



Gerstle Park

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Spring 2014

Spring Fling Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 12th at 10 AM sharp!
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 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. **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Please contact:
info@gerstlepark.com



Hugo Landecker Named 2014 Citizen of the Year!

One of the original founders of the GPNA, Past President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and in his own words, "Chief Bottle Washer," our own Hugo Landecker, was honored by the City Council and also the Chamber of Commerce for his years of service: zoning and planning oversight, invasive species eradication, historical building preservation, and homelessness policy reform. Congratulations, Hugo, for the Richard P. O'Brien Citizen of the Year Award!



Sidewalks:

Good News/Bad News

You may have noticed that the San Rafael Dept. of Public Works (DPW) has spray painted several sections of our neighborhood sidewalks to indicate damage. This was done in part to warn pedestrians in hopes of minimizing "trip" hazards.

The BAD NEWS is that under state law, property owners are responsible for the upkeep of adjacent sidewalks. Quite a few years ago, the City took care of this, but not anymore. As maddening as this is because the damage is usually a direct result of overgrown roots of trees on the right of way, it seems that we don't seem to have much ability to dispute this.

The GOOD NEWS is that DPW is offering to partner with GPNA and property owners to repair the sidewalks in a cost-effective manner. A similar program was successfully implemented with the Dominican neighborhood in 2012. In a nutshell, homeowners there were able to take advantage of a "group discount" with a designated contractor and each homeowner who chose to participate paid approximately \$240 per 6'x4' section of sidewalk. The City requires only one group encroachment permit and fee \$246 for the partnership, whereas if you work individually, you alone must pay the same amount. The City has agreed to fix the root problem where feasible, or remove trees when required, at no cost. Often the tree roots may be too damaged and the tree will not survive, or become a safety hazard and have to be removed. The homeowner must discuss this with the Public Works Department on a case-by-case basis. The contractor will remove the old sidewalk and will then install the new sidewalk.

Our neighborhood association does not want to lose street trees. In some cases the sidewalk contractor may be able to accommodate special paving to preserve the tree roots, for an additional cost.

Of course, no property owner is required to participate in this joint project, you may contract a concrete firm individually, but you will lose the bulk discount. We will be reaching out directly to affected homeowners after we have decided to choose a contractor and have more information to share. In the meantime, email info@gerstlepark.com if you have any questions.

President's Column

Happy Springtime, Everyone!

As I write, jasmine and hyacinth perfume the air and fruit tree petals fall as so many snowflakes. Gerstle Park is exquisite in the spring.

With the changing seasons, the Board welcomes three new members. We spent a morning together to hammer out annual goals, based upon your input at the Annual Meeting.

2014 Board Goals

1. Do a better job of targeting communications: board, membership, neighborhood, city and county.
 2. Address neighborhood safety issues: emergency preparedness, crime, parks and open space, sidewalks, traffic and parking
 3. Improve the Gerstlepark.com website as the focal point of communication
 4. Re-visit the 2002 GPNA Neighborhood Plan
- We look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood and meeting your families and friends at the Spring Fling.

Yours truly,
 Amy Likover
 GPNA President
president@gerstlepark.com
 415.450.1520

2014 Board:

- Amy Likover, President
- Gina Silvestri, Vice President
- Ross Parmenter, Treasurer
- Rupi Buttar, Secretary
- Hugo Landecker
- Leigha From
- Aliyya Mattos

GPNA Financial Corner February Statement

Beginning bank balance	\$4768.63
Deposits	645.00
Checks	119.04
Check copies	3.00
Ending bank balance	5791.59
Outstanding check	25.94
Ending balance	<u>\$5265.65</u>

READY gerstle park

Neighbors knowing neighbors

Our first meeting March 10 at the Elks Lodge was fantastic! About 100 neighbors filled the hall to listen to experts from neighborhood, City, County, Marin County Medical Reserve Corps (FEMA), and the Red Cross.

We'd like to hit the ground running, to bring you all basic emergency preparedness and further training and leadership opportunities.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW:

1. Sign-up for a free Ready Marin class this spring:

Purpose: What to do before, during and after a regional disaster.

Tentative dates: Tues April 23, OR Mon, May 5 OR Thurs, May 29

Place: B Street Community Center. We will confirm this week!

If you haven't already, secure a place in a class ASAP info@gerstlepark.com

2. Get cell phone emergency alerts from Marin Sheriff's Department

Registration for Alert Marin takes 5 minutes online – I just timed it!

<http://www.alertmarin.org>

3. Readiness Preparation in your home

For Readiness Prep, please see...

<http://readymarin.org>

4. Further training to become a 'Citizen First Responder':

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) - \$45, begins April 10th - Hurry!

<http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/oes-cert-home/>

Marin Medical Reserve Corps (Through FEMA): Free. Requires competencies such as Ready Marin & CERT training

<https://www.marinhhs.org/marin-county-medical-reserve-corps>

Marin Search & Rescue (Through Marin County Sherriff): Requires a minimum 2-year commitment, training offered twice yearly

<http://www.marinsar.org>

Red Cross – Excellent source of information:

<http://www.redcross.org/ca/san-francisco/local-programs-services/community-preparedness>



New Life into an Old Beauty

Built in 1900 and moved to its present site in 1929, "this old house" is looking even cuter after its new paint job.

Owner and occupant Samantha purchased the house in 2005 and has thought long and hard about what color to paint it ever since. "This house isn't just mine - it belongs to the neighborhood. Everyone else probably sees it more than I do so I wanted to make sure it was eye catching. I wanted it to be one of those houses that you just can't help look at when you are going by it."

After doing much repair carpentry herself (she is a general contractor and owner of B Street Builders) Sam enlisted local talent to help finish off the job: Joe Likover for finish carpentry and Mary Ann Nardo for color choice and placement.

Overall it was a neighborhood effort that brought new life to an old neighborhood beauty!



GPNA Reaches Out to Apartment Managers & Owners

As part of our effort to inform residents about the March 10th Emergency Preparedness meeting, we called 22 property managers. The results were fantastic, and we thank you! One example, Mary Wiegmann manager of 127 Ross St (Bayside Management), phoned or emailed all tenants. As we are a neighborhood association, we welcome all renters and property owners to join.

Annual Meeting

Our annual business meeting and year-end report took place January 27th in the beautiful Queen Anne style Falkirk Mansion and neighbors loved it! About 70 people



turned out to socialize and welcome guests Mayor Gary Phillips and Police Chief Bishop. Thanks to GPNA graphic design volunteer James Ferrandini, there was a beautiful slideshow set to music to highlight the year's events and to thank volunteers. Watch it on our website! We enjoyed delicious fresh fruit and veggies, and antipasti by Valerie Silvestri and scrumptious Four Layer Caramel Crunch Brownies by Judy Gallegos. (<http://share.bhg.com/qpgNBEg> - use brownie mix instead of nougat.) There were Board elections, a member interest survey, and lively discussions.

Calendar

Board meeting: Every 2nd Thursday Monthly

- April 12: Spring Fling
- June 14 – Garage Sale
- July TBA - Bocce Event
- August 5 – National Night Out
- September 14 - Annual Picnic, 4-7 PM
- October 31: Halloween House Decorating Contest
- December 8 – Winter Social
- December 11 – Neighborhood Caroling

New Plantings



On February 15, an enthusiastic group of GPNA volunteers, armed with shovels, pick-axes and a whole lot of 'elbow grease', planted 25 dwarf manzanita and a half-dozen buddleia bushes parallel to the white picket fence at D Street. Our volunteers provided the labor; the City of San Rafael provided the one-gallon bushes and planting soil.

While it'll be a while before these are big enough to really notice, you can see the lovely spring daffodils, day-lilies etc. that unsung Gerstle Park residents quietly planted on their own over the last couple of years.

We're hoping Mother Nature will provide lots of rainy weather to help these plants get established. But, just in case, four volunteers have committed to keeping them watered for the first year in drought periods. So, with a little luck, we'll have a full and lovely entrance garden for all to enjoy and be proud of.

If you are interested to joining our garden group - occasionally weeding and planting, send us your name and email info.

Mary Valente, info@gerstelpark.com



Open Space Report

The rains were welcome this past month, and provided softer earth to pull out invasive species such as French broom. Hugo Landecker has led this effort for 20 years. Note that buttercups, moss and miner's lettuce are replacing the broom.

GPNA Volunteer

Webmaster Needed!

Email info@gerstlepark.com for details.

Short School Report

In January, Visioning Meetings aimed at dealing with expanded enrollment concluded. Since enrollment has increased over the past 8 years, Short will need to expand. It was recommended that Short move toward being a K-5 with two classrooms per grade level. Next year, Short will expand from K-2 to K-3 and will add new classrooms each year to become a standard elementary school. The current strategy to implement the expanded size involves adding temporary structures. It is likely that a large portable multipurpose building will be added this summer near the parking lot on the west side of the lot. The following summer, three smaller 4th and 5th grade classroom portables will be added on the Clorinda Ave. side of the site. The final enrollment will likely be around 200 students.

Meanwhile, the school district is in the process of working with architects to evaluate the school district's facilities needs in a process they are calling "master planning." As they evaluate sites, they will be looking at Short and recommending a long-term solution which could involve new permanent structures or the possibility of an entirely new school site.

The GPNA expressed our concerns about 1. The effect of increased enrollment on traffic 2. The site isn't large enough to house more students. We strongly discouraged the use of portables noting that they are unattractive and take up large amounts of outdoor space. We noted that we would rather see money spent on well-designed permanent structures. Our concerns were heard by the district, and we appreciated being a part of the visioning committee.

Sun Valley will continue to be the neighborhood school for Gerstle Park West of D Street and Laurel Dell for Gerstle Park East of D Street. Short will continue to be a school of choice. Moving forward, we will continue to be involved in the expansion plans at the evolution of Short School.

Thanks to 2014 Volunteers

We're all volunteers at GPNA, and our active base is expanding. Special thanks so far this year go to our helpers who make the neighborhood more beautiful, safe and friendly: Aliyya M., Amy L., Ann L., Bob U., Brian W., Brigitte W., Diantha B., Dotty L., Cynthia L., Dan M., Dave L., George S., Gina S., Greg B., Hugo L., James F., Janis S., Joe L., Josselyn R., Judy G., Kearsley H., Laurie O., Leigha F., Lois T., Lori S., Mary V, Mitch S., Pepe G., Phil V., Ross P., Rupi B., Samantha S., Sandy B., Steve S., Tom F., Tom O., Tracy L., Valerie S., Regrets to others not listed!

Cell Phone Reporting

It's "OK" to call 911 from cell phones in Marin County! If a citizen is calling on or near Hwy 101, its going to route to CHP because most likely (based on historical data, etc.) the citizen is reporting a traffic incident. Otherwise it should come to the appropriate PSAP in the county.

911 is the highest priority call - 7 digit lines are secondary. State funding for the Communication Center comes from the volume of 911 calls our center receives. Please encourage citizens to call 911 in an emergency.

More information

1. Report wrongdoings immediately so the police can follow up – never wait!
2. If you have a cell phone-camera, supplement the call with a photo of the wrongdoing. You have the constitutional right to photograph from public property.
3. Save the non-emergency number 485-3000 in your cell phone.
4. To follow up with persistent neighborhood problems, please email us info@gerstlepark.com. GPNA likes connecting neighbors to benefit the great quality of life we expect in Gerstle Park. nextdoorgerstlepark.com is a communication forum with neighbors. Check it out!

San Rafael Doings

Take a look at City Manager Nancy Mackle's Snapshot: <http://www.cityofsanrafael.org/snapshot>
Federation of San Rafael Neighborhoods – all kinds of interesting news:
<http://www.fsrn.info>

Spring Fling!



Sat. April 12
10 AM sharp!
Gerstle Park Playground

egg hunt
for kids under 9 yrs.
prizes
contests
don't be late!



Gerstle Park
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

You Can Help After a Disaster!

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
BASIC TRAINING

Be prepared! No experience required.
Learn how to care for your family and neighbors following a disaster through interactive, hands-on activities.



San Rafael CERT
Thur April 10
6:30 pm - 9:00 pm
Sat April 12 & 19
8:30 am - 4:30 pm
\$45 • 18 hrs



Register at www.ReadyMarin.org



For additional information call 415 485.3409 or e-mail coordinator@marincountycert.org
Scholarships are available. This is a volunteer program.
You are welcome to attend any of the 10 trainings in Marin County in 2014.



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

- 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!