

T H E ECHO

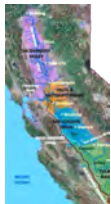
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MVMCC Management Update

Ongoing Projects

- One additional safety rail is complete.
- Quarterly sewer maintenance is ongoing.
- Multiple water leaks in the Park infrastructure have been repaired.
- One retaining wall is in progress.
- One drainage project is planned for late October.

Capital Improvement Projects

On October 3, we had the kickoff meeting with Novato Public Works regarding replacement of the roof and main electrical cabinet, ADA upgrades to the pool and changing rooms, and the new A/C system for the clubhouse.

Public Works has hired an architect to determine the next steps for the roof replacement. Tentative schedule: summer or fall of 2025.

The A/C will be replaced after the new roof is installed, or during the installation if it coincides with the structural roof framing.

Public Works has hired an electrical consultant to advise on the next steps for the replacement or repair of the electrical cabinet energizing MVMCC. Initial statement: one year of lead time is needed. The companies that perform this work have full schedules, and we need to get in line.

Public Works has also hired an architect to advise on the next steps for ADA compliance, including specific details for remodeling the pool changing rooms, installing a pool and spa lift, replacing the clubhouse bathrooms, and installing a lift to the lower clubhouse floor.

Carports

The rains are coming; please clean out your carports before everything gets damp.



Matt Greenberg
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 GENERAL MANAGER
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Directory Update

New

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 415-377-3020
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Katya Contreras
 130 Marin Valley Drive
 415-948-7738
 katyasusana@msn.com

Echo Deadline to Submit Articles

Email articles to Anila Manning: anilahere99@gmail.com by the 8th of the month for the next month's issue with "ECHO" as the subject. Images should be high resolution.

THE ECHO 2024

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Letter to Residents

PAC

Greetings from the Park Acquisition Corporation Board of Directors

by **John Hansen**

November is a time of thanks, and we have much to be thankful for. We are moving forward on many fronts. We continue to progress with excitement and cautious optimism toward resident ownership of Marin Valley Mobile Country Club (Park). At the same time, we are working to maintain the Park in a safe and healthy condition in partnership with our landlord, the City of Novato.

Below is a summary of just some of what the PAC Board is focusing on.

Update on Status of Three Capital Projects

PAC Board VP of Operations Jay Shelfer and I continue to nudge things along on three specific capital improvement projects: the clubhouse roof, main electrical switch, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) updates to the clubhouse, pool area, and gym restrooms. Under the new City Manager, Amy Cunningham, the City is utilizing a new approach to getting our capital improvement projects underway. The City has hired a consulting engineer and architect to review capital improvement projects before

design and construction can begin. This is a new and mandatory process. These three projects will be delayed until sometime in 2025. Hopefully, these projects, along with a number of other capital project needs, can be completed before the budget year ends on June 30, 2025.

What Happens if the Electrical Switch Fails

An important topic of discussion at the October 7 PAC Board meeting centered around what happens if the main electrical switch fails and we lose power indefinitely until a new switch can be ordered and installed. First, we can assure residents that the clubhouse has a generator. The clubhouse will serve as a place where residents can recharge phones and use electricity for other needs.

The PAC Board agreed to ask Matt Greenberg to update us on how a long-term outage would be handled. Once we know more, we will share this information with all residents.

Most importantly, we will again highlight this potential emergency situation to the City with the intention of getting a new switch purchased and installed as soon as possible. Look for more information on this sometime in November/December.

Two Different Boards of Directors

Now that the Marin Valley Cooperative (MVC), Inc., a nonprofit public benefit corporation, has been formed to take ownership of the Park should a purchase take place, two distinct boards — the PAC Board and the MVC Board — will conduct meetings.

PAC Board meetings will continue to focus on the operational aspects of running the Park, providing updates on the Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the City, and raising money for legal expenses. The PAC Board continues to govern under California's Brown Act.

MVC Board meetings will focus on matters related to becoming a self-owned resident community as a Limited Equity Housing Cooperative (LEHC). The MVC Board is not subject to the Brown Act. It will govern under California guidelines for corporations and by the interim bylaws that members of MVC will be asked to accept by vote at a membership meeting in November. At press time, we have yet to set a date for this meeting.

PAC and MVC Board meetings will be noticed separately so residents will know what is being discussed at each meeting. To help residents distinguish between the two boards, the PAC Board is working with **Erma Wheatley** to develop separate and distinct logos for each entity.

Additional Tree Work Needed

From the lens of fire safety, MVEST Chair **Bill Davis** and I recently walked the Park to

identify the additional tree work needed. Our report was given to the Novato Fire District for review and confirmation. We will then approach the City with this information and request an emergency budget adjustment for the funds needed for the additional tree work. This is a crucial health and safety need, so hopefully, with the backing of the Novato Fire District, the City will concur and allow additional funding.

PAC Legal Fund

Collecting funds for our legal counsel at Goldfarb & Lipman is ongoing. The PAC Board uses these funds to cover Karen Tiedemann's legal counsel needed for the two roads we are traveling: (1) meeting requirements of the Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the City, leading to ownership negotiations, and (2) taking the necessary steps to become a Limited Equity Housing Cooperative (LEHC). Notably, billing for the second road is being deferred until Marin Valley Cooperative receives a pre-development loan from ROC USA.

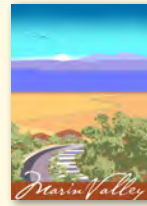
PAC Board Treasurer Steve Plocher reports the legal fund income and expenses at the monthly PAC Board meeting. Contributing to the Legal Fund is an investment in our future. Many of you are making monthly contributions, which really helps. Every dollar counts. Please drop your check made out to *PAC Legal Fund* into the black metal legal fund box on the clubhouse counter, or give it to Steve Plocher.

Park Website

The Park website contains a wealth of helpful and informative information. I encourage residents to become familiar with all that is available on the site. To track what is happening with the potential resident ownership of the Park, you can follow the timeline of meetings and information provided simply by visiting <https://marinvalley.net/ownership-options/>. To learn about Park current events and activities, check out the homepage at marinvalley.net. For questions, contact Erma Wheatley at ermawheatley@gmail.com.

Stay Informed – Watch for Updates

Tools for communicating with residents include the emailed Resident Updates, the monthly *Echo*, robocalls, posters, banners, "News and Events," on our website, and flyers in the resident tubes. The PAC Board Communication Committee primarily uses email to communicate with residents. We know that a handful of residents do not have email, and we try to have updates delivered to these folks. **Be sure to give your email address to PAC Board Secretary Carol-Joy Harris at caroljoyharris@comcast.net. You must OPT-IN to receive robocalls from Park Manager Matt Greenberg, as these calls share emergency information and critical announcements. To OPT-IN, contact Matt directly at 415-883-5911 or via email at gm:mvmcc@gmail.com.**



UPDATE from Resident Ownership Discovery Committee (ROD)

by **Mary Currie** PAC Board ROD Committee

Members Joining MVC

At press time, the Marin Valley Cooperative, Inc. (MVC) has 225 households with 302 members.

First Member Meeting Postponed to November

The first member meeting of Marin Valley Cooperative (MVC) has been postponed from October 24 to a date in November to be determined. More time was needed to ensure that the MVC interim bylaws and three MVC Board policies (Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest, and Procurement) are thorough and complete. All of these documents were originated by our partners at ROC USA (Resident Owned Communities USA), CCCD (California Center for Cooperative Development), and legal counsel. The Resident Ownership Discovery (ROD) Committee has been working with our partners and legal counsel to tailor these documents to suit the requirements of MVC.

The interim bylaws were posted to the Marin Valley website on September 18, and

copies were provided at the September 19 workshop. The three board policies were shared with residents via an emailed Resident Update on September 30. All comments received from residents have been considered and implemented where necessary and appropriate.

The Resident Ownership Discovery Committee is working on a few more tweaks. Once finalized, they will be emailed to residents for a final review, and comments will be accepted. When all comments have been reviewed and implemented as appropriate, the documents will be voted on for acceptance by the joining members at an MVC member meeting sometime in November. At this first MVC member meeting, members will also vote on

- (1) continuing to retain Goldfarb & Lipman as legal counsel
- (2) having the MVC Board be comprised of the same board members currently serving on the PAC Board.

Earlier, in March 2024, residents voted in favor of the board member configuration, and this vote is to reaffirm that consensus.

Community Ambassador Program

After several months of preparation work with partners at ROC USA and CCCD, the PAC Board's ROD Committee was prepared to begin an outreach program asking residents to join the Marin Valley Cooperative, Inc. With over 300 residences, it would be a huge undertaking to contact everyone. Could a mechanism be implemented for neighbors

to meet more of their neighbors while getting the word out?

Enter **Janie Klimes** to the rescue! In August, while visiting her son and his husband and their new baby in England, Janie spent her downtime thinking about establishing a Community Ambassador Program (Program) for the Park. Several other residents formulated similar ideas, but it was Janie who called a meeting and got this Program off the ground. The Program would be used to spread vital Marin Valley Co-op information throughout the Park through personal contact with residents by phone, email, or door-to-door. The timing was perfect; by the time Janie returned, the ROD Committee was ready to roll out the MVC Joining Agreement to residents. John Feld and Mary Currie had already teamed up to discuss using the Park's six emergency response zones as the foundation for spreading information.

Janie's idea was to have six Zone Leaders, each with five or six Community Ambassadors who in turn would report on their neighbor contacts to their Zone Leader. The six Zone Leaders were recruited and met with Klimes and Currie for a briefing on the specific outreach needed.

The Zone Leaders and Community Ambassadors conducted two rounds of resident outreach. The first was to ensure that everyone knew about the September 19 workshop, which focused on joining MVC and preparing for the first member vote. The workshop turnout was excellent, with about

100 people in the ballroom and another 50 on Zoom. Following the workshop, gears shifted.

In the second round of outreach, the ambassadors were tasked with ensuring that every resident was aware of the MVC Joining Agreement, knew how to access the agreement, and understood what to do with it once they had it.

The result of these efforts was tremendous. With this outreach system in place, we can continue building community with neighbors engaging neighbors.

A big thanks goes to Janie Klimes for making this essential outreach program a reality. And thanks go to the Zone Leaders who guided the Community Ambassadors in their assigned zones: **Trish Brady, John Feld, Susan Hoff, Charlotte Kells, Anne Lakota, Timo Navsky, and Nancy Warfield**. Trish and Nancy shared the two outreach efforts in their zone.

A huge thank you goes out to each and every one of the volunteer Community Ambassadors:

Pia Andersson	Kim Holscher
Gayle Atkinson	Meg Jordan
Mary Barbosa	Judy Lane
Barbara Bell	David MacLam
Janet Bogardus	Barbara Matas
Deborah Boyar	Deb McNeil
Paula Capocchi	Susan Meyer
KC Casey	Judi Purdom-Park
Pauline Clucas	Kinna Rocksberg
Ed Collins	Jeanne Skybrook
Lucinda Daly	Pat Thompson
Sharon Damerell	Jae Tillinghast
Michale Dancer	Vicki Waddell
Marty Gelman	Nancy Warfield
Inga Grace	Tom Weeden
Michael Hagerty	Charlotte Weiser
Lynn Haxton	Brad Witherspoon
Peggy Hill	Sandy Zeichner ■



Diablo Winds This Side of Paradise

by **BILL DAVIS**

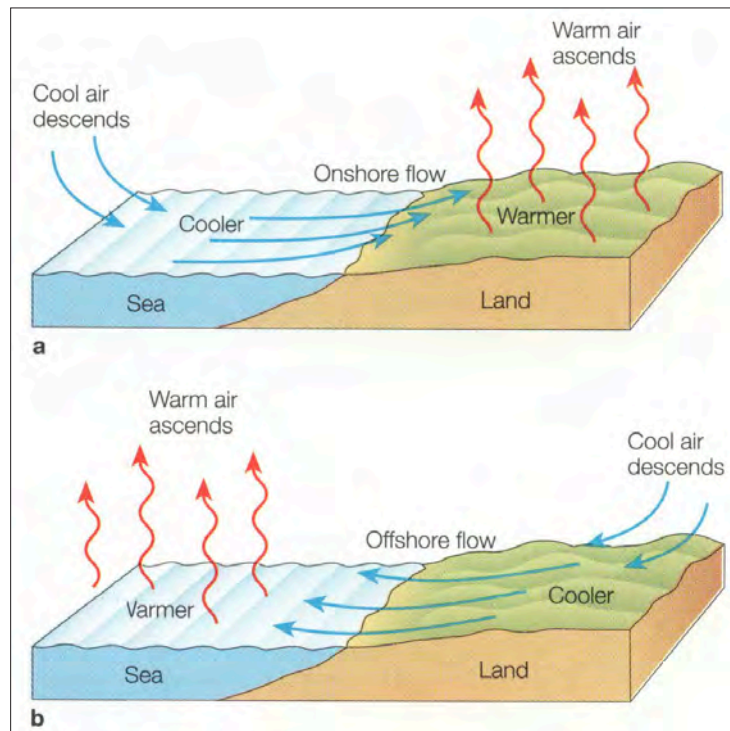
We live and thrive in a Mediterranean climate, and in a very real sense, it is a paradise. We enjoy warm days and cool evenings; even when the temperature climbs to triple digits during the day, the evening and night will dip down into the high 50s. It is almost like an automatic air conditioner — actually better. It is as close to paradise as this born and-raised Minnesotan has ever experienced.

How is this possible?

In Marin Valley, we have an amazing microclimate within our Mediterranean climate. If you lived in Mill Valley, you would find it much cooler; if you lived in Santa Rosa, you would find it much hotter during the daytime. The mountain range due west of us protects us from the heavy ocean fog that often blankets the area, especially those areas nearest to the Golden Gate Bridge. "The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco," Mark Twain famously wrote.

We are insulated here, and it is all driven by a gentle airflow of great complexity. A gentle breeze travels some 40 miles over the western California Coast Range. Further north, in Petaluma, the wind comes from the Pacific Ocean through the Petaluma Gap — usually harsher, colder, and carrying fog.

Almost every evening, the low pressure in California's vast Central Valley draws in cool, high-density air and fog from the Pacific Ocean. This air moves through the Carquinez Strait area and over the mountains. (See map a)



But there is a devil lurking in this whole mix that appears almost yearly.

In October and November, winds can unexpectedly reverse direction, bringing an offshore breeze. The Spanish named these the Diablo (Devil) Winds quite appropriately, as they threaten our paradise with fires. Dry grass on the ground can be ignited from sparks, setting off brush fires that then spread to trees.

The devil takes over from there, sending embers airborne for 20 miles or more. This natural phenomenon has been known and studied for many years and is impossible to predict, other than knowing it will occur this year or next. It can bring massive fires and dense smoke. (See map b)

This phenomenon impacts the entire California coast and occurs during the fire season, which we are currently experiencing. It is the price we pay to the devil for living in this paradise.



an emergency or disaster. Let's keep the devil at bay. Situational awareness and teamwork can reduce our risks when the Diablo Winds, earthquakes, internal power outages, or the devil in any other form comes over the hills.

Give me a call, and I'll add you to the list of people we can reach out to in case of an emergency or disaster. Thank you. ■

Bill Davis
billdavismsp@hotmail.com
 415-246-9289

You need to be prepared for the worst-case scenario, which can come with short notice: a grab-and-go bag, a reliable car with a full tank or battery, escape routes, cash, and friends. Even if we do not evacuate, you must be able to breathe safely. It's important to have N-95 masks and air purifiers in your home to filter the toxic air from any drifting smoke. The remainder of this year could prove to be quite an adventure for us senior citizens in this community.

Over the years, we on the MVEST team have tried to anticipate these kinds of dangers and provide Marin Valley residents with options for potential threats. We are a voluntary team dedicated to anticipating the devil that could ravage this bucolic paradise. The threat I just described is real and looms in the autumn air every year.

Are you ready? Can you lend a hand? Since the COVID pandemic, MVEST has taken extra precautions and has shrunk in size. I am asking you to simply raise your hand and say, "Yes, I am available to help if needed. Give me a call." Our strength is in understanding the situation and knowing what can realistically be done in



Message from Mar Val

Mar Val would like to send out a giant

Thank You

to

Mr./Mrs./Ms. Anonymous for their spectacular gifts. This person wrote that they hated seeing those ugly, dirty, white tables at Pub and then took the initiative to solve that issue. Mar Val was gifted with eight lovely tablecloths — oilcloth with a delightful and appropriate Pub pattern; they can be easily cared for and used for many years.

M/M Anonymous also donated lovely small lights for each table — I can't wait for it to get dark at Pub so we can truly enjoy the lights.

Dear Friends,

As hard as it is to believe, while we are currently in the throes of a heat wave as I write this, the holidays are fast approaching.

First is Mar Val's delicious Thanksgiving dinner on Saturday, November 23. Many residents believe this is the best event of the year. If you are willing to roast a turkey or volunteer in any capacity, please call **Sandee Duncan**.

Make your reservations early, as this event always sells out. See the flyer in this *Echo* for further details.

Mar Val has much for which we are truly thankful — our incredible board and committee chairpersons, Park Management, and the many volunteers who make our events the wonderful parties they are. Many volunteers work behind the scenes who sadly do not receive sufficient recognition for the vast number of things they do: the treasurer, who pays all of our bills and taxes, prepares the cash boxes for raffles and drink tickets, makes weekly deposits, and refills cash boxes; our bartenders who arrive early to set up and stay late to clean up; our kitchen helpers and chef for Pub and dinners; our volunteer coordinator; our decorators; our table-setup-and-teardown crew; our secretary, who takes minutes and keeps records; our reservationist, who handles an

incredible number of reservations for every event; our drink/raffle ticket sellers; our board members who have served on the Mar Val Board for many years and bring their wisdom and experience to us; and the many wonderful residents who jump right in to help with cleanup, gathering linens and dirty dishes, breaking down tables, and putting away chairs. You are all so magnificent and a key part of making Mar Val the organization it is. Thank you.

Last but certainly not least: an authentic popcorn machine — red with large front wheels, a kettle, and a glass reservoir — just like in the theaters, but better because it's here in the ballroom for every Pub and it's FREE. We are all truly enjoying the fresh, hot popcorn. I'm sure all Pub attendees join me in sending our deepest appreciation for these outstanding gifts. Perhaps one of you can figure out who our mysterious anonymous donor is so that we can publicly thank them.

Mar Val looks forward to welcoming you to our holiday events.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Corry
MAR VAL PRESIDENT
ckcorry@comcast.net
415-370-6403



Mar Val Thanksgiving Dinner

Saturday, November 23

5 pm Cocktails 6 pm Dinner

Menu

**Turkey & Dressing
Sweet Potatoes
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Green Bean Casserole
Cranberry Sauce
Rolls
Pumpkin Pie**

Reservations: \$16.30 per meal
Limit: 2 persons per household

Reservation deadline: November 19, 5 pm
(or when 140 reservations are received *before the deadline*).

Reservations will NOT be accepted prior to November 1.

Make checks payable to Mar Val.
If you have paid for a Mar Val dinner and cannot make it,
arrange with a friend or neighbor to bring it to you after the event.

Even if you have generously volunteered,
YOU MUST STILL DEPOSIT A RESERVATION CHECK PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE.

Questions? – Call Susan Hoff 707-365-9426



Mar Val Holiday Party

Saturday, December 14

5 pm Cocktails 6 pm Dinner

Featuring

The Lee Waterman Trio!

Menu

Pork Loin with Cranberry Apple Compote or Fettuccine Alfredo

Vegetables & Salad

Roasted Potatoes

Cheesecake

Reservations: \$16.30 per meal

Limit: 2 persons per household

Reservation deadline: Wednesday, December 11, 5 pm
(or when 120 reservations are received *before the deadline*).

Reservations will NOT be accepted prior to November 23.

Questions? – Call Susan Hoff 707-365-9426

Home Owners League Message

Greetings,

Successful Events

We want to thank everyone who attended the Ice Cream Social. It was a great success, mainly organized by **Michale Dancer**, **Anne Lakota**, and **Ed Collins**. We were pleasantly surprised by how many people requested vegan and nondairy options, so we will provide more next time!

David Gray delivered a remarkable photo presentation of his African safari, showcasing his travels to South Africa and Botswana. He is truly a talented photographer. If you missed his presentation, it will be repeated on December 8 at 7 pm. David also has a wonderful sense of humor, making the whole experience a lot of fun.

Park Market

We are looking for a couple more volunteers to join us. You may not be assigned regular days but will be on call in case someone gets sick, travels, or has other commitments that prevent them from being present. Most of the volunteers enjoy participating, as it is both fun and beneficial to the community. If you decide now is the right time for you to join us, please speak with **Jill Boland** at the market. We would like to welcome **Jim Gronvold** to our merry band of volunteers.

Many folks already know the people who make this market successful, but there are a few who may not be familiar to

everyone. Our most regular volunteer, the very quiet **Michael Theircof**, comes early for every delivery and usually handles most of the pre-market setup and post-market cleanup. You'll probably recognize him by his cap that states, "Damn Seagulls." You'll understand once you see the hat.

Two other individuals who contribute significantly to this endeavor are **David MacLam** and **Paul Weinberger**. You may already know them; David teaches Taiji on the clubhouse deck most mornings, and Paul is a regular bartender at Friday Pub nights. Together, they break down the many cardboard boxes twice a week and pack them into the appropriate waste bins. You might be amazed at how much cardboard we recycle each week.

There is much more to making the food giveaway safe, smooth, and effective than most people realize.

Battery Recycling

Speaking of volunteers, you will soon see the results of the behind-the-scenes work done by **Lu Damerell**, who has been diligently working to establish a viable recycling program for batteries, fluorescent bulbs, and toner. The new recycling center for these items will be located behind the large shed in the breezeway. Now we will be able to recycle these products here instead of taking them elsewhere (you haven't been throwing them in with your

trash, have you?). Lu has obtained permits and equipment to restart our recycling efforts since our last processor shut us down and confiscated all of our bins. We are very grateful for Lu's many hours of research and implementation.

New iMac

The new iMac in the library is finally up and running. We encountered a minor issue when someone changed the password, preventing others from using it. We took it back to Apple (twice) and got it fixed, ensuring this won't happen again. Previously, we relied on secondhand Macs, which were often outdated by the time we received them. This time, HOL purchased a new computer that should last much longer. We have installed Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel on it, making it even more useful. If you have files you need to keep, please bring a flash drive to save them, as all items you create will be erased when you log out. You can also save items to your own cloud service. I would like to thank **Ron Citroen**, **David Gray**, and **Rene Prado** for their persistent efforts in keeping our computers up and running.

Stay safe and healthy,



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

In Concert

Jeanne Skybrook

Performing with her Ukulele

Friday, November 15 • 7 pm after Pub
Fireside Room



PHOTO BY CINDY YOUNG

Born on the plains of Nebraska, this prairie nightingale came out of the womb singing. She started performing at age eight in her father's church and never stopped. From church music, she easily transitioned into folk music, influenced by hootenanny, then bluegrass, country, swing, and the blues. Having performed in groups and as a duo for 30 years throughout the Midwest and West, she now performs solo, having shifted from guitar to that fun, versatile little instrument, the ukulele, which drew her to her current favorite: Hawaiian music.

Jeanne's love of various musical forms includes singing in the Marin Symphony Chorus for over 30 years and performing as a volunteer for Bread and Roses — an organization that brings entertainment to enhance the lives and uplift the spirits of those confined in institutions — since 1990. She has been a happy resident of Marin Valley for 20 years. ■



November 9

1-4 pm (Setup 12-1 pm)

Homemade cookies, cakes, pies and treats, jams, chutneys and sauces, craft items, clothing, cards, and gifts for children, among many other surprise items await you.

Anyone can set up a table to sell items. Not everything is handmade. Vintage clothing, antiques, jewelry, and objets d'art often appear. Contact Tara Plocher at taraplocher@gmail.com ■

Marin Valley Gallery

Featured Artist Laura Kradjan-Cronin

Laura Kradjan-Cronin's work is featured October through November. Below is *Open Sunday*, one of her oil paintings now in the clubhouse gallery. ■





NEWCOMERS GROUP

Saturday, November 16
Fireside Room • 2 pm

Come, meet new friends, and explore this vibrant community. Enjoy an informal and relaxed setting to ask questions and tap into the collective knowledge of people who have lived here for ages, who know the area well, and who would love to share this information.

We especially welcome residents who have arrived in the last year or so, along with all others who want to find out — or assist others in discovering — more about Marin Valley and its environs, people, organizations, and events.

Whether you have lived here for a week or more than 20 years, we aim to be an enlivened and diverse group of people who welcome getting to know our neighbors. ■



Live Long, Live Healthy

by **MARSHALL KRAUSE** and **MARTY GELMAN**



Monday, November 25
Fireside Room • 4:30 pm

A scientist from the Buck Institute for Research on Aging will inform us about the latest research on the causes of human aging, the prospects for slowing it down, and the habits and behaviors that contribute to longevity.

The goal of the Buck Institute is to increase the number of healthy years of human life. The Institute, located in north Novato, has 22 laboratories with faculties dedicated to distinct aspects of these issues. Tours are available at www.buckinstitute.org/. ■

Swinging into the Rest of the Year

by **INGA GRACE**

Swing Dance classes will continue in November and December! We'll meet in the Bamboo Room on the first three Wednesdays of November (Nov. 6, 13, and 20) and December (Dec. 4, 11, and 18). Each month's series is \$60. Newcomers and drop-ins (\$20) are always welcome — no partner required!



First three Wednesdays of November and December
Bamboo Room • 7 pm
Doors open at 6:45
Class from 7 to 8 pm
Followed by social dancing

Contact Inga for information at 415-533-9088. ■

Aging Gracefully

by **JOHN FELD**

Saturday, November 2
Fireside Room
2 pm

Gail Patterson and her friend Cece O'Connor will host a meeting in the Fireside Room on November 2 from 2 to 4 pm to discuss some of the often-overlooked challenges faced by older adults. Their goal is to empower us to find agency, purpose, and fulfillment as we age. They aim to foster dialogue and deepen understanding of the issues we encounter in later life, transforming the perception of aging from something to fear into a vibrant, life-affirming journey.

You're invited to join this celebration. With humor and grace, they hope to address the complexities of aging, igniting meaningful conversations and inspiring curiosity. Together we can enhance our ability to live fully at every stage and embrace the richness that each year offers. Come and explore the possibilities and enrich our later years together! ■

The Buck Stops Here



Buck stopping in Elizabeth Lev's back yard.

Warm and Fuzzy

by **ELIZABETH LEV**



Hello, neighbors. Once again, we will be collecting items for the homeless: Please give only brand-new gloves, mittens, caps, socks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and small bars of soap. Put your items in the designated box on my front porch starting November 15 and ending December 15. I will bring the items to various locations to give them away before Christmas. In years past, this has been a very successful project, so I hope it will be again this year! ■

Thanks in advance,
Elizabeth
107 Marin Valley Drive

Fallen Leaf Block Party

by **MICHELE RODRIGUEZ** and **KC CASEY**



When the View Ridge neighbors had a summer block party, we were motivated to host one in the Fallen Leaf Way neighborhood, a group of twenty homes. September 8 was chosen by a majority vote, and each resident was asked to bring a potluck dish. Tables were borrowed from the clubhouse, chairs from the neighborhood, and music via a Sirius XM and Bluetooth setup.

We enjoyed a feast of foods and drink, including Jan Thomas's chilaquiles and tamales, Pat Thurston & Brynda Foster's deviled eggs and dessert, Lance Masterson & Ursula Pedersen's tasty appetizer, Karin Mortensen's veggies and dip, and Susan Hoff's drinks and chips. Sheri & Greg Smyth brought lamb-stuffed dolmas, Miriam & Rex Spross brought Japanese sweet potatoes and tahini sauce, Pat Higgins & Richard Wilkerson brought fruit kabobs, and KC brought potato salad. Todd Rogers grilled sausages for us, and Michele brought a broccoli salad and fruit pie.

It was WONDERFUL to be outdoors in the shady sunshine, eating, talking, and laughing as we got better acquainted. We were happy to meet and welcome our new neighbors, Sheri and Greg, from Austin, Texas. There is something about the human connection, the social interaction, which seems to help all of us age more slowly and gracefully.

This is the Fallen Leaf Way challenge: Which neighborhood is next? ■

A Photographic Journey

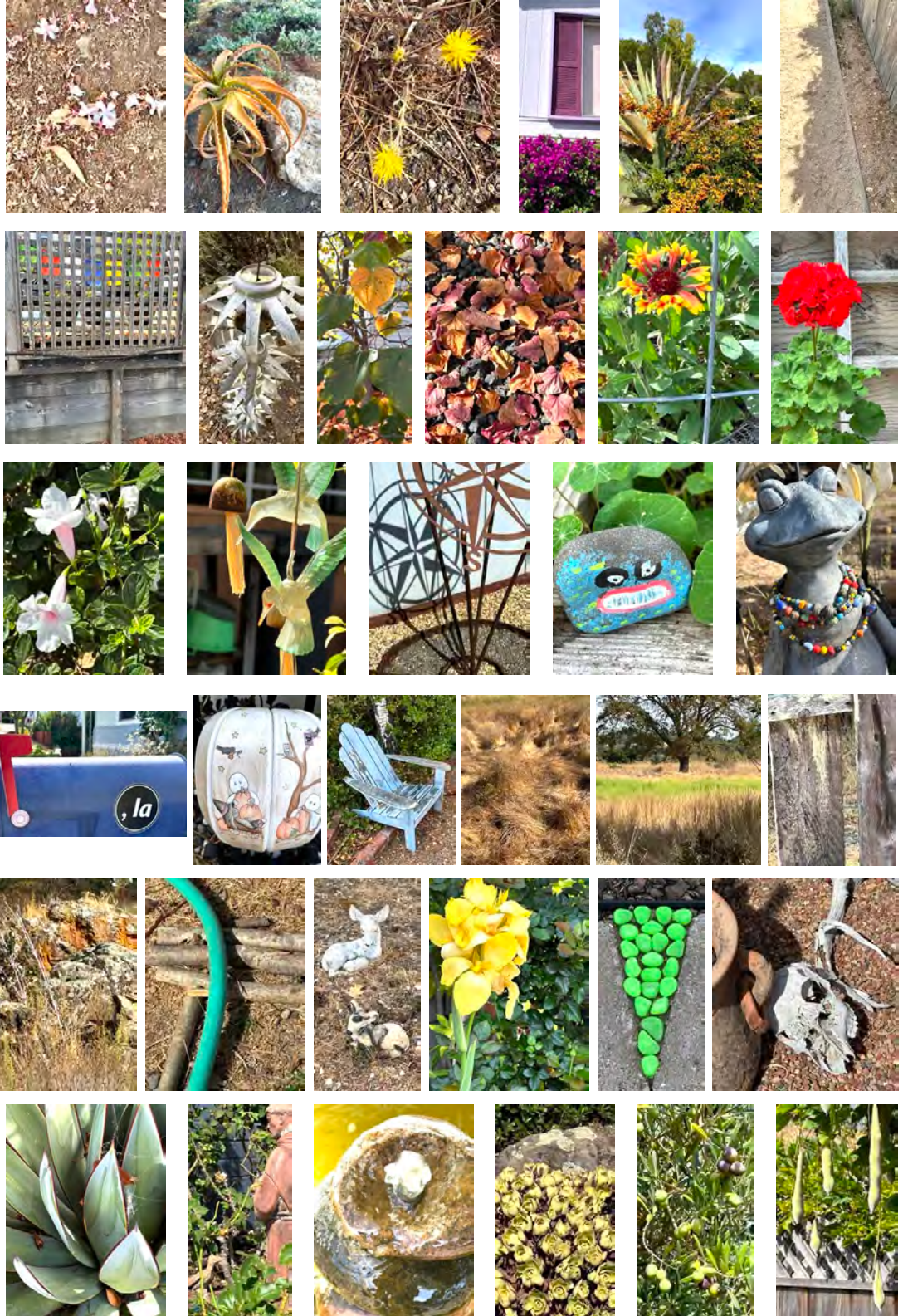
by **MICHELE RIVERS**

Greetings, neighbors and friends in the Park.

This morning Fergie (my faithful companion) and I had a wonderful time capturing our walk in photographs. Perhaps you will be able to identify our route with the images in the 36 photographs. Reviewing them, I found it interesting to see what captured my attention. I did no enhancement of the photographs, though some I cropped to emphasize shape or subject. Some featured objects; some shadows, lines, or textures; and some I just found colorful or humorous. Anyhow, you may be able to follow our steps if you want a photographic adventure from 8 View Ridge Drive — we made a large circle. ■

Have fun.

Michele and Fergalicious



The Joy of Talking to “Strangers”

by **LORNA SASS**

Did your parents warn you to never talk to strangers? Mine sure did, and while they certainly had my safety and best interests at heart, it was pretty bad advice when it came to living a fun, adventure-filled, and fulfilling life.

So thoroughly indoctrinated was I in the idea of avoiding strangers that, even though I’ve never been a shy type, I didn’t begin to wonder about the wisdom of this parental advice until I was in my late twenties. At that time, probably because I was living alone in a tiny Manhattan studio apartment and studying in solitude to get my PhD, I began to feel like I needed to find some people to talk to on the spur of the moment. I soon got the idea of chatting with bus drivers as we motored across Central Park or slowly made our way downtown in traffic. This experiment seemed pretty safe to me at the time, and I approached it with curiosity, almost like a scientist excited about collecting data.

Well, dear reader, not only was it a safe experiment, but it was great fun. The NYC bus drivers seemed as eager

for connection as I was, wanting to engage in conversation even though theoretically they were supposed to keep their eyes and ears exclusively on the busy, congested city streets. I began recognizing several of them who had regular routes that dovetailed with mine, and before long, I called them by name, and knew about their families, what was troubling them, how they felt about driving in the snow, and what it was like working for the city.

The more I learned about them, the more curious I became. Little did I know that this experiment would be the training ground for what would evolve into a lifelong career of interviewing people all around the world about food and travel.

Indeed, the fun I had chatting with bus drivers quickly translated into permission to talk with just about anyone I felt intuitively drawn to and who I instinctively sensed would be responsive. For example, when I saw a Broadway actor or cabaret singer on the subway, I approached them respectfully and either caught their eye, smiled, and nodded, or complimented them verbally on

a recent performance. Sometimes a brief conversation ensued, and sometimes it didn’t, but either way, I felt enriched by the encounter.

Then, when I was in line at a Jewish deli, I might ask the person behind me about the type of smoked salmon he was about to purchase. Other times, when I was hanging out on a bench in Central Park, I struck up a conversation with the person sitting next to me. (Once, during Christmas season, that person turned out to be the man who played Santa in the Radio City Music Hall holiday show, and I ended up going to a performance both to cheer him on and to cheer myself up!)

What started out as an experiment in talking with strangers turned into my understanding that there are no strangers, just acquaintances we haven’t made yet!

But the bigger lesson that I’m wanting to remember in my elder years is that approaching people and life with playfulness and curiosity rather than fear is wisdom in action. With this thought in mind, I dare you to speak to a stranger and see what happens. Please let me know! ■



Point Reyes Birds

Text and Photography by **DAVID GRAY**

It's migration season.

In mid-September, we were out at Point Reyes National Seashore, and I had a great opportunity to photograph some birds up close. A gigantic western juniper had blown down in a recent storm near the Chimney Rocks parking area, opening up a previously shaded area and providing some nice new landing spots for small birds.

The western flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*) is a West Coast bird whose range extends from southern Alaska in the summer down to Mexico in the winter. It is small, with a wingspan of under 6 inches and weighing under half an ounce. With its olive-colored back and dark wings, it has fairly decent camouflage. Its bicolored bill is a differentiating characteristic; the top half is black, and the lower part is yellow. It has a small crest and a pale eye ring.

This western flycatcher was hunting for insects that were attracted to the newly sunlit area around the fallen juniper. (below)



Some year-round birds were also busily enjoying their new hunting grounds. A female downy woodpecker (*Dryobates pubescens*) shown above is listening for boring insects moving underneath the juniper bark.

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Lastly, a song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) was fluffed up against the cold wind blowing off Drakes Bay. (right)






While further north in Fort Bragg in early October, we counted at least four waves of Canada geese (*Branta canadensis*) flying south. Each wave had 100 to 200 birds in huge V- and W-shaped formations. They know winter is coming.



As the weather cools down, please remember to check the air in your car tires and inflate to the manufacturer-recommended levels, which are printed on a sticker on the driver's-side doorframe. Correctly inflated tires help save money by improving efficiency as well as traction and safety. ■

NOVEMBER 2024

SEE WWW.MARINVALLEY.NET FOR UPDATES AND LINKS

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
7:30-9AM	Taiji Deck/ David MacLam	6AM Trash	7:30-9AM Taiji Deck/ David MacLam	7:30-9AM Taiji Deck/ David MacLam	7:30-9AM Taiji Deck/ David MacLam	7:30-9AM Taiji Deck/ David MacLam	
10-10:30AM	Meditation Zoom*	7:30-9AM Taiji Deck/David MacLam	10:30-11:30AM Craft & Chat Library	10-11AM Water Aerobics Pool	11AM-12PM Rollin' Root 	10-11AM Water Aerobics Pool	2PM Aging Gracefully Fireside Room
11:30AM-12:30PM	Group Strength Training Bamboo Room/ Nan Watanabe	10-11AM Water Aerobics Pool	VOTE	7-8PM Swing Dancing Bamboo Room	HOL BOARD MEETING Fireside Room	12PM Mahjong Fireside Room	5PM Dancing Meadow
	 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS						 BALLROOM MARKET SATURDAY 7-4PM
7:30-9AM	Taiji	6AM Trash	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	
10-10:30AM	Meditation	7:30AM Taiji	10:30-11:30AM Craft & Chat	10-11AM Water Aerobics	11AM-12PM Rollin' Root 	10-11AM Water Aerobics	
11:30AM-12:30PM	Group Strength Training	10-11AM Water Aerobics		6PM MAR VAL BOARD MEETING Ballroom		12PM Mahjong	2PM Newcomers Group Fireside Room
		1-4PM Bridge		7-8PM Swing Dancing		5-7PM Pub	5PM Dancing
		4:30-6PM PAC BOARD Meeting Ballroom/Zoom**				7PM Jeanne Skybrook Ukulele Performance Fireside Room	
7:30-9AM	Taiji	6AM Trash	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	
10-10:30AM	Meditation	7:30AM Taiji	10:30-11:30AM Craft & Chat	10-11AM Water Aerobics	11AM-12PM Rollin' Root 	10-11AM Water Aerobics	
11:30AM-12:30PM	Group Strength Training	10-11AM Water Aerobics	5PM Thanksgiving Dinner reservation deadline	11AM Ladies Bridge Private, Fireside Room		12PM Mahjong	2PM Mar Val THANKSGIVING DINNER 5PM Cocktails 6PM Dinner
		1-4PM Bridge		7-8PM Swing Dancing		5-7PM Pub	
		4:30PM Last Monday Lectures: Live Long, Live Healthy Fireside Room/Marshall Krause, Marty Gelman				7PM Pub	
7:30-9AM	Taiji	6AM Trash	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	7:30-9AM Taiji	
10-10:30AM	Meditation	7:30AM Taiji	10:30-11:30AM Craft & Chat	10-11AM Water Aerobics	10-11AM Water Aerobics	10-11AM Water Aerobics	
11:30AM-12:30PM	Group Strength Training	10-11AM Water Aerobics		4PM Book Club Carol-Joy Harris		12PM Mahjong	5PM Dancing Meadow
		1-4PM Bridge				5-7PM Pub	
		4:30PM Last Monday Lectures: Live Long, Live Healthy Fireside Room/Marshall Krause, Marty Gelman				7PM Pub	

* Anila Manning

** Carol-Joy Harris

*** www.marinvalley.net