

# Gerstle Park

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## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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Winter 2012



### GPNA Winter Social Monday Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, 5-7 PM



**Panama Hotel**  
4 Bayview St., San Rafael  
Complementary Hors d'oeuvre and Spiced Apple Juice

*Thanks to our friend, Dan Miller at the Panama Hotel*

**Cash Bar**

*Join us!*

It's time to

Renew old friendships and meet new neighbors

\*  
Questions, contact Amy: [president@gerstlepark.com](mailto:president@gerstlepark.com) or 415.450.1520.

### Save the Date

**Wednesday Jan 23, GPNA Annual Meeting**

**6:30 — 9:00 PM**

**Note Date Change!**

**Annual report, Speakers, Great Snacks**

**Trinity Lutheran Church**

**333 Woodland Avenue San Rafael, CA 94901**

\* Make it a New Year's resolution to renew your membership before January 1st. To vote at our Annual Meeting, you must be a current member. GPNA memberships expire December 31, 2012. *See form on page 4.*

### GPNA Board Members Needed

Interested in improving the Gerstle Park Neighborhood? Want to be part of a constructive and fun group of people? The GPNA Board is interested in you. Send a short paragraph describing your history with Gerstle Park and why you would like to join. Terms are 3 years, we meet monthly and have 4-6 events annually. Contact: [president@gerstlepark.com](mailto:president@gerstlepark.com)

### Halloween in Gerstle Park!

Many of our neighbors in Gerstle Park celebrated Halloween with a variety of creative Haunted Houses this year. The Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association asked several "judges" to I.D. their favorites and report back to the GPNA Board. The GPNA honored the following neighbors who went over the top in decorating their homes with prizes that included: vouchers for Brushless Carwash, a gift certificate to Napoli Pizza and Pasta and tickets to the Marin Symphony. Our neighbors on the receiving end of the recognition were thrilled to be acknowledged and appreciated the honoring of their neighborhood "spirit."

Prize winners for best efforts in transforming their homes to "Haunted Houses" included:

**231 Bayview:** The display had a graveyard scene with people in coffins "coming to life"; a scary movie playing; lots of things to look at.

**235 Marin St:** Jason was in the bushes with a chain saw; "body" parts were hung and strewn all over the house as well as the GPNA "cemetery" in the front yard; treats included "refreshments" for the adults as well as candy for the kids.

**12 Ross St:** They shared their very large animated spider atop the entry trellis, and had spooky music in their graveyard.

**217 Bayview:** Their yard was filled with scarecrows with pumpkin heads, some of which were occupied by the "undead" ready to tap you on the shoulder and stare into your eyes.

The GPNA also awarded three Honorable Mention prizes of gift certificates to Muffin Mania to neighbors at 153 Clark St.; 533 D St.; and 101 Marin St.

A huge Thank You to all who generously donated prizes - the Marin Symphony, Brushless Carwash, and Napoli Pizza and Pasta/Sam Sargent; and to our judges who ventured fearlessly out into the dark and stormy night.

Thank you to everyone for making Gerstle Park a great—and entertaining—place to live!

- Cindi Hubbard, GPNA Board



Our neighbors enjoying the Annual LUAU picnic in August!

## President's Column

### Hi Neighbors!

Gerstle Park glistens with rain, autumn colors abound, moss and ferns decorate our woods while the sun peeks through on another glorious Marin day. I hope this finds you and your families amidst preparation for year-end celebrations, for it is a time to pause and reconnect. We as neighbors can also reach out to those close to us and share our stories at this special time of the year.

Our Board enjoyed meeting many of you the late summer Luau picnic in Gerstle Park. Thanks to everyone on the Board, but especially Gina Silvestri for yeoman's work at transporting us all to the tropics with her little grass huts, volcano, beautiful tablecloths, games and steel band music. Cindi Hubbard organized prizes and the grilling troops, Hugo, Joli and David the food and Heather Stewart photographed the day. Thanks to you, neighbors, for delicious dishes and for volunteering. What a great event!

Did you get a glimpse of Halloween in Gerstle Park? Replete with spooky weather, our close-knit and historic neighborhood was transformed into a ghoulish graveyard. The trick or treaters loved the setting (Thanks to Board members again for arranging judges and prizes) and to our generous neighbors, there for the kids at the knock of a door.

Your Board spent a Saturday morning in technology training with WebMaster Darren Sargent. Kudos to Darren for helping us re-design our website to make it content rich. Stay tuned!

Join us Thursday, January 24th for our Annual Meeting. This is always a special evening. We vote for new Board members, reminisce about our year and always invite guest speakers. The food is scrumptious and the company delightful. It's a great time to meet new people and renew old friendships. Details to follow.

Interested in joining our Board? This talented group of dedicated neighbors has a lot of fun and our work is rewarding. We certainly welcome newcomers. Please contact me if you'd like to learn more.

Yours truly,

Amy Likover

GPNA President

president@gerstlepark.com

C: 415.450.1520

## Open Space Update

The French Broom pulling season is now officially open. The rains have softened the soil so that removal is possible without breaking backs or breaking the stalk off and leaving behind a root that will sprout. In the past we have had people use weed wackers on Broom. Yes, it looks good afterwards, but the regrowth rate is about 90%.

If we can conquer the seeds, we can conquer the Broom. Unfortunately, the seeds can remain dormant in the ground for 30 to 50 years before sprouting. We do know that French, Spanish and Scotch Broom (our most prevalent species) flowers in the second year. Using this idea we experimented with removing all the visible Broom and then coming back two years later to remove those that sprouted before they could flower and spread seed. What a failure that idea was. Yes, we removed all the visible Broom, but missed those hidden behind trees, in clumps of grass or under ferns. Came back two years later and they had already gone to seed.

We have a group of Broom removal volunteers that you may see in the open space from time to time. All of them work on this in their spare time. If you would like to volunteer please contact Hugo Landecker <clandecker@saber.net>. Also, you can join the Gerstle Park email group. Just let Hugo know.

## News from the San Rafael Group:

*An independent city-wide coalition of residents and businesses*

Hugo Landecker, who heads up San Rafael Group (Independent of GPNA) reports that the B Street Safeway food store now has two security people on duty from 3 PM-12 AM. In addition they have random plain-clothes security people. You should see a much improved dynamic in and outside of the store. The store manager reports that liquor theft is almost nil and the employees are delighted with the change. The Safeway District Manager is very aware of our concerns and is committed to support the community.

Previously, our B Street Safeway had been identified by neighbors and the police as a free source of alcohol for the homeless and underage people from all over the County. Safeway had a "no chase" policy. Just go in the store take whatever liquor you want and walk out. Theft of liquor has been exceeding \$100,000 per year. The clerks are now noticing many people coming into the store, going to the liquor aisle, seeing security and walking out. The new policy should have a positive impact on public intoxication.

On another front Community Action Marin reports they plan to a team of mental health people to outreach to the homeless community,

Hugo has been attending weekly meetings with Ritter Center, St Vincents', downtown business, Business Improvement District, police and others. Progress is happening but there is much work to be done.

## GPNA Financial Corner

Treasurer report as of November 2012

**Current balance**

**\$2153.64**

# San Rafael Police K-9 Program Needs our Support

The San Rafael Police Department lost their K9 program in 2003 due to budget cuts. The officers of the SRPD have stepped up and led the efforts to reestablish this program and have formed the San Rafael Police K9 Association. This program is run solely through fundraising and the volunteer efforts of our officers. They are reaching out to residents and local businesses asking for financial support. Your donations will help us make San Rafael a safer community by bringing back this essential function.

Please visit <http://www.srpolicyk9.org> to find out more and help our Officers make this program happen, and thank you for supporting our police officers.

Benefits of a canine unit:

- Searching for and/or apprehending dangerous criminals.
- Locating missing children and the elderly.
- Providing back-up to an already depleted force.
- Being a bridge between the community by hosting demonstrations at schools and other public events.
- Reducing the availability of narcotics in our community.

# SR Planning Commission Splits Vote on Large Group Home Regulation

Since March 2011 there has been a moratorium in San Rafael on new unregulated Large Group Homes as the City Attorneys study possible zoning regulations per directions from the City Council. Tuesday, November 13th the SR Planning Commission voted on three motions based on the three options City staff had crafted (See Agenda, Staff Report, <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/meetings/>) to regulate or not regulate unlicensed Large Group Homes in San Rafael. All three motions ended in a split vote. There is no recommendation from the Commission to the Council on this very urgent matter. In sum, four of the six Commissioners present were in favor of regulation whereas two Commissioners favored a wait and see strategy. So although the report comes with split votes, there are four Commissioners who understand the necessity to regulate these businesses. Option 2 and also Option 3 (once amended by Commissioner Pick) required the transparent notice and hearing and four Commissioners voted for either 2 or 3. The City Council will take up this matter at a time to be announced.

Our Association Board voted in favor of Large Group Home regulation for health and safety purposes and urges the City Council to do the same. We request transparency and recommend discretionary rather than ministerial approval. The health and safety of our neighborhood homes is our guiding principle for this issue. Permitting and planning for unregulated Large Group Homes should be properly noticed and heard and granted the appeal process required of other homes in the neighborhood.

Please contact Amy Likover [president@gerstlepark.com](mailto:president@gerstlepark.com) if you wish to receive emails about future Council meetings on this topic.

# HISTORY NOTE: 100 Years of Water for Gerstle Park by Cynthia Landecker



The Landeckers are an active and integral part of this amazing neighborhood.

Our neighborhood streets are being torn up by MMWD in the giant undertaking of replacing the district's aging water lines. Well, aging is the right word! We have discovered that Marin Municipal Water District is celebrating its 100th birthday this year.

The district was formed after a new state law made regional water districts possible, and MMWD was the first in the state. Before this, water was delivered to citizens by five separate private companies (who fought the new district), or in many cases by individual wells. We know of one mini-system that consisted of San Rafael Avenue well water being pumped up hill to a tank on Grove Street, and then flowing downhill by gravity to several homes.

Many of the old Victorians in our neighborhood originally were assigned very low meter numbers, which brings home to us how sparsely populated San Rafael was in 1912. MMWD is discovering that some of the old original lead pipes leading off the main to individual Victorians are still in place. Our water should be a little safer now!

You can find out more about our water's history by picking up the book, "Mount Tamalpais and the Marin Municipal Water District", an Images of America publication written by Jack Gibson. It is available in book stores.

## Holiday safety reminder

As the holidays approach be sure to remember a few key tips:

- If purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches, and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break and keep the stand filled with water. If purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "fire-resistant".
- Be sure to keep your vehicle locked and gifts or boxes out of sight - both in your car or around your trash bins. It's a visual of what you just received and could be an invitation for thieves.
- If you plan to travel for the holidays, don't discuss your plans with strangers. Have a trusted friend or neighbor to keep an eye on your home and use lights on timers.

## GPNA Calendar of Events *Tentative schedule*

Dec 13	Thur	GPNA Monthly Board Meeting
Dec 17	Mon	GPNA Winter Social
Jan 23	Wed	Annual Meeting

We encourage all to attend the Board Meetings which are held each month from 7-9PM at different locations. Please verify time and location prior to meeting by emailing [info@gerstlepark.com](mailto:info@gerstlepark.com)



# Gerstle Park

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> - December 31<sup>st</sup>*  
One Vote Per Individual - \$20/year (\$10 seniors age 65+)

NEW MEMBER     RENEWAL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*all GPNA correspondence is via email*

Payment Type:     CHECK     CASH

**TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$** \_\_\_\_\_



*Check events of interest to you. We welcome you to a year full of neighborhood fun & friendship!*

- Spring Fling Egg Hunt
- Annual September Picnic
- Newsletter Reporting, Quarterly
- December Caroling
- Other social events
- January Annual Meeting Refreshments
- Summer Garage Sale
- Membership promotion, year-long
- Halloween events
- New neighbor welcoming
- Open space invasive species eradication, Nov-May

Neighborhood advocacy in San Rafael city government, Year-long

*Check Issues of interest to you.*

- Homelessness
- Gerstle Park
- Group home regulation
- Zoning enforcement
- Albert Park
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

visit our website  
[www.gerstlepark.com](http://www.gerstlepark.com)

**Welcome to the GPNA!**