

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

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



Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2008

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings, Neighbors!

The Board is busy, busy. From my perspective, our two highest priorities just now are: 1) advancing a solution for our troublesome and dangerous traffic pattern at First and C and First and D Streets and 2) bringing our website up to date with a design that will allow us to make swift edits and encourage regular usage. You will find articles updating you on both of these matters in this newsletter. We would also like to extend an invitation for members (i.e. YOU) to submit ideas and or articles to further enhance this missive. The more the merrier! Have a lovely summer.

GERSTLE PARK ANNUAL GARAGE SALE IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!

It's time for our 14th Annual Garage Sale! We've already had many inquiries from excited neighbors ready to sell, sell, sell! Here's how it works: Complete the enclosed application to register to participate with GPNA and you will be included on the official map of sales, be part of our coordinated publicity including posters, the IJ, Craigslist and several community listings. You will also receive an attractive lawn sign identifying you as a GPNA supporter and participant. Your registration fee pays for the maps, the signs and the advertising. The balance of the funds goes toward supporting other GPNA community projects.

The printed maps will be distributed at First and D, San Rafael Avenue and D, and Bayview and B on the day of the sale. To be included, you must register before June 15th. Should you register after June 15th, you will still receive a sign, but will not be included on the map-which requires production time. If you have some items you would like to offload, but don't want to participate in the sale, a booth for these types of items will be set up in front of the Panama Hotel with all proceeds going to the Neighborhood Association.

Member registration is \$20.00. Non members fee is \$30.00, which includes activation of your GPNA membership until January 2009. If you have any questions prior to the event, please feel free to contact Michelle Hanson at 306-4223.

We also need volunteers to help before and on the day of the sale. Please contact Muriel Ballard at mballard@fhallen.com if you'd like to help with this fun and exciting event.

TRAFFIC UPDATE

Members of the Traffic Committee and Board Members met with City Manager Ken Nordhoff, Mayor Al Boro, and Nader Mansourian, City Traffic Engineer, in a continuing effort to advance a solution to the dysfunctional intersections at First and C and First and D Streets, as well as addressing the flow of excess traffic into the neighborhood as it tries to avoid these areas. The only thing everyone seems to be able to agree on is that we will never get 100% agreement. That understood, we are seeking a solution that will have the "greater good" at its core, knowing that any changes made will have a ripple effect that is not entirely foreseeable. We parted ways with a plan to meet again, at which point we will review three possible alternatives and their impacts. One will take a look at a minimal solution which incorporates some new signage and, perhaps, a median. Another will look at a mid-level solution incorporating two-way traffic thru to Second Street and a four-way stop at First and C. The last alternative we'll delve into considers installing lights at both intersections. If you feel yourself bristling already, fear not. Nothing will be done until the possibilities evolve further and are then presented to the neighborhood at a community meeting. We do believe the city is working hard to try to come up with a solution that will satisfy our community. We have looked at nearly a dozen alternatives and there is no magic pill. Stay tuned for further updates.

PARTICIPATE IN YOUR DEMOCRACY! DON'T FORGET TO VOTE ON JUNE 3RD!

Marin voters will be faced with an important decision on June 3rd- Who will represent our interests in the California State Senate for the next 4 years? Because the 3rd Senate District encompassing Marin, the eastern half of San Francisco and a small part of Sonoma County that includes Petaluma, Cotati and Rohnert Park is predominantly Democratic, whoever wins the primary in June is expected to easily win the November election.

Please be sure to cast your vote in this important election. Democracy only works when you participate in it! Have you moved recently? You have until May 19th to register to vote at your new address- just call the Marin County Registrar of Voters at 499-6456 or stop into Kathleen Russell Consulting at 8 Willow Street in Gerstle Park for a Voter Registration form.

(Vote June 3rd continued from page 1)

State Assemblymember Mark Leno

Assemblymember Mark Leno has represented the eastern portion of San Francisco for the past six years, and he currently chairs the powerful Assembly Appropriations Committee, which oversees all bills with a fiscal impact on the state. He also serves on the Election & Redistricting and Labor Committees, as well as the Public Safety Committee, which he chaired from 2003 to 2006. Leno lived in Mill Valley when he first moved to California, and he remains a small business owner of Budget Signs, Inc.

Leno is currently authoring a bill that requires an Environmental Impact Report before any aerial spraying for the Light Brown Apple Moth is conducted. He has also been a leader in encouraging solar energy over the years by authoring numerous successful bills. He has fought for better schools and access to higher education, a cleaner and sustainable environment, universal affordable and quality health care, improved transportation, renewable energy, safer streets and equal rights for all Californians. Visit www.markleno.com for more info.

Former State Assemblymember Joe Nation

Joe Nation served in the State Assembly, representing Marin and Sonoma counties from 2000 to 2006, where he earned a reputation as a pro-business, moderate Democrat. Nation ran against U.S. Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey in 2006 and lost.

While in the Assembly, he authored legislation to improve and expand health care, transportation and education. Nation is an outspoken advocate for fiscal responsibility and accountability within state government. He was the principal co-author of AB 32, California's Global Warming Solutions Act. Nation now lives in Sonoma County and is currently a Climate Change Advisor for the environmental consulting firm, ENVIRON International. Nation also teaches health care, climate change and public policy at Stanford University. For more info, visit www.joenation.com.

State Senator Carole Migden

Senator Carole Migden is serving her first term in the State Senate. She currently chairs the Labor and Industrial Relations Committee and the Senate Democratic Caucus. Before her election to the Senate, Migden served as Chairwoman of the California Board of Equalization (BOE). Prior to that, she represented eastern San Francisco for six years in the Assembly, where she served as the Chair of the powerful Appropriations Committee.

Migden has passed legislation requiring cosmetics companies to disclose to the state cancer-causing agents in their products, as well as a measure to increase the

state's focus on vocational education in our schools, and a bill to provide mental health assessments for young people in California's beleaguered juvenile justice system, among many others. She authored the Clean Water Act as well. In March 2008, Migden was fined \$350,000 by the FPPC for repeated campaign finance violations, the largest fine ever levied against a California elected official. That same month, she was denied the endorsement of the State Democratic Party in a 298-742 vote. For more info, visit www.carolemigdenleading.com.

EARTH DAY AFTERMATH

It's a good thing! As the Board considered how we could best serve the neighborhood in conjunction with Earth Day, the idea came up to provide more trash receptacles around the neighborhood. Marin Sanitary has agreed to supply us with more cans, and the city is willing to arrange for additional pick-ups. Our job now is to identify where the cans will sit. Please e-mail Dan Miller at dtm94901@yahoo.com with any suggestions.

GPNA BOCCE BALL

Since the mid 1990s our neighborhood has been home to the Albert Park Bocce Ball Courts at the corner of B Street and Albert Park Lane. The Marin Bocce Federation runs the 8 outdoor and 2 indoor courts. The federation has built a successful bocce program that includes league play 5 nights and 3 mornings per week and serves over 1,000 people. In addition, they have been very generous in offering programs for Special Olympics, schools, youth camps and fundraising for local charities. The courts are available for limited private rental as well. In addition, during open play hours, anyone can pay \$3/person for 3 hours of court time, which includes game instructions and equipment.

The game itself dates back as far as 5200 B.C. and has been traditionally viewed as a sport for seniors. Currently however, bocce is steadily gaining in popularity as many busy, overstressed people are learning to enjoy the slow pace, mental stimulation, and social interaction that bocce provides. That said, the game is by no means easy and can take anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour and a half depending upon skill level and luck. These days, it seems many people are craving a greater sense of community and bocce seems to fill this void. Most of the league teams bring potluck dinners and make a social event of the games.

As of April 1, some of your GPNA board members have been showing up to represent our neighborhood as the Gerstle Park Rangers on Tuesday nights at 6:30. And while we have yet to win a game (hey, give us a break - we're still learning!), we are having a great time. The game consists of rolling a 4 inch bocce ball as close as possible to a smaller

target ball called the pallino (this is where we are having a little trouble...). The ball closest to the pallino scores a point and then the team that reaches 12 points first wins the game. We hope to be able to report a meteoric rise in our league standing by the next newsletter.z

CAMP GALILEO

Camp Galileo is coming to our very own Short School this summer! With a curriculum developed in partnership with The Tech Museum of Innovation, the de Young Museum and KLUTZ, this camp has earned a reputation of excellence. 97% of parents at their 15 Bay Area camps say that they would recommend the program to others. With a maximum camper to staff ratio of 8:1 (6:1 for kindergartners), Camp Galileo has been voted "Best Camp for Kids" in Bay Area Parent and "Best of the Bay" in San Francisco Magazine. Combining art, science, and outdoor programming with fun camp traditions, the 3-week program, taking place June 23rd thru July 25th, provides a summer day camp experience kids in pre K - 5th grades love, though one and two week options are available. For more information or to enroll: www.campgalileo or call 1-800-854-3684 or call Jeremy Sampson @ 510-595-7293 x334 with questions.

GPNA "MIXES" IT UP WITH CAMP GALILEO

On Monday May 5th the GPNA Mixer was held at Short School with Camp Galileo co-hosting the event. There were drinks, snacks and a play area for children. A wonderfully produced camp video was shown. The presence of this highly regarded camp in our neighborhood is cause for great pride and delight. Discounts for Gerstle Park residents are available by referencing "GPNA08".

MARIN HISTORY MUSEUM FEATURES HISTORY WALKS

Join with the Marin History Museum to explore the history of San Rafael's colorful downtown area. Walking tours will be given on the 3rd Saturday of the month from May through September, at 10 a.m., at the Marin History Museum headquarters' Boyd Gate House, 1125 B Street, San Rafael. We will learn about some of San Rafael's prominent old families as we visit the estates of Robert Dollar at Falkirk and the Boyd and Cook estates at Maple Lawn (now the Elks Club) and the beautiful Gate House. We will learn about San Rafael's Mission church, our Carnegie Library, The Belrose studio and theater, and many elegant

existing and long-gone 19th century business buildings on Fourth Street. Tours last about an hour. Wear sensible shoes, a hat, and suntan lotion! The tour is free to members of the Marin History Museum and \$5.00 for non-members. For more information, contact the History Museum at (415) 454-8538.

Note also that the popular "Riding the Rails: Marin's Historic Trains" exhibit has been extended through January, 2009! Don't miss this fascinating chronicle of the evolution of railroad transportation in Marin County!

ANNUAL BROOM PULL A SUCCESS!

We had another successful Broom Pull in Gerstle Park's open space area on March 29. We pulled French Broom, an extremely invasive non-native plant which is a fire hazard. Our efforts were coordinated by the city of San Rafael's volunteer coordinator Cory Bytoff, who arranged for assistance from members of the Marin Conservation Corps. GPNA member Steven Schoonover arranged for a volunteer crew of good workers from Center Point to help out. We concentrated on an area near D Street. For the first time we had a chipper available, which eliminated large piles of broom.

This project is now in its 15th year. The 2007/2008 growing season produced an abundance of seedlings like we have never experienced before. This is compounded with a short pulling season caused by late rains and early spring weather. We need more helpers badly. I am willing to train you and GPNA will provide gloves. Please contact Hugo Landecker (clandecker@saber.net) or 456 0221. Broom pulling is fun, rewarding, and great exercise!

Neighbors do not realize that the beautiful neighborhood asset of our open space is in danger of returning to the impenetrable state it was in 15 years ago. If our efforts were to stop for just five years, our open space would no longer be accessible to the many residents who enjoy hiking and dog walking in this quiet refuge.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Neighborhood building activity seems to have slowed down. Here are the projects that you can expect to see in the coming months:

- Safeway color scheme will change.
- 20 Greenwood will get a rear deck expanded with a new rear stairway added.
- 162 Greenwood has changes to previously approved retaining wall modifications. At this time we are trying to find out more.

Please contact Hugo Landecker (clandecker@saber.net) or 456-0221 if you have any questions or concerns.

NEW NEWSLETTER EDITORS WELCOME YOUR INPUT

Diane Fischler and Bob Urban have assumed responsibility for your Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association Newsletter and we invite you to share your thoughts with our readers. If you'd like to write a short piece about a topic that you think would be of interest please send it along to us and we'll consider it for inclusion in the next newsletter. The Board thanks Lisa Fait, who has edited the newsletter for the past three years, for the contributions she has made to the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association. As the new editors of your newsletter we will strive to continue the fine work that she has done. Please contact us by email with your news and comments, at (dfischler@mindspring.com or bobletter@comcast.net).

KEEP AN EYE OUT for big changes coming to our website and newsletter. The newsletter will soon be available in an enhanced format online. If you're interested and ABLE (we know some of you don't have computers!) to receive your newsletter by e-mail, please either send us your e-mail along with your garage sale application or-if you're not going to participate in the garage sale, send your e-mail to mballard@fhallen.com with "Newsletter By E-mail Please" in the subject line. Thank you!

GPNA CALENDAR

June 4	Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting*
June 21	Saturday	Neighborhood Garage Sale
July 2	Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting*
August 6	Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting*
September 3	Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting*
September 21	Sunday	Annual Picnic
October 1	Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting*
October 31	Friday	Hallowe'en Decoration Contest Judging
November 5	Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting*
December 3	Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting*
December TBD		Christmas Caroling

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

2008 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