

Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

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



Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

August is upon us and I am still learning all that is involved in being President of the Association. It feels like a good time to re-acknowledge Tymber Cavasian, our former President. There are many matters to attend to in the neighborhood and some are light and fun like the picnic and the Spring Fling. Other matters are of significant importance and concern such as how traffic flows through our streets, flood control, supporting neighbors in pursuing improvements to their homes while keeping with the neighborhood style, and keeping the open space safe and clean. Tymber did a great job as President by bringing her passion and skills to the table. She went above and beyond by making the time to attend many city meetings, tracking of local tree health, saving stray animals and much more.

Building on all the great momentum Tymber generated, I have turned my attention to shoring up the process and administrative aspects of the job, beefing up our membership, looking for ways to improve what we already have going and seeking opportunities to add value.

What we really need in order to make some BIG improvements are neighbors to help us with the GPNA website and a CPA or Attorney to help us sort out our Corporate Status and filings. Web-wise, we have many great ideas that we'd like to implement in terms of services and information and no one with the time to do so. Legally we've got some catch up to do! Can you help us better reach the community with your web development skills or apply your accounting or legal knowledge to strengthen the GPNA's infrastructure? Please contact me directly if you can.

Read on for updates and news of upcoming events. Thanks again Tymber, and thanks to all of our members who demonstrate time and again their commitment to this community.

DRAGON PAINTING CONTEST

The Gerstle Park dragon is famous! It is a landmark, a play structure and now offers a chance to do something wild and wonderful. If you can imagine a better dragon, please color the enclosed outline with your vision and send it in to: GPNA Dragon Contest P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael, CA 94915-0644 by **September 15, 2007**.

The Board will select the best submission at our monthly meeting on October 4. If your artwork is selected, the dragon will be professionally painted to match and you will win a prize as well!



Additional outlines are available online:
<http://www.gerstlepark.com/Dragon.pdf>

ANNUAL PICNIC:

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 FROM 4:00-7:00 P.M.

Yippee, it's picnic time!! This year the picnic will be held on a Sunday. We received feedback that Thursday night is difficult for families with kids in school, and darkness falling earlier. So, we decided to hold the picnic on Sunday, September 9th from 4:00-7:00 p.m. We are looking into some new musical entertainment possibilities, and have a few other fun ideas up our sleeves. Please come out for a fun afternoon in our beautiful park and visit with your neighbors, make some new friends and eat great food.

Families with last names beginning with A-L:
Please bring a dessert

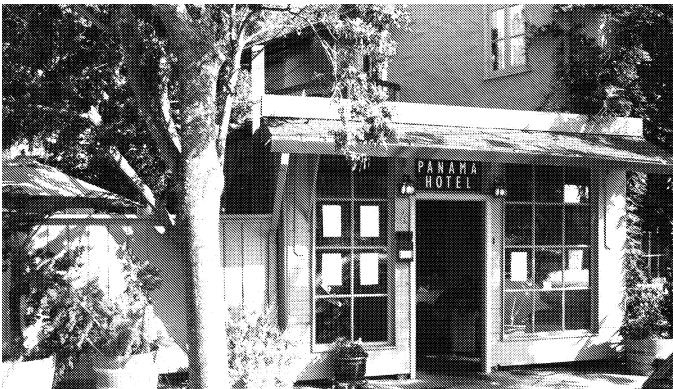
Families with last names beginning with M-Z:
Please bring a side dish or salad.

GPNA NETWORKING AND SOCIAL MIXERS

On June 4 we held GPNA's 1st Networking/Social mixer and by time you're reading this newsletter, the second mixer on August 6 will have happened. Our inaugural mixer, at the Panama Hotel setting was just perfect. Owner, Dan Miller provided a delicious assortment of appetizers, wine was available for sale and Dan provided room tours while a hotel history lesson was enjoyed by all.

The mixers are designed to provide a venue to help neighbors meet neighbors and to pitch your business or maybe find a sitter for your home, kids, or pets. Wouldn't it be great to find out a neighbor holds expertise in an area you need some help with? That's what the mixers are for so watch for announcements about the next one.

For more information, contact Board Member, Bob Beyea @ 408-4016 bobbeyea@yahoo.com



GARAGE SALE RECAP

Thank you to all who participated in the GPNA Garage Sale! As always, it was a lot of fun, we attracted treasure hunters from all areas and lots of money and laughs were exchanged for "one man's junk . . ."

This year we decided to send a letter to those folks who participated in the garage sale without registering with the GPNA. Our intention with the letter was to support those who did register and therefore helped cover GPNA's costs.

We considered that some folks might be put off by the letter, but our hope is that a conversation might begin in the neighborhood which would

impact peoples' thought processes in the years to come. Meanwhile, the recent letter garnered us a new member and possibly a new board member, as well as a few grumbles. The bottom line is a lot of volunteer energy and time are put into promoting the event for the community. Somehow it just doesn't feel right when folks choose to have their sale, on that particular day, without registering.

OUR BEAUTIFUL NEIGHBORHOOD AND HELPING TO KEEP IT THAT WAY

The Gerstle Park neighborhood is beautiful in many ways including naturally growing fruit trees, occasional deer sightings, Gerstle Park itself, our open space and numerous trees and wild flowers. We are indeed very lucky to live in such a beautiful spot. Easy access to downtown San Rafael and the Highway 101 also contribute to our high quality-of-life.

We also have our share of litter and unwanted household items out on our curbs that interfere with our enjoyment of the beautiful surroundings. Please help to keep our neighborhood an attractive and welcome place to live by being a good neighbor. Please, don't litter and if you see litter, take the opportunity to pick it up and toss it appropriately.

If you missed the annual GPNA Garage Sale and/or have items that you would like to get rid of at any other time, rather than leaving items on the curb for an indefinite period, please donate items to the Goodwill, Salvation Army, Life House or a charity of your choice. Salvation Army will pick-up at your doorstep!

Goodwill is located at 809 Lincoln Ave in San Rafael, (415) 456-5273. Drop off hours are Mon-Sat: 7:15 am-6:00 pm, Sun 10:00 am-5:00 pm

The Salvation Army is located at 351 Mission Street in San Rafael, (415) 454-7201. Drop off hours are Mon-Sat. 9:30-5:30 pm and their number to schedule a pick up at your home is (800) 728-7825.

Life House of Marin picks up used items. Their phone number to schedule a pick up is (415) 626-5710. Mon-Fri, 8:00 am - 3:00 pm.

October 27 is **Make a Difference Day** and the City of San Rafael sponsors cleanup efforts. In previous

years, we had a Gerstle Park neighborhood focused team. We want to participate again and need some help. If you can help lead the group or would like to participate in the cleanup day, please write to info@GerstlePark.com.

Thanks for helping to make Gerstle Park such a desirable place to live!

STREET SWEEPING



Another way to help keep Gerstle Park clean and beautiful is to note street sweeping days and make sure your car is clear of the sweeper. San Rafael only does two street sweeps in our neighborhood each fall. So it's important to move cars and push leaves, dirt

and litter out to where it can be picked up! The machines cannot pick up piles of leaves or debris. Debris must be accessible and in small drifts in order for the sweeper to pick it up. Our neighborhood is divided into two street sweeping routes. Here's the schedule:

Rt. 11 is Clark, Woods, Miraflores and West:
Tuesdays, 8/21 and 10/2

Rt. 15 is the rest of Gerstle Park:
Mondays, 8/13 and 10/1

You can see the Street Sweeping Map, check your specific location, and note any updates to the schedule at <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/Assets/Public+Works/StreetSweep/StreetSweep2997.pdf>

WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT DART?

by guest writer and Gerstle Park resident Ken Homer

Almost everyone I know has a long to do list, which for various reasons, they never seem to get around to completing. The DART training was on my *should-do* list for years. What moved me to action was watching Spike Lee's heart-breaking

documentary, *When The Levees Broke*, about the government's horribly bungled response to Hurricane Katrina. It was then that my wife and I realized that in the event of a major earthquake in the Bay Area, we were likely to be on our own for much longer than the three days of food and water we had set aside to see us through. The DART training suddenly jumped from our *should-do* list to our *must-do* list!

The DART training confirmed our fears that in the event of a major earthquake, help may be much longer than three or four days in coming. More importantly, DART helped us to take practical steps to prepare for the worst and so become more confident and able to respond when needed. By the end of the DART course, we knew that whether it's a big quake or a major flood or fire, we will be prepared to ensure our own safety and well being and then see to the safety and well being of our neighbors.

We were so jazzed by what we learned in DART that we began talking about it with friends and neighbors. It has been a bit of a shock to discover how many people have done nothing to prepare themselves for an earthquake, fire or flood. To be fair, some folks we spoke with said they have set aside food and water for a couple days. But these same folks said they expect to be taken care of by local emergency services pretty quickly. It is so easy to assume that as long as we have food and water for three days, everything will be fine. There is a widespread expectation that after a couple of days the crisis will abate and local firefighters will begin distributing stockpiled food and water to those in need. After all, that's what we pay taxes for, isn't it?

The reality is if we do experience a major catastrophe, it is the neighborhoods and residents that escape severe damage but are unprepared that are most vulnerable to prolonged discomfort or suffering. It could take weeks to restore infrastructure services and emergency service crews will be far too busy dealing with larger issues to be of much use to us. Our best hope lies in learning about the kinds of dangers we face, getting to know our neighbors and organizing together to develop plans and practices to handle the inevitable. Taking the DART class is a great way to start that preparation.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

by guest writer and Gerstle Park resident
Diane Fischler

Where can you practice putting out fires in teams while your classmates shout encouragement? Where can you walk into a darkened room with scared and injured people and in a matter of moments, quickly perform triage and first aid, and then a few minutes later, pretend to be a terrified disaster survivor screaming for help?

Where can you lift two tons of cement off of a trapped victim, while a 230 lb fireman is standing on top of it, shouting orders at you?

Where can you wear a baggy orange vest, orange hat, and plastic goggles while learning the skills you need in order to safely and competently ensure that your family is safe in a disaster? Where can you learn how to ensure your family safety, then go out into your neighborhood, offering whatever assistance you safely can, until emergency personnel arrive and can take over?

And where can you have the experience of arriving at the scene of a disaster, quickly sizing up the situation, going on a search and rescue mission, triaging the injured, administering first

aid, and then going back out and doing it again?

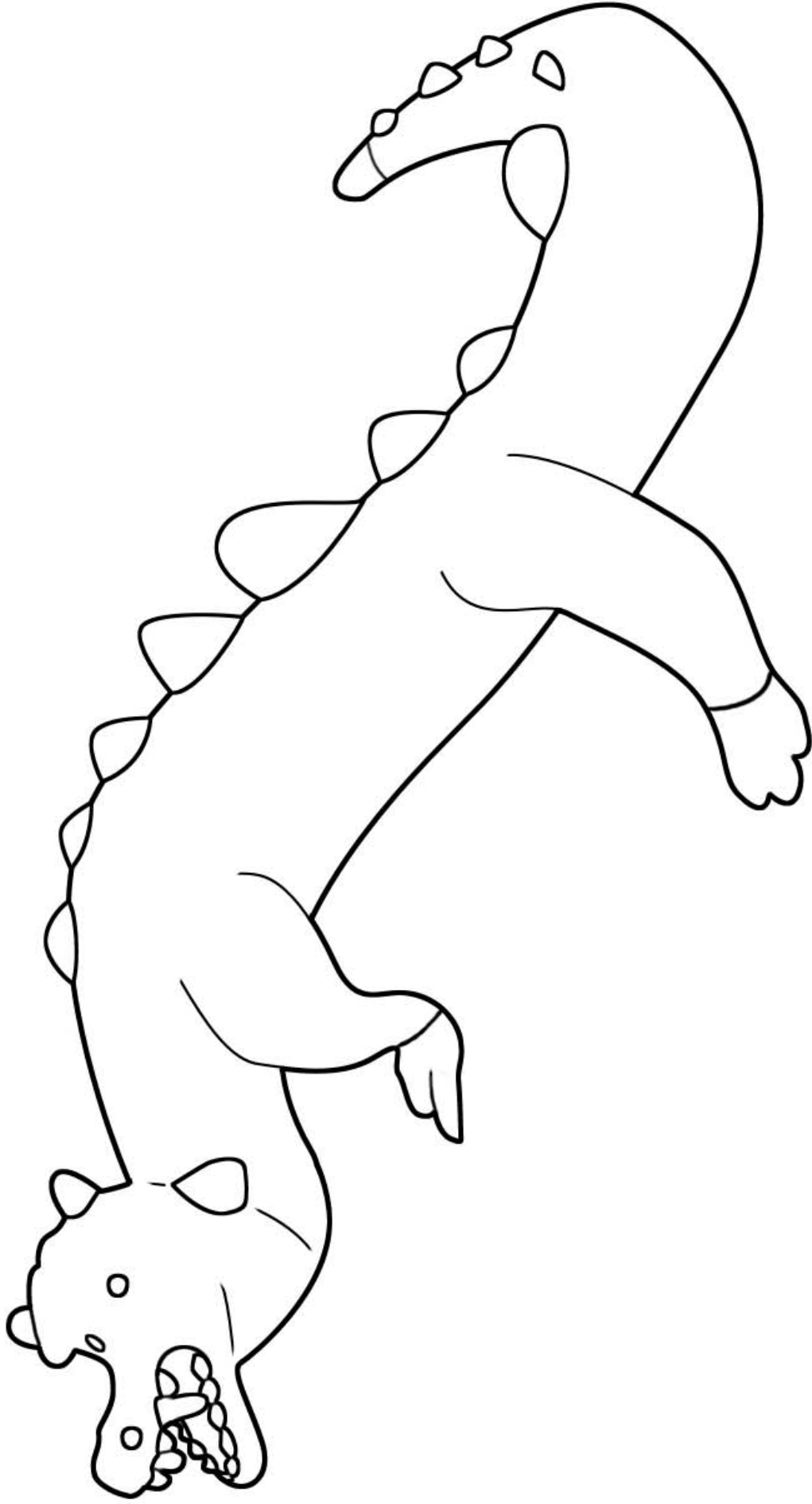
The answer is: DART, the Disaster Area Response Team. This is a comprehensive eight-week class, where participants get plenty of hands-on experience doing all of the above, and more. Then they have satisfaction of knowing they learned how to prepare for any sort of disaster that might occur and are equipped to help their neighbors.

Don't put it off! Sign up today by calling 415-485-3488. GPNA will pay for 50% of your registration upon completion of the class!

GPNA 2007 CALENDAR

September 6	Thursday	Monthly Board Meeting*
September 9	Sunday	Annual Picnic
October 1	Monday	Street Sweeping, all except:
October 2	Tuesday	Clark, Woods, Miraflores, and West
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 or wish to attend a meeting, please contact:
info@gerstlepark.com



Color and return (by September 15, 2007) to:

GPNA Dragon Contest

P.O. Box 150644

San Rafael, California 94915-0644

Artist's Name: _____

