

Gerstle Park

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Early Fall 2013



GPNA Annual Picnic – *Picnic in the Park*

Gerstle Park

Sunday, September 15

3 pm – 6 pm

Bring your own main dish to barbecue, and also a side dish to share.

Last names A-L	Salads or Vegetables
Last names M-S	Appetizers
Last names T-Z	Desserts



GPNA provides the grill & charcoal, condiments, and non-alcoholic beverages -We'll dance to the bluegrass music of Savannah Blue. This is a great time to catch up with old friends and make new acquaintances.

Please volunteer to help!
president@gerstlepark.com or
785.7184

Welcome Coffee- A New Tradition!

On Saturday, June 22, at Muffin Mania, about 25 friendly Gerstle Park Neighbors got to know one another. Amidst the sparkling conversation, someone was passing muffins while others were filling their coffee cup and exchanging emails and phone numbers. Many thanks go to Patricia Leeds and Bob Urban for hosting the event and to Ilona Galante for her kind hospitality.

Candidates Night - San Rafael City Council

Invitation from the Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods
Wednesday, Sept 11, 2013 at 6:00 pm
San Rafael Corporate Center – TAM Seminar Room
750 Lindero St.

In attendance will be 5 candidates running for 2 Council vacancies: Greg Brockbank, Kate Colin, Maribeth Bushey-Lang, Peter Levi and Randy Warren. The forum will be moderated followed by audience questions.

Tymber Cavasian

Afternoon of Bocce Report

On July 27th, GPNA held our first "Afternoon of Bocce" at Marin Bocce. Neighbors picnic'd, visited with friends & learned how to play the game. All participants were treated to live acoustic guitar music from musician (...and GPNA Webmaster) Greg Barnett. Everyone also enjoyed a cup of San Rafael's own Fiorello's Italian gelato. Special thanks to Marin Bocce and my Bocce Event Committee, made up of Bocce Playing GPNA Members, for all their help in getting this event ROLLING.

Gina Silvestri, GPNA Board Member



Garage Sale Report



The 2013 GPNA Garage Sale was another neighborhood success! This year, in hopes of making a great event even better, we offered neighbors the choice of having their sale in Gerstle Park OR at their home. There were 12 sales in

the Park and another 56 at individual residences around the neighborhood. We also made registration available online. That sure made last minute registration easier on all! We are pleased to report that the sale brought in over \$1,750 in sale registrations and membership renewals – money that will be well spent throughout the year on events and newsletter printing costs. Thanks to all who participated... including Mother Nature for blessing us with mild weather that day! See more photos of the 2013 Garage Sale in the Photo Gallery at www.gerstlepark.com.

We welcome your Garage Sale feedback – please email us at garagesale@gerstlepark.com.

Gina Silvestri, GPNA Board Member

President's Column

Hello Neighbors!

I hope you are enjoying another sublime summer in Gerstle Park. Our friendly and historic neighborhood connects beautifully to the many activities in San Rafael, a great little city. We also enjoy easy access to Marin County's amazing natural beauty. Read on about hikes through our Open Space.

There's a lot of good reading in this late summer newsletter. GPNA neighbors have enjoyed many merry summer gatherings. In this issue read about the Annual Picnic, reports from the Garage Sale, the Bocce event and the New Member Coffee. You may wish to attend the Council Candidate forum. Dottie Lemieux, our GPNA interviewer, brings you a column about the historic Gerstle Park Inn.

If you would like to join Dottie as a **reporter**, or are interested in helping **edit and design the newsletter**, please contact me. I am also looking for a **Board Secretary**, perfect if you like taking minutes and summarizing meetings. Do you enjoy meeting new people? Join the **membership or nominating committee**. Are you happiest organizing parties? Join the **events group**. If you like **tech**, join us! Do you want to go **caroling** this winter? Spearhead that event! We 4 Board members are doing multiple jobs and while we love our organization, some helping hands would be most appreciated.

Thanks again for everything you do, and see you at the picnic!

Yours truly,

Amy Likover, GPNA President
president@gerstlepark.com 415.450.1520

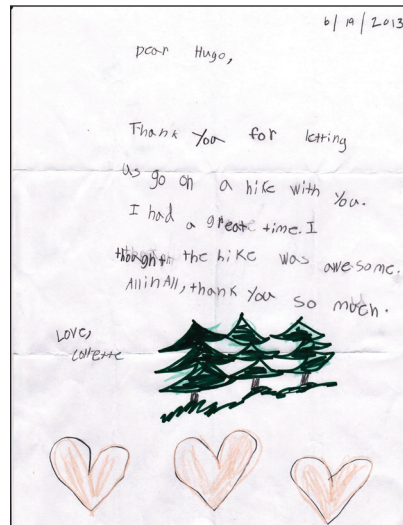
GPNA Financial Corner

7/29/13 balance \$4693.58

Hugo Landecker Treasurer

Suggestions - Marin County Sheriff and San Rafael Police

Residents are urged to turn on "talk radio," and lock doors and windows when they are away from home - no matter where you live. Don't forget to lock your car as well and avoid leaving valuable items inside where they can be easily stolen. Be aware of the activity in your neighborhood, note the license plate number of suspicious vehicles and call the Police Department. Ask your neighbor to keep an eye on your home while you're away or call for vacation watch. Police: 485.3000. Always call 911 for emergencies. Read the National Crime Prevention Council's safety tips at www.ncpc.org



Thank You Letters

We very much enjoyed Hugo as our nature guide around the trails of Gerstle Park.

He has a great way with the kids! We

are part of a YMCA adventure guide tribe named The Soaring Eagles. Each month, dads and their daughters meet and to do a community building activity.

Hugo taught us about the history of the area, showed us the rock quarry, and explained the impact invasive plants have on the neighborhood trails. Most importantly, he taught us how to identify poison oak!

Adam Treewater, GPNA Neighbor

A Gracious Slice of Old San Rafael in Gerstle Park

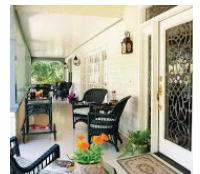
I meet Jim and Judy Dowling on the veranda of the historic **Gerstle Park Inn**, at 34 Grove Street, just off San Rafael, near leafy Gerstle Park. The Dowlings bought the property in 1995 and restored what had been a drug and alcohol rehab facility to a beautiful and historically accurate structure.

Originally the Inn was one of several buildings on two properties built in the 1880's by two influential San Rafael families, the Gerstles and Schlosses. When the families merged through marriage, the estates became one. An arsonist destroyed the main home in the 1950s leaving the smaller future Inn building and a carriage house that is now home to the Dowlings.

Remnants of a large redwood grove, some awe-inspiring oak and cedars and a fruit orchard provide plenty of charm, peace and tranquility to the setting. The Dowlings spent many months renovating the building and grounds, a pleasant respite from their years in corporate management.

They were ready to settle down when they bought the property and made it into an Inn, one that receives visitors from around the world, half of them repeat customers.

Jim does all the maintenance work, Judy the bookkeeping and they both work on the elaborate breakfasts they serve





their guests. The omelet list alone would be worth the visit. "It's my favorite part of the job," says Jim, whose years in hotel management kept him apart from the guests. "I love to see my guests and hear their stories."

"We've seen their kids grow up over the years," adds Judy, as many of their regulars have families in the area and return to this spot for holidays and family reunions.

"We don't advertise much," says Judy. "We like it quiet here and so do our guests," so there are no weddings or large events. But a spacious conference room is available for special meetings.

They cater to a diverse crowd. Most of their trade comes from locals, friends and family who come to visit. They also get business travelers and visitors from San Francisco, looking for a getaway. One half are repeat visitors. Loyal guests are vocal in their praise of Gerstle Park Inn and of the 10 hotels in San Rafael reviewed by the Tripadvisor site the Inn rates a solid number 1, a fact of which the Dowlings are understandably proud.

When asked what they liked least about running a large upscale B and B, they both laugh, and Jim exclaims, "Plumbing!" They also wish they could travel more, but acknowledge they enjoy being in such a beautiful setting, among the trees, which is one perk of running this business.

"We have to be available 24/7, in case of emergencies," says Judy. Sometimes people call for rooms in the middle of the night, using the emergency line. "Europeans especially like to be spontaneous and don't make reservations ahead, so we have had the occasional 4 AM call," says Judy.

"Many of the guests go sightseeing in wine country or the City during the day," says Jim, "so our only time to be with them is breakfast." The Dowlings also love Thanksgiving and Christmas time, says Judy.

I was surprised to learn that many Gerstle Park residents don't know about the Inn. That's a shame, because it's the perfect place for that next family reunion.

Dottie Lemieux, GPNA Member

Goings on in San Rafael

See our City Manager's informative monthly communication
<http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/citymgr-snapshot/>

Thanks to a Neighbor

Lois Tucker spent 5 hours cleaning up the Wolfe Grade/ Wolfe Ave. triangle area. She removed dead wood from the trees near the Gerstle Park sign, pulled weeds and broom, trimmed lilies and pruned trees that were growing crooked. She has also been watering plants all season. Thanks, Lois!

From Short School

Hello Gerstle Park Community,

Thank you to all for supporting our growth and construction over this past summer. We truly appreciate your patience with the increased levels of noise associated with facility updates. Once the work is done, the school will look even better and the students will be able to benefit from the modernized facilities.



This fall we will be collecting input and feedback from community members, Short School Staff, District Administration, and members of the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association to begin to discuss the future of Short School. As we are now entering our 4th year of operation, we want to reach out to our neighbors to be a part of this conversation.

We are always looking for photos or historical memorabilia associated with the school. Just recently a neighbor kindly donated the 1955 class picture. If you have any stories about Short School that you can share or any other collectables, please contact us as we are trying to get a better sense of the history of Short School. Please contact the front office or email me.

The first day back for San Rafael City Schools is Thursday August 22nd.

Thank you,

Pepe Gonzalez,
Principal
pgonzalez@srcs.org
Short Elementary School 485-3793

Local Hoteliers Offer Discounts for GPNA Members

Thanks to Jim Dowling at the Gerstle Park Inn and Dan Miller at the Panama Hotel who extend a 10% Discount to you. Contact info@gerstlepark.com for membership validation. Click on the hotels websites for reservations and information.

<http://www.gerstleparkinn.com/>
<http://www.panamahotel.com/>

GPNA Calendar of Events

Thursday, August 22	Board Meeting*
Sunday, September 15	Picnic in the Park
Thursday, September 19	Board Meeting
Thursday, October 17	Board Meeting
Thursday, October 31	Halloween House Contest, Trick or Treating
Monday, December 9	GPNA Social, Panama Hotel
Thursday, December 19	Board Meeting
Thursday, January 23	Annual Meeting

*Contact info@gerstlepark.com for location, to verify dates/times



Gerstle Park

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Annual Membership Form

Membership year runs from January 1st - December 31st

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

Please complete the information below and return with your check to:
GPNA, P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael CA, 94915-0644

☐ NEW MEMBER ☐ RENEWAL

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Cell: _____

Email Address: _____ Date: _____

all GPNA correspondence is via email

Payment Type: ☐ CHECK ☐ CASH

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Interested in volunteering for the following events or committees?

If so, please indicate with one or more checks.

Descriptions can be found on our website, www.gerstlepark.com.

☐ **COMMITTEES**

- ☐ Membership Committee - promotion, organization and staffing membership tables at events
- ☐ Open Space Committee - weeding of invasive species (French Broom) in neighborhood open space, Nov-May

☐ **EVENTS** *includes planning, decorating, helping day-of:*

- ☐ Fall Picnic
- ☐ Christmas Caroling
- ☐ Garage Sale
- ☐ Halloween Decorating Contest (judging)
- ☐ Spring Fling Egg Hunt

☐ **NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCACY IN SAN RAFAEL**

- ☐ City Planning
- ☐ Homelessness issue
- ☐ Large Group Home Regulation(s) Committee
- ☐ Parks
 - ☐ Gerstle Park ☐ Albert Park
- ☐ Zoning enforcement

☐ **NEWSLETTER** *Quarterly*

- ☐ Distribution
- ☐ Editing
- ☐ Graphic Design

☐ **PHOTOGRAPHY**

☐ **WEBSITE**

Welcome to the GPNA!