



# ANNUAL REPORT TO OUR MEMBERSHIP

APRIL 19, 2018

Thank you for joining together with more than 500 households and businesses on Russian Hill to pursue our mission: *to be a voice for residents and merchants to preserve and advance neighborhood character and quality of life through collaboration, volunteerism, and celebration of community.* Your membership and support are so important. Briefly, here are some of RHN's activities and accomplishments during fiscal year May 1, 2017—April 30, 2018.

## DESIGN, ZONING, LAND USE

Volunteers attended approximately a dozen pre-application meetings and project presentations to offer input and monitor for broader neighborhood impacts. Most recently, DZLU has helped formulate RHN's position and advocate on behalf of the community for the proposed Whole Foods 365 project on Polk St. On the policy front, DZLU provided comments on the City's new Urban Design Guidelines and is reviewing Special Area Guidelines for Polk St. It has supported historic preservation of threatened properties, expressed opposition to new installations of wireless equipment on wood poles and supported the San Francisco Coalition to Underground Utilities via letters and testimony. In addition, committee members produced RHN's "Land Use and Development Principles," a document that aims to serve as a broad tool for evaluating and guiding projects and policies. Members have also participated in the Van Ness Corridor Neighborhood Council. You can reach DZLU by email to [zoning@rhnsf.org](mailto:zoning@rhnsf.org).

## FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

RHN's Families With Children Committee has worked hard this year to promote a sense of community for families with children in the neighborhood. To that end, this year the Committee has hosted four family gatherings at Helen Wills, our local playground, where RHN provided snacks, crafts and games for the kids, and a chance for everyone to come out and get to know their neighbors. Together with the Polk Street Merchants Association, the Committee also co-sponsored the annual Polk Street Halloween Walk where over a hundred children, pets and parents trick-or-treated in costume at local businesses and also decorated pumpkins to take home! In addition to in-person get togethers, the Committee periodically sends out emails compiling information about family-friendly things happening in and around Russian Hill. RHN's Families With Children Committee is always looking for ways to make Russian Hill an even more wonderful place to raise children. If you have ideas or want to get involved, please reach out to [families@rhnsf.org](mailto:families@rhnsf.org)

## PARKS

The Parks Committee held three successful Community Park Workdays. In conjunction with SF Recreation and Parks Department, we helped to maintain and improve Michelangelo Playground's landscaping and replaced 10 tons of sand in the children's play area. We are also in the final stages of discussion to help fund improvements to Helen Wills Playground. To volunteer or make suggestions for park improvements contact [parks@rhnsf.org](mailto:parks@rhnsf.org).

Lovely Fay Park on Russian Hill was bequeathed to the City of San Francisco by Mary Fay-Berrigan and open to the public since 2006. Currently the house, in need of extensive restoration, is closed to the public but the Thomas Church award winning design garden is open to enjoy. Fay Garden is well maintained with beautiful trees, bushes, pathways, flowers and rose gardens thanks to the Citizens Advisory Committee and to Zack Taylor, Park Service Maintenance/Manager for S. F. Recreation and Parks. In 2017 little lights were added to illuminate the outlines of the two white gazebos at night. On the gate is posted a historical narration and visiting hours. In 2017 improvements completed to Fay House included the hazmat abatement (asbestos, etc.), a new roof deck, replacement of the original deck flagpole, a new balustrade/railing on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor deck, and roof repairs to check water intrusion. For more information about Fay Park please contact [director8@rhnsf.org](mailto:director8@rhnsf.org).

## TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION

The Central Subway extension, Polk Street & Van Ness improvement projects, the crooked street congestion and the ongoing problem of buses getting stuck on the steep hill at Filbert & Jones were among topics followed this year. In May, the SFMTA is planning to begin a community outreach process on the Central Subway extension (to North Beach and Fisherman's Wharf) to gather input and a deeper understanding of community needs in connection with planning this important project.. RHN urges all members to respond and participate. Contact [transportation@rhnsf.org](mailto:transportation@rhnsf.org).

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## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

The team kept the information flow going at a high pace in FY2017-2018, producing 25 eblasts highlighting social events, neighborhood sweeps, police/safety activities and event photos reaching a record 971 subscribers (up 17% from the beginning of 2017.) The open rate consistently beat the industry average of 21% with a 46% rate. The webpage saw an addition of 55 articles posted, 89 events and 34 photos to ensure a good degree of relevance and timeliness. The committee of 1 has grown to 3 and will more actively maintain RHN FB and Twitter accounts. And lastly, a \$4300 donation from Intel Corp was made based upon volunteer hours in 2017. Contact [communications@rhnsf.org](mailto:communications@rhnsf.org).

## SAFETY

RHN's Safety Committee partnered with the Families with Children Committee over the past 4 years in putting on Safety Fairs for over 250 parents and children learning first hand from SFPD officers (dogs, motorcycles, SFPD cars, sirens and fun ways of learning) the community can become crime busters! Great outreach and success through Children's events. Monthly SFPD crime newsletters are included in every RHN EBLAST. Contact [safety@rhnsf.org](mailto:safety@rhnsf.org).

## NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT

This past fiscal year, the Neighborhood Improvement Committee continued with its periodic volunteer sweeps. Our group of volunteers, through their hard work and dedication, have raised awareness for, and facilitated, clean streets on Russian Hill. Our ultimate goal is to have the City resume street cleaning in the neighborhood, so we sent out a survey to gauge the level of support for this service. The number of respondents was impressive, and support for street sweeping was overwhelming. The next step is to present the survey to our two supervisors to demonstrate broad support within our community. We'll keep you updated on our progress.

Additionally, RHN Neighborhood Improvement partnered with Friends of the Urban (FUF) Forest and RHCA in the 2017 tree-planting effort. Volunteers surveyed locations for new trees and tree-replacement, and stuffed mailers to be sent to residents throughout the Hill. While the tree-planting was considered a success, it fell short of the goal the organizers set. The good news is that a new tree-planting is being coordinated in cooperation with FUF for this Spring. Trees and gardens are now being planted at no cost to homeowners. Tree maintenance and tree root damaged sidewalk repair is now being provided by SF Public Works. Homeowners and or "renters" can apply for new trees, replacement trees, and even small sidewalk gardens to be installed at no cost to homeowners. Applicants will be asked to commit to arranging weekly watering of the new plantings until they are established. The tree-planting date is TBD, so please stay tuned for further updates. Questions, contact [improvement@rhnsf.org](mailto:improvement@rhnsf.org).

## SOCIAL

The Social Committee had a busy FY 2017-2018. We started the year with a Wine and Dine dinner at a member's home where we enjoyed a home cooked dinner, great conversation and a beautiful view. Our *Cheers* nights gave members a chance to mingle at Rogue. In June RHN enjoyed the beautiful weather at a picnic at *Teepee* park on Hyde Street, where we recognized the street cleaning volunteers while enjoying hamburgers, hot dogs etc. In September, we participated in the SF Community Night at SF Symphony where RHN enjoyed music composed by Bernstein, Rachmaninoff and Ravel. We ended the year with a fabulous holiday party with over 100 attendees. We have multiple events planned for 2018 including *Cheers* events, dinners and encores of our picnic, symphony night and our holiday party. If you have questions or suggestions, contact [social@rhnsf.org](mailto:social@rhnsf.org).

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership in 2017 increased with 63 new members joining RHN. There were 165 membership renewals for the 2017 calendar year achieved through both Winter and Spring renewal campaign efforts. New Membership Chair Tracey Katayama joined the Board in October of 2017. Contact [membership@rhnsf.org](mailto:membership@rhnsf.org).

## HISTORY

The History Committee takes photos of all of RHN's gatherings and events, featuring them on the website and maintaining them for archival purposes. The committee also responds to requests from the public for historic information on Russian Hill and our organization. Contact [history@rhnsf.org](mailto:history@rhnsf.org).