

Gerstle Park

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Spring 2013



Get Ready for Spring Fling

Saturday, March 23rd

10 AM Sharp!

The Gerstle Park Playground

Be there by 9:30 AM with your baskets, cameras, parents, grandparents and extended family to join us in this Gerstle Park ritual. Our Springtime Bunny will visit and pose for photos with the children. She will have already sprinkled the park with candy-filled eggs and special prize notes. **This is a fun activity for children 9 and under.** Younger children (up to 5 years old) will gently search the playground while older children carefully comb the upper level of Gerstle Park, including the Redwood Grove. This very special Gerstle Park event is not to be missed. It's a great time to see old friends, meet new families, and renew your membership. Join us for fruit, coffee and pastry! Donations gladly accepted. Please contact info@gerstlepark.com if you can help.

Annual Meeting in January

It was great seeing so many neighbors at our annual business meeting and report of the year's events. About 50 people turned out to welcome guests Mayor Gary Phillips (pictured with Amy Likover) and Police Officers Augustyn and Prince. Hugo Landecker and the Mayor reported on progress with the issue of homelessness in San Rafael. The police officers answered questions and provided brochures on crime prevention. Thanks to Cindi Hubbard for overseeing 2012 photographs and the slideshow, to Judy Gallegos, Cynthia Landecker, Samantha Sargent and Bob Urban for staffing the membership table. We all enjoyed scrumptious, beautiful



Photo by Tom Obletz

fruit and vegetable platters, antipasti and baked goods prepared by GPNA Board member Gina Silvestri and her mother Valerie Silvestri. Two lucky neighbors won free court time at Marin Bocce Federation. Thanks to Marin Bocce, Safeway, Starbucks and United Markets for their generous donations.

Gathering with Department of Public Works, March 4th

We had an informative neighborhood meeting at the Panama Hotel with special guest Jim Forsythe, San Rafael Streets Superintendent. During the social time before the meeting, neighbors enjoyed conversations with new neighbors and old friends. Hugo Landecker teamed with Jim Forsythe from the Public Works Maintenance Department to discuss neighborhood problems that we get help on from Public Works. Street sweeping was discussed and good suggestions came from the audience for improving notification to residents. Public Works removes abandoned items from street corners. They report that in some instances they have been able to identify those responsible and the consequences are severe. Last year DPW removed at least 200 tons of this debris. Public Works also removes debris from campsites in our open space. Recently 30 tons was cleaned from San Rafael Hill. Special thanks to Proprietor Dan Miller for hosting and for the complimentary hors d'oeuvre.



Neighbors gather to hear from Hugo Landecker and Jim Forsythe at Panama Hotel.

School Vote - April

Check your mailboxes in early April for your ballot to participate in a special Vote-By-Mail election. Measures A and B will be included on the ballot to maintain current levels of local funding for San Rafael City Schools. Ballots must be returned by mail no later than May 7th and the measures require 2/3 majority to pass.

Opportunities Galore with the GPNA

Love Events? Join us in planning and coordinating fun seasonal events!

Good in Design or Writing? Put your expertise to work with our newsletter.

Are you a Photographer or Video expert? The GPNA would welcome your help documenting our events.

Like Taking Minutes? Consider joining the GPNA Board as Recording Secretary.

For details, please contact info@gerstlepark.com

President's Column

Happy Springtime, Everyone!

The Magnolia and fruit trees are in bloom as I write and though our weather vacillates from balmy to stormy, you have to love that Springtime is here.

There is much news to share in the GPNA. We welcome involvement at many levels. New to the Board this month is Ross Parmenter whose lives near his Gerstle Park business. Ross is committed to our activities and brings a fresh perspective. Greg Barnett stepped forward to be our new webmaster and has taken to the task with enthusiasm and pragmatism. Many thanks go to outgoing webmaster Darren Sargent for the thoughtful transition and years of service. The Board thanks Cindi Hubbard for her many positive contributions as Board member: excellent minutes, superb organizational skills and for crafting better membership files. We also thank Heather Stewart for her creative design of our newsletters and signs and for being excellent and active Board member. We wish both outgoing Board members well. Please consider joining the fun on our board; the more the merrier!

Here are our 2013 Board Goals:

Membership – Increase the accuracy and efficiency of membership recording; improve data management capabilities and augment member involvement.

Communications – Improve our newsletter operation (designer, editor, distribution) and craft a policy regarding e-blasts.

Website – Overhaul our website to better fulfill our mission. We'll report our progress at the January Annual Meeting.

The GPNA membership year runs January-December so get the most out of your annual dues, and renew now! (See page 4 for the membership form.)

We look forward to meeting your families and friends at the Spring Fling. And please, don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

Amy Likover
GPNA President
president@gerstlepark.com
415.450.1520

Open Space Report

On January 19th GPNA sponsored a French Broom removal project for National Service Day. We had about 10 people attacking that invasive species in the Open Space near D Street. It was a fun event.

We cleared a big area and got a nice write-up in the Marin IJ.
http://www.marinij.com/novato/ci_22411959/marin-volunteers-weed-dig-and-give-national-day

We suggest you take a walk along the fire road that leads to D Street. You will see a huge change, if you haven't been there for awhile. Volunteers work daily to extend these cleared areas and you are welcome you to join us. Fresh air, accomplishment and exercise are the results. Much better than being on a treadmill! Our removal season usually ends about May 1 depending on weather. Once it gets warm, the earth dries and makes removal difficult. Our open space project is now in about the 20th year. When we first started, nobody realized that we had an open space area. You couldn't have even hiked it if you tried. Now the area has become a neighborhood asset and is used daily by hikers and dog walkers.



Volunteers pulled French broom from a hillside taking part in National Day of Service.

D Street Paving – Time to Check Your Sewer Laterals

If you own property on D Street, you probably received a letter from the Department of Public Works in November 2012. The DPW asks the property owners to check their sewer lateral and, if needed, make necessary repairs before the City paves D Street. What does this mean for property owners? The sewer laterals (sewer lines that connect to the City's main line) are the property owners' responsibility. Laterals can be impacted by tree roots and might need replacement. Many of these laterals are over 100 years old. To be on the safe side, owners should use an inspection service.

Once the street is paved, there will be a "5 year moratorium" for digging in the street. For those who choose not to make necessary repairs the penalty will be very expensive. As the weather improves the DPW will resume the repaving projects. This may occur in mid or late March. Signs will be posted. For more information, contact the Department of Public Works, <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/pubworks-home/>

GPNA Financial Corner

1/1/13 balance	\$2609.15
Total expense	-374.50
Total income	+890.00 Dues
2/28/13 balance	\$ 3124.65

Community Development Projects

GPNA works with the San Rafael Community Development Department on new projects in and around our neighborhood. When building projects come up, we review the plans for code compliance and make every effort to maintain the character of the area. Sometimes we can even make things better for the applicant and the neighborhood. One project in the pipeline is a new 4-story building at the NW corner of Second and B Streets. The ground level will be parking with retail on the B Street frontage. This will be topped with 3 stories of apartments.

There have been numerous proposals for this building and though the design keeps getting better, there's still a ways to go. Developers plan to demolish the two Victorians on the site, one of which is a burned out building on the San Rafael List of Historical and Architectural Sites. We are unsure if the developer will be forced to restore this building. Such buildings come under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) so demolition gets complicated. Although the proposed parking for this site meets minimum requirements, we anticipate that our neighborhood will be impacted by overflow parking.

Homelessness in San Rafael

Community Action Marin now has a CARE Team that deals with those in mental crisis. They will travel anywhere a problem is occurring have resources for follow up care. CARE Team members are specially trained and work closely with the San Rafael Police Department. The CARE Team has already proven their worth. If you see a need for this care, please call 415-847-1266.

Recently the San Rafael City Council voted unanimously to support a Downtown Street Team for the homeless. This program was developed for Palo Alto where it been very successful. The goals of the program are to provide training in basic job and job-seeking skills, help with job applications, motivational training, part-time employment and possibly housing. Participants are paid with stipends and not cash. The employment involves cleaning up downtown and perhaps contracting with local businesses for various services. We are unsure when the program will start, but City Hall is working on it. The criteria for participation are punctuality, sobriety and work readiness. If these expectations are not met, the person is out of the program but may come back and try again and some do. Contact Hugo Landecker (San Rafael Group) <clandecker@saber.net> for more information about the homeless situation.

San Rafael Doings - From Our City Manager

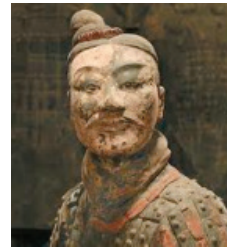
For a complete "Snapshot" Consult City Manager Nancy Mackle's Blog <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/citymgr-snapshot/>

State of the City Dinner

Join Mayor Gary Phillips and the City Council at the Annual State of the City Dinner: A Taste of San Rafael, hosted by the City and the Chamber of Commerce. Embassy Suites Hotel, March 14, 6:30 p.m.

China's Terracotta Warriors

The Friends of San Rafael Public Library present a docent lecture from the Asian Art Museum Wednesday, March 6, at 1 p.m. in the Council Chambers. This program will be repeated at 3 p.m.



Second Fridays Art Walk

Each month San Rafael galleries and many retailers on Fourth Street host artists and art work, featuring new exhibits, receptions, and related events, from 5 to 8 p.m.

GPNA Calendar of Events

Tentative schedule

March 23	Spring Fling (<i>March 30 Rain Date</i>)
June 15	Garage Sale
July 27	Bocce Event
August 6	National Night Out in Gerstle Park
September 15	Annual Picnic
October 31	Halloween Haunted House Contest
December 9	Winter Social, Panama Hotel
January 23	Annual Meeting

Board Meetings: April 20, May 9, June 13, July 25, August 8, September 12, October 10, November 14, December 12. Contact president@gerstlepark.com for details



**Congratulations
to Muffin Mania
30 Years in Gerstle Park!**

**Thank you, Sullivan-Galante Family,
for your scrumptious food, neighborly
generosity and hospitality!**



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!