



Gerstle Park

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Winter 2016

NEW! Renew your 2017 GPNA Membership on our Website!

Winter Social

Monday, Dec 12th, 2016 6:30-8:30 PM



The Panama Hotel Restaurant, 4 Bayview St.

No charge to attend

Complimentary appetizers and hot apple cider

Thanks to GPNA Member/Panama Hotel Owner Dan Miller

Cash Bar

It's time to renew old friendships & meet new neighbors.

Adults only, please.

Christmas Caroling

Thursday, December 15th, 2016 6:30-8:30 PM

Where: Gather/practice at 127 San Rafael Ave.

When: Meet at 6:30 PM, Depart at 7 PM

What: GPNA provides hot apple cider and songbooks

Bring: A dozen cookies to share and a flashlight



Weather: If light rain, bring an umbrella and dress accordingly. If heavy rain, we'll reschedule for the following Thursday. This is an especially great event for children, so bring them along!

GPNA Annual Meeting

Monday, January 23, 2017

Elks Lodge: 1312 Mission Ave., San Rafael

6:00-9:00 PM

Cash bar opens at 5 pm

6:00-7:00 PM Meet and greet; homemade refreshments

7:00-7:45 PM 'The Year in Review' slideshow and reports

7:45-9:00 Guest Speakers and Q & A



Halloween Decorating Contest Results

1st Place: 235 Marin St.

2nd Place: 508 D St.

3rd Place: 217 Bayview

4th Place: 201 Marin

5th Place: 101 Marin



Prizes Donated By:

Ginolina Restaurant

Marin Bocce

The Mountain Play

Northbay Dental

Panama Hotel & Restaurant

Shineology Car Wash



President's Column

Amy Likover

Hello Neighbors!

This time of year, even Gerstle Park with its perennially beautiful weather, feels like winter is a'coming. We celebrated the autumnal season with an amazing Halloween House contest. You may have had a chance on that dark, spooky and rainy night to experience some of Gerstle Park's finest: Hogwarts and flying witches on D Street, a scary haunted labyrinth on Marin, cow in a witches' cap and skeletons on Marin St., a treasure chest with pirates on Clark, an enchanted garden with a political statement on Marin, a spooky passageway on Bayview, and a scary giant cockroach on Ross. Fun was had by all, even on that soggy and frightening Halloween night.

Will you be attending our December Social at the Panama Hotel? This adults only hors d'oeuvre and cash bar event at a favorite venue (thanks to proprietor and former Board member Dan Miller,) provides a welcome start to the Holidays. That same week, join the neighborhood carolers as we brighten up the night's sky, bringing song to your doorstep. Plan on attending our Annual Membership Meeting Monday evening, January 23 at the Elks Lodge. New this year due to popular demand will be a security vendor fair where you can learn how to secure your home. Both the Mayor and Chief of Police will address our group, so bring your questions!

Please read our "Abundant Opportunities" article, and join the fun! If you are a Board member type of person, willing to make a 3-year commitment to the neighborhood, we would love to hear from you. Thanks for your enthusiasm, involvement, and appreciation as we continue our mission "to draw a wide diversity of people to work together and partner with our community and local government to enhance and protect the character and livability of our neighborhood."



I look forward to seeing you in January at the Annual Meeting, which will be a bittersweet moment for me, my last as a Board member, having "termed out" after 6 years of service. We will host the Mayor and Police Chief, along with what promises to be an excellent event.

As always, see you soon, around the neighborhood, and thanks!

Abundant Opportunities

- Love to walk your dog, with your stroller, or just... walk? Join our bi-annual newsletter distribution team.
- Talented with graphics? Help format our newsletter.
- Excellent with websites? Ours could use your skill.
- Enjoy promoting events? Join the GPNA fun. We'd love your ideas.
- Talented editor? Get trained to edit our newsletter.
- Enjoy our Open Space trails? Help pull invasive species this rainy season. They come out like tulips!
- Hooked on policy issues? We follow many local issues, and welcome you!
- Want to meet new people? The GPNA is the hub of our neighborhood.
- Do you like to cook, set-up or host events? Join the fun!
- **Are you a Board member type, devoted to our mission and willing to commit to a 3-year term? Send us an intro paragraph, and we'll contact you.**
- To connect with us, and become an active member of our neighborhood, please contact: info@gerstlepark.com

Treasurer's Corner

Ross Parmenter

Balance (as of 09.01.2016): \$6,775.93

Expenses: \$1,010.97

Income: \$486.90

Balance (as of 11/11/2016): \$6,252.76

+ MarinLink Account balance \$5,270.00*

*Attend the Annual Meeting 1/23 for more about this exciting donation made to our neighborhood!

Albert Park Community Clean Up Day

Save the Date — Jan 21, 2017



In an effort to create a connection with our local parks and beautify the space around us, join members of the San Rafael community on Saturday, January 21, 2017 from 9:30 am to 11:30 am to kick off the first quarterly clean up of Albert Park. Please stay tuned for more details about this event as January 21, 2017 approaches.

This event is supported by the City of San Rafael and organized by the GPNA and the B Team. For further information, email Carrie Marmesh at: keepsrcclean@gmail.com.

Open Space

Hugo Landecker

Greenwood Avenue: Recently the San Rafael City Council accepted the donation of 3.1 acres of land adjacent to existing open space near the end of Greenwood Avenue. The donation is being transferred from the Marin Open Space Trust to the City and will become permanent open space. The transfer guarantees there will be permanent access to open space from the end of Greenwood Avenue. Thanks to all of you that made this possible, to MOST and to those neighbors that donated the funds that made this possible. The final transfer will happen in January.



Upper Toyon Ridge: The GPNA was recently informed that 10 acres of undeveloped land at the end of Upper Toyon are facing the construction of two large homes.

This land is adjacent to our open space and is currently in the Town of Ross. Many of you have hiked this ridge. Ross was about to approve the development, but temporarily halted because there are endangered species on the site. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to evaluate conflicts with the federal Endangered Species Act. It is proposed to remove hundreds of trees from the site. If you hike the site, you will see story poles representing the foot print of the homes and the height. These homes would be situated high on the ridge, visible from Ross Valley, Second Street and northward.

There is a group that is working on acquisition of this land for permanent open space, should the development not go forward. Further information on Upper Toyon Ridge protection efforts can be found at: www.change.org/p/protect-upper-toyon-ridge.

Important Planning Issues

Hugo Landecker

Ross Terrace is a public right of way that has existed since the Gerstle Park neighborhood was originally subdivided. The street itself was never paved. Few people even know it exists. Some years ago there was a stairway from Ross Street that led to a footpath to the west end of Clayton Street. The path is still there. The City removed the stairs, because of non-compliance with codes.

Recently GPNA was notified by the City that a developer plans to build two homes accessible only from Ross Terrace. An initial plan was to construct an access roadway from the end of Clayton Street to the building site. The Fire Department requires a bigger turning radius than than could be constructed within the confines of the right of way which would require cutting into multiple privately owned properties.

The latest proposal involves cutting a new access road from Ross Street and not extending the road to Clayton Streets next to the rear of some properties fronting on Marin and Woods Street. Also proposed is to use the right of way for required onsite guest parking which blocks the end of the new road (contrary to code). There are many problems with the provided plans and at this time the application is considered incomplete and will not go forward to required public hearings.

The GPNA Board is not against the construction of the two new homes but we expect all projects to follow City code, to protect the livability of the neighborhood.

René Mouly, Trailblazer

Neighbor Interview

By Dotty Lemieux

At nearly 88 years old, or as he puts it, "At my next birthday, I'll be 22 for the fourth time," René Mouly is full of energy and he's still using it to blaze trails for his community.

In his native France, René was a part of the French underground during the occupation by the Germans in World War II. He and a few other young people (he was only 14 at the time) posed as shepherds, using local cows to help those fleeing the Germans escape to Spain. His small hamlet was near the Pyrénées, and they guided their charges through a short but critical stretch of French countryside through creeks and under bridges, toward freedom.

René didn't tell his family what he was up to, but when his World War I vet father learned of his son's activities, after the War, he was very proud.

René came to the US after the War, settling first in Southern California with an uncle and then moving north to Kentfield in 1951. He developed a successful career as a landscaper, and for years was much in demand in places like Ross. In 1965, he bought the property he now lives on in Gerstle Park. "My wife and I lived in a subdivision in Novato for a while," he says, but wanting something with more history and character to it, they decided the Gerstle Park neighborhood was the place to live and soon built the house near Gerstle Park where they still live today.

For the past 23 years, since his semi-retirement from the landscaping business, René has worked tirelessly on the trail at the end of Greenwood, at first just opening it up, then improving it into the winding trail that is there today.

When René started his work on the trail, the property at the end of Greenwood was in private hands, and the owners hoping to develop it. Instead, through a series of negotiations with neighbors and the Marin Open Space Trust, the land that René helped clear, is on its way to being permanently protected as part of the existing Oakwood Open Space and can be seen on the map drawn by Hugo Landecker on the Gerstle Park Open Space site: Go here:

<http://www.gerstlepark.com/open-space-maps.html>



When I ask how he got started on such a massive project, he laughs "I needed something to do. So when someone told him about a trail, he first said "What trail? I was right there in front of my eyes!" It took him four months just to open it up, working 45 minutes a day, cutting back decades worth of poison oak, berries, and broom. Finally, there it was, the trail. René continued this work, on his own, for 22 years.

He wasn't entirely on his own, as a few others helped along the way. "Hugo Landecker is a pioneer," he says, emphatically. "Make sure you mention Hugo. And Mitch Shandly, too." When I compare them to the Three Musketeers of trail making, he just nods.

"The City should pay me," says René, only half joking. "I think something like \$1000 a year would be fair. Then I can buy a used Lexus." The Gerstle Park Neighborhood Association is forever grateful to René for his work, and also to his band of swashbucklers, Mitch and Hugo.

READYgerstlepark

Dave Lammel

Winter will soon be upon us! Here are a few things to think about before the storms and possible power outages. Don't forget to clean your roof gutters and downspouts plus clear leaves from surface drains. You might also check that your downspouts haven't separated, and that they empty away from your foundation so that soil won't be washed away. Consider trimming nearby large trees. Stock sandbags if you're in a flooding area. Needless to say, steer clear of downed power lines, and for prolonged power outages (not to mention earthquakes), store water (5 gallons per person to last 5 days, plus more for sanitation and cooking), and keep a flashlight next to your bed. There's lots more info at: readymarin.org

Calendar

December 12 – Winter Social, Panama Hotel
December 15 – Christmas Caroling, rain date 12/22
January 23 – Annual Meeting, Elks Lodge

GPNA Board

Amy Likover, President
Gina Silvestri, Vice President
Joss Robertson, Corresponding Secretary
Nadia Silvershine, Recording Secretary
Ross Parmenter, Treasurer
Hugo Landecker, Member
Carrie Marmesh, Member