

# Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

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



## Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2009



### GPNA GARAGE SALE

As many people of our neighborhood found out on June 20, the GPNA puts on a big time garage sale. The feedback we received from households mentioned big crowds and quite a frenzy of buyers. Last year we had 42 homes that contributed to the garage sale kitty. This year we had 58 paid households. All though there were households that did not contribute to this neighborhood event, we would like to thank the households who did. This event is our organization's best fundraiser and many residents get to meet their neighbors for the first time. We encourage more households to contribute to our annual event, because as we experienced this year, more households involved means bigger crowds. Thanks again for a very successful event. Our next big event is the neighborhood picnic.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> FRIDAYS ART WALK ON 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET

Walk downtown San Rafael every 2nd Friday evening 5 - 8pm to enjoy galleries, open studios, art shows, libations and inspirations at various venues up and down Fourth Street. The next Art Walk is Friday September 11th!

Also, did you know that Art Works Downtown provides artistic education with rotating gallery exhibitions, Art Talks and art classes taught by studio artists and other artists? There are classes for children and adults. Visit <http://www.artworksdowntown.org/AWDEducation.html> for information on this great community resource.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PICNIC

Mark your calendars! The GPNA Annual Neighborhood Picnic is on Sunday September 20th. Hot dogs, burgers, buns, and the fixings are supplied by GPNA. Community members are encouraged to round out the menu with potluck items of fruit, salads, side dishes and desserts. See below for suggested food items by last name.

**Event:** GPNA Annual Picnic

**Date:** Sunday September 20th

**Time:** 4-7pm

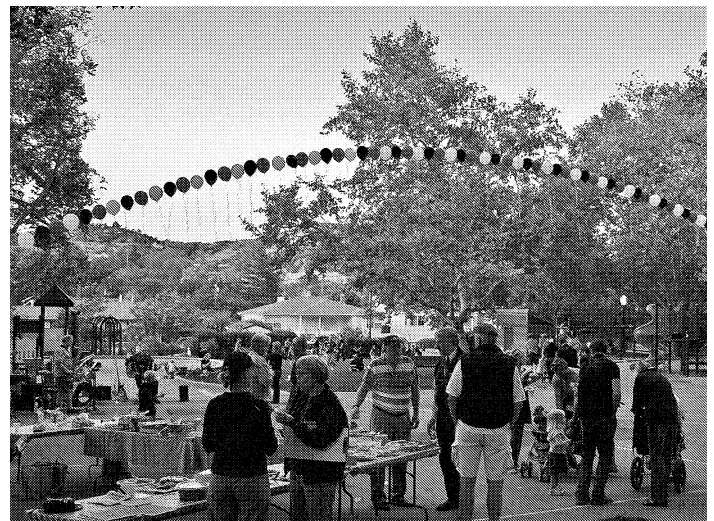
**A-L:** Bring fruit or deserts

**M-Z:** Bring a salad or small side dish

**Location:** Gerstle Park Playground

The Neighborhood Picnic is yet another free GPNA neighborhood event (in addition to the Spring Fling and Halloween Contest). The event is hosted each year by the GPNA Board and volunteers. This is where you come in.... if you like these events, please HELP OUT! ITS FUN! We'd love to have your help on just one event a year. Call 272-2073 if you're willing to flip burgers, hand out plates, or if you'd like to volunteer to help at another event in the future.

Do you have a band? Are you a musician looking for your next (free) gig? We need your music or entertainment at the picnic. Call 272-2073 if you can contribute to the picnic festivities.





## TRAFFIC UPDATE

Things are starting to happen on the streets and at the intersections of 1st & C & D streets, and the changes may be troublesome while the work is in progress. These intersections have plagued our neighborhood for years, so any inconvenience will be outweighed by the improvements in safety and driving convenience.

This article will go to press on August 1st so we will not have an accurate review of the progress by the time you receive and read this, so we are including, below, the exact description from the city on how they see this project progressing. At the time of writing this article the contractor is completing phases 1 & 2.

### Construction Stage

**Phase 1:** Locate existing underground utilities such as gas, water, etc. to make sure that they are not hit or damaged during the remainder of the construction stage – This item began on Tuesday July 14th, as planned. Many residents will remember the AT&T service outage that occurred in late July when cable lines were severed. AT&T was busy for a week putting things back together.



**Phase 2:** Traffic signal upgrades and modification at 2nd/D – The contractor will install new equipment at that intersection.

**Phase 3:** Install new ADA compliant curb ramps at each of the four corners of 2nd/D and associated drainage improvements.

**Phase 4:** Remove existing striping.

**Phase 5:** Install new signs, remove old signs, install new striping and convert D Street to two-way. This phase of the project includes the installation of the additional stop sign at the intersection of 1st/C.

The target date for the completion of the construction stage is August 12th, however, this date may change depending on the complexity of the field conditions.

### Monitoring Stage

Once construction is complete it will be important to determine whether the projected benefits have been achieved and whether unforeseen problems may have arisen. Therefore, traffic patterns will be measured after the final construction work is complete. Here is the monitoring schedule:

**Phase 6:** Public Works will work with the Police Department to monitor the changes for the six months after completion of the construction, identify the associated issues and come up with required mitigations.

**Phase 7:** The City will discuss the findings with Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association representatives.

**Phase 8:** The City will prepare a final report discussing all the findings.

**Phase 9:** The City will present the final report to City Council in early 2010 in order to accept the two-way change, modify it or reject it.

The GPNA will continue to monitor this project and keep our neighborhood posted with updates. Please drive with caution around this area. It will be confusing at first, with each step changing current patterns and the construction that will be on-going through the whole project. We are confident the changes will be a long awaited success, though it may take some time for all of us to get used to the changes.

## SAN RAFAEL VOTE ON PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES

As a result of the San Rafael City Council decision on August 3, Gerstle Park voters will be asked to help decide on the expenditure of \$88 million in general obligation bonds to finance a new police and fire building and to upgrade the city's fire stations.

A yes vote on the public safety bond measure on November 3 will mean an average increase for property owners of \$16 annually at the beginning and would rise to about \$41 per \$100,000 of assessed evaluation over the life of the project.

Passage of the bond measure would combine the present Fire Station #1 at Mission and C Streets with the Police Department, which is now tucked away in the basement of the City Hall and at rented space across Fifth Avenue. The new downtown public safety building, the location of which is yet to be determined, would serve as an emergency operating center.

Gerstle Park voters are urged to visit [www.cityofsanrafael.org](http://www.cityofsanrafael.org) and to click on the videos showing the condition of the current police and fire facilities. There are images of the C and Mission fire station in a building erected in 1918, ninety-one years ago. The doors are so small that a slow and complicated maneuver is needed for fire engines to squeeze out of the building. The climbing tower at the fire station across from the Montecito shopping center has cracks and could well come down in an earthquake, quite possibly blocking the only exit from the station for fire engines and paramedic units.

The police station has clearly outgrown its space. The City Hall does not meet seismic standards; should it collapse atop the police station in the basement, the likelihood is great that there would be a collapse of emergency communications in San Rafael.

In a recent conversation with a GPNA Board member, City Manager Ken Nordhoff recognized that the current state of the economy may weigh on the minds of San Rafael voters as they consider passing a bond measure. However, he is firm in his conviction that many years of study, in collaboration with community members, clearly demonstrate the urgent need to improve fire and police facilities. "The public safety facility deficiencies are real and

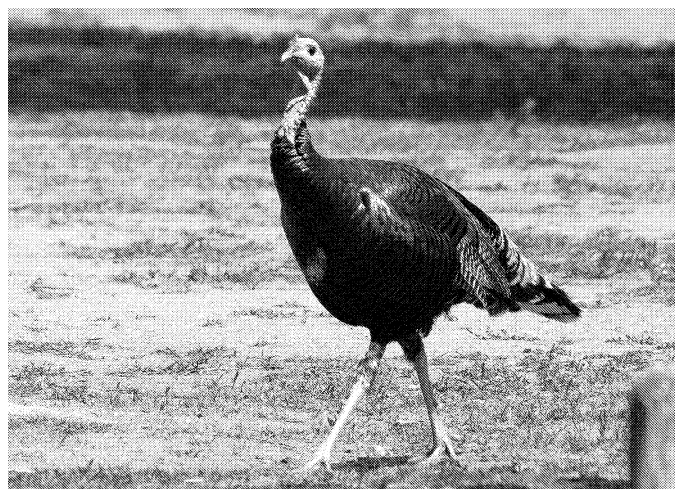
need to be addressed now. Given this priority, this is the right time to pursue solutions for these needs," he said. Nordhoff also pointed out that there would be no increase in taxes in repaying the bonds until August, 2010. Hopefully, the economy will be better then.

The GPNA urges all neighborhood voters to educate themselves as thoroughly as possible prior to the November 3 vote.

To learn more, please visit [www.cityofsanrafael.org](http://www.cityofsanrafael.org) or call Assistant City Manager Terri Hardesty at 485-3072.

## GERSTLE PARK'S NEW MASCOT?

Almost everyone has had the opportunity to see this new addition to our neighborhood. This is one of three turkeys that have been spotted in the Gerstle Park neighborhood over the past few months. This remaining turkey has decided to stick around. If anyone from the neighborhood has anything more to add about these wild (or not-so-wild) birds feel free to contact the GPNA and we will share that story with everyone. Just remember this turkey seems quite unfazed around humans, so please drive carefully if you see it in the streets.



## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

The GPNA would like to thank Steve Boyer of St. Vincent's. Steve was very generous to host our monthly meeting this June at St. Vincent's. Steve gave us a great tour and history lesson on the facility. Steve runs a top notch facility for many who are not as fortunate. Great job Steve.

## OPEN SPACE UPDATE

In June the SRFD hired a company to clear French Broom north of the fire road near D Street. All of you hikers probably saw the piles of broom along the fire road. To complete this project the dead material has been chipped and the remnants scattered (as mulch). This completes the initial removal of French broom north of the fire road. The next step is to continue to remove the new seedlings that will sprout this winter. If this step isn't done then the seedlings will flower and produce seed in 2011. Lots of volunteers will be needed for this effort, so we will keep you informed about when you can come to help.

Homeless encampments continue to be a problem in the open space. SRPD has not been very effective in dealing with this. They have issued a few citations and done a few patrols, but a greater police presence is badly needed. We suggest that you notify the SRPD if you notice an encampment – but of course you should not involve yourself directly.

## OPEN SPACE NATURE WALK

This walk is intended for those who wish to experience the wonderful open space areas that have become a neighborhood asset. The walk will explore the paths, trails and fire road that wend through the wooded hillside above Gerstle Park. This two hour hike will be led by Hugo Landecker. Please phone 456-0221 for a reservation. Date: Saturday, October 10. Meet at the corner of San Rafael Ave and Grove St. Cost: Free.

## GPNA CALENDAR

**September 2** Wed Board of Directors Meeting

**September 20** Sun Annual Picnic

**October 7** Wed Board of Directors Meeting

**October 31** Sat Halloween Contest Judging

**November 4** Wed Board of Directors Meeting

**December 2** Wed Board of Directors Meeting

**December** Christmas Caroling (TBD)

**January 6** Wed Board of Directors Meeting

**January 28** Thu Annual Meeting

### Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) Membership Application

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

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

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

Do you wish to receive this newsletter at your home?  Yes  No

Would you like to be included on our mailing list?  Yes  No

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

New Member  Renewal

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual donation \$15.00 Per Household (\$10.00 Seniors Age 65 or Older) - One Voting Member

Payment Type: \_\_\_\_\_