



**GGMG** | GOLDEN GATE  
MOTHERS GROUP

# 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

*Celebrating 16 Years Supporting San Francisco Mothers*

# *our mission*

The distinctive mission of the Golden Gate Mothers Group (GGMG) is to “nurture ourselves, our partners and our community; create an environment of support, information sharing and connection; learn, teach, create, have fun and provide balance in the lives of our growing families.”

This mission statement guides the actions of the more than 80 volunteer moms who run the GGMG and who drive the organization forward. As mothers, we learn how to balance our lives despite the many challenges of motherhood. As volunteers, we attempt to give back and to appreciate the community in which we live. This report summarizes the efforts our volunteers made in 2011 to help and support San Francisco moms, their families and their communities.

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# board of directors

## CHAIR, KATHY YU



Kathy has been a volunteer for three years. Prior to becoming a stay-at-home mom, Kathy was the Strategic Alliances and Mergers and Acquisitions Director for

Microsoft's mobile business. Kathy has two daughters: Darcy is three years old and Dorian is 20 months old.

## TREASURER, JIN SUN PARK



Jin Sun has been a volunteer for GGMG for one year. She is a stay-at-home mom who works part time for a startup producing mobile apps. Prior to that, Jin Sun worked as a

marketing director for a social gaming company and as head of operations and planning for a leading online beauty store. Her son, Nicholas, just turned one.

## TECHNOLOGY, SHANA COMBATALADE



Prior to becoming a stay-at-home mom, Shana was Vice President of Operations for a cosmetics company. She has been a GGMG volunteer for four years. Shana has two boys and one dog: Griffin is five years old, Spencer is three years old and Huckleberry is fifty-six in dog years.

## VICE CHAIR, JENNIFER GETTE



Jennifer works full-time as a Pharmaceutical Sales Executive and has been a GGMG volunteer for three years. Jennifer served as a writer and as an editor on the GGMG

Newsletter Committee prior to joining the board. Jennifer has two kids: Adam is five-and-a-half years old and Jamison is three-and-a-half years old.

## PARTNERSHIPS, IRIS CHOI



This is Iris' second year as a GGMG volunteer. Prior to becoming a stay-at-home mom, Iris was a Vice President in investment banking. She has one son, Tyler, who is two-

and-a-half years old.

## PR/MARKETING, SUMI DAS



Sumi is a journalist and producer with more than 15 years of media experience. She has been a correspondent for CNN, MSNBC and TechTV, filing breaking news reports and feature stories for web,

television and radio. She is currently a contributor for CBS and the BBC. Sumi has two kids: Aasha is four-and-a-half years old and Sabine is two years old.

## SECRETARY, LEIANN LAIKS



Leiann has her own law practice providing employment law compliance advice to businesses in the Bay Area. She has been volunteering for the Community Support committee for the

past year. Leiann has a two-year old son, Graydon.

## EDITORIAL, RYAN SILVERS



Ryan has been a GGMG volunteer for three years. She has worked as Calendar Editor, Managing Editor, Editor-in-Chief and now Board member. Prior to becoming a stay-at-

home mom, Ryan was a publisher, editor and writer at several different magazines throughout California. Ryan has one son, Isaac, who will be four years old in May.

## MEMBERSHIP, JENNIFER BELENSON



Jennifer has been a GGMG volunteer for two years. Prior to becoming a stay-at-home mom, Jennifer was an Assistant Vice President in Marketing/Product Management for a financial services

company. She has one daughter: Avery is three-and-a-half years old.

# looking back...

The GGMG volunteer base consists of more than 90 volunteers serving on 14 different committees.

Here's a look at some of the major accomplishments and changes in 2011.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In 2011, Community Support established a Member Support program to help GGMG moms in need by offering assistance in the form of meals, grocery cards, babysitting and gift cards. Over 30 meals were prepared and delivered by our GGMG members for the Helping Hand meal delivery service which supports new moms and moms in need of a break from the kitchen. Community Support also joined forces with Golden Gate National Parks, California Coastal Commission and Recology for a worldwide beach cleanup effort. GGMG hosted a "Glitter Walk" on Ocean Beach, during which over 160 people collected approximately 150 pounds of trash. Community Support also organized five donation drives. More than 100 costumes were donated to the Homeless Prenatal Program (HPP) Halloween costume collection; \$1,140 was raised for the Homeless Prenatal Program Turkey Drive; more than 240 toys and books were donated to the SF Child Abuse Prevention Center; GGMG members prepared 38 dishes and 456 sides for the HPP sides drive and 653 pajama sets were donated to HPP, as well.

## EDUCATIONAL SERIES

Educational Series expanded the scope of its events in 2011. In addition to continuing the popular, large-scale Preschool and Kindergarten

events, the team also offered smaller preschool events providing more individualized support to members. The 2011 programs also included various parenting classes and workshops for members in partnership with Parents Place, Carmel Blue and DayOne. In the fall, the team added a programming series focused on transitioning back to the office and how to translate one's new dimensions, capabilities and skills in the work world. The series has been well-received and continues in 2012!

## JUST FOR MOMS

Just for Moms events are a fun reminder that it's essential for moms to take care of themselves so they can be their best for their little ones. Attending a JFM event is also a great way to connect and meet other moms. Whether it's at a spa, wine bar, or self-defense workshop, these events re-energize and support moms. In 2011, the team organized successful neighborhood dinners for working and stay-at-home moms and showcased GGMG partners via open house parties at Peekadoodle KidsClub, Recess Urban Recreation and the Jewish Community Center. The committee also introduced new vendors and activities for events held exclusively for GGMG members.

## KIDS ACTIVITIES

The Kids Activities committee negotiates with popular, up-and-coming child-friendly venues to allow GGMG members to sample a variety of kids' classes and activities at a discount. In 2011, the team welcomed two new volunteers, increased its monthly activities from an average of 15 to 25 activities per month and also added several new vendors

including: 4Cats, the new Children's Creativity Museum, and JAMaROO. Its most popular events this year included: Summer Berry Picking, Fall Apple Picking, A Trip to the Pumpkin Patch, Building Gingerbread Houses, special Nutcracker and Velveteen Rabbit shows and the ever popular Hanukkah event at Temple Emanu-el. Kids Activities event listings can be found in the GGMG magazine and online at [www.gmg.org/events.html](http://www.gmg.org/events.html).

## MAGAZINE

Over the last few years, the GGMG newsletter has been developing into a magazine, with additional pages, longer features, a more sophisticated design and professional photography. In 2011, the team recognized those changes by officially renaming the publication the GGMG Magazine. Staff increased from approximately 12 to over 20 volunteer moms - a team that became stronger through hard work, camping trips, family picnics and monthly meetings. New sections were created for moms of newborns (the 4th Trimester), mom entrepreneurs and community bloggers in an effort to bring forth emergent groups within the GGMG community, as well as additions of a cartoonist and I ♥ Mom first-person collective. Central themes such as relationships, food, nature/nurture and budget were covered with humor and insight. 2011 also marked the first ever 'Best Of', and more controversial SAHM and Working Mom issues.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Membership committee processed an average of 180 new membership applications monthly in 2011 and the total number of members grew from approximately 3,900 in January to almost 4,400 in December, an increase of nearly

# ...to 2011

12%. At five New Member Coffees held throughout the year, new (and not-so-new) members met other moms and learned more about the different membership benefits and how to use Big Tent. The committee also offered the ability to purchase gift certificates for GGMG memberships in 2011.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

The Partnership team strives to identify organizations that are exceptional resources for our members and creates alliances that provide significant value for GGMG families. Thus far, the team has established partnerships with Peekadoodle KidsClub, the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco (JCCSF), Recess Urban Recreation and Wondersitter. In 2011, GGMG members were given the opportunity to sample the services offered by these partners for free or at a steeply discounted rate. These partnerships have focused on services that enrich the lives of GGMG mothers and their little ones. In addition, the Members Discount committee has been able to arrange discounts for GGMG members with more than 300 organizations. The team would like to thank all its partners for the support they provide to the GGMG community.

## **PLAYGROUPS**

GGMG continues to foster relationships that are built upon the monthly playgroup formation events. These long lasting relationships, for both mother and child, are a core reason why most members choose to join this amazing group. In 2011, 62 playgroups formed and the number of specialty groups increased from 38 to a phenomenal 237 groups by the end of the year. The committee also forged a new relationship with Recess

Urban Recreation as an event venue with great success. Moving forward, Playgroups' expansion plans include offering additional events throughout the year to meet the growing needs of members by hosting special events targeted at specific groups.

## **PR & MARKETING**

2011 saw the creation of the PR and Marketing committee. Once the small team was assembled, volunteers set to work on their primary tasks: managing all external and internal communications and preserving GGMG's mission throughout its messaging. The PR and Marketing volunteers responded to media inquiries and as a result, earned mentions in *Parents* magazine as well as on the popular sites, *Red Tricycle* and *Babble.com*. The committee also worked alongside other GGMG volunteers, supporting their efforts to plan, publicize and organize GGMG events, such as the Glitter Walk during the California Coastal Cleanup Day. In addition, PR and Marketing helped establish GGMG's presence at San Francisco parenting events, including the Birth & Baby Fair and Preschool Preview Night.

## **RECRUITING**

In 2011, the Recruiting team welcomed a new chair who also brought a new focus for the team: volunteer development and retention. With nearly 4,400 members now, the GGMG Volunteer count has inched closer to 90 and the Recruiting team has its hands full trying to find and retain its volunteer base. Since all volunteers are busy moms, the committee made it their responsibility to not only find the best job matches for interested volunteers, but also

put initiatives into place, such as New Volunteer Brunches and Volunteer Training & Development, to ensure that GGMG volunteerism meets the expectations of those dedicating their time to this organization. These optional programs are designed to assist GGMG moms in reaching the personal and professional milestones they've set for themselves as new moms and GGMG Volunteers.

## **SOCIAL EVENTS**

In 2011, the Social Events committee increased the capacity for its three largest and most popular annual events. Approximately 2,200 guests registered for the annual Egg Hunt at the San Francisco Zoo; 1,800 for the Summer Party at Speedway Meadow, and 2,900 for the Halloween Party at Sharon Meadow. The team also increased the participation of new partners to increase the number of activities, samples and prizes offered at these events.

## **WEBMASTER**

GGMG forums experienced significant increases in traffic in 2011, up 25% over the previous year. Based on member feedback, the forums were divided into Parenting, Caregiver Search and Miscellaneous categories, and Classifieds were opened up to allow members to promote their own businesses as well as other's. Membership cards available online to print at home were introduced, and Forum Tips became a regular feature in the Magazine to provide forum policy education and reminders. In addition, the Webmaster Team created a survey to determine how the forums and other features are used, in anticipation of the upcoming site redesign.

# by the numbers

## 2011 By The Numbers

New members added: **2,183**

Volunteer moms: **93**

New playgroups formed: **62**

New members discounts offered: **46**

Just for Moms events: **82**

Kids activities: **69**

Postings in the Parenting Questions forum: **47,882**

Pounds of trash picked up at the GGMG Coastal Cleanup site: **150**

Attendees at the GGMG Social Events (Spring, Summer & Halloween): **6,900**

Number of times GGMG members have activated partnership benefits: **980+**

Original articles published in the 2011 GGMG Magazines: **38**



# member quotes

In their own words, GGMG members share what the organization means to them.

"My major challenge in 2011 was that my daughter was 2. The GGMG moms talked me off the ledge more than once by commiserating, offering sage advice, and making me laugh. I'm the first of my local friends to have kids, so I don't have many people to turn to about parenting dilemmas. The collective experience of GGMG has been invaluable for guiding me through the epic twists and turns of parenthood. Thank you to all the amazing moms out there!"

- Felisa Yang

"It's hard to say what part of membership I've benefitted from more. My younger son's furniture all came from the GGMG classifieds, which might be slightly more expensive than Craigslist, but a heck of a lot safer. I love the forum for asking and answering the hundreds of questions all parents (new and experienced) have. I also started a subgroup for an obscure niche interest, and was surprised to connect with a good dozen of moms with similar interests."

- Terri David, happy 3-year member

"The most important thing I have gotten out of being a GGMG member is that it helped me through a very big adjustment in my life. Having a child indeed changes everything and I found that it helped me explore the new world of being a parent in a much easier way. I have access to playgroups, events, and most importantly new friends that truly understand what it is like to be a parent."

- Elizabeth Jansson



"GGMG is a great network of moms in San Francisco. I love the forums and magazine - they are great resources! Being a new mom can be terrifying and GGMG reminds me that the emotions I'm feeling are normal and that the questions I have are reasonable."

- Tiffany Twilley

"GGMG is a modern version of the tribe women had in the old days. In 2011, I had my second child and got amazing advice from experienced moms of two and more. My son started preschool, and moms told me where to get his lunchbox and labels. On everything from colds to pregnancies to household management, GGMG moms have been there for me. It's a privilege to be a member of this community."

- Vicky Keston

"GGMG has been such a tremendous resource for my family! It's helped us navigate through those early days of parenthood by setting us up with

a playgroup that still keeps in touch (almost 4 yrs later). We have participated in many of the community events and constantly refer to the online forums for advice and referrals. I tell all my friends who are expecting that joining GGMG is a must!"

- Halle Cane

"My favorite thing about GGMG is that at any time of the day or night I can ask a question (or just ask for support) and get answers within minutes from a group of smart, informed women. It has been invaluable during the last 18 months!"

- Gallia Levy

"GGMG is my go to source for everything -- not just kid related! I have loved all of the people I have met through GGMG.....moms, babysitters, landscapers, hair dressers, general contractors and the list goes on! When I have a need -- ranging from my baby isn't napping to my roof is leaking, GGMG always saved the day. It's an amazing resource of information and resources vetted by an amazing network of moms."

- Alison Tirone

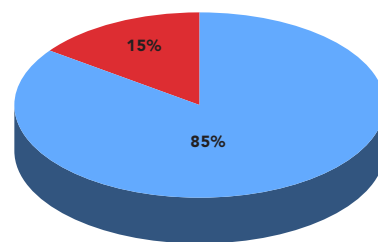
# finances

In 2011, GGMG had revenues of \$384,370 and operating expenses of \$327,294. The majority of the revenue, 85% came from membership dues with the remaining generated from magazine advertising and activity fees. As a 501(c)(7) non profit organization, magazine advertising revenue is limited. Activity fees are offset by BigTent transaction fees and by vendor payments for events.

The majority of the operating expenses for 2011 come from the cost of printing the magazine (36%). Operations including insurance, legal fees, accounting services, taxes, BigTent transaction fees, and volunteer logistics accounted for 34%. The remaining 30% went directly back to our members through benefits including annual social events (Spring, Summer, Fall events), partnerships (JCCSF, Peekadoodle KidsClub, Recess Urban Recreation), educational programs (preschool nights and Parents Place events), Just For Moms, Kids Activities, Playgroups and Members Discounts. While Community Support used 4% of the GGMG budget to grant awards in 2010, in 2011 the committee narrowed its focus (based on the results of a membership survey) to direct assistance for members in need.

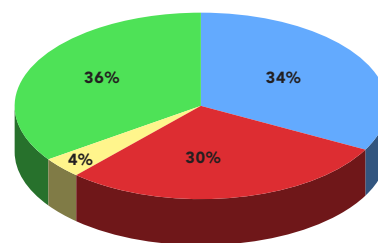
As GGMG looks forward to 2012, continued strong membership numbers are anticipated. Major operating expenses will shift slightly with a goal for a decrease in the percentage of operational costs to 28% and an increase as a percentage in member benefits to 37% with the magazine steady at 35%.

## 2011 INCOME



- Membership Dues Income (85%)
- Activity Fees/Other (15%)

## 2011 EXPENSES



- Operations (34%)
- Membership Benefits (30%)
- Community Support (4%)
- Newsletter (36%)



# *our future*

In 2011, the GGMG organization offered further value for members by signing significant partnerships with Peekadoodle KidsClub, the JCCSF, Recess Urban Recreation and Wondersitters. These partners offered everything from free gym memberships to free adult and kids classes. The JCCSF even offered free private pilates classes along with babysitting for members. These partnerships will continue to be a key value offering for members.

In other areas of the organization, GGMG streamlined various internal processes from accounting to procedures for various committees. Most of these processes are carried out without any disruption to member benefits and services. For instance, how volunteers are on-boarded into the organization, or the process of signing agreements with vendors for the Members Discount committee. As an organization managed and run by 90+ volunteers, GGMG will continue to improve its internal operations to make volunteering easier for juggling moms and to offer more valuable programming for its growing membership.

For 2012, GGMG will take on a significant project to revamp the technology platform. For members, this will mean a better online forum interface while volunteers will have improved online tools to run the organization - from moderation of forums, payment processing to an interactive online magazine. These significant changes will take a tremendous amount of work by valuable volunteers to implement over the next nine months. GGMG looks forward to revealing the new online website by the end of the year.

Through motherhood, the GGMG organization was built. Through motherhood, the GGMG organization will continue to grow and support volunteers, members and its community.



# our volunteers

Thank you to ALL of the GGMG volunteers who make this great work possible:

**Business Development** – Rio Dluzak (Chair); Michele Barnowski

**Community Support** – Lisa Shaskan (Chair); Laura Quigley; Juli Roh; Stephanie Lai; Rica Thomas Antoniotti; Jenny Raj; Elana Konstant; Stefanie Buchalter

**Educational Series** – Belen Aguayo-Jimenez (Chair); Ming Ming Liu; Angela Cheung; Jessica Zhang

**Graphic Design** – Grace Leung (Chair)

**Just for Moms** – Shelley Wu (Chair); Michelle Tom (Co-chair); Laurel Kellam; Michelle Melanphy; Berit Suba; Teresa Pletka; Mimi Jiggins

**Kids Activities** – Emily del Real (Chair); Brooke Kerpelman (Co-Chair); Sharon Gee; Rachel Euretig; Kelly White; Audrey Lee

**Magazine** – Tara Robinson (Chair); Kristen Aitken (Co-Chair); Rachel Metzger; Debby Oh; Kait Drace; Kirsten Pflieger; Clarissa Buck; Dallas Stromberg; Amber Schulenberg; Kitty Gallisa, Fe Brown; Inga Lim; Hayley Durack; Natasha Maresca; Kate Nicholson; Rhiana Maidenberg; Amy St. Clair; Laure Latham; Linda King-Byrnes; Megan Bates; Dariana Ross

**Membership** – Sheryl Nicol (Chair); Danielle Diedrick; Jessica Clifton-Czarny; Natasha Reckless; Vi Pavlicevich

**\*New\* Mom Entrepreneurs** – Heather Natsch (Chair); Jodi Goldberg; Justine Simpson

**Operations** – Julie Suppelsa (Chair)

**Playgroups** – Shelley Daza (Chair); Rachel Schulz (Co-Chair); Katherine Piersanti; Erin Ferrare; Sujin Heerin; Sue Chan; Shirley Ling; Megan Jones; Jocelyn Herndon

**PR** – Sumi Das (Chair); Dhyana Levy; Natalie Flynn

**Recruiting** – Jennifer Loffer (Chair)

**Social Events** – Brook Holton Sheahan (Chair); Stephanie Francis-Jones; Sara Wilson; Stacy Lewis; Mira Bieler Burdett

**Webmaster** - Sarah Peterman (Co-Chair); Anya Bosina (Co-Chair); Chantelle Thomas; Heather Beckstead; Jessica Taylor; Joycelyn Chung; Katherine Piersanti; Shannon Kaiser; Summer Recchi; Ushma Upadhyay

*Special thanks goes to Fiona Chan Photography (photos on pages 3, 10 and 11) and Hayley Durack (cover photo, photos on page 9).*



# our partners

The GGMG thanks the many businesses that have contributed to its community during the past year. Over 50 merchants have donated their time, products, facilities, expertise, and services to GGMG social events, newsletter contests, volunteer recognition events, member raffles and GGMG programs.

GGMG extends its heartfelt gratitude to the following businesses:

**Andrew Weeks Photography**

Customized service with superior results.

[www.andrewweeksphotography.com](http://www.andrewweeksphotography.com)

**Axis Café**

Hidden gem at the bottom of Potrero Hill. [www.axis-café.com](http://www.axis-café.com)

**Beaba USA**

Design and technology to create innovative products for the juvenile industry. [www.beabausa.com](http://www.beabausa.com)

**Bring it Bags**

You won't forget your bags because we remind you. [www.bringit.com](http://www.bringit.com)

**CariFree.com**

Fight tooth decay the easy way because you too can be cavity-free. [www.carifree.com](http://www.carifree.com)

**Felix The Cook**

Simply delicious, decorated sugar cookies. [www.felixthecook.com](http://www.felixthecook.com)

**Fiona Chan Photography**

Specializing in weddings, engagement photos and family portraits. [www.fionachanphotography.com](http://www.fionachanphotography.com)

**Jenny Benton**

Rolf SI practitioner. [www.jennybenton.com](http://www.jennybenton.com)

**Jewish Community Center of San Francisco**

The oldest Jewish center on the West Coast, providing educational, social, cultural and fitness programs to the community since 1877.

[www.jccsf.org](http://www.jccsf.org)

**Modern Playhouse**

Earth friendly products for kids.

[www.modern-playhouse.com](http://www.modern-playhouse.com)

**Parents Place**

Support and social networks for parents and their children.

[www.parentspplaceonline.org](http://www.parentspplaceonline.org)

**Peekadoodle KidsClub**

An interactive playspace with the largest array of educational classes in the Bay Area. [www.peekadoodle.com](http://www.peekadoodle.com)

**Picaboo.com**

Only Picaboo makes it so easy to get creative with your photos.

**Recess Urban Recreation**

A membership-based 3,200 square foot developmentally-rich playspace offering childrens classes.

[www.recess-sf.com](http://www.recess-sf.com)

**Soccer Tots**

Soccer programs for children 18 months to 6 years old.

[www.soccertots.com](http://www.soccertots.com)

**Sports Basement**

Selling the best brands at basement prices. [www.sportsbasement.com](http://www.sportsbasement.com)

**Susan Steingraber**

Acclaimed ecologist & author.

[www.steingraber.com](http://www.steingraber.com)

**Sweet Lauren Cakes**

Cakes and cakepops for any celebration.

[www.sweetlaurencakes.com](http://www.sweetlaurencakes.com)

**Tutu School**

Every child should know what it feels like to dance. [www.tutuschool.com](http://www.tutuschool.com)

**Wondersitter**

Providing wonderful babysitters to families by making sure every Wondersitter is uniquely qualified for the needs of your family.

[www.wondersitter.com](http://www.wondersitter.com)

**Zoli Baby**

Committed to giving parents safe, worry free solutions to real-life changes.

[www.zolibaby.com](http://www.zolibaby.com)



# thank you!