

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

Summer 2011



Get Ready for the Garage Sale

The big Gerstle Park neighborhood Garage Sale is just ahead. On Saturday, June 18th from 9AM to 3PM the neighborhood will host one of its biggest events of the year. Residents will display items that they no longer need or use for hungry buyers to admire and acquire. It's a great opportunity for you to clean up your basement and garage and turn those unused items into cash.

When you register to participate you will receive a yard sign and be included on our neighborhood map which highlights the address of each participant and lists a few of the major items for sale. The map will show shoppers from outside our neighborhood who is selling what and where each sale is located. The Garage Sale will also be advertised in the IJ and on Craigslist, and posters will be hung at key points around the neighborhood.

This event is our neighborhood association's biggest fundraiser of the year. Money left over after expenses will be used to fund the GPNA newsletter, the website, the Spring Fling egg hunt and the annual picnic which we provide at no charge.



Please support the GPNA and register for this event by filling out the form below.

Registrations must be received by Monday, June 13th. You can pick up your yard sign at the home of Stacey Laumann at 109 1st Street either Wednesday 6/15 or Thursday 6/16 between 6PM and 8PM, or Friday 6/17 from 4PM to 8PM. After the sale, please return the signs back to the same address so they can be used again next year. If you have any questions you can contact Stacey at 272-2073 or via email at staceykate@hotmail.com.

2011 GPNA Garage Sale Registration Form

Complete this form and return it with your check for \$20, payable to GPNA and marked "Garage Sale" to:
GPNA, Attn: Garage Sale, PO Box 150644, San Rafael, CA 94915

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Email Address _____

I am holding a sale. Please include these items on the map/address (list 4-5 items):

I would like to make a donation to the GPNA. My check is enclosed.

I would like to sign up for the garage sale & renew my 2011 membership for \$30.

Forms are due Monday, June 13, 2011!!

Gang Murder in Gerstle Park

If anyone from our neighborhood isn't aware of it now, there was a stabbing, murder in the Gerstle Park neighborhood Wednesday May 11th.

The incident began at 4:53 p.m. when police began receiving reports of young men armed with sticks and bats running in the 600 block of B Street near the San Rafael Community Center, followed shortly by more calls of a white sedan chasing a red SUV in the Gerstle Park neighborhood.

Within minutes, a resident on Woods Street called 911 and said an injured man came to her door asking for help and then collapsed in her front yard. Officers arrived to find the victim with a grievous injury from a stab wound. The victim, a 21 year old Corte Madera man, was treated by paramedics and taken to Marin General Hospital where he was pronounced dead. Around the same time, two more bloody victims were dropped off at the emergency room. The two men, age 20 and 21, were treated for minor injuries and released into police custody for questioning. Two additional men who came to the emergency room were also detained for questioning in the case and the ER was locked down for a period time as a precautionary measure.

We all can agree, most Gerstle Park residents were very concerned with reading this news. But, this also should be a wake-up call with regard to gang activity in San Rafael and the Gerstle Park neighborhood.

The GPNA will continue to advise residents to lock their cars and their homes. The GPNA also wants to have its residents be more aware of their surroundings. Keep an eye out for groups of young men either driving around the neighborhood or hanging out in Gerstle Park. If buildings, fences, walls, bathrooms or picnic tables have graffiti-like gang symbols, (often referred to as tagging) please let the police know about this. Often the "tags" will disclose which gang is in a certain area and this information will be helpful to the police.

We need more public involvement in these matters. The police can't help us if we don't report suspicious activity. Also, the GPNA provides instant police reports via emails if you wish to receive them. Contact the GPNA and request to be put on this email list.

Please keep the following police phone numbers handy:

Emergency #: 485-3393

Non-Emergency # 485-3000

Crime Tip Form Added to the City's Police Website

The San Rafael Police Department has added a new feature to its website to allow residents to offer tips about criminal activity. The feature, the "Silent Witness Tip Form," provides an online template for informants to submit suspect descriptions, provide information about crime locations and times, and attach photos and other digital evidence. Tipsters can remain anonymous.

Users can also translate the form into more than 50 languages through a Google pull-down menu. The tip form is accessible in the "online services" section of the www.srpd.org. *From the Marin IJ, May 7, 2011*

Spring Fling

The annual Spring Fling egg hunt in Gerstle Park on April 23rd was enjoyed by many of our neighbors and their children. Here are the smiling faces of the winners of the egg hunt and jelly bean contests.



Special Egg Winners

Diego Portillo, age 5 and
Jax Kolotkin, age 2



Jelly Bean Contest

Diego Martinez, age 9 and
Kevin Vicente, age 9

Minor League Baseball Proposed for Albert Park

There is a proposal by Centerfield Partners, a minor league baseball organization, to bring professional baseball to San Rafael and use the ballpark facility at Albert Park. There have been two meetings, April 28th and May 19th held at the Community Center, were open to the public and presented by the City of San Rafael Park & Recreation Commission.

The two public meetings allowed the public to voice their approval or disapproval to the proposal, ask questions and bring up concerns with this proposal. Centerfield Partners was also in attendance to answer any questions.

The proposal is to allow a professional team to play 45 homes games at Albert Park. Centerfield Partners is requesting a 3 year Facility Use Permit, make improvements to the stadium, increase temporary seating, add concessions, restroom facilities and fencing.

During the two meetings there was considerable discussion with regard to concerns from nearby neighbors. Parking, security, field maintenance, rest rooms, noise, lights, local traffic, serving of alcoholic beverages and litter were the main points presented to Park & Rec & Centerfield Partners.

As of May 19th SR Park & Rec approved this proposal to move forward and present their findings to various city departments that will study this proposal and review all of the concerns that were presented to the Park & Rec Commission. The next step would be to take the findings of the city departments and present this to the City Council for their approval. At the time of this publication there is no set schedule or timeline for this process to report.

The GPNA does not favor or reject the idea of baseball at Albert Park, but unanimously voted to have this proposal go through all of the necessary city departments and approval processes that is required of homeowners and businesses alike. The GPNA will continue to follow this story and have more information for the neighborhood as it happens.



Curb Appeal: Gerstle Park!

With the economy struggling on life support, unemployment in the double digits and the sinking feeling that our property values are not the million dollar retirement funds they were a few years ago, our little eclectic neighborhood is looking a bit worse for wear. The City of San Rafael can barely maintain our sidewalks or streets. Let's face it; they won't be fixing our walkways that have the topography of our coastal mountain range any time soon.

So what can we do to give our neighborhood a facelift that won't break our depleted bank accounts? Here's my idea: We look for grants for neighborhood renewal; we solicit the help of local businesses to give us a substantial discount or group pricing on paint, concrete work, landscaping and labor for the good PR we will provide, as well as the number of jobs we generate. We talk to our neighbors and see if they want to join us in getting Gerstle Park pretty again! With group pricing, we will be able to afford to fix our sidewalks, driveways, paint our houses or landscape our yards.

And when the work is completed, we can have a contest, with prizes for the most changed appearance, the prettiest landscaping, and the best paint job. Let's get out of the depression doldrums: It's time to think positively and be proactive!

Curb appeal can be as simple as mowing a lawn, trimming a hedge or planting a few flowerbeds. If we work together to bring a little pride back into the neighborhood, we will all feel better about where we live, and get to know our neighbors a little more.

If you are interested in helping out with grant searching and writing, talking with local businesses, or have any ideas to add, please contact: Jennifer Hewitt, 454-4894.

The second installment of our interview with longtime Gerstle Park residents Cynthia and Hugo Landecker will be published in the fall issue.

A New Housekeeping Ordinance

The City of San Rafael recently adopted the 2009 International Property Maintenance Code, which governs your responsibilities for maintaining your home and property. It is comprehensive, and you should be aware of its provisions. You can get the complete text at the City's Code Enforcement Division. Here are the highlights:

- Your home and property must be maintained in a clean, secure and sanitary condition, in accordance with the Code.
- Your sidewalk, walkways, stairs and driveways must be clean and repaired.
- Your property must be kept free of weeds and plant growth over 6 inches in height, except cultivated flowers and gardens.
- All accessory structures such as garages, fences and walls must be structurally sound and in good repair.
- Inoperative vehicles must be stored in an enclosed area, and painting vehicles outside of an approved booth is prohibited.
- Graffiti is prohibited and it is the responsibility of the property owner to remove it.
- Garbage cans must not be stored in the public right of way except on the day of removal, and must be stored on non-service days out of public view or nearest the main structure.

Living Locally - What's Your Local Business?

There are so many talented people in Gerstle Park with services to offer: accountants, bakers, contractors, garden designers, therapists. Wouldn't it be great to do more business locally?

We'd like to build a local resource guide so that Gerstle Park residents might spend more time and dollars right here. If you'd like to include your business in this list, please go to www.gerstlepark.com and list your business description and contact info under the FORUM section, Jobs and Services.

We'll compile the local resource guide and make it available to the neighborhood. Free advertising? Yes, essentially. Let us know you're out there!

Update on Clean & Sober Living Issue

San Rafael City Councilmen Brockbank and Levine met with GPNA committee members to listen to our concerns about the unregulated homes for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts that have been identified in our neighborhood. There are 10 such facilities in San Rafael, some housing 12 or more temporary residents. Of greatest concern were safety issues of the facilities located in older homes that are not up to today's fire safety codes of say, a bed and breakfast. The transient nature of the residents and the difficulty of knowing such neighbors and the impact of parking, noise and smoking were also discussed. The City Attorney and City Planner will be studying the issue this year perhaps proposing code changes. We understand that both city officials are considering forming a city-wide blue ribbon committee to make recommendations in that regard.

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) Membership Form

Please complete the information below and return with your check to:

GPNA, P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael CA, 94915-0644

Membership year runs from January 1st - December 31st

One Vote Per Household - \$20/year (\$10 seniors age 65+)

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

CHECK CASH

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____ Date: _____

Do you wish to receive our quarterly newsletter via email instead of home delivery? YES NO

Would you like to be included on our email distribution list? YES NO

Are you interested in volunteering with the GPNA? YES NO