

President’s Letter

Please JOIN our Neighborhood Association!!!

So much has happened in our neighborhood since the Spring. The elephant in the room is the sale of the 21-acre parcel that borders Locust Ave, Gold Hill Ave, Highland Ave, and Deer Park formerly owned by Dominican University and purchased by a developer. A concerned group of people met within days after the sale and formed a separate group, Save Dominican Valley. They have been providing updates at our monthly Board meetings, providing us with an article within this newsletter, attending City Council meetings, and submitting relevant and crucial information on environmental and safety concerns to the City of San Rafael. This does not happen in a vacuum. I encourage you to read, make your own decisions, and get involved.

What amazes me is how our neighbors quickly joined together, made connections, and are making efforts to stop irresponsible development.

What else does your Association do for you:

DBCNA has sponsored an expert on coyotes to speak with us this past Spring to dispel myths and help us to understand their behaviors to live in sync with them. Thank you to those that attended. The Summer Scoop was well attended by all ages! We had a native seed distribution and a representative from Save Dominican Valley to talk about their efforts.

We have a full line-up this Fall. The Walk-About has already occurred that included San Rafael Fire Fighters hiking us around the hills on Gold Hill Grade. They spoke about fire behavior and evacuation. A more tutorial session will take place November 4 as a follow-up to that talk and an opportunity to participate in a mini-evacuation drill. Our cocktail party will be in February 2024.

We have new neighbors including young families. Two families have volunteered to host a DBCNA sponsored Halloween Party for our younger neighbors. We will host a tree-lighting gathering in December. We have a new Treasurer who is new to our neighborhood.

Have I mentioned . . . PLEASE JOIN OUR ASSOCIATION!

These events take time . . . but not much when shared amongst all. These events take money (advertising, space rental, subscriptions, banking fees, etc.) and have been offered at no cost.

May I mention again . . . PLEASE JOIN OUR ASSOCIATION!

Pay Pal is up and running again. Our dues will increase from \$30 to \$40 in 2024. Join now! Volunteer for a Board position or to help with an event. It takes a neighborhood who cares to keep Dominican/Black Canyon such a desirable place to live.

Kathy Burwell, DBCNA President



October 14th Walk About Group





Newsletter News!!



This is our first e-edition of the DBCNA Newsletter. Our biennial newsletters will move to one paper edition in the Spring and an e-edition in the Fall In order to capture all our neighbors, be sure to send us your email address on our website.

Dominican Firewise Committee

One of the goals of the Firewise Committee is for Dominican Black Canyon residents to be prepared to evacuate immediately if ordered by public—safety agencies. This means residents should have an evacuation plan, understand our system of alerts and warnings, have a 'go bag', know the evacuation route options, be prepared to secure their homes prior to departure, and be able to evacuate quickly. We will hold a pilot Evacuation Drill on November 4, circulating materials to assist in your planning, a 'Wildfire Evacuation Survival Checklist. Attendees will be greeted by San Rafael Fire Department specialists who can answer questions and provide more information. Looking ahead, the Committee has designated 2024 as the year for a full-blown Evacuation—drill. We are recruiting neighborhood representatives to join us in local-level preparation. With a network of neighborhood representatives, our committee can more effectively reach those who lack email access, those with medical vulnerabilities and those with experience and resources to help.

Belle Cole and Greg Brockbank, Co-Chairs

To find out more or to sign up for the DBCNA Firewise Committee, contact Co--Chairs: Belle Cole (415-847-8479) or Greg Brockbank (415-717-7056) or email DBCNA.Info@gmail.com.

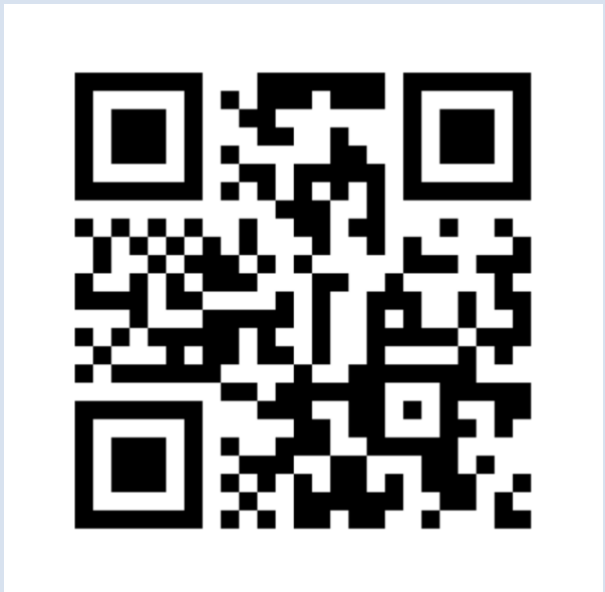
SEMI-ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

**November 4th 10 – 12 noon
Pilot Evacuation Drill**

Trinity Community Church

STAY CONNECTED- DIGITIZE!

This will save trees, money, and volunteer hours. We need your email address to send you the newsletter as well as Mail Chimp notifications of urgent messages which provides active EMERGENCY links to City of San Rafael, and notification of meetings and social events. We do not share or sell these addresses and they will only be used by the Association for related events or services. You do not need to be a paying member to receive these notifications.



Email to DBCNA.INFO@gmail.com

OR scan QR Code

We will add you to the list!



2024 Traffic Safety Initiative

Dear Residents of Villa, Mountain View and Locust Avenues,

We have been working for the last couple of years on bringing awareness to the neighborhood on traffic issues such as speed, safety and obeying traffic signs. We placed speed monitoring signs on Grand Avenue, the SRPD has provided educational talks, and we installed orange flags to aid in crosswalk safety in those intersections where the need was greatest. All in all, the neighborhood has done great work and we have seen a down tick in the number of issues.

Unfortunately, several of your neighbors continue to express concern that not enough attention has been given to an ongoing issue of speeders on Villa, Mountain View and Locust Avenues. These streets seem to be used as straight aways for gathering speed while coming or going from those neighborhoods. It has been witnessed with speeders being neighborhood residents, gardeners, construction workers and delivery personnel. This behavior has created a very dangerous environment for pedestrians and bicyclists alike. There are sections on these streets where there are no sidewalks forcing walkers to use the shoulder of the roads while narrowly being missed by speeding vehicles whizzing by. We cannot wait for a tragedy to happen.

The subject of adding speed humps to these streets has been discussed for some time now, but we have held off from engaging the City as we do not know if this is the preferred solution from a few concerned residents of from a majority. Once the City receives our request, they would do a traffic study and respond back with their opinion on possible 'traffic calming' actions. One of those actions could be to install speed humps.

So, we are asking you to take a moment to voice your opinion. Please write to DBCNA's email account DBCNA.info@gmail.com and let us know your thoughts for or against speed humps on Villa from Grand/Linden Avenues to the stop sign before the 101 North on ramp; Mountain Veiw from Grand Avenue to Sienna Way; and Locust Avenue from

Grand Avenue to Gold Hill Grade. We will report back once we have reviewed your email responses.

It is our sincere hope that this will solve the traffic issues and once again allow pedestrians to walk our streets safely.

Evacuation Check-In, a Pilot Drill

Saturday, November 4th

The DBCNA Firewise Committee is preparing residents for immediate evacuation if ordered by public safety agencies.

We are holding a Pilot Evacuation Drill on November 4 at the Trinity Community Church on Grand Avenue between 10-11:30 am. Look for materials distributed in advance through email and hand delivery, including a Wildfire Evacuation Survival Checklist. Check-in at the Trinity Church and meet with San Rafael Fire Department Specialists who will answer questions about evacuation and provide more information

You will learn what it means to be prepared. Residents will get help with their evacuation plan, understand the system of alerts and warnings, decide on contents of a Go Bag, learn evacuation route options, secure your home prior departure, and learn to evacuate quickly.

This is a unique opportunity to start the overwhelming process of what it means to evacuate. Children and pets are welcome!

Will you Survive A Wildfire Evacuation? [Click Here](#)

[Wildfire Evacuation Survival Checklist](#)

Feel free to reach out to us for more information.

Co-chairs: Belle Cole, 415-847-8479 and Greg Brockbank, 415-717-7056.



AUTOMATIC LICENSE PLATE READERS

The San Rafael Police Department began utilizing ALPR technology in 2012. The Police Department currently has two camera systems on two marked patrol vehicles and one system on a radar speed trailer for a total of eight cameras. Even in this limited deployment model, ALPR technology has proven to be useful in identifying stolen vehicles and providing investigative data to solve crimes.

In the last five years, the City has seen motor vehicle thefts increase by over 50%. From January 1st to June 30th, 2023, alone, there have been 238 reported motor vehicle thefts and of these, the City has recovered 45% of the total stolen vehicles. ALPR technology has proven to be effective in other cities to mitigate and deter crimes. For example, Vacaville, which currently utilizes an ALPR camera system, has seen a 33% reduction in motor vehicle thefts. Given the success of the ALPR technology in assisting the Police Department with solving crime and considering recent trends regarding motor vehicle thefts, we are excited about the expansion of the use of ALPR technology.

Some Benefits of the use of ALPR's

- **Enhanced Crime Prevention:** ALPR systems can quickly scan and analyze license plates of vehicles in real-time. This enables law enforcement to identify stolen vehicles, track down suspects, and monitor the movements of known criminals. By doing so, ALPR plays a crucial role in deterring criminal activity.
- **Rapid Response:** ALPR technology automates the process of scanning license plates, providing law enforcement with instant alerts for vehicles associated with outstanding warrants, AMBER alerts, or other immediate threats. This rapid response capability can be a game-changer in critical situations.
- **Reducing Vehicle-Related Crimes:** ALPR can help reduce crimes such as car theft, burglaries, and even hit-and-run incidents. Criminals are less likely to target areas with ALPR systems in place, knowing that their movements are being monitored.
- **Data for Investigations:** ALPR systems collect valuable data on vehicle movements, which can be used in investigations. This data can

provide crucial leads, timelines, and evidence in criminal cases, making it easier to solve crimes and bring perpetrators to justice.

- **Community Safety:** ALPR contributes to an overall sense of safety in our community. When residents and businesses know that law enforcement is actively using advanced technology to combat crime.

The FLOCK Safety ALPR camera system the City will deploy in the next couple of months only captures objective information. There is no personal identifiable information captured or stored in the database, thus ensuring the highest level of privacy concerns.

San Rafael Police Department



**WE ALWAYS WANT NEW
and FRESH IDEAS!**

To get involved in the Dominican Black Canyon Neighborhood Association, contact us at DBCNA.info@gmail.com.



Save Dominican Valley: Neighbors Speak Up

You may have started to see Save Dominican Valley signs popping up in neighbors' yards recently. This initiative is a community response by 300 concerned citizens to the purchase of a 21-acre parcel of land behind Dominican University by a developer who wants to build up to 75 new houses and townhomes on it.

The developer has submitted five pre-applications for 29-75 homes to the City of San Rafael. These pre-applications included significant misstatements, inaccuracies and factual misrepresentations per federal and state regulations, government agency maps, and guidelines.

At the heart of the matter is consideration for the health and safety of current and future residents, as well as environmental concerns (protected species, toxic substances), protecting open space and access (biking and hiking trails), and traffic and evacuation concerns on this—steep forested property that is snugly surrounded by single-lane roads, a creek, natural water channels, and subject to flooding and mudslide danger.

The core concerns include the density and location of the proposed housing, the types of housing, as well as the disregard for the geological, topographical and environmental conditions. These issues plus the developer's failure to incorporate and plan according to the city's own General Plan and Zoning Code in the pre-applications, continue to escalate concern for short and long-term hazardous outcomes.

Of specific and urgent concern:

The developer is aiming to limit citizen input and discussion by fast-tracking the application process and development under a law known as California Senate Bill 330. However, that fast-track process is only available for projects that are consistent with the programs, policies, and regulations of the San Rafael General Plan and zoning ordinances.

The Developer is additionally seeking to apply a law known as the "Builder's Remedy" which would allow the developer to completely ignore the SR General Plan and zoning ordinances and require the City to automatically approve the project. However, this "remedy" is only available if the city has not "adopted" a housing element substantially in compliance with state housing law. The city of San Rafael adopted a substantially compliant housing element three weeks before the developer submitted his plans. As a result, this "remedy" is not available to the developer.

Save Dominican Valley would like you to add your voice to the urgent message that *any development must comply with all federal, state and city zoning laws to build safely.*

For more information on the issues and implications of the current development efforts and to easily and directly communicate to city representatives, go to www.savedominicanvalley.com.



Cocktail Party coming
back in Feb 2024!



Be Aware - Be Prepared

In conversation with Manny Albano, SRFD, Community Disaster Preparedness Coordinator.

I sat down with Manny to talk about wildfire as a precursor to our two-part Fall Fire Wise/Fire Safety events on October 14th and November 4th to discuss the realities of fire behavior, best practices, and evacuation strategies. Here is a summary of our conversation:

The philosophy of the San Rafael Fire Department is “fire mitigation” rather than prevention. They are hoping to engage in control burns once they gain approval. Currently there is a robust hazard mitigation plan in place for fuel clearing, such as the use of goats.

Only 2% of fires are deemed, “uncontrollable”, as in the Paradise and Dixie Fires. In those situations, the fire moved at a speed of 80 football fields per minute, embers moved at 40 mph, and fire moved on the ground uphill at 14 mph. These fires stopped because they met up with one another where fuel had recently burned. These fires were fueled by low humidity, high wind, and remoteness. There was dense undergrowth that allowed the fire to “marinate and grow”.

Up to 92% of wildfires that burn structures are spread by embers. Embers can be pulled into attic spaces through vents due to the pressure difference between cool inside and hot outside. Those embers then ignite the insulation. He recommends 1/16” mesh for about \$10 each to put over attic vents. Other ways to “harden” include creating a defensible space of 5ft between your home and brush,

removing fuel plants such as Juniper, Italian Cypress, and bamboo, use 7A construction materials, and the use of hardscapes such as rocks, stones, and succulents. Fines for not removing fuel plants can start at \$250. The fire department has grants and can remove these types of plants/trees. They partner with Fire Foundry Crew for these projects.

In a June 2022 fire in a Dominican neighborhood, defensible space helped to save a home during a vegetation fire. The owner had removed “flashy fuels” (low grasses), limbed-up trees, and cleared ladder fuels that burn up toward the canopy. The reduction in fuels kept the intensity of the fire low and firefighters were able to gain control quickly.



If you are told to evacuate, Manny’s best advice is to “get in your car and get out”. Keep in mind that the pavement won’t ignite, so just keep moving. He suggests that you get away - get downhill - get on an open road/highway. He says it’s a good idea to have a battery backup for your garage door should it not open due to a wildfire-caused power outage.

Come hear more about fire facts, safety, and evacuation at our **November 4 Semi-Annual DBCNA Meeting from 10-11:30 am** at the Trinity Community Church, 1675 Grand Avenue.

*Kathy Burwell,
DBCNA President*




LOCAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES



More information at <https://www.srcs.org/>



[Marin Community Fridges](#)



[Dominican University](#)



The caller ID for AlertMarin is 415-473-6376 and the SMS short codes used by the system is 88911



(415) 457-5160
www.marintennisclub.com



<https://www.tccsr.com/>
 1675 Grand Avenue

The 2nd Annual Ember Stomp, Marin's wildfire prevention and preparedness festival, took place at the Civic Center Fairgrounds on May 20, 2023. Over 5,000 visitors attended! Hosted by Fire Safe Marin and The Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA), this free event spotlighted an extensive collection of wildlife prevention resources and demonstrations. Festival participants were invited to explore ways to protect their homes and lives from wildfire.

The vast array of activities and exhibits was impressive. Three 'Live-Burn' demonstrations contrasted the flammability of traditional building materials with fire-resistant options. A full-scale FireSmart Yard Expo provided three examples of beautiful and functional landscape designs with features to protect a home from ember ignition. The Art Exhibit featured diverse works, jury-selected from 140 entries to convey the human response to living with wildfire as well as our individual and collective responsibility to protect our environment and each other. The Family Stage had an extensive roster of entertainment including dual language storytelling, a magician, music and sing-along acts, and a skit. There was a Kids Zone, five live bands and a New Orleans 2nd Line band touring the fairgrounds to bring everyone into the festive atmosphere. Also, great food!

Favorites were the New Ideas Stage showcasing leaders in wildfire prevention explaining innovations in fire mitigation strategies, including yours truly. Goats, therapy dogs, the Marin Humane Society and Halter Project reminded residents how animals take care of us and what we need to do to protect them in a wildfire.

Fire Safe Marin had a substantial publicity campaign in English and Spanish to promote attendance. As they celebrate the success of Ember Stomp, they are also reviewing each element with an eye for improvement. We are grateful to this award-winning group for their dedication to our safety.

Belle Cole, co-chair, DBCNA Firewise Committee



Please complete this registration form. (One form per household)

If renewing, kindly indicate any changes – otherwise provide only **Telephone numbers**

NEW MEMBERSHIP **RENEWAL** **Check if any changes to email/phone**

SECTION 1: MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME			
Additional Name	<i>(optional)</i>		
ADDRESS		MAIN PHONE	
TOWN/CITY	San Rafael	MOBILE PHONE	
ZIP CODE	94901	PRIMARY EMAIL	
		Additional EMAIL	

SECTION 2: MEMBERSHIP AND PAYMENT DETAILS

	DESCRIPTION	MEMBERSHIP DUES (Annual)
Membership	Household Membership	\$30
Optional Donation	Optional Donation	
	Total Amount	
PAYMENT METHOD	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Check <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Online	

SECTION 3: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION *(optional)*

How long have you lived in the Neighborhood? <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 1-10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 20 years
Please indicate if you would be willing to help with any of the activities listed below: <input type="checkbox"/> Social Events <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver Newsletters <input type="checkbox"/> Write newsletter or web articles <input type="checkbox"/> Firewise Preparedness <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Web Postings <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Serve on the Board <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

To pay online with PayPal: Go to <https://dominicanareanews.com/> or scan the QR Code

To pay by check: Send this form with a check made payable to:
 DBCNA - P.O. Box 151702, San Rafael, CA 94915-1702



AND - Subscribe to our Mail Chimp list [HERE](#) to stay up to date on our latest news and events. This is our only way of expeditiously sending out information to our neighborhood.

