

T H E  
**ECHO**

**JUNE 2018**

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HONEY BEE



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## Letter from the Editor

The newly delivered 2018-2019 Marin Valley Directories have additional space between each name to help you keep it updated and current. New resident information is usually listed on this page (pg. 2) of the *Echo* in the "Directory Update" as below. Write this information in your directory in the space provided between names to keep it up to date.

### Echo in Color

A color digital version of each issue of the *Echo* is now being emailed with interactive links directly to residents unless they have requested otherwise. The printed black-and-white version is still being delivered later in the month when we receive them from the printer.

If you would like to change how your information is shared and to let the office know if you have any changes, especially new telephone numbers, please notify Matt.



### Directory Update

#### New Resident

**Sean Casey**

19 Marin View Drive  
415-497-1755

SeanCaseyis@comcast.net

## HOL COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

# A Mobile FARMERS MARKET Is Coming to Marin Valley

Every Thursday beginning in June a truck outfitted to sell fresh fruits and vegetables will visit Marin Valley. The Agricultural Institute of Marin (AIM), which organizes the Sunday and Thursday farmers markets at the Marin County Civic Center, is launching a mobile farmers market to meet us where we live. Instead of making a trip to the farmers market, the market will come to us! Parked in front of the clubhouse for an hour every Thursday morning you'll see a shiny black mobile farmers market stocked with seasonal fruits and vegetables. Early summer produce may include rainbow chard, carrots, potatoes, artichokes, strawberries, and more. Look for different selections each week as new vegetables and fruits come into season.

We'll let you know the official start date and time soon! AIM is still working out the details, but we're all excited that Marin Valley will be the first to experience this farmers market on wheels!

This new program is funded by a grant to AIM from Marin Community Foundation. In addition, the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank is working closely with AIM to enroll qualified residents in the CalFresh program. Enrollees will receive a stipend, added to a special debit card each month, to purchase produce from the Marin Farmers Market as well as food from many local grocery outlets.

CalFresh enrollment began here in the Park on May 10<sup>th</sup> and will continue well into June. A Food Bank representative will return several times to assist with the application process.

Liana Orlandi

*Agricultural Institute of Marin (AIM)*

## THE ECHO JUNE 2018

### MARIN VALLEY MOBILE COUNTRY CLUB

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A PUBLICATION OF MHB Group Region 8  
[www.mobilehomeboard.com/](http://www.mobilehomeboard.com/)

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#### PAC BOARD

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#### STANDING COMMITTEES

FINANCE Stephen Plocher  
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Stephen Plocher, Larry Cohen, Carol-Joy Harris,  
Ron Romaine, Susan Meyer, Kevin Mulvany  
MV PROJECT PLANNING John Hansen, John Shelfer

#### HOL BOARD

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TREASURER Tara Plocher 415-302-5992

#### MAR VAL BOARD

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DIRECTOR EMERITUS Dee Schneider  
DIRECTOR/BAR MANAGER Fred Dargie 884-2969  
DIRECTOR/HOSPITALITY Larry Moore 883-0486  
DIRECTOR/RESERVATIONS Carolyn Corry 370-6403

#### SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Email articles with "ECHO" as the first word of the subject line and a copy of the article in the body of the email to Erma Wheatley:

[ermawheatley@gmail.com](mailto:ermawheatley@gmail.com)

Images should be as large as possible to enable a 300 ppi resolution (*pixels/inch*).

#### DEADLINE

**Everything is due the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month or sooner for the following month's issue.**

# Management Update *Letter to Residents*

**Trim Dry Grass** Warm weather and dry conditions are coming. Please be fire safe and trim the dry grass for defensible space surrounding your home. Residents are required to trim all dead grass on your home rental lot.

**Gas Issues?** Remember, if you are experiencing any issues with your gas system, please call the front desk first before calling PG&E.

**Carport Consideration** Rule #12 Carports: Keep up the good work and continue with your cleanup of stored items in your carport. Per Mobile Home Residency law, you are permitted only certain items in your carport. BBQs and manufactured patio furniture are among the accepted items. Parking is paramount with the number of resident vehicles here at Marin Valley. Please be considerate by cleaning out your carports and parking your vehicles under them.

**Home Project Approvals** Prior to any projects at your home, stop by the front desk to apply for any needed approvals or HCD permits. We can help you with this and guide you through the process.

**20 MPH** Abide by our 20 mph speed limit, and please stop at all stop signs for the safety and consideration of others.

**Pressure Washing** Water conservation is paramount. Only if absolutely necessary pressure wash your home. Pressure washers use 2.5 gallons of water per minute.

**New Clubhouse Curtains** The clubhouse has new curtains installed in the ballroom. Stop in to see the upgrades and view the wonderful art in the Marin Valley Gallery and front entry.

**Retaining Walls** Do you have concerns over the condition of any retaining wall next to or behind your home? I have a list of walls that need repair but I am sure there are some I have missed. Fill out a resident input form so I can inspect what is causing you concern and determine an appropriate repair.

Thank you,



**Matt Greenberg**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
gm.mvmcc@gmail.com  
415-883-5911 ■ 415-883-1971 Fax

Greetings from the PAC Board.

**Finances** Our finances are in order. The debt service on the loan is 2.53 as of March 31, 2018, well above the required 2.0. Our cash, plus short-, medium-, and long-term reserves is in excess of \$4.9 million.

**Standing Committees** — **MVEST** continues to be active in focusing our attention on safety issues around our community. See their report in this *Echo* on pages 4 and 5. —The PAC **Project Planning Committee** is taking up the matter of developing the area below the clubhouse. There are potentials for a park area, community garden, and perhaps the drilling of a water well to address emergency water storage and the watering in the community garden. The committee will hold meetings to hear your input and to incorporate these findings into the project.

**Summer Hours** The PAC approved that the pool and hot tub will now be open until 10 pm.

**Budget** Larry and I met with the City Staff to discuss the 2018-19 budget as well as pending issues. These discussions were detailed in the PAC monthly meeting available in the posted minutes. Al Frei also attended the meeting and introduced us to Roy Helsing. Al is retiring in July and plans to transfer his business to the Helsing Group of San Ramon, CA. This matter is under discussion and consideration between the PAC Board and the City Staff.

The PAC Board, Al Frei Real Estate Services, and City Staff did not suggest rent increases for the coming year to the City Council. The PAC board again reviewed the budget and requested that funds not spent this year for landscaping management be transferred to the coming year's budget. This was agreed on by City Staff and was included in the 2018-19 budget approved (along with no rent increase) by the City Council at the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

PAC invites you to its **annual meeting at 11 am, Saturday, June 2**. The agenda will be posted in the clubhouse and emailed as usual. Please come and celebrate another successful year!

In service,



**Jay Shelfer**  
PAC PRESIDENT  
jjshelfer@yahoo.com





# “Well Done Marin Valley”

by JOHN HANSEN

**T**hat was the unanimous sentiment expressed by all the agencies involved with the May 5<sup>th</sup> Evacuation Exercise — Novato Fire District, Novato Police Dept., Novato City Staff, and the Marin Co-Sheriff Dept., among others.

At about 1:30 pm on May 5, Novato Emergency Operations Center issued a (voluntary) evacuation order, followed shortly by police, sheriff, CHP cruisers and motorcycles, and a fire truck circulating through the Park. If you did not get the phone call, go to the web and log on to [www.alertmarin.org](http://www.alertmarin.org) to see what the problem was or to sign up. MVEST played a supporting role in the exercise by dispatching Block Captains to canvas the Park with encouragement for participation.

The result was that an impressive 25% of Park residents showed up to the pre-designated evacuation center at the Hill Gym next to Margaret Todd Senior Center. The reception committee included several agencies with information about what to expect in an actual emergency evacuation, and other useful emergency tips.



A common question, likely shared by more than those who ask it, is: What is the benefit of such an exercise? The answer is that ALL participants benefit. Emergency Agencies get to test their alert, traffic, and crowd management systems; MVEST gets to test its organization, mobilization, and evacuation protocols. And for the residents, the benefit is a bit more subtle, but nonetheless extremely important. Let me explain ...

Most of the time we navigate through our daily lives by negotiating one decision after another based on what we have learned, what we believe, and what we have agreed to. We’re usually not troubled by the car coming toward us on the road because the traffic rules we have agreed to provide us with a sense of safety and security. But emergencies and disasters, by their very nature, occur outside our experiences, beliefs, and agreements — the vacancy of which results in panic — a “thought-deficient” flight-fright-or-freeze reaction. This rarely ends well.

Those of us who physically participated in an evacuation exercise now have a memory of the process to recollect when the real thing happens. The result will be a substantial reduction of the panic reaction, and a much safer and saner thoughtful response.

Incidentally, this same principle applies to other associated preparedness measures such as having a grab-and-go bag of essentials, a communication plan for friends and relatives, and even regularly reviewing your insurance policies. Waiting until you need them is a fool’s errand. ■

## Some Colorful Shrubbery Suggestions for Privacy to Replace Juniper

RIGHT: *Pink flowered Burgundy Queen or Helene Strybing Tea-Tree (Leptospermum)*  
OPPOSITE PAGE: *Crimson bottlebrush (Callistemon)*



# Gutters and Stuff

by JOHN FELD



**A**h! Lovely warm days approaching summer. What better way to enjoy a great day than noticing what's overhead.

All the leaves of fall and winter are probably now still sitting in your gutters, on the roof of your porch, carport, and deck. This debris can pile up, and with the rain we had this spring, may even have turned into a solid matting of decaying vegetation. These remnants of growth will soon become very dry, and that also means flammable.

FireSafe Marin ([www.firesafemarin.org](http://www.firesafemarin.org)) suggests: **the single most effective step you can take to protect your home TODAY is to clean all leaves, needles, and debris from your roof and rain gutters!**

Research shows that two out of three homes destroyed during wildfires are ignited by wind-blown embers, and not from the actual flames of the fire. These embers can ignite your home in several ways and can travel miles from a large fire. By taking some time today to clean your roof and gutters, you'll have taken the first and possibly the most significant step toward protecting your home.

About cleaning those gutters and roofs, FireSafe Marin also states:

## Be safe!

- 1. Hire a professional if you are unsure or lack the proper tools. Some roofing materials can be damaged if you walk on them, and every roof poses a fall hazard. (This is particularly true of the corrugated roofs that many of us have attached to our homes.)**
- 2. Always use a sturdy, well-footed ladder to reach your roof and gutters.**
- 3. Don't clean your roof alone. Be sure there is someone with you, on the ground, to help when needed.**
- 4. Always keep your roof clean of debris. Clean it as often as necessary during fire season. Remember: even a tiny handful of leaves are enough to burn your home!**
- 5. Check your gutters. Metal gutters are safest, and all gutters must be maintained completely free of leaves, needles, and vegetation during fire season (and the rainy season, too).**

One more warning: NEVER step or lean on your corrugated roof. They are not designed to carry the weight of an adult.

Getting rid of this vegetative mass is usually not an easy task. You will need a stepladder, a rake to reach branches and leaves out of your reach, probably a hose to wash out gutters, and plenty

of plastic bags to put it all in. While the gutters on the main part of our homes are easier to attend to, getting into the gutters on porches and carport roofs can be a nightmare. They seem designed to make it almost impossible to do a thorough cleaning job.

My hands are just too large to be able to reach into the convoluted guttering systems that seem deliberately made to catch everything and not give easy access to any cleaning tool known to mankind. For me, I use a large fork, bent wire, and a hose with a small nozzle that shoots water at high pressure. Be prepared to get very wet — but persevere.

Like the rest of your roof, you may need to clean your gutters more often if you live where leaves fall onto your roof.

It is not a bad idea if you can afford it to have a professional do all this cleaning for you. And while you are about it, have them inspect your roof for any likely damage.

Some people put “gutter guards” over gutters, but these generally do not work with the types of roofs installed on mobile homes. Certainly I have never seen any that work with corrugated roofs. ■





# Message from Mar Val

Dear Friends,

Those of you present at the Volunteer Dinner in April are aware **Carolyn Corry** was named Mar Val's Volunteer of the Year in recognition of her many contributions in adding to the positive fabric of our community.

We are delighted to confirm the very popular Jazz Brunch will take place on Saturday, June 16, 2018. The bar will open at 11 am, and brunch will be served at noon. Once again

we will be treated to live jazz performed by the **Lee Waterman Trio**.

Reservations for the Jazz Brunch will be accepted beginning Monday, June 4<sup>th</sup>.

Also included in this month's magazine is the reservation form for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July BBQ. Since July 4, falls on the first Wednesday of July, the cut-off date for reservations will be Monday, July 2. Reservations will be accepted beginning Monday, June 18<sup>th</sup>.



With warmest regards,

**Kathleen Dargie**  
MAR VAL  
PRESIDENT  
kfdargie@aol.com

## Lee Waterman Trio • JAZZ BRUNCH • Under the Ragtop

**June 16, 2018 • 11 AM** BAR OPENS • **12 PM** BRUNCH

M E N U    QUICHE LORRAINE (BACON)    OR    QUICHE FLORENTINE (SPINACH)  
SWEET ROLLS/MUFFINS • BAGELS WITH SALMON/CREAM CHEESE • FRUIT SALAD

\$12 PER PERSON    BLOOD ORANGE MIMOSAS \$5

Reservation deadline is **June 13 at 5 pm** or when 120 reservations have been received.

For questions call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403

### Lee Waterman Trio • JAZZ BRUNCH • Under the Ragtop

**June 16, 2018 • 11 AM**

RESIDENT \_\_\_\_\_ RESIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST \_\_\_\_\_ GUEST \_\_\_\_\_

# Residents attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$12 each    **Check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. (NO CASH please)**

# Guests attending \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$12 each    Make checks payable to Mar Val.

Reservation deadline is **June 13 at 5 pm** or when 120 reservations have been received.

For questions call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403.



# 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY DINNER



5 PM Cocktails • 6 PM Dinner • Music by “The Tempos” featuring our own Brynda Foster

M E N U BBQ CHICKEN BREAST OR VEGETABLE KABOB  
MACARONI SALAD • GREEN SALAD • ROLLS • APPLE PIE

\$12 per person Reservation deadline is **July 2 at 5 pm** or when 120 reservations have been received.

For questions call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403.

## JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> DINNER RESERVATION FORM

Please circle entrée choice

RESIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken    Vegetarian Kabob

RESIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken    Vegetarian Kabob

GUEST \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken    Vegetarian Kabob

GUEST \_\_\_\_\_

Chicken    Vegetarian Kabob

# Residents attending \_\_\_ @ \$12 ea    **Check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. (NO CASH please)**

# Guests attending \_\_\_ @ \$12 ea    Checks payable to Mar Val. Questions? call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403.

Reservation deadline is **July 2 at 5 pm** or when 120 reservations have been received.



### Mar Val

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

**Carolyn Corry**



### HOL

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

**Joan Nelson**

# Home Owners League Message



### CONGRATULATIONS TO

**Joan Nelson** — named HOL's Volunteer of the Year. We so appreciate your love and energy and all your work with your various projects.

### MANY THANKS TO

**Susie Lahr** for the successful 5<sup>th</sup> Annual “Art in the Park.” You couldn't help but be amazed at the quality, variety, and talent of our local artists.

**Pauline Hawkins** for another amazing spring and summer garden at the clubhouse. HOL buys the plants and

Pauline performs her wizardry in the planting to keep it blooming all season. Lovely. (Also see page 12)

To **Tara Plocher, Jeannine Freedom,** and **Dee Dee Kausen** for the Spring Craft Fair that showcased many fun and interesting items.

To **Erma Wheatley** for an excellent (as usual) job on our new directories. You should have found yours on your porch the first week of May. If you did not, please contact Matt Greenberg. Only one copy per household, please.

To **Matt Greenberg** for responding to HOL members' requests to get rid of the Scotch Broom. What a job!

**Food for the Park:** Did you get your free bag of food at the May 10<sup>th</sup> CalFresh Community Meeting?

**Gym Machines:** The current thinking is that we will not remove any of the existing machines in the gym but will rearrange them to make room for the new NuStep that Management is buying. If you need instruction on

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how to use these machines, drop a note in the cubbyhole next to the HOL bulletin board labeled "Requests," and we will try to connect you with someone who can help you.

**New Shredder:** The shredder HOL purchased for the Park is a great success. Just follow the instructions for emptying it when the red light goes on. Empty the plastic bag into a paper bag to recycle that paper bag into the blue paper-recycling bin, not the compost bin. Replace the plastic bag in the shredding container; the plastic bags are custom sized and expensive.

**LOOKING FORWARD with HOL**

Be looking for new lounge chairs around the pool, organic vegetables to buy off the Farmers Market weekly food truck (see pg. 2), changes to the HOL Board, and our annual Dues Drive in July.

Quack Quack,  
  
**Janie Klimes Crocker**  
 HOL PRESIDENT  
 jkklimes@subell.net  
 281-414-3984 cell



**COMMUNITY DANCING**

**Saturday • June 2 • 7- 9 pm**

Come to the clubhouse ballroom on the first Saturday of every month for dancing and good music. Saturday night June 2 will feature **DJ Michael Hagerty** with dance hits from the 50s, 60s, and 70s. He'll be glad to take requests, too.



by **SUZIE LAHR**

The artists of Marin Valley sprang into spring for our community with our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Art in the Park on Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. We were enthused to make it happen for all of you and hope you attended to meet us in person and talk with us throughout the afternoon. Did you come see our current Marin Gallery exhibit and visit our talented resident artists both displaying and demonstrating their art? The surprising dance talent on stage and our resident music mixologist provided us with background entertainment and jazz music, all while enjoying tasty goodies and gorgeous bouquets from the Marin Farmers Market and beyond.

With your support we will continue to present this yearly event along with our rotating Gallery exhibits. We do this for your enjoyment and to fulfill your appreciation of the arts. Our next Gallery exhibit in the Marin Valley Gallery will be hung in September, and we welcome all new and seasoned resident artists to join us. We appreciate the community support and want you to sign our guest book in the Fireside Room.

In May several of our talented artists also participated in Marin Open Studios with **Dorallen Davis** at Falkirk Mansion and **Jane Heaphy** at VenturePad, both in San Rafael.

Stay tuned for the next artist meeting in early July. It will be

announced in the July *Echo* and via email to the artists. All artists are welcome to join us by emailing me at [suzielahr@aol.com](mailto:suzielahr@aol.com).



**Art Happenings Near the Park**

**Marin MOCA**

Palm Drive – Hamilton  
*Make Your Mark*  
 June 16 – July 29

**Marin Community Foundation**

Hangar 5 – Hamilton Landing  
*Nature – A Guy Colwell Retrospective*  
 May 30 – September 20

**Water Aerobics  
 Classes in Progress!**

**Mon • Wed • Fri • 10 - 11am**

At our wonderful pool: the water is warm and the sun is shining. Come and enjoy! For more information call **Kamala Allen** 415-306-6865



**Ukulele Classes**



Join the crowd and learn to play the ukulele!

Create music and join the active social life of an ukulele.

New classes are starting soon. We will try to schedule around your availability. If interested, contact **Jeanne Skybrook** 415-302-3010.



**First & Third Thursdays • Clubhouse 7 pm**  
Please, no food or drink ■ Feel free to bring your chair

## Chocolat

**Thursday • June 7 • 7 pm**  
(2000) Drama/Romance 2 hrs

**Director** Lasse Hallström

**Starring** Juliette Binoche,  
Alfred Molina, Judi Dench,  
Leslie Caron, Johnny Depp

**Oscar** Best Picture; **Nominee**

Best actress in a supporting role;

Best writing, screenplay; Best music, original score.

**Golden Globes** Best performance by an actress in a comedy or musical;

Best supporting actress; Best original score



In 1959, a mysterious woman named Vianne (Juliette Binoche) moves with her young daughter into a small French village and in a few days opens up a confectionery shop across the street from the church, just after the beginning of Lent. While the townspeople are supposed to be abstaining from worldly pleasures, Vianne tempts them with unusual and delicious chocolate creations and just the right candy to break down each customer's resistance. With every passing day, more and more of Vianne's neighbors are succumbing to her sinfully delicious treats, but the Comte de Reynaud (Alfred Molina) is eager to see the newcomers run out of town. Unswayed, and with the help of another new arrival in town, a handsome gypsy named Roux (Johnny Depp), she plans a "Grand Festival of Chocolate," to be held on Easter Sunday.



## Babette's Feast

**Thursday • June 21 • 7 pm** (1987)

Drama — Denmark 1 hr 43 min

**Director** Gabriel Axel **Starring** Stéphane  
Audran, Bodil Kjer, Birgitte Federspiel

**Oscar** Best foreign film **Golden Globes**

**Nominee** Best foreign film

In a remote 19<sup>th</sup>-century Danish village, two sisters lead a rigid life centered around their father, the local minister, and their church. Both had opportunities to leave the village: one could have married a young army officer and the other, a French opera singer. Their father objected in each case. Many years later — their father is now deceased — they take in French refugee Babette Hersant, who agrees to work as their servant. After winning the lottery, Babette wants to repay the sisters for their kindness and offers to cook a French meal for them and their friends on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their father's birth. It proves to be an eye-opening experience for everyone. ■

## Panel on "Death with Dignity"

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Tuesday • June 12 • 5 – 6 pm**  
**in the Fireside Room**

- How to legally request the pills
- Deciding on whether to use the pills
- How to plan conversations with loved ones
- How to stage a "going-away" party

With experts:

— **Karen Kidd**, counsellor from  
Compassion and Choices

— **Joan Nelson**, our neighbor  
and trained chaplain who is  
going through the hospice and  
dying process

Come to the Fireside Room and hear how different people handle the difficulties, and ask questions on how you can make the most wise and graceful decisions for yourself and your loved ones!

This panel is part of our Tuesday meditation group on Courage and Grace, for facing difficult times in our lives. We do 20 minutes of silent meditation and ask advice of others with similar experiences. All are welcome.

We can be prepared to meet the hard times with courage and grace!

**Test your knowledge of these awesome little creatures (answers at the end)**

1. The sole purpose of the male bee is to: **a)** protect the hive **b)** keep the hive warm **c)** mate with a new queen **d)** promote honey production.
  2. Bees are necessary to provide how much of the food we eat?  
**a)** 10% **b)** 20% **c)** 30% **d)** 100%
  3. During the winter, bees:  
**a)** hibernate **b)** migrate **c)** keep the hive warm **d)** have a natural die-off.
  4. In the summer, a bee lives  
**a)** about a day **b)** about three months **c)** about a month **d)** about a week?
  5. There are how many species of bees?  
**a)** 5,000 **b)** 10,000 **c)** 20,000 **d)** 50,000
  6. A newly hatched queen bee's first act is to: **a)** swarm up into the sky so she can mate **b)** teach the female bees her special dance **c)** kill all the other queen larvae **d)** start laying eggs.
  7. The average life span of a queen bee is: **a)** 4) days **b)** 4 weeks **c)** 4 months **d)** 4 years.
  8. Bees have provided sustainability on Earth for: **a)** 10,000 years **b)** 100,000 years **c)** 50 million years **d)** 100 million years
  9. A bee's wings buzz in strokes per minute at a rate of: **a)** 500 strokes **b)** 1,000 strokes **c)** 11,000 strokes **d)** 15,000 strokes
- True or False:**
10. The females kick all of the males out of the hive in late fall because they know they can create more in the spring.
  11. If you find 5,000-year-old honey in a pyramid, it is safe to eat it.
  12. All bees die when they sting you.

# Bees!

by YVONNE DEVINE



**W**e depend on these amazing insects for much of the food on our plates!

There are many fascinating facts about bees; my favorite is that the females employ several interpretive dances to let their sisters know where that great patch of flowers is. The most complicated dance is called the “waggle.” She waggles in a figure eight, and her angle tells the direction of the flower in relation to the sun, straight — either straight up toward the sun or straight down from the sun. Waggle left, left of the sun; waggle right, same. Her shaking tells how far away the patch is. A half second of waggle says it’s about 1/3 mile away. Incredible.

Crops all over the world depend on bees for pollination, in backyard gardens as well as on enormous patches of agricultural lands. In the past, bees mostly suffered die-off and colony collapse during the winter months. But now, alarmingly, they are perishing during the warm summer months, a time when they usually thrive and flourish.

So, what isn’t new is that climate change, loss of natural habitats, and resulting susceptibility to disease have become major factors in bee colony collapse. What is new is the threat from the recent introduction of a class of insecticides called neonics (or neonicotinoids) by Bayer and Monsanto corporations. The use of neonics has skyrocketed and they are

now the most widely used poison on about 150 million acres of America’s crops yearly. A majority of the corn, soybean, and canola seeds are treated with this chemical before planting. If you’ve driven through the hundreds of miles of acreage planted with these crops in the Midwest, you know how extensive this is!

Our watchdog EPA has set the leisurely timetable for reviewing the use of this toxin for 2022. Can our bees and our subsequent food supply survive another four years? The European Union just banned its use as of April of this year.

## Some Things You Can Do

— **Plant** flowers that bees like in your garden: poppies, lupine, milkweed, for example.

— **Make** your own safe weed and insect killers: sprinkle white vinegar on weeds, spray a mix of biodegradable dish soap and water on plants to get rid of slugs and aphids.

— **Introduce** ladybugs, mantises, and spiders into your garden.

— **Notify\*** your congressperson and request intervention and control of corporate poisoning as well as a more timely review of the use of neonics. ■

*Answers: 1. C, 2. C, 3. C, 4. C, 5. C, 6. C, 7. D, 8. D, 9. C, 10. True, 11. True, 12. False (all die except the queen — she doesn’t have a barbed stinger).*

*\*Editor’s note: Faxes are said to get the most attention these days since so few people send them anymore, e.g., thousands of emails vs. hundreds of letters vs. a handful of faxes.*

# Do You Use the FREE Cellular Voice and Text Plan You Already Have?

by **PETER DYKE**

In the April *Echo* I outlined ways to “cut the cord” and reduce your cable bill dramatically. Today I’m encouraging you to consider taking this a step further and review your cellphone usage and bill, potentially saving \$40–\$60/month or more.

Let’s look at how we’ve had our cellphone plans marketed to us over the years:

First it was incoming calls that were free — of course that didn’t last. Then text messages — originally priced individually — were slowly subsumed into bundle plans and finally became as free as they are to the provider (they were purely a cash cow in early days).

Then as we almost stopped using our phones to actually make voice calls, opting instead for text, email, browsing, etc.; cellular data usage became the one service that can be leveraged in billing. So whenever you use your phone while out and about, it’s likely using some data to check your email, to access maps, or to use Yelp to find a restaurant nearby or check that store you’re going to. All use cellular data, which is currently the most expensive part of a cellphone plan.

## How Much Data?

But what if, like me, you rarely talk on the phone on the road — but when you do, you want it to work well — and actually spend most of your time at home or elsewhere where your phone is able to connect to Wi-Fi for all its data needs? I do use data on the road — for maps, GPS, email, Twitter, sometimes some music — but I don’t, for example, stream Netflix to my phone (which some carriers would like you to do because then they could charge you for more data) — and my total monthly

cellular data usage is less than half a GB (pronounced gig or gigabyte).

## In the Park

Cellular reception in our Park is spotty, whichever carrier you use, and aluminum sidings on mobile homes act as a strong barrier to any signal. But most of us have Wi-Fi indoors, usually from Comcast (Xfinity). So wouldn’t it be great if we could just reverse our thinking and use our phones on Wi-Fi and have the cellular connection just as backup when we’re on the road? Better still, even if we’re walking about the Park or elsewhere, and we somehow could use other Xfinity Wi-Fi hotspots?

Yes, there is a way to do just that. In fact, several ways, with different providers and plans ranging from \$15 to \$30. But since you most likely already have your Internet access from Comcast (Xfinity), I want to tell you about just one: Xfinity Mobile ([xfinitymobile.com](http://xfinitymobile.com)). This is Comcast’s cellular service that is already included with your Internet access! Yes, you already get this essentially for free — all you would pay for is cellular data when you don’t have a Wi-Fi connection, and some taxes.

## The Catch

Of course there’s a catch. You need to be paying for Xfinity Internet access. You need to either buy the phone from them — they offer the latest iPhones and Samsung Android phones just like any carrier does; currently (until 6/24/18) there’s \$200 cash back even on the iPhone X — or bring your own unlocked iPhone 6 or greater (you cannot bring your own Android phone yet, maybe soon). Note I say unlocked: this means you have fully paid off the phone to your current provider and as

a result and by law they have unlocked the phone, i.e., released it for use on any provider.

If your current phone is on the compatibility list (<https://www.xfinity.com/mobile/byod>) and is unlocked (check with your current carrier — while you’re at it make sure you know your existing account number and PIN), you can trot down to the Xfinity store and sign up for the Xfinity Mobile “By the Gig” plan that will charge you \$12 per GB for cellular data — which is probably more than you use in a month anyway — and get the unlimited voice (US calls) and texts that are already on your Internet access account to use anywhere. (The cellular carrier is really Verizon, plus every Xfinity router is a free hotspot for you.) They will take a credit card number for automatic payment, and the initial payment is \$1.22 (not a typo). You can port (i.e., keep) your existing phone number (DO NOT cancel your existing service first, as this could cause you to lose your number). You set your phone to enable Wi-Fi calling (which you should already be doing anyway, but not all carriers support it). You do NOT need a network extender (in fact, it might be incompatible — just unplug it if you have one).

## The Deal

So to recap: With the right phone and Wi-Fi, and conservative usage while on the road, you could be paying just \$12/month (plus taxes) for better cellphone service than you have currently. You can have up to five such plans per Xfinity Internet access account.

Yes, it’s a deal. And it works. ■



# Pauline: Periled but Undaunted

by JOAN NELSON

My life is enriched a hundredfold every time I interview a Park resident for an *Echo* feature.

If you have a knack for writing (even if you don't), you might want to interview someone just to find out who they really are behind the part of them they allow you to see. Because ...

*What lies behind us*

*And what lies before us*

*Are tiny matters*

*Compared to what lies within us.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

**T**he name “Pauline” is still associated, by those of us old enough to remember, with the old serial film melodrama, *The Perils of Pauline*. The association is apt, for Marin Valley’s own undaunted **Pauline Hawkins** was bombed out of London, evacuated to Birmingham in the Midlands, and when she heard the German bombers coming, held her breath while speculating how close the next one was going to land.

Our Periled Pauline married at 19 and emigrated to Canada with a one-year-old child. Widowed five weeks later, she remained a widow for nine years. She remarried and became, at the age of 33, not a “tourist” but a “traveler,” overland via a Dormobile campervan, along with tent. The perilous journey led from France and Europe through the deserts of Iran, Afghanistan, and over the Khyber Pass. All this along with her German shepherd, “London,” who was in quarantine for six months in England before taking off (airfare paid in full) on this adventure.



Our Perilous Pauline was robbed at gunpoint by bandits in Torbat-e Jam with a rifle butt jammed into her back and her head covered with a stinking wool jacket from one of the locals. Why? Because she was a woman along with forty men and it was Ramadan. Arrested and held in jail in Kabul, she was robbed of jewelry and money.

Her travels took her through Greece, Turkey, Iran, India, and Afghanistan, by freighter to Mombasa, and from East Africa to Kenya, where she stayed with the Maasai. The tribal people honored her as a guest by tapping blood from a cow’s jugular vein, mixing it with milk, and pouring it into a gourd. After it was passed around to the elders, it was up to Pauline to overcome her instinct to not even smell it and to put the gourd to her own lips, pretending to drink it. Lots of smiles.



Onward to Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and Cape Town, South Africa. From there she took a freighter called the *Dolly Turman* back to the US. Dormobile, dog... all safe and sound. What a ride!

Just for fun, ask her how she liked having a baboon in the vehicle or how it felt to be running for your life in desert sand going three steps forward/two back.

Ask about driving a VW van across her eventual USA homeland and how she ended up in Marin, where you might have run into her over the years when she lived in a motel in the San Rafael Canal area and in San Anselmo, Kentfield, Mill Valley, Sausalito, and Bel Marin Keys.

Like many of us Marin Valley women, Pauline...raised to be a housewife...excels at cooking and homemaking. Having learned how it feels to be poor, and using food banks, she had to reinvent herself with marketable skills: programming telephones and installing systems in offices.

Finally, she earned the privilege of living here, and throughout the year you'll find her collecting, organizing, and distributing items for the October Black Cat event. Not unexpectedly, Pauline has dedicated herself to our community, including nine years on the HOL board and 15 years on the Park Improvement Committee. She enjoys photography and nurturing the life of plants by seeding, grafting, fertilizing, pruning, and above all...talking to them. Ask her to show you her before and after photos of the stark area in front of the clubhouse transformed by her dedicated labors and skilled gardening. You've seen her climbing, scrambling, hauling, digging, planting, and weeding. Check out the clubhouse plantings — the flowers, shrubs, and trees that welcome us each time we approach the clubhouse. Then ask her to invite you through her iron gate labeled "Pauline's Garden" (160 Marin Valley Drive, across from the Quail Crossing sign). Here you will find a magical winding garden path leading to compost bins, plums, grapes, apples, lilacs, bluebells, shrubs, seedlings, cuttings, and other specimens of vegetable, herbs, and ornamental plants.

If you're lucky she might invite you into her museum of a home packed with treasures (think nomadic Bedouin mask) from all over the world. If you're luckier still, she might make you a cappuccino by hand the Italian way, with raw organic sugar. You might even catch a hummer fluttering around her, sparrows in the bedroom, towhees in the kitchen, or the turkey found sleeping in her sunroom.

Along the way, you will surely hear about her two children, four grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. Email her at [dundeesmom@aol.com](mailto:dundeesmom@aol.com). Dundee was her treasured guide dog reject for whom she was on a waiting list for eight years. He lived to the good age of 14. ■

# Cormorant

Article and Photography by **DAVID GRAY**

**T**he cormorant is an aquatic bird. It frequently allows one to just barely get it in focus, and then blip, it dives underwater for about a minute or two as it hunts for fish, coming back up for air at yet another random spot. These black and very slightly iridescent brown-winged birds are fairly large, having a wingspan of about four feet and weighing around four pounds. They have a brisk and constant wingbeat while in flight, flying with their necks extended. The first-year juvenile double-crested cormorant has light plumage, as can be seen in the in-flight photograph, taken at Oso Flaco Lake near Guadalupe, California.

There are a few local subspecies, including the double-crested cormorant and the Brandt's cormorant. The double-crested is the more common and widely dispersed bird, whose range extends across the United States and into western Canada and Northern Mexico. It lives year-round on the west and southeastern coasts and migrates across the middle U.S. They are at home in ponds, lakes, rivers, and oceans. The population of the double-crested cormorants is particularly evident at the mouth of the Columbia River, where we have observed wave after wave of groups of hundreds of birds every couple of minutes

heading home at dusk to roost on East Sand Island, home to nearly 13,000 breeding pairs. There are so many cormorants at East Sand Island that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is actively culling nests to reduce their population.

The Brandt's cormorant's habitat is limited to the west coast of North America, where it is found in oceans and bays. They nest on cliffs and on old abandoned piers, such as the Brandt's cormorant family I photographed on Elkhorn Slough in Monterey County in June 2010. The chick pretty much constantly pesters the adults to be fed, and when





the adult is ready, it opens its mouth and the chick dives down its throat. In the photo, it's the male parent feeding the chick. The Brandt's cormorant male's throat (technically, its gular pouch) is blue, but not so for the female.

The mating plumage of the cormorant is seen in the spring, and it is subtle yet spectacular: their eyes turn a bright blue, and the male double-crested cormorant gets some



matching eyeshadow surrounded by a ring of brilliant blue feather dots, as seen in the top photo above from Point Reyes National Seashore taken March 22, 2018.

Locally, one often sees double-crested cormorants at the Las Gallinas ponds or Phoenix Lake, as well as at Point Reyes.

Amazing birds! ■

# JUNE 2018

SUNDAY 3	MONDAY 4	TUESDAY 5	WEDNESDAY 6	THURSDAY 7	FRIDAY 1	SATURDAY 2
<b>6:30-9:30 AM</b> Taiji McLam/ Clubhouse Deck <b>1-4 PM</b> Mahjong Fireside Room	<b>6-8+ AM</b> Trash Pickup Fireside Room <b>9:30 AM</b> Low-Impact Exercise Fireside Room <b>10-11 AM</b> Water Aerobics Pool <b>6 PM</b> MVEST Meeting Fireside Room <b>7:20 PM</b> Poor Man's Poker Card Room	<b>6:30-9:30 AM</b> Taiji McLam/ Clubhouse Deck <b>10 AM-11:30 AM</b> Chair Yoga John Marino/ Fireside Room <b>5-5:30 PM</b> Meditation on Courage and Grace Fireside Room <b>CALIFORNIA ELECTION</b> 7 AM-8 PM Ballroom	<b>10-11 AM</b> Water Aerobics Pool <b>11 AM-1 PM</b> Whistlestop call Roberta 415-883-0843 <b>11:15 AM-2 PM</b> Craft and Chat Ballroom <b>3-4 PM</b> Watercolor Class Ballroom <b>6 PM</b> PAC MEETING	<b>6:30-9:30 AM</b> Taiji McLam/ Clubhouse Deck <b>9:15 AM</b> QiGong Dove <b>6-6:40 PM</b> Silent Meditation Bamboo Room <b>7 PM</b> Film Night <b>CHOCOLAT</b> <b>7:20 PM</b> Poor Man's Poker	<b>10-11 AM</b> Water Aerobics Pool <b>4 PM</b> Canasta <b>5-7 PM</b> Pub Night Ballroom <b>7 PM</b> Board Game Night Fireside Room	<b>11 AM</b> ANNUAL PAC MEETING <b>7-9 PM</b> COMMUNITY DANCE
<b>6:30 AM</b> Taiji Mahjong	<b>6-8+ AM</b> Trash Pickup <b>9:30 AM</b> Low-Impact Exercise <b>10 AM</b> Water Aerobics <b>6 PM</b> MVEST Meeting <b>7:20 PM</b> Poor Man's Poker	<b>6:30 AM</b> Taiji <b>10 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>5-6 PM</b> Meditation on Courage and Grace with panel— <b>Death with Dignity</b>	<b>10 AM</b> Water Aerobics <b>11 AM</b> Whistlestop <b>11:15 AM</b> Craft and Chat <b>3 PM</b> Watercolor Class <b>5 PM</b> <b>Resurrection Deadline</b> <b>6 PM</b> <b>MAR VAL MEETING</b>	<b>6:30 AM</b> Taiji <b>9:15 AM</b> QiGong <b>6:30 AM</b> Taiji <b>9:15 AM</b> QiGong <b>6 PM</b> Silent Meditation <b>7 PM</b> Film Night <b>BABETTE'S FEAST</b> <b>7:20 PM</b> Poor Man's Poker	<b>10 AM</b> Water Aerobics <b>4 PM</b> Canasta <b>5 PM</b> Pub Night	<b>11 AM</b> Bar Opens <b>12 PM</b> Brunch <b>LIVE JAZZ</b>
<b>6:30 AM</b> Taiji Mahjong	<b>6-8+ AM</b> Trash Pickup <b>9:30 AM</b> Low-Impact Exercise <b>10 AM</b> Water Aerobics <b>6 PM</b> MVEST Meeting <b>7:20 PM</b> Poor Man's Poker	<b>6:30 AM</b> Taiji <b>10 AM</b> Chair Yoga <b>5 PM</b> Meditation on Courage and Grace	<b>10 AM</b> Water Aerobics <b>11 AM</b> Whistlestop <b>11:15 AM</b> Craft and Chat <b>3 PM</b> Watercolor Class <b>5 PM</b> <b>Resurrection Deadline</b> <b>6 PM</b> <b>MAR VAL MEETING</b>	<b>6:30 AM</b> Taiji <b>9:15 AM</b> QiGong <b>6 PM</b> Silent Meditation <b>7 PM</b> Film Night <b>BABETTE'S FEAST</b> <b>7:20 PM</b> Poor Man's Poker	<b>10 AM</b> Water Aerobics <b>4 PM</b> Canasta <b>5 PM</b> Pub Night	<b>11 AM</b> Bar Opens <b>12 PM</b> Brunch <b>LIVE JAZZ</b>
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