



## **TENTH ANNUAL GPNA GARAGE SALE** **SATURDAY JUNE 19TH - SAVE THE DATE!**

See insert between page 2 and 3 for more information and the registration form.

### **VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [www.gerstlepark.com](http://www.gerstlepark.com)**

Our new website is a great way to stay in touch with Gerstle Park news and hear about upcoming events. We'll be adding photos this month! We're also considering a regular feature on the website spotlighting some of the nice old (and not-so-old) homes in our neighborhood. Let us know how we can make our website more effective and fun for you. Email feedback to Tymber at [tymber@distinctivebuilders.com](mailto:tymber@distinctivebuilders.com).

### **NEIGHBORHOOD BIRDWALK, SATURDAY, APRIL 24th**

It was a perfect Marin day weather-wise, and the GPNA Birdwalk was headed up by expert birders Sharon Barnett and Kevin Stockman. We even had a contest, with the winner guessing the correct number of species that we would sight. We met at the Panama Hotel and made our way to Gerstle Park, looking for whatever birds we could find on the way. We saw many species, and even spotted a Nuttall's woodpecker high up in a tree, in a nest also containing its young. But the highlight of the day for me was to see my first hooded oriole. These birds are not common in our neighborhood, but I had heard of them being here in the past. We used to have a neighbor who specialized in hooded orioles, and every day he would give me the latest report on their activities. He knew of only 2 pairs that would nest in the neighborhood. I still remember how upset he was when one of the trees they had nested in was cut down. Then there was a prolonged frost, and after that he never again saw another one.

We ended the walk at Wildcare, and our contest winner was Cynthia Landecker, who guessed 15 species correctly. Many thanks to Sharon and Kevin for arranging this fun event. Everyone had a good time, which is what living in our neighborhood is all about.

(Thanks to Hugo Landecker for the above article.)

### **SPRING FLING WRAP-UP**

Once again, the annual GPNA Spring Fling was a success! About 100 children hunted for eggs and met the Easter Bunny. We played games, ate numerous cupcakes, and had a chance to pet live bunnies, courtesy of the 4-H Club. A special thanks goes out to all who lent a helping hand. We look forward to seeing all the kids there next year!

### **DEFIBRILLATOR UPDATE**

In our last issue, we made a request for donations to buy this much-needed piece of medical equipment for our local Police. The portable defibrillator has been proven to be a lifesaver when used promptly in a case of sudden cardiac arrest, and our Police have been trained to use it. The cost of the defibrillator is around \$2200. So far, we have received \$1735 in donations, and we give a hearty thanks to everyone who made a contribution of any size. GPNA will donate \$250. This means that we will need only about \$200 more to buy the defibrillator.

If you can make a donation please write a check, payable to SRPD, AED Fund, and send it to GPNA, P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael, Ca. 94915. Please write "Att: Defibrillator Fund" at the bottom of the envelope. Remember- it's tax-deductible! (under Section 170(C) (1) of IRS Code 94-6000424)

### **SECOND STREET APARTMENT COMPLEX PROPOSAL WITHDRAWN!**

GPNA became aware of a proposed apartment complex development along the Second Street corridor between C and D Streets this spring. The developer's plan was to demolish 3 turn-of-the-century homes and build an incompatible apartment complex that would tower above one remaining Victorian house. The complex's parking garage entrance was to be placed on C Street between First and Second Streets, which would have circulated additional traffic through the neighborhood along First Street. The Marin IJ ran a front-page article on the proposed project last February 25, and included objections to the project by GPNA Board President Chandra Murphy and Board Member Andrea Eneidi. After this article was published, the developer withdrew the proposal.

GPNA considers the withdrawal of this proposal a success in working to ensure that there is a buffer zone between downtown and the Gerstle Park neighborhood. However, GPNA expects that the developer will be back with another proposal in the future.

## **STATUS REPORT: SAN RAFAEL GENERAL PLAN 2020**

The GPNA Board of Directors and concerned residents continue to make input into the General Plan as it is being reviewed by the San Rafael Planning Commission prior to its consideration by the City Council. GPNA has more people involved in this process than any other neighborhood!

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR), which accompanies the Plan, has concluded that if all segments of the Plan are implemented, traffic in our city will worsen. More intersections will be classified at Level of Service (LOS) "F" - for failure. Streets near our neighborhood that will be designated with LOS "F" or "E" (one step above failure) are Streets A, B, C and E, as well as Second, Irwin and Hetherton Streets. Our water supply would also be impacted, as MMWD is unable to serve additional growth without worsening the already-existing deficit of available water. There are also many other issues of concern that are addressed in the EIR.

The City, in an effort to meet the demand for affordable, low cost and very low cost housing, is proposing such measures as allowing new buildings to be constructed with more density and height. Included in the Plan are various methods to assist in paying for this new housing. But even with such allowances as they propose, new housing that would be below current market value could not be self-supporting; they would have to be subsidized by local communities and homeowners. GPNA must continue to monitor any proposed projects for our neighborhood that might increase our already high density level. It should be noted that our portion of San Rafael already has the highest housing density in the City.

The General Plan includes design guidelines for the Second and Third Street corridors, as the City is trying to bring more housing to the downtown area. GPNA has been pushing for stricter design guidelines for these streets- guidelines that would require compatibility with existing nearby structures. For example, we think it's important to avoid building a high-rise, high-density residential building that would tower over a low-rise single-family home. We have several examples of this distressing juxtaposition in our neighborhood and throughout San Rafael, and we can see that it doesn't work. Recently a developer proposed a 14-unit apartment complex at 1300 Second Street, right next to a small single-family dwelling. The proposal was withdrawn after GPNA publicized our objection to this project in the local paper.

We urge you to get involved in the General Plan process, to protect your neighborhood and your own interests. Here is the current schedule for upcoming meetings (please note that this schedule may change. We will make every effort to keep you updated):

### **Tuesday, April 27:**

- Public hearing on draft design guidelines
- Planning Commission completion of review of neighborhoods, community design, and economic vitality elements

### **Wednesday, May 19:**

- Public hearing on draft implementing ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance and Map
- Planning Commission review of proposed Zoning Ordinance and Map amendments

### **Tuesday, May 25:**

- Planning Commission review of recommended changes to draft of General Plan 2020

### **Tuesday, June 22:**

- Planning Commission review of recommended changes to draft of General Plan 2020

### **Tuesday, July 13:**

- Planning Commission review of recommended changes to draft of General Plan 2020

### **Tuesday, July 27:**

- Planning Commission review and adoption of resolution to recommend certification of the final Environmental Impact Report to the City Council
- Planning Commission review and adoption of resolution to recommend the draft of General Plan 2020 to the City Council
- Planning Commission review and adoption of implementing ordinances and resolutions (Affordable Housing Ordinance, Project Selection Process Resolution, Design Guidelines Resolution, and Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment)

Please note: After completion of public hearings and review by the Planning Commission, additional public hearings before the City Council will be scheduled.

## **GPNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS VACANCY!**

Do you want to make a difference in your neighborhood? Would you like to have a strong voice in what happens to Gerstle Park, instead of just reading about it? Do you have one evening a month free to come to our meetings? If so, here's your chance- volunteer to fill the vacancy on our Board of Directors. Everyone on our Board has a busy life outside their duties for GPNA, and it's by no means a full-time job. The only requirements are a genuine concern for our neighborhood and a sense of commitment. Call our Board President, Chandra Murphy, at 482-8033, or email her at [murphdtm@yahoo.com](mailto:murphdtm@yahoo.com).

## **GPNA BLUE RIBBON AWARDS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT**

GPNA is happy to announce the initiation of our Blue Ribbon Awards, recognizing home and property improvements that enhance the appearance of our neighborhood. About once every season of the year we will consider nominees for this award, and the winner(s) will be announced in our quarterly newsletter and on our website. They will also receive a small appreciation sign that we would be pleased to post on their premises for a short time, if that is desired. Whether you rent or own, your efforts at improving your surroundings are a plus for the whole neighborhood. So if you're making some improvements, don't be surprised if someone from GPNA knocks on your door to hear about your project and recognize your efforts! Also, anyone who wants to make a nomination can call us at 482-8033, or email us at [feedback@gerstlepark.com](mailto:feedback@gerstlepark.com).

This Spring we are recognizing 3 such improvements: the lovely makeover at 610 C Street by Linda Miller, who has transformed a small and nondescript front yard into a very pleasing landscape of different levels that features a winding rock path and a miniature bridge, and an oasis of contentment on a new front porch. Second, a long overdue recognition for the wonderful blooming gardens in the planting strips along Woodland and B Streets at Bayview, created and maintained by Robert Menge; and last but definitely not least, the extensive work done at 337 Bayview by Scott Jacques and Michael Cardoza, who turned a front yard full of weeds into a great lawn with plants, a curving stone path and a rock accent piece, and also built a beautiful wooden gate leading to their back yard. Thank you all for making our neighborhood more beautiful!

## **NEIGHBORHOOD VOICES**

Kenney Johnson has been the drummer in Chris Isaak's band for almost 20 years, and for the last 7 of those years he and his wife Katherine have lived in a charming 1920's-era house in Gerstle Park, which they have lovingly restored. Their home is filled with memorabilia from his travels with the band as well as family photos, his extensive drum collection, and Katherine's colorful collection of art glass. For the past 3 years Kenney has enjoyed new recognition as an actor, playing himself on Showtime's "The Chris Isaak Show", in which he is portrayed as a kindly but wisecracking skeptic. Although I recognized him immediately when I encountered him at the B St. Safeway, he frequently passes unnoticed in the neighborhood as he and Katherine walk their dog, Lucy, and run their errands. He is quite affable, talks easily, and was willing to be interviewed at home.

The house is much larger than it appears from the street, and while Kenney and Katherine have installed many new features - appliances, hardwood floors, a large, stone-tiled shower in the master bath - they have managed to preserve an old-fashioned charm. The original claw-foot tub is still in the smaller bathroom, and many new fixtures were chosen for their classic old-style design. A mirror over the tiled fireplace in their living room is surrounded by an old, rusty, rococo-style wrought-iron frame, which Kenney found discarded in a field. It fills the space beautifully, and looks made to order. The garden in back is a quiet retreat, with a large euphorbia tree in the middle, native to Africa but looking quite at home. A path of paving stones winds around the yard, many of them embedded with foreign coins, seashells, and other souvenirs and keepsakes. Katherine is justifiably proud of the garden, because she created it from "nothing but a yard full of weeds".

Originally from a small town in the Texas panhandle, Kenney loved music from an early age and has been a drummer since the age of 12. He moved to the Bay Area in his early 20's, where he met Katherine, and was a featured performer in a few bands before joining Chris Isaak. He enjoys seeing new places, and has traveled with the band through Australia, Asia, and Europe. But he has a special fondness for seeing new towns and cities in the U.S., and has played in "just about every city in the country".

The Chris Isaak show was shot in Vancouver, and while Kenney says that he enjoyed the experience, he admits to being homesick, "especially during those Pacific Northwest winters", because the shooting schedule necessitated being away from home 6-8 months of each year. The writer and producer of the show were the team who made "Northern Exposure", a popular series from the '90's, and the writers were always open to creating scripts based on real experiences of the band members ("embellished a bit, of course", Kenney says). The show was unique in that all the musical numbers taped for viewing were performed live, and not pre-recorded and lip-synced, as is usually the case with TV. Now that the show has ended, Kenney and Katherine look forward to more time at home, although playing gigs with this popular band will probably always involve occasional travel for Kenney. A new show, on network TV this time, is now being discussed, but he is philosophical about that idea. "Many shows turn out to be nothing more than possibilities", he says. Right now, he and Katherine just want to get used to being back home, and to finish getting rid of all the extra furniture and other goods they had accumulated from having two households for the past 3 years. They've had 2 garage sales, because they had so much that they didn't feel they could wait for the GPNA garage sale in June, and are relieved that they finally have more space. "It was like a furniture warehouse in here", Katherine states. They both love living in Gerstle Park, and now that they have cleared some space in their home, they are in the process of finishing a guest room in their basement and adding some more plantings in the garden. "We're back home at last, and here to stay", they both agree.

# **TENTH ANNUAL GPNA GARAGE SALE**

## **SATURDAY JUNE 19TH - SAVE THE DATE!**

It's that time of year again- time to go through all your closets, drawers, garages, etc. for all those hidden and no longer needed treasures. Our annual garage sale is a great way to make more room in your home or apartment, and make some money at the same time! There are 2 ways to participate: to have a garage sale at your home, you can contribute \$20 and have your address and location printed on the official GPNA sale map along with a description of your sale articles; you will also get a large orange sign to place in your yard or by your apartment. Option 2 is to have your sale at Gerstle Park. For \$25 you can get a 6' by 12' space; for \$40 you can get a 6' by 20' space. You will get more traffic by renting a space in the park, because that's the hub of the sale, and it's where most buyers will go first.

There will also be a prominent ad in the IJ.

To participate, fill out the registration form below and send it to the address on the form BEFORE JUNE 10th, so that you can be included in the map given out to buyers when they come to the park. If you have any questions, you can call GPNA Board President Chandra Murphy at 482-8033, or email her at murphdtm@yahoo.com.

### **Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)**

#### **Garage Sale Registration Form**

Please complete the information below and return with your check (payable to GPNA and marked "Garage Sale") to: **GPNA - Garage Sale, P.O. Box 150644, San Rafael, CA 94915**

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

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

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

I plan to hold my garage sale:

- At my home or apartment building (\$20.00)
- At Gerstle Park (\$25.00) 6' by 12' space
- At Gerstle Park (\$40.00) 6' by 20" space
- I cannot participate, but would like to make a food/drink/baked goods contribution.
- I cannot do any of the above, but would like to make a donation to GPNA! My check for \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

List of items you want to include on the map (4-5 items maximum please):

If you're not already a current member of the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association, you may want to take this opportunity to become a member (or renew your expired membership) – Thanks.

- New Member       Renewal      Annual donation \$10.00 per household (\$5.00 Seniors) – 1 voting member  
Term of memberships is from January 1 to January 1.

#### **AMOUNT ENCLOSED:**

FOR GARAGE SALE:      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

FOR MEMBERSHIP:      \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL:      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Remember your garage sale registration is per family - not per household - and should be returned no later than June 10th to be included on the official map. All proceeds go directly toward GPNA neighborhood events.**

## **NEW BEAT ONE TEAM AT SAN RAFAEL POLICE DEPT.**

As has been our custom for 30 years, we've had our semi-annual shift rotation at SRPD. In doing so, we've selected new shifts, new days off, and new beat assignments. For the first time since 1998, Cpl. Dan Hanlon, #190, will not be on Beat One. The reason for this is that he and I will have the same work hours for the next 6 months, and we can't both work the same beat at the same time. You can expect to see him on Beat One from time to time, such as during my vacation. I look forward to having him back on Beat One in the future. So here's our new line-up:

### **DAYS:**

Officer Bill Drolla #347 (*Mon-Tues-Wed & some Sundays*)

Officer James Bellamy #518 (*Thurs-Fri-Sat & some Sundays*)

### **NIGHTS:**

Officer Todd Berringer #501 (*Thurs-Fri-Sat & some Sundays*)

Cpl. Charlie Metcalf #223 (*Mon-Tues-Wed & some Sundays*)

As always, in an emergency call 911. For non-emergency matters, call 485-3000. If you want to reach all 4 of us for matters that are not time-sensitive, you can send an email to [beat1@srpd.org](mailto:beat1@srpd.org).

I hope this information is helpful. Remember, if you think you may need help from the Police Dept., don't hesitate to call.

Best wishes from Charlie Metcalf, #223  
Serving San Rafael since 1976

## **CONNECTIONS TO THE PAST**

Recently we came across 2 articles that made connections to the past of Gerstle Park. One was about a person, the second about an object.

The first was an IJ obituary dated November 18, 2003, announcing the passing of Michael Angelo Lopez of San Rafael, aged 85. Mr. Lopez had a long, rich and giving life. A WW2 veteran, he was, according to the obituary, "an American hero in every way. He was gifted as an educator, linguist, thespian, dancer, artist and vocalist." In 1920, when he was just a baby, he and his mother, Maria, witnessed the murder of his father during the Mexican revolution. His mother fled with him to San Francisco, where in 1923 she married Joe Gargiulo. They bought an interest in the Carmel Hotel on B St., raising their growing family at 4 Bayview St. Eventually, they expanded their home into a boarding house and restaurant called "Maria's Pueblo", which the family operated until 1976. The building was then sold and became...the Panama Hotel!

Our second connection, the object, is a large, squat, 3500-lb. safe that probably dates from the 1860's. The lettering across its front says "Short Ranch Co." We learned about the safe from the Sept. 16-22, 2003 issue of "Marin Scope Community Weekly".

"Gerstle Park" is a relatively new name for our neighborhood. When it was first developed, it was called "Short's Tract" or "Short's Addition". J.O.B. Short and his brother Orey, then very young men, traveled with their mother to California from "the States" in 1846 in one of the earliest wagon trains to

come over the Sierras directly into California. They settled in Marin, eventually using the derelict mission buildings in San Rafael. Opportunity knocked when the gold rush came, and the brothers established their ranch in San Anselmo, opening one of the first dairies in the county. In 1868, they subdivided Short's Addition (if you examine a map of San Rafael dating from that time, you will see that almost all of our existing lot lines were established then). As the Short family prospered, their land agent in San Anselmo built a new office building in 1910. When Farrington Jones bought the building in 1946, the Short Ranch safe was still there. His son, Roy Farrington Jones, continued the family business, keeping and using the safe. Mr. Jones has a deep interest in Marin County history, and this last fall he donated the safe to the Marin History Museum, which is housed in the Boyd House on upper B St. So the safe has a connection not only to our neighborhood, but to eastern Marin's rural beginnings as well.

Thanks to Cynthia Landecker, an enthusiastic researcher of Gerstle Park history (and the former editor of this newsletter), for this article.

## **GERSTLE PARK DRAGON VANDALIZED**

To all our neighbors: the dragon in Gerstle Park, which has been a delight for our children as well as a mainstay in the park for well over 40 years, was vandalized on or around April 29th. The police were informed, but it's unlikely that they will find the person or persons responsible. The dragon was created by Scott Tilman, the gardener for the Gerstle family when their home occupied the property. For this reason, the dragon has much historical and sentimental value for the neighborhood.

The City is willing to repair or even replace the dragon in a new location, but for this to happen, your input is needed. If anyone has a picture of the dragon the way it looked before it was vandalized, please call GPNA Board Chairman Chandra Murphy at 482-8033, or email her at [murphdtm@yahoo.com](mailto:murphdtm@yahoo.com). If anyone has information about this incident of malicious damage, please notify the San Rafael Police Dept.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**


**June 3:** Monthly Meeting - 7PM

**June 19:** Annual Garage Sale

**July 1:** Monthly Meeting - 7PM

**August 5:** Monthly Meeting - 7PM

**September 2:** Monthly Meeting - 7PM

 **September 16:** Annual Picnic