

T H E
ECHO

May 2022

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PAC Election

by **STEVE PLOCHER**

The seats currently held by Jay Shelfer, Carol-Joy Harris, and John Hansen are up for election. All three are running for re-election.

Sunday, May 8 – Saturday, May 14: Nominations accepted by election committee. Contact Steve Plocher (415-302-9043).

IF THERE ARE MORE THAN THREE NOMINATIONS:

- **Sunday, May 15 – Friday, May 20.** Election committee prepares and mails ballots.
- **Tuesday, May 24 (6 pm).** Meet the Candidates — Fireside Room.
- **Wednesday, May 25 — Friday, June 3 (3 pm).** Ballots accepted at the clubhouse voting box in the lobby.
- **Friday, June 3 (4 pm).** Votes counted.
- **Saturday, June 4.** PAC annual meeting; new PAC Board members introduced.

Surf's Up

by **KEVIN MULVANY**

All set for a dip in the pool or spa?

YOU BET YOU ARE!!



But don't forget to take a quick shower first.

Our pool and spa are well maintained with sophisticated, modern sanitizing and filtration systems serviced regularly by a professional pool service company. Although disease outbreaks involving public pools and spas are infrequent, they can and do occur from time to time and can be serious.

It just makes good sense and is a common courtesy to your neighbors to wash up a bit before practicing your swan dive into the spa.

Photo courtesy of Sean Casey, starring that fearless fashion marvel, Jeanne Skybrook. Wardrobe arranged by a resident claiming to be "Pierre of Paris" (seems unlikely).

THE ECHO 2022

MARIN VALLEY MOBILE COUNTRY CLUB

100 MARIN VALLEY DRIVE • NOVATO, CA 94949
415-883-5911 / 415-883-1971 FAX

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www.mobilehomeboard.com/

MARIN VALLEY

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PAC BOARD

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SECRETARY **Carol-Joy Harris 415-883-2824**
TREASURER **Stephen Plocher 415-302-9043**
AT LARGE **Vicki Waddell 415-382-8684**

STANDING COMMITTEES

FINANCE **Stephen Plocher**
MV PROJECT PLANNING **John Hansen, Jay Shelfer**
MVEST **John Hansen, Bill Davis, John Feld,
Stephen Plocher, Carol-Joy Harris,
David Gray, Kevin Mulvany, Erma Wheatley,
Pam Berkon, Joan Cervisi**

HOL BOARD

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1ST VICE PRESIDENT **Ed Collins 415-377-7696**
2ND VICE PRESIDENT **Timo Navsky 415-279-5935**
SECRETARY **Kamala Allen 415-306-6865**
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EVENTS & ACTIVITIES **Janie Crocker 281-414-3984**
AT LARGE **Anne Lakota 415-713-4606**

MAR VAL BOARD

PRESIDENT **Kathleen Dargie 415-884-2969**
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2ND VICE PRESIDENT **Pat Thurston 415-884-0740**
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TREASURER **Sandee Duncan 415-883-3034**
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DIRECTOR/HOSPITALITY **Larry Moore 883-0486**
DIRECTOR/RESERVATIONS **Carolyn Corry 370-6403**
DIRECTOR OF LOGISTICS **Larry Cohen 883-7786**

SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Email articles with "ECHO" as the subject to **Anila Manning: anilahere99@gmail.com** with a copy of the article in the body of the email. Images should be high resolution.

ECHO DEADLINE

The 8th of the month or sooner for the following month's issue

MVMCC *Management Update*

REGISTER FOR
ALERT MARIN
Emergency Notification System
to get emergency alerts
from Marin County at
www.alertmarin.org
415-473-6376

Warm weather and dry conditions will soon be here. Please be fire safe. Park maintenance will start trimming the dry grass and brush to create defensible space surrounding your home's common areas in June.

Please cut any dry grass on your rental lot within five feet of your home's perimeter.

Water conservation is mandatory. Our local reservoirs are very low. This is important. Water your gardens with a drip system or micro-irrigation only, and only at night or early in the morning. Water running down the street due to overwatering or broken irrigation systems is not permitted.

Remember, if you are experiencing any issues with your gas system, please call the front desk first before calling PG&E. MVMCC is your gas company. Maintenance personnel and Management have received training to help with any problems.

Rule #12, Carports: Keep up your home's curb appeal, and continue with your cleanup of stored items in your carport. Per Mobile Home Residency law, you are permitted only certain items in your carport. BBQs and manufactured patio furniture are among several accepted items. Parking space is paramount with the number of resident vehicles here at MVMCC. Please be considerate by cleaning out your carports and parking your vehicles under them.

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



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



About 130 residents attended the Community Meeting on April 7 to discuss the recent burglaries with Novato Police Officer Josh Wax. A recording of the meeting is available on our Marin Valley YouTube channel.

Letter to Residents

Greetings from the Park Acquisition Corporation Board.

Our finances are in order. Our cash, plus medium- and long-term reserves, is remaining close to \$5 million. The City Council, by recommendation of Novato City Manager and staff, have approved the use of the federal grant for the rehabilitation of our sewage pump stations and subsequent infrastructure. This will amount to the neighborhood of \$3 million; with this savings, our MVMCC reserves could then be used for other pressing matters.

The PAC Board agreed and proposed to the City to **pay down our existing \$3.5 million bank loan**. While this will initially reduce our reserves, we will no longer need to have a debt service of nearly \$652,000 on the loan. Funds used for debt service could then go to replenish and grow our reserves back to comfortable levels. On a good year, we normally are able to put in reserves of \$800,000 from rental income, less expenses for the yearly budget and capital improvements. So the debt service of \$652K could be added to these sums. Our thought is to have more than \$4 million in reserves for needs and emergencies.

The PAC board and MVMCC residents reviewed and approved the **proposed 2022/23 budget** and returned it to the City for approval. Management and the PAC are recommending **no increase in rent** for residents. The PAC board reviewed and made its recommendations for salary increases for MVMCC staff and relayed this to the City.

The **new Omicron variants** are very contagious and spreading throughout the area. Please stay careful.

The **water reservoirs** in Marin are full but are being drawn down with the hot weather and lack of rain. The Water Department is still urging us to be mindful of our water usage. The drought currently ongoing in California is likely to continue. We need to conserve what water we now have to last as long as possible.

The Novato Police held a community meeting on April 7 about **Park security**. Motion detector lights and cameras installed around your homes are helpful. Cameras installed to record visitors to your homes and nearby areas should be registered with the police. Should crimes be committed nearby, your pictures and video may give needed information to track down the perpetrators. Having well-lit streets and lighting around buildings is generally discouraging to thieves. Residents should act to record and observe, and to contact police and Park management should you observe suspicious activity here in MVMCC. **Do not approach or engage with suspects**, as this could be dangerous.

Find out what's going on.

Management, MVEST, HOL, and Mar Val are very active on your behalf, and their activities are reported on in articles here in this month's *Echo*. I urge you to investigate and participate.

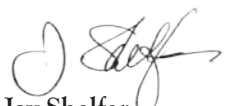
Meetings. The PAC Board's meetings are enriched by resident participation. Your observations and suggestions on how we can better serve your and the community's interests are always welcomed. Come to the Board meetings or email us to put an item on the agenda.

The agendas for future PAC meetings, which include the Zoom link, shall be posted 72 hours prior and are available to those on the mailing list. Contact **Carol-Joy Harris** at caroljoyharris@comcast.net to be added.

These meetings are broadcast live on Comcast Channel 26. A video of the April meeting is at <https://youtu.be/mVOPGYqxVHE>. The next Board meeting will be Tuesday, May 3, at 6 pm.

In service,




Jay Shelfer
PAC PRESIDENT
jjshelfer@yahoo.com



Evacuation—Part 3: Alarm to Car

by **JOHN HANSEN**

We have no way of knowing all the reasons for mandatory evacuation of Marin Valley, so we chose two of the most likely scenarios on which to model our focused preparedness. The elevated risk of wildfire here in Marin Valley, plus the fact that wildfire evacuations are becoming increasingly more common, guided our choice of using a threatening wildfire for the two scenarios. In Scenario I, we would have about two hours between the evacuation warning and the order to leave. In Scenario II, we would be ordered to evacuate immediately and would have no warning at all. In preparation for either case we strongly recommend that you review Emergency Evacuation Parts 1 and 2 in the March and April *Echos*, respectively. As nearly every wildfire in California in the last few years that has been too difficult to quickly contain also occurred on a Red Flag Day, we are assuming the same setting for both of our scenarios.

SCENARIO I — TWO-HOUR WARNING BEFORE EVACUATION ORDER

Let's assume you have conscientiously prepared your go-bag and that you've already completed your Red Flag Day essentials — what else is left? Well, that depends on you and your personal maintenance level. Following are lists of additional things you may want to consider. As everyone's needs will be different, we suggest you make your own list and **PRIORITIZE** it from most to least essential.

Your Ride

- If you are dependent upon someone else for your safe evacuation, finalize those specific arrangements now. Be sure to have a “Plan B” driver ... just in case
- Freshen drinking water in your car
- Keep a “relief container” in your car

Your Person

- Dress for extreme exposure and protection — long-sleeved cotton or wool only (no synthetics), solid shoes, wide-brimmed hat
- Hydrate yourself
- Monitor for evacuation updates

Last-Minute Planning

- If you have prearranged to shelter remotely with a friend or relative, now's the time to let them know you may be showing up very soon
- It's also a good time to alert your primary local and remote emergency contacts (friends, relatives, coworkers)
- Pull out your official evacuation map (previously provided to each local address by the Novato Fire District) and refresh your memory, then keep it handy in your car

Ideally the go-bag accessories and home prep items would have been checked off on an earlier Red Flag Day, but just in case ...

Go-Bag Accessories

- Laptop/charger/updated USB drive
- Cell phone/charger/backup battery
- Additional important documents not already in your go-bag
- Cash/checkbook/small valuables (jewelry, keepsakes)
- Keys
- Updated meds

Home Prep

- Bring flammables indoors (doormat, deck furniture, etc.)
- Close windows/doors
- Leave doors unlocked

- Leave some lights on indoors
- Leave side yard gates open
- Leave garden hoses connected and out front for fire agency use
- Leave buckets of water out front for fire agency use

This is not a comprehensive list, just some suggestions. You may wish to add or delete from your list according to your needs. For example, I will be sure to grab my stash of chocolate bars on the way out the door – not leavin’ *them* behind.

SCENARIO II — NO WARNING

From your prioritized list for Scenario I, do what you can do very quickly as time allows. First priorities should include “Your Ride” and “Your Person.” Try to leave immediately (within about 10 minutes). The longer you take, the greater your risk and the longer you’re likely to sit in traffic. It has been shown time and again that your car is the safest place you can be during your evacuation. When you get into your car, you’ve already accomplished the greatest part of your emergency evacuation, so don’t “blow it” down the road.

Road Trip

The last step of the evacuation will be the easiest if you have prepared as recommended. It’s the final stretch, the sprint to the finish line – the “Car-to-Safe-Shelter” step. The word “car” is a place holder for whatever safe, enclosed transport you may choose – car, truck, bus, motorhome, etc. Please don’t consider evacuating by bicycle, motorcycle, or on foot. Exposure to the elements during a wildfire can be brutal, even lethal.

- When you get into your car, take a deep breath and let it out slowly. This will help reduce your greatest remaining threat – anxiety. Do it again whenever you need to, like when a panicked neighbor cuts you off.
- If it’s smoky outside, turn on your car’s interior fan to the “recirculate” setting to keep the outside air from entering your car; keep the windows fully closed. This will greatly minimize your smoke exposure. You can also buy after-market HEPA filters for your car’s specific make/model/year. This can further

improve your interior air quality. Specific installation instructions can be found on YouTube.

- Remember, everyone is trying to leave at the same time and some will be far more anxious than others, so be extra vigilant.
- DON’T SPEED – drive the speed limit or less if visibility is impaired; be courteous and understanding of other drivers, even if other drivers are not – your safety may depend on it.
- Stay on the designated evacuation route unless directed by an official to do otherwise.
- If traffic is stalled, STAY IN YOUR CAR ON THE PAVED ROAD – it’s still the safest place to be even with approaching flames. Take another deep breath and don’t flinch.
- When you get to the freeway, expect the traffic to be like rush hour on steroids – even at a standstill. You may spend several long hours before you get to your destination. This is where the “relief container” can be very handy ... and be sure to stay hydrated; this is no time for a dehydration stupor or brain fog.

Drills and Exercises

Your specific “Alarm-to-Car” routine is likely the most important step in your emergency evacuation and yet may be very different from everyone else’s. We strongly recommend that you take the time to get your unique routine nailed down – then practice your own fire drill once or twice. It shouldn’t take long and can save a wealth of angst when it counts. “If you don’t practice, it’s just a good idea.”

On **Saturday, June 4** starting around 10:30 am MVEST will be hosting a Parkwide evacuation exercise (EvaX). We’re billing this as a “dress rehearsal” to encourage each of you to practice your “Alarm-to-Car” routine – including your evacuation apparel of choice – once the alarm sounds, then to hop into your car and leave the Park via Marin Valley Drive, our primary evacuation route. Go to the bottom of the hill at the Park entrance turnaround and get a free admission ticket to our Marin Valley EvaX Debrief and Pizza Party to follow shortly at the clubhouse. This will be the perfect venue to mix your evacuation preparedness thoughts and experiences with some fun.

Taking Action Before There is Smoke

by **ERMA WHEATLEY**

The goats did an outstanding job reducing the fire prone vegetation surrounding the Park. Now it's OUR turn to prepare our own homes and grounds inside the Park for the upcoming fire season.

But, what to do?

How to do it?

For a good overview of what is needed to reduce wildfire risk, create a defensible space, and home hardening, come to

EMBER STOMP

Marin's 1st Annual Wildfire Prevention Festival

Sat, May 28 • Civic Center • 11 am–5 pm

Find out from the experts (you can question face to face), along with food (local food trucks), music (four bands), art, games, demonstrations, and fun. See p. 8.

Windblown embers are one of the main ways that wildfires spread and cause our homes to ignite.

Grants End in June

You can find out about grants available for defensible space and home hardening work at the festival if you haven't already applied for one. Or find out now on the Fire Safe Marin website: <https://firesafemarin.org//programs/grant-opportunities/>

Grants from the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) end on June 30. See also www.novatofire.org/prevention/wildfire-and-vegetation-management for qualified goods and services for matching grants awarded, equal to 50% of monies spent up to \$5000. The program ends June 15, at 5 pm. Programs for the next fiscal year should start again in July.

Examples (but not limited to):

Home Hardening Matching Grant Program

- Replacing non-WUI compliant materials for WUI rated materials
- Installing fire rated vents or 1/8 or less wire mesh
- Installing gutter guards
- Replacing single paned windows with double paned tempered glass windows
- Replacing wood siding with stucco/cement board

Vegetation Management Matching Grant Program

- Removal of dead vegetation
- Removal of juniper, bamboo, Italian cypress, rosemary, and fountain grasses
- Removal of shredded bark mulch
- Clearing debris from gutters and roofs
- Installing rock around perimeter of structure

How to Think Lean, Green, and Clean this Spring

- Allow space between individual plants, or plant in small, irregular clusters or islands.
- Remove dried grass, weeds, dead branches, and all other dead vegetation.
- Properly irrigate plants using healthy soil to remain green summer through fall.
- Mulches: 0–5' from homes — use non-combustibles i.e. rock, gravel, and stone. From 5' and beyond — use composted woodchips or bark nuggets to a two-inch depth, not fine stringy mulches.

Fire Smart Landscaping UC Master Gardeners Tip

Marin County Annual Disaster Simulation May 14

Saturday, May 14 • 8:00 AM – 1:30 PM • Hall Middle School • Free

230 Doherty Drive • Larkspur, CA 94939



A free half-day event to refresh CERT skills with a simulated post-earthquake scenario: search and rescue, triage, transport, and basic first aid with live “victims.”

Please note: Participants need to show proof of vaccination. All current county COVID protocols and guidelines at the time of the event will be adhered to.

Register: www.eventbrite.com/e/marin-county-annual-disaster-simulation-may-14th-2022-certs-we-need-you-tickets-309937219567

MARIN'S 1ST ANNUAL WILDFIRE PREVENTION FESTIVAL



**11AM - 5PM
FREE
ADMISSION**

**SAT. MAY 28, 2022
MARIN CENTER,
FAIRGROUNDS ISLAND**

**FIND OUT HOW
TO PROTECT YOUR
FAMILY!**

FEATURING:

4 LIVE BANDS FOOD TRUCKS
GAMES FOR KIDS GOATS
FIRE SAFETY DEMOS FREE RESOURCES
40+ PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



fire aside



WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG

Message from Mar Val

Dear Friends,

The long wait is almost over. Mar Val's official start to the summer season will take place on Monday, May 30, with the annual Memorial Day BBQ. As in the past, we will determine whether the event will take place indoors or outdoors based on the weather forecast.

As advised in last month's *Echo*, our fiesta marking Cinco de Mayo takes place at Pub on Friday, May 6. Please be aware reservations are required for the

Mexican dinner, which will be served at approximately 5:30 pm.

This photo depicts our beloved benefactor Patrick Wheatley as we celebrated his many years of volunteering – on his 93rd birthday!



With warmest regards,



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

MAR VAL PRESENTS



Cinco de Mayo Pub Event – Friday, May 6

Pub at 5 pm

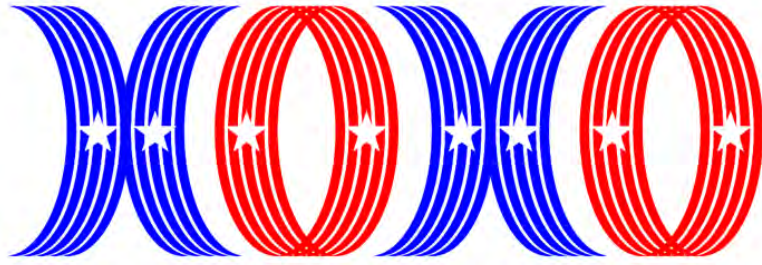
Dinner Service at 5:30 pm

**Reservations are required if you wish to enjoy this delicious dinner.
Vegetarian option will be available.**

Reservation deadline is May 3 @ 5 pm or when 100 reservations have been received.
\$10 per person, no cash, make checks payable to Mar Val. Questions, call
Carolyn Corry @ 415-370-6403.

All attendees must show proof of full COVID vaccination and booster.

Remembering on Memorial Day
Thank You, Veterans!



Monday, May 30

Cocktails 5 pm • Dinner 6 pm

Hamburger / Hot Dog / Morning Star Veg Burger / Impossible Burger

Potato Salad Baked Beans

Ice Cream Bars

Reservation deadline is **May 25 @ 5 pm** or when 120 reservations have been received. \$15 per person. Checks payable to **Mar Val. NO CASH.**

Questions – call Carolyn Corry @ 415-370-6403.

All attendees must show proof of full COVID vaccination and booster.

Singer/Storyteller Doug Adamz



by **MAGGIE SIEGFRIED**

Friday, May 20 • 6 pm • Pub

Mar Val and I will be sponsoring a wonderful (formerly) Bay Area musician and storyteller named Doug Adamz to perform on Pub night Friday, May 20 at 6 pm.

Doug Adamz is a dazzling guitar player, a soulful singer, and an outrageous harmonica player. Add the insightful poetry of his lyrics and his terrific sense of humor – Doug puts on a show you'll never forget. Doug is well known in Marin County and has performed at the Nazz Coffeehouse and many other local venues. He will be accepting donations.

A Great Way to Meet Your Neighbors

Volunteer for Mar Val Dinner Parties

Our Mar Val Board is looking for some new volunteers to sell drink tickets or help out decorating tables, serving the main dinner entrée, or serving dessert. We would enjoy having new volunteers join our team. It is a great way to meet your neighbors.

If interested, please contact Sandee Duncan at 415-883-3034 or Larry Moore at 702-596-6897.

Home Owners League Message

Neighbors,

We had a remarkable turnout at the communitywide presentation by the Novato Police Department concerning the **large increase in theft in the Park**. About one quarter of all residents attended, and we were presented with a lot of information.

The main message was that it is happening all over Marin, and the best thing we can do is **lock up everything**: our houses, sheds, cars, outside containers. It was also mentioned that motion-detector lights are a good preventive measure.

- If you drive a car with a remote control with a panic button, consider sleeping with the remote at your bedside, and if you hear something unusual during the night, press the panic button to activate your car alarm, which will almost certainly scare away would-be robbers.
- If you call the police from a cell phone, using 911 will route your call through another agency and take more time. You can call the Novato Police dispatch center directly at **415-897-4361**. It is wise to have this pre-entered in your cell phone.

Water Aerobics class is once again in full swing and welcomes those in need of gentle and effective group workouts.

We are going to have more **lounge chairs** by the pool and more umbrellas, which are much requested.

More and more residents are relying on the **Contractors Guide** available on our website and in the library. Please take a few moments to submit your reviews, and if you find the website or the paper forms too much, you can always call David Tetta or Inga Grace (telephone numbers can be found in the new directory), who will record your experiences. You can also email marinvalley.net@gmail.com.

HOL is about to launch a program to offer **walking poles** for those who have trouble walking freely. These poles are a great help with balance issues. We welcome donations, in case you have some poles you don't use. They will be available to borrow for those in need.

Our meetings are "live" again in the Fireside Room, and we welcome residents to attend. If you would like to receive an agenda before the meetings and a copy of the minutes, please send me an email at johnmfeld@gmail.com.

Please stay safe and enjoy the coming warm weather.

John Feld



John Feld
HOL PRESIDENT
johnmfeld@gmail.com
510-495-4138 cell



Understand Your Inner Archetype

by **KAMALA ALLEN**

Thursday, May 5 • 5-7 pm • Fireside Room

One of the many treasures who grace our community is a woman named Jessica Fergus. You may have met her at one of our events. She is someone who has, through her extraordinary life, gained a lot of wisdom to share with us, especially in the area of archetypal psychology. Recently, Jessica expressed a desire to give back to our community since it has opened its arms to her as a friend. One of her special talents is facilitating workshops that give an understanding of our personal archetypes

reflected in the images of Tarot cards. Through this method, called Gestalt Tarot, one can develop clarity regarding finances, relationships, health, career, and dreams by exploring archetypal personalities within.

She will be offering a free two-hour workshop in Gestalt Tarot in which residents will work with a variety of wisdom cards, including those of Osho, Byron Katie, Esther Hicks, and Louise Hay. Her HOL-sponsored workshop will take place on Thursday, May 5 at 5-7 pm in the Fireside Room. All residents are welcome. For further information, please text her at 415-595-3918 or email her at jessica8@mindspring.com.

Breezeway Craft Market Now on First SATURDAY

by **TARA PLOCHER**

Saturday, May 7 • Breezeway • 1 – 4 pm

Due to popular demand, the breezeway craft market is moving from the first Sunday of the month to the first Saturday of the month

You'll still find luscious baked goods and a colorful array of jewelry, gifts, dolls, pottery, and surprises! Email Tara at taraplocher@gmail.com with questions.

Dancing

Mambo merrily in the Meadow or swing smoothly on the clubhouse deck – our free-form dancing gathering is a movable feast on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

Dancing times and locations may be subject to change ... a group email is sent out the day of the dance. Please contact Steve Plocher if you'd like to be on the list: stephenplocher@hotmail.com.

NightJet Mystery Theater

by **VICKI WADDELL** and **JANIE CROCKER**



Sunday, May 22 • 7-9 pm • Ballroom

On KMVC Radio Station ride along with fellow passengers on the NightJet Train that will be speeding you across the Alps from Florence, Italy to Vienna, Austria. Although we always hope our listening audience will enjoy meeting their fellow travelers who come from far and wide, we unfortunately cannot guarantee your safety as our research indicates that shenanigans are afoot. Apparently some of the passengers have harbored secrets that have festered over time and may lead to serious repercussions. So, we caution you to watch your step, as you dive into what happens in our World of Mystery on the NightJet train.

A Note from the Producer

Production of our community play is nearing the end, and the day of the event is on the horizon.

You **ARE** guaranteed to have a really fun time and find out who in the Park has acting talent.

Sacher-tortes (**John Feld**) and lemon bars (**Cherrie Dougherty**) will be served at the end of the play to all who attend, along with various cordials (think brandy and Baileys) and nonalcoholic drink choices.

The notice and sign-up sheet will be in the clubhouse lobby on **May 1** along with a box for your \$5 check. **NO CASH**. Make checks payable to **HOL**. The deadline for signing up is **Wednesday, May 18**.

You will not be guaranteed a reserved seat unless you put your check in the box. Space is limited to the first 100 people. If you are unable to bring your check to the clubhouse, let **Janie Crocker** (janieklimes1948@gmail.com or 281-414-3984) know and she will come get it.

If you have any questions, call Janie at the number above.

This event is for residents only; no guests. You must be fully vaccinated and once-boosted to be allowed entrance. If your proof of vaccination is not on record, email a picture of your COVID card to **Carolyn Corry** at ckcorry@comcast.net

Everyone Is Welcome to Bark in the Park!

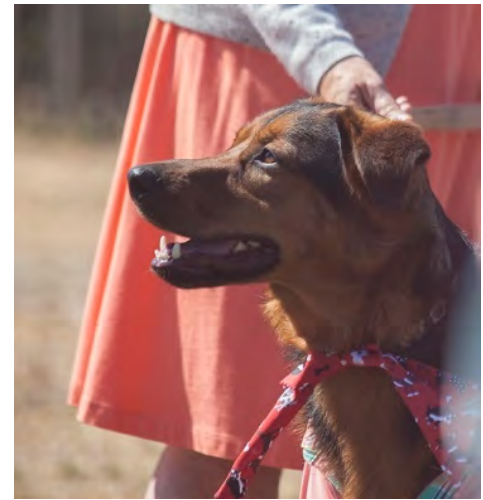


by **TIMO NAVSKY**

Saturday, May 28 10–11:30 pm

Dogs! Dog lovers! In and out of costume, playing, parading ... a good time will be had by all in the meadow at the end of Sunrise.

There will be prizes for Best Costume, Best Trick, Youngest Dog, Oldest Dog, Smallest Dog, Furriest Dog, Most Hairless Dog, and for which person has owned the most dogs in their lifetime! There will be a short parade.



We'll have chairs set up, a tent for shade, drinking water for the pups, and water and cookies for the adults. Dogs must be on leashes. Please come and join us for some great entertainment, some good laughs, and a chance to participate in a community event where you can meet your neighbors! For details contact **Timo Navsky**, pgemsky@comcast.net or 415-279-5935.

Marin Valley and Heartwood Pen Pals Meet in Person

by **KIM HOLSCHER**

Over the last few months, Marin Valley community residents have enjoyed a role as pen pals. Kim Holscher, the third-grade teacher at Heartwood Charter School in Fairfax, initially asked for volunteers to serve as pen pals for the students. Each child then started the process with a letter to their new pen pal. After the exchange of a half dozen letters or so, Kim arranged an opportunity for the pen pals to meet one another in the outdoor classroom, which is located in the Bothin Youth Center Girl Scout Camp.

Kim and the students arranged several activities for a fun-filled hour on April 5. The students showed their handwork, such as weavings and knitted recorder cases. They played several tunes on their recorders, including "She'll Be Coming Around the Mountain." The students served refreshments and gave a tour of their handmade "fort" under construction in the nearby woods.

A special presentation was made to John Feld for his many months of volunteering to teach baking to the students.



The idea to match community residents as pen pals sprang from Kim's appreciation of the common interests and values both communities share: in spite of the age difference of several decades, both groups are creative and interested in art and music, enjoy outdoor activities, and value thoughtful interaction, both in person and in writing. And everyone writes in cursive!

We are hoping to host the students in mid-May around the pool and clubhouse art gallery. Meanwhile, more residents have volunteered to become pen pals for the second grade, so the connection between the two communities continues to grow.

Speaking of Death

by ANEESHA DILLON

Saturday, June 18 • 3–5 pm and the next five Tuesdays • Fireside Room

Every culture has its own norms and values, and each society has its particular etiquette about what is acceptable to talk about “out loud” and what is not. In our society, for multiple generations, speaking about old age, illness, and especially death have been generally taboo. Until very recently, the tendency for many people has been to avoid the whole idea for as long as possible.

I still carry the grief I felt as a 10-year-old when everyone in our extended family, even the kids, knew that our beloved grandfather had leukemia and was going to die – everyone except for him, that is. They said, “It’s better if he doesn’t know; he couldn’t take it.” In the six long years of his illness he was never told, though he must have known on some level. I never got to say goodbye to him. It was heartbreaking for all of us.

Fast forward 60-something years, and things are changing in our culture around how we relate to old age, death, and dying. Particularly since the Hospice movement began in this country 30 or 40 years ago, our cultural norms are shifting toward what we could call a more “death affirmative” attitude.

Many people are learning to accept the fact of death as a natural part of life. And because it’s going to happen to all of us, it’s easy to recognize the importance of compassionate comfort care for all people at the end of life. We are fortunate to live at a time when death can come out of the shadows and reveal itself as a sacred passage of life, just as birth is.

It is natural to feel some fear when we remember that, one day, we too will die. No one really knows where we’re headed – it’s a journey into the unknown. Our Circle of Friends presentations and discussions give us the chance to become more familiar with the issues all of us will meet at the end of our lives.

Our new awareness shines a light onto what we have been accustomed to fear as darkness. Once the inevitability of death is truly accepted, it can be recognized as a natural and sacred event in life, and our fears around death and dying can begin to relax.

And a strange thing begins to happen when death is invited into our lives; a deeper gratitude arises along with a new appreciation for the value of this life and the time we still have left to live it.

This will be the subject of a series of classes that I offer in June and July (in person in the Fireside Room), in conjunction with the Circle of Friends group. The series is called, “The Best 3 Months: End of Life Fulfillment, Care, and Planning.”

Ask yourself this question: Would you be prepared if you learned today that you had only three months to live? This class asks you to imagine just that and then explore your wishes for those three months in the domains of the physical, spiritual, emotional, life legacy, and after-death care.

We will work with a new domain each week over a six-week period, with reflection questions (yes, there is homework), discussions, and experiential exercises. And we now have a shelf in the library!

Our first meeting will take place on Saturday, June 18 at 3–5 pm, and the five subsequent meetings will be on Tuesdays, June 21–July 19 at 3–5 pm.

The class is free, though if you decide to join, your regular attendance is expected.

For more information and to register, contact me at 415-827-7137 or devaaneesha@hotmail.com.

Our regular Circle of Friends will be May 24 at 4pm; the program will be announced soon.

Trip of a Lifetime

By **VICKI WADDELL** and **JUDI PURDOM** (Judi's Photography)

About two years ago I interviewed Judi Purdom about her 2019 trip to Tasmania/Australia and New Zealand. Then COVID hit and we went into lockdown. As Park residents, we did our due diligence, stayed safe, and we can now venture out again.

Whether you decide to travel locally or afar, here's an inspirational story to get your boots a-walkin'!



Judi's trip wasn't just a vacation but a five-week sojourn – a dream that goes back to 1974 when she and her family were seriously considering moving to Australia. Life plans changed, but she never lost the wanderlust of wanting to visit the southern hemisphere. She set out, along with other adventuresome souls, on a guided tour with Overseas Adventure Travel to "Down Under." I asked Judi to tell us her observations, impressions, and stories.

History/Government/People

For being such a developed country, I was interested to learn that Australia was originally settled by criminals from England who were just dumped into a penal colony in New South Wales. Didn't make any difference what their crime was, they were obligated to do seven years' hard labor, even though some of them were only eight years old! Port

Arthur, with the original jailhouse and other government buildings, is now a National Heritage site.

Australia is populated by aboriginal Australians who are indigenous to their land, whereas the Maoris, who reside in New Zealand, originated in Polynesia. I had hoped to see original aboriginal dwellings, but these indigenous people have been around for over 50,000 years! Yes, there are museums that house artifacts, etc., but the aborigines don't stand apart; they are woven into everyday life along with 500 other clan groups who together have made Australia one of the most ethnically diverse societies in the world today.

In New Zealand, the sheep outnumber the people, or "Kiwis," by 7 to 1. The Maoris were the first to inhabit the North and South islands, but their influence in government has been latent. Today, Maori culture is included in public events, sports, ceremonies, and the arts.

Here's a fabled flightless Kiwi bird:



All the major cities in both Australia and New Zealand are on the waterfront. From an

architectural point of view, they never tear down the older historical buildings; they just put up new buildings right next to the old buildings.

Americans today seem so polarized, but the Aussies and Kiwis appear to have it together, meaning they get things done! To this extent, they are light-years ahead of us. For example, when China first tried to buy up all their dairy farms, the Aussies wanted no part of that. They immediately initiated regulations to stop them and were initially successful. Climate change is a BIG deal to them, and everyone is on board sustaining and improving on the resources they have.

Regardless of their station in life, the Aussies and Kiwis are genuine and friendly (including the press),



and these characteristics are attributed not just to those who work in the tourist industry. Their roads are clean. Even cities like Sydney and Melbourne, which have approximately five million inhabitants, are cleaner than Los Angeles with a similar population. Auckland (at 1.6 million) in New Zealand is far cleaner than San Francisco at 885,000. Of interest: the countries are alike in that they are desperate for doctors!

Fun Activities

I went on this trip without any expectations; I was open to everything. I repeated October 14th twice by crossing the International Date Line; petted a koala; fed a kangaroo; rode in two prop planes back and forth from Alice Springs; saw *West Side Story* in the Opera House in Sydney along with a private backstage tour; saw Tasmanian devils, crocodiles, and nocturnal wombats; trekked a bit of Cradle Mountain (very rugged);



and took five sulfa baths in a swimsuit that after many washes still stinks!

Other highlights included riding on a riverboat down the Dart River in Queenstown. This is a shallow river, so I was able to see lots of crocodiles along with one very cute baby croc bathing in the sun on a small log. Also saw a very large python wrapped around a tree. Loved the houses in Railton, Tasmania. Each has its own hedge carved into animal shapes!

The Te Papa Museum in Wellington, New Zealand, was a very emotional experience for me. This is not like our de Young or Legion of Honor. Rather, this museum provides deep insights into the country's history, culture, geology, and flora and fauna as well as its deep ancestral links to the Maori people. All the exhibits come to life so you can actually read, feel, and smell the history.

My favorite section is dedicated to the WWI veterans, pictures of whom were life-sized.

Yes, I threw a boomerang, and yes, it came back. The aborigines can actually kill a person with a boomerang!

Another favorite outing was the walking narrative of the telegraph station nicknamed ANZAC in Alice Springs, which is another World Heritage site. ANZAC stands for Australia and New

Zealand Army Corps, whose soldiers fought in WWI. Each year, veterans who fought in wars all over the world starting with WWI are remembered. In fact, since 1916, mothers and wives have baked ANZAC cookies and still send them off to their soldiers so they remember their homeland. They taste like oatmeal cookies dressed with either nuts or fruits. Very good!

Our Aussie guide had a very thick accent, so when we visited the outback, I thought he was telling us all about the "school of the year." It wasn't until later that I realized he was saying "School of the Air" in Alice Springs. This school got its name from the manner in which children learned their lessons, i.e., by listening to their radios at home. The outback is VAST, and there are no brick-and-mortar schools. Not much has changed, except today the radios are being replaced by computers.

Overall Impressions

After five weeks abroad, once I came home, I couldn't remember anyone's name! Since I had left, I noticed that California gas prices had gone way up. Well, they're nothing compared to the beastly prices Down Under! No matter where I went, the scenery and towns could be placed right in the US. Architecture, parks, gardens – so very similar – made me feel right at home. Many times I've heard the cliché, "trip of a lifetime" and just sort of laughed it off, but now I appreciate its meaning. This was my trip of a lifetime!



The Magnificent Frigatebird

Text and Photography by **DAVID GRAY**

The Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) is the largest of the frigatebird species, with an immense wingspan of 7 to 8 feet. It is found on subtropical and tropical oceans and seas, and our recent trip to Baja gave me the opportunity to photograph them.



We caught them in their mating season, so the male was at the height of his coloration, with a spectacular red gular sac being prominently displayed. The females, below, are very differently colored (dimorphic), which is rare in seabirds. The female's head and breast are white with some mottling of black feathers on its neck and breast. In breeding season, the female's eye ring turns a light blue, which is visible if you enlarge the photo.

The beak is reminiscent of that of the cormorant, long with a hooked tip.

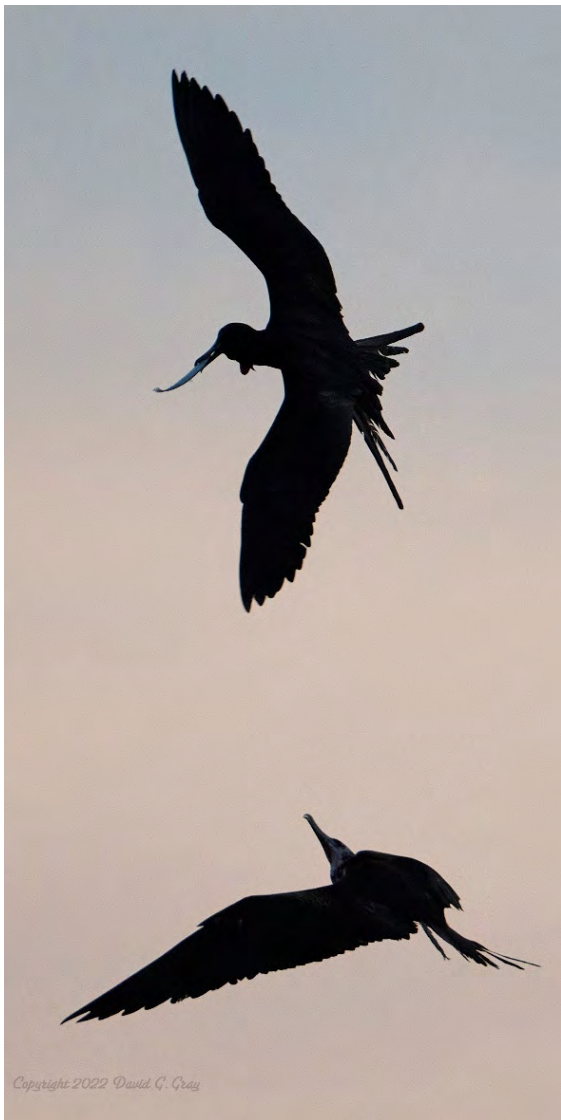
Magnificent Frigatebirds are monogamous, and their usual nesting areas are in mangroves. These frigatebirds were nesting on uninhabited and environmentally protected islands in Bahia Concepción, so their nests were on the ground.



We were about halfway down the eastern side of the Baja peninsula off the Sea of Cortez on Bahia Concepción when we saw these birds swooping down to grab fish near the surface of the water. They are also notorious for stealing prey caught by other seabirds, such as cormorants, by scaring them into dropping their catch. We won't see these magnificent birds near our Park, but I hope you enjoy seeing them through my lens.








Just another Baja evening with a frigatebird swooping down on unsuspecting fish



Frigatebird male with needlefish, female frigatebird below



Two frigatebirds and a gull

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
1 10-10:30AM Meditation <i>Zoom/contact Michael Hagerty</i>	2 6AM Trash 10-11AM Water Aerobics 5PM MVEST <i>Zoom/ contact John Hansen</i>	3 6PM PAC Board Meeting <i>Zoom/ contact Carol-Joy Harris</i>	4 10-11AM Water Aerobics 2-3PM Craft&Chat <i>Library/contact Tara Plocher</i> 6PM HOL Board Meeting <i>Fireside Room</i> 7PM Dancing	5 11AM-12PM Rollin' Root  5-7PM Inner Archetype	6 10-11AM Water Aerobics 12PM Mahjong 1-1:30 PM Rollin' Root 5-7PM Pub w/ Cinco de Mayo 7PM Dancing	7 1-4PM Breezeway Crafts Market 1:30-3PM Drum Circle 7PM Dancing	
8 10-10:30AM Meditation <i>PAC Board nominations open</i> Echo Deadline	9 6AM Trash 10-11AM Water Aerobics 5PM MVEST	10	11 10-11AM Water Aerobics 2-3PM Craft&Chat 6PM Mar Val Board Meeting 7PM Dancing	12 11AM-12PM Rollin' Root 	13 10-11AM W. Aerobics 11AM FireSafeMarin /Zoom 1-1:30PM R. Root 5-7PM Pub 7PM Dancing <i>PAC Board nominations close</i>	14 7PM Dancing	
15 10-10:30AM Meditation 10AM-12PM Installation of new Gallery exhibit	16 6AM Trash 10-11AM Water Aerobics 5PM MVEST	17	18 10-11AM Water Aerobics 2-3PM Craft&Chat 7PM Dancing NightJet Mystery Theater deadline	19 11AM-12PM Rollin' Root 	20 10AM W. Aerobics 1-1:30PM Rollin' Root 5-7PM Pub w/ Doug Adamz 7PM Dancing	21 7PM Dancing	
22 10-10:30AM Meditation 7-9 PM NightJet Mystery Theater	23 6AM Trash 10-11AM Water Aerobics 5PM MVEST	24 4PM Circle of Friends <i>contact Aneesha Dillon or Timo Navsky</i> 6 PM PAC Meet the Candidates (if election)	25 10-11AM Water Aerobics 2-3PM Craft&Chat 4PM Book Club <i>Carol-Joy Harris</i> 5PM Memorial Day Party deadline 7PM Dancing PAC ballots accepted till June 3 (if election)	26 11AM-12PM Rollin' Root 	27 10AM W. Aerobics 1-1:30PM Rollin' Root  5-7PM Pub 7PM Dancing	28 10-11:30 AM Bark in the Park 11-5 PM Ember Stomp Fairgrounds 7PM Dancing	
29 10-10:30AM Meditation	30 6AM Trash 10-11AM Water Aerobics 5PM Memorial Day Party	31	MAY 2022				Please check marinvalley.net to see if events have changed before you come, or to find a Zoom link.