

Gerstle Park

Neighborhood Association

Winter 2009-2010



GPNA Annual Meeting

Join us on Wednesday January 27th for the GPNA annual meeting. At the meeting we'll elect new members of the GPNA Board, talk about new GPNA efforts for the coming year, and enjoy a special presentation on the trails and open space of the Gerstle Park area. Members and non-members are invited to attend.

Wednesday Jan. 27, 2010
6:30pm: Pizza and Drinks
7:00-8.30pm: Annual Meeting
Trinity Church
333 Woodland Ave.

Be A Volunteer!

Now that we've seen the good things that community involvement can do, wouldn't you like to get in on the action? Join the GPNA Board or volunteer to contribute your time at one of our events. Currently there are only 5 Board members, so there are several seats available! Board meetings are the 1st Wednesday of each month from 7-9pm. We have dinner, talk and plan fun things for our neighborhood. If you're interested, please contact Tracy Loy at 408-960-9370. *Join us!*

Join Your Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

If you're not a member, this is the time to join the GPNA. If you are a member, now is the time to renew your annual membership, as the beginning of the new year approaches. Please use the form at the back of this newsletter to renew or begin your GPNA membership. It is the perfect way to stay informed about your community and show your support for the many great events that are provided free to you by the Association.

Thanks To You!

We've all seen the traffic changes at the intersections of 1st and D, and 1st and C Streets. Feedback received by the GPNA Board and the word on the street is "HOR-RAY!" The effort to get here took many years of hard work by many dedicated neighbors. Thank you for your contributions! This neighborhood improvement exemplifies the power of community involvement. Without our input, there likely would have been no improvements at all.

Acknowledged below are folks who contributed between 2001 and 2009. If you know of other neighbor contributors, please let us know. And thank them!

Andrea Eneidi	Laura Ackley
Angelo Douvos	Lori Schifrin
Bill Mittendorf	Lynn Bradescu
Bob Beyea	Maria Besenty
Bonnie Pybus	Marion Rollins
Brian Gannon	Mary Hunter
Bridgette Waterbury	MaryAnn Nardo
Chandra Murphy	Maureen Zeuss
Dan Miller	Megan Green
Daniel Beggatt	Michael Soldavini
Dave Pedroli	Muriel Ballard
Debra Pellinacci	Paul Hidiman
Eric Christ	Richard Guile
Fran Halperin	Roger Jennings
Hugo & Cynthia Lan-decker	Sander Temme
Jim and Kathleen Leech	Sharon Barnett
Jim Schmidt	Stacey Laumann
Jordis Weaver	Steve Schoonover
Joy Phoenix	Therese Oliver
Kevin Stockman	Tina Edmond
Kim and Maynard Geisler	Tracy Kirst
Krystyna Demkowicz	Tymber Cavasian
	Viktoriya Wise



Will Short School Reopen?

As a result of rising enrollment in K-8 grades in the last three school years, the School District is considering the reopening of Short School for elementary school children. Because the current 2009-10 student enrollment for grades K-8 exceeds 4,000 students the District is utilizing every classroom space available at their open schools. Since Short School is a viable facility and has been unused for a number of years the Board feels that it should be considered as a means to relieve this surge in student enrollment.

At the present time no decision or action has been taken and the District is anxious to keep the Gerstle Park neighborhood aware of plans that are being considered. The decision to reopen Short School will be made by the Board of Education at one of their regularly scheduled meetings. In any event, they do not expect that a recommendation will be brought before the Board before January of 2010. Gerstle Park residents can visit the San Rafael City Schools website at www.srcs.org for current information. You can find school board meeting agendas and subscribe to the district's electronic newsletter there. For any questions, you can contact Christine Thomas at 492-3205.

Halloween in Gerstle Park

Halloween comes and goes every year and people who live in our neighborhood never let us down when it comes to decorating their homes. The GPNA would like to acknowledge the time spent, creativity and enjoyment all of us get from the decorations and give a little gift for the homeowners who took the time to transform their home. We certainly can't award every home that had decorations, but we have made a list of the homes we felt went beyond the ordinary and made us proud to live in Gerstle Park. A special thanks to the following homes and we will get our gift to you shortly.

116 Greenwood	40 Pleasant Lane
538 D St.	533 D St.
39 Pleasant Lane	508 D St.
421 D St.	32 Bayview
106 Bayview	34 Miraflores
24 Marin	239 Bayview
217 Bayview	347 D St.
101 Marin	25 Clorinda



A Walk on the Wild Side

The old rock quarry is just up the hill above Gerstle Park and although many of the older houses in our neighborhood were built with rock taken from it scarcely anyone knows its there. On 10 October Hugo Landecker led a group of Gerstle Park residents on a walk through our open space, which encompasses the area from D street to Clorinda and from Upper Toyon down to Gerstle Park. The old rock quarry was one of the points of interest. Some of the participants had never been on the open space before and were not aware that it existed. Others were experienced hikers. Everyone had a wonderful time.

The walk began at the top of Grove Street where the trail begins. Although it was once covered with French Broom the trail has been cleared and its now an entry into the paths that wend through the wooded hillside above the Park. Hugo explained how the French Broom, aside from hiding the paths, represents a serious fire hazard during warm summer months. The path soon joins a dirt fire road that starts at the lower part of D Street just after the beginning of the grade and continues through the woods, past the site of the old rock quarry to the end of Makin Grade. Along the way we met people walking their dogs and Hugo told of occasional overnight “campers” who sometimes spend nights in the wooded nooks above the trail until they are asked to leave by police who patrol the open space at night.

Leaving the trail at Makin Grade, the group continued up hill on the street to Upper Toyon and then to the right on Upper Toyon through gates that warned us that we were entering a “private roadway.” We hoped that this would not deter others who would like to enjoy this pleasant journey, for the road continues through a lovely redwood grove to the end of Upper Toyon where we once again reached a pathway and began our descent down the hillside. This pathway soon branches, with one fork continuing left around the hillside to Spring Grove Avenue and on down into the residential area. Our group took the right branch of the pathway and soon emerged at the top of Clorinda street and continued down Clorinda and back to our starting point at the foot of Grove Street.

Although it wasn't included in our open space walk, Hugo told us about a trail, very much frequented by dog walkers and hikers, that begins on Upper Toyon just beyond the “private roadway” gate and continues downhill to meet the end of Greenwood Street. It is an easy trail that few know exists and all should try. It is the only remaining fragment of the old stage coach road, dating from the late nineteenth century, that joined San Rafael and the then resort town of Bolinas on the coast.

In mid-October property owners closed off the lower part of this trail and although the problem has since been resolved, it represents an issue that Gerstle Park residents should be aware of, for our open space isn't just a neighborhood asset, but a community asset as well.

Many don't realize it, but our open space provides a wooded backdrop for the whole community to enjoy.

An email group is being organized to keep people informed about open space happenings. Please email clandecker@saber.net if you want to join the email group. Some are advocating a purchase of two lots at the end of Greenwood for permanent open space. Let's get together on this!



Turkey Update

The GPNA has contacted the SPCA, Marin Humane Society and Wildcare with regard to our neighborhood turkey. None of these organizations or the GPNA can do anything with regard to removing the turkey off of our streets. It is considered “wild” and cannot be relocated. It is unfortunate because this will probably not have a good ending. Please drive carefully and more importantly DO NOT feed this bird. It is a very likely that the turkey stays in our neighborhood because it is routinely being fed.

Home Safety Measures

With the holidays approaching, many of us will be traveling away from our homes to visit family and friends. Here are a few home safety tips to keep in mind before you go:

- ◇ Call your home security service if you have one and update your emergency contact list. Make sure the alarm company knows how to reach you while you are gone and who to call if any problems develop.
- ◇ Lock all windows and doors, including often forgotten bathroom windows and basement doors, before you leave. Invest in high-quality, name-brand deadbolt locks for all exterior doors.
- ◇ If you have double-hung windows, bolt the upper and lower sashes together or insert a metal bar in the track to prevent opening. To secure sliding glass doors, add a bolt lock or use a metal bar to block the door closed.
- ◇ Sign up for the US Postal Service's 'Hold Mail Service'.
- ◇ Leave a car parked in the driveway, and ask your neighbor to move it from time to time to make the house look lived-in. Unplug your automatic garage-door opener before you leave. A crook can accidentally open it with the right opener code.
- ◇ Leave blinds and curtains in their normal position so that your house doesn't have a closed-down look, but move expensive electronic equipment like televisions and computers away from windows where they are easily seen.
- ◇ Make sure the premiums on your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy are paid and your coverage is up to date.

How To Become A Member of the GPNA

Fill out the form, below, and mail it to us with your check. We ask you to join, or renew your membership at this time each year. In the past, people have renewed at the Easter Egg Hunt or the Annual Picnic and other odd times of the year, so we would like to get the membership more into an annual timeframe. It's very important, when you fill out the form, to include your contact information. Many people have email addresses, and we can inform you electronically of important timely matters. Please print those email addresses clearly because a letter, number or dot can make a big difference between an accurate address and one that will not receive mail. The Association thanks you for your continued support.

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 1st - December 31st
Annual Donation, One Voting Member - \$15/year (\$10 seniors age 65+)

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____ Date: _____

Do you wish to receive our quarterly newsletter via email instead of home delivery? YES NO

Would you like to be included on our mailing list? YES NO

Payment Type: CHECK CASH **TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$** _____