Neighborhood potluck Sunday, January 22

Join us for our first meeting of the year as we start off 2012. Help identify neighborhood issues, get involved in your community, and meet your neighbors!

Membership rates are $15 (basic), $30 (general/family, up to two people), $50 (contributing) and $100 (supporting). Bring a dish to share! Sign up for a dish on our website at www.alamosq.org, or just bring something that day. During the ASNA meeting members will elect the 2012 ASNA Board.

Sunday, January 22, 2012. Doors open 12 p.m., Food is served at 12:30 p.m. Meeting at 1:15 p.m.

The Westerfeld house is the location of the 2012 Potluck. PHOTO: NICO LIZARRAGA

Holiday fire brings out neighborhood support

BY GUS HERNANDEZ, ALAMO SQUARE NEWSLETTER

Upon hearing news of the fire, the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association sprang into action and set up an online Fire Relief Fund. Neighbors dropped off donations, clothing, shoes, and blankets at the Missionary Temple Church on Golden Gate.

The African American Art and Culture Complex on Fulton (shown above) held a get together on December 24, 2011. Neighbors, firefighters, and friends came to offer encouragement. Executive Director London Breed was on hand to offer her support.

see Events >
2011 Board of Directors

Officers
Lisa Zahner, President
lisa.zahner@alamosq.org

Gus Hernandez, Vice President
gus.hernandez@alamosq.org

Erinne Morse, Treasurer
erinne.morse@alamosq.org

Bill Bonds, Secretary
bill.bonds@alamosq.org

Board Members at Large
John Dallas
Margot Frey
LaVonne Hickerson
Nico Lizarraga
Azalia Merrell
Christian Nguyen
Owen O'Donnell
Michael Smithwick
Will White

Holiday fire, cont’d

Alamo Square resident and neighbor Sister T’Aint A Virgin of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence helped to organize the first fire fundraiser at The Edge, a bar in the Castro, collecting over $1200 in donations and tons of clothes, just two days after the fire.

On Tuesday, December 27, the Red Cross held a meeting at the Missionary Temple Church on Golden Gate to coordinate housing needs and register displaced tenants.

On Thursday, January 5, 2012, the Fillmore Neighborhood Association joined with the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association to co-host a fundraiser at Ras-sela’s on Fillmore Street. Over $2400 was collected.

Alamo Square, North of Panhandle, and Divisadero neighbors are planning an event on Friday, January 20. St. Cyprian’s Church at Turk and Lyon will host an evening of music, food, and a raffle, with a sliding scale $5 - $20 suggested donation.

Since December 22, the ASNA Fire Fund has collected over $12,000 in online donations alone for the displaced residents of the fire. The ASNA Board has voted to make an additional $1,000 donation to the Fire Relief Fund, bringing the total raised to over $16,600 as of press time.

Supervisor Christina Olague

District 5 Supervisor Christina Olague was sworn into office by newly elected Mayor Ed Lee on January 9, 2012. The D5 seat was left vacant when former Supervisor Mirkarimi was sworn into the Sheriff’s office on Sunday, January 8. Mayor Lee was also sworn in on Sunday. The D5 seat is up for election in November.
Thank you to new Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi

Congratulations and thank you to newly-elected Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi for all his work as Supervisor of District 5 over the last eight years.

Some of Supervisor Mirkariemi's landmark accomplishments include a first-in-the-nation ban of the use of plastic bags, the Market-Octavia area plan which pioneered new zoning classifications allowing smart infill along transit corridors, refurbishing of the Hamilton Rec Center and Hayes Valley Playground, and the establishment of a subsidy program for the installation of solar panels for low-income residents and local non-profits.

Ross pushed for police accountability and foot-beat patrols, supported neighborhood livability by promoting local farmers' markets, advocated for the re-vitalization of the Divisadero Corridor, and promoted parklets, traffic calming, bike and pedestrian safety measures.

Letter from the president

I really love our neighborhood. I love its walkability, and that it is centrally-located in the City. I love our park, Alamo Square, and I love that from the top of the hill one can see lots of other parks: Alta Plaza, Buena Vista (and hidden in the downhill), Duboce. I love the diversity of the people who pass by my house every day: visitors from all over the world with their maps and cameras, kids going to Tae Kwon Do, the whistling delivery man who stocks the ice cream at the corner store, or people walking their dogs from Alamo Square to Duboce Park and back. It's all about finding everyday joy right on my doorstep.

We are so fortunate to live here, and the people who live and work here are what make the difference. The horrible five-alarm fire on Pierce and Golden Gate that destroyed three buildings and left 60 people homeless has really shown our neighborhood to be full of generosity, compassion, and hospitality.

Some neighbors lost everything, including wallets, IDs, cell phones, and birth certificates, in addition to losing their home and belongings. Imagine how awful that would be if it were you. Imagine if your rent were subsidized and you lived on disability payments. This is what happened to some people.

Through the amazing outpouring of donations, our neighborhood association has raised over $15,000 which will be divided among our neighbors who were displaced by the fire. That money can be used to pay for security deposits on new apartments. The Alamo Square newsletter

Thank you note from a neighbor displaced by the fire

My family and I cannot thank you and ASNA enough for all the support you are providing. We lived in one of the Victorians on Golden Gate and are committed to staying in the neighborhood and rebuilding. Our little one loves the park and my wife and I love all the surrounding restaurants, bars, and services that make our neighborhood so special.

But what has been outstanding is the outpouring of support from the entire neighborhood.

We will rebuild and we will be back.

Tim, a neighbor displaced by the December 22 fire
Neighborhood Association will also donate $1000 to the fire relief fund, which comes from money raised by membership dues. (So, if you ever wonder why it’s good to be a supporting member of your neighborhood association, this is a fine example of our membership dues at work!)

The generosity has been astounding: Neighbors came forward with offers of temporary housing, leads on apartments, housewares, clothing, toiletries, furniture, and appliances.

Special thanks to Pastor Harlan Jones, of Missionary Temple CME Church on Golden Gate, who opened his church to the American Red Cross as a relief headquarters and donation center. Pastor Jones just arrived in San Francisco three months ago, and his hospitality is much appreciated.

We also appreciate the quick work of the San Francisco Office of Emergency Services, which has arranged for low-interest loans for people displaced by the fire to be used to replace their belongings, as which served as a one-stop resource office, to replace lost drivers licenses, IDs, social security cards, etc.

2011 was a very busy year for the Board of the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association! We have worked closely with the MTA for traffic calming, especially pedestrian safety, bikeways, and tour bus management. We will soon have high-visibility zebra-striped crosswalks for some corners around the Square, and a traffic count showed that during busy days, we average one tour bus every three minutes! We have been discussing the pros and cons of a parking-permit area around our neighborhood. The Draft Tour Bus Report is now online at www.alamosq.org. I encourage you to read it, and comment on the survey posted with it, to give us a better idea of YOUR thoughts and concerns.

Michael Smithwick is retiring after twelve years on the Board of the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association. He has been a tireless advocate for pedestrian safety, our Farmers Market, shopping locally, and calling 311 for City services, as well as “manning the grill” at the past Flea Markets. His efforts resulted in many neighborhood safety improvements, including the repeal of the morning tow-away on Oak and Fell Streets, which has helped slow traffic. We will miss you on our Board, and appreciate ALL you have done, Michael! Thank you!

In 2012, we want YOU! Have a good idea for our neighborhood? Want to make something happen? Let’s do it! We have lots of opportunities to do good work where we live! Shoot us an email: board@alamosq.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

With warm regards,

Lisa Zahner, ASNA President
president@alamosq.org
Drinking fountain fixed

ASNA has finally succeeded in fixing the Alamo Square drinking fountain which was vandalized in early 2011. This was a true example of neighbors working together!

The decorative fountain at the top of the park is not standard to the City drinking fountains, and Rec and Park could not replace the stolen bowls. So, the ASNA board voted to purchase new bowls directly from the drinking fountain manufacturer. (ASNA was the original purchaser of the fountain.)

ASNA member Thomas Duane researched and procured special locking bolts to keep the new bowls secure. Fai Chin, and his wife Michelle, the owners of SF Hardware spent over an hour, at no charge, customizing a security nut driver so that it would fit in the tight space under the bronze bowls. Special thanks to Tamdin from Cliffs Variety who fabricated the screw set, and Noah from The TechShop SF for fabricating the last little piece of connecting metal we needed. Finally, thanks to Lee Nagar and Julie Talcott-Fuller who helped Tom clean and repaint the fountain. Thank you all!

Pedestrian safety and traffic calming updates

The ASNA Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety committee has been working with the MTA for several years to improve traffic calming and pedestrian safety around the neighborhood.

We recently received news that several changes are slated for early 2012. They include:

• Hayes/Steiner – upgrading the crosswalks to higher-visibility zebra-striped crosswalks.
• Crosswalks around Alamo Square – add better visibility around crosswalks by taking out 1/2 a parking space length.
• Divisadero at Fulton and at Golden-Gate – retiming the red lights.

We are continuing our discussions regarding better management of the tour buses, planning for high tourist volume during the America’s Cup, and traffic changes anticipated if the Oak/Fell Bikeway proposal is approved.

Alamo Square Park Master Plan

After several huge trees in the park fell or were damaged in storms in 2011, the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association commissioned a Tree Survey from HortScience to determine the health and expected longevity of the trees in the park.

The survey identified all of the significant trees in the park (over 250), and offered tree maintenance guidelines, including pruning and planting suggestions.

ASNA has gifted the Tree Survey to the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department. We plan to work with Rec and Park in 2012 on a long-term Park Master Plan for Alamo Square.

Park Volunteer Day Schedule

One of ASNA’s main purposes is to help improve Alamo Square. Park volunteer days are scheduled throughout the year. Come out, join your neighbors, pitch in and give back to your community!

Save the Date!
Next Park Volunteer Day:
Saturday, February 4

2012 Volunteer Days
Saturday, April 7
Saturday, June 2
Saturday, August 4
Saturday, October 6

9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Email bill.bonds@alamosq.org to sign up! Meet at the tennis court. Coffee provided, fun guaranteed!

Alamo Square hoodies and t-shirts

As a member of the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association, you get the best price on our hooded, zip-front, fleece-lined sweater. Machine washable, sturdy, and perfect for those brisk days and nights at Alamo Square.

Hoodies (Black or Brown)
$45 Members
$60 Non-Members

$15 T-shirts (Green, Black, or Gray)

Email us to check availability and place an order: hoodies@alamosq.org or tshirts@alamosq.org.
Oak/Fell Bikeway project eliminates traffic lane removal option

The top goals identified at the first public meeting on the Fell and Oak Street separated bikeway proposal were 1) to increase safety and reduce conflicts, 2) calm traffic, and 3) improve Panhandle entrance/exit. However, the MTA is no longer considering the removal of a traffic lane, despite this solution having the potential to address these goals.

The potential impacts of removing one traffic lane are as follows:

- Fell Street would experience heavy congestion between 8am and 8pm.
- Oak Street would also experience heavy congestion between 7am and 7pm.
- Some traffic would divert to parallel side streets.
- Muni 16X Line would be delayed on Oak and Fell. Muni lines on nearby streets could also possibly be delayed by spillover traffic.

Other options still being considered

One-Way Cycle Track

A wider bikeway that is physically separated from moving traffic could be installed adjacent to the curb.

- Requires the removal of 37 parking spaces on Oak and 43 parking spaces on Fell.
- Direct connection to the Panhandle bike path.
- 15 less parking spaces would be removed as compared to the One-way Cycle Track design.
- Bikeway would be more narrow than Panhandle Path (5’ for each direction).
- Buffer would be more narrow than other options (2’-3”, similar to buffer on Market Street).
- Potential conflicts between turning vehicles and contra-flow cyclists requires turn restrictions or other intersection design treatments.
- Turn restrictions would be difficult to enforce without physical barriers, which would also impede through southbound traffic on Baker and Broderick.
- Vehicles entering/exiting driveways would have to look out for two-way bike traffic.
- Would require removal of metered parking spaces on Divisadero.

Contact Luis.Montoya@sfmta.com to provide input on the Fell/Oak bikeway proposals.
The 2012 ASNA Board of Directors slate

The Alamo Square Neighborhood Association Nomination Committee presents the 2012 ASNA Board of Directors slate.

Officers
Lisa Zahner, current president, to continue in that position. Lisa is interested in pedestrian safety, traffic calming, graffiti abatement and neighborhood commercial districts. She and her husband, Jonathan Hoyt, have three fabulous kids.

Gus Hernandez, current vice president, to continue in that position. Gus is editor of the Alamo Square Newsletter and also manages the Alamo Square Online website.

Erinne Morse, current treasurer, to continue in that position. Erinne is interested traffic calming and pedestrian safety around Alamo Square.

Bill Bonds, current recording secretary, to continue in that position. Bill is dedicated to the protection and improvement of Alamo Square, for people and pets. He is also chair of the Park Committee.

Returning board members
John Dallas, long term board member to continue on the board, with an interest in traffic calming and park improvement.

Margot Frey Cusenbery to serve on her second year on the board. Margot’s interests are in events and event promotion for ASNA.

LaVonne Hickerson to serve on her second year on the board. LaVonne is interested in helping to coordinate the annual Alamo Square Flea Market this year. She also serves on the Park Committee and is a dedicated volunteer.

Nico Lizarraga, manager at Chateau Tivoli, to continue on the board. His interests include park improvement and event promotion.

Azalia Merrell to continue on the board, is interested in events and event promotion for ASNA. She was the Alamo Square liaison for the District 5 Mayoral Forum at UCSF Cole Hall in November 2011.

Christian Nguyen to continue on the board. His interests for the neighborhood include traffic calming for our streets.

Owen O’Donnell to continue on the board. His interests include park advocacy, park volunteer days, and community advocacy.

Departing board members
Thank you to Michael Smithwick and Will White for their service on the 2011 ASNA Board of Directors.

New board members
Mary Bosworth is a lawyer and lives in the neighborhood. She has a dog, she loves the neighborhood and the park, and sees the area and the park improving all the time. Mary wants to help continue those improvements while maintaining a friendly, comfortable, accessible neighborhood for people and pets.

Katrina Jankowski is a writer and currently stays at home with her one-year-old son. She was previously an Analyst in the Strategy Practice of the management consulting firm McKinsey & Company. Katrina wants to help build a greater sense of community and create a long-term strategy to sustain and improve the park.

Quintin Mecke is Communications Director for Assemblymember Tom Ammiano and is a long-time resident of Alamo Square. His interests on the board include bike and pedestrian advocacy and traffic calming.

Members will vote for the 2012 ASNA Board of Directors at the January 22 Potluck and General Meeting.

Residential permit parking for Alamo Square?

The proposed Oak and Fell bikeways, and the impact of some proposed scenarios which include removing parking along Oak and Fell has led to discussions with the MTA about how to regain parking that could potentially be lost.

Ideas include adding angled parking on other nearby, wider streets. This would also have an added benefit of calming traffic.

Another idea is to make the area around Alamo Square a Residential Parking Permit area, limiting parking to a certain time period for cars that do not have a permit.

Our neighborhood is the only neighborhood within walking distance that does not require a parking permit. As a result, many people who live elsewhere park their cars here for several days at a time, or all day during the workweek, to take an employee shuttle to work.

If parking permits were implemented, the cost would be $100 for residents and businesses that have their vehicles within the permit area. It’s also possible to obtain temporary 2-8 week permits for visiting guests, but that would need to be done in advance.

What are YOUR thoughts about the potential for Permit Parking in the neighborhood? Please take a moment to visit our website (www.alamosq.org) and complete the RPP survey.
One of our biggest accomplishments this year as a Neighborhood Association was establishing good working relationships with the other Neighborhood Associations in District 5.

Together, we approached the City and Zazzle, the sponsors of the 2011 Bay to Breakers, to propose changes to the rules for Bay to Breakers participants, which had a very positive impact in our neighborhoods and parks. Our goal was to make the Bay to Breakers Fun for Everyone. (In other words, less of a frat party and more of fun footrace it was in earlier years). The result of our clear, cohesive message was much less drinking, no floats, more porta-johns, more security, and better protection and fencing around our parks, both Alamo Square and the Panhandle. We also developed the Neighborhood Ambassador Program, which was made up of volunteers who served as point-people to direct runners to restrooms, etc, and to alert police of any problems.

We look forward to working together in the future!

D5 Neighborhood Action Committee is made up of ten neighborhood associations in District 5, including Alamo Square Neighborhood Association (ASNA), Buena Vista Neighborhood Association (BVNA), Cole Valley Improvement Association (CVIA), Divisadero Merchants Association (DMA), Fillmore/Lower Fillmore Neighborhood Association (FLFNA), Lower Haight Merchants and Neighbors Association, (LHMNA), Haight Asbury Improvement Association (HAIA), Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association (HVNA), Inner Sunset Park Neighbors (ISPN), and North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association (NOPNA).

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**Tour bus, cont’d**

buses altogether. This would require public hearings and legislation from the SFMTA Board of Directors. Some level of environmental review would also be required to gauge the impact on nearby neighborhoods. Another idea would be to implement specific parking zones for tour buses, and to implement residential permit parking, which would result in more parking control officers in the area citing tour buses for improper behavior.

We welcome visitors to our wonderful park – especially on foot, bike or Muni! But for those that come by tour bus, we’d like to find a solution that works well for both the residents and the people who come to visit our City.

We will be meeting with the MTA in early Spring to discuss this Draft Report and pursue remediation ideas. What are YOUR thoughts and ideas? Let us know! Contact erinne.morse@alamosq.org to join the Tour Bus Committee, and/or fill out a brief survey online on our website at www.alamosq.org.

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**MUSIC. ART. DRINKS.**

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**MADRONE Art Bar**

Support local merchants. Shop & drink in the neighborhood.
500 Divisadero Street (at Fell)  www.madroneartbar.com
BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE HEARDING THEATER ADAPTIVE REUSE PROJECT
BY AMY WEISS, HARDINGTHEATER@GMAIL.COM
PHOTO: WWW.HAIGHTERATION.COM

The Harding Theater Adaptive Reuse Project is a small group of neighbors with a mission to facilitate the purchase, restoration, development, and operation of the Harding Theater in order to preserve and revitalize its historical legacy while maximizing community benefit and utilization. Over the last two months we have been connecting with key stakeholders in the neighborhood and city to build off of previous development proposals and community activism regarding The Harding.

The Harding, located next to the Independent at 616 Divisadero, opened in 1926 as a venue for silent films and vaudeville performances. The Harding is currently protected as a historical resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), is eligible to be designated as a local landmark, is registered on both the California and National Historical Registers, and has the potential to be restored and developed to provide a variety of desired uses. However, the theater will continue to remain unused and deteriorate (and possibly be demolished in the future) without a coordinated community effort.

We have created a community input survey for the Harding Theater Adaptive Reuse Project and we hope that you will take the survey. If anyone made a resolution to get more engaged in their neighborhood, this is a great start! This survey will help us 1) get information and responses from the community regarding our vision for the project, and 2) offer neighbors a variety of ways to get further involved with our efforts.

www.surveymonkey.com/s/NNX973X

The survey should take less than 10 minutes to fill out. After you finish, please forward it along to any of your contacts that might be interested in this project (especially those who consider the Divisadero corridor to be their neighborhood).

Sample Survey Questions:

How many times did you attend the following venues/events in the last year?
- Movie Theaters (not for a film festival)
- Live Music
- Live Performance, Theater, Dance, etc.
- Film Festival screening
- Neighborhood art walks
- Community meetings

www.surveymonkey.com/s/NNX973X

616 Divisadero

How often do you patronize the following types of businesses and/or events on Divisadero?
- Coffee Shop/Cafe
- Restaurant
- Bar
- Food Markets/Corner Stores
- Barbershop/Hair Salon
- The Independent
- Farmers’ Market
- Yoga/Fitness
What is your home trying to tell you?
Ask Alamo Square’s #1 real estate agent.

“As Bonnie walked through my home for the very first time, I was completely blown away by her seemingly limitless knowledge of the property’s renovation history. I know they call her the “Victorian Specialist” — I had no idea she would turn out to be my very own ‘House Whisperer’ too!”

— Kristin Slye, San Francisco Home Buyer

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www.bonniespindler.com
Events, cont’d

Friday, January 20
**Fire Fundraiser at St. Cyprian’s**
St. Cyprian’s Church
Turk & Lyon
6 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Local music, food, drinks, and raffle!

Sunday, January 22
**ASNA Potluck and General Meeting**
Westerfeld House
Fulton at Scott
12:00 p.m. - Welcome
12:30 p.m. - Potluck
1:15 p.m. - ASNA General Meeting

**Renew your membership or join ASNA!**

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**Important Contacts**

Tom O’Connor, Manager
Rec and Parks Department
tom.o’connor@sfgov.org
(415) 218-0259

Denis O’Leary, Police Captain
SFPD Park Station
(415) 242-3000
SFPDParkStation@sfgov.org

Ann Mannix, Police Captain
SFPD Northern Station
(415) 614-3400
SFPDNorthernStation@sfgov.org

ParkScan: Report park issues at ParkScan.org

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**Privacy policy**

Alamo Square Neighborhood Association (ASNA) will not share your information with anyone, nor will your information be given out for political purposes.

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2012 ASNA Membership Form

**Personal Contact Information** (2 contacts per general/family membership, will only be used for ASNA purposes)

**Primary Contact** - Please print legibly

First Name          Last Name
Email                Phone

**Secondary Contact**

First Name          Last Name
Email                Phone

**Address Information**

Street
City          State          Zip

**Membership Rates**

☐ $15 - Basic Membership
☐ $30 - General / Family Membership
☐ $50 - Contributing Membership
☐ $100 - Supporting Membership
☐ Other contribution___________
☐ Check this box if you are renewing your membership

**Indicate areas of interest:**

☐ Park Volunteer Days
☐ Alamo Square Flea Market Volunteer
☐ Transportation & Pedestrian Safety
☐ Neighborhood Socials and Events
☐ Other____________________________

Make checks payable to: ASNA, Box 15372, San Francisco, CA 94115
Alamo Square Newsletter
December 2011 – January 2012

January
Fire Fundraiser, Friday January 20
St. Cyprian’s
6:30 p.m., Turk at Lyon

Annual Potluck and General Meeting
Sunday, January 22
Westerfeld House, Fulton at Scott

Doors open at 12 p.m.
Potluck at 12:30 p.m.
Meeting starts at 1:15 p.m.
Sign up for a dish online at www.alamosq.org

Renew your Membership or Join ASNA!
Become a member and vote for your new 2012 board!

Alamo Square Online: www.alamosq.org