

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

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

REPORT ON ANNUAL MEETING

GPNA held its annual membership meeting and election of 2003 Board members on October 23. We are grateful to Trinity Lutheran Church for generously providing a comfortable meeting room. Treasurer Brett Merner reported a bank balance of \$4,307.47. Besides the election, our main order of business was three amendments to GPNA By-laws: one changing Board term limits from three to four years; one allowing the Board to vote by email on urgent matters; and one allowing that those members who have email can be notified by email of any proposed By-law amendments. (Members without email would continue to be notified by letter.) These amendments were approved by the members present.

After a review of the many issues that the Board has been diligently following in this very busy year, the following people were elected to serve on the GPNA board, effective Nov. 1, 2002 to Oct. 31, 2003 (the officers were chosen by the new Board at its November meeting):

Hugo Landecker, President	456-0221	clandecker@saber.net
Krystyna Barron, Vice President	459-4006	krys@matteworld.com
Richard Geist, Secretary	454-1429	rgeist@pacbell.net
Lynn Bradescu, Asst. Secretary	454-4132	lalynn3@attbi.com
Brett Merner, Treasurer	453-1750	bwmerner@aol.com
Craig Barron	459-4006	cbarron@matteworld.com
Cynthia Landecker	456-0221	clandecker@saber.net
Chandra Murphy	482-8033	murphdtm@yahoo.com
Steve Schoonover	456-1954	ajaxlaw@pacbell.net
Jennifer Stroman	460-0912	jenniferstroman@hotmail.com
Deborah Weinberg	482-9130	

Outgoing Board members Ken Goudey and Jerry Yesson were thanked for their years of service, as were Betsy Dalpino and Barbara Shilling, who resigned earlier in the year. Special thanks went to outgoing President Tina Yesson, for her two effective, productive, and eventful years.

THE GRINCH WHO STOLE CAROLING

Oh dear, the Grinch was here! GPNA has had to cancel its annual holiday caroling event this year. The Board of Directors has such an overwhelming workload right now that we have no manpower to spare to organize caroling. We hope to be in full voice next year; in the meantime perhaps some of you will go out in your own groups to serenade your neighbors with Christmas cheer.

SIGN SADNESS

Sometimes people nail temporary signs announcing yard sales, lost pets, etc. right into street trees. Ouch! This hurts trees. Find another temporary location, and don't forget to take your sign down as soon as possible to avoid the fluttering clutter of old signs.



December 18th:

MEET THE MAYOR TO DISCUSS GERSTLE PARK DENSITY & TRAFFIC

Mayor Al Boro and city Planning Director Bob Brown have accepted an invitation to meet with Gerstle Park residents. This will be our greatest opportunity to voice our objections and concerns re:

- Proposed housing project (20+ units) for Short School site
- Added housing density proposed by adding second units
- D Street becoming a two-way street up to 2nd Street

Please come to voice your opinions on these matters as they impact an already overcrowded neighborhood — parking, traffic, car trips, noise, pollution, and strain on water, gas, electric will all be negatively affected.

Please mark your calendars. We need to make a very strong appearance at the meeting to make a difference and show the city the strength and solidarity of the GP residents.

December 18, 7:00 pm at Short School: **BE THERE!**

DECK YOUR HALLS

Thinking about overdoing for the holidays? Good! If you do overdo in decorating your house, know that GPNA Board members will be out in late December looking for the most festive exteriors to be recognized.

Of course, the truth is, the most modest effort adds charm and warmth—everybody wins when we make our neighborhood beautiful and fun to look at!

HALLOWE'EN DECORATING CONTEST

Wow, our local Hallowe'en hobgoblins are getting better and better at bringing out the deathly, scary, rattly, ghoully, witchy, yucky, foggy, gory side of home decorating. Talk about curb appeal! It was very hard for the GPNA to pick winners among all the fan-**DRASTIC** houses, but here are our choices:

508 D Street	Most Impressive Ghost
21 Marin St.	Best Witch
11 Marin St.	Best Special Effects
231 Marin	Best Graveyard
112 San Rafael Ave.	Best Lights
239 Bayview (the Pumpkin King)	Best Display of Carved Pumpkins
229 C Street	Most elegant (!)

The winners will be notified of their selection in a tasteful but inexpensive manner. Thanks to ALL the neighbors who put such effort into making Gerstle Park so very terrible on October 31!

GERSTLE PARK EMERGENCY PLAN PRESENTED AT ANNUAL MEETING

A proposed Gerstle Park Emergency Plan has been developed by Tamra Peters and other Disaster Area Response Team (DART) graduates living in the Gerstle Park neighborhood, working with Fire Chief Brian Waterbury. The Plan was presented at the October GPNA annual meeting to a round of applause. Essentially the plan is a guide to pre-disaster preparation, so our residents can survive and recover from a serious calamity.

Through Fire Department DART training, and with the neighborhood's new Emergency Response Committee, the Plan will give us a working system so residents can practice at being "neighbors helping neighbors" before a disaster strikes. We need a sufficient number of DART graduates in the neighborhood to make the Plan successful. DART graduates receive disaster training, then are officially registered with the state as disaster services workers. A photo I.D. is issued to each graduate, to be worn during an emergency along with a DART vest and hardhat.

Please read the enclosed DART/ Neighborhood Emergency Plan flyer. You can be part of this community effort by: preparing your home and family; taking the DART course; and signing up to be a Street Captain.

A BEAUTIFUL EVENING FOR A PICNIC

Our September 12 Gerstle Park Annual Picnic featured a return to the traditional weeknight venue at the park's Redwood Grove. It was a lovely place to be on a very perfect September evening. The Grove seemed to offer a more intimate place for conversation and hot dog dining, and the kids were running around happily in spite of no organized games.

We enjoyed raffling off a number of wonderful prizes. GPNA is very grateful to Muffin Mania, La Fayette Pastry, the Panama Hotel, and the Gerstle Inn for very generous, super prizes. Other prizes included Gerstle Park old-house stationery, GPNA T-shirts, a basket of food goodies, and a day sail on the Bay.

We erred in not getting the City to open the gate so those among us who have a hard time with hills could drive up. We'll try to rectify that next year. And we'll ask for MORE salads!

Many, many thanks to GPNA Board members who schlepped all the supplies up the hill, set up the tables, and did the cooking. Special thanks to Richard Lambert and Peggy Merner for their help in that respect. And more thanks to the nice folks from Center Point, who joined us with big gorgeous desserts, and then helped schlep all the supplies back down the hill!

UPDATE ON CITY'S PROPOSAL FOR HOUSING AT SHORT SCHOOL


To satisfy ABAG requirements, the City of San Rafael has been developing a plan for adding 2,090 housing units in its 2020 General Plan. The Short School site is being considered for rezoning to allow development of a 20-plus unit housing project right in the heart of the Gerstle Park area. The property is a mere 1.26 acres and under current zoning would only accommodate a **maximum of nine** single-family homes.

Under the Fair Share premise driving the density distribution of the 2020 plan, in which each neighborhood has a plan for additional housing, more units are actually assigned to the already dense neighborhoods while density is kept lower in the less dense neighborhoods. Thus, as Gerstle Park is already the densest neighborhood tract (according to the 2000 census and our own survey), we are expected to take on a higher number of units than less dense neighborhoods. But the GPNA Board feels that we have done our fair share already, and we oppose increases in our housing density until other areas of the city catch up.

Of the 109 members of the public who attended the City's Oct. 24 public presentation on the housing element of the General Plan 2020, 58 were Gerstle Park residents who came to express their opinion of housing density and Short School's development! Unfortunately, the meeting was broken up into workshops not designed to address specific sites or opinions. However, our residents voiced their concerns regarding increased traffic, parking restraints, drain on natural resources, air and noise pollution, and safety if the 20+ units were developed or density increased. We again asked that if the school district ever divests itself of Short School, the site be limited to single family homes to preserve a historic, fragile, and already over-congested neighborhood.

Many residents have written members of the Steering Committee and Mayor Al Boro. Please continue to voice your opinion – communications should be sent to:

City of San Rafael
2020 General Plan Steering Committee Members
c/o: Linda Jackson, Community Development Department
1400 5th Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901
fax: 415-485-3184



The Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association Quarterly Newsletter
Year 2002-2003 Number 1
All articles written by GPNA board members.
Editor: Cynthia Landecker Layout: Ken Goudey
Reproduced by: Office Depot at a cost of approximately \$400 for 1400 copies.



A VISIT FROM HAL BROWN

Thanks to County Supervisor Hal Brown, who visited the November GPNA Board meeting and spoke of three current issues of particular interest to him:

- 1) Privacy initiative: Clients of institutions such as banks should have their personal information protected. If the state won't act, protection for consumers will have to occur on a county by county basis.
- 2) To try to relieve some traffic congestion, a system of free passes for school children is being considered for Golden Gate transit buses' existing routes.
- 3) Silveira/St. Vincent's: The county has asked San Rafael to consider a full review of minimum or no development on these lands, due to the urban sprawl and huge traffic increase that would result from current plans. Hal believes that money can be found to build affordable housing without the accompanying development of large tracts of market rate housing.

The GPNA Board were also glad of the opportunity to share with Hal the many issues facing GPNA.

TOT LOT PROGRESS

New Board member Chandra Murphy reports that she and Melissa Daly are continuing their work with the city of San Rafael to plan for the renovation of the tot lot at Gerstle Park. The architectural plans have been completed and the neighborhood volunteers are very pleased with them. They hope that the community will be as well. Participants in the GPNA Annual Meeting Oct. 23 had a chance to see the attractive plans. Any one who is interested in commenting or learning more about the tot lot plans can call Chandra at 482-8033 or email her at murphdtm@yahoo.com. Chandra says that the more input there is, the better. Work on the project may begin early in 2003.

Chandra would like to inform residents that if anyone in the community would like to make a donation to go Towards Gerstle Park, they may do so by sending a letter with the donation to the City of San Rafael, 1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901. The City will send you an acknowledgment for tax purposes.

YUMMIES FOR WILDCARE

Wildcare, a California wild animal rehabilitation center bordering Gerstle Park at 76 Albert Park Lane, will take as food for its sick, injured and permanent animals: acorns, pyracantha berries, black walnuts, blackberries, huckleberries, and possibly other seeds, berries and fruit you might be discarding from your property. To inquire if the facility can use something you are willing to drop off at their center, call 415-456-SAVE.

WEB WORKER WANTED IN WORST WAY

GPNA has a beautiful web site (www.gerstlepark.com), thanks to the creative efforts of Ken Goudey, who also publishes our newsletter. The web site is a great potential means to reach GPNA members and all Gerstle Park residents with web access. It can keep them up to date on very important events and issues, and provide much more detailed, timely information than the Board can impart to residents through quarterly newsletters and occasional emails. But our Ken has limited time, and we really need to find someone with a technical bent who would be willing to volunteer his or her skills to keep the web site up to date. We know you're there—we NEED you!! Please call Ken Goudey at 482-8391 to explore the idea!

EMERGENCY RADIO TRAINING: FUN AND VALUABLE!

If Gerstle Park is ever cut off from the outside world due to a disaster, the first thing to go will be the phone system. We won't be able to call for help or call our families. But amateur radio will remain, and Radio Amateurs can get the message through! Would you like to be the unsung hero on your block?

The Hamilton Wireless Association, with Gerstle Park resident and radio buff Bill Smith, is offering a program to facilitate emergency communication within neighborhoods like ours. The program consists of a radio course of three sessions plus on-air practice. Graduates can earn an Amateur Radio Technician license, be able to use a two-way radio on Amateur frequencies, and learn special emergency communication techniques. They will be asked to acquire a hand-held Walkie-Talkie transceiver (\$150 new).

The cost of the course is \$35. If you see the importance of acquiring this interesting skill, and are willing to make the commitment in time and resources, please call 415-456-4481 for further information and class schedules.

NEW IDEA: GOOD DESIGN AWARD

Once in a while someone in our neighborhood does an outstanding, sensitive job of building or renovating a house or apartment complex. Once in a while a front yard will just bloom with a pretty garden. These efforts grace the street, and make us even prouder of Gerstle Park. GPNA Board members feel that it would be worthwhile to recognize with some simple public appreciation such outstanding work, which benefits all of us in the neighborhood. Accordingly, we are asking if any of you would like to join Board member Cynthia Landecker in formulating standards and a method of recognition of good design. Cynthia would welcome your participation in forming a planning committee (with as few meetings as possible!) Please call her at 456-0221. We are excited about getting started on this after the holidays.

TRAFFIC: A DRIVING ISSUE!

Excessive traffic volume and speed as well as tempers continue to frustrate Gerstle Park residents, but there is a particular problem on First Street, particularly at the C and First Street intersection. Traffic volume on First Street has been counted in excess of 5,000 vehicles per day, which has a debilitating effect on this residential area. This large number of cars must pass through the hazardous, confusing, and awkward First and C Street intersection. The residents around this intersection endure the result from frustrated motorists, which includes vehicle incidents, excessive honking and often verbal altercations. This intersection has also proven fatal to one pedestrian.

The City of San Rafael Traffic Engineer and Department of Public Works have received letters and phone calls from the neighbors and GPNA which not only outline these problems but also include many alternatives for improvement. Some of the ideas presented to the City include changing D Street (between First and Second) back into a two-way street to reduce the traffic volume onto First Street.

At this time the City does not feel that the intersection is a problem for the neighborhood, motorists or pedestrians, and they continue to reject the idea of limiting the traffic flow from D onto First Street.

The GPNA is continuing work on this issue in the hopes of making a positive change for the Gerstle Park neighborhood. On Nov. 12, we sponsored a concerned citizen focus meeting on traffic issues and we are petitioning the City to pursue this matter.

For more information or to make comments, call Steven Schoonover at 456-1954 or Andrea Eneidi at 456-1233.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- December 10:** Monthly Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
December 18: Meeting with Mayor Al Boro, 7 p.m., Short School.
January 2: Monthly Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
February 6: Monthly Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
March 1: **TENTATIVE:** Open Space French Broom Pull
March 6: Monthly Board Meeting

Please check the website at: <http://www.gerstlepark.com>
Or call: 456-0221 for additional event information.



FENCE FIXES

We have had a rash of recent fence problems in the neighborhood. Here is what the municipal code says: Fences within the front setback (usually within the front 15 feet of the property line) cannot exceed 3 feet in height, but can be 4 feet high with anything over the 3 foot limit being 80 percent open. There are also restrictions on the use of chain link or wire mesh. Please check with the Planning Department (refer to Municipal Code 14.16.140) before planning a fence. The municipal code is also available on-line at www.cityofsanrafael.org.

Almost all properties in our neighborhood do not have the front property line at the sidewalk. There is a City-owned planter strip between the sidewalk and the property line, and you should not build your fence on this strip.

NEW NOISE ORDINANCE

The City of San Rafael will have a new noise ordinance in place in December that establishes decibel and time limits on noise. Some new restrictions you should be aware of are:

- Raucous or nerve-wracking noise is mostly prohibited. Some exceptions are necessary construction and property maintenance activities.
- Construction hours are limited to 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and not permitted on Sundays and holidays.
- Property owners can make maintenance noises from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

For more details, visit or call City Hall or go to the City's website at www.cityofsanrafael.org, then click on Municipal Codes. The new ordinance will be under Title 8.13.

Your Neighbors Are My References!!

~Fine Line Painting~

REMINDS YOU:

In addition to exteriors, we do INTERIORS!

Quality work in ALL interior/exterior spaces with experience on all surfaces. We are experienced in applying special custom coatings to unique surfaces.

“Interior/Exterior” SPECIAL 20% OFF

January - April 15th — limited appts. available — Call now for estimates

Fine Line Painting - “The Gerstle Park Specialist”

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

San Rafael Fire Department

Presents

DART

Disaster Area Response Team Training



The Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association is encouraging residents to take DART training by offering to reimburse half (\$20.00) of the \$40.00 tuition for the first twenty graduates. **An adequate number of DART-trained residents is needed to carry out the Gerstle Park Emergency Plan; a plan that can help save lives and property during a disaster. (See back for details.)** Classes fill up months in advance so please apply quickly to reserve a place.

Fire Department Training Center

210 Third Street at Union

(Across from Whole Foods Market)

Next available classes are:

June 17, 24 and July 1, 8, 15, 22, 2003

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

You must attend all 6 classes to become a D.A.R.T. member

For more information, call 458-DART

Clip and Mail

Class registration is \$40.00

Make your check payable to: City of San Rafael

Mail to: San Rafael Fire Department, 1039 C Street, San Rafael, CA 94901

Registration – D.A.R.T. Class – June 2003

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

THE GERSTLE PARK EMERGENCY PLAN

Gerstle Park's draft Emergency Plan will outline how this neighborhood can prepare for and respond to disasters. In Marin we can anticipate earthquakes, fires, flooding and landslides. For up to three days after an 8.3 earthquake, we will be without power, water, sewage disposal or phone communication. Casualties will be high. Families will be separated; rescue personnel will be diverted elsewhere. What will we do?

The Gerstle Park Emergency Plan counts on people like you and your neighbors taking the DART training. This training includes how to prepare for earthquakes, fire suppression techniques and utility control, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue operations and team organization and management.

The Emergency Plan:

DART-trained Street Captains, residing throughout Gerstle Park, will be the nucleus of the plan. Street Captains will help neighbors prepare for an emergency by assessing and planning for each family's particular needs. They will learn which neighbors have useful resources and special knowledge which can help in an emergency. During an emergency, Street Captains will follow a set procedure to help first their block, then other streets. Runners and local Amateur Radio folks will help with vital communication.

An Emergency Response Committee, composed of DART graduates who also serve as Street Captains, has been formed which will train new DART graduates to be Street Captains and promote DART training in Gerstle Park. To assure continuity of the Plan, a Neighborhood Association Board member will maintain a liaison with the San Rafael Fire Department and the Emergency Response Committee.

Since the events of September 11, we have learned that ordinary people can and must take responsibility in dire situations. It is time to take responsibility for yourself, your family, and your neighbors. Please sign up for the DART classes. Your neighborhood needs your commitment.

-Tamra Peters

Author, Gerstle Park Emergency Plan

For more information about the Gerstle Park Emergency Plan call: Lois Tucker at 456-9905.

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 94915-0644

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Do you wish to receive this newsletter at your home? Yes No

Would you like to be included on our mailing list? Yes No

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!