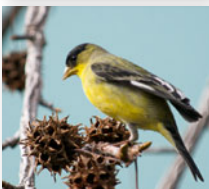
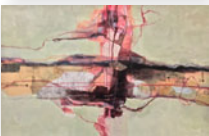


T H E
ECHO

MARCH 2019

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Marvin "Marv" Weissensee

January 25, 1935

December 13, 2018



Marv was a longtime resident, a Realtor, and an active community member who donated a percentage of his commissions to our Marie Dugan-Weissensee Humanitarian Fund, which has been assisting residents in need. We offer our condolences to his family and friends.

Possible Land Uses

Come and offer your suggestions at an information-gathering meeting on the possible uses of the area below the clubhouse.

**Monday, March 6 • 5-6 pm
before the PAC meeting**

Directory Update

New Residents

Michale Dancer
415-519-3395 cell
Michale@stilllifegifts.com
Martin Gellman
415-328-2370 cell
Marty@stilllifegifts.com
185 Marin Valley Drive
415-924-6612

Novato Lions Club Bingo

**Thursday, March 28
Marin Valley Clubhouse
Games start at 6 pm**

- Ticket price \$15
- Advance ticket purchase eligible for cash drawing

For tickets call or email
Connie Marelich 415-382-3350
or CTMarelich@gmail.com



SAVE THE DATE

Bill Hartwell Is Coming Again to Marin Valley

Sunday, April 28 • 3-5 pm

- Country-folk singer-songwriter Bill Hartwell, who currently resides in San Diego, primarily performs in Southern California but his gigs have taken him from coast to coast. His performances over 30 years include playing original songs from his five CDs.
- Bill is an old friend of residents Charlotte Kells and Lee Dunne, who sponsored the event last year. This year HOL will be sponsoring this free event for our community.
- Light refreshments
- Check out www.billhartwell.com

THE ECHO MARCH 2019

MARIN VALLEY MOBILE COUNTRY CLUB

100 MARIN VALLEY DRIVE
NOVATO, CA 94949
415-883-5911 / 415-883-1971 FAX
WWW.MARINVALLEY.NET

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MARIN VALLEY

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Cohen, Kevin Mulvany, Stephen Plocher
MV PROJECT PLANNING John Hansen, John Shelfer

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SECRETARY Joanne Woodward 415-506-4568
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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

DEADLINE

**Articles—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

Unauthorized solicitation from outside vendors trying to sell vacuum cleaners, frozen food, and/or home services, all have been reported to the front desk. An unsolicited knock at the front door can at times be unnerving, and against Park policy. Please alert the front desk if you have had solicitors. We will contact the service provider. Please never let a stranger into your home even if they seem friendly and with good intention. Call the front desk for assistance.

Digging

Prior to any digging, it is required to alert Management. This can prevent costly repairs to underground electrical lines and gas or water pipes. It will also prevent residents from losing power, water, or gas during the investigation and/or repair.

Carports

Per Park Rule #12, carports are not for storage. People who can't park in their respective carports impact others by parking in guest spaces or in the street.

Overnight Street Parking

There is no street parking from midnight to 7 am per Park rules.

Fallen Leaf Path

The Fallen Leaf walking path project is near completion. Phase II—a handrail in some areas where needed, will begin this summer.

Thank you,



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

Greetings from the PAC Board,

Our finances are in order. The debt service on the loan is 2.25 as of December 31, 2018, well above the required 2.00. Our cash, plus short-, medium-, and long-term reserves is in excess of 4.9 million dollars.

MVEST

MVEST activities bring a sense of community and mutual benefit to our community. Its coordination with other communities in Novato and the outreach to county and state resources benefits all those here at Marin Valley. See the MVEST report on the next page.

New Assistant City Manager

We have lost a good friend and valuable contact with the City of Novato, as Peggy Flynn has resigned her post at the City and taken up new responsibilities as City Manager of Petaluma. We wish her well. Our new contact, Kate Whan, Novato's Public Works Administrative Manager, will be filling in for administrative inquiries and issues until it is decided who at the City should assume oversight of Marin Valley.

Project Planning

The PAC's Project Planning Committee will have an information-gathering meeting on the possible uses of the area below the clubhouse on March 6 between 5 and 6 pm. Be sure to come and offer your suggestions.

Solar

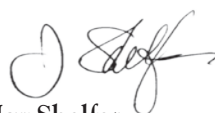
The plan for installing a solar array in the area along the SMART train tracks is taking an urgent step forward, with PG&E advising that if current lawsuits alleging malfeasances on their part are paid out, they will need to raise energy fees by five times. We will be meeting with City and state officials to push forward this beneficial and cost-saving project.

Spa

We have found a suitable spa cover for the hot tub in our pool area. Matt Greenberg is working out the details. We shall order and install it as quickly as possible.

The next PAC meeting will be March 6 at 6 pm. The agenda shall be posted in the clubhouse the previous Sunday.

In service,



Jay Shelfer
PAC PRESIDENT
jjshelfer@yahoo.com



John Hansen Invited to FIRESafe Marin Board

by **BILL DAVIS**



Those Who Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail

FIRESafe Main

Todd Lando heads FIRESafe Marin. This volunteer group is working hard to make Marin County a safer place to live. They are all dedicated to reducing wildland fire hazards and improving fire potential awareness here in Marin. Much good work has been done, but our local climate is getting hotter and dryer, with a much longer fire season. Consequently, wildland fires are increasing.

This group is not only educating Marin citizens about wildland fire ignition, they also coordinate with state and federal agencies to direct available funding to the most dangerous areas. Marin Valley resident John Hansen has been invited to serve on the board of directors of this dedicated group of Marin officers and citizens. This is a special and important appointment for him and our community. We all must do a better job at wildfire prevention today and in the immediate future. To lead and direct the way, John Hansen is joining this dedicated team.

John Hansen

Many of us know what amazing and consistent work John Hansen has done over the years on the

Marin Valley Emergency Safety Team (MVEST) and on the Board of Directors of our Park Acquisition Committee (PAC). His hard work and achievements for Marin Valley only serve to continue his reputation and impressive resume.

John grew up in the Central Valley around Fresno. After high school he attended Cal State Fresno and got into marine biology, where he states his eyes were opened, and he got straight A's from that point onward. "It was the field work that really got me going. I loved the scientific method, and it was pure fun." In the '60s he got into underwater scuba diving. In the '70s he taught high school physics, math, and chemistry and became an assistant principal, while building his own house in the Central Valley. In the '80s he went to UC Santa Cruz and got a master's degree. Then he went after a PhD until his money ran out. The money resurfaced later when John began consulting for the U.S. government on environmental concerns.

He consulted for the government, oil companies, and environmentalists on underwater issues. Then in the '90s he integrated

much of his work into the burgeoning computer world in the direction of homeopathic medicine for ongoing quality health. "Chronic illness can have multiple origins."

John shared with me that one of the most motivating people he ever met was Goldtree McCall. He was a real cowboy who had traveled all over the country. But he was a loner, a thinker, and a completely self-sufficient person who always thought ahead. "He was the most interesting person I ever met." John credits McCall with imparting the importance John now places on thinking ahead in many areas of his life.

Today John is again stepping forward for what he believes in, but not as a loner in the tradition of Goldtree McCall. He will be working with some of the best talents in Marin County to make this county a safer place to live and thrive. His talents, organizational skills, achievements, and dedication will now be used not just within Marin Valley but also countywide as one of the directors of FIRESafe Marin.

Congratulations to John, and thank you from all of us at Marin Valley. ■

Have you noticed multiple fire chiefs' vehicles parked by the clubhouse occasionally the last couple of months? Who are these people? What are they up to? Why are they here?

FIRESafe Marin has been meeting here at the Marin Valley clubhouse occasionally on the second Friday of the month. For many reasons it has been very difficult for this organization to find an adequate place to meet.

Their meetings are attended by multiple Marin fire agencies and Firewise decision-making representatives as well as county officials such as Novato Fire Chief Bill Tyler, Marin County Supervisor Katie Rice, Marin County Fire Department Chief Bob Weber, Marin County Fire Department Battalion Chief Christie Neil, retired San Francisco Deputy Fire Chief Rich Shortal, and a PG&E representative, just to name a few influential office-holders and administrators.

Two Separate Organizations: One National—One Local

by JOHN FELD



Firewise — a national program designed for residents who live within a wildland-urban interface (WUI) that teaches people how to adapt to living in a wildfire-prone area. It empowers neighbors to work together and take action *now* to prevent losses by providing a collaborative framework for neighbors to reduce wildfire risks at the local level.

To become a Firewise community, Marin Valley volunteers, primarily John Hansen, worked with the Novato Fire District to create a written wildfire risk assessment for the community. This document was an important piece of the application process that identified our priorities and future activities. This risk assessment became the committee's primary tool in determining our action plan moving forward.

In our community we started with a firebreak around the outside of the whole community; next we concentrated on removing fire-prone plants from around our homes and creating defensible space to make fire ignition close to impossible around our structures and gardens. At the same time, we continue our education program, which entails learning and passing on information.

As a Firewise community, we are committed to having an annual wildfire risk reduction educational outreach event. The volunteers are also required to commit to service within the community, including training, assessments, and organizing.

Marin Valley was one of the first Firewise communities in our area reducing our wildfire risks and adding to the safety of firefighters. Now there are dozens more. Most of Novato is considered to be within an wildland-urban interface. The more Firewise communities there are, the more it helps protect us all.



FIRE Safe Marin — a nonprofit local organization dedicated to reducing wildland fire hazards and improving fire-safety awareness in Marin County. It fosters community involvement by building partnerships and providing resources for mitigating fire danger.

After the Oakland Hills fire in 1991, several public agencies and private interests wanted to reduce the likelihood of a similar tragedy occurring in Marin. FIRE Safe MARIN was formed to promote fire safety and stimulate communities to collaborate when solving problems related to fire protection. In Marin they:

- Educate people with booths and talks at events
- Create a comprehensive list of fire-safe plants
- Distribute available grants so that all communities can help address their local needs
- Organize “chipper days” for chipping tree branches
- Ensure that power lines are kept free of vegetation
- Establish escape routes for communities in the event of emergencies.

FIRE Safe Marin promotes effective fire safety by informing groups interested in fuels management. They sponsor educational programs for residents and professionals, coordinate vegetation reduction projects, and assist neighborhoods in becoming Firewise communities.



Support your favorite charitable organization, such as FIRE Safe Marin, Cal-IPC, etc. by starting your Amazon shopping at <https://smile.amazon.com/>. Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases through AmazonSmile.



Register for Cal-IPC's Weed Management Volunteer Training

Saturday • March 2 • 10 am – 2:30 pm • Albert J. Boro Community Center, 50 Canal St., San Rafael

Learn from local experts about invasive plant biology, control methods, tools of the trade, volunteer programs, mapping, and more! Training sessions for volunteers are free and open to all experience levels.

Go to : www.cal-ipc.org/resources/volunteers/wildland-volunteer-network/volunteer-training-marin

MAR VAL

Message from Mar Val

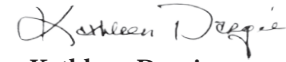
Dear Friends,

You will recall Mar Val celebrated the Scots at the Scottish dinner in January, followed by honoring the French with the Mardi Gras dinner in February. It only stands to reason, therefore, that the Irish be allowed equal time in March with the annual observance of St. Patrick's Day. As

indicated on the reservation form below, the event is scheduled for Saturday, March 16. While we do not wish in any way to limit the attention St. Patrick so richly deserves, this event coincides with the 90th birthday of Mar Val's longtime volunteer and benefactor, Patrick Wheatley. We urge you to

don your "greenest" outfit, cover it in shamrocks, and join us for the double celebration on March 16 beginning at 5 pm.

With warmest regards,



Kathleen Dargie
MAR VAL PRESIDENT
kfdargie@aol.com



MAR VAL PRESENTS

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

MARCH 16, 2019

5 PM COCKTAILS ■ 6 PM DINNER

Menu

Corned Beef/Cabbage or Vegetarian Shepherd's Pie

Potatoes ■ Carrots ■ Rolls

Dessert

Reservation deadline is March 13, 2019 at 5 PM or when 140 reservations have been received.

Please make checks payable to Mar Val – NO cash please – \$15 each.

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

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER RESERVATION FORM

RESIDENT _____	Corned Beef/Cabbage	Shepherd's Pie
RESIDENT _____	Corned Beef/Cabbage	Shepherd's Pie
GUEST _____	Corned Beef/Cabbage	Shepherd's Pie
GUEST _____	Corned Beef/Cabbage	Shepherd's Pie

residents attending _____ @ \$15/each. Check for _____ enclosed.

guests attending _____ @ \$15/each. NO CASH – checks payable to MarVal

Reservation deadline — March 13, 2019 at 5 PM or when 140 reservations have been received.

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



HOL Home Owners League Message



Activities for 2019

Thank you so much for the multitude of replies to HOL's Activities and Interests Survey. Overall, it seems that those who have participated have greatly enjoyed and endorsed 2018 activities. All the existing activities and services will continue in 2019.

Events for 2019

Events that we will probably repeat in 2019 include mosquito, rat, and yellow jacket control; Scamming Seniors (but this time dealing with online shopping); "A Matter of Balance"; Bill Hartwell Music; and the Holiday Craft Fair. All these events are planned and carried out by HOL Board members.

This spring, instead of Art in the Park, we will be sponsoring the Marin Valley Art Gallery 5th Anniversary Celebration.

Can YOU Make These Happen?

The following list of activities and events won't happen without your help. We need volunteers to make these things happen. Among the suggested activities that need your help to plan:



Gardening classes

Presentation on End-of-Life Options and Advance Directives Grief Group

Biography presentations

Organizing women's and men's groups

Dance classes (tango)

Cooking classes (Vietnamese spring rolls, cake frosting, Mexican food)

How to use the gym

Chamber concert

Safe driving class

What are YOU expert at? Do you know how to connect to people who can make these events happen? The HOL Board will support you in every way, guide you in making it happen, and be there for your event.

If you have more interests and ideas (or questions), PLEASE email them to me and we will see what we can do: jkklimes@swbell.net. I am also looking for ways to improve community and communication within the Park and would WELCOME your input!



Yellow Safety Vests

WHERE ARE YOUR YELLOW SAFETY VESTS???

We have bought and distributed over 120 vests, but rarely see them worn. When we see better compliance, we will buy more. Until then, don't look for them in the library. However, if you need one and you will wear it, contact Mark Crocker at 281-757-4456, and we will get one for you.

Miscellaneous

Yes, our copy machine is fully capable of making two-sided copies.

If you don't want HOL flyers, please toss them in your recycle bin.

We have tried to obtain free food distribution from various agencies but have not yet qualified.

We will not have a flu shot clinic this year due to not enough people signing up and previous no-shows.

We would all like more chair yoga, but John Marino is not currently available for more classes here.

Note: Next HOL meeting is **March 20 • 6 pm • Fireside Room**

Janie Klimes-Crocker

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

HOL COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS



COMMUNITY DANCING

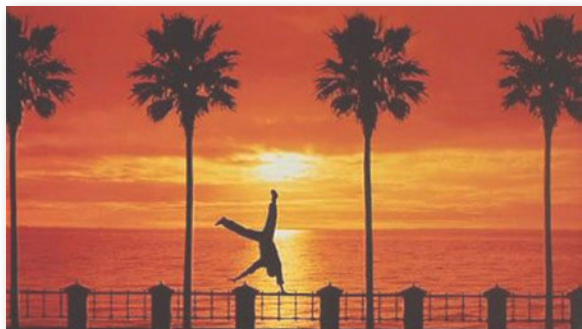
First Saturday of the Month • Saturday • March 2 • 7-9 pm

Steve Plocher will DJ nostalgic hits from KC and the Sunshine Band, Manfred Mann, The Mamas & the Papas, Elvin Bishop, and The Young Rascals, plus the usual great dance numbers by Michael Jackson, Pointer Sisters, Michael Franti, etc.



FILM NIGHT

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



LA Story Thursday • March 7 • 7 pm

Comedy (1991) 1 hr 38 min

Director Mick Jackson **Writer** Steve Martin
Starring Steve Martin, Sarah Jessica Parker, Patrick Stewart, Victoria Tennant, Richard E. Grant

A talking freeway billboard inspires a wacky weatherman to try to win the heart of a young newspaper reporter, who is struggling to make sense of the strange world of early 1990s Los Angeles.



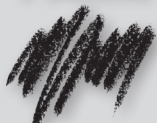
A Shot in the Dark Thursday • March 21 • 7 pm

Comedy (1946) 1 hr 42 min

Director Blake Edwards
Starring Peter Sellers, Elke Sommer, Herbert Lom

Inspector Clouseau is sent to investigate a murdered corpse found at a millionaire's chateau, but chief inspector Dreyfus is loath to allow the bumbling Clouseau near the case. While Clouseau's idiotic antics are barely tolerated, he tends to the case at hand.

ART IN THE PARK



by SUZIE LAHR

This month will be the fifth anniversary of the Marin Valley Gallery in our clubhouse, and on Saturday, March 23, a new exhibit will be installed. At our most recent artist meeting 18 resident artists attended, and many others in the Park have participated in our ongoing rotating exhibits over these past five years.

We welcome you as a resident artist to join us. If

you want to include a piece of your work in our March 23rd Gallery Exhibit, please pick up the exhibit information sheet on the specific requirements. These are located in the Art in the Park wall slot to the right of Matt Greenberg's desk. Call me at 415-884-9611 or email me at suzielahr@aol.com for further information on our exhibits and meetings, or to be added to our artist email list to which I send out updates and news on what we are doing.

There will also be a **Marin Valley Gallery 5th Anniversary Reception** to follow on **Sunday, April 14 from 3-5 pm**. This art and wine reception will be

for our residents and your friends and families to meet all of our talented resident artists here in the Park. Stay tuned and read your April Echo next month for specifics on that event!

We appreciate the support that Marin Valley residents and artists have given us in creating this world of art right in our beautiful Park.



Marin MOCA

500 Palm Drive – Hamilton Terrain An exhibition of paintings by **Janet Bogardus Viola Frey: Her Self** 1st and 2nd Floor Galleries March 2–April 15 Opening Reception for both Saturday, March 2, 5–7 pm

Marin Civic Center Bartolini Gallery

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

Marin Community Fdn.

Hangar 5 Hamilton Landing – Suite 2 “Exterior” – works by Michael Murphy, Nate Geare, Terry Thompson Through June 14 Weekdays 9 am–5 pm

Marin Society of Artists

1515 3rd Street – San Rafael Seeing Colors Through March 2

de Young Museum

Golden Gate Park – SF Monet – The Late Years Through May 27 Gauguin: A Spiritual Journey Through April 7

Recycling Batteries and Light Bulbs

by **PAULINE HAWKINS**

“I wrote this because in speaking to a resident of four years, I realized he had no clue of this service we offered to residents.”

Dear residents,

About ten years ago, I started the recycle program for the Park for dead light bulbs and batteries. I want to thank all of you who take part in this little program; you would be surprised if you saw how many bulbs and batteries we collect each month that we are keeping out of the landfill. Now that we have many more new residents, I want to make sure you know about this program that the Park supports. There are bins in the clubhouse breezeway for depositing burnt-out bulbs and florescent lights as well as dead batteries and used inkjet inks. It is so easy to forget and throw one or two in the trash. To

avoid doing so, I myself have a small bucket that I collect these items and every so often take to the clubhouse. Our maintenance staff take them to the recycling plant. So for those not familiar, next time you head to the exercise room, pool, or office, check put where these bins are located. We can all do our small part, and every bit helps.

Why Recycle Batteries?

When batteries begin to rot away in landfill sites, their chemicals may leak into the ground, causing soil and water pollution and ultimately harming animals, humans, and the environment. Recycling these items

helps eliminate toxic chemicals from our environment.

Why Recycle Fluorescent Light Bulbs?

Standard and halogen light bulbs should be disposed of in normal household waste. But compact florescent bulbs and tubes need to be recycled. These fluorescents thrown into your trash can will most likely end up in a landfill, causing mercury to be released into the environment. Mercury can be present as a liquid, vapor, or both, as the liquid will evaporate at an ambient temperature. Potential exposure to mercury is also a risk for anyone involved in handling them once they have been thrown out. ■

TERRAIN An Exhibition of Paintings by Janet Bogardus



“Untitled” by Janet Bogardus — mixed media

Marin Museum of Contemporary Art, Members Showcase Gallery, 2nd Floor • 500 Palm Drive • Novato
Opening Reception Saturday, March 2 • 5-7 pm • Exhibit: March 2-April 21



Marin County 2019 AARP Tax-Aide Services

*Free Income Tax Assistance for
Low- and Middle- Income Taxpayers*

What Is Tax Aide?

Free, one-on-one, confidential income tax counseling and tax return preparation service by volunteers for low- and middle-income taxpayers who file basic income tax forms and are 50 and older. There are no fees and no sales pitch for other services, and AARP membership is not required.

When and Where

Volunteer tax counselors are available from February until April 11–15 at locations listed below:

NOVATO 415-897-4147

North Marin Community Services, 1907 Novato Blvd.
Mondays & Thursdays 10 am–2:30 pm
Last day Monday, April 15

SAN RAFAEL 415-485-3348

Sponsored by San Rafael Goldenaires
San Rafael Community Center, 618 B Street
Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30 am–2 pm
Last day Thursday, April 11

MILL VALLEY 415-383-1370

Mill Valley Community Center, 180 Camino Alto
Tuesdays & Thursdays 9 am–1:30 pm
Last day Thursday, April 11

NORTHGATE (no phone)

First Congregational Church, 8 No. San Pedro Road
Tuesdays & Saturdays 10 am–3 pm
Wednesdays 3 pm–7 pm
Last day Saturday, April 13

FAIRFAX 415-453-8151

Fairfax Library, 2097 Sir Francis Drake
Mondays & Wednesdays 10 am–2 pm
Last day Monday, April 15

SPECIAL SESSIONS

NOVATO 415-899-8290

Margaret Todd Senior Center, 1560 Hill Road
All sessions by appointment only
Wednesdays, 10 am–2 pm: March 6, 13, 20, 27 & April 3

What to Bring

- A copy of your 2017 tax return
- Picture ID, plus Social Security Cards or ITINs (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number) for self, spouse, and dependents
- Social Security numbers for child care providers and alimony recipients
- Any and all W-2 Forms
- All forms 1099 for Social Security, pension, interest, dividends, stock/bond sales, IRA distributions, unemployment, etc.
- All forms 1095 and 1098, e.g. mortgage interest, tuition, health insurance coverage information for taxpayer, spouse, and dependents
- Checkbook or bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit
- Tax-exempt interest or dividend statements
- Cost basis of stock, bond, and other investments that you sold during the year
- To itemize, bring your list of paid property taxes, medical bills, charitable contributions, and mortgage interest.

Your tax return will be electronically filed at no cost

Questions? Email: marintaxaide@gmail.com
Website: www.aarp.org/taxaide ■

*Article submitted by resident John Reilly—
Tax-Aide volunteer*

The Dirty Dozen and the Clean Fifteen

by JOHN FELD

The nonprofit, nonpartisan organization Environmental Working Group (EWG) is set up to empower people to live healthier lives in a healthier environment. Using research and education, they strive to give consumers healthy choices. Note that EWG is not all about food. They examine many aspects of our environment, from tap water to shampoos, household cleaners, and pesticides to empower us to get to know our environment and protect our health.

EWG's research is guided by teams of scientists, policy experts, and lawyers who stand up for public health when government and industry won't. You can use them to check on the purity of your cosmetics and everyday products through their online databases and mobile apps. They empower consumers to make safer and more informed decisions about the products they buy and the companies they support. In response to consumer pressure, companies are giving up potentially dangerous chemical ingredients in their products and improving their practices.

Check their website (ewg.org). For details of your sunscreen, shampoo, detergents, etc., they have a handy smartphone app so you can check items right in the store before you buy.

One of EWG's most important and well-publicized efforts is their ranking of fresh produce based on its level of pesticide contamination. The results are compiled into their *Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce*, which is updated annually and is often presented as the Dirty Dozen and the Clean Fifteen. Studies have shown that exposure to pesticides leads to long-term health issues, including neurological problems and increased risk of cancer. Pesticides also are harmful to pollinators such as bees.



The **Dirty Dozen** is a list of 12 food items you should not buy unless they are pesticide free. The 2018 list actually added a 13th item:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Strawberries | Cherries |
| Spinach | Pears |
| Nectarines | Tomatoes |
| Apples | Celery |
| Grapes | Potatoes |
| Peaches | Sweet bell peppers |
| | Hot peppers |

What made the products so unhealthy? One-third of all conventional strawberry samples contained ten or more pesticides. Conventional spinach had relatively high concentrations of permethrin, a neurotoxic insecticide; 90% of conventional apples had detectable pesticide residues; 80% of apples tested contained diphenylamine, a pesticide banned in Europe; and more than 96% of conventional grapes tested positive for pesticide residues. One sample of conventional tomatoes contained 15 different pesticides and breakdown products—best to grow your own! Conventional potatoes had more pesticide residues by weight than any other crop. A minimum of 13 pesticides was detected on a sample of conventional celery. If you can't grow your own, it's best to buy these as organic. These foods have higher levels of pesticides than other produce types. On average, spinach samples contained nearly double the amount of pesticide residue by weight than any other crop.

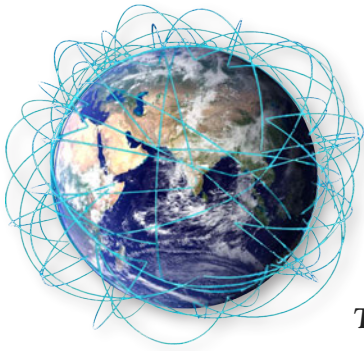
Overall, close to 70% of conventional (not organic) fruits and vegetables had some level of pesticide residue. Hot peppers, new to the list in 2018, tend to be contaminated with dangerous insecticides; thus buying this item organic or at least cooking hot peppers grown conventionally to help reduce insecticide levels is suggested.

EWG states that rinsing produce under tap water helps reduce pesticide levels before consumption, and research conducted at the University of Massachusetts shows that soaking produce in a baking soda and water solution may do an even better job of getting rid of pesticides.

The **2018 Clean Fifteen** produce items that tend to have the least pesticide residues are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Avocados | Asparagus |
| Sweet corn | Mangos |
| Pineapples | Eggplant |
| Cabbage | Honeydew melon |
| Onions | Kiwi |
| Sweet frozen peas | Cantaloupe |
| Papayas | Cauliflower |
| | Broccoli |

What makes the Clean 15 clean? Fewer than 1% of conventional avocados tested positive for pesticides. Only one pesticide was found on any of the 360 avocados sampled. Less than 2% of sweet corn samples had any detected pesticide residues—although most corn comes from Roundup Ready genetically engineered GMO seeds. Buy organic corn to avoid GMO crops. Less than 10% of conventional onion samples contained any pesticide residues. No detectable pesticide residues were contained in 90% of conventional pineapples and asparagus samples, 88% of mangos, 86% of cabbage samples, 82% of kiwi, roughly 80% of conventional frozen sweet peas and papayas, 70% of broccoli samples, and 61% of melons. ■



Globetrotters

by VICKI WADDELL

The globetrotters of our Park are amazingly different in the manner in which they travel, the destinations they choose, and the sights that inspire them to keep on trekking. This month we extend a big thank you to Janet Willett for sharing her experiences.

What prompted you to start traveling?

The “travel bug” hit me in high school when I traveled to Mexico City with my Spanish class. After my sister married, my family and I visited her in Germany. During college, I spent a summer at the University of Madrid. I continued to study languages in college and ultimately became an ESL teacher. When you study languages, it’s very easy to lose them if you don’t use them, so after graduation I decided to combine my two loves (language and travel) and went to live in Mexico City for a year and a half to hone my skills.

I asked Janet if she was afraid to go off like that on her own at such a tender age. “Not at all,” she said and then with a wink: “Well, my father had called the embassy in Mexico City, and the staff gave me some help to settle.”

What do you enjoy doing when you’re traveling?

I concentrate on hiking and biking. I love traveling from hut to hut or town to town,

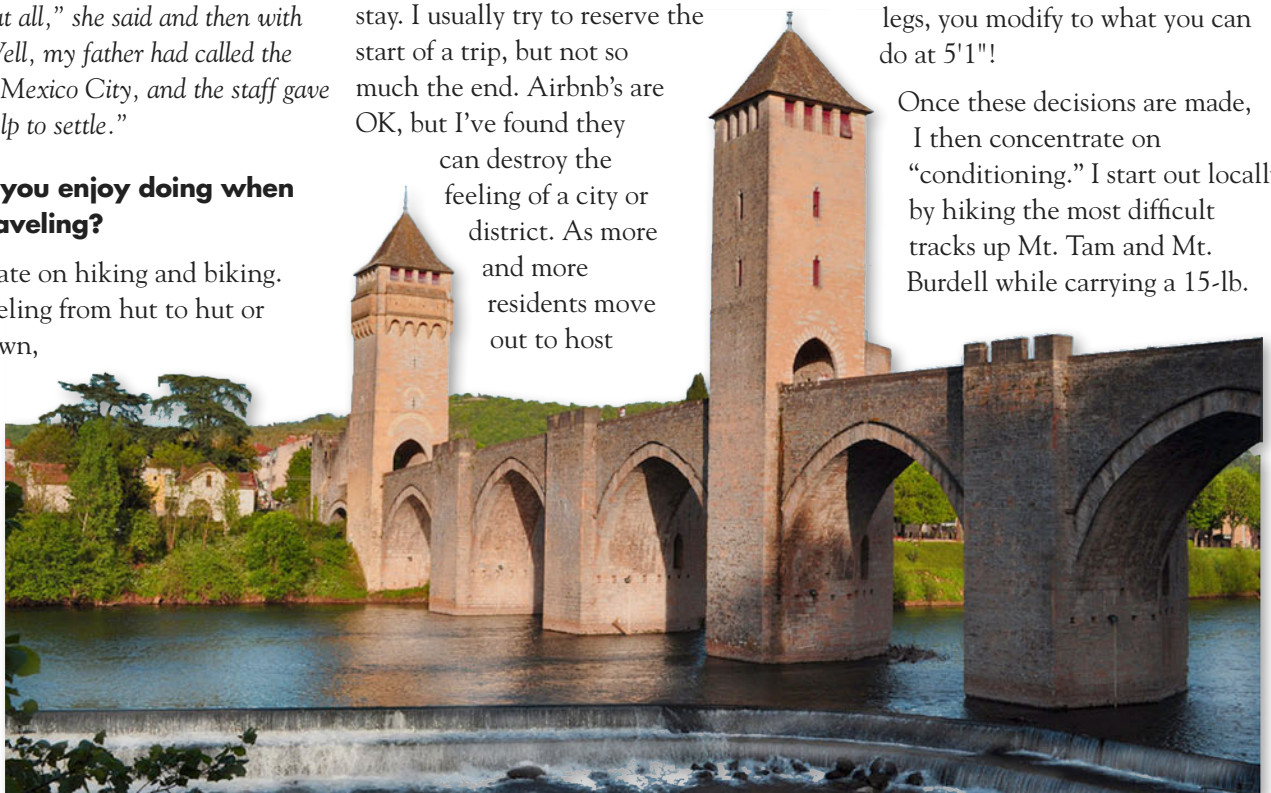
staying in hostels, meeting local people and other travelers. I prepare a budget and share expenses with a friend, such as food and accommodations. I can’t understand all the languages I hear, but I’ve learned that young people are most helpful because they’ve learned English by watching American TV cartoons with no dubbing. I’ve recently found this to be true in Slovenia, Portugal, and Corsica. To plan my trips I refer to guides such as *The Rough Guide to Travel*, which is similar to *Lonely Planet*. DK Eyewitness guides are great for go-to’s and history. And there are many guides specific to walking one of the pilgrimage roads. Once I’ve planned my hiking/biking routes, I then concentrate on where I’m going to stay. I usually try to reserve the start of a trip, but not so much the end. Airbnb’s are OK, but I’ve found they can destroy the feeling of a city or district. As more and more residents move out to host

travelers and enrich their purses, the reason why people lived in that particular city in the first place is lost, as is the community.

How do you prepare for your trips?

Since most of my trips are fairly rigorous, I first consider my limitations. It’s not a good idea to carry too much on your back (no more than 12% of your body weight). Also I select easy to intermediate treks that accommodate my age. And I check out elevations. No need to become oxygen deprived! For example: a four-hour 3,000’ climb carrying a 15-lb. pack is not possible for me. I’ve learned the hard way that when you can’t be a strong guy with long legs, you modify to what you can do at 5’1”!

Once these decisions are made, I then concentrate on “conditioning.” I start out locally by hiking the most difficult tracks up Mt. Tam and Mt. Burdell while carrying a 15-lb.



Pont
Valentré
(XIVe),
Cahors,
Lot,
Occitanie,
France

pack. The Mt. Wittenberg hike in Pt. Reyes is a good one. If you can't climb 1,200' in two hours, then modify the plan. I always caution friends to do their research and study trail maps before venturing out. As to accommodations, try staying in the hostels in Pt. Reyes National Seashore and in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. I've found them to be similar to what is available in Europe.

What do you love about trekking?

Oh, the slowness of walking. Last year I walked from Figeac to Cahors in France. I pretend I'm a peasant in the medieval days, walking the farmland to a village market, hearing medieval music, and then finally ending up in a big city gawking at a huge cathedral! Once I walked 250 miles over one month's time over the Grande Randonnée, which is a network of long-distance footpaths in France; then over the Pyrenees into Spain, to Pamplona, and into the La Rioja wine region. There are many networks of trails throughout Europe with detailed maps and often (but not always) good markings. Trails in France are marked with signs consisting of white stripes and red stripes that grade the major and minor trails, directions for turning, etc.

What are your favorite places to visit?

Kenya! Obviously there are places you cannot hike due to the wild animals,

but it's absolutely fascinating to drive around in a Land Rover and see wild animals roaming the earth! In Kenya, you can learn so much about the animals and the land from people who are required to study for two years in college before they are hired as

**It's better to go by
yourself than not go at
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you to trust the world.**

professional guides. I loved meeting the villagers and buying some of their handmade tribal wares to bring home for myself and friends. I also love Provence for biking and hiking. On most of these treks, you can arrange for food and lodging in advance. New Zealand, Iceland, Portugal, and Slovenia are magnificent.

What have you learned from your travels?

It's better to go by yourself than not go at all. Traveling teaches you to trust the world. I'm an optimist, but still there are times when difficult decisions need to be made. I specifically recall the time this guy was following too close to me in Mexico. So I shoved him off the bus! Certain cultures

will accept the lone traveler, but acceptance comes with understanding. For instance, people in Spain and Mexico often travel in groups. So I make friends with women along the way and converse with them as a pair or in a hiking group. I also learned that it helps to have a good reason for traveling. Being a teacher gave me professional credibility. As a result, this made me an acceptable lone traveler in their eyes.

What funny thing has happened to you?

In Spain, we needed a taxi to go to the bus station to get to Jerez de la Frontera. A man who thought he knew more than anyone how to get there instructed our taxi driver to go to the station. We got to a station, but it wasn't the train station! Nevertheless we got to Jerez in time to enjoy the Feria del Caballo (horse fair). Horses are rated by their gait, looks, etc. Similar to our dog show at Westminster, the horse that wins represents the finest example of its class. Whole families dress in beautiful Flamenco-style attire and drink sherry while riding elegant horses. Each family has their own casita. They dance, eat, party, and show their horses. Fabulous! ■

I would love to include your travel experiences in a future Echo. Please contact me should you wish to be interviewed. Kindest regards, Vicki Waddell (415-382-8684).



Goldfinches

Article and Photography

by DAVID GRAY



Lesser Goldfinch male



Lesser Goldfinch female

Goldfinches are seeming to be more prevalent in our area again as they migrate through. We see both the more common lesser goldfinch (*Carduelis psaltria*) and the American goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*) around this time of year. While they are both classified as year-round residents in their respective ranges, they do travel from north to south and back again as the seasons change. Both are classified as “New World Finches.”

The lesser goldfinches love the seeds in the American sweetgum trees that are around our Park. The sweetgums have five-pointed leaves that turn a beautiful bright reddish-orange in the fall, along with spiky seed pods that are about an inch in diameter. The goldfinches will sometimes hang on the seed pods themselves to eat the seeds. The seed pod that the female lesser goldfinch is hanging on in the accompanying photograph is literally hanging by a thread; it's a good thing that goldfinches weigh less than 0.4 ounce! The male is photographed in the same tree. The lesser goldfinch is the smallest of the finch family. Note the gray beak and the black cap that covers the eye of the lesser goldfinch male. These are distinguishing characteristics between it and the American goldfinch, as is the greener tinge to its feathers.

The American goldfinch is found more often in flocks foraging for seeds on the ground, as shown in the photograph of the flock on the Estero Trail in Point Reyes National Seashore. I have seen them playing games on dandelion puffs, landing near the top of the stalk and riding it to the ground. They really seem to love that game. They weigh more than the lesser goldfinch, typically half an ounce, give or take.



Both are smaller than a sparrow. The American goldfinch male is a brighter yellow than the lesser goldfinch, and its eye is distinct because of its black cap. Its bill is yellow.

Both the American and lesser goldfinches tend to travel in flocks, and both are nontthreatened species. They inhabit fields and floodplains, such as those around our Park. In the winter in particular they can be seen on bird feeders. Sunflower seeds and thistle are favorite foods.

Both varieties nest in small trees and large bushes and typically not in forested areas. The female selects and builds the nest while the male stands guard. She weaves her cup-like nest from reeds, leaves, bark, and even spider webs. For insulation the nest is lined with fur, hair, and plant fibers. They lay one brood per year of anywhere from three to six eggs. Incubation is about two weeks. After they hatch, the young are helpless and require warmth and food from the parents. Their lifespan is nearly eleven years for the American goldfinch, and at least seven years for the lesser.

Keep your eyes open for that flash of yellow—it might just be a goldfinch! ■



American Goldfinch male

