

T H E
ECHO

NOVEMBER 2018

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From the Editor

Farewell and Welcome

It is with sadness and regret that we must say goodbye to a longstanding column, which has enhanced our enjoyment of living in these inspiring environs and which has appeared in the *Echo* since the beginning of this design.

It is my vision to eventually post the entire series on our new website, *MarinValley.net*, so we can still take advantage of all its secrets of exploration and adventure, especially for new residents who may not have an insight to all the revealed sites. I won't say any more, in case you haven't guessed, and will let you read the official farewell. But, we hope that an occasional article might still arrive over the (email) transom of any new discovery to share.

Fortunately, we also have the opportunity to welcome with great enthusiasm a new columnist, Meg Jordan, whose recently published article on new discoveries in overcoming dementia and Alzheimer's is reprinted in this issue. She will continue writing a bimonthly column in the *Echo* about integrative health, well-being, and thriving as we age. We look forward to learning more from Professor Jordan, author, speaker, international health journalist, Registered Nurse, clinical medical anthropologist, and neighbor.



VOTE

November 6

One of our own residents is on the ballot — **Bill Davis** — who is running for the Novato Fire District Board of Directors.

After being nominated to this Board of Directors in 2015, he is currently serving as its President since being voted to this position last year.

HOL COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS



Skimming, Smishing, Spoofing, and Spear-Phishing — Entering the New World of Scams Tuesday • November 13 4 pm • Ballroom

HOL presents **Kristina Warcholski**, who will speak on the rising incidence of sham computer tech support notifications and other online scams where imposters request money transfers, as well as bogus online dating invitations, false sweepstakes and lottery winnings, fake investment schemes, and rental, affinity, and other frauds.

Kristina Warcholski is the Consumer and Community Mediation Coordinator for the Marin County District Attorney's Office. She heads a group of mediators who help those with consumer complaints resolve their disputes through mediation, as well as performs intake for consumer complaints within the county. Kristina has been a licensed attorney for over 30 years and was formerly a supervising deputy district attorney in Santa Clara County. ■

THE ECHO NOVEMBER 2018

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DEADLINE

Articles are due the 8th of the month or sooner for the following month's issue.

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

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

Management Update

Letter to Residents

Welcome to Fall

Management is busy directing projects prior to winter weather, which include the continued fire-prone plant removal project, Park-wide tree maintenance, and preventive pruning care. You will see workers cleaning the V-ditch in the field behind Club View Drive for drainage as well as other preparations for wet weather.

Park Improvement: New pool rules signs have been installed, and the spa has been repaired.

Retaining walls: 14 retaining walls are complete, which concludes this year's work.

Drainage: Several French drains, and tracks to evacuate standing water, are in progress or complete.

Asphalt Maintenance: 10 driveways have had asphalt repair or overlay. Those with concrete driveways that need repair are not forgotten but are on our list for a future date.

Fire-Prone Plant Removal: Defensible space has increased from 50 ft. to areas up to 100 ft. in most places.

Pool will close for the winter with the cold weather, but the spa will remain heated.

Home Colors: Please verify with Management prior to choosing your home's new exterior color.

Pump House Lift Stations: A study is being performed to determine the life expectancy of lift stations and emergency generators. We will update you with the results.

We continually find cigarette butts on the street, which is very concerning, especially after the fires. Please, if you smoke, do not throw a burning cig out the window, and pass this information along to anyone working for you in the Park. There is too much dry fuel, and it is very disrespectful to your neighbors.



Matt Greenberg
GENERAL MANAGER
gm.mvmcc@gmail.com

415-883-5911 ■ 415-883-1971 Fax

Greetings from the PAC Board,

Our General Manager, Matt Greenberg, is doing an admirable job of efficiently conducting Park business within our designated budget, as our finances are in very good shape. The debt service on the loan is 2.79 as of May 31, 2018, the end of the 2017/18 budget, well above the required 2.00. Our cash, plus short-, medium-, and long-term reserve, is in excess of \$4.9 million.

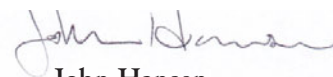
MVEST continues to focus on safety issues around our community. Our world is changing ever more rapidly with each passing year, as are the associated risks and hazards. Wildfires, for example, are far more devastating now than they were just a few years ago. MVEST remains vigilant because of these changes, and continues to adjust our preparedness, safety, and security measures accordingly.

Transformation of the clubhouse to an ADA-compliant facility has progressed during the last month, under Management and Novato Public Works Department oversight. The PAC Projects Committee will hold meetings later this year to gather input from all interested residents on the development of the acreage below the clubhouse and above Club View Drive. Some of the ideas put forth to date are for a community garden, a picnic/sitting area, an emergency water well, an assisted living center, or a dog park. Watch for notices on when and where you can give your input. These meetings will be scheduled when the PAC President returns. In the meantime, you can send your input to John Hansen. Your input is necessary before any plans are formulated. This will be a community-planned project.

The PAC Board continues to work with Novato City Management to modify the existing Management and Delegation Agreements we have for management and operation of MVMCC.

The next PAC meeting will be Wednesday, November 7, at 6 pm. The agenda will be posted in the clubhouse three days before the meeting.

In the absence of President Jay Shelfer, who is out of town,



John Hansen
PAC VICE PRESIDENT

Message from Mar Val

Dear Friends,

Talk about exciting! November brings with it one of the most popular of Mar Val's holiday events, namely the Thanksgiving dinner on Saturday, November 17.

As you may be aware, Mar Val relies on volunteer residents to roast the turkeys served at the dinner. In return, the turkey roasters are compensated for the cost of the dinner. We are looking for 14 people to volunteer their services; if you are interested, details are as follows:

1) The turkey, roasting pan, onion, and celery will be delivered to your home along with roasting instructions.

2) The cooked turkey will be picked up from your home and delivered to the clubhouse on the afternoon of Saturday, November 17.

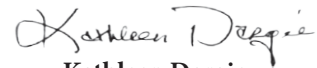
3) If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sandee Duncan 415-883-3034 no later than Monday, November 5.

On a related subject, we also need 4 to 5 people to carve turkeys at the clubhouse.

Carvers are compensated with a free drink ticket. Again, please contact Sandee if you can help with carving.

Thanksgiving is traditionally our best-attended event, so we suggest you submit your reservation in advance of the posted cutoff date.

With warmest regards,



Kathleen Dargie
MAR VAL PRESIDENT
kfdargie@aol.com



MAR VAL PRESENTS

Thanksgiving Dinner

NOVEMBER 17 ■ 5 PM COCKTAILS ■ 6 PM DINNER

M E N U

TURKEY, DRESSING
SWEET POTATOES
GREEN BEANS WITH ALMONDS
MASHED POTATOES WITH GRAVY
CRANBERRY SAUCE
ROLLS
PUMPKIN PIE

NOTE: There is NO separate vegetarian entrée for this dinner. Limit of two persons per home.

Reservation deadline is November 14 at 5 pm or when 140 reservations have been received.

Even if you have generously volunteered to cook or carve a turkey, sell tickets, or volunteer in any capacity, YOU STILL NEED TO MAKE A RESERVATION BEFORE THE DEADLINE.

Reservation box will be on the counter at 9 am on Thursday, November 1, 2018.

\$15 per person. Checks only — make payable to Mar Val.

Questions: Call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403.

Thanksgiving Dinner Reservation Form

RESIDENT _____ RESIDENT/GUEST _____

\$15 per person – Checks payable to Mar Val for \$ _____ NO CASH



Grab and Go or Stay and Play

by Bill Davis

Who will die in the next big earthquake or fire? Who died in the Santa Rosa conflagration? Why did they die? What were the lessons learned by the Office of Emergency Services, Santa Rosa Police, and the Santa Rosa Fire Department? How can similar disasters be better managed with early alerts? How can we in this wildland/urban interface and lovely, sequestered, bucolic environment know when to stay in our homes and when to run for our lives to a safe area? I think the answer is simple: **The earlier the alert, the better the survival rate.**

I, along with others, have argued for a siren here in the Park, a loud siren that could be heard throughout the community. I grew up with a siren, drilled to sirens, highly respected sirens, and knew that every Wednesday at noon the siren would be tested. I spent my first 36 years in St. Paul, Minnesota, where when you heard the siren at any time other than Wednesday at noon, you were to take cover in any basement you could find because there was a tornado coming. The tornadoes are absolutely terrible. They skip, rip, or plow everything in their way, ripping out trees, houses, cars, and even whole concrete bandshells. I have seen what they can do and have done. For me, the tornado in *The Wizard of Oz* was more fact than fiction. So when I hear a siren, I respond by taking cover, listening to the radio, and reaching for a prayer book.

Today in California, in Marin County, in Novato, in the remote Marin Valley Mobile Country Club, we are in sad need of a siren or a similarly effective alarm system. The experts argue against a siren because they say it causes too much confusion and mayhem in disasters that occur in high-density environments. Well, then let us implement something that works as well as a siren, and let us sort out the mayhem and get out alive.



MVEST is working on an alarm system that can be activated in the whole Park without causing confusion and mayhem. We are currently testing a radio alarm system that will function 24 hours a day all year long with built-in, fail-safe features and redundancy. *Who, where, when, and why* protocols are also being developed. It has to be better than a siren (no mayhem). The “new normal” in California, with the fire season lasting longer and longer — or really, all year long — means that the threat of a fire devastating this Park is increasing.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please share them. Let's keep the barbecues confined to our backyards.

HOL COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

HOL Offers Residents Free Safety Vests

A Plea from the Resident Who Suggested the Reflective Vest Program



Thank God that at 80 years young the State of California still considers me a good driver. Sixty-six years without an accident, traffic ticket, or insurance claim. And I passed the vision test. Hooray!!! Do not take comfort from this or lull yourself into a sense of false security. There are a lot of things I can't do as well as I did at 20, 40, or 60. Even 70. My eyesight is not as good. My reaction time is slower. Even my thought processes are not as clear. Etc., etc., etc. This is why I and every other driver in the Park need your help.

As the days get shorter and nights longer, we still have to get out on our sidewalk-less streets to walk our dogs, visit our neighbors, get the exercise that keeps us flexible, and tend our postage-stamp-size front gardens. Don't know about you, but when I'm driving I have trouble seeing our residents at dusk and later. Walking our streets without reflective clothing/vests is dangerous when vehicles travel at *any* speed, not to mention the contractors and delivery trucks that whisk around our Park as fast as they can. Please get that vest and keep my driving record intact.*

* This message has been approved (and written) by octogenarian Mark Crocker (see next page).

Home Owners League Message



GREAT NEWS! Ray Schneider has volunteered to coordinate “Just One Hour,” a service offered in our Park in which people who volunteer to help are matched with those with needs. Needs can be anything from visiting, shopping, or driving, to whatever the person asks for. Ray will incorporate our “Near Neighbor Buddy Program” with a digital database to expand and revitalize what we currently have going. He will work with Matt and others for implementation. You may receive a phone call or email message asking you to fill out the buddy form and to share “Knock, Knock ... Ring, Ring, Are You OK?” with your neighbors. Ray asks that you contact him to volunteer and for questions: 415-883-4182 or ray@delannaray.com.

UPCOMING HOL Events

Skimming, Smishing, Spoofing, and Spear-Phishing – Entering the New World of Scams”

Tues • Nov 13 • 4 pm • Ballroom

This talk covers computer tech supports, and other online scams, imposters, money transfers, online dating, lotteries and sweepstakes, investment schemes, and rental, affinity, and other current scams. It is presented by **Kristina Warcholski**, the Consumer and Community Mediation Coordinator for the Marin County District Attorney’s Office. She has been a licensed attorney for over 30 years. We are looking forward to this presentation and Q&A.

HOL Holiday Fair!!!

Sun • Dec 9 • Noon–5 pm • Ballroom

This is an expansion of last year’s fall Craft Fair. HOL wants you to come celebrate the holiday season with us. There will be free food, including sandwiches, cookies, and drinks. We are planning a bake sale where you can purchase your holiday goodies just in time for parties. There will be tables of crafts and holiday gifts. Do you have crafts, collectibles, cards, jewelry, jellies, jams, candles, soaps, lotions, or items suitable for holiday presents that you would like to sell? Maybe you would like to sell your own baked goods? You can set up on the big Bake Sale Table. Maybe you can earn a little spending money! Contact Tara Plocher or Jeannine Freedom to reserve a free display table. Only 10% of vendor sales will go back to HOL. One resident suggested an ornament exchange, in which you bring one and take one off the Ornament Table. Bring us any of your good ideas.

Reflective Safety Vests

HOL wants to help drivers and walkers avoid accidents that could turn our lives upside down. We are offering FREE bright, lightweight mesh safety vests with reflective stripes that you could wear over a shirt/blouse, sweater/hoodie, or parka/raincoat. The vests are large one-size-fits-all. They don’t make a fashion statement but could save us from a lot of time in rehab and the courts. The vests can be found in the

library. Just take one and sign the sign-out sheet. For more information, call Janie Crocker 281-414-3984 or Mark Crocker 281-757-4456.

ISSUES HOL Is Working On

The **piano** has been tuned.

We will be replacing the cantilevered **spa umbrella**; that is in the works.

A new **Nu-Step** for the gym is now out of our price range. When it goes on sale again, Management and HOL will pursue getting it.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Several suggestions have been received for future events. Right now, all the HOL Board are at their volunteer limit! Can you help? If you sign up to coordinate an event, you will receive a nice gift certificate. Any of us on the board can tell you how and will help as much as possible.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE EVENTS

- **Safe-Driving Classes**
- Information on **trusts, advanced directives, life-alert discounts**
- Removing some of the cubbyholes and making room for another **bulletin board**

Join us at the next HOL meeting on **Wed • Nov 28 • 6 pm • Fireside**
NOTE DATE CHANGE.

Janie Klimes Crocker

Janie Klimes Crocker
HOL PRESIDENT
jklimes@subell.net
281-414-3984 cell

COMMUNITY



DANCING

First Saturday of the Month • Saturday • November 3 • 7–9 pm

Steve Plocher will be DJ with more Michael Franti, Kotaja, Spencer Davis Group, Roysopp, Tina Turner, ShaNaNa, + + +.



HOL COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

FILM
NIGHT

1st and 3rd Thursdays • Clubhouse • 7 pm • Please, no food or drink • Feel free to bring a chair



Ladykillers *Comedy/Crime (1955) 1 hr 31 min*

Thursday • Nov 1 • 7 pm

Director Alexander Mackendrick **Writer** William Rose

Starring Alec Guinness, Herbert Lom, Peter Sellers

Oscar nomination 1957 Best screenplay

Music professor Alec Guinness rents a London flat from a sweet old lady saying that, from time to time, several other musicians will visit in order to rehearse. In truth, Guinness can't play a note, nor can his visitors; he's a criminal mastermind, holding court over a gang of thieves who use the flat to plan a daring £60,000 robbery.



The Blues Brothers *Comedy/Crime/Musical*

Thursday • Nov 15 • 7 pm (1980) 1 hr 13 min

Director John Landi

Writers Dan Aykroyd, John Landis

Starring John Belushi, Dan Aykroyd, James Brown, Cab Calloway, Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, Carrie Fisher

Jake Blues, just out from prison, puts together his old band to save the Catholic home where he and brother Elwood were raised.

ART IN THE PARK



by SUZIE LAHR

Appreciating the world of arts is all-encompassing with the help of our five senses. With the eyes we can see beauty all around us. We enjoy our vision whether walking through museums or nature, reading, or writing a thoughtful note to another person. The ears bring us the delight of music, whether it be a symphony, rock and roll, or the melody of sweet young voices. The nose captures those delicious scents of seasons, flowers, and herbs and spices. The mouth brings the joy of tasting all the delectable foods we eat each day,

be it a simple piece of fruit, a bowl of soup, or an abundant gourmet meal. And, yes, touch: the feel of a cashmere sweater or the warm hug from another person or the radiating heat of the sun.

In appreciating our lives every day and treasuring each moment, I suggest you take a moment each day to in be touch with each of the senses you have access to and to realize how fortunate we are to take in the gifts of beauty each of them brings us. So often we just let them pass by without a second thought.

You are creating a piece of art with every sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. It is all art for the soul, both ours and of those around us. This community is filled with artists, especially when we all recognize and appreciate the gifts that each of us living here has to give to one another.

VISUAL ART EVENTS



AROUND TOWN

de Young Museum

Golden Gate Park – SF
Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey
Nov. 17 – April 7, 2019

Legion of Honor

Lincoln Park – SF
East Meets West – Jewels of the Maharajas
Nov. 3 – Feb. 24, 2019

Marin MOCA

Palm Drive – Hamilton
“Winter National Juried Exhibition”
November 11 – December 23

Marin Civic Center

10 Avenue of the Flags
San Rafael, Redwood Foyer
Marks in Time – Tattoo Artists of Marin County Through Nov. 26

Bartolini Gallery

One Place Deeply —Photographs by Marty Knapp Oct. 29 – Nov. 20
Inspired Images: Marin Photography Club Oct. 29 – Dec. 20

Opiates Vs. CBD Medical Marijuana

by KATHRYN McMUDIE

I was on opiates (Vicodin, Norco, MS Contin, Fentanyl Patch, and Dilaudid) for twelve years for fibromyalgia pain. I found the pain was not getting better and I was desiring more opiates!!

I attended Kaiser's Pain Clinic in San Rafael, CA. I was informed by the RN Case Manager at the Pain Clinic that opiates do not help with the pain of fibromyalgia. I discovered that with opiates, I got used to "x" mg dose, only to find I needed a higher dose in six months or so due to the addiction/tolerance properties of Fentanyl.

With the support of my internist and the Pain Clinic at Kaiser, I decided to taper slowly off the Fentanyl Patch under the supervision of my physician and RN team. I was off the patch by October of 2016. I was prescribed Dilaudid to help with withdrawing off the Fentanyl Patch, and then I then tapered from the Dilaudid to taking no opiates as of February of 2018. It was two years of patience and withdrawal symptoms.

I found using CBD medical marijuana for pain control much better than the Western pain medication.

FYI: Marijuana consists of both cannabidiol (CBD), which does not cause a psychoactive effect, and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which is well known for altering one's mental state.

I note this because I was afraid that as a clean and sober person of 37 years (38 years on October 26, 2018), that it would affect my sobriety in some way.

But I have found that this is not the case, for I do not get high with CBD medical marijuana.

If you are a clean and sober person reading this article, please talk with your sponsor before using CBD medical marijuana if you have never used it before.

My pain has decreased using CBD medical marijuana and I have no side effects, as I had with opiates. For me, the main advantage of CBD marijuana is that my mental state is not altered.

(As a retired RN, I must caution all of you reading this: Please do not taper off any medication without your physician's approval and instructions.)

I have been told by people close to me, "Nice to have you back again, Kathryn!" And it is great being back smelling the flowers, enjoying the afternoons gardening, reading, walking, instead of being so drugged out on opiates. I love my life now.

Don't get me wrong, some days are more painful than others, but

I have learned what my physical and mental limitations are and how to adjust my activities accordingly during a fibromyalgia flare.

I have learned the proper dosing of CBD medical marijuana through the help of a Cannabis Consulting Agency (United Patients Group) here in Marin County. This agency helped me with choosing the appropriate CBD product.

Nine months later, I find myself waking up earlier, involving myself in more activities, and enjoying my retirement more.

Going off opiates and using CBD medical marijuana has changed my life. I am so grateful to Kaiser, the Kaiser Pain Clinic, and the United Patients Group in Marin County.

I am also grateful to myself for taking the risk to live again! ■



Breakthrough News for Halting and Reversing Mental Decline

New Research Offers 6 Ways to Protect Yourself from Dementia and Alzheimer's

by MEG JORDAN

Without a doubt, one of the most distressing aspects of aging is the fear of losing one's mental capacities.

More people are worried about memory loss, cognitive decline, and dementia than the loss of physical mobility. Alzheimer's disease is now the sixth leading cause of death for older adults in the U.S., affecting more than 5.4 million Americans.

Testing

Your risk increases with the presence of certain alleles of the ApoE gene; thus DNA testing is recommended for families when elderly parents exhibit symptoms such as personality changes, lack of focus, and impaired judgment.

Unhealthy Lifestyles

We used to think of dementia and Alzheimer's as an "old person's disease," but unhealthy lifestyles are viewed as chief contributors to an expansion of neurological disorders that has all the markings of a public health catastrophe in the near future. But the good news is that new research in the last five years is seeing promising results in **reversing** the signs of dementia and memory loss and putting the brakes on mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and early-stage Alzheimer's disease, once thought irreversible.

Consistent Factors

As a medical anthropology doctor and an RN specializing in behavioral health, I search the world for remedies, botanicals, and even cultural rituals that keep us vital and engaged

throughout our life span. While I've found a wide variance in the specific lifestyles among the pockets of flourishing elders worldwide, there is always a consistent pattern of eating a largely plant-based diet, engaging in rigorous physical activity, and enjoying close social networks. These lifestyle factors are echoed in the innovative clinical findings of several neuropsychology researchers, including Dale Bredesen, MD, from the Buck Institute for Research on Aging and the Department of Neurology at UCLA, as they map out protocols to halt and reverse serious neurological disorders that were once thought intractable. As a faculty member of the Institute of Functional Medicine Coaching Academy, I spent time learning the various new protocols and proceeded to examine them in five case reports that I just presented along with a clinical nutritionist at Harvard's Institute of Coaching in September.

If you're suspecting some memory loss of a loved one or yourself, then get the battery of neurological and genetic tests (explore the ApoE gene allele), and begin the protocol right away. If you're interested in preventive health measures, start with a few aspects of the six points listed here and make them a regular part of your life.

For more information, I recommend reading *The End of Alzheimer's: The First Program to Prevent and Reverse Cognitive Decline* by Dale Bredesen, MD, and *Brain Maker: The Power of Gut Microbes to Heal and Protect Your Brain for Life*, by David Perlmutter, MD. ■

A Lifestyle Plan for Optimal Cognitive Health Includes:

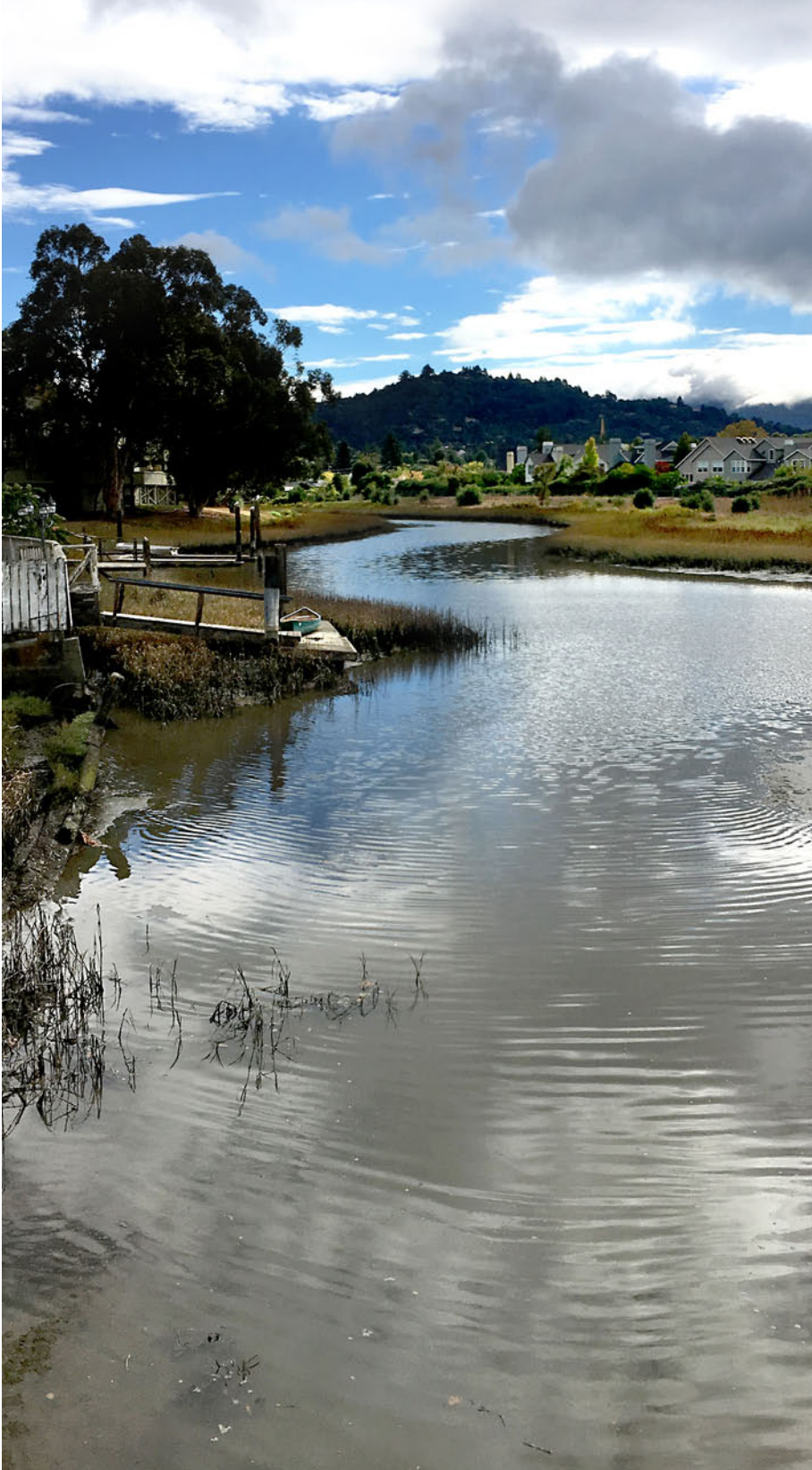
- 1. HIIT exercise:** High-Intensity Interval Training, the best way to stimulate BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor) production. BDNF is a naturally occurring neurotrophin throughout the nervous system that plays a role in neuronal plasticity.
- 2. Nutrition:** Consider a modified ketogenic, low-carb, high in healthy fat diet with intermittent fasting.
- 3. Targeted supplements:** Helpful compounds include phosphatidylserine, bacopa, and lion's mane medicinal mushroom.
- 4. Sleep:** restorative, consistent, uninterrupted, and at least eight hours every night.
- 5. Social connections:** Enriching and positive social connections.
- 6. Brain stimulation** — a variety of methods.

Meg Jordan, PhD, RN, NBC-HWC, is Dept. Chair and Professor of Integrative Health Studies master's degree program at California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco.

This article is adapted and reprinted from CoveyClub.com, a virtual meeting place and IRL (in real life) club platform for lifelong learners.

Take a Hike

by MIKE HOLLAND



Santa Venetia Marshes

By definition, an island is a body of land surrounded by water. So that means you need water, and the more water you have, the more potential there is for lots of islands. San Francisco and Marin certainly have plenty of water. The Pacific Ocean, San Francisco Bay, San Pablo Bay, Tomales Bay, Petaluma River, Sacramento River, and Napa River are large expanses of H₂O. Why, then, are there so few islands in this region?

There are large islands everyone knows — Alameda in the Easy Bay, Alcatraz and Treasure in S.F. Bay, Angel off the coast of Tiburon, and the Farallones out in the Pacific. And there are some quasi-islands that are really just marshlands. This would include Skaggs and Tubbs Islands on Highway 37, and Bair, Greco, and Station Islands in the extreme southern part of San Francisco Bay. There's also Mare Island in Vallejo, which looks to me to actually be a peninsula. Guess it depends on when the tide is in.

Some of the smaller islands are in San Pablo Bay. The Sisters Islands are near McNears Beach. Her siblings, the Brothers Islands, are directly across the strait. There is even a B&B on East Brothers. The Marin Islands (East and West) are a national wildlife refuge in San Rafael Bay. Most Marinites have long wondered what is actually on these small landmasses. Red Rock is the small island you see when driving across the Richmond Bridge.

Perhaps the largest, least known island is Brook Island Regional Preserve. It's in the Richmond Inner Harbor and, as the name suggests, is a habitat for birds and sealife. The last island in this geography tour is best known for the oysters it produces, i.e., Hog Island in Tomales Bay.

I've written "last" too soon, because there is one more island that may be the smallest of them all and is only a few miles from our community; it is the destination for our next hike. It's Santa Margarita Island in the Santa Venetia Marsh.

Santa Margarita is easy to find. Drive 101 to the North San Pedro Road exit. Go one mile east to Meadow Street. Turn left and go a few hundred yards to the intersection of Meadow and Vendola. You'll see the bridge that links the land to the island. This is a very short hike, only a quarter of a mile around the entire loop trail. It's worth it, though, because you see lots of waterfowl and splendid views of Mt. Tam, the San Pablo Ridge, the Bay, and even Contempo Marin. You also see many boat docks at the nearby houses that look to be abandoned or in disrepair. Perhaps the creek hasn't been dredged?

You shouldn't be too fatigued after this 400-meter hike, so let's make this hike a twofer! Drive down Vendola through the neighborhood until it dead-ends at the trailhead for the Santa Venetia Marsh. This trail is a 1.2-mile loop on the raised levee. Again, great unobstructed views and plenty of fauna to keep you occupied.

I can think of two after-hike activities that may be appealing. If you go on a Thursday or Sunday morning, you can hit the Farmers Market for food truck fare and coffee. Or, go hiking closer to lunchtime and stop in at Chalet Basque on N. San Pedro Road. Perhaps, in honor of this newly discovered island, you'll have its namesake cocktail.

A final note from *Take a Hike*: After four years of this column it's time to put the pen down and take a break. Thank you for reading, for commenting, and even for occasionally sampling some of this outdoor menu. See you around the Park. ■



Good Riddance!



by JOHN HANSEN

Fire-prone plants are disappearing from the Park landscape. But we're not all the way there...yet.

When the wildfire threatened our community in 2016,

the Fire District acknowledged that the greater threat was the prolific distribution of fire-prone landscape vegetation that was WITHIN the Park.

The fire just highlighted this issue.

In 2016, MVEST began the process of ridding the Park of fire-prone vegetation. Assuming from experienced advice that this would take many years to accomplish, we have been pleasantly surprised with the progress that has occurred in such a short time.

All of Marin Valley has greatly benefited in safety and security from the exceptional participation by so many of our residents in this common sense policy.

Yet, there are still a few who have yet to participate in this campaign — the reasons for which cannot compare to the safety of our entire community.

Yes—EVERY fire-prone plant matters!

This map shows approximately all the juniper originally planted in the Park with the remaining plants shown in red.



What to Do When You Find a Wild Animal in Distress

by ANILA MANNING

The red-tailed hawk writes songs across the sky.

— Kate Wolf



We love our red-tails, swooping across the hills, nesting in the Park, and screaming for food as nestlings. A red-tail sitting still in a carport, panting, is not behaving normally.

In the afternoon of June 29 we noticed a young red-tailed hawk sitting rigid on the floor of a neighbor's carport on Wild Oak. We called Marin Humane, and officers Lily and Gracie were here within ten minutes. They gently scooped the bird up in a net without him fighting at all. The officers touched the hawk's keel (the bone on a bird that corresponds to a human's sternum), and they could tell he hadn't eaten for a while and was probably dehydrated. They took him to WildCare, and the next day someone from WildCare was walking around the Park with binoculars trying to find the nest. He said the hawk was a young bird who should still be receiving care from his parents and that WildCare would

want to return him to his nest if possible.

Alison Hermance from WildCare comments, "Many people grew up believing that touching a wild baby bird will cause his parents to reject him, but this is absolutely NOT true! Wild animals are very good parents, and touching a young wild animal will not result in rejection or abandonment.

"The young hawk was admitted to WildCare's Wildlife Hospital, where he received treatment for dehydration and emaciation and a full

medical exam. Although WildCare's medical team didn't yet know if he would be able to return to the nest, the volunteer was there to scout for the bird's parents and the location of the nest in hopes that this young hawk, like so many other baby raptors fallen from the nest, could be reunited with his parents and nestmates.

"Unfortunately, the bird's exam found the symptoms of an infection, so WildCare kept him in care and did not reunite him with his family immediately. He made a full recovery, however, and was returned to his home territory on August 4, 2018."

So what to do when we find an animal in distress? First, call WildCare's Living with Wildlife hotline 415-456-7283 for advice to properly assess the situation. WildCare may give you instructions on how to safely capture the animal yourself if you are able to, or they may instruct you to call Marin Humane for assistance.

Temporary Care Instructions for All Animals

1. Call WildCare at 415-456-SAVE (7283) or 415-300-6359 (after 5 pm) before approaching any animal.
2. Do not give the animal any food or water. Feeding an animal an incorrect diet can result in injury or death. Also, a captured animal can get food and water stuck in its fur/feathers, potentially leading to discomfort and hypothermia.
3. If you are comfortable doing so, capture and place the animal in an appropriately sized, secure box with a towel or paper towel on the bottom. Make sure the box has holes in the lid.
4. Keep the animal in a warm, dark, quiet place.
5. Leave the animal alone. Remember, human noise, touch, and eye contact are very stressful to wild animals.
6. Keep children and pets away.
7. Follow the instructions given to you by the WildCare hotline operator.

And continue to enjoy the wild kingdom we live in!



Oak Titmouse

**Article and Photography
by DAVID GRAY**



titmouse from the similar juniper titmouse, whose range, habitat, and calls are different. There is a very slight overlap in territory, so one can be pretty certain of which variety is being seen, based on the location. The range of the juniper titmouse is primarily in the lower Rocky Mountains, and they are almost never in oaks.

builds the nest, preferring a natural cavity. She uses soft materials gathered nearby over a week to a week-and-a-half. The male “rides shotgun” during the gathering of nesting materials and brings her insects while she is on the nest for the two-week incubation period. They will nest in bird boxes, but their preferred nest elevation is over ten yards high, so a tall ladder is needed for best results. Lower-height bird boxes can be used with the addition of a predator guard.



The oak titmouse (*Bacolophus inornatus*) is often heard in the oak trees throughout our Park with its cheerful *tit-tit-chrr, tit-tit-chrr-chrr* call. A very small little gray bird, it is a tough one to spot. They weigh from about 0.3 ounces up to 0.7 ounces as adults.

It has a short gray crest that it erects when feeling territorial, threatened, or curious. Its small, stubby beak is gray and is well-suited to its diet of mostly seeds and insects.

The oak titmouse range is primarily California, extending slightly into Oregon and south to coastal Mexico and parts of the Baja peninsula, so they are a local bird. I have seen them here in our Park, on trails in Terra Linda, and in the Pinnacles National Park, where the photos in this article were taken in late September 2018. In 1996 biologists differentiated the oak

The oak titmouse is quite enterprising with feeding: they use their beaks to pry apart galls, acorns, pine nuts, and larger food items, sometimes holding the food with a foot while they chip away with their beak. They even eat poison oak berries! Insects also serve as a part of their diet, including wasps, spiders, and aphids.

Oak titmice mate for life and produce one to two broods a year of clutches of three to nine eggs. The female

Oak titmice have many predators, including jays and owls and snakes. Their defense is to mob-attack predators, and they are not species-specific for the birds in their mob; any other small bird is welcome to join in the rumble.

As one might suspect, the main threat is from habitat loss of their oak woodlands through development and agriculture. We are so fortunate here to have designated green space surrounding us with a lot of oaks. ■

NOVEMBER 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 7:00 - Taiji 9:30AM MacLam/ Clubhouse Deck 1-4 PM Mahjong Fireside Room  TURN CLOCKS BACK	5 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30AM Low-Impact Exercise Fireside Room 10-11AM Floor Aerobics/ Bamboo Room 6 PM  MVEST Meeting Fireside Room 7:20PM Poor Man's Poker	6 7:00 - Taiji 9:30AM MacLam/ Clubhouse Deck 10AM Chair Yoga Marina/Fireside ELECTION DAY	7 10-11AM Floor Aerobics Bamboo Room 11AM-1PM Whistlestop Roberta-415-883-0843 11:15AM Craft and Chat Library 3-4PM Watercolor Class Ballroom 6 PM PAC MEETING	1 7-9:30AM Taiji MacLam/Deck 9:15AM QiGong Dove 11AM-12PM The Rollin' Root Clubhouse Parking Lot 1-2:30PM Quest for Vibrant Health Hansen 3-4:30PM DrawOn! Bogardus 6-6:40PM Silent Meditation Bamboo Room 7PM Film Night  LADYKILLERS	2 10-11AM Floor Aerobics Bamboo 4PM Canasta 5-7PM Pub Ballroom 7PM Board Game Night Fireside Room	3  COMMUNITY DANCING 7-9 PM Ballroom
11 7AM Taiji 1PM Mahjong 4 PM Salon	12 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30AM Low-Impact Exercise 10AM Floor Aerobics 6 PM  MVEST Meeting 7:20PM Poor Man's Poker  VETERANS DAY	13 7AM Taiji 10AM Chair Yoga THE NEW WORLD OF SCAMS with Kristina Warcholski 4PM • Ballroom	14 10AM Floor Aerobics 11AM Whistlestop Bridge/Fireside Rm 11:15AM Craft and Chat 2:30PM Readers' Theatre 3PM Watercolor Class 6 PM MAR VAL MEETING THANKSGIVING DINNER RESERVATION DEADLINE or after 1:40 reservations	15 7AM Taiji 9:15AM QiGong 11AM The Rollin' Root 1PM Vibrant Health 3PM Draw On! 6PM Silent Meditation Film Night  THE BLUES BROTHERS	16 10AM Floor Aerobics 4PM Canasta 5PM Pub	17  MAR VAL THANKSGIVING DINNER 5 PM Bar Opens 6 PM Dinner
18 7AM Taiji 1PM Mahjong	19 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30AM Low-Impact Exercise 10AM Floor Aerobics 6 PM  MVEST Meeting 7:20PM Poor Man's Poker	20 7AM Taiji 10AM Chair Yoga	21 10AM Floor Aerobics 11AM Whistlestop 11:15AM Craft and Chat 3PM Watercolor Class	22 10AM Floor Aerobics 4PM Canasta 5PM Pub	23 10AM Floor Aerobics 4PM Canasta 5PM Pub	24  FULL MOON 6:51PM
25 7AM Taiji 1PM Mahjong	26 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30AM Low-Impact Exercise 10AM Floor Aerobics 6 PM  MVEST Meeting 7:20PM Poor Man's Poker	27 7AM Taiji 10AM Chair Yoga	28 10AM Floor Aerobics 11AM Whistlestop 11:15AM Craft and Chat 3PM Watercolor Class 4:30PM Book Group 6 PM HOLMEETING	29 7AM Taiji 9:15AM QiGong 11AM The Rollin' Root 1PM Vibrant Health 3PM Draw On! 6PM Silent Meditation	30 10AM Floor Aerobics 4PM Canasta 5PM Pub	DEC 1  COMMUNITY DANCING 7-9 PM Ballroom