But, as the song says, "Times, they are a changin."

In the spirit of the new century, the GPNA will be conducting a special neighborhood-wide "Vision Quest" meeting. We invite all neighbors to come tell us your ideas about what you'd like the GPNA to be involved in in the future. What will be the focus of our neighborhood in the 21st century? What is important to you? Are there fundraisers you'd like to see instituted?

Please join us on July 19, 2000 at 7:00pm in our usual meeting place at Short School for our GPNA Vision Quest meeting. Please bring your ideas.

Treasurer's Report

As of April 30th, the GPNA had a balance of \$2,209.87 in the treasury. Most of our revenue this calendar year has been from memberships. Thanks to all members who have paid their annual dues. If you're not up to date on your membership payment, please send a check to us SOON. Thanks.

At the end of June, GPNA's Annual Garage Sale will be the news of San Rafael and will produce a big chunk of our annual income. The Garage sale is important on a number of levels beyond the revenue it creates; it's an opportunity for volunteers to work together on a worthwhile project and support our association. Thanks to all who participate - either as a volunteer, donor to the bake sale, or buyer of a sign and listing on the official map.

We *Can* Make a Difference

Recently a plan for a proposed new home to be built on an empty lot on Bayview Street came to the attention of Bayview resident Steve Patterson, who brought the issue to the GPNA. The proposed stucco building was to have a concrete front yard and no windows facing the street. We were astonished that anyone would consider building such an unfriendly, uncharacteristic home in Gerstle Park.

Steve coordinated a meeting with the lot owners, their architect, and surrounding neighbors. The night of the meeting, Steve's home was packed with concerned neighbors and the owners and architect left with a clear understanding that this type of home does not fit in with the historic character of our neighborhood. As a result of this meeting and letters that Steve urged us to write to the planning department, the owners have decided not to proceed with their original plan. Kudos to Steve Patterson and all of us neighbors who showed up and made a difference.

And by the way, we are not alone in our perception about this type of home. On April 20th, the *New York Times* published an article about how Portland, Oregon has banned this type of architecture — known there as "snout" houses. All new homes built in Portland must pass the "trick or treat test;" in other words, when kids come around to trick or treat, they should actually get a sense that somebody lives in the house, and be able to find the door. Imagine that.

Tree Planting, Take II

Did you miss our deadline for having a city tree planted in front of your home? Not to worry! Tom Rothenberger, City of San Rafael Park Maintenance Supervisor and Rhonda Kutter, our Landscaping Chair, will be working together on an ongoing basis to identify more potential tree locations in our neighborhood. We'd like your input! One of our current goals is to create a tree canopy connection between the downtown area and our neighborhood. Many places along our transition/gateway streets (like First Street), are short on trees. Several old and diseased trees have already been removed by city crews and a few new trees will still be planted early this summer. Please call Rhonda Kutter at 457-5528 if you would like to sign up for a tree.

Did You Know?

- No person who owns or has possession, custody or control of any vehicle shall park or leave the vehicle standing upon ANY street or alley for seventy-two (72) or more consecutive hours. (San Rafael Municipal Code, Section 5.40.030).
- It is unlawful for any person to park a vehicle on a San Rafael city street or roadway or other public property for the purpose of selling or hawking such vehicle. If a vehicle remains parked in the same location for more than six (6) hours and there is displayed a sign or other means of communication on or near the vehicle stating the vehicle is for sale, there shall be a presumption that the vehicle owner is engaged in the principal purpose of offering such vehicle for sale. (San Rafael Municipal Code, Section 5.40.045).

WHAT TO DO?

To report a vehicle in violation of the above cited parking ordinances, call 485-3033, the traffic unit of the San Rafael Police Department. Vehicles in violation may be subject to fines or towing in accordance with the Municipal Code and/or California Vehicle Code.

Annual Picnic is just around the corner: September 9th!!

2000 GPNA Board Members

Rachel Tracy , President	721-0761
Bill Baker , Vice President	460-9942
Tom Obletz , Treasurer	459-0149
Tina Yesson , Membership	455-8671
Melanie Haiken , Newsletter	454-5848
Ken Goudey , Website	482-8391
Rhonda Kutter , Landscaping	457-5528
Jerry Yesson , Code Enforcement	455-8671

GPNA Monthly Meetings



Remember, You're Invited!

(In fact, we need a new secretary!)

GPNA meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. Upcoming dates are: June 14th, July 12th, and August 9th.

Your Neighbors Are My References!!

- 323 Bayview St—shingle style Arts/Craft
- 322 Bayview St—English Tudor bungalow
- 231 Bayview St—shingle style Arts/Craft
- 153/155 Clark St—70's style duplex
- 523 C St—Victorian duplex
- 112 San Rafael Ave.—shingle style Arts/Craft
- 200 Marin St.—shingle style Arts/Craft

Fine Line Painting

"The Gerstle Park Specialist"

~Since 1987—Estimates-485-1493—prepped right to last-

Buying, Selling, Refinancing?

We have just SOLD 139 Greenwood Avenue (2bd, 1ba for \$520,000) and donated \$500 to the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association!
We will donate \$500 on each sale closed to the GPNA!

For a FREE MARKET ANALYSIS of your property, or to get a 24 HOUR APPROVAL for a refinance or Purchase loan, please call:

Vince Sheehan, Gerstle Park Homeowner and Broker of

Vince Sheehan Realty
302-2500 or 457-8988 (H)

&

Ross Valley Mortgage
485-4448