

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

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



Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Spring Fling has “flung” and 2007 is well underway. There is much to report, so I'll jump right in. First of all, one of our favorite and biggest events is approaching! **The neighborhood-wide Garage Sale is on June 9th.** Get your applications in early!

In the last newsletter we reported the results of the recent, though limited, priority survey taken earlier this year. Those who voted determined the number one priority to be for the Board to represent GPNA interests to the City of San Rafael City Council, City Staff and Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods. Board member, Brigitte Waterbury and I took the first step by meeting with our City Manager, Ken Nordhoff. We expressed our goal, as a Board, to improve the quality and nature of communication between the neighborhood and the city.

Ken was very interested in the Neighborhood Priority Survey. He emphasized the value of concrete data to consider when making decisions about how to support Gerstle Park. The city prefers to make decisions based on neighborhood preferences as a whole rather than individual requests, which are often sources of disagreement for others.

As a united neighborhood, we have significantly more influence on the city's decisions of how they apply resources. Therefore, the Board has decided to mount a neighborhood-wide distribution of the Priority Survey. The results will shape the Board's priorities and empower our community to have a significant impact on city decisions. The survey will be mailed to you in May. Here is your chance to make a difference in the community. Please fill it out and send it back promptly.

For an update on the status of neighborhood traffic matters and our Traffic Committee's plans and activities, please go to www.gerstlepark.com. We will keep you informed when community meetings and presentations will be held to allow you to assess the impacts and any proposed changes for yourselves.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that we have two openings on the board. Talk about having a good time! Here's the opportunity to make a great difference in your own neighborhood, learn how civic affairs are managed, meet your neighbors, and fill those idle hours. Seriously, being on the board is a great way to contribute, socialize, and expand your horizons. Please contact me, or any board member for more information!

-Muriel Ballard, GPNA Board President

SAVE THE DATE FOR GPNA'S FIRST NETWORKING AND SOCIAL MIXER! JUNE 4, 2007

Ever wonder if a plumber lives in the neighborhood? How about a roofer, a veterinarian or an architect? Would you like a neighbor to watch after your pets while on vacation? Maybe you or your teenager can baby-sit or dog walk. Looking to change jobs? Have a job to offer? Want a fun, relaxed setting to pitch your business or fill a need?

Let's find out what kind of talent our neighborhood has to offer, how we can help one another and have some fun!

What: GPNA's 1st Networking and Social Mixer.

When: Monday June 4, 2007: 5:30-7:30pm

Where: Our very own Panama Hotel. Refreshments can be purchased. Finger food provided.

Why: Why Not? It's a nice venue to meet your neighbors.

What's the catch? No catch, but you need to be a GPNA member. The \$15 membership is worth the price of admission. If you're not a member or need to renew, come by and do so!

We will showcase a special neighborhood guest at each event. For more information contact Board Member Bob Beyea @ 408-4016

RSVPs are encouraged. bobbeyea@yahoo.com

SAVE THE DATE! GPNA NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE GARAGE SALE

Saturday, June 9th, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

It's time to empty your closets and storage areas, and sell all that old good stuff that's been taking up space for too long! Last year, folks cleared out their basements and cupboards and replaced that "stuff" with some CASH. The garage sale also enabled the GPNA to fund several neighborhood events.

GPNA is sponsoring our 13th Annual Garage Sale at participating residences throughout the neighborhood. This is a coordinated and publicized neighborhood-wide garage sale that attracts hopeful bargain hunters from all over. It is a wonderful chance to get out and mix with your neighbors and meet new folks while helping out our neighborhood.

Here's how it works: Register to participate with the GPNA and you will be included on the official map of sales and join in the fun! You'll enjoy the benefits of lots of shoppers pulled in by our coordinated publicity in the IJ, craigslist, several community listings, flyers, and you'll be provided with large signs to hang at your residence identifying you as a GPNA supporter and participant.

The publicity will include clear directions on where to obtain GPNA garage sale maps. The maps will be available at buyer information stands located at 1st and D, San Rafael Ave. and D, and Bayview and B. To be included on the official map, you must register before June 4th. Your registration fee (1) puts your address on the map, (2) gets your sale items listed, (3) provides you with an official event sign, (4) provides you with coordinated advertising and (5) helps to support GPNA. Late registrations past June 4th are okay and you will get a sign but won't have items or your address listed on the official map. The registration fees pay for the ads, the maps and the signs, with all remaining proceeds going to support the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association.

Of course, all of the proceeds from your sale are yours to keep! If you don't want to run a garage sale but have a few quality items you'd like to donate to the GPNA to sell for you, note the drop-

off information on the registration form and those items will be sold the day of the sale at the GPNA table with proceeds used to support GPNA activities and the newsletter.

If you are a current member of GPNA, your registration fee is \$20.00. If you are not a current member, your registration fee is \$30.00, which includes your garage sale registration and activates your GPNA membership until January 2008.

To participate: Just fill out the registration form found in this newsletter or available at

www.gerstlepark.com, and mail it with your check marked "Garage Sale" to the address on the form. Please remember; garage sale registration forms must be returned **no later than June 4th** to be included on the official map. If you have any questions, please contact: Nancy Otto at 453-2013 or nancy.otto@gerstlepark.com.

SHORT SCHOOL, SHORT STORY, GREAT OUTCOME

Early April brought a flurry of activity in our neighborhood around Short School on Marin Street. Concerned neighbors called and emailed Board members when they spotted an ugly, prison-style, chain link fence being erected around the front of the school. We quickly contacted Chris Thomas, San Rafael City School Facilities Director. Chris was wonderfully responsive and immediately drove over to see exactly what was happening. She halted the erection of the fence, made sure the correct size fence was put in the right place and went the extra mile by insisting that a green fence, better fitting into our neighborhood, was installed instead. So, hurrah and thank you to Chris and to all of the players involved in nipping that eyesore in the bud!

Chris informed us that the Short School would continue to be used as a school. Here is the relevant excerpt from her timely letter:

"Keystone Schools has leased Short School for three years from San Rafael City Schools to serve children in Kindergarten through third grade who have special learning needs. The program is designed for small-group work with less than twelve students per class, and enrollment is not expected to exceed seventy-five to

one hundred students. Keystone School is scheduled to open its program for students in May 2007, once the grounds and buildings have been prepared for the students. Plans include placement of additional fencing in front of the school to increase security and keep students safe from the street."

Let's welcome our new neighbors. If all goes well we won't have to worry about how that property is developed for a good long time!

SPRING FLING RECAP

This year's spring fling event was a huge success. A few changes this year were met with great enthusiasm. First, the age range was extended to include eight-year olds who still very much enjoy Easter egg hunting. Second, the actual hunting was divided into two groups with the smaller kids' eggs hidden in the lower playground area. This helped keep the event safer for the little ones and made for less crowded conditions for all attending. And last, a balloon artist was on hand to engage the children while everyone was waiting for the hunt to begin. The event started at 9:00 and was still going strong at 11:30 with many local families continuing to enjoy our own beautiful Gerstle Park on a beautiful day. Thank you to all of the community members who helped orchestrate this event and to Muffin Mania for donating the yummy muffins.

GPNA BEGINNINGS

Some of you are curious about how GPNA began. Originally our neighborhood was mostly single-family homes. Sometime, in the 1950s the developed areas were rezoned to high density residential. As time went on, many fine old homes were demolished and new high-density apartments were constructed. It became obvious that this trend could not continue and still have Gerstle Park retain its character and charm.

About 1972 a small group of residents held a series of informal meetings. The intention was to organize with the objective of preserving the remaining character of the neighborhood. Someone came up with the idea that we should have an association. Continued discussions ironed out the details, such as neighborhood boundaries. Originally the first

proposal was to have the neighborhood west of D Street. Someone said that the problems east of D Street were the same as to the west and so the boundary was moved to B Street. Then came the discussion whether to be a homeowners association or a neighborhood association. Well, that was simple; it was decided to include renters, which qualified us as a neighborhood association. Lastly, we needed a name until Cynthia Landecker suggested, "Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association" and so we began.

The next step was to form a Board of Directors and elect officers. The first president was Mike Flynn who lived on Estates Court. Mike led us down the path to a set of by-laws and articles. In 1973 we had our first annual picnic. It continues today only through the strength of our members. If you are not already a member, please consider joining and being a part of keeping Gerstle Park the wonderful neighborhood it is.

UPCOMING VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE

To prevent urban wildfires such as the 1991 Oakland Hills fire, California has mandated that all cities and counties adopt a vegetation management ordinance by 2008. The San Rafael Fire Department is developing the ordinance and while it is changing almost daily at this point, here's how it stands now.

Approximately 60% of the Gerstle Park neighborhood will be affected: All areas west of Clark Street, Woods Street, upper Ross Street, Miramar, Miraflores, parts of Grove Street, Gerstle Park, South end of C Street and the hill areas on the east side of the neighborhood.

As currently written, the ordinance has confusing language and requirements. We all care about fire prevention and this ordinance will have widespread impact on vegetation management rules. Several Board and community members are working with the Fire Department on the ordinance so it is crafted to best serve our community. We encourage you to learn more about this ordinance by visiting our website at www.gerstlepark.com. For more specific information, contact Hugo Landecker: clandecker@saber.net or San Rafael Fire Prevention at 485-3308.

GPNA Garage Sale Registration Form

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

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

I am holding a sale! Please include these items on the map/advertising (5 max, please):

\$20.00 GPNA member

\$30.00 non-member (fee includes GPNA membership until January 2008)

I would like to make a donation to GPNA. My check for \$_____ is enclosed.

AMOUNT ENCLOSED

FOR GARAGE SALE: \$ _____

DONATION: \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

All proceeds go toward GPNA neighborhood events.

I cannot have a sale but have a few quality items I want to donate to the GPNA table.

I will bring them to 6 Antonette Ave. on June 7, 4-7 PM. or to the GPNA table located at the Panama Hotel by 8:30 AM day-of-sale. Any unsold items may be donated per GPNA discretion.

If you need more information or have questions, please contact Nancy Otto at 453-2013 or nancy.otto@gerstlepark.com

Sellers: Dates to Mark on Your Calendar

June 4th- Registrations must be received by June 4th to be included in the official map

June 5th - Pick up your GPNA location sign at 6 Antonette Ave. 6-8 PM

June 7th - Drop off any donation items to 6 Antonette Ave. 4-7 PM

June 9th - **SALE DAY!!** 9-2PM

Post Sale - Cleanup & return your sign to 6 Antonette Ave., (front porch) so GPNA can re-use them.

2007 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 through December 31st

Individual: One Voting Member: \$15.00 (\$10.00 Seniors Age 65 or Older)

Household: Two Voting Members: \$20.00 (\$15.00 Seniors)

New Member ♦ Renewal

Gerstle Park T-SHIRTS: Child & Adult \$15ea. _____ / _____
Quantity Size

Additional Donation: \$ _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____ Date: _____

Do you wish to receive our quarterly newsletter via email instead of home delivery? Yes ♦ No

Are you interested in volunteering? Yes ♦ No

THE FEDERATION OF SAN RAFAEL NEIGHBORHOODS: WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD A STRONGER COMMUNITY

Founded in 1992, the Federation has served as an umbrella and advocacy group for all neighborhoods in San Rafael, south of Puerto Suello Hill. The group provides a neighborhood and community perspective on key issues in San Rafael. The Federation addresses multi-neighborhood and city issues that cross over neighborhood boundaries and impact a number of neighborhoods. The group works to bring attention to these types of items, interact with City staff and decision makers, and provide a network to foster collaboration between its members. The Federation supports neighborhoods in attaining solutions on issues they may be struggling with and provides guidance on navigating the San Rafael system for newcomers.

Federation members are individuals, homeowners and neighborhood associations. Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association is a long-standing member. As it turns out, this years Chair, Steve Patterson, and Vice-Chair, Tymber Cavasian both live in Gerstle Park! The Steering Committee members cover 11 different neighborhoods, with membership adding in many, many more. This year several initiatives were identified for Federation efforts including: trees, development process and design, traffic calming, historic preservation, review of downtown planning applications, and conducting more forums, such as the Transportation Forum they held last Fall.

Monthly meetings are the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm and are held at the Lindaro Corporate Center in either the Boro or Tam room. The Agenda usually includes an interesting guest speaker and everyone is welcome to attend. The Federation also meets monthly with the City Manager

on the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 am in City Hall. "Neighborhood Speak", a monthly article written by the Federation, also appears in the local paper, the San Rafael Newspointer. To join their email list or for more information, contact stephenpatterson.1@comcast.net or tymber@distinctivebuilders.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 \$60 course fee. Call Anna at the San Rafael 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!

GPNA 2007 CALENDAR

May 3	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
June 4	Monday	GPNA Networking & Social Mixer
June 7	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
June 9	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.ballard@gerstlepark.com

WHO TO CALL LIST: HELPFUL NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE NUMBERS

Abandoned Vehicles	485-3033	Illegal Construction	485-3365
Building Inspect./permits	485-3365	Litter	485-3407
Business Licenses	485-3051	Marin General Hospital	925-7000
Center Point Liason	456-3036	Marin IJ	883-8600
City Attorney	485-3080	Marin Recycling	453-1404
City Clerk	485-3066	Marin Sanitary Service	456-2601
City Manager	485-3070	MMWD	945-1455
Assistant City Manager	485-3475	MMWD Emergency	945-1500
City Planning Department	485-3085	Parking Issues	458-5333
Chamber of Commerce	454-4163	Parks Dept.	485-3355
Code Enforcement	458-5038	PG&E	800-743-5000
Comcast	459-5333	Planning Department	485-3085
Community Center	485-3333	Police Department	485-3000
Community Development	485-3085	Police Emergency Number	485-3393
Community Policing	485-3114	Potholes	485-3355
Dangerous Animals	309-6339	Public Library	485-3323
Design Review	485-3085	Public Works	485-3355
Disaster Preparedness	485-3488	Public Works Emergency	485-3385
Drainage Problems	485-3355	Sewers	485-3375
Earthquake Supply Center	459-5500	Street Maintenance	485-3375
Emergency Operations	485-3111	Tenant/Landlord Disputes	499-7454
Fire Chief	485-3304	Traffic Unit	485-3034
Graffiti Hotline	485-5326	Tree Removal (street trees)	485-3375
Hazardous Material	485-3308		

Other useful info can be found on the San Rafael website at: www.cityofsanrafael.org