



The BNA – [www.thebna.org](http://www.thebna.org) – May/June 2011

## Sewer Laterals – The City Should Pay

### Shame on City Manager for Steamrolling Opposition to City's Plan

by Concerned Residents of The Broadmoor

San Leandro City Manager Steven Hollister is retiring, and his parting gift to the city is going to cost hundreds of property owners thousands of dollars apiece.

It begins with nine unlucky families in the triangle bounded by Dowling Blvd., Dutton Avenue, and Beverly Avenue. The sewer main behind their homes is failing

The city moved the sewer main out into the street, and is making these property owners pay the bulk of the cost – as much as \$10,000 each – for connecting their laterals to the new, relocated sewer main. Despite plenty of propaganda from the city, this is *not* about paying for

some property owners' sewer pipes – there is nothing wrong with their laterals. This *is* about repairing the city infrastructure, which is what we pay our sewer fees for.

Now, in justifying the city's refusal to live up to its responsibility to the Dowling Triangle families, Mr. Hollister is making the astounding assertion that *none* of the *23 miles* of backyard sewer mains throughout San Leandro belong to the city.

Property owners from The Broadmoor to Bay-O-Vista to The Manor are now on the hook for the costs if these lines fail. City engineers have identified over 500 prop-

erties that are at risk of "failure," and over 900 affected in all.

These are sewer lines that, while never officially deeded to the city by early developers, have been maintained by the city and used to convey city sewage for almost 100 years! The city has recorded easements over the backyard sewer lines in numerous places. Just across the

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## City Hoped to Placate With Low-Interest Sewer Loans Residents Not Buying City's Manager's Line

by Shelley Martin, The BNA Board

On April 12 the City of San Leandro hosted a Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting to inform Council members and The Broadmoor residents of the chronology leading up to the

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## From The BNA President

### Melinda Rieboldt

Are you a good neighbor, involved in your neighborhood?

A Neighborhood Watch group is an effective way to keep crime out of our neighborhoods. Neighborhood Watch relies on the best crime fighting tool ever invented ... GOOD NEIGHBORS!

Starting a Neighborhood Watch can be the basis for ongoing dialogue and cooperative relationships with the police and other law enforcement agencies.

Neighborhood Watch is all about getting to know each other, taking time to care about each other, and working together in a program of mutual assistance. You will be trained on how to recognize and report suspicious activities in your neighborhood, and you will learn various crime prevention strategies.

Since there is not an officer on every corner, you and your neigh-

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### Upcoming Meetings of The BNA Board

June 1 ■ 7:00 p.m.  
July 6 ■ 7:00 p.m.  
August 3 ■ 7:00 p.m.  
Zocalo Coffeehouse, 645 Bancroft

# City Manager Search – We Listened to You

Over 85 People Gave City Council a 'Laundry List' of Desired Qualities

by Pauline Cutter, District 5 City Councilmember

One of the most important decisions our City Council will make this year is the selection of a new City Manager to replace Stephen Hollister, who will retire in June.

In an effort to get the community's opinions, we invited residents to weigh in on the city's website on the desired qualities our next City Manager should have. The website received over 85 responses and, along with the comments from a town hall meeting, this input helped guide the Council in our interviews with the candidates.

People often say that the City Manager has to possess a laundry-list of qualities, including the ability to "walk on water," given the huge demands of running a public corporation with a multimillion-dollar budget, hundreds of employees, and thousands of shareholders – the citizens.

During the interviews, I kept that in mind while focusing on the area I see as most pressing for San Leandro now: the city's fiscal

health. I believe the city needs a manager who is strong in leadership, financial savvy, and the ability to ensure we live within our means. Through the city is going through some challenging budget times, I contend that this is a good opportunity for the city to look at its operations and make sure we are working efficiently.

Due to recent reductions in staff, furlough days, and department cuts, each of our employees are working to their capacities. Like any other organization, we need to make sure that each is complementing the work of others and the goals of the community. It will take a person with strong organizational skills and managerial know-how to evaluate our city infrastructure, make recommendations, and implement these changes.

The selection of the City Manager represents great possibilities for San Leandro. The energy, innovation, and expertise of this leader can allow us to implement a vision

for a more vibrant city. Our manager will be a leader in attracting businesses to town, encouraging investment in the city, and making San Leandro a true destination and breeding ground of entrepreneurship.

By working closely with the schools, our partnerships with both districts can continue to maximize resources, create efficiencies, and foster a sense of collaboration. And developing positive relationships with staff and community members will allow us to move forward and make the necessary changes to protect our fiscal health.

As Councilmember, I am dedicated to attracting excellence to San Leandro and making sure our City Manager is accountable to all of us, responsive to our needs, and accessible to residents and city employees alike.

Remember, if you have any questions or want to share your thoughts, I can be reached at 577-3357 or [pcutter@sanleandro.org](mailto:pcutter@sanleandro.org).



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## North Area Home & Garden Tour June 12

Fundraiser Annually Benefits Terminally Ill Children at George Mark House

by Patti Silva, Home & Garden Tour Chair and Member of The BNA

As sure as the flowers bloom, June is the month when six generous families open their houses for the San Leandro North Area Home and Garden Tour. Celebrating its 19th year, this local fundraising event has become a North Area tradition!

You will be inspired as you see how these creative owners have transformed their classic homes to fit their modern lifestyles. You're invited to come spend a Sunday afternoon and have a leisurely stroll through these beautifully remodeled and decorated homes and gardens, as well as the serene and lovely gardens of The George Mark Children's House.

Tour proceeds will be given to the George Mark Children's House, whose mission is to provide a welcoming, home-like refuge for the most seriously and terminally ill

care with funding from all government levels.

The Tour is Sunday, June 12, from noon to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$20 per person. Advanced

tickets may be purchased from Zocalo Coffeehouse at 645 Bancroft Ave., Sabino's at 1273 MacArthur Blvd., and Evergreen Nursery at 350 San Leandro Blvd. You may also purchase tickets on the day of the tour at 93 Broadmoor Blvd..

For further information, check our website [www.slhomeandgardentour.com](http://www.slhomeandgardentour.com), email [SLHomeTour@aol.com](mailto:SLHomeTour@aol.com) or call Tour Chair Patty Silva at 636-4137.



children and their families. This pioneering facility, located on Fairmont Ave in San Leandro, is a model of palliative care as well as an important advocate for pediatric

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## Gabriele Rowe 'Looked Like an Angel and Precocious and Unpretentious, Gabriele Talks Shares Her Passion for Music

by Mia Ousley, Editor

Many of us already know Gabriele Rowe, the precocious 13-year-old Victoria Avenue resident who won first place in the April 9 Hayward Idol competition for teens.

Gabriele's many years of vocal training helped her win over 28 auditioners and 10 finalists with her renditions of *Hallelujah* by Leonard Cohen and *You Raise Me Up* of Josh Groban fame.

According to one observer, who is not a relative, "Gabriele looked like an angel and sang like an angel."

Quite the Renaissance girl, the seventh grader spends her free time on Bancroft Middle School's girls basketball team, cross country team, and debate club, not to mention appearances around the neighborhood at civic events.

Gabriele started her vocal training with the Piedmont Choir at age 9. "But you aren't taught to be a soloist in a choir," said Gabriele's mother, Priscilla Rowe. So after two years, Gabriele began studies with Matt Liebowitz.

According to both daughter and mother, a voice coach helps you do

certain things, such as move between octaves, help with your breathing, push you in directions where your voice is, and keep you challenged with new songs that are going to improve your



voice, "all the things you wouldn't necessarily do if you were singing in your bedroom," Mom laughed.


"My coach chooses songs he thinks would be good for my voice

and that work for my voice range," said Gabriele. Each week she gets a new song and the two of them figure out which songs she will sing for any specific performance. "It was Matt who helped me choose *Hallelujah* and prepare for Hayward Idol."

So how did Gabriele get the notion to audition for Hayward Idol? Her mother had seen a blurb in the *San Leandro Times* about last year's winner, so followed through to find the competition for this year. She delivered Gabriele to Hayward's Douglas Morrison Theater one afternoon in early March to try out.

"It doesn't matter how prepared you are, you always get nervous," said Gabriele. "And you prepare by just practicing over and over."

Six judges sat in the middle of the theater, with no other audience, making Gabriele all nervous. "There was one spotlight on stage with a little 'X'. There was just myself and one other girl. Walking up on to the stage I felt excited but nervous. They say, 'Whenever you're ready.' When I started singing, I felt more comfortable. I always feel



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## Sang Like an Angel' to Win Hayward Idol and Details the Audition Process

more comfy when I start singing.”

Within two weeks Gabriele received notice that she had been chosen as one of the 10 finalists. “I sat in my room while Mom was listening to their message on the phone. When she yelled, ‘You got in the top 10!’ I tripped over something and shouted, ‘Really?!’”

Gabriele found the dress rehearsal the night before the April 9 judging very helpful, since it was a run through of what would actually occur the following evening. “It really lowers the stress level on your part, knowing that you would know what to do,” she said. Being seventh in line also helped, since hearing six others before her reduced her nervousness.

“It made me feel good that the girls were really nice and not little cliques,” said Gabriele. “When one of us came backstage after performing, the rest of us gave them a high five and said, ‘You did really well.’ We talked about school and movies and stuff back stage.”

The night of the performance the girls spent their time in the rehearsal room singing Katie Perry and Justin Bieber songs in four-part harmony. “That really made us feel good,” says Gabriele. It wasn’t until the sixth finalist was nearly finished that Gabriele’s



heart started beating a little faster. “But everybody gave me a high-five before I went and I felt that I could do this.”

The girls waited nervously for about 10 minutes listening to last year’s winner perform as the four female judges discussed their decisions. “Then they called everybody on stage; we all felt that no matter what happens we were all still friends.” When they

announced they had made their final decisions, then it was more nerve-wracking. “You feel like, ‘I hope it’s me,’ but I know everybody else did well. We all looked at each other when third place was announced.”

The third place winner received a \$25 gift card to iTunes and an iPod Shuffle, and the second place winner won a \$50 gift card and iPod Shuffle. Then they announced First Place.

“When they said my name, I did not expect it, my mouth opened. I totally thought that Alby Ungashe, who was standing next to me, was going to get it. It was a fact in my mind. When they said my name, I was said it wasn’t right, but I was also happy I won. Everybody looked at me and smiled and said “Nice Job, Gabbie.”

Gabriele still has a look of amazement on her face as she describes the scene. “I looked at judges and they were smiling and clapping. They gave me a bag with gifts [a \$75 gift card with an iPod Shuffle] and everybody in the audience stood up. The MC’s smile really made me feel really happy. He handed me the first place bag.

And what is Gabriele’s next goal? “I will totally do American Idol, or X Factor, or some kind of TV show where you sing,” she smiled.

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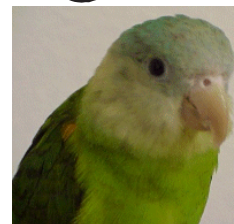
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# Raspberry Almond Teacake Tartlets

## What Better Way to Enjoy the Home & Garden Tour

by Melinda Rieboldt, President of The BNA

24 small tartlet pans (2- or 3-inch)  
baking spray  
2/3 cup butter  
1/2 cup + 2 tbsp sifted cake flour  
1 cup finely ground toasted almonds  
1 1/2 cups superfine sugar  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
6 large egg whites, lightly beaten  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/3 cup fresh raspberries  
2 teaspoons sugar  
2 teaspoons light corn syrup  
Confectioners' sugar for garnish

Melt butter over medium heat until it begins to brown and has a nutty aroma (6-8 minutes). Remove from heat. Strain and discard solids. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 400°. In a large bowl, combine flour, almonds, superfine sugar, and salt. Add egg whites, vanilla, and browned butter, whisking well. Apply baking spray to tartlet pans and divide flour mixture among pans. Place pans on rimmed baking sheet. Bake for 6

minutes, then remove from oven.

Mix raspberries, sugar, and corn syrup in a blender until pureed. Drop approximately 1/2 teaspoon puree into center of each tartlet. Pull a toothpick through the center of each drop to create a heart. Bake again until golden brown (3-4 minutes).

Remove from oven and cool for 10 minutes. Place tartlet pans on wire rack to cool completely. Carefully remove tartlets from pans and sift confectioners' sugar over the top. Use a slightly moistened finger to dissolve sugar over raspberry hearts.

## Sewer Laterals – Who Will Pay?

— Continued from Front Page

street from the Dowling Triangle, the city relined and repaired the sewer and reconnected the laterals on the exact same sewer line at no cost to the homeowners.

*The city began this scheme by ramming through a municipal code change in December without ever contacting the affected families.* There were protests by scores of Broadmoor residents and others at recent City Council and committee meetings. Mr. Hollister tried to steamroll opposition to his plan, trotting out the City Attorney and Engineering and Finance Departments to claim that the city didn't

own the sewers, the law wouldn't let them fix them, and even if it did it would be too expensive.

As one Dowling Triangle resident said as she appealed for support, "They are using our block as a test case to set precedent for future infrastructure improvements. If they can shift those costs to the property owners this time without a problem, then it will be done at every opportunity. Think of it as if it were happening to your property and your family. I'm sure there is a solution which will not financially strangle San Leandro families one block at a time."



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## City Sewer Plan – Facilities Meeting Overview

— Continued from Front Page

relocation of the main sewer line of the Dowling Triangle – an area bordered by Breed, Dowling, and Beverly Avenues.

City engineer Uche Udemezue explained that in 1995 a “Sanitary Sewer Master Plan” was created to resolve sewer deficiencies. The north section of San Leandro was identified as having over 500 potential sites for sewer failure due to its 100-year-old infrastructure.

Mr. Udemezue recounted that in 2008, the city re-examined sewer lines in the Dowling Triangle. Property owners in the Dowling Triangle were sent letters stating that the city would inspect and repair their sewer lines “at no cost.” Mr. Udemezue clarified that “at no cost” meant that the city would not charge to inspect existing sewer lines, not that it would pay to repair sewer lines.

In 2010 the city council voted to amend San Leandro Municipal Code section 3-14-640 to require property owners to incur the cost of operation, maintenance, and repair of private sewer laterals. Subse-

quently, the city notified Dowling Triangle property owners that it had relocated the main sewer line from Dowling Avenue to Beverly Avenue and that it was the property owner’s responsibility to pay the cost of connecting their lateral sewer line to the relocated sewer main.

They city offered Dowling Triangle property owners a three-year loan for up to \$15,000 at a 0.46% interest rate for the cost of connecting sewer laterals to the relocated sewer main.


City Manager Steve Hollister stated that the city was investigating other financing options for Dowling Triangle property owners. Mr. Hollister suggested extending the loan period from three to ten years as a possibility. Councilmembers Joyce Starosciak, Pauline Cutter, and Diana Souza asked Mr. Udemezue questions about possible special assessment options to pay for the Dowling Triangle costs.

City Attorney Jayne Williams explained that the city has no documentary evidence that the Dowling

Triangle sewer line was ever dedicated to the City by express dedication and that the city has never accepted, by resolution or otherwise, the Dowling Triangle sewer line into the City’s sewer system.

Ms. Williams indicated that Dowling Triangle property owners may have an argument that the Dowling Triangle sewer line was dedicated through an implied-in-law dedication based on the continued use of the Dowling Triangle sewer line without interference from property owners or the City for at least five years. However, Ms. Williams believes that the scope of the implied-in-law dedication is likely limited to use of the sewer lateral and associated sewer main, but not access to the sewer main.


According to Ms. Williams, if there is an implied-in-law dedication between Dowling Triangle property owners and the City, it is the responsibility of Dowling Triangle property owners to connect to the main sewer line as a result of its relocation.



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## From the President – continued

- continued from Front Page

bors will know what is going on around you, helping the police fight crime before it starts.

Currently there are no “official” Neighborhood Watch groups formed in The Broadmoor. As we are a large development with many different areas, I would encourage the formation of multiple groups to keep a watchful eye. You can start by asking your neighbors to form a Neighborhood Watch group with you. You may even meet new neighbors in the process!

Let The BNA know of your group so we can support your efforts by including articles in the *Beacon*, putting notifications on

The BNA website and on The BNA Email Discussion Forum, and connect new residents with you.

A Neighborhood Watch program benefits all of us. Please con-

sider starting a group in your area. Until next time, Melinda.

Feel free to email me with any questions you have about the neighborhood at [president@thebna.org](mailto:president@thebna.org).

## Mark Your Calendars!

### JUNE

6 – Registration Begins for Library Summer Reading Program

6 – Public hearing on proposed Budget, 7:00 p.m. City Council

11 – World Cultural Celebration for Library Summer Reading Program

12 – Home & Garden Tour, 12-4, benefit for George Mark Children's House

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