

# Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association

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



## Quarterly Newsletter

Winter 2008

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dearest Neighbors,

With the year soon drawing to a close, I find the subject of completion of interest. So many of us relax our focus on our goals as the holidays approach, some beginning this slackening before Halloween. "The year is almost over," they say, "what's the point?" I like to look at the year-end as a compelling incentive to wrap up a few things in order to begin the new year with a fresh start. Imagine starting your next year **WITHOUT** the same old resolutions: clean out that garage, lose ten (twenty) pounds, exercise regularly, save money.... What if you were to get the garage cleaned and lose ten pounds before January 1st? What would your goal be then? How could 2009 be different? I believe the GPNA can pat ourselves on the back for completing two long-standing goals this year, forever eliminating them from our to do list, leaving room in 2009 for some good new ideas. We finally got a contemporary new website up and running. If you haven't seen it yet, please visit [www.gerstlepark.com](http://www.gerstlepark.com). We will be giving a thorough tour of the site at our Annual Meeting, scheduled to take place Thursday, January 29th.

Additionally, we have a plan in place to correct the dangerous traffic pattern at First and C, and First and D Streets. We HOPE the matter goes before the City Council in December, so 2009 will be about implementation and not continued discussion about resolution! Please read the article giving specifics on page 2 of this newsletter. If you enjoy receiving the newsletter by mail and/or e-mail, don't forget to return your membership renewals promptly. Thank you so much for your support this past year. It was a good one! We wish you Happy Holidays and a safe and healthy New Year!

Muriel Ballard

President, GPNA



### WANT TO BE PART OF THE "IN CROWD"?

The "In Crowd" is that fabulous group of folks that you need to thank for providing these great neighborhood benefits:

- The quarterly newsletter
- The Annual Meeting
- Open Space and Trail maintenance
- Monitoring of Building & Development in the neighborhood
- The Spring Fling
- The Annual Garage Sale
- Public Notices/Posters regarding matters affecting your community
- The Gerstle Park Website
- Community Improvements
- Halloween Decorating Contest Awards
- Monthly meetings on your behalf
- E-mail notices regarding development, events and crime
- Networking Events
- Welcome Packets for New Neighbors
- Etc, etc.

Who are these cool people? They are the folks who pay the modest dues each year, which the elected Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association Board then invests on your behalf. You might already be one of them... are you? If yes, then THANK YOU, THANK YOU!! We look forward to your renewal. If not yet, then come on in, the community is FINE!!! Take a look at that list. If you want to continue to receive these services, we need you on our team.

Members also share these exclusive benefits:

- Receive newsletter by mail or e-mail vs. picking it up at Muffin Mania or the park
- Receive a discount on Garage Sale fee.

Please fill out and return the Membership Application on the back of this newsletter today!

## BUILDING PERMITS

Frequently GPNA gets inquires about building permits. Sometimes neighbors are curious about what other neighbors are doing. Previously acquiring this public information involved a visit to City Hall. Now there is an easier way: using the computer. Go to the City of San Rafael web page ([www.cityofsanrafael.org](http://www.cityofsanrafael.org)) and you will see an on-line service titled "ePermits: Project and Permit Status". You can click on this and then enter the address or the assessor's parcel number and, if the resident has obtained any required permit, you will get the status of your neighbor's project.

## TRAIL MAPS

GPNA is in the midst of mapping locations and preparing attractive, permanent trail markers to be installed at principal Gerstle Park open space entry points and trail junctures. These should help hikers avoid the confusion about where the various trails lead, as well as help with the connection between our two major open space areas.

## STOP! SIGN... (FINALLY!!!)

On September 17th a meeting was held at the B Street Community Center, at which three alternatives were presented to improve the dangerous intersections at First and C, and First and D. Via an outreach program that included a mailing, posters, a web poll and e-mails, along with the presentation on the 17th, a consensus was reached whereby the intermediate level solution was preferred. This solution includes putting a stop sign on the east-bound corner of First and C, extending two-way traffic flow on D Street up to 2nd Street, and inhibiting northbound left hand turns onto Frances and First during peak traffic hours. Once in place, this new pattern will be observed and refined over time accordingly. This change, along with a comprehensive list of other changes necessary to the Gerstle Park traffic flow, will be presented to the City Council on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Continued support from the community, in the form of showing up at this hearing, should result in a better, swifter outcome. Please plan on attending if you are able.

## A DOG ATTACK

(Why Leashes Are Important)

Several weeks ago it happened... in the open space above Gerstle Park. A friend was walking her three handsome Labrador Retrievers one morning. They were on a wooded hillside path when suddenly the chocolate Lab's ball rolled down the hill into the trees and brush below. When she ran down the hill into the bushes to retrieve the ball our friend heard a shriek and much scrambling in the undergrowth. The chocolate Lab fled up the hillside with a terrible wound in her stomach. She was rushed to the vet and it required many stitches to repair the wound. It was concluded that a large raccoon had attacked her.

We walk every day with our two dogs, often on the same path where this attack occurred. But our dogs are always on the leash. Yet, most of the dogs we encounter in the open space areas are off leash, circling about their owners, and enjoying the freedom of the outdoors. To be honest, our dogs would roam uncontrolled for hours if we didn't leash them, but they have never gotten into trouble and they haven't disturbed other walkers.

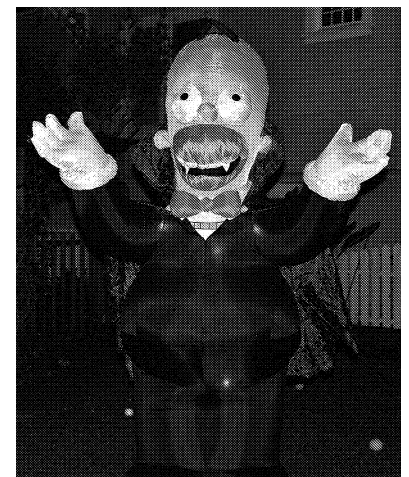
We'd like to suggest that leashes are a really good idea for any dog when outside his or her property. Often people think, "oh, my dog is safe... he won't hurt anyone". But there are other safety concerns, like the dog's safety - since often it is the pet that gets hurt, or the safety of our environment, as uncollected feces are unsanitary and offensive. And yes, the dog gives up some freedom. But stop to consider, when she's leashed she's bonding with her master and that is a benefit that the dog owner may not have thought about. The one leash exception that we can think of, where safety may not be evident, is the case where the dog is a 150-pound Great Dane and the master is a small human. In this case, perhaps a saddle and reins would be advised.

# SCARY, SCARIER, SCARIEST!!

Members of the GPNA Board do a thorough drive-thru of the entire neighborhood the night before Halloween, judging decoration efforts. This year it seemed as if no one wanted to play, as we were hard-pressed to find houses with more than a pumpkin on the porch! We speculated that, perhaps, the economy and the election were providing enough frightening material that Halloween just seemed like too much! We were pleasantly surprised to see our usual folks and then some out working hard on Halloween day to make our neighborhood the “go to hot spot” for Trick or Treating! We would like to acknowledge the following homes for outstanding decoration efforts, (please forgive us if we missed your decorations if they went up 10/31 and were off the beaten path):

- 222 Bayview:** Brilliant handmade serpent slithering over the house
- 41 Octavia:** Stunning arrangement of spooky stuff:
- 231 Bayview:** Thrills & Living Chills (live actors!)
- 421 D Street:** Creepiest Windows
- 217 Bayview:** Undercover Graveyard
- 239 Bayview:** Plethora o’ Pumpkins
- 34 Miramar (Thank you!):** Best Mischief Night Preview
- 20 Miramar:** Gruesome Headless Ghost
- 11 Madrone:** Most Ghosts
- 116 Greenwood:** Grizwalds (PG & E thanks you)
- 119 San Rafael:** The Great Pumpkin
- 39 & 40 Pleasant Lane:** Pleasantly Painful
- 101 Marin Street:** Creepiest Courtyard
- 508 D Street:** Fiendish Fun
- 347 D Street:** Patio Pranksters

Those acknowledged will receive a \$20 gift certificate at Muffin Mania.



## ANNUAL MEETING!

Please mark your calendars and plan on attending our Annual Meeting scheduled to take place Thursday January 29th, from 6:00 - 8:00, at the

Trinity Church community room. Pizza and beverages will be served.

## BOARD MEMBERS WANTED:

We will be experiencing a large turn over in Board Members this year. We have openings for six new members. This is such an excellent way to get to know the people in your community, and to give back. Please consider joining. I'll be happy to chat with anyone about what is involved:

Muriel Ballard 415.499.7755

## GPNA CALENDAR

<b>December 3</b>	Wed	Board of Directors Meeting*
<b>December 15</b>	Mon	City Council Review of Traffic Plan
<b>December 18</b>	Thu	Christmas Caroling
<b>January 29</b>	Thu	Annual Meeting

\* Guests are welcome! If you would like to address the GPNA Board of Directors, wish to attend a meeting, or need more information on Gerstle Park Events or Community Meetings, please contact [muriel.ballard@gerstlepark.com](mailto:muriel.ballard@gerstlepark.com)



### 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

**Membership Year Runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Individual:** One Voting Member: \$15.00 (\$10.00 Seniors Age 65 or Older)

**Household:** Two Voting Members: \$20.00 (\$15.00 Seniors)

New Member ♦ Renewal

Gerstle Park T-SHIRTS: Child & Adult \$15ea.

Quantity

Size

Additional Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to receive our quarterly newsletter via email instead of home delivery?

Yes ♦ No

Are you interested in volunteering?

Yes ♦ No