

T H E
ECHO

FEBRUARY 2019

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Free Smoke Alarm Installations



Sound the Alarm

The American Red Cross – Marin Chapter asks everyone to help *Sound the Alarm* in Marin Valley and be part of the nationwide Red Cross effort to help reduce the number of deaths and injuries from home fires.

Why participate? In a typical year, home fires kill more people than all other natural disasters combined in the U.S. To help save lives, the Red Cross is asking every household in America to take two simple steps—

- **practice fire drills at home and**
- **check smoke alarms monthly.**

In our effort to save lives and help end home fire tragedies, the Red Cross will Sound the Alarm through a series of home fire safety and smoke alarm installation events in communities.

Here in Marin Valley, join the Sound the Alarm home fire safety and smoke alarm installation event

February 9, from 9 am–noon.

Please sign up at the front desk with your preferred time.

Watch for tube flyers and possible change of date.

The Red Cross responds to nearly 64,000 disasters a year, the majority of which are home fires. Home fires represent a significant threat to our communities, which is why the Red Cross launched the nationwide Home Fire Campaign and rallied an army of volunteers, donors, and partners to canvass high-risk neighborhoods, install free smoke alarms, replace batteries in existing alarms, and help families create escape plans. Please join this important effort. Together, we can Sound the Alarm about fire safety and help save lives.



Help Shape the County's Services for Older Adults

Age-Friendly County of Marin Survey

by **MICHAEL HAGERTY**

Marin County has just been recognized by AARP and the World Health Organization (WHO) as an age-friendly county.

We know that people over 60 often face problems ranging from difficulty driving to loss of income to chronic pain. MARIN WANTS TO KNOW the problems you face, by providing a survey that takes about 15 minutes to complete. This survey is voluntary and anonymous.

Please take this survey if you are 60 years or older or representing an individual or group of adults age 60 or older. The information collected through this survey will inform the development of a strategic plan for achieving an Age-Friendly County of Marin. Go to:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/agefriendlycountyofmarin

If you prefer a printed copy, contact Michael Hagerty at 415-382-1345 or mrhagerty@ucdavis.edu.

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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

Winter weather is still with us.

Clean out **rain gutters** to provide clear drainage for your roof and downspouts.

Extra flashlight batteries are a good call just in case. Keep them in an easy-to-get-to location.

Store your **garden umbrellas**, and secure any lightweight furniture and any yard items that can be blown away or damaged from wind or rain.

Have on hand several bottles of **clean drinking water**.

Visit www.alertmarin.org/register to sign up for **emergency alerts**.

If the power is out, **battery-operated radios** are handy for weather updates.

Stocked food and up-to-date meds, if you need them, are also good to have handy.

Sand bags are free from the Novato Corporation Yard, 550 Davidson Ave., Novato. You need to fill them yourself or call 415-899-8280 to arrange for pre-filled bags.

Please remain vigilant regarding **strangers** or people whom you do not recognize in the Park. The unattended packages delivered to your front porch are attractive to those who may want to steal them.

While you are exercising your dog or just walking at dusk or after dark, please **wear reflective clothing** so drivers are sure to see you.

We have to replace **concrete** in order to remove trip hazards on the walkway from the clubhouse down to pump station 1. Also in progress is concrete replacement on the lower Fallen Leaf path. In the new budget we will be looking at adding a handrail at several locations on Fallen Leaf path for easier walking and safety.

Pool heater is off for the winter but the **spa** is 103°.

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 2.32 as of November 30, 2018, above the required 2.00. Our cash, plus short-, medium-, and long-term reserves, is in excess of 4.9 million dollars.

Safety – MVEST continues to be active in focusing our attention on safety issues around our community as well as ways to make it more cohesive. Our efforts for fire awareness and preparations to prevent fires here are quickly becoming the gold standard for not only Marin but the country as well. Watch for the March 2nd FireWise fair at the clubhouse.

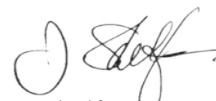
ADA –The transformation of the clubhouse into an ADA-compliant facility continues, with the City's public works department overseeing. With the recent rains, land management projects will be on hold until the land dries a bit so equipment and laborers can access the affected areas.

Budget – The midyear budget review is currently underway. In full awareness of the need to harden our community against pending emergencies, we shall amend the budget as necessary. The elephant in the room is the need to replace the two sewage pump stations and their related pipelines. We will be working closely with the City's engineering group to work out the details and funding—another reason to be mindful of tightening our spending belt and doing the necessary in a timely manner.

Hot Tub Cover – We are investigating possible solutions to keep our hot tub open yet reduce its energy costs that run \$2,500 to \$4,000 a month, depending on the season.

Management – The Helsing Group is under contract for a year to help us manage the Park, with Matt, Mark, and Greg from Al Frei's group on board. The next PAC meeting will be February 6th at 6 pm. The agenda will be posted in the clubhouse the previous Sunday.

In service,



Jay Shelfer
PAC PRESIDENT
jjshelfer@yahoo.com



MVEST So Far

by JOHN FELD

As we progress into 2019, it seems that this would be a good time to recap the accomplishments of MVEST.

Already a Member

As you know, everyone in Marin Valley is, by default, a member of MVEST, and many people are actively involved with volunteering

Apart from block captains, there are many other positions that people take on. We have a communications team that equips and trains volunteers with two-way radios, others who deal with medical issues, while others man the “control center” or Incident Command in the clubhouse, and still others who are helping train people to care for their pets during emergencies.

break around the complete perimeter of the Park, which was one of the primary reasons the 2016 fire did not spread into the Park.

Again in 2018 another MVEST grant proposal enabled us to receive an even larger grant to clear all the brush and undergrowth on both sides of the road leading into the Park.



All this requires training and organization based upon FEMA guidelines.

Fuel Break

The current iteration of MVEST really got underway in 2014. In that year MVEST wrote a grant proposal and was awarded a PG&E grant for \$25,000 to create a fuel



to make this a safer and more prepared place to live.

Volunteers

At this time, we have about 70 volunteers out of about 420 residents. Combined, these people put in approximately 1,200 hours of work in the past few years. There are 36 block captains, each of whom has 10–14 homes in their area. You should all know who your block captain is; if you don't, let me know and I will arrange for the captains to introduce themselves.

Evacuation

We also worked with the City and Novato Fire District (NFD) to organize a very successful evacuation exercise, and established the zones and blocks in the community. Also in 2014, we assisted in getting nearly 75% of our homes equipped with earthquake bracing.





Emergency Power Generator

In 2015 we got the emergency power generator equipped with a reserve gas tank, which will keep the clubhouse provided with power when all else fails.

Gas Turn-Off Valves

We also arranged for each home to get a new gas turn-off valve installed, which allows the gas to be turned off and on easily without requiring special tools. These replaced the previous taps, which were often stuck and less than satisfactory.

Firewise



In 2016 Marin Valley became one of the first FireWise communities in Marin. In 2017 we started in earnest to get rid of fire-prone plants in the community, making the Park much less susceptible to fire spreading. There are now only about 10–15 homes that have refused to participate in this important fire safety effort.

Since that time we have had a table at the Novato Farmers Market to

promote FireWise to other Novato communities, we have become active participants in more recent evacuation exercises, we have held the fourth successful MVEST neighborhood general meeting, we have conducted ongoing trainings, and we have worked closely with NFD and the City as well as organized red flag warnings.



Additionally, many people (more than 60) have trained with local fire departments to become Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members. We have also held several CERT training classes here at Marin Valley.

Current Projects

Continuing plans include

- making the clubhouse a safer place to stay in when we can't evacuate
- establishing emergency water supplies, and protocols dealing with solid waste in disasters
- establishing a communitywide alarm system
- monitoring homeless encampments around our location (it is possible

that the 2016 fire in the adjacent property to the north of us was started by homeless campers)

- developing an alternative emergency exit route to the south as well as a new “safe refuge” area at the end of Sunrise Lane.

All of these accomplishments would not have been possible without the continued support of our Park Manager, Matt Greenberg. He has done much of the heavy lifting needed to accomplish these tasks.

Weekly Meetings

MVEST continues to work on making us all safer. We hold weekly meetings in the Fireside Room each Monday at 6 pm, and everyone is welcome to attend.



MVEST has become a finely tuned organization that is respected by communities and fire departments throughout Marin County.

If you would like more information or to become involved, please let me know at johnmfeld@gmail.com. ■

MAR VAL

Message from Mar Val

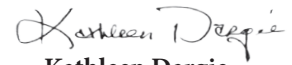
Dear Friends,
In case anyone thinks that following the nonstop activity of the holidays we have entered into a period of calm, let me assure you nothing could be further from the truth.

As we have been known to say, *laissez les bon temps rouler*. Yes, the fabulous Mardi Gras dinner will take place on Saturday, February 23.

For the third year in a row we will be treated to a tour de force by the talented trio of Tichenor, Eggers, and Lunsford, who are established show-stoppers at the Belrose in San Rafael.

beads and sign up for a trip to New Orleans on the 23rd of February.

With warmest regards,



Kathleen Dargie
MAR VAL PRESIDENT
kfdargie@aol.com

Mar Val presents *Laissez Le Bon Temps Rouler*

MARDI GRAS

Featuring Jazz Music by

Virginia Tichenor, Marty Eggers, and Carl Lunsford

February 23 ■ 5 PM Cocktails / Music ■ 6 PM Dinner

M e n u

Red Beans/Rice with Sausage or Vegetarian Red Beans/Rice
Corn Casserole and Salad

Dessert

Reservation deadline is **February 20 at 5 pm** or when 140 reservations have been received.

\$15 per person. For questions, please call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403.



Mar Val is once again happy to welcome to Mardi Gras Night the dynamic trio of Carl Lunsford, Virginia Tichenor, and Marty Eggers (*shown to the left.*) Virginia, daughter of renowned ragtime pianist Trevor Tichenor, studied as a classical pianist and now plays ragtime piano and drums. Virginia's husband Marty plays the string bass, tuba, and piano. The infamous Carl Lunsford, who played with Turk Murphy for many years, plays the banjo and guitar. This terrific trio can be seen on the second Wednesday of every month at the Belrose Theater in San Rafael.

Don your Mardi Gras beads and mask, and come enjoy the fabulous, toe-tapping sounds of this musical trio.

MARDI GRAS RESERVATION FORM

Please circle entrée choice

RESIDENT _____ Red Beans/Rice/Sausage Red Beans/Rice
RESIDENT _____ Red Beans/Rice/Sausage Red Beans/Rice
GUEST _____ Red Beans/Rice/Sausage Red Beans/Rice
GUEST _____ Red Beans/Rice/Sausage Red Beans/Rice

Residents attending ____ at \$15/each. Check for \$_____ is enclosed. (NO CASH, please)

Guests attending ____ at \$15/each. Checks payable to Mar Val. Questions? Call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403.

Reservation deadline is **February 20 at 5 pm** or when 140 reservations have been received.

Home Owners League Message



Interest Surveys

We trust everyone has completed their New Year's Resolution and are well into preparing for the spring. You should have received your "Interest Survey" in the tube and are full of ideas of events that you would like to know about. We already have singer Bill Hartwell coming back in April. **Charlotte Kells** is the Event Coordinator.

I am hoping to get events planned in advance and am shooting for at least one event a month. Turn in your Interest Surveys by putting them in the cubbyholes next to the HOL Bulletin Board or give them to Matt. We will sort through them in the middle of February and post the results on the bulletin board and on the website.

Just One Hour and Buddy System

Don't forget to support **Ray Schneider** in his effort to coordinate "Just One Hour" and the "Buddy System." All requests and volunteer names are confidential. He asks that you contact him at 415-883-4182 or ray@delannaray.com.

Reflective Safety Vests

Safety for residents is foremost on our minds. Please wear your yellow vests when walking both during the day and at night. Call or email **Mark Crocker** at 281-757-4456 or amarkcroc@swbell.net if you need a vest and there are no more in the library.



Umbrella

HOL will be buying a new cantilevered umbrella for the spa in the spring. If you notice any other items that would be nice to have, bring it to the board and we can talk about it!

NOTE: Next HOL meeting is in the Fireside Room, February 20 at 6 pm.

Janie Klimes-Crocker

Janie Klimes-Crocker
HOL PRESIDENT
jkkimes@swbell.net
281-414-3984 cell

HOL COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

First Friday Game Night

by **ED COLLINS**

WOW! Super Wow!
After months of little participation in Game Night by community residents, there was an overflow crowd at the game night in January. Besides Ed and his group of seven hardcore gamers, eight to ten residents joined in the fun!

While small games of Set (in which Ed was whomped by Erma and others), Azul, and more international games went on, Ed's friend Paul managed to entice a large number of people into playing more group-like games — Hive Mind and Dixit. From the uproarish laughter coming from that group, I'd say they had a great time.

So, join us at the next First Friday Game Night on February 1 at 7 pm.



FILM
NIGHT

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



Shaun of the Dead

Thursday • February 7 • 7 pm

Comedy/Horror (2004) 1 hr 37 min

Director Edgar Wright

Starring Simon Pegg, Kate Ashfield, Nick Frost, Bill Nighy, Lucy Davis

Life isn't too good for Shaun. He lives with his best friend Ed, neglects his girlfriend Liz, and despises his step-dad. When Liz dumps Shaun, he vows to get his life back on track. Unfortunately, this is the day that the dead have decided to come back to life.

Close Encounters of the Third Kind

Thursday • February 21 • 7 pm

Drama/Sci-Fi (2001) 2 hrs 13 min

Director Steven Spielberg

Starring Richard Dreyfuss, François Truffaut, Teri Garr

Awards Oscar: Best Cinematography; 15 other wins, 8 nominations

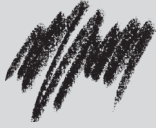
Electric company lineman, family man Roy Neary, and single mother Jillian Guiler are among some individuals in Muncie, Indiana, who experience some paranormal activity before the occurrence of some flashes of bright lights in the sky, which they believe to be caused by a UFO. Roy becomes obsessed with what he saw, unlike some others, especially those in some form of authority, who, in not wanting to appear crazy, refuse to acknowledge their belief that it was a UFO.



Community Dancing Resumes

Come to the ballroom the first Saturday of the month from 7 to 9 pm to enjoy the joy of music and dancing. On February 2, DJ Charles Watson will be back at the controls as the impresario of sound.

ART IN THE PARK



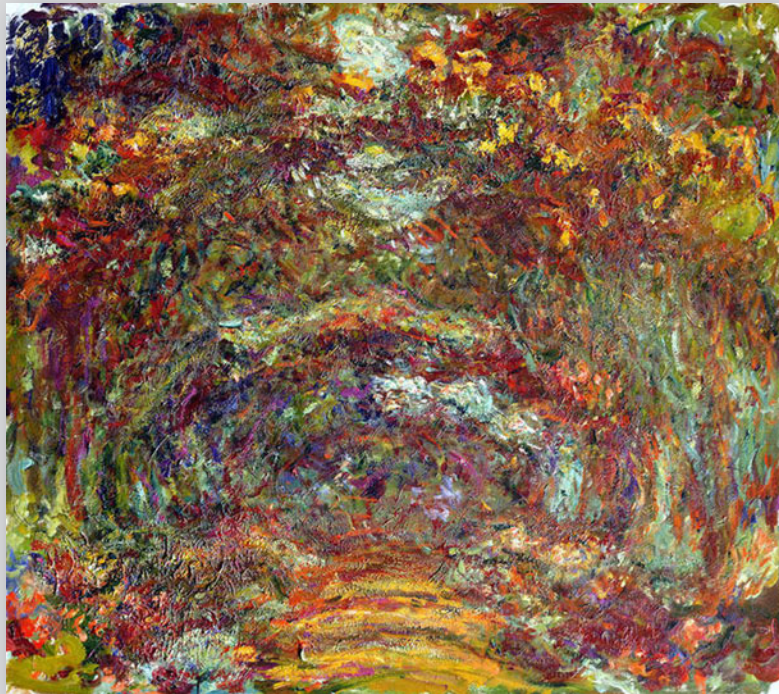
by **SUZIE LAHR**

All resident artists are invited to join us in our first 2019 get-together and meeting in the Fireside Room at the clubhouse on **Tuesday, February 5 at 4 pm**. We especially welcome all new artists to join our art happenings in 2019. At this gathering we will be meeting and greeting each other and discussing the upcoming Marin Valley Gallery resident art exhibit to be installed on March 23 as well as our opening reception on April 14.

This seems to be the month of Monet, with a new exhibit opening February 15 at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. This exhibit will feature paintings from the latter part of his life when his eyesight was failing due to cataracts; amazingly enough, even back in the early 1900s surgery was performed to correct this.

The works in this exhibit are primarily of his beautiful and treasured gardens in Giverny that

he personally designed, having had a passion for gardening as well as for painting. Every day for 20 years, he painted in his beloved gardens, capturing the varying light and exquisite colors of nature.



Claude Monet, 'The Artist's House Seen from the Rose Garden,' 1922–1924. Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris France (at the deYoung Museum)

His focus on studying light in these later years enabled him to capture the changes in color brought about by rain, smoke, water reflections, and snow and culminated in his use of bright, bold colors on large canvases, along with the well-known quote, "I would like to paint as a bird sings." His broad, energetic brushstrokes of vibrant color float on two-dimensional canvases, embracing his mastery of impressionism as he leans toward modernism. Several of the pieces are of his famous lily ponds in his Giverny gardens and have been brought here from the Musée Marmottan Monet in Paris.

As you walk by our own lily pond while entering the Marin Valley clubhouse and watch its never-ending colors, light, and water reflections, it brings to mind the beautiful artwork of Monet and the pleasure it brought him in his latter years.

VISUAL ART EVENTS



AROUND
TOWN

Marin Community Foundation

Hangar 5
Hamilton Landing
– Suite 2
Marin Open
Studios —
25th Anniversary
Group Exhibition
Through
February 1

de Young Museum

Golden Gate Park – San Francisco
Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey
Through April 7
Monet—The Late Years
February 16–May 27

Marin MOCA

500 Palm Drive – Hamilton
Open to Interpretation
Artists of MarinMOCA Exhibition
Through February 24

Marin Civic Center Bartolini Gallery

*Inside Insights — 100 Works of
San Quentin Arts in Corrections*
Through March 28

Being Green

Checking out at the store, the young cashier suggested to the much older woman that she should bring her own grocery bags because plastic bags weren't good for the environment.

The woman apologized and explained, "We didn't have this 'green thing' back in my earlier days."

The young clerk responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment for future generations."

She was right—our generation didn't have the "green thing" in our day. Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles, and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over.

So they really were recycled. But we didn't have the "green thing" back in our day. Grocery stores bagged our groceries in brown paper bags, which we reused for numerous things; most memorable, besides household garbage bags, was the use of brown paper bags as book covers for our schoolbooks. This was to ensure that public property (the books provided for our use by the school) was not defaced by our scribbles. Then we were able to personalize our books on the brown paper bags. But too bad we didn't do the "green thing" back then.

We walked up stairs because we didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. We walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks. But she was right. We didn't have the "green thing" in our day.

Back then, we washed the baby's diapers because we didn't have the throwaway kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy-gobbling machine burning up 220 volts—wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing.

But that young lady is right; we didn't have the "green thing" back in our day.

Back then, we had one TV, or radio, in the house—not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of the state of Montana.

In the kitchen, we blended and stirred by hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human

power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull. But we didn't have the "green thing" back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service in the family's \$45,000 SUV or van, which cost what a whole house did before the "green thing." We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 23,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest burger joint. But isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the "green thing" back then?

Tell this to another selfish old person who needs a lesson in conservation from a smart young person ... ■

Submitted by Pauline Hawkins

Treasure Mapping

Ed Collins is hosting an event for some of his friends in the Fireside Room at noon on Saturday, February 2. Treasure Mapping is where you cut pictures and words from magazines to create a collage of the "treasures"

you want to discover and draw into your life. You can also draw and use markers and paints if you prefer.

While this is a private event there will be room for residents. We would like to limit participants to 12 or so. If interested email Ed at mretc@hotmail.com or text/call him at 415 377-7696 You can also look for a sign-up sheet at the clubhouse later in the month.

New Neighbors

by SHIREEN AKROOSH



On a very windy, rainy, glum day in this new year I had the pleasure of meeting **Denise Billings**, a three-month resident of our Marin Valley community. Spending a few minutes with such ebullient vivacity considerably brightened my soggy wet winter's day. So far, Denise's impression of us is most favorable as she looks forward to becoming an involved volunteer in the Park's social functions.

A New Jersey native, Denise has lived in Novato since 1974 practicing as an insurance broker. She has one daughter, 33, married and living in Portland, and she and her daughter maintain a very close relationship and friendship. Although Denise continues to work at her profession, she has cut the workload considerably to now enjoy a slower-paced lifestyle, devoting precious time to other interests that include yoga and her love of gardening and interior design.

A two-time cancer survivor, her lessons learned are to slow down, enjoy new activities, and just be happy. Now that you have met Denise, look for her at clubhouse functions and get to know this energetic and lovely addition to Marin Valley. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY SHIREEN AKROOSH

A Succulent Affair

by LORNA SASS

Succulents ~ Ideal replacements for incendiary junipers

I've been having a love affair with succulents for over four decades. And with good reason!



They not only come in fascinating shapes and sizes, but are water wise, fire resistant, and very easy to care for.

For all of these reasons they are ideal replacements for the incendiary junipers that have wisely been excavated from most of the front gardens and upslopes here at Marin Valley.

Just a word on terminology: "Succulent" is the broad category name that includes all types of cactus but is also inclusive of many other varieties. Succulents are water wise because they store water in either

their thick stems or their fleshy leaves. One characteristic that distinguishes some cactus from other types of succulents is that they have spines that make touching them a very bad idea. I have vowed over the years to not include spiny cactus in my collection, but I am often so dazzled by their shapes and tall, proud bearings that I have succumbed to bringing many of them home.

If those naughty spines have been turning you against succulents, look again! Many varieties have magnificent flower-like shapes with leaves that resemble petals and colors that range from pink to red to orange and deep purple.

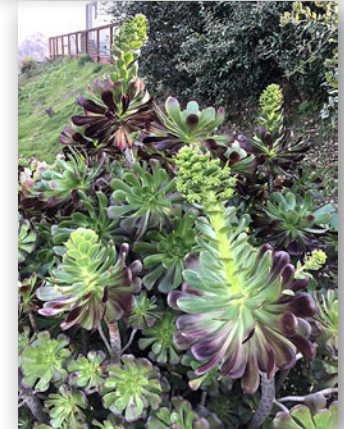
Soil Preferences

Succulents thrive in soil that is loose and airy (see resources below) but are so easygoing

that they will grow in almost any type of terrain. There is rarely a hurry to transplant them from the plastic pot they came in; indeed, they actually prefer being slightly pot-bound. As a general rule, they like to get fairly dried out between waterings—maybe once a week in summer and rarely in the rainy season. A few varieties, such as *rhopsalis* (Christmas cactus) is the most common one) prefer to remain slightly moist. It's a good idea to google individual types by name to learn the requirements of each plant.

A Succulent Garden

There are three ways to go when designing a succulent garden:

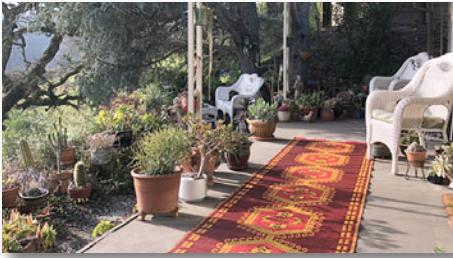


PHOTOGRAPHS BY LORNA SASS

1) Plant succulents directly in the ground. Doing this will allow the succulents to grow faster and send out many little offshoots called "pups." Mounding types will mound more easily when their roots are allowed to roam freely. The pups can be snipped from the parent plant and placed directly into soil, and voila: you will have a new plant. (Many books suggest waiting a few days until the bottom of the pup hardens, but I haven't found this to be necessary.)

2) Plant succulents in pots, large and small. This is the way to go when you have limited space or want to have a large variety of plants.

It's also fun to make "dish gardens" by arranging the cuttings of various types of succulents into one pot.



3) Artfully arrange pots of succulents among a variety of plants.

Intersperse pots of succulents between flowering annuals and perennials to great effect. Use ground irrigation for the perennials and water the succulents by hand, or use irrigation with much smaller spouts (or hand water as needed).

If possible, during the rainy months, move potted succulents to a spot under the carport or eaves to protect them from becoming waterlogged. However, I am finding that even though they wouldn't choose all the rain they are getting at this time of year, they are resilient enough to survive it. Just make certain that any potted plants have excellent drainage!

One of the great things about succulents is that you can easily grow them from cuttings. Generous neighbors and friends are likely to begin giving you cuttings once they hear of your interest in starting a collection. Unlike with other plant cuttings, you don't need to be in any rush to plant them. Just pop them into soil when you are good and ready! You can even put the cuttings in wall planters without soil and they grow aerial roots and look sprightly for several months.

Inspiration

In San Rafael check out Falkirk Cultural Center's succulent garden to see many varieties artfully arranged by Marin Master Gardeners. Be on the lookout for their annual succulent sale. Also, there are various groups on Facebook that feature the photos of succulent devotees, and Instagram is over-the-top with pictures of succulent love! ■

Resources

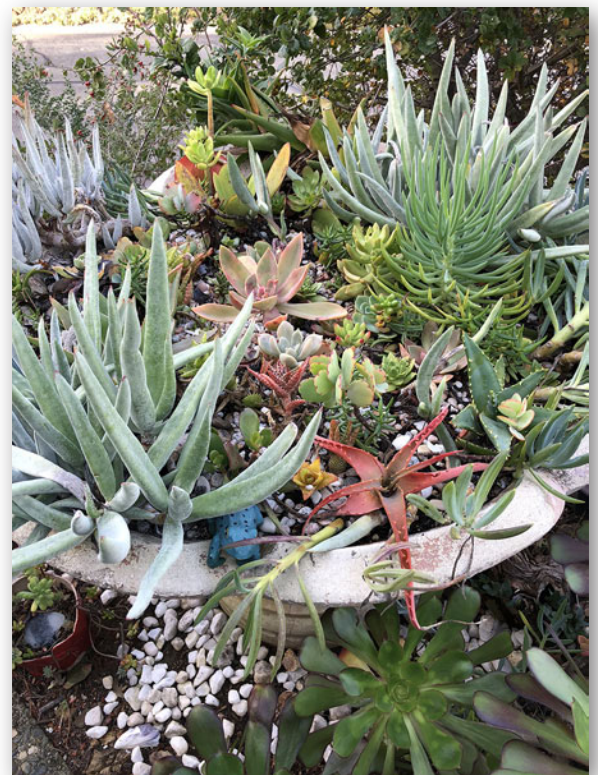
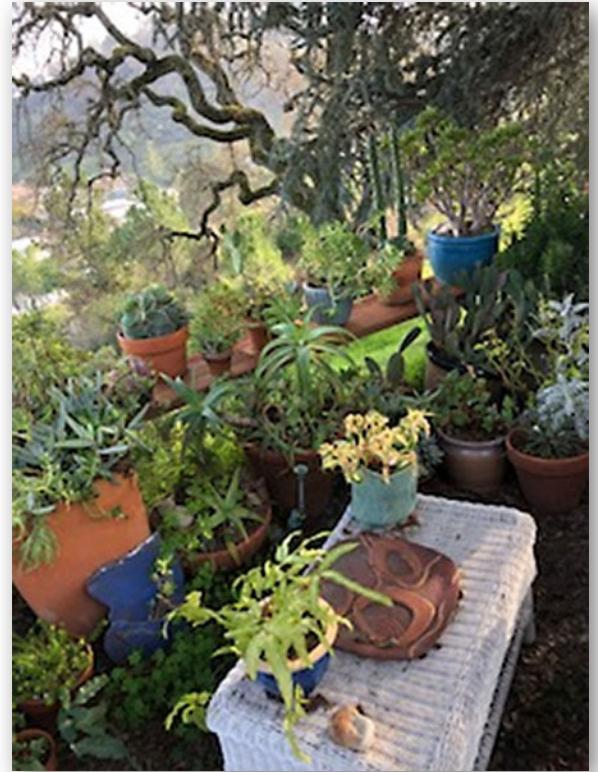
Soil — A&S Landscape Materials (previously called American Soil and Stone), 565 Jacoby St., San Rafael is an inexpensive source of what is labeled "Falkirk mix," a soil aerated with tiny bits of clay and other materials. (If you want to adapt standard planting mix for a potted succulent, you can just stir in about 20% perlite or vermiculite.)

Sources of Succulents

Succulents have become so popular that you will now easily find them in any nursery, but for a very special treat (and priced accordingly!) go to Cactus Jungle in Berkeley and San Anselmo, Lone Pine Gardens in Sebastopol, and Succulent Gardens in Castroville. In each of these places, you will see varieties not commonly found elsewhere. For good prices and interesting varieties try Home Depot and Friedman's Home Improvement in Petaluma.

Deborah Lee Baldwin is considered by many to be the queen of succulents! Her books (available in the Marin county library) and YouTube videos are full of great ideas for creating succulent gardens large and small.

If you really get hooked, go to **Cactus and Succulent Society** (www.sfsucculent.org) meetings in San Francisco. Each month a different grower brings fabulous succulents to sell. You will also be regaled with free cuttings from members as well as a very informative lecture with slides focusing on succulents in different parts of the world.



Lorna Sass has a PhD in medieval literature and is the award-winning author of 15 cookbooks. She is a proud member of Succulents Anonymous on Facebook.

Tundra Swan

Article and Photography

by DAVID GRAY

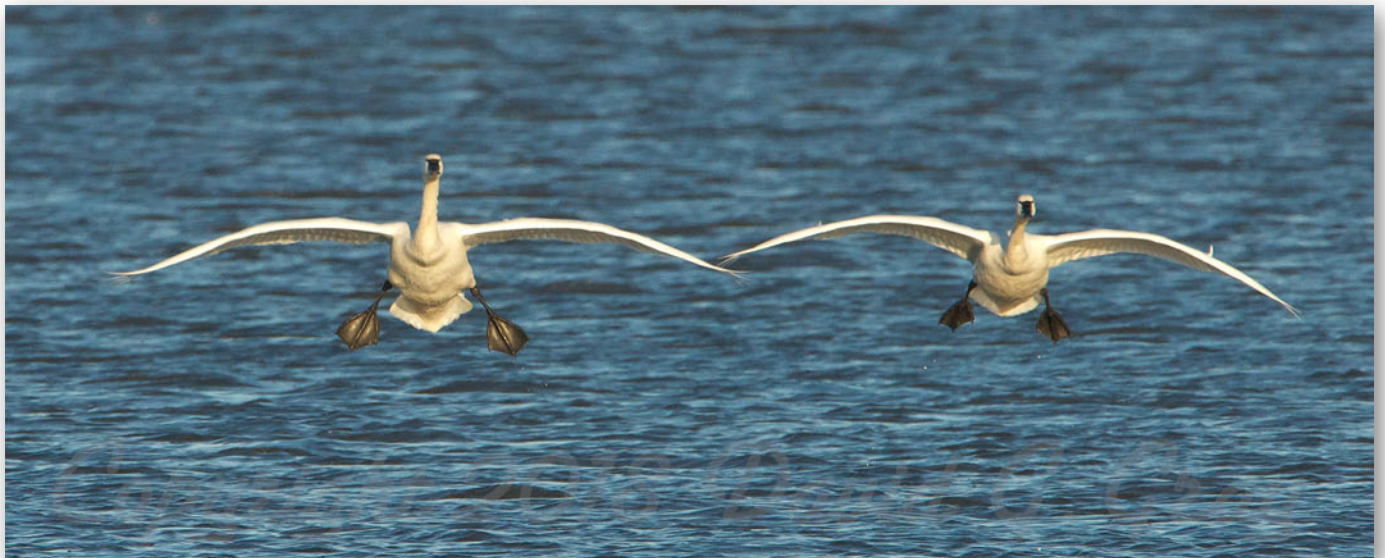
Tundra swans (*Cygnus columbianus*), also known as whistling swans, winter in Northern California and also on the eastern seaboard. Hundreds of thousands of them winter in the Central Valley.

They are beautiful, large, pure white birds, regal in flight and while swimming. They fly with their long necks extended, and can be differentiated from great egrets from afar by this characteristic. They are the smallest of the swan family at 14 to 20 pounds, but are still much larger than the Canada goose who weigh 8.5 pounds on average.

They are most un-regal when feeding, “tipped up” with their tail feathers in the air while eating algae in shallow bodies of water.



Takeoff seems improbable when watching them literally running across the water, wings flapping shallowly, until they reach air speed and slowly climb.



Tundra swans are not so regal on landing or takeoff; they require a long, clear landing area, and they spend a fair amount of time on approach scouting for a clear space to glide in, “flaps down” until their feet touch the water, and then settling into a long belly slide.

Up close, the black feet and black beak with a tiny spot of yellow near their eye helps to differentiate the tundra swan from other swans, such as the European-imported mute swans found year-round in the Las Gallinas ponds. Tundra swans nest in the arctic tundra in the spring in marshes, laying clutches of three to five eggs per year. The eggs hatch after about four weeks. The chicks grow very fast, given that they have little time before winter comes again. They fledge in about ten weeks, about twice as quickly as other non-arctic swans.



The tundra swans mate for life. They are very social birds; during their wintering time they can be seen gathering in small groups and honking at other incoming and outgoing swans. They also gain protection in numbers. Given their size, the only two significant natural predators are the arctic fox and the brown bear.



The length of their migration is notable: from the Arctic Circle, it is a journey of some 2,500 to 3,500 miles. They fly traveling in classic V-patterned groups; to alleviate stress on any one bird, they trade off being the leader.



It's wonderful living on the Pacific Flyway! ■

SUNDAY JAN 27	MONDAY 28	TUESDAY 29	WEDNESDAY 30	THURSDAY 31	FRIDAY 1	SATURDAY 2
7:00 - Taiji 9:30 AM MacLam/ Clubhouse Deck 1-4 PM Mahjong Fireside Room	6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise Fireside Room 10-11 AM Aerobics Bamboo Room 6 PM MVEST Meeting Fireside Room 7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker Card Room	7:00 - Taiji MacLam/ Clubhouse Deck 9:30 AM 10 AM Chair Yoga Marino/Fireside	11 AM-1 PM Whistlestop call Roberta 415-883-0843 11:15 AM Craft and Chat Library - 2 PM 6 PM	7-9:30 AM Taiji MacLam/Deck 9:15 AM QiGong Dove 11 AM The Rollin' Root Clubhouse Parking Lot - 12 PM 1-2:30 PM Quest for Vibrant Health Hansen/Fireside 3-4:30 PM Draw On! Bogardus 6-6:40 PM Silent Meditation Bamboo Room	10-11 AM Aerobics Bamboo Rm 4 PM Canasta 5-7 PM Pub Ballroom 7 PM Game Night Fireside Room	12 PM Treasure Mapping Fireside Room COMMUNITY DANCE 7-9 PM Ballroom
3 7 AM Taiji 1 PM Mahjong	4 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise 10 AM Aerobics 6 PM MVEST Meeting 7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker	5 7 AM Taiji 10 AM Chair Yoga 4 PM ART MEETING IN THE PARK	6 11 AM Whistlestop 11:15 AM Craft and Chat PAC MEETING 6 PM	7 7 AM Taiji 9:15 AM QiGong 11 AM The Rollin' Root Vibrant Health 1 PM 3 PM Draw On! 6 PM Silent Meditation 7-9 PM Film Night SHAUN OF THE DEAD	8 10 AM Aerobics 4 PM Canasta 5 PM Pub 7:15 PM Bingo ECHO DEADLINE	9 American Red Cross SOUND THE ALARM Save a Life 9 AM-12 PM Ballroom and Park
10 7 AM Taiji 1 PM Mahjong	11 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise 10 AM Aerobics 6 PM MVEST Meeting 7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker	12 7 AM Taiji 10 AM Chair Yoga	13 11 AM Whistlestop 11:15 AM Craft and Chat 6 PM MAR VAL MEETING	14 7 AM Taiji 9:15 AM QiGong 11 AM The Rollin' Root Vibrant Health 1 PM 3 PM Draw On! 6 PM Silent Meditation VALENTINE'S DAY	15 10 AM Aerobics 4 PM Canasta 5 PM Pub	16
17 7 AM Taiji 1 PM Mahjong 4 PM Salon in the Park-Love 29 Marin Valley Drive	18 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise 10 AM Aerobics 6 PM MVEST Meeting 7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker PRESIDENTS' DAY	19 7 AM Taiji 10 AM Chair Yoga FULL MOON 7:53 PM	20 11 AM Whistlestop 11 AM Bridge / Fireside Rm 11:15 AM Craft and Chat 5 PM MARDI GRAS RESERVATION DEADLINE or after 140 reservations 6 PM HOL MEETING	21 7 AM Taiji 9:15 AM QiGong 11 AM The Rollin' Root Vibrant Health 1 PM 3 PM Draw On! 6 PM Silent Meditation 7 PM Film Night CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND	22 10 AM Aerobics 4 PM Canasta 5 PM Pub	23 MAR VAL MARDI GRAS 5 PM COCKTAILS 6 PM DINNER
24 7 AM Taiji 1 PM Mahjong	25 6-8+AM Trash Pickup 9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise 10 AM Aerobics 6 PM MVEST Meeting 7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker	26 7 AM Taiji 10 AM Chair Yoga	27 11 AM Whistlestop 11:15 AM Craft and Chat 4:30 PM Book Group	28 7 AM Taiji 9:15 AM QiGong 11 AM The Rollin' Root Vibrant Health 1 PM 3 PM Draw On! 6 PM Silent Meditation	FEBRUARY 2019	