



# Gerstle Park

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Fall 2015

**GPNA ANNUAL PICNIC**

Sunday, September 20th  
4 - 7 PM

Gerstle Park — Lower Area

GPNA provides hot dogs and drinks.  
Neighbors bring a side dish to share.

LIVE MUSIC

JUMPY HOUSE FOR KIDS

BRING A SIDE DISH TO SHARE  
Last Names A-L: Desserts  
Last Names M-S: Salads or Vegetables  
Last Names T-Z: Appetizers

For more information and to volunteer:  
[info@gerstlepark.com](mailto:info@gerstlepark.com)

## National Night Out

Gerstle Park was rockin' and rollin' on August 4th, National Night Out (NNO), an event designed to build police-community relationships. There were a number of block parties that brought neighbors together. Police officers that joined in the celebration were especially approachable, even spending some quality time with neighborhood children! San Rafael Mayor Gary Phillips was on hand at a gathering in the Redwood Grove at Gerstle Park itself. Residents on C Street, Antonette and Ross Streets also celebrated the summer evening together. A good time was had by all!

Nadia Silvershine



## Safer Sidewalks

### Coming Soon

Close to 200 property owners signed up by the August 15th deadline to participate in a group pricing program with Van Midde & Son Concrete to fix their sidewalks. Work is estimated to begin soon.

The GPNA Sidewalk Improvement Program was designed to lessen the sidewalk replacement costs for this City-mandated sidewalk improvement. Additionally, our goal was to dissuade the City from arbitrarily removing trees from the neighborhood and simply ordering owners to repair their adjacent sidewalks. The compromise that has been reached includes the following:

- In approximately 17 locations, the City will incur the cost of removing those trees that are causing serious damage to the sidewalks, regardless of who owns those trees.
- The City will also cover all costs associated with replacing those trees from an approved list of trees less likely to damage the sidewalks after they have been repaired.
- The City will also incur the cost of repairing any major damage to curbs and gutters.
- The City will provide without fees any required encroachment or construction permits.
- The costs being charged by the contractor approved by both the City and the GPNA Board is significantly less than it would be if the City did the work and assessed the property owners accordingly.

This has been an impressive community effort. The result will be safer, smoother sidewalks ahead. If individual property owners want to challenge the City, it is their legal right to do so.

Many thanks go to the GPNA Sidewalk Committee members for their countless volunteer hours organizing this project, and to our Urban Forester volunteers who will recommend appropriate replacement tree species.

Gina Silvestri  
Chair Sidewalk Committee

# President's Column

*Happy August, Everyone!*

We hope you're having a restful summer and have had a chance to enjoy recent events in San Rafael such as the Sunset Criterium bike race, 2nd Friday Art Walks, weekly live music at the Farmer's Market and of course the excellent GPNA Garage Sale, our biggest fundraiser.



There's one more great summertime event in the neighborhood and we look forward to seeing you there! The Annual GPNA Picnic takes place in beautiful Gerstle Park on Sunday, September 20th, 4-7 pm. Bring along your favorite the potluck side dish to compliment our barbecued hot dogs and veggie dogs. Join the fun, too. There will be a jumpy house and face painting for the kids, along with live music for all of us. Catch up on the latest neighborhood news, make new friends and greet your neighbors.

On September 28th, we will co-host with San Rafael School District an info session about the proposed bond issue to improve the schools, and learn what a K-5 program in a new building will mean at Short and Laurel Dell Schools specifically. Before you know it, our Halloween House decorating contest will be underway, so plan ahead!

Your Board is busy sifting through the final details of our sidewalk program, along with the many issues that come our way. Don't hesitate to get involved. Monthly Board meetings are open to members, so contact me for date, time and place.

# Short School Report

*Greetings Neighbors!*

Short School is about to embark a wonderful learning year for what has now grown to become our Transitional Kindergarten to Fourth Grade program. We have two new teachers and our program expands to include the arts, and hands-on science and opportunities to explore how students can make a difference in their community.

I know many of you are wondering about the portables that were placed on the Short School property this summer. I assure you, they are going to be painted in the next couple of weeks. Also, they are not permanent. The ultimate goal is to create a more permanent, modern, attractive structure that will accommodate all of our students, eventually in K-5 program.

We appreciate your patience this last week as the fire alarm sounded repeatedly. There was no danger, and the problem has been fixed.

Thank you for your interest and support! I look forward to continuing to get to know you as neighbors.  
Vanessa Flynn, Short School Principal  
vflynn@srcs.org

# Community Meeting: School Bonds and the Future of our Schools

The GPNA is excited to be partnering with San Rafael City Schools to present a community meeting about future facilities plans for our local schools and two bond measures that will be on the ballot this fall. Representatives from San Rafael City Schools will be giving a presentation about the results from the 'master planning' process which identified the facility needs for each school in our district. Short School and Laurel Dell are schools in the greatest need of upgrades and rebuilding on that report. Information will be shared about the proposed bond measures and how they would be used to benefit our schools as well as the preliminary plans for some of the facilities upgrades (including the plans for a full rebuild of Short). Your questions and feedback welcomed.

**When:** Monday, September 28 at 6:30 pm  
**Where:** Short School - Multipurpose Room  
35 Marin Street.

# Neighborhood Interview with Drew Norton

I caught up with Drew virtually as we were both on the go the past two weeks. To set the groundwork, I asked him about his firm and the work he does for it.



Drew is a Partner and Principal for a Civil Engineering firm located in San Francisco leading a team specializing in sustainable design and green infrastructure. They work on projects ranging from buildings to larger city planning. He works throughout the State,

but most of his work is right here in the North Bay. “Very little of my work is in San Rafael,” says Drew, “except for an exciting project now under construction, the new Arts and Science Center at Marin Academy.”

In college he fell in love with science, going on to get his engineering degree at CSU in Sacramento. Then back to his hometown of Santa Cruz where he met his future wife, Carrie.

As a consultant, Drew volunteers his time as a member of Gerstle Park Sidewalk Committee, interacting with the public over issues around street trees and homeowner responsibility for sidewalk repair. He is gratified to see the City is receiving “an unbelievable amount of support; it seems like people are seeing this program for what it is, a concerted effort to help beautify the neighborhood while enhancing and preserving the character of Gerstle Park.”

At the same time Drew wishes he “could provide more time to the program and also work on other community based programs such as a neighborhood community garden or organizing people to landscape the streetscape in front of the Park.” As he puts it, “Plenty of great ideas, not enough time to execute.”

As for the challenges of being in a neighborhood where some of the infrastructure is nearing the end of its useful life, Drew explains, “Our neighborhood is old and did not go through a modern day planned development so it has very special and unique characteristics; no two streets are the same. “ From the beginning he has focused on balancing local neighborhood needs with a larger Urban Forest Plan that ensures sensible planning and thought around the replacement and new planting of our most important resource, the trees.

Drew, his wife Carrie and daughter Brynne have made their home in Gerstle Park for the past two years. They love a place where, “the people are real, the community is welcoming, the weather is perfect and the nights are very peaceful.” They also enjoy the access to open space and to the Park, for “a strong life balance.”

“I really enjoy sitting on my front porch as the sun is setting,” Says Drew. “This is when I feel a close connection to the neighborhood and its environment.”

In his spare time, Drew is an avid bike rider and commutes to work via bike and ferry almost daily. He is proud that his family has only one car. The only thing missing from his life now is the beach volleyball he grew up with.

Dotty LeMieux

## Historic Preservation

Gerstle Park has many homes that are considered to be historically or architecturally significant by the City. A new organization called San Rafael Heritage has just been formed to promote preservation of our community heritage and history. For further information, or to join, visit:

<http://www.sanrafaelheritage.org>

Membership is free at this time.  
Cynthia Landecker  
President, San Rafael Heritage

## Happenings in San Rafael

Our city is an interesting place to live, with many events. Enjoy the City Manager’s Snapshot news every two weeks in your email inbox. Click here for the latest: <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/citymgr-snapshot/>

## Street Update

Several metal guardrails on the D St./Wolfe Grade curve were installed to replace portions of the wooden fence. We have been assured that this job will be phased in and completed by the DPW in the near future.

## PG&E Mitigation, 999 Third St.

Consult our website for regular updates on this required environmental improvement.



## Report Graffiti

Take a photo of any graffiti and report it immediately to our Public Works Department. If it's on City property, they get right to work; otherwise the problem is referred to the property owner and the SRPD when appropriate. <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/pubworks-opsmnt-graff-hot>

## 2015 Board

Amy Likover, President  
Gina Silvestri, Vice President  
Ross Parmenter, Treasurer  
Joss Robertson, Secretary  
Hugo Landecker, Member  
Leigha From, Member  
Ralph Holt, Member  
Nadia Silvershine, Member

## Calendar

September 20 - Annual Picnic in Gerstle Park, 4-7 PM  
September 28 - School Bond Info Meeting, Short School 6:30 PM  
October 31: Halloween House Decorating Contest  
December 7 - Winter Social at the Panama Hotel  
December 10 - Christmas Caroling (Rain date 12/17)

To attend our monthly Board meetings: Contact:  
[info@gerstlepark.com](mailto:info@gerstlepark.com)  
or Amy 415-450-1520

## Gerstle Park Wall



One portion of the Gerstle Park bluestone wall at the NE corner of Lodge Lane and San Rafael Avenue was replaced as part of a larger drainage upgrade and curb project by the City. This new section is approximately 22 feet long by 5 feet high and 15 inches thick. The large pieces of stone are a handsome match with the native California Bluestone already used along the north edge of the park. Because the new wall is angled back from San Rafael Avenue it improves the pedestrian visibility for vehicles entering San Rafael Avenue from Lodge Lane. The completion of this project is a tribute to the cooperation between the Engineering Department and the Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association.

## Treasurer's Corner

### *Ross Parmenter*

Balance (as of 05/28/2015): \$8,729.09

Expenses: \$1856.26

Income: \$1914.55

Balance (as of 08/04/2015): \$8,787.38\*

\*Note: Our GPNA Treasury reflects an unused remaining balance of \$2090.19 from the Get Ready Gerstle Park / Marin Link award.

This past accounting period the GPNA Board purchased for the Get Ready Gerstle Park Program (2) Generators and supporting supplies costing \$1,685.49.







# Gerstle Park

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

## Annual Membership Form

*Membership year runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> - December 31<sup>st</sup>*  
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](http://www.gerstlepark.com).

COMMITTEES

- Ready Gerstle Park, Emergency Preparedness
- 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!