

T H E
ECHO

JANUARY 2017

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Letter from the Editor

The night before our six-hour drive to Thanksgiving dinner, our car lurched forward and stammered a heavy knocking sound while we were trying to drive. A tow truck, a rental car, and a week later, we returned to our car in the service department with newly replaced engine wires and a bill of over \$3,000. The problem — the cold weather, a warm car, and a perfect refuge for rats who seem to like Priuses and the tiny, low-voltage wires and insulation. Other cars are also chosen, but Priuses evidently have a long track record. After being alerted about the cost of our visitor and catching three more, some of our neighbors hired abatement professionals. I spoke with one of them. Short of wrapping up your car so there is no entryway underneath, the pros recommend traps as the most reliable and effective way to maintain a rodent-free space. Beyond hiring specialists —

What to Do?

You can lay traps yourself. Choose the larger size specially designed for mice. Instead of dog food, which can harden and grow old and stale, use birdseed, which keeps it fresh and is a good find for a hungry intruder. Birdseed already compacted with suet called “Peanut Crunch” comes as congealed, moist cake. It’s for wild birds but works well in the traps. I hear the shiny metal of the traps is a warning sign to a rodent and can deter interest. You can get housing for the traps that disguises them and also helps to avoid tripping them off yourself. I hear they are available at Friedman’s in Petaluma. Indoors, we’ve had a lot of success with electronic traps in the past. If you have an electrical outlet near your car, you can plug in Victor’s Pestchaser Rodent Repeller, which emits ultrasound at varying volumes and frequencies and cannot be heard by humans or non-rodent pets — highly recommended by another resident. We’ll give that a try too.

If you use the mechanical ones, designed for rats, which will also work for mice, use plain peanut butter as bait, which mix the peanut butter with birdseed, which is considered a treat and a good find for a hungry intruder.

Knowing whether rodents are housing themselves at night in your car can be difficult, short of opening the hood every day to check for evidence. You can position the traps along the sides and front of your car. Watch for signs around your car. And by laying down sand or powder, you can notice tracks.

Rats sleep during the day in nests they make from odd straw, string, and comfy findings in hidden out-of-the-way places. They like their privacy under ivy, juniper, and inactive places where they won’t be discovered. According to the specialists, keeping your surroundings clean and devoid of hiding places will help keep them away. They tend not to choose areas where they might be disturbed. Maintaining activity in a carport is better than a cluttered space that hasn’t been touched in months.

There are a lot of solutions online, but if they don’t work, they are just a tale.



IN MEMORIAM

Margaret Fuchs

Robert Kuder

Junie Pose

December 2016

THE ECHO

JANUARY 2017

MARIN VALLEY MOBILE COUNTRY CLUB

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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*).

DEADLINE Everything is due the 8th of the month or sooner for the following month's edition.

Letter to Residents

Greetings from the PAC Board.

Finances

Our finances are in order. The debt service coverage ratio is 2.76 as of the latest statement for the period ending October 31, 2016. The current reserves stand at \$3,128,069.90.

MVEST

MVEST is busy preparing its Firewise application for the December 31, 2016 deadline for submittal.

Making MVMCC a safer community is everyone's priority.

City of Novato

In the past month we welcomed the new City Manager, Regan Candelario, and learned of the resigning of Cathy Capriola, Assistant City Manager, to take a new position as City Manager of Sonoma. We wish her well.

We have learned that it will take some time to fill the vacated City staff positions in Novato, including the assigning of a new liaison to MVMCC, which Cathy Capriola had ably filled these past years. There are many issues pertaining to MVMCC that need updating and reworking. We at the PAC look forward to working with the City staff to resolve these in a timely manner.

New Time for PAC Meetings

PAC meetings will start at 6 pm from now on. The next one is January 4, 2017.

In service,



Jay Shelfer
PAC PRESIDENT
jjshelfer@yahoo.com

Management Update

Happy New Year: 2017!

Winter weather is here.

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

Put **extra flashlight batteries** in that kitchen drawer you can easily get to.

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

Good to have several **bottles of clean drinking water** on hand.

Register for emergency alerts at www.alertmarin.org.

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.

Sandbags are free from the Novato Corporation Yard, although you need to fill them yourself — 550 Davidson Avenue, Novato.

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

The **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, Fax 415-883-1971

Message from MarVal

2017

Dear Friends,

In reviewing the social events of 2016, the MarVal Board wishes to once again acknowledge and thank the many residents who so generously volunteered their time to ensure our success.

We are very excited about our plans for 2017, beginning with the **Scottish Dinner on Saturday, January 21**. You are encouraged to don your most flamboyant tartans and plaids and join us for an evening featuring the music of Scottish Highland Bagpiper, Scott MacLeod. Please refer to the reservation form below for the menu.

Based on the overwhelmingly positive response to our initial Mardi Gras celebration last year, we are delighted to announce we will once again celebrate this event on Saturday, February 25, 2017. Details will appear in next month's *Echo*.

The MarVal Board joins in sending our most sincere wishes for a happy and healthy New Year to all residents of Marin Valley.

With warmest regards,


Kathleen Dargie
 MAR VAL PRESIDENT
 kfdargie@aol.com

- January 21** *Scottish Night*
- February 25** *Mardi Gras*
- March 18** *St. Patrick's Dinner*
- April 22** *Mar Val Volunteer Appreciation Dinner*
- May 29 (Monday)** *Memorial Day BBQ*
- June 17** *Jazz Brunch*
- July 4 (Tuesday)** *BBQ*
- August 19** *Luau*
- September 4 (Monday)** *Labor Day*
- October 28** *Black Cat/Halloween*
- November 18** *Thanksgiving Dinner*
- December 16** *Holiday Party*
- December 31 (Sunday)** *New Year's Eve*

SCOTTISH NIGHT

January 21, 2017 ■ 5 PM Cocktails ■ 6 PM Dinner

M E N U

Salmon or Vegetarian Entrée
Roasted Potatoes
Salad
Dessert

Reservation deadline is January 18 at 5 PM or when 140 reservations have been received.
 For questions, please call Carolyn Corry at 415-370-6403

SCOTTISH NIGHT RESERVATION FORM

Please circle Entrée choice

RESIDENT _____

Salmon Vegetarian

RESIDENT _____

Salmon Vegetarian

GUEST _____

Salmon Vegetarian

GUEST _____

Salmon Vegetarian

Checks only (payable to Mar Val—NO CASH, please) Number attending _____ at (\$12/person) TOTAL \$ _____

Reservation deadline — January 18 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

Spring is almost here, and HOL is planning two great events this spring:

Art in the Park

HOL is proud to support our very own “artist colony” right here in the Park. Those of you who have attended Art in the Park in previous years know the delight of having our local resident artists share their works. For those of you who haven’t, you can get a peek

at the quality of resident art in our “galleries” in the clubhouse foyer, hallway, and Fireside Room.

Bark in the Park

Something new for our canine residents is in the early planning stage. We’re thinking treats, presentations, contests, and we might even have something for humans too! Please contact me if you can help.

Thank you for a fabulous Holiday Party to Mar Val and to all the bright, cheery folks who were there.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year,

Warm regards,

Miriam Dvorin Spross
HOL PRESIDENT

Hablo or Parlez?

If anyone is interested in being in a **conversational Spanish** and/or **French group**, sign-up sheets will be at the front desk after the New Year.



parlez-vous français?



AARP Driver Safety Course Change of Dates

SAVE THE DATES:

**February 28 and March 2
from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm**

Both days are \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members. Sign up (again, please) at the front desk in early February. This is an HOL-sponsored event open to MVMCC residents only.



Community Dancing

The first, first Saturday of the month community dance for 2017 will be Saturday, February 4, 7 – 9 pm.



Readers' Theatre Group

will resume the third Wednesday in March.

Community Connections

by JOAN NELSON

Hooray ... many of the Emergency Contact and Buddy Connection forms that were inserted into the last *Echo* issue were updated and returned to the office! If you have misplaced yours, you can get a new one from me (Joan Nelson at figleafjoan@comcast.net or 415-506-4166).

A bad neighbor is a misfortune as much as a good neighbor is a great blessing.

HESIOD

WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

How will you “do” the rest of your life?

A mere four hours could make all the difference. **Save 9 am to 1 pm on February 18** to create a fuller, deeper future for yourself and for others in your sphere of influence. Then look for

more information in the next February issue of the *Echo*.

For additional information you can contact:

Joan Nelson
figleafjoan@comcast.net
415-506-4166
415-595-6221 cell



Too Late Came the Rains

by **BILL DAVIS**

You were late, Mr. Storm, when you crackled and growled
And poured your water all over the ground.
Where were you earlier when the fire was all 'round?
Our homes nigh on fire, and you couldn't be found.

God help us ancient residents from the fiends that can plague us:
Unstable earth, shifting winds, and fuels that still threaten us.
Rising hills, steep slopes that we cross from on high,
We live at trail's end with views of the sky.

Some ignore the threat of the fire-prone brush,
Some deny that it's ready to explode in a rush.
Too late came the rains, just days in arrears.
Too close came the flames, unleashing our fears.

Smoke on the hill, just a small, tiny speck,
Then the wind all at once drew itself a large breath.
The smoke changed its form to a huge, raging mane,
And the hill to the west became all aflame.

The fiend raced downward with more wind and flame,
To ravage dry fuel and all it could claim.
As it raced toward our homes, we stood there appalled.
In moments, we knew it could devour us all.

It's nice to live in a trail's-end Park,
With the beauty of flowers and the song of the lark.
But prevention is our only defense
From a fire from hell, lit by one spark.

Fire can be a friend; it can keep us so warm;
Cozy if we respect it, disastrous if ignored.
Junipers old and dry still live in our space,
And can cause an inferno, destroying this place.

OK, Monster of Destruction, of such huge dimension,
I will do what I can in the name of prevention.
Though I may be old, my bite less than my bark,
I know all the junipers are just awaiting one spark.

If we respect you not, we will all suffer;
The Fire Monster will have us for supper.
Our fire was bravely extinguished well before dark,
But fire season will return again soon — let us ready our Park! ■

It Is Up to Us: *Defensible Space*

by **JOHN FELD**

The more you can eliminate the things that can lead a fire to your home, the more likely your home will survive.

Judith Cook, FIREWISE

Defensible space is the area around your home, decks, carports, and sheds where landscaping is not likely to foster fire. It ranges from 30 to 100 feet, including other nearby homes or up to 200 feet if wildland is next to your home.

For us at MVMCC, this means that defensible space includes the homes of close neighbors, thus what applies to us also applies to them. If your neighbor has flammable plants or debris around their home, you do not have a defensible space and you are not safe.



Example of the interconnectedness of a 100' defensible space.

Within defensible space:

- Create a three-foot, fire-free area on all sides of your home with no plants that contain sap.
- Clear gutters of leaves and debris.
- Trim any limbs hanging over the house on nearby trees.
- “Limb up” trees around the house by removing lower limbs up to 10 to 15 feet from the ground.
- Clear trees and shrubs of dead material, and keep them pruned. Space trees and shrubs far enough apart to slow the spread of an approaching wildfire.
- Regularly keep your property free of all dead leaves and needles.
- Choose deciduous trees rather than evergreens, when planting close to your home.

Defensible space is the area that gives firefighters a chance to save your home.

Without it, they will often decide to not even try but to instead move on to homes they can save. ■

TRAINING

MVEST IC Training

Sign up now, limited spaces available.

Saturday, January 14, 9:30 am

MVMCC Clubhouse

MVEST Block Captain Training/Refresher

Open to everyone. Block captains, reserve block captains, and people who are interested.

Saturday, January 21, 9:30

MVMCC Clubhouse

CERT Training in Novato,

Saturdays February 11 & 18, 8:30 am – 5:30 pm

Novato Fire Station 62, 450 Atherton Ave.

Novato, CA 94945

CERT Leadership/ICS Training

Thursday evening, February 16, 6 – 9 pm

Mill Valley Community Center

180 Camino Alto

Mill Valley, CA 94941

The Green Thing

In the line at the store, the cashier told the older woman that plastic bags weren't good for the environment. The woman apologized to her and explained, "We didn't have the green thing back in my day."

That's right; they didn't have the green thing in her day. Back then, they returned their milk bottles, Coke bottles, and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, using the same bottles over and over. So they actually were "recycled."

But they didn't have the green thing back in her day.

In her day, they walked up stairs because they didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. They walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time they had to go two blocks.

But she's right. They didn't have the green thing in her day.

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

But that old lady is right; they didn't have the green thing back in her day.

Back then, they 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 pizza dish, not a screen the size of the state of Montana. In

the kitchen, they blended and stirred by hand because they didn't have electric machines to do everything for them. When they packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, they used wadded-up newspaper to cushion it, not styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap.

Back then, they didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. They used a push mower that ran on human power.

They exercised by working, so they didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity.

But she's right; they didn't have the green thing back then.

They drank from a fountain when they were thirsty instead of using a plastic bottle or cup every time they had a drink of water. They refilled pens with ink instead of buying new ones, and they replaced the blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull.

But they didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar, and kids rode their bikes to school or rode the school bus instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service. They had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And they didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from a satellite 2,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza joint.

But they didn't have the green thing back then! ■

*Submitted by Pauline Hawkins
Blessings to you all this holiday season.*

Take a Hike

by MIKE HOLLAND

"Take a Hike" has been suggesting walks and rambles for about two years; yet somehow we have neglected to mention what is probably THE most popular hiking course in all of Marin County. It receives more foot traffic than even the famed Dipsea Trail. It's beautiful and easily traveled and has mountains, meadows, and ocean. It is the **Tennessee Valley**.

How did a local hiking trail in California earn a name from the South? Easy — all it took was for a ship to beach on the rocks of a notoriously dangerous cove. The ship was the S.S. Tennessee, a paddle steamer carrying 551 passengers lured to our state in 1853 to join in the Gold Rush. Thankfully, all 551 were rescued, and perhaps some made their fortunes after this dramatic start. Because of this accident the area adopted the names Tennessee Cove, Beach, and Valley. It could have easily been called something else because several other ships subsequently crashed on this beach. It pays to crash first, I guess. One final maritime note: Just over the hill from the cove is Pirates Cove, which suggests that lots of activity was occurring in this seaside region.

But what about the hiking? The trail starts at the parking lot at



the very end of Tennessee Valley Road. You'll gently walk 1.9 miles down a gradual slope until reaching the beach. Because it is a valley, you will always see green hills surrounding you. Wolf Ridge is to the south, Coyote Ridge to the north. You may see a coyote, but I doubt a wolf will appear; they are long gone from this area. You also won't see any elk, even though the valley was originally called Elk Valley by the natives.

Both ridges are accessible via several trails and fire roads. All are steep and reward the hiker with spectacular views from their summits. They are worth exploring if you are up to it. Tennessee Valley

itself offers plenty to keep you occupied while you walk. About one-half mile from the start are some stables to your left. Walk by them, turn the corner, and you encounter a fully functional Mongolian yurt. I think the Park Service rents it for retreats and special events. As you near the beach there is a freshwater lagoon that should have ample bird life. The beach itself is gorgeous, although, as noted above, quite treacherous. Use caution if you feel tempted to wade in the surf. And, as if we needed any more examples of how powerful Mother Nature can be: The north face of the cliff in the cove used to have a huge arch that collapsed a few years

ago. There were only a few folks nearby. They described the sound as "momentous."

The after-hike options for Tenn Valley are plentiful and varied. If you want "lite," there is a Starbucks and a Good Earth market at the Shoreline Shopping Center. More substantial fare can be had at the Dipsea Cafe on Shoreline. (At least until the owner makes good on his intention to close the cafe and open a marijuana dispensary.) If you really want to live it up, drop in at the Buckeye for good food and/or fascinating people watching in the bar.

Join the crowds; hike the Valley. ■

Dove

Article and Photography by DAVID GRAY

Doves (both white and mourning) are universal symbols of peace.

Tawny with a slight tinge of pink and quite shy, the mourning doves in our Park make their homes amongst us. They forage for seeds in the undergrowth and sit in treetops and on utility wires overhead. The distinctive and plaintive sound of their *cooOOoo coo coo coo* call gives them their common name, *mourning dove*. This is the call the male makes when trying to attract a mate. Once paired, mourning doves are monogamous, forming strong pair bonds.

Sometimes when I see a dove up in the trees, I will mimic its call by whistling their low-pitched song, and I am sometimes rewarded with an answering call; other times they just cock their heads and blink at me with what appears to be curiosity.

Mourning doves are widespread across the United States and range into southern Canada and

most of Mexico. They can raise up to six broods of two chicks each in a year, which accounts for their ability to maintain their population in the face of hunting that claims some 20 million birds annually and a high mortality rate of nearly 70 percent in their young. Their population is estimated at about 475 million individuals.

Doves are very strong and fast fliers. Their distinctive elongated diamond-shaped tail with its outline of black and then white feathers flourishes when the birds take off or land with a whistling of wings. In flight, they can reach speeds of 55 miles per hour! They can change direction of flight very rapidly to avoid predators. It is amazing to see their aerobatics at such high speeds, when it seems that they might well come apart from the g-forces.

Much is made by naturalists of doves' rare method of drinking. Most birds have to get water in their mouths, raise their heads, and then allow the water to trickle

down their throats. Doves have the ability to use suction to drink and can keep their beaks submerged as they drink. They also can tolerate brackish water without getting dehydrated, so they do well in desert environments where humans could not tolerate the same level of saltiness.

Doves eat seeds and almost nothing else; they appear to prefer pine and sweetgum nuts, which are plentiful in our Park. They temporarily store the seeds in a digestive organ called the crop (or croup or craw). They also swallow sand or fine gravel to aid in digesting the seeds.

We are blessed to have their beautiful if mournful-sounding calls here in our Park.

All my best to dear Bill Noble, the true birdman of Marin Valley who now lives in the Sierras. It will be impossible to fill his shoes, so I will simply try to follow in his footsteps.

May the peace represented by the mourning dove be with us in the New Year! ■



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

7

1-4 PM Mahjong 


6-8 AM Trash Pickup


9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise
7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker 


10 AM -2 PM Craft Group

11 AM -1 PM Whistlestop
(call Roberta 415-883-0843)

6 PM PAC MEETING 

9:15 AM QiGong with Dove 

6:15-7 PM Silent Meditation
7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker 

4 PM Canasta 

5-7 PM Pub Night 

7-9 PM COMMUNITY DANCE

1-4 PM Mahjong 


6-8 AM Trash Pickup


9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise
7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker 

10 AM -2 PM Craft Group


11 AM -1 PM Whistlestop
(call Roberta 415-883-0843)

6 PM MAR VAL MEETING 

9:15 AM QiGong with Dove 

6:15-7 PM Silent Meditation
7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker 

4 PM Canasta 

5-7 PM Pub Night
7:15 PM Bingo 

5 PM COCKTAILS
6 PM DINNER

ECHO DEADLINE

1-4 PM Mahjong 


6-8 AM Trash Pickup

9:30 AM Low-Impact Exercise
7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker 

10 AM -2 PM Craft Group

11 AM Ladies' Bridge
11 AM -1 PM Whistlestop
(call Roberta 415-883-0843)

7 PM HOL MEETING 

9:15 AM QiGong with Dove 

6:15-7 PM Silent Meditation
7:20 PM Poor Man's Poker 

4 PM Canasta 

5-7 PM Pub Night 

MAR VAL
SCOTTISH DINNER
5 PM COCKTAILS
6 PM DINNER


1-4 PM Mahjong 

6-8 AM Trash Pickup

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FEBRUARY 4
7-9 PM COMMUNITY DANCE

JANUARY