

Get Involved in GWPNA! You can make a real difference!

Hello, GWPNA members and friends! Last summer, we created four “Issues Committees” to help us organize ourselves more efficiently and effectively on behalf of Greater West Portal. And we encourage you, our members, to join a committee if there’s a topic that’s particularly of interest to you, or one in which you have expertise to add to the group. If you find a committee you’d like to be part of, please email or call me or Vice President Ken Kruszka (our emails are on the back page), and we’ll put you in touch with the committee chair. These committees meet as needed to consider the most important issues, do research, meet with government officials or local experts, and report back to the Steering Committee about their findings, with recommendations. Here’s a list and a short explanation about each committee:

Community Education – Strive to Engage and Inform WP Residents

Issues: seek out opinions and interest, organize and hold forums to educate or inform people of important issues re: codes, zoning, civility, quality of life issues, participation in the neighborhood, recreational activities at clubhouse and library; increase awareness of GWPNA and membership through these activities
SC Members: Tim Colen, Stan Kaufman, Peggy daSilva, Carolyn Klemeyer, Mary McDermott



Quality of Life – Work with City Services and Neighborhood to Add Value

Issues: homeless and panhandlers, traffic and parking concerns, street and sidewalk repair/cleaning; streetlights; trees; other specific, very local issues (boat in



driveway, neglected residential lawns or broken sidewalks)

SC Members: Steve Suacci, Stan Kaufman, Sheila Bost, Helen Johnson, Mary McDermott, Helen Naish

Housing and Growth – Help Manage the Future of our Unique Neighborhood

Issues: secondary units, parking, growth for new families, how to support select projects such as senior assisted living, apartments with retail below (WP Ave only), do our share of affordable housing if we can; maintain current single-family-dwelling status.



SC Members: Ken Kruszka, Tim Colen, Steve Suacci, Howard Strassner, Bert Hill, Fred Martin
Members at Large: Don Enochson

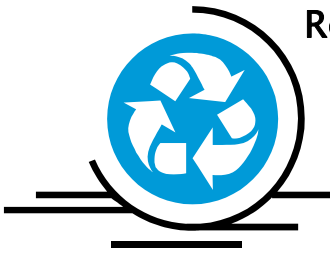
Business on the Avenue – Monitor and Work Together for Ambiance and Diversity

Issues: work more closely with Merchants’ Association; review mix of businesses; get owners to be more responsive on cleaning, graffiti, etc.; encourage them to keep up attractive storefronts; understand zoning, codes and monitor activity, new businesses; help promote WP.
SC Members: Mary Burns, Chris Radich, Rae Doyle, Joe Basuino



We hope to be hearing from you soon!

Mary F. Burns
 President



Recycling, Composting, and Plastic Bags

In the 1980's, Boy Scout Troop 88 ran the West Portal Recycling Center. As a volunteer, I had expected to see mostly thirty-somethings like me, veterans of the 1970's environmental movement, carefully separating their glass and paper by color, flattening cans and plastic bottles. I was surprised to see few of my age, but many from the 'The Greatest Generation', religious in their devotion to newspaper-lined garbage cans and careful separation of metals, glass, and paper. It was an eye-opener on our commitment to efficient use and recycling of natural resources by a generation that came of age in scarcity.

The recycling center went out of business with the introduction of curbside recycling fifteen years ago, but that dedication by people in this neighborhood remains. A Norcal executive recently told me that the proper separation of recyclable materials, inorganic landfill waste, and organic compost is extremely high; the compost is so useful that it commands the highest fertilizer rates, for its purity and nutrient value. Anything organic goes in the compost – food scraps, soiled paper, bones, seafood, meat, eggshells, coffee grounds, plant trimmings, pet waste, and even unpainted/untreated wood.

The biggest problem in the system is non-recyclable plastic, mostly shopping and vegetable bags. These bags are a significant factor in land and water pollution, and are estimated to be directly responsible for the deaths of a significant number of animals. Exposed to the elements, they leach chemical pollution in the ecosystem. In landfill, they do not break down. As a container for dog and cat waste, they mix organic and inorganic compounds into a useless and unhygienic problem for waste processors.

Luckily, a solution is at hand: biodegradable and compostable waste bags! These bags are designed for the green kitchen pails which are available for free from Sunset Scavenger. In addition to kitchen compost size, bags are available in 13 and 30 gallon sizes and as sealable dog waste bags. The cost of a pet waste bag is about \$.10 each, significantly less than the estimated \$.14 estimated as the environmental cost of each plastic grocery bag. Put another way, you could use a bag every day for a month for less than the cost of a café latte. The bags are presently sold at Walgreens, Cole Hardware, Albertsons, Whole Foods, and Rainbow Grocery, to name a few.



More information is available at the website for Sunset Scavenger (www.sunsetscavenger.com), under the Recycle / Compost section, including a complete list of stores which sell the compostable bags, and lots of practical hints about recycling and composting.

An even lower-cost alternative is to store organic waste in opened milk or ice cream cartons, paper bags, and paper Chinese takeout cartons. A little masking tape over the top will help ensure the waste stays contained, and reuses the container efficiently.

For more information, call the SF Dept. of the Environment at 415.355.3700, or go to www.sfenvironment.com.

Bert Hill, GWPNA Membership Officer

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Families working to improve their neighborhood

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Time to Renew GWPNA Membership

Included in this month's FogCutter is a membership sign-up form and envelope to send it and your check back to us. On the address label of your FogCutter you will see a date after your name – this indicates the last year for which your dues were paid up – so if it's not current, please consider joining again!

The Fogcutter is the newsletter of the Greater West Portal Neighborhood Association, published bi-monthly and distributed to GWPNA members. Please contact any officer, or the newsletter editor, with your ideas, issues and questions. **DAYTIME calls only please!**

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