

WESTWOOD PARK ASSOCIATION



Newsletter ~ Winter ~ 2005

Letter from the President

I hope everyone is having a happy and healthy holiday season. I want to take this opportunity to tell you about some of the goings on regarding the common areas in the neighborhood.

First, I am very pleased to announce that the Association has hired a new gardener, Baltazar Gutierrez. After interviewing several gardeners, Mr. Gutierrez, who came very highly recommended, was selected. He is responsible for *comprehensive* landscape maintenance, including lawns, plants, and irrigation upkeep. The Association has received several comments from residents saying what a great job Mr. Gutierrez is doing and how much better our common areas are looking. We are very fortunate to have him.

Hiring our new gardener is part of the Association's larger effort to improve the looks of the common areas. The planted areas on either end of Miramar have been weeded, the irrigation has been repaired, and new plants will be added as needed. Missing or dying *photinia* plants on the upper Plymouth and Faxon greens will be replaced, and the hedges will be pruned more appropriately to give them a better look. Broken and missing sprinkler heads have been replaced on the greens. All of the sprinklers on the Miramar median strips are now working, with the exception of the one just below the Circle, which requires more extensive repairs. The Association will improve each of the Miramar median strips over the next few years as funds allow. This will include refurbishing the 85-year-old irrigation systems, removing old grass and adding new sod and gopher protection. Other ideas being considered include replacing missing trees on Miramar and replacing the grass and gopher-proofing on the upper Plymouth green. Please let us know if you have any suggestions.

We also have several wonderful residents who are helping to keep our neighborhood beautiful. Dan Joraanstad has started organizing the Westwood Park Garden Volunteers. This terrific group of residents has volunteered to help oversee the watering, maintenance, and other improvements of the common areas. We have at least one person who is responsible for each of the 17 greens, some of whom have been watering their green for 10, 16, and even 18 years! And on the graffiti front, David Greenbaum has generously volunteered to oversee graffiti removal in the neighborhood. (Contact the Association to join his team or report any graffiti.)

Our hats go off to all the residents who give their time and energy to help make our neighborhood such a great place to live. If any of you also wish to join in, please contact the Association.

Happy New Year,
Greg Clinton

board@westwoodpark.com

Westwood Park Association Board Members

President
Greg Clinton

Vice President
Anita Theoharis

Secretary
Nanette Asimov

Co-Treasurers
Julie Hagelshaw & Bob Hermann

Member at Large
Anne Chen

Member at Large
Grant Edelstone

Members of the Westwood Park Association Board of Directors are volunteers elected to serve three-year terms.

Board meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of each month at the home of a board member, and begin at 7 p.m.

For information and the location of upcoming meetings, visit www.westwoodpark.com.

Contact us via e-mail at:
board@westwoodpark.com,
or by voicemail at:
415-333-1125
or by mail at:
P.O. Box 27901 #770
SF, CA 94127

Dues Increase

by Greg Clinton

The Association wants to notify residents that we will likely need to increase our annual homeowner's dues next fiscal year, which will start March 1, 2006.

When the Westwood Park Association was established in 1917, dues were somewhere around \$12 per year. Our current dues of \$59.40 have clearly not kept pace with inflation during the past 88 years! This is because the Association has always been aware that we have residents who are on fixed incomes, so we have worked very hard to keep dues as low as possible. However, our costs have been rising dramatically: Liability insurance has more than doubled, cost of postage and materials continues to go up, and maintenance of the 17 common areas is becoming increasingly more expensive.

All administrative and advocacy work by the Association is done by unpaid volunteers (the Association stopped having a paid secretary in 1993). Our neighborhood is also extremely fortunate to have wonderful residents who pitch in and volunteer to do things like help water the greens, maintain and repair the irrigation systems, paint over graffiti, and so forth. We also have a resident architect who donates his time to review remodeling proposals to ensure that construction adheres to our neighborhood design guidelines. We have another resident who volunteered her time to manage the Miramar gates restoration. If not for the generous help of all these residents, our costs would be much, much higher.

Congratulations

to this year's Halloween House contest winners!

1st Prize: 59 Hazelwood. Very creative handmade decorations, including 7-foot-tall skeleton and

straw columns, plus great lighting, cobwebs and fog machine. (\$30)

2nd Prize: 799 Faxon. Fascinating potpourri of witches, crows, skeleton heads, spiders, cobwebs and lights. (\$20)

3rd Prize: 800 Miramar. Excellent gigantic spider and web. (\$10)

Honorable Mention: 55 Valdez. Creative carved pumpkins with candles and large homemade pirate ship.

Man's Best Friend in Westwood Park

At the annual meeting in September, some residents expressed concern about dog feces being left on the common areas and on private property. Residents have experienced the unpleasant task of cleaning dog feces off shoes, lawns and sidewalks. Some residents relax and play on the larger greens (upper Faxon and Plymouth Islands). They are concerned that dogs' waste can cause an unhealthy environment.

It was also noted that people from outside of the neighborhood walk or drive to our large common areas to walk dogs or let them run free.

Here are San Francisco's laws governing safe and healthy dog ownership, which we hope will help remind as many people as possible of their responsibilities as pet owners:

Leash Law: It is illegal to allow your dog to roam off your premises without a leash, except in areas designated as an animal exercise area under the jurisdiction of the City's Department of Recreation

and Parks [San Francisco Health Code Sec. 41(a) and 41.12(a)].

There are several off leash dog running locations in San Francisco, which can be found on line at www.sfgov.org (click on Department of Parks and Recreation), or by telephoning 415-831-2700.

Cleaning Up After your Dog: It is illegal to allow your dog to defecate on any public or private property (other than your own) without immediately removing and disposing of the dog's feces [San Francisco Health Code Section 40(a)]. Further, it is illegal to walk your dog anywhere off your property without carrying a suitable container/instrument for removing and disposing of the dog's feces [San Francisco Health Code Sec. 40(b)].

Thank you for your help in maintaining the beautiful neighborhood that Westwood Park residents are so lucky to enjoy.

The Westwood Park Association

Hans Nelson: A Founding Father of Westwood Park

by Nanette Asimov

It's been said that the soul of the craftsman finds its way into the craft.

In Westwood Park, it may be the soul of the contractor that found its way in, for the man behind about 350 of the Park's 650 homes was Hans Nelson—a generous, fun-loving Swede who relished a practical joke, knew how to party, and had a knack for building houses people couldn't wait to live in.

He arrived in this country nearly 100 years ago and set out to join his brother, Martin, a carpenter in San Francisco, said Hans Nelson's grandson, Nelson Foss, a museum curator in New Mexico.

In San Francisco, "my grandfather decided that pounding nails wasn't what he was cut out for," said Mr. Foss. So the brothers built a house, sold it, and made some money. "He said, 'We can keep the money, or use it to build two houses.'"



As homes built by Mr. Nelson multiplied across the city, so did the contents of his wallet – as well as his sense of humor, which often emerged in the com-

pany of fellow masons at the Scottish Lodge. One day, those friends were astonished at the clumsiness of a new waiter at the lodge who kept dropping food in their laps and serving soup with a thumb crooked into the steaming liquid.

Only one lodge member kept smiling as the others grew irritated. That was Mr. Nelson, who'd hired an actor to play the butter-fingered server.

Not all of Mr. Nelson's practical jokes were as amusing. There was, for instance, the time the curtains caught fire in his family's Laguna Street apartment after one of the exploding cigars he'd given his buddies blew up.

"My grandmother put her foot down after that," chuckled Foss.

More often, though, Esther Nelson was a willing partner in the fun because her husband could never quite finish telling a joke himself. "He'd just start laughing so hard, tears would pour out, and he couldn't finish," said Mr. Foss. "My grandmother would have to supply the tag line."



Hans Nelson in his office.

Mr. Nelson had much to be carefree about. His homes were selling well and, whether shrewd or just plain lucky, he had withdrawn all of his money just weeks before the Crash of '29.

But fortune faded when Mr. Nelson was only in his 40s. He suffered several strokes and was never quite the same after that, said Mr. Foss, who was 14 when his grandfather died in the late 1950s.

Yet, his legacy endures in his homes and in the memory of his generosity. As Mr. Foss tells it, Mr. Nelson lent money to everyone who asked. "I've never heard of anyone who didn't like him," he said.

Getting Prepared, One Step at a Time

by Greg Morris

We all have seen unforgettable images of the disasters natural and otherwise that have struck in the last year alone—the tsunami in Asia, Katrina and other devastating hurricanes in the U.S., the earthquake in Pakistan. While it's not possible to anticipate everything that can happen during a disaster, there are concrete steps we all can take to be more prepared. Acting now will add to your safety and comfort during a disaster and add to your peace of mind beforehand.

Assembling disaster supplies for your household is an absolutely critical task. It can save lives. It's also a big task if you try to do it all at once. So it's easier to stock up on supplies over time.

The San Francisco Fire Department's Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) Training Program has published a recommended list of disaster supplies (see chart, right). You'll probably find that you already have some of the supplies, but maybe they are scattered around your home. You'll ideally want a complete set of supplies in one place. Additional items can be added as soon as possible. Even the smallest steps you take to be prepared can have a big impact when disaster strikes.

Additional tips:

- ◆ Store enough supplies for at least 72 hours.
- ◆ Check and rotate water, food, batteries and clothes at least once a year.
- ◆ Keep your gas tank full.

Keep this newsletter as your supplies checklist. For a more detailed list, and for info about NERT and what you can do to be prepared, visit the NERT website at www.sfgov.org/site/sfnert_index.asp. Learn about the Westwood Park NERT team and get involved by writing to nerf@westwoodpark.com.



*Mr. Morris is a Westwood Park resident
and a member of Westwood Park's
Neighborhood Emergency Response Team*



Neighborhood Heroes

The residents of Westwood Park would like to extend our deepest appreciation to these generous neighbors who donate their time to water and care for Westwood Park's 17 common areas. We thank you for helping to keep our neighborhood green and healthy!

Mario Cardozo
John Cerovac
Ann Comoglio
Terry Conlan
Andy Fey
Bob Geleta
Steven Haggard
Kathy Jackson
Dan Joraanstad
Peggy and Joe Koman

John MacDonald
Steve Miller
Mike O'Driscoll
Susan Percal
Ken Rychwalski
Gerald Simpkins
Roy Skover
Rande Spiegelman
Christian Wright

Perks of the Park

Wish you had more time to chat with your neighbors? Now you can, without running out to the backyard fence. The Westwood Park discussion group is becoming a vital place for neighborhood news, messages, questions, queries, tips, complaints and kudos! Go to <http://www.westwoodpark.com/discussion.htm>.

If you've got kids—or are about to have some—the Westwood Park Parents Group may be the place for you. To find out more, contact Kathy Balch at kathy@balch95.com.

Disaster Supplies Checklist

Essentials

- Water—1 gallon per person/day
- Water purification kit
- First aid kit, freshly stocked
- First aid book
- Food (canned, ready-to-eat, plus comfort foods like hard candies)
- Can opener - non-electric!
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Radio, flashlight, spare batteries
- Essential medications
- Extra pair of eyeglasses
- Extra pair of house and car keys
- Fire extinguisher (A-B-C type)
- Baby supplies: special foods/formula, bottle, clothing, blankets, baby wipes, disposable diapers, pacifier
- Pet supplies: food, water and restraint (leash or carrier)
- Cash and ID for each person to wear

Sanitation Supplies

- Large plastic trash bags to use for waste, shelter, or rain ponchos
- Large trash cans
- Bar soap and liquid detergent; water-less soaps, 'wipes'
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Feminine hygiene supplies
- Toilet paper
- Household bleach

Safety and Comfort

- Sturdy shoes
- Heavy gloves for clearing debris
- Candles and matches
- Light sticks
- Change of clothing
- Knife or razor blades
- Garden hose for siphoning and fire-fighting
- Tent
- Communication kit: paper, pens, stamps

Cooking

- Plastic knives, forks, spoons
- Paper plates and cups
- Paper towels
- Heavy-duty aluminum foil
- Camping stove for outdoor cooking

Tools and Supplies

- Axe, shovel, broom
- Adjustable wrench to turn off gas
- Tool kit with screwdriver, pliers, hammer
- Coil of 1/2" rope
- Plastic tape, staple gun and sheeting for window replacement
- Bicycle
- City map

Ocean Avenue Revitalization Collaborative

by Shannon Frank Edelstone

Join Us in Making Ocean Avenue a Vibrant Place to Shop! The Ocean Avenue Revitalization Collaborative (OARC) is a group of merchants, residents and representatives of local non-profits committed to making the Ocean Avenue commercial corridor a more vibrant and inviting place to shop, eat, and spend time.

In late October 2004, the OARC met for the first time, with organizational assistance from LISC, a national non-profit group working in San Francisco with the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development. LISC provides training, technical and some financial assistance to groups working on community development. Together, LISC and the Ocean Avenue Revitalization Collaborative hope to make Ocean Avenue a fun and safe place for all.

OARC participants have met monthly and have already published the first edition of a colorful new magazine called *The Ocean Wave*, helped sponsor the first of many (we hope) historic walking tours, decorated Ocean Avenue for the holidays, and more. We welcome your ideas and participation! Volunteers are also greatly needed to work with the Ocean Avenue Revitalization Collaborative in these ways:

- ◆ Help decorate Ocean Avenue for the holidays—this would consist of placing garlands on street poles on Ocean Avenue between Victoria and Lee, and fundraising for additional decorations. Email shanfran1@yahoo.com.
- ◆ Reach out to merchants and property owners to help improve building facades. Send an email to shanfran1@yahoo.com.
- ◆ Submit an article for publication in the *Ocean Wave*, the new publication put out by the Merchants on Ocean. Email Jacques Campos at store5037@theupsstore.com.
- ◆ Help develop a historic walking tour of Ocean Avenue. Email Dan Weaver or Woody LaBounty at djpweaver@yahoo.com.

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The Ocean Avenue Revitalization Collaborative (OARC) is looking for volunteers.

To get involved with helping make Ocean Avenue a vibrant place to shop, please contact Emmet McDonagh at emmet.mcdonagh@gmail.com, or (415) 333-2333.

—Shannon Frank Edelstone