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Matt's Avocado Tree

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Political Signs in the Park

California Civil Code §799.10. Display of Political Signs
Information supplied by MATT GREENBERG

resident may not be prohibited from displaying a political campaign sign relating to a candidate for election to public office or to the initiative, referendum, or recall process in the window or on the side of a manufactured home or mobile home, or within the site on which the home is located or installed. The size of the face of a political sign may not exceed six square feet, and the sign may not be displayed in excess of a period of time from 90 days prior to an election to 15 days following the election, unless a local ordinance within the jurisdiction where the manufactured home or mobile home subject to this article is located imposes a more restrictive period of time for the display of such a sign. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of this section and the provisions of Part 5 (commencing with Section 4000) of Division 4, relating to the size and display of political campaign signs, the provisions of this section shall prevail. [2012]

Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers Prohibited in Novato

by MARY CURRIE

t the May 7 PAC Board meeting, resident Serena D'Arcy Fisher reminded us that the use of gas-powered leaf blowers is prohibited in Novato. It is important that all residents be aware of this. It is also important that if you have a gardener or landscaper who starts up a gas-powered leaf blower, you ask them to stop and inform them that this use is prohibited in Novato.

To give a sense of the pollution generated by these machines, according to the State of California Air Resources Board (CARB), operating a gas-powered commercial backpack leaf blower for just one hour emits smog-forming pollution comparable to driving a new light-duty passenger car about 1,100 miles — approximately the

distance from Los Angeles to Denver, over 15 hours of driving.

The City of Novato's web page www.novato.org/government/sustainability/gas-powered-leaf-blowers includes the pertinent information. The no gas-powered leaf blower Ordinance No. 1690 was adopted in September 2022. The ordinance states that the operation, or authorization of the operation, of a gas-powered leaf blower to blow leaves, dirt, and other debris off any surface at any time is prohibited. Also, there are fines associated with the use of gas-powered leaf blowers.

John Feld has found grants to buy electric leaf blowers through the CARB's Moyer Program at https://bit.ly/3wq2KQr. ■

Directory Update

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ECHO

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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 for the next month's issue.

Management Update Letter to Residents

Warm weather and dry conditions are here. Please be **firesafe**. Hand crews will be trimming the dry grass and brush to create defensible space in the common area surrounding your homes.

Water conservation is still important. Our local reservoirs are looking good. This is important: Water your garden only with a drip system or microirrigation. Water only at night or early in the morning. No water is permitted to run down the street due to overwatering or broken irrigation systems.

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. BBOs and manufactured patio furniture are among several accepted items. Parking 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.

Please abide by our **15-mph speed limit** and please stop at all stop signs for the safety and consideration of others, including pets.

Standing water is a breeding ground for MOSQUITOES. Please look around your home to determine if you may have any standing water. If so, pour it out to prevent larvae from hatching.

Thank you.

gm.mvmcc@gmail.com 415-883-5911 • 415-883-1971 Fax Greetings from the Park Acquisition Corporation Board.

Ad Hoc Committee The exclusive negotiation agreement (ENA) with the City of Novato was signed on May 1, 2024. It is available on the counter at the clubhouse and is posted on the MVMCC website under Park Documents.

The ENA gives the PAC Board exclusive rights to negotiate with the City for the purchase of MVMCC until December 31, 2025, with two possible six-month extensions. It also allows the negotiation of alternative agreements. We hope to begin meeting with the Ad Hoc Committee as soon as schedules allow. With the City in the midst of its budget adoption process, the timing of these meetings is pending.

Progress toward Maintaining an Affordable Community of Senior Citizens at MVMCC

Our current efforts are to work closely with ROC (resident-owned communities) USA and its California affiliate, CCCD (California Center for Cooperative Development) to achieve our longterm goals. ROC USA has helped over 300 US communities achieve similar goals.

MVMCC residents voted on March 6, 2024, to pursue establishing a resident-owned nonprofit Limited Equity Housing Cooperative (LEHC). The vote was a resounding confirmation of the steps being taken by the PAC Board to achieve long-term stability and financial viability for our community.

The PAC Board will continue to put out "Resident Updates" via the Constant Contact service and to post to all on our mailing list the current state of affairs as the situation develops in our board and committee meetings. If you are not currently receiving these updates, contact PAC Board secretary Carol-Joy Harris at caroljoyharris@comcast.net.

Novato Rent Control Program for Mobile Home

Parks The first reading of the City of Novato's draft mobile home rent control ordinance occurred on May 5 at the City Council meeting. Our input was taken into consideration.

Finances The DSCR (debt service coverage ratio) is currently well within acceptable range. We are in dialogue with the City of Novato concerning billing that may not have been budgeted for the current year. We have requested more details to ensure that MVMCC benefits from these expenses

Legal Expenses We are current with the billing of our legal advisers. As we advance, the need for legal counsel will continue, and a monthly contribution to the MVMCC legal fund is suggested. This will spread out your cost of helping the community and equally remove the burden of the PAC needing to continually reach out for funding. Consider it an investment in your future at Marin Valley. To make a contribution, drop your check into the Legal Fund box at the clubhouse or give it to PAC Board treasurer Steve Plocher.

Projects/Budget With the PAC's input, The Helsing Group has prepared an operating and capital improvement budget for the ongoing operating and maintenance of MVMCC.

Winter storms played havoc here in the Park, and repairs have been made where damage occurred. We have been collecting bids for replacing the clubhouse roof this year and for initial preparations for the future installation of solar roof panels.

We are working with PG&E to repair and replace the main electrical transfer switch coming

into the Park as part of our efforts to move forward with the renewal of the Park's electric infrastructure under the PUC/PG&E program to convert mobile home parks back to PG&E control and operation.

We plan to budget for the continuation of projects such as fire abatement and tree trimming and/or removal with the support of Marin's fire departments.

A complete engineering survey of MVMCC is requested under this year's capital improvement budget. The funding agreements to purchase MVMCC from the previous owner require that this action be routinely and periodically taken to ensure that the facilities and supporting infrastructure of MVMCC are maintained and kept up to date in serviceable condition. This survey will provide the blueprint for our community's health and safety.

These projects will be included in next year's budget of July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025. We are asking for residents' support and presence at City Council meetings during June to guarantee council approval of these projects. (See p. 5.)

Vaccine COVID and its new variants are still around. Do not let your guard down. Practicing social distancing and continued masking are advised but not required as the state and country relax the mandated precautions to avoid the transmission of COVID. The CDC still reports that you are less likely to be seriously ill if you have been vaccinated, and avoidance of transmittable situations is encouraged. Good ventilation is always important.

Activities Management, MVEST, HOL, and Mar Val are all very active on your behalf, and their activities are reported in articles in each month's *Echo*. I urge you to investigate and participate. To take advantage of these worthwhile events, it is best to see the notices at the front desk and online at *marinvalley.net*. By the time the *Echo* is published, some events have already passed.

Participation Residents' participation enriches the PAC Board meetings. We welcome your observations and suggestions on how MVMCC can better serve your and the community's interests. Come to the board meetings or email us with your input, questions, comments, and suggestions.

Agendas Agendas and the Zoom link for future PAC Board meetings are posted 72 hours before the meetings and are available to those on the mailing list. To be added to this list, contact PAC secretary Carol-Joy Harris at *caroljoyharris@comcast.net*. You can also find the Zoom link on our *marinvalley.net* homepage.

Meetings The next board meeting (also the 2024 annual meeting) will take place on Saturday, June 1, at 11 am. At this meeting, the newly elected PAC Board will elect/choose its officers for the coming year. The regular monthly PAC Board meetings will resume on the first Monday of every month starting in July.

In service,

Jay Shelfer
PAC PRESIDENT
jjshelfer@yahoo.com
415-250-0375 cell

We Need You at June 2024 City Council Meetings

by MARY CURRIE

he Novato City Council has scheduled public meetings to receive input on the proposed budget for the coming fiscal year, 2024/2025.

Our Marin Valley Mobile Country Club budget is a part of the City's overall budget. The PAC Board is currently working with the City to ensure that all of our requested funds remain in the budget. As Park manager Matt Greenberg shared at the May 6, 2024, PAC Board meeting, we are asking for funds to continue tree work, fire abatement, repairs for the electrical switch, and a new roof with associated preparations for future solar panels (this will be a separate project). The PAC Board is also asking for significant funds to complete an updated, comprehensive engineering survey and condition assessment of the Park.

We are asking at least 50 residents to attend each meeting. Why? Because:

- **1.** The City needs to know and see that we are still here and following the budget process.
- **2.** We want the City to adopt the MVMCC proposed budget with all of our requests included.
- **3.** Attending these meetings and presenting a unified front is a strategy we've used before, and it helped us then. The unified-front messaging is being developed with a strategic eye on purposefully thanking the city council for what they do and encouraging them to adopt the MVMCC proposed budget. Prior to each meeting, a "Resident Update" will be emailed to residents including the meeting details and the unified messaging points that the PAC Board is encouraging speakers to deliver. We will also host "Get Organized" meetings prior to each of the council meetings.
- **4.** We want about 15 people to speak at each meeting (more or less, depending on how the budget process develops.

The City Council meetings typically begin at 6 pm. We will know where in the agenda the budget item will be discussed once the agenda is posted 72 hours before each meeting. The meetings will take place at Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue.

Tuesday, June 11: City Council budget hearing Tuesday, June 25: City Council budget adoption

ROD Committee Update — May 15, 2024

Resident Ownership Discovery (ROD)
Committee UPDATE to Residents



by **DAVID TETTA**

for the ROD Committee: John Hansen, Serena Fisher, Alan Gump, Dave Tetta, with either Jay Shelfer or Mary Currie

reat news! MVMCC is now officially part of ROC USA's HUD-PRICE grant application. Their overall application is for \$75 million; our portion is for \$7 million to address capital improvements and other costs. As an applicant, ROC USA held a public hearing on May 23 and will incorporate comments they received into their final application, which is due on June 24. Award notifications are expected in October — keep your fingers crossed! If ROC USA's application is successful, our receiving grant money is contingent on MVMCC becoming a limited-equity housing cooperative (LEHC). However, ROC USA has until 2027 to invest PRICE funds.

Now that the exclusive negotiation agreement (ENA) is signed, the ROD committee has additional legal issues to work through in terms of co-op development. We have begun working with an attorney from Goldfarb & Lipman who has experience with both the CCCD organization and LEHCs in general. Along with ROC USA and CCCD, we are all trying to determine the best way to dovetail the PAC and co-op boards, as the PAC moves toward completing its stated purposes and the future LEHC forms in order to accept title to the Park. A particularly important issue is clarifying which votes will be made by the PAC community and which will be made by co-op members. In the coming weeks we hope to have that plan firmed up and to provide information at a community workshop.



PREVENTION Is the Best Insurance

by JOHN FELD

his article presents two sections: commercial homeowners insurance, and prevention steps we can take without or in addition to insurance.

Please read both!

COMMERCIAL HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

In March of this year, State Farm announced the nonrenewal of approximately 30,000 homeowners policies. If you've recently sought home insurance, you're likely aware that most insurance companies are hesitant to offer coverage for our particular area due to the wildfire risk. Many insurers told me they cannot write a policy due to wildfires, and suggested our only option is the California FAIR Plan.

California FAIR Plan

Established as a "temporary" insurance plan of "last resort," the FAIR (Fair Access to Insurance Requirements) Plan offers coverage for homeowners in high-risk areas. Many of State Farm's canceled policies are expected to transition to the FAIR Plan, potentially straining its solvency.

The FAIR Plan is not government backed; rather, it was established over 50 years ago to provide insurance solutions for Californians and does not depend on taxpayer funds.

If enough homeowners on the FAIR Plan incur widespread losses, such as those that occur after a wildfire, policyholders statewide could potentially see a steep premium increase to cover those losses.

FAIR Plan is receiving over 900 quote requests daily, compared to approximately 350 per day in 2023.

Although intended as a temporary fix for conditions to be addressed in the near future, over the past few years, 90% of those with this insurance renew it each year.

The recent turmoil in the California home insurance market has left the FAIR Plan overburdened, strained, and increasingly expensive. As of January 2024, over 350,000 homes are on the plan (and this number is constantly growing). But, for Californians with homes in high-risk wildfire areas, it may be the only way to insure their homes.

FAIR Plan insurance is considerably more limited than a standard policy but will protect homeowners from shouldering the full cost of a loss. Recently a FAIR Plan spokesperson stated that the average cost of a policy is about \$3,200 per year, which is significantly more than a typical home insurance policy in California. Added insurance for earthquakes and floods, etc., will substantially add to this amount.

FAIR Plan typically covers fewer types of losses and offers fewer policy options than a private home insurance plan. Increased coverage incurs an additional cost. Importantly, earthquake coverage is not included and must be added as an endorsement from the California Earthquake Authority.

Further restrictions of a standard FAIR Plan policy for your dwelling and personal property include:

- Applicants must demonstrate that they have been denied coverage from the private insurance market multiple times.
- Damage must derive from four perils: fire, lightning, internal explosions, or smoke.
- The standard plan insures at actual cash value only and does not include coverage for many different named risks, including liability.
- The plan covers the replacement cost value, rather than market value; the value of your home is depreciated from its cost at time of purchase, not the going market rate.

It stands to reason that this is a case of needing to do some time-consuming research. Make sure you cannot find any alternative options and work out whatever add-ons you may need. More details can be found at www.cfpnet.com/policies/dwelling.

It is worth noting that insurance is still a lucrative industry, earning 19.4% profit in 2023, so the current trend of raising rates and refusing loans may have other implications beyond just profit.

But (seems there is always a "but" when discussing money) there are some things you can do to reduce the likelihood of needing insurance. But with limited assets, self-insurance can be very risky.

Alternatives

The noninsurance solutions concern what we can do to keep our homes safe during emergencies if for any reason we have insufficient or no insurance.

First, familiarize yourself with the potential emergencies we are likely to encounter. We do not have much reason to prepare for terrorist attacks or hazardous material spills. Most homes in Marin Valley are not at risk for floods, but if in doubt, check with Matt at the clubhouse.

Insurance is expensive and will likely become considerably more so. In lieu of paying premiums to insurance companies each year, you can save the same amount of money in a savings account that gains interest. If you keep this money in a dedicated account and don't dip into it, it can be used for emergencies when they arise. It also helps you to strategize about the issues you have to address in a timely manner.

If you remain **uninsured**, **be aware that you will not have liability insurance**, so be especially careful if you have anyone working on or in your home. If someone is injured, you may be liable for large insurance claims.

If you do find insurance, check with your agent to see if they offer discounts for living within a Firewise Community. MVEST has established Marin Valley as a Firewise Community for many years now.

PREVENTION

Climate change is becoming a more serious threat every year. As the climate heats up, fires will inevitably become more prevalent. Furthermore, our homes are much more flammable than regular stick-built homes, so the most important thing you can do is reduce the dangers of fire and home hazards.

If you are unsure what is involved, consider getting a **free**, **no-strings-attached appraisal from the Novato Fire District.** They will inspect your home, looking at all the fire dangers and leave you with a finished report. Check this link to apply for an inspection: https://rb.gy/sjg67d

Home hardening refers to making your home more disaster-resistant. Do whatever you can among the following to keep your home hardened:



Maintain a five-foot defensible space all around your home — a wide strip void of any flammable items adjacent to your home — to greatly reduce the likelihood of your home burning down when there is a wildfire or even a house fire nearby.



 Place a metal mesh over all your external air vents to stop embers from entering your house. The metal mesh has to be no larger than ¹/8" to be effective.
 Embers are one of our biggest risks for home ignition.



• Remove any combustible material on your roof, including leaves and pine needles. Overhanging trees are also an increased fire risk. Windborne embers are the usual way that fires start in mobile homes. Most homes here have metal roofs, and even a small fire can melt this metal and set your house on fire.





• Clean out your gutters.

Around the Park you are likely

to see plants, usually grasses, growing in some roof gutters. This means that, over time, leaves and plant debris have gathered in them and composted down to earth, and plants have taken root. Rain will thus not flow down the drainpipes but run over the edges of the gutters, soaking parts of the home and potentially rotting the structure of the house. It also creates another place for embers to catch fire and damage the home.



The **siding** on our homes is thin metal or plastic siding. These substances melt quickly when near a fire and leave the wooden supports in your home susceptible to ignition. Newer homes are manufactured with fireproof material. You can replace your present siding with **fiber cement board**, which is expensive but deemed firesafe.



• If you are thinking of adding or replacing a deck, make sure you have a permit, which necessitates no untreated wood. Most new decks now have engineered wood rather than redwood or other natural wood.



 Fences and gates that are attached to your home can spread fire from your landscaping to your house. It is best that your home have no wooden attachments.



 Make sure that any mulch you use is fireproof — most bark mulches are quite flammable. The best mulch is stone or compressed granite.



- FireSafe Marin has an excellent plant guide identifying firesafe plants (https://firesafemarin.org/create-a-fire-smart-yard/plants/fire-smart-plants/).
- Remove any outside buildings that are made of wood.

 Garden sheds are very susceptible to flying embers, and can easily catch on fire and provide another dangerous heat and ember source close to your home.



 Make sure your steps are sturdy and have a textured grip to reduce falls if the weather is icy or wet. • Annually check for termites can prevent considerable expense. While most of the wood in our houses does not come in contact with the earth, any wood on the ground should be pressure treated and inspected annually.

Inside your home



• Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from all heat sources, including fireplaces, wood stoves, portable heaters, and candles. Space heaters should always be plugged directly into the outlet; make sure its cord is not damaged or frayed and disconnect when not in use.



 Never use your oven to heat your home.



 Avoid connecting multiple extension cords, as these pose a fire as well as a tripping risk. • Maintain heating equipment by having it cleaned and inspected each year by a professional; again, repairs are much less expensive than replacing.



Many older houses in the Park have aluminum wiring, which is known to catch fire when subjected to heavy electrical loads. Likewise, **electrical**

fuse panels installed before 1990 are more prone to problems. They may not meet code requirements, making them a potential fire hazard. These panels could cause electrical shocks or arc faults and, in some cases, trigger electrocution. If you are buying a home, make sure your home inspection looks for older wiring. If you already own your home and are unsure of the wiring, get a competent electrician to check your wires.

Prepare for power outages. Have emergency flashlights ready (not candles). When the power goes out SWITCH ALL LIGHTS AND APPLIANCES OFF AT THE SWITCH to prevent a surge that could damage your electrical circuit when the power returns.



We live in an earthquake area, and good earthquake bracing can save your home when a quake happens. Because there are myriad types of bracing, it is always good to get yours assessed by an expert. The bracing in many Marin Valley homes is sadly deficient. Proper earthquake bracing creates a virtual sled that supports your home, thus it may slide from side to side but will not suffer from the most damaging up-and-down movements. It is not inexpensive, but much cheaper than buying a new home.



Lastly, join your emergency preparedness team MVEST, where you will find out more about home hardening and other safety-promoting procedures. MVEST communicates up-to-date safety information during meetings and in most editions of the *Echo*.

Stay aware and be safe.

In Memoriam

SHIRLEY FORREST

October 31, 1930 –
April 21, 2024

by JOAN CERVISI



Shirley was a self-proclaimed "party girl" and tried to never miss Pub or any of the special events at the clubhouse.



office manager at MVMCC. She truly loved this job. Sometimes folks just needed a listening ear or to vent, and her philosophy was to never repeat what she heard.

Shirley is survived by her five children: Joan (and Dave), Bill, Pat, Katy, John (and Traci); nine loving grandchildren; four stepgrandchildren; and four greatgrandchildren.

The Goats Are Almost Here!



by ANILA MANNING

Thank you, Novato Fire Protection District and Marin Wildlife Protection Authority, for giving us \$50,000 worth of "Prescribed Herbivory"; hundreds of grinding teeth! Gentle baaing surrounds us as hungry goats munch their fill

around the Park boundaries, keeping us safer from grass fires this summer. Please let the goatherd use your garden hose to fill up water basins for them. Look for them on the hillsides in late June and early July.

Message from Mar Val

Dear Friends,

I have good news and bad news — let's get the bad news over with first. As we all know, the price of food has risen dramatically.

SALES TAX

Beginning in July, Mar Val is going to add sales tax to our events ... on a \$15 dinner that comes to \$1.30, making the total for dinner \$16.30. Just like every restaurant in Marin, Mar Val has to pay sales tax on every meal served, as well as every drink, both alcoholic and nonalcoholic. The current tax rate in Novato is .085, and it seems likely that it will be increased to .0925 after the next election. We hate this as much as you do, but it is the law and we will be compliant while trying to keep all of the balls in the air financially. The good news: Mar Val will continue to absorb the tax on food and drinks served at Pub.

Mar Val's annual election of officers took place on May 8 with the following results:

Carolyn Corry — President

Anne Glasscock — 1st Vice-President/
Bar Manager

Pat Thurston — 2nd Vice-President Connie Marelich — Secretary Vickie Waddell — Treasurer Larry Moore — Director at Large

(Hospitality)

Larry Cohen — Director at Large (Logistics) ...

along with three Committee Chairs: Susan Hoff — reservations Sandee Duncan — volunteers/library Tim Hoke — Pub food.

Make your reservations now for Jazz under the Ragtop on June 15, with smooth, easy jazz by the Leo Waterman Trio along with mimosas, bagels, and much more.

Then for July 4, our own Brynda Foster will once again be entertaining us with her musical talents. (BTW — a correction for my error in the last *Echo*: Brynda is the generous donor of the cookies, brownies, and other sweet goodies to Pub while Pat Thurston is the generous donor of her infamous deviled eggs and monkey bread. Many thanks to you both.)

I'm thrilled to see many of you sitting at different tables, getting to know some new friends and welcoming newcomers.

Come join us on the deck for our summer events.

Sincerely.

Carolyn Corry

Carolyn Corry

Mar Val President

ckcorry@comcast.net

415-370-6403 cell

Coming in July

Mar Val presents

Independence Day!!

Thursday, July 4 ● 5 pm Cocktails ● 6 pm Dinner

Music by Brynda Foster!!

Try our Margaritas

MENU

Pulled Pork Sandwich *or* Egg Salad Sandwich Green Salad & Macaroni Salad Chef's Surprise Dessert

\$15 + sales tax = **\$16.30 per person**. Make checks to Mar Val.

Deadline for reservations: Monday, July 1, by 5 pm (or when 120 reservations have been received)
For questions, call Susan Hoff @ 707-365-9426



Mar Val Jazz Brunch Under the Ragtop

Music by Lee Waterman Trio Saturday, June 15

11 AM Cocktails 12 PM Brunch

Try Our Mimosas!!

MENU

Egg White Quiche: Spinach Broccoli

or

Egg White Quiche: Cheddar Artichoke Cherrie's Cinnamon Roll Casserole Smoked Salmon and Bagels with all the fixings Fresh Fruit Cup and Danish Pastries

\$15 per person, make checks payable to Mar Val

Deadline for reservations: Wednesday, June 12, by 5 pm (or when 120 reservations have been received).

For questions, call Susan Hoff @ 707-365-9426

Home Owners League Message

Greetings,

It appears the rains have finally ceased, bringing an unusual surge of growth to the lands surrounding our community. Thanks to the efforts of the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority and the Novato Fire District, the goats will soon return to aid in weed control, supplemented by manual cutting facilitated by these organizations. Matt will organize any finishing touches on the communal areas within the Park.

It falls upon us to keep the areas around our homes free of weeds, particularly those highly flammable species such as Juniper, Fountain and Pampas Grasses, Bamboo, and French Broom.

The upcoming Pride Parade on June 9 promises to be a joyous occasion, starting at 10:45 am and followed by festivities at the clubhouse. This celebration is inclusive, welcoming not only members of the LGBTQ+ community but also "straight allies" who stand in support. Please text Kathryn McMudie at 415-517-8353 for more info.

As many are aware, HOL hosts a variety of recurring events and services, including but not limited to:

Art in the Park **Breezeway Boutique** Breezeway Craft Fair **Breezeway Market Place** Chair Yoga Circle of Friends Contractors Rating Guide Craft & Chat Dancing Depression & Anxiety Group Game Night **Group Strength Training** Healing Meditation **Just One Hour Last Monday Lectures** Marin Valley Directory A Matter of Balance (through Vivalon) Rollin' Root Taiii

This list is augmented by recent special events, as well as the Pride Parade and festivities, David Gray's captivating photo presentation of his journey to Costa Rica, with a forthcoming report on his second safari to Southern Africa.

Water Aerobics

We're always eager to introduce new activities for Park residents.

Activity leaders can be residents or external participants. Contact me or Janie Klimes if you have an activity in mind.

In addition, HOL is launching a Newcomers Group to acclimate new residents to the wealth of activities and events in Marin Valley. This monthly gathering will cover various topics and aims to connect residents with established groups such as PAC, HOL, MVEST, and Mar Val, among others. The existing Welcome Committee already gives new residents a complimentary ticket to a Mar Val dinner. Perhaps there could be a newcomers table at future events. Social events such as dining out, theater outings, art shows, and beach walks may also be organized. Experienced residents are encouraged to lend their knowledge and companionship to this initiative. To participate, sign up at the front counter.

On Earth Day, **Peggy Hill** led a commendable effort to clean up lower

Marin Valley Drive, extending from the Park entrance to Bolling Drive and including surrounding establishments.
Volunteers, including Meg Jordan, Carol-Joy Harris, Joan Leopold, Todd Rodgers, and Michelle Rodriguez, alongside assistance from Gretchen Schubeck from the City of Novato, received appreciation from neighbors for their

contributions.

Chair Yoga, the A Matter of Balance Class (see p. 13 to sign up for a new class), Taiji, and the Group Strength Training class (focused on targeted muscle training from head to toe, led by YMCA awardwinning instructor Nan Watanabe) have all been enriching for participants. They are gentle yet effective. I wholeheartedly recommend these classes to everyone.

Take care, John

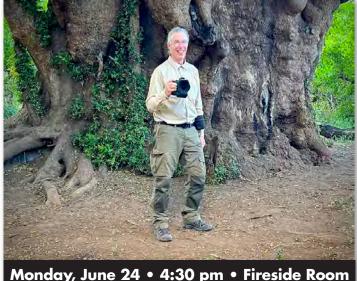
John Feld
HOL President
johnmfeld@gmail.com
510-495-4138 cell



How Did You Get That Bird to Do That?

by MARSHALL KRAUSE, **MARTY GELMAN**

avid Grav will be the June Last Monday Lecture speaker. David is well known to Park residents from his participation in our continuous art show, his photo safari presentation, and his Bird of the Month column and gorgeous photos featured in each



Monday, June 24 • 4:30 pm • Fireside Room

Echo. Now is your opportunity to find out how his work is accomplished because on June 24 at 4:30 pm he will give a talk about his art and how he

manages to get such special shots of our feathered friends. David will demonstrate how to get great photos in nature and will have plenty of examples to show. There will be adequate time for your questions about photography and the skills needed for the best nature photography.

It will take some time to catch up with David as he started at age eight

and was printing his own images while he was in high school. David uses a Nikon but can work with many other cameras.

A Second A Matter of Balance Class

by MICHAEL GARDNER

■ he first offering of A Matter of Balance has been a huge success! We are looking forward to the second offering through the program sponsor Vivalon. We do not currently have a date set for the second class, however Vivalon is currently accepting calls and emails to have your name put onto a wait list for priority registration.

Sign-up instructions

If you are interested in signing up for the second offering please contact Reina Garay Solis at 415-456-9062 ext. 122 or email at rgaraysolis@vivalon.org. Please indicate that you are calling from MVMCC and are interested in getting on the wait list for the next offering of A Matter of Balance at MVMCC.

Thank you for your interest in the second offering!

Living with Art

by **SUZIE LAHR**

s I am sitting here on this rainy day in May I feel so uplifted to live in this community. For 40 years while raising my family I lived high on a hill in a much larger house with spectacular views and no other houses or neighbors in sight. Now, living here, I actually enjoy the close proximity of warm neighbors to wave to and chat with on my daily walks, while working or sitting in my garden.

This also brings to light that beauty and art are everywhere, and that is my one true love. Just looking out the window Continued on page 16

Marin Valley Pride Celebration

by NANCY WARREN

JUNE 9



Parade at 10:45 am — gather at Marin View Drive & Marin Valley Drive corner

Celebration & Potluck — at the clubhouse following the parade

Open to all - LGBTQIA - their families - our allies - come one come all!!!

Will you volunteer? We need event captains and volunteers for:

- Traffic control & parade safety
- Setup for the event 6/8
- Event support during the celebration 6/9
- Food volunteers shopping, event setup & management
- Cleanup crew after the event/parade 6/9

Contact Kathryn McMudie (text only: 415-517-8353) if you will captain, volunteer, or provide potluck food OR if you would like to ride in a car or be assisted with a wheelchair for the parade.

We hold our Pride celebration to show our commitment to equal rights for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities; their families; and allies in Marin Valley and beyond. Please join us!

Being an LGBTQ+ Ally

In celebration of Pride — here is an introduction to the Human Rights Campaign Foundation guide to being an ally of the LGBTQ+ community. (See link at bottom of article for the entire 25-minute read.)

s our world becomes more accepting of broader and more diverse identities, you may have questions about how you can better support the

LGBTQ+ community, or what LGBTQ+ even stands for. Every

person has their own journey in understanding what it means to support LGBTQ+ people, whether you're LGBTQ+ or not. We hope this resource can help you begin that journey.

You might be reading this resource because you want to provide guidance for LGBTQ+ people in your role as a teacher, counselor, or religious leader. Maybe your child, best friend, or parent just came out to you, and you have no idea what that means. Maybe you're already a member of

the LGBTQ+ community, and you want to make sure you're supporting all of the parts of the community that you can. Or maybe you're reading this resource because you're just trying to be a better ally. No matter what brought you here, you have come to the right place.

This resource is designed to help build understanding and comfort. If you are new to LGBTQ+ issues, we will answer many of your questions. Or, if you have known LGBTQ+ people for years and are looking to find new ways to show your support, you can skim this resource and take the pieces that are relevant to you. It's ok to not know everything — we're here to help.

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation hopes this resource can help you build understanding of LGBTQ+ identities and issues, and that you can use this newfound knowledge to be an ally to the LGBTQ+ community as a whole. Thank you for reading. We're glad you're here.

We'll start with the basics: What does LGBTQ+ stand for?

LGBTQ+ stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and more." Many people and organizations use "LGBTQ+" as a catch-all term for the noncisgender and nonstraight community.

We have multiple identities

Being lesbian, gay, or bisexual refers to a person's sexual orientation, or who they are attracted to. Being transgender refers to a person's gender identity, or their internal sense of gender. People may refer to themselves as queer if their sexual orientation and/or gender identity is outside of the mainstream. These labels are not mutually exclusive. For example, a person can be a transgender woman and a lesbian – a woman who was assigned male at birth and is attracted to other women. This person might also refer to themselves as queer because their sexual orientation and gender identity are counter to the mainstream.

Every single person has their own sexual identity and sexual orientation, and there is no right or wrong way to define either. While most people who use a specific sexual identity (e.g., lesbian) use it to refer to a specific sexual orientation (e.g., a woman who is attracted to other women), others may use different identity labels to describe that same sexual orientation — and others still may use the same identity label to convey different sexual orientations.

Similarly, everyone's gender journey is unique, as are the ways one person may define their gender and gender identity and/or choose to express or present their gender. You should not make assumptions about a transgender or nonbinary person's transition goals, feelings of gender dysphoria, current anatomy, experience with misogyny, or how they were socialized growing up based on their gender identity and/or assigned sex at birth.



A long way to go

In the United States, LGBTQ+ people have reached major milestones in the past 50 years, often credited to the work of transgender women of color in the Stonewall riots of 1969, coming on the heels of earlier LGBTQ+ uprisings including Compton's Cafeteria in 1966 and the Black Cat protests in 1967.

You can learn more about Stonewall and the past 100 years of LGBTQ+ rights in the United States at https://www.cnn.com/2015/06/19/us/lgbt-rights-milestones-fast-facts/index.html

Much has changed for LGBTQ+ people in the US since 1969. "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" has been overturned — allowing gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals to serve openly in the military. Marriage equality is the law of the land. And employment discrimination against LGBTQ+ people has been recognized by the Supreme Court as illegal.

That being said, we still have a long way to go. LGBTQ+ people are still targets of violence. More than 1 in 5 of any type of hate crime is now motivated by anti-LGBTQ+ bias. HRC has been tracking a horrifying wave of fatal violence against transgender women, especially Black transgender women.

LGBTQ+ people can be denied services in many states, ranging from homeless youth programs and veterans services to shopping centers and taxi cabs. And too many LGBTQ+ people are subject to so-called "reparative," "exploratory," or "conversion" therapy, a dangerous practice that targets LGBTQ+ youth and falsely seeks to change their sexual orientation or gender identity. Seventy countries worldwide have made it illegal to be LGBTQ+ and in 12 of those countries the punishment can be the death penalty.

By pushing for LGBTQ+ acceptance and equality, we can make the world a better place for LGBTQ+ people. Through the very act of reading this resource, you are showing an interest and determination in making the world a better place for LGBTQ+ people. Thank you for joining us.

HRC Being an LGBTQ+ Ally full resource material:

https://reports.hrc.org/being-an-lgbtq-ally?

PFLAG Guide to being a straight ally https://pflag.org/resource/s4e-guide-to-being-a-straight-ally/

Continued from page 13 at the movements and colors of the landscape, the birds gliding through, and the changes nature brings every day — these are true works of art.

The artists in this community bring that feeling indoors for you at our Marin Valley Gallery. I do hope you take the time when you're in the clubhouse to look at each painting and think about what the artist was thinking and doing as they created their pieces. Notice the technique and the medium they have learned to use with skill and imagination.

We are on a search to have more artists join us, whether you are new in our community or whether vou've been creating art behind your doors and we have never seen it before. Step up to the plate and join us, as we are a warm and supportive group. We recently had a meeting and decided to try having a feature artist in each exhibit. Every six months, we hang a completely new full exhibit; in addition to this, we will now be changing the feature artist every two months. We will implement this new idea in our next full exhibit installation – Sunday, August 4 – and throughout the fall and winter. We are curious to see how it works out for the artists and the community at large.

To be added to our email list and receive notices when we set meetings to gather as a group and prepare to hang exhibits, just contact Suzie Lahr or leave a message at 415-884-9611. Our next meeting will be sometime toward mid-June/July.

Peggy Hill's Earth Day Cleanup

by LORNA SASS



РНОТОБВАРН: СІТУ ОF NOVATO

From left: Peggy Hill, Carol Joy Harris, Meg Jordan, and Anonymous

ave grabber, will grab it, became Peggy Hill's motto when she noticed a great deal of trash accumulating on Marin Valley Drive between Bolling and the half-circle turnaround just before the MVMCC entrance.

Peggy began organizing a group cleanup on Earth Day before the pandemic and resumed this past Earth Day with great effect.

I love making things cleaner and more beautiful, she told me. I was inspired by David Sedaris who claims to spend nine hours some days picking up litter!

What I find is that doing something to benefit others comes back to me. Those who've volunteered to help with the cleanup have the same reaction. I joke that I get positive karma points that I can use since I've screwed up plenty in my life, she added with a wink and a smile.

Some folks feel angry and have judgments about people who leave trash in these areas, but who am I to blame and get upset about it? We have no idea how challenging their lives might be.

Many Marin Valley folks and the people who live in the housing along that road stop to thank us when they see us out there with our grabbers and trash bags. It's a gift all around.

Peggy doesn't reserve her trash pickup just for Earth Day. She keeps the grabber and two plastic bags in her car — one for trash and the other for recycling — and when she spots a mess she stops regularly to remove the debris.

Want to receive the joy and satisfaction of doing the same? Mark your calendars for next year's Earth Day or, better yet, grab a grabber and pick up trash whenever and wherever you see it. Then thank yourself for making the world a better place!

Pool Rules

by ALAN GUMP

Many residents are enjoying the pool and spa during these late spring months. We would like to remind everyone of the Pool Rules so residents and guests may enjoy a harmonious use of these popular facilities.

- All users must shower immediately <u>before</u>
 using the pool or spa. The changing
 rooms, washrooms, and showers are
 now fully open for your convenience.
- All guests must be accompanied by a host resident. Residents are responsible for their guests' behavior.
- Kids' hours are 11 am 2 pm. No diapers are permitted in the pool or spa. No children under five years of age are allowed in the spa.
- No food or drink is permitted in the pool area, except for nonglass water bottles. If glass is broken, the pool or spa will need to be closed and perhaps drained. Picnic tables are available outside the pool gate for your use to enjoy food and nonalcoholic beverages.
- No radios or other devices are allowed except in authorized classes or unless used with earbuds.
- The pool/spa area is a Quiet Zone where residents like to connect and relax. Residents who bring children to the pool area during the kids' hours must ensure that noise is kept to a reasonable level. Screaming and loud shouting are not permissible.

Thank you for your attention.

Please be courteous if asked to follow pool rules. A phone number for Pool Security is posted on the gate if needed. Let's have a safe and enjoyable summer!

The Pool Committee

Matt's Avocado Tree

by LORNA SASS

ave you noticed the seemingly endless supply of small, bumpy, delicious avocados that our general manager, Matt Greenberg, has been



generously giving away over the past month or so?

Recently, when Matt offered me a few of these delicious yummies, I asked him about the source.

Oh, I have a tree that just keeps on giving, he told me, but it wasn't always that way.

When Matt moved to his home in American Canyon, he planted an avocado tree. Despite fertilizing and watering it regularly, the tree never bore fruit. After four barren years, Matt was ready to cut the tree down but decided to first ask around for suggestions. Leonardo, the Mexican gardener who worked at MVMCC for some 30 years, told Matt to locate the rustiest nails he could find and bang them into the base of the tree. *Your tree needs iron*, he explained with a knowing look.

Within a year, the avocado tree started producing fruit and is now, some nine years later, 25 feet tall, blessing us all with over 500 avocados annually. They remain hard until we pick them. Matt told me. You can even add avocado leaves while cooking black beans for an authentic aroma and flavor! How convenient!

The tree shares its bounty with me, he continued, and I love sharing this bounty with everyone!



This wonderful story about Matt's avocado tree has stayed with me, especially the part about the rusty nails being the healing medicine. What is the moral of this tale of regeneration? I'm wondering what folk wisdoms and ancient healing ways we have overlooked in favor of dropping pills that often have harmful side effects.

Your thoughts?

Lazuli Buntings and Friends

Text and Photography by DAVID GRAY

he lazuli bunting (*Passerina amoena*) is a small finch whose range spans the eastern United States, southern British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and western Mexico. While I've never noticed any in our Park, we are indeed within their summer/breeding range. They are about 5" long, with a gorgeous blue coloration, much like the famed lapis lazuli stone, on their head, back, and upper wings. The upper breast is rust red. The unmarked light gray of the belly helps to distinguish it from the Western bluebird.

The lazuli bunting primarily eats seeds. This pair was flitting among tamarisk trees eating the seeds along the Colorado River near Arches National Park in Utah. They also eat insects. They build their nests in the bushes from grasses and small twigs or roots, where they lay a clutch of anywhere from three to five pale-blue eggs.

We see rock wrens (Salpinctes obsoletus) in the local canyons near Marin Valley. Their range is very similar to that of the lazuli bunting. They are mediumsized wrens (5" long) who live up to their name. This rock wren was in the Little Wild Horse



Rock wren on red clay perch

Canyon, which features slot canyons, near Goblin Valley in Utah. Even with the red and aqua-colored rocks, it blends easily into its background. The rock wren has a wide repertoire of songs, up to 100 different variations.



Lazuli bunting pair



Female rock wren on rocks

The rock wrens nest in crevices or cavities of canyon walls, laying a clutch of 4 to 11(!) eggs. The female does all the incubation, from 12 to 18 days.



Little Wild Horse Canyon, Utah

Blue-gray gnatcatchers (*Polioptila caerulia*) are found in almost all of the United States except for Washington and North Dakota. Gnatcatchers have tiny beaks and are quite small: about 4" long. Their foreheads and backs have a blue-gray color cast, with a white ring around the eye. The throat, breast, and belly are gray, and their eyes are brown.

The blue-gray gnatcatcher is the only migratory bird of the gnatcatcher family and the only gnatcatcher we might see in our Park; the three other gnatcatcher species have ranges that end in Southern California. It comes as no surprise that they eat small insects. They nest in bushes, with

both the male and female

incubating paleblue eggs with brown speckles laid in a small, cup-shaped nest constructed of plant matter and spider webs, and camouflaged

with lichens.



Blue-gray gnatcatcher – above, singing; below, eyeing me.



IIINF 920 924

			JUI	NE Z	2 (0 2	4				Meeting Ballroom/Zoom*
S	UNDAY		Monday	TUESDAY	,	WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	6:30 _{PM} Dancing Meadow
7:30-9 AM	Taiji Deck/David Maclam	6ам 7:30-9 ам	Trash Taiji Deck/	7:30-9 AM Taiji Deck/ David MacLam	7:30-9 AN	n Taiji Deck/ David MacLam		Taiji Deck/ David MacLam	7:30-9 AM	David MacLam	1-4 _{PM} Breezeway Craft Fair
10-10:30 AM	Meditation Zoom**	10-11 AM	David MacLam WaterAerobics Pool	10:30- Craft & Chat 11:30 _{AM} <i>Library</i>	10-11 AM	Water Aerobics	10-11 _{AM}	Chair Yoga Fireside Room Rollin' Root	10-11 _{AM}	Water Aerobics Pool Mahjong	Echo DEADLINE
11:30 _{АМ} - 12:30 _{РМ}	Group Strength Training	10 AM- 12 PM	Balance Class Ballroom/		6:30 PM	Pool Dancing Deck		Clubhouse Parking Lot	5-7 PM	Fireside Room Pub	
	Bamboo Room NanWatanabe	1-4 PM	Bridge Private, Fireside Rm		Deck	6 PM	HOL Board Meeting Fireside Room	6:30 PM	Dancing <i>Meadow</i>	6:30 _{PM} Dancing	
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10-10:30 AM		7:30-9 AM	•	10:30- Craft & Chat	10-11 AM	Water Aerobics	10-11 AM	Chair Yoga	10-11 AM	Water Aerobics	MazZ
10:45 _{AM}	Marin Valley Pride Parade		Water Aerobics Balance Class	11:30 AM	5 PM	Jazz Brunch reservation deadline	11 AM -12 PM	Rollin' Root	11 AM	FIRESafe Marin Meeting	Mar Val
	and	IOAM-IZPM			6 РМ	Mar Val Board		STEW STEW	12 PM	Majong	Jazz Brunch
*	Celebration	1-4 PM	Bridge		OPM	Meeting		HOOT		Pub	11PM COCKTAILS 12PM BRUNCH
11:30 _{AM} - 12:30 _{PM}	Group Strength Training				6:30 ₽M	Fireside Room Dancing	6-10 РМ	Game Night Fireside Room/ Ed Collins	5-7 РМ 6:30 РМ	Dancing Dancing	6:30 _{PM} Dancing
	16		17	18		19		20		21	22
7:30-9 AM	Taiji	6 AM	Trash	7:30-9 _{AM} Taiji	7:30-9 _A	м Taiii	7:30-9 AM	Taiji	7:30-9	₁ Taiii	
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11:30 _{AM} -	Group	10-11 AM	Water Aerobics	11:30 AM		Aerobics	11 AM -12 PM	Rollin' Root	12 PM	Majong	
12:30 PM	Strength Training	1-4PM Bridg	Bridge		11 AM	Ladies Bridge <i>Private, Fireside Room</i>			5-7 PM	Pub	
	numng				6:30 PM	Dancing		1888	6:30 РМ	Dancing	6:30 _{PM} Dancing
	23		24	25		26		27		28	29
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10-10:30 AM	Meditation	7:30-9 AM	Taiji	10:30- Craft & Chat	10-11 AM		10-11 AM	Chair Yoga	10-11 AM	Water Aerobics	
11:30 _{AM} -	Group	10-11 AM	Water Aerobics	11:30 AM		Aerobics	11 AM -12 PM	Rollin' Root	12 PM	Majong	
12:30 PM	Strength Training	1-4 PM	Bridge		4:30 PM	Book Club Carol-Joy Harris			5-7 PM	Pub	
	maining	4:30 _{PM} Last Monday Lectures: David Gray Fireside Room/Marshall Krause, Marty Gelman	6	6:30 PM	Dancing		REST	6:30 PM	Dancing	6:30 _{PM} Dancing	

^{7:30-9}AM **Taiji** 10-10:30_{AM} Meditation 11:30_{AM}- Group Strength Training **12:30**PM

SATURDAY

11AM PAC Annual

^{*} Contact Carol-Joy Harris for link ** Contact Anila Manning for link