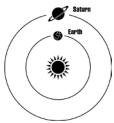


# T H E ECHO

## October 2024



<p><b>2 Matt Greenberg</b></p> <p><b>3-4 John Hansen</b></p> <p><b>4 ROD Committee</b></p> <p><b>5 John Feld</b></p> <p><b>6 Carolyn Corry</b></p> <p><b>6-7 Carolyn Corry, Susan Hoff</b></p> <p><b>8 John Feld</b></p> <p><b>9 Suzie Lahr Tara Plocher</b></p> <p><b>10 Aneesha Dillon, Timo Navsky David Gray</b></p> <p><b>11 Ed Collins</b></p> <p><b>11 Carol-Joy Harris</b></p> <p><b>12 Michael Hagerty Marshall Krause, Marty Gelman</b></p> <p><b>13 Mary Currie</b></p> <p><b>14-16 Frank Simpson</b></p> <p><b>17 Lorna Sass</b></p> <p><b>18 Vicki Waddell Cherrie Dougherty</b></p> <p><b>19 David Gray</b></p> <p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>MVMCC</b> MANAGEMENT UPDATE, IN MEMORIAM, RESIDENT UPDATE</p> <p><b>PAC</b> PAC LETTER TO RESIDENTS ROD Committee Update</p> <p><b>MVEST</b> Grab &amp; Go</p> <p><b>MAR VAL</b> MESSAGE FROM MAR VAL EVENT FLYERS</p> <p><b>HOL</b> HOL MESSAGE HOL COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS <i>Oct-Nov</i> Marin Valley Gallery <i>Oct 5</i> Ballroom Craft Market <i>8</i> Circle of Friends <i>8</i> On Safari with David Gray <i>12</i> Dump Run <i>14</i> Save Your Ballot <i>22</i> Men's Hour <i>28</i> LAST MONDAY LECTURES: History of Marin Valley with Jay Shelfer</p> <hr/> <p>Novato Sales Tax Measure M Saturn's Disappearing Rings Scream Therapy Angels Long-Term Care Insurance Help BIRD OF THE MONTH: <i>Northern Harrier</i> CALENDAR: <i>October 2024</i></p>
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**ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITTEES**

**PAC BOARD**

PRESIDENT John Hansen 415-847-7155  
 VP/DIR. PARK OPERATIONS Jay Shelfer 415-250-0375  
 VP/DIR. COMMUNICATIONS Mary Currie 415-793-8420  
 SECRETARY Carol-Joy Harris 415-883-2824  
 TREASURER Stephen Plocher 415-302-9043

AD HOC NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE John Hansen, Jay Shelfer

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

CAPITAL PROJECTS John Hansen, Jay Shelfer  
 COMMUNICATIONS Mary Currie, Chair; Carol-Joy Harris,  
 Charlotte Weiser  
 Stephen Plocher

**FINANCE**

**FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEES**

PRO FORMA (Budget Master-Planning) David King,  
 Chair; Stephen Plocher, Todd Rogers

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE Brad Witherspoon

**GRANTS AND LOW-INTEREST LOANS**

Serena Fisher, Michele Rodriguez

EXTERNAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES Janet Bogardus

INTERNAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES John Hansen,

Sue Meyer, Brad Witherspoon

MVEST Bill Davis, Chair; Pam Berkon, Pauline Clucas,

John Feld, David Gray, John Hansen,

Stephen Plocher, Erma Wheatley, Brad Witherspoon

**ROD**

Serena Fisher, Alan Gump, John Hansen,

David Tetta (Mary Currie/Jay Shelfer)

**HOL BOARD**

PRESIDENT John Feld 510-495-4138

1<sup>ST</sup> VICE PRESIDENT Ed Collins 415-377-7696

2<sup>ND</sup> VICE PRESIDENT Timo Navsky 415-279-5935

SECRETARY Anne Lakota 415-713-4606

TREASURER Tara Plocher 415-302-5992

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES Janie Crocker 281-414-3984

AT LARGE Michale Dancer 415-519-3395

AT LARGE Lisa Jackler 415-686-7048

AT LARGE Sandy Zeichner 415-902-5143

**STANDING COMMITTEE**

PARK MARKET Jill Boland, Chair; Lucinda Daly, Michale

Dancer, John Feld, John Hansen, Susan Hoff, Meg Jordan,

Ann Lakota, Joan Leopold, Gary McClendon, Deb McNeil,

Sue Meyer, Eve Riebe, Janet Shouldis, Brad Witherspoon

**MAR VAL BOARD**

PRESIDENT Carolyn Corry 415-370-6403

1<sup>ST</sup> VP, BAR MANAGER Anne Glasscock 415-601-3047

2<sup>ND</sup> VP Pat Thurston 415-884-0740

SECRETARY Connie Marelich 415-382-3350

TREASURER Vicki Waddell 415-382-8684

DIRECTOR/HOSPITALITY Larry Moore 883-0486

DIRECTOR/LOGISTICS Larry Cohen 415-883-7786

CHAIR/RESERVATIONS Susan Hoff 707-365-9426

CHAIR/LIBRARY Sandee Duncan 415-883-3034

CHAIR/PUB FOOD Tim Hoke 925-575-6189

BOARD CONSULTANT Kathleen Dargie 415-884-2969

BAR MANAGER EMERITUS Fred Dargie 415-884-2969

# Management Update

Our October 1, 2024, rent invoices will show increases in the trash and sewer fees. Marin Sanitary Service ([marinsanitaryservice.com](http://marinsanitaryservice.com)) is raising trash rates to \$46.76 per lot per month, and Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District ([www.lgvsd.org](http://www.lgvsd.org)) is increasing the sewer rate to \$113 per lot per month. Questions about these rate increases should be directed to the agency responsible.

Park Management has had several retaining walls built, and five safety rails.

Please keep all pets indoors unless on a leash out for a walk. Remember, the young quail are vulnerable to cats. Small off-leash dogs have been reported.

Your dogs will bark when unattended, so please keep

them with you. Your neighbors will thank you.

**Park Rule 8.1:** Park Management must give written approval for house color, siding material, roof type, color, and landscape choice prior to any installation or changes.

**Park Rule 20.3:** No repairing or servicing of vehicles or boats is permitted in carports, driveways, or streets. The Dept. of Public Works will enforce the restriction on all oil-clumped cat litter being disposed of in a storm drain.

Our Park speed limit is 15 mph.

Wear reflective clothing or a reflective vest when walking at dusk or at night so drivers can see you.



**IN MEMORIAM**

Eduardo Diaz Silveti

1929 – 2024

**Directory Update**

**New**

Sharon Lemmon  
 19 Marin Valley Drive  
 415-310-5107  
[sfslemmon@gmail.com](mailto:sfslemmon@gmail.com)

**Echo Deadline to Submit Articles**

Email articles to Anila Manning: [anilahere99@gmail.com](mailto:anilahere99@gmail.com) by the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month for the next month's issue with "ECHO" as the subject. Images should be high resolution.

# Letter to Residents



## **Greetings from the Park Acquisition Corporation Board of Directors.**

We are seeing a higher level of participation by residents at our regular monthly PAC Board meetings. This is so appreciated, as the more we all get involved, the stronger our community becomes. PAC Board meetings take place on the first Monday of the month (unless a given Monday is a holiday) at 5 pm.

Agendas and the Zoom link for future PAC Board meetings are always posted 72 hours before the meeting. PAC Board secretary Carol-Joy Harris emails the agenda to those on the Parkwide email list. If you are new to the community or have a change in your email address, contact Carol-Joy Harris at [caroljoyharris@comcast.net](mailto:caroljoyharris@comcast.net). You can also find the Zoom link for the meetings on the [marinvalley.net](http://marinvalley.net) homepage.

Much of August and September were focused on waiting to hear back from the City regarding the roof replacement and the main electrical switch replacement (or repair). As you can see, things are moving at the blazing speed of government. As of press time, we plan to meet with the Novato City staff to get things moving before the rains come. We are also waiting for the City to work with us on obtaining a Property Condition Assessment, a

budgeted item that is essential for us to understand the property's condition before drafting a financial plan and purchase offer.

The PAC Board's Resident Ownership Discovery (ROD) Committee has been dedicated to informing residents of each step in becoming a Limited Equity Housing Cooperative (LEHC). See their article on p. 4.

The PAC Board's Finance Committee has two subcommittees. One is working on identifying resources to help residents find assistance with things ranging from caregiving to rent. The other is developing projected budgets for Park ownership and examining the financial requirements to continue Park operations. This work is being shared with our partners at ROC USA (Resident Ownership Communities USA) and CCCD (California Center for Cooperative Development).

At the September PAC Board meeting, the board voted to have Park Manager Matt Greenberg develop a draft plan for moving homes in and out of the Park for discussion at an upcoming meeting. Moving these homes is quite a process and can sometimes cause delays for residents. The PAC Board wants an established procedure that keeps residents informed of any potential impacts.

## **What Is a Closed Session PAC Board Meeting?**

The PAC Board, per the requirement set forth by the City of Novato, operates its governance following the Brown Act, guaranteeing the public's right to attend local legislative meetings. Closed session meetings under the Brown Act are allowed in circumstances in which privacy is warranted – such as our current situation of discussing the terms of a sale.

In our case, residents can attend and comment on agenda items at the start of a closed session meeting but must then leave to allow the PAC Board to confer with legal counsel Karen Tiedemann. Afterward, the board will report back to any waiting residents. Per the Brown Act, this report is standardized – either there is nothing to report, or direction is given. While this process can be frustrating to residents, closed session meetings are the only legal forum for the PAC Board to strategize with legal counsel regarding the possible purchase of the Park. These discussions are inappropriate for an open meeting for obvious reasons, as we do not want the purchase details to become public.

## **Stay Informed – Get Updates**

Tools for communicating with residents include “Resident Update” emails, the monthly *Echo*, robocalls, flyers in the resident tubes, and banners. Be sure to opt in to receive robocalls from Park Manager Matt Greenberg, as these calls share emergency information and critical announcements.

## PAC Legal Fund

We are still collecting funds for legal counsel. The PAC Board uses funds to cover legal counsel needed for following the two roads we are traveling: (1) meeting requirements of the Exclusive Negotiating Agreement (ENA) with the City leading to ownership, and (2) taking the necessary steps to become a Limited Equity Housing Cooperative (LEHC).

Consider contributing to the Legal Fund as an investment in your future at Marin Valley. Many of you are making a monthly contribution, which really helps. Let's all commit to raising these funds. Every dollar counts. Drop your check made out to "PAC Legal Fund" into the black, locked Legal Fund box at the clubhouse front counter, or give it to PAC Board Treasurer Steve Plocher. Steve reports the Legal Fund income and expenses at the monthly PAC Board meeting.

I look forward to getting a timeline for the roof replacement and electrical switch replacement/repair before the rains come. Fingers are tightly crossed.



*John Hansen*  
John Hansen  
PAC PRESIDENT  
johnhansen.emt@gmail.com  
415-847-7155 cell



## October ROD Committee Update

by **SERENA FISHER, ALAN GUMP,  
JOHN HANSEN, DAVE TETTA,  
MARY CURRIE**

On September 4, 2024, the California Secretary of State accepted our attorney's filing of Articles of Incorporation to establish a nonprofit public benefit corporation called the Marin Valley Cooperative, Inc. (MVC). This new entity allows us to take the necessary steps toward ownership, ultimately becoming an official Limited Equity Housing Cooperative (LEHC).

In August and September, the Resident Ownership Discovery (ROD) Committee was very active developing, preparing for, and hosting two community workshops that were well attended.

The August 17 workshop "Becoming the Marin Valley Cooperative and What It Means for Us" focused on discussing key steps necessary in becoming a housing cooperative, cooperative member benefits and responsibilities, and differences between being a member versus a nonmember.

The September 19 workshop homed in on familiarizing residents with several key documents associated with the formation of Marin Valley Cooperative, Inc., including bylaws, MVC Board of Directors policies, and a code of ethics. The workshop also introduced information about the initial joining agreement and clarified two next steps:

1. Residents will be invited to join the Marin Valley Cooperative for a \$25 joining fee.
2. Once we have a sufficient number of households join, the MVC Board of Directors (the same individuals as those on the PAC Board of Directors) will convene its first member vote. The first voting meeting will ask MVC members to vote to approve the documents reviewed at the workshop as well as several additional actions.

To clarify further, residents will be invited to join the Marin Valley Cooperative, Inc., which is a public benefit corporation. MVC will not fully become a cooperative until purchase. We want residents to be aware of this nuance.

The ROD Committee continues to identify the next steps and bring them to you as soon as they are sorted out. For determining our next steps, our weekly planning sessions with our partners at CCCD and ROC USA, and with our attorney, provide the necessary guidance.

Watch for emailed "Resident Updates" as this process continues to emerge. Your participation is critical so that we are all informed! ■



# Grab and Go

## Essential Guide to Creating a “Grab & Go” Bag

by **JOHN FELD**

**E**very Marin Valley resident should have a “grab and go” bag — one of the most effective preparations for an emergency. This bag should contain the bare minimum of what you’ll need if you have to leave your home at a moment’s notice. This is not for when you have 24 hours’ notice; it’s for when you have seconds to leave your home to save your life.

### Bag Selection

Choose a lightweight, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or a bag with handles. It should be stored year-round in an accessible location like your hall closet or the trunk of your car. If you are fit enough to carry a backpack, this is ideal. Otherwise, use a carrying bag with handles. Keep it light enough to enable you to carry for at least a short distance. Be wary of suitcases with wheels; many are not very “roadworthy.” Fit the bag to your needs, not your needs to the bag.

Using the following list, gather what you need and then select a bag that accommodates it. If you have no experience with backpacks, inquire at your local sporting goods store. Some of the objects you collect can be stored in the trunk of your car.

### What to Pack

Assume you have to survive for a short time with what is in the bag and that, if your home is lost, you can begin rebuilding your life with its contents. Be brutal in discarding things you love but cannot carry. If you have heavy

gold ingots under your mattress, put them in a bank safety deposit box.

Alternatives to the following list are on the counter in the clubhouse.

1. Copies, preferably on a flash drive, of your important papers, including copies of property deeds, bank records, insurance papers, copies of birth certificates, passports, and your will. (You do have one, don’t you?) The originals should be stored somewhere safe, such as a bank lock box. Consider creating multiple flash drives and giving one to a trusted person for safekeeping. Include photographs of valuable items: appliances, electronic equipment, cameras, jewelry, paintings, etc.
2. Four filled water bottles per person. This is your immediate emergency supply — not enough to live on for a week, but enough to last each person a day or two. Water containers should be no larger than what you can physically carry. Be careful, water is heavy! Make sure your containers have a loop or strap that can easily attach to your pack or bag. (And be sure to get the necessary clips to do this.)
3. Some way to make a fire — either a windproof lighter or windproof matches with a striker.
4. Food for two to three days. No matter how delicious your favorite energy bar is, after two days with nothing else, it will be hard to stomach. For food that needs to be cooked or heated, include a stove and pans.

5. A good, comprehensive emergency first aid kit
6. A lightweight sleeping bag or blanket and, if not built in, some form of waterproofing
7. A multitool, a hand-crank emergency radio, a flashlight, spare batteries, etc.
8. \$100 in small-denomination bills (ATMs won’t work without power).

Other items to consider:

- Plastic ponchos and rain gear
- Whistle to signal for help
- Face masks (N95s)
- Plastic sheeting to shelter in place
- Garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Can opener
- Complete change of clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, sturdy gloves, and shoes.

Most of these items are already in your home and can fit into a carry-on style bag. It may sound like a lot, but it’s better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it.

Most of us would wish to take family photos. If possible, scan these in advance and store them in the cloud.

Prepare your bag this week. Delaying can cause real difficulty after the event. Anything degradable, such as food, should be replaced at regular intervals.

What you should have in your shed or car deserves another article, which will be forthcoming. ■

# Message from Mar Val



## Mar Val Thanksgiving Dinner

**Saturday, November 23**

**5 pm Cocktails 6 pm Dinner**

### Menu

*Turkey and 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 they've eaten theirs.

Even if you have generously volunteered,

**YOU MUST STILL DEPOSIT A RESERVATION CHECK  
PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE**

Questions? – Call Susan Hoff @ 707-365-9426

### **Want a free Thanksgiving dinner? ROAST A TURKEY!**

Some of our seasoned (sorry) volunteer turkey roasters are no longer able, so we're looking for a few good people to share their skills for our sumptuous dinner on Nov. 23. We buy the turkey and supply a pan and time-tested instructions; you bring the cooked turkey up to the carvers and relax with a banquet! Call Sandee Duncan 415-883-3034 to be one of the 12 lucky roasters!

Dear Friends,

Mar Val is heading into a very busy fall/winter season. Black Cat is on October 26 ... get into the spirit of the night and wear a costume! Prizes will be awarded for Best Female/Best Male/Best Couple outfits. Chef Larry will be preparing a lovely dinner, and Cherrie Dougherty will once again set up her delicious Bakery Boo-tique. Cookies, pies, cakes, and assorted sweets will be available for purchase for our Black Cat dessert or to enjoy later. This is the one and only fundraiser for Mar Val for the year; we use proceeds from this event to cover the cost of our annual liquor license. Come join us for this always-fun event.

As Thanksgiving approaches, make your plans to attend one of the most popular events of the year: a real home-cooked turkey dinner with all the trimmings and usual sides. Remember that this event is not on Thanksgiving Day but on Saturday, November 23. Two people per residence only ... sorry folks, but this is a high-demand evening, and we want to be fair to all. Please check the November *Echo* for requests to cook turkeys, carve, serve, and decorate. **EARLY RESERVATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** The reservation box will be placed on the clubhouse counter on November 1.

As this article goes to press, we are eagerly awaiting our September 13 big mystery reveal ... I have, thus far, not received any of the gifts but have been assured that they will arrive by that date for all Pub-goers to enjoy. Who in the world is this mystery donor?

Sincerely,

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



# **Black Cat Fundraiser**

**Mar Val's Annual  
Liquor License Fundraiser**

**Black Cat Spooky Costume Party**

**Cash Prizes for Best Costumes  
and FaB00lus Bake Sale**

**Saturday, October 26**

**5 pm Cocktails • 6 pm Dinner**

Larry's Meaty Macaroni or Vegetarian Lasagna

Salad & Garlic Toast

Bakery Treats for Sale

from Cherrie Dougherty & Volunteers

\$16.30 per person

**Reservation deadline: Wednesday, October 23 by 5 pm**

or when 100 reservations have been received.

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 they've eaten theirs.

Make checks payable to Mar Val

Questions — Call Susan Hoff @ 707-365-9426

# Home Owners League Message

Greetings,

## Donations

Marin Valley residents, your generosity has been overwhelming. Thanks to your contributions, HOL is well prepared for the future. We deeply appreciate your support. In fact, your kindness has inspired us to allocate some of these donations toward our yard maintenance efforts. As you may know, the Humanitarian Fund was transferred to HOL several years ago with the mandate to assist those in financial or physical need with maintaining their front yards, including the removal of fire-prone plants and unsightly overgrowth. As the cost of hiring gardeners surged dramatically, our budget (funded by your donations) struggled to keep up with the increasing demand. This year, we supported around two-thirds of the homes we identified as needing assistance. To address this gap, HOL has transferred \$2,500 from our general fund to the Yard Maintenance fund, allowing us to continue this important

work throughout the year. Once again, thank you for your generous contributions.

## Ballroom Craft Market

Our popular Craft Markets are now being held in the ballroom and will occur on the first Saturday of each month through the end of the year. Don't miss our largest event, which will take place in December, just in time for festive gift shopping!

## Art in the Park

Starting in October, the corridor section of the Marin Valley Gallery will be refreshed with a new artist. Kradjan-Cronin will be the new featured artist, with her paintings on display until early December. Congratulations, Laura!

## Dump Run

The next dump run is scheduled for Saturday, October 12, starting at approximately 9 am. If you have items you would like to have hauled away, please contact Ed Collins at 415-377-7696 (text preferred) or email him at [mretc@hotmail.com](mailto:mretc@hotmail.com). Please see the article on p. 11 for details.

## Newcomers Group

Our Newcomers Group is open to all Park residents, with a primary focus on those who have joined the community in the past 12 months. We also welcome long-time residents to share their experiences and help newcomers get acquainted with their neighbors. This informal, enjoyable gathering aims to share information and build a sense of community within the Park. At each meeting, we determine the topics and scheduling. Be sure to look for flyers, our [marinvalley.net](http://marinvalley.net) website, or give me a call for updates. Our next meeting at 2 pm on Saturday, October 19 will include issues with insurance.

## New Macintosh

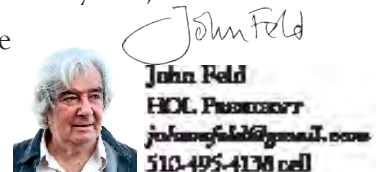
We have acquired a new Macintosh computer for the library, thanks to your contributions. While we previously relied on donated used computers that were prone to frequent issues, this new Mac represents our first brand-new addition since we purchased a new PC last year. Remember, you cannot save work

directly onto our hard drives, so bring a flash drive if you need to save your files. Additionally, please limit your printing to no more than ten sheets to conserve toner and paper. If you encounter any issues with the computers, let me know. Note that printing from the PC is currently unavailable due to frequent user changes in settings that disable printing for everyone.

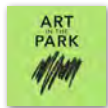
## HOL Events

Please see the following pages for new HOL events: the League of Woman Voters of Marin's review of the ballot propositions, Men's Hour, and an African Safari with David Gray. And don't miss continuing events: the Circle of Friends, Last Monday Lectures, which this month will present a history of Marin Valley with Jay Shelfer, Preventing Anxiety & Depression (ends mid-October), Group Strength Training, Taiji, Meditation, Craft & Chat, the Book Club, The Rollin' Root, Game Night, Dancing, Water Aerobics, and our Park Market of extra food.

Stay safe,







# Marin Valley Gallery

by **SUZIE LAHR**, photos by **LAURA KRADJAN-CRONIN**

**C**ome visit the Marin Valley Gallery lobby and hallway display with the artworks of our latest featured artist, Laura Kradjan-Cronin. As with many connections in this Park, our histories together go from San Geronimo Valley, while I was working as the curator for the Maurice del Mue Gallery in the San Geronimo Valley Community Gallery, to our very own valley here.

Laura's delightful variety of paintings will be on display through the months of October and November. Then we will highlight our very own David Gray with his amazing wildlife photographs from his latest safari trip. You can catch a preview at his next slide presentation on October 8.

As I have said many times in the past, we are always looking for new Park artists to join us, so just give me a phone call or send me an email. We have much space to fill each time we change the gallery, and the more artwork we have the more interesting those displays become. We sincerely hope that all residents enjoy the efforts of our Art in the Park team! ■



Tex Mexi-Cat



Still Life with Sanka



Nicasio Fire Truck

# Ballroom Craft Market

by **TARA PLOCHER**



**Saturday, October 5**  
**Ballroom**  
**1 - 4 pm**

**E**veryone is invited to the craft market now called the Ballroom Craft Market, on Saturday October 5 from 1 to 4 pm. It will be held the first Saturday of the month throughout the end of the year. And then it will resume about every two to three months or so next year.

Look for homemade cookies, cakes, pies and treats, jams, chutneys and sauces, craft items, clothing, cards, and gifts for children, among other surprise items each month.

Anyone can set up a table to sell items. Not everything is necessarily handmade. Vintage clothing, antiques, jewelry, and objets d'art often appear. Contact Tara Plocher at [taraplocher@gmail.com](mailto:taraplocher@gmail.com). Setup is from 12-1 pm. ■



# Circle of Friends

by **ANEESHA DILLON** and **TIMO NAVSKY**

**Tuesday, October 8**  
**Fireside Room**  
**4 pm**

**O**ur Circle of Friends group here in the Park has been meeting regularly every two months for the last two and a half years. We have grown into a very cohesive core group, and together we have been learning about the facts and the mysteries of the end of life. Gradually, we are becoming more knowledgeable and more comfortable with the idea of death.

This growing acceptance has inspired many of us to take steps in our lives now, steps that can bring us more peace and relaxation as we age. We have learned about trusts and wills, medical and emotional advanced directives, and other practical considerations. We have viewed films, had discussions, and listened to a number of guest speakers. By talking about these issues within the group, it becomes easier to communicate our wishes to friends and family.

Our original intention in creating Circle of Friends was, first, to bring together a group of our MVMCC neighbors who might be interested in learning more about aging, dying, and end of life. And then, when ready, to serve as informal support through visiting or being available to listen, share, help with errands, read, etc.

Some people in the Circle of Friends feel that now is the moment to move forward on some version of the above idea. In our October 8 meeting we will be talking about it, brainstorming, and exploring possibilities of how we'd like to proceed. Even if you feel like being only peripherally involved, your ideas and input will be really helpful! Please join us. ■

# On Safari with David Gray

by **DAVID GRAY**

**Tuesday, October 8**  
**Ballroom**  
**6:30 pm**



*Getting ready to climb into a safari vehicle in South Africa, near the border of the Kruger National Park, with cameras and lenses in protective rain gear.*

**C**ome see photos and videos of my three-week March 2024 photo safari to South Africa and Botswana.

I was one of 12 photographers on the trip. We traveled in open vehicles among elephant herds, lion prides, leopards, Cape buffalo, cheetahs, giraffes, wild African dogs, kudu, impalas, klipspringers, nyalas, and one or two bird species (900 in the region). It's my best work so far. ■

# Dump Run



**Saturday, October 12**  
**9 am**

**W**ant to get rid of (fill in the blank) but it's too big for the trash bin?

Neighbors get together and rent a trailer, and we drive around and pick up stuff a few times a year. We usually have trouble fitting all the “junk” into our two trips, so if you have something that can be broken into smaller pieces and put in your bin, please do! Please have your stuff ready by 9 am.

We do NOT take **cardboard**  
**building materials**  
**construction waste.**

**Toxic materials** — such as chemicals, oil, paint, fluorescent light bulbs, and pressure-treated wood; you can take those items to:

**Recology Sonoma Marin Recycling Center,**  
**7576 Redwood Blvd., Novato, 800-243-0291**

[www.recology.com/recology-sonoma-marin/novato-recycling-center/](http://www.recology.com/recology-sonoma-marin/novato-recycling-center/)

**Electronic items** — such as monitors, TVs, computers and accessories, cell phones, audio/video equipment, microwaves, printers, scanners, and fax machines. These can be donated to the eWaste Collective in Bel Marin Keys at:

**Computer & Technology Resource Center**  
**42 Digital Drive #2, Novato, 415-883-1428**

There is also **Renew Computers in San Rafael.**

## **Donations are appreciated.**

HOL will cover the dump fee, but individuals are responsible for the \$25 fee per item for large items such as washers and dryers.

## **To have your items hauled away:**

Please **text** (preferred) Ed Collins with details at **415-377-7696** (NO CALLS PLEASE, unless necessary) or **email** him at [mretc@hotmail.com](mailto:mretc@hotmail.com) ■

# Save Your Ballot

by **CAROL-JOY HARRIS**



**Tuesday, October 14**  
**Ballroom/Zoom**  
**7 pm**

**B**allots for the November 5 election will be mailed out on October 7. We will receive ours shortly thereafter.

Save yours for a few days!

Why?

On October 14 at 7 pm, the League of Women Voters of Marin County will make a presentation in our clubhouse ballroom about all the statewide ballot measures. It will cover the pros and cons of each measure, who supports and who opposes, and where the money is coming from. The meeting will also be available on Zoom, so you can come to the ballroom or watch from home. Then you'll be confident about how you wish to vote on each proposition.

To Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02webNQdVZOUzJicXZORkY1dG8vdz09>

Meeting ID: 810 2446 5623

Passcode: 510036 ■

# Men's Hour

by **MICHAEL HAGERTY**

**Tuesday, October 22**  
**Fireside Room**  
**5-6 pm**

**T**he company of men has been a part of every culture, from prehistoric hunting parties to defending homes and family, to rooting together for sports teams. But after retirement, men often are left with less purpose and meaning in our lives.

We'll talk about **The Hero's Journey**, which every man and woman can follow. But we also will talk about the kinks in the path that are **special to men**, and how to navigate those paths for more fulfillment in our lives.

**Come to this hour and learn:**

- ▮ How to gain more meaning in your life using mindfulness and Tai Chi.
- ▮ How to connect with your purpose every day with a 10-minute exercise.
- ▮ The **TWO TOPICS** that affect men daily that women don't want to talk about.

**This hour is for men only.** Is it worth one hour to get some tips about navigating **The Hero's Journey** in our lives? ■

*Michael Hagerty is a retired professor at UC Davis and was a Marin County Commissioner for Aging. His research explores how to find meaning and purpose in life and how to achieve more happiness in our daily lives.*



# History of Marin Valley

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

**Monday, October 28**  
**Fireside Room**  
**4:30 pm**

**J**ay Shelfer was president of the Park Acquisition Committee for over ten years. Get his unique perspective and a few fun stories at October's Monday lecture! ■



*Homes far back in the hills, 1970*



*View of completed Park above Hamilton*

# Novato Sales Tax Measure M

## City faces a \$4.3 million deficit in the current fiscal year

by **MARY CURRIE**

*Note: This information is not intended as an endorsement but rather a showing of the facts about Novato's Measure M drawn from the information on the City website.*

**O**n November 5, 2024, Novato voters are being asked to approve Measure M to increase the current sales tax of 8.5% by 0.75%, adding 7.5 cents to a \$10 purchase, which would be paid by anyone shopping in Novato. Novato's current sales tax rate is the second lowest in Marin County. The sales tax increase is projected to generate an additional \$10.3 million annually, and 100% of funds generated will remain in Novato. Essential purchases like groceries, medical and dental services, utilities, and prescription medicine are exempt from sales tax, helping to ensure that the cost is not a burden to those on fixed or limited incomes.

Until recently, Novato has been supported by COVID-driven stimulus funding protecting essential services from cuts. This one-time stimulus funding has been depleted.

The City is asking for a sales tax increase to be approved by voters to continue to

protect essential City services, community safety, and quality of life, including:

- ✓ fixing potholes and maintaining City streets
- ✓ maintaining 9-1-1 emergency response and public safety
- ✓ maintaining parks and recreation programs and facilities
- ✓ reducing the risk of wildfires.

The goal is to financially stabilize the City's revenue stream with the passage of the sales tax increase. As we've learned, the City of Novato has been struggling financially for a number of years now as evidenced in part by numerous staff turnovers, a reduction in staff positions, and being several years behind in completing required official audits of their financials.

Learn more about Measure M: <https://www.novato.org/our-town/measure-m> ■

The ballot language for Measure M reads:

"Shall the measure continuing locally controlled funding, that the State cannot take away, and maintaining City of Novato's services, such as: fixing potholes/streets; maintaining 9-1-1 emergency response, crime/gang prevention; attracting/retaining small businesses; maintaining parks/recreation facilities; enhancing wildfire prevention; and repair aging storm drains; by establishing a 3/4c sales tax in the City of Novato, until ended by voters, for general government use, providing an additional \$10,300,000 annually, with citizens' oversight, independent annual audits be adopted?"

# Saturn's Disappearing Rings

by **FRANK SIMPSON**

**I**n mid-August, 2024, Maggie and I took our telescope into our backyard on View Ridge Drive. At 4 am, it was dark, but the sky was crystal clear. To the east, Jupiter and Mars were rising so closely as to appear almost to collide. This close proximity as viewed from Earth is called a conjunction. To the right of these two planets was the star Aldebaran, located in the V of Taurus's head, and straight above Aldebaran were the Pleiades (the so-called Seven Sisters). We aimed our six-inch Dobsonian telescope at each of these celestial objects in turn. We found the four Galilean Moons of Jupiter and were soon enthralled, touring among the gorgeous, glowing chandelier of stars of the Pleiades.

Then we asked, "Where is Saturn now?" In previous summers, Saturn and Jupiter had appeared near each other in the night sky. But this morning, we noticed an obvious, slightly dimmed object, possibly along the ecliptic, to the west. We pointed our telescope at it, brought it into focus, and confirmed it was Saturn — perhaps the most beautiful jewel of the night sky. But something was different. Was its ring missing?!? Every previous summer, Saturn's characteristic ring had appeared as a prominent, rounded disc encircling the central sphere. Now, however, Saturn was a ball in the middle of a straight line. Were our eyes deceiving us, or had Saturn's famous ring collapsed into a line?

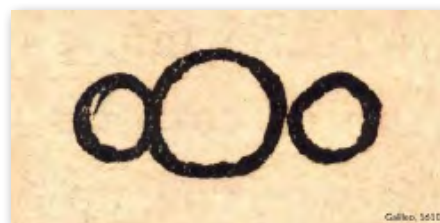
Later that morning, I got on the internet and posed these questions to our modern-day oracle, Google. It turns out Maggie and I were not the first to witness Saturn's ring seemingly disappear. Galileo observed a similar phenomenon in the early 1600s, though he did not understand what he was seeing. Neither did we.

Galileo was the first person to describe the planets through a telescope. His was self-made with about 20x magnification. The lenses were imperfect, with air bubbles in the glass, leading to distorted images.

Even so, Galileo's crude telescope revolutionized Western thought. In 1610, he discovered four of Jupiter's moons, to this day called the Galilean Moons. The Aristotelian assertion that Earth was the center of the universe, with the heavens revolving around it, was soon to crumble. That same year, Galileo also observed Saturn, noting:

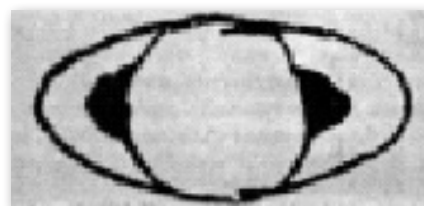
*I have observed the highest planet [Saturn] to be triple-bodied. This is to say that to my very great amazement Saturn was seen to me to be not a single star, but three together, which almost touch each other.*

Here is a sketch of Saturn from Galileo's 1610 notebook. He believed the objects flanking Saturn were "globes" or "handles," possibly large moons.



*Sketch of Saturn by Galileo in 1610*

In 1612, Galileo observed Saturn again — and was astounded to find that the moon-like objects that he had seen two years earlier had vanished. He wrote: *I do not know what to say in a case so surprising, so unlooked for and so novel. The round, mouse-like "ears" were no longer there!*



*Sketch of Saturn by Galileo in 1612*

In 1616, Galileo observed Saturn again. He wrote:

*The two companions are no longer two small perfectly round globes ... but are now much larger and no longer round ... that is, two half ellipses with two little dark triangles in the middle of the figure and contiguous to the middle globe of Saturn, which is seen, as always, perfectly round.*

Galileo never suggested that Saturn was surrounded by a ring, as we now understand it. Neither did his contemporaries with similarly primitive optics.

It wasn't until 1655 that Dutch astronomer Christiaan Huygens, using a 43x magnification refractor telescope of his own design, proposed that Saturn was surrounded by a solid ring: *a thin, flat ring, nowhere touching, and inclined to the ecliptic.* Huygens also discovered the first of Saturn's moons, Titan.

Here is a page from Huygens' 1659 publication *Systema Saturnium*.

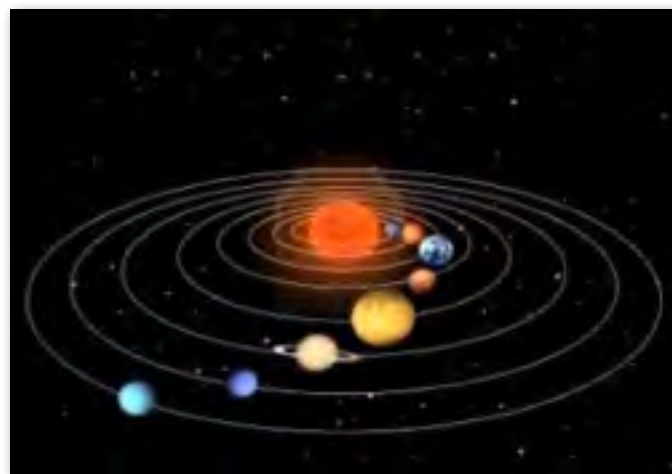


What explains the appearance and disappearance of Saturn's rings? Why did Galileo see "round globes" around Saturn in 1610, but none in 1612 and "arms" in 1616?

Why did I clearly see a disk around Saturn in previous years but only a barely detectable, thin line in August 2024 and again on September 8?

We now know that Saturn's ring "disappears" in cycles of 12 to 16 years and reappears during the intervening years. Why?

Well, Saturn, like Earth, is tilted on its axis. The planets of our solar system orbit the Sun at various velocities along the same plane. The time it takes for each planet to revolve around the Sun varies, making the solar year different for each planet. Additionally, we view Saturn from a side-on perspective, across the plane of the solar system, from a vast distance on Earth.



*The plane of our Solar system*

You can do the math if you wish:

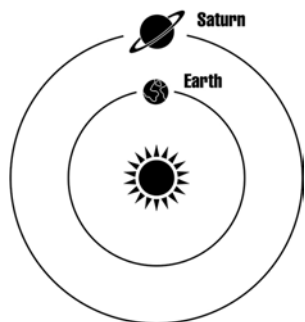
- 1 Saturn Day = 10 hours, 34 minutes.
- 1 Earth Day = 24 hours. Thus,
- 1 Saturn Day = .440 Earth Day.

Earth's axis of rotation is tilted 23.5 degrees from the plane of our Solar system. Saturn's axis of rotation (thus the angle of its equatorial ring) tilts 26.73 degrees from the plane of the Solar system.

Both Earth and Saturn experience seasons as they orbit the Sun. Earth travels around the Sun once per Earth year; Saturn takes about 29.5 Earth years to complete one orbit.

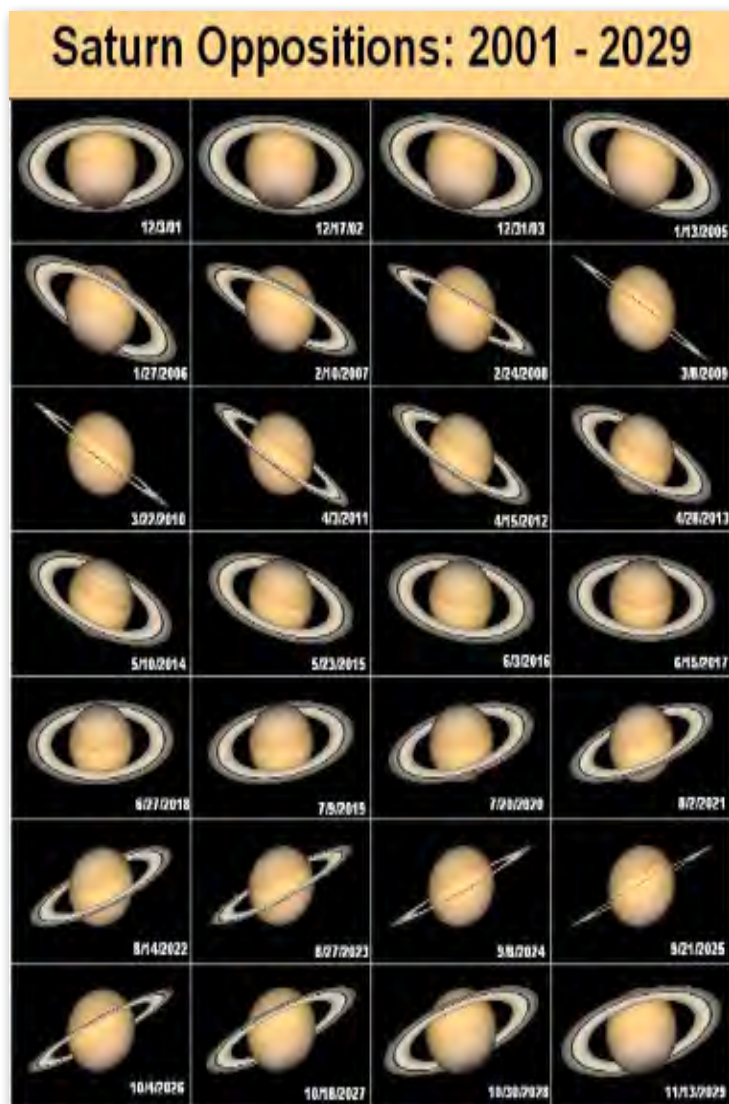
So, what do we see from Earth as we gaze across our vast Solar system toward Saturn? I'll define one more astronomical term: opposition. Opposition occurs when Earth and an outlying planet, such as Saturn, are at their closest point. At opposition, the sun,

Earth, and Saturn align, with Earth and Saturn on the same side of the sun. Here is a diagram of Saturn and Earth at opposition.



Earth and Saturn are at opposition approximately once per Earth year.

Now, look at this. These are views of Saturn at each opposition from 2001 through 2029.



Notice that we observed Saturn from BELOW the ring from 2001 through 2008, viewing Saturn’s Southern Hemisphere. In 2009, we began viewing Saturn’s ring edge-on from Earth as we were crossing its equator. By circa 2010, due to the tilt of Saturn’s axis as it traveled around the Sun, we started viewing Saturn from ABOVE its ring, or its Northern Hemisphere. We’ve been viewing Saturn from the north side of its ring since 2010.

As of September 8, 2024, our view of the planet and its equatorial ring is nearly edge-on again. Calculations show that on March 23, 2025, Saturn’s ring will be EXACTLY edge-on from our perspective. On that date, we will cross the ring, transitioning back to viewing Saturn’s Southern Hemisphere. Because Saturn’s ring is only 1 kilometer thick, and because we are so far away, it will effectively disappear from our view, though we may still see a thin shadow of the ring cast across Saturn’s equator due to illumination by the sun. Unfortunately, on March 25, 2025, Saturn will not be at opposition, as the Sun will be between Earth and Saturn, blocking our view.

But I can vouch that on September 8, 2024 – like Galileo in 1612 – I observed Saturn through my telescope, and its ring was collapsed to a single, thin line. ■

For more information, visit

“Visualizing the History of Saturn and its Rings” <https://nightingaledvs.com/visualizing-the-history-of-saturn-and-its-rings/>

“Why Do Saturn’s Rings Disappear?” [www.highpointscientific.com/astronomy-hub/post/astronomy-101/why-do-saturns-rings-disappear](http://www.highpointscientific.com/astronomy-hub/post/astronomy-101/why-do-saturns-rings-disappear)

A Picture of Saturn Every Year for Four Years [www.reddit.com/r/space/comments/168i08s/i\\_took\\_a\\_picture\\_of\\_saturn\\_every\\_year\\_for\\_4\\_years/?rdt=34915](http://www.reddit.com/r/space/comments/168i08s/i_took_a_picture_of_saturn_every_year_for_4_years/?rdt=34915)

Saturn’s Oppositions Animated <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Saturnoppositions-animated.gif>



# Scream Therapy

by **LORNA SASS**

**Y**esterday I had a chance to do scream therapy in the car. It was 10 am on a Saturday morning, and I was on my way to a jazz festival in Sacramento. Boy, was I surprised by all of the stop-and-go traffic at that hour.

Confession: I'm the original don't-fence-me-in girl, and I go slightly nuts when I get stuck in traffic. My whole body seems to start yelling GET ME OUT OF HERE as I squiggle and squirm. In fact, I discovered the benefits of scream therapy quite spontaneously when stuck in traffic several years ago. It was a terrific way to let go of all the stress and tension that had been building up in prior days.

You could call it my very own version of the primal scream!

But I digress ... Back on the slow road to Sacramento, when the second round of stand-still-for-ten-minutes traffic happened, I seriously considered turning back but I was so eager to hear live music and see some of my favorite musicians in the flesh that I convinced myself to keep going — and then I remembered my favorite traffic cure-all medicine: scream therapy.

The windows were already rolled up since it was hot and I had the A/C on. I took a deep breath

and started screaming at the top of my lungs. I took another deep breath and screamed again, this time banging hard on the steering wheel and yelling, "I hate traffic! What kind of sadist turns a three-lane highway into a single-lane road? Get me out of here!"



*Lorna's Stapeliad screaming for attention*

PHOTOGRAPH: LORNA SASS

Oh, that screaming felt like such a relief! It felt so good to let the frustration out rather than stuffing it and risking an ulcer ...

I continued doing scream therapy intermittently each time we came to a halt. I took some care in the way I screamed so I wouldn't end up hoarse. I did this by opening my throat and mouth really wide and making funny faces with my mouth and jaw as I screamed, and that seemed to do the trick.

When I arrived at the jazz venue, the parking goddess rewarded me with a spot right near the entrance, and within minutes I was tapping my toes to my favorite jazz riffs. Yippee! And kudos to scream therapy. The price is right, there's no waiting in line, and the rewards are many.

Stress is not good for our health and well-being, so I hope you'll try scream therapy sometime.

Or if you have a better way to let off steam, please let me know ASAP. I'll be all ears ... ■

# Angels

by **VICKI WADDELL**

**T**here are so many joys in our lives, and of course, we also have our fair share of ups and downs. Nevertheless, we have been given the quality of resilience, so I surmise we are conditioned to overcome and get on if we try. Another gift that has been given to us mortals are the angels we meet along the pathway of our lives. All one needs to do is listen and carefully observe to meet an angel. I am not referring to the biblical type but rather the angels who live among us and those we meet by happenstance as we travel about the world.

Although I am not prone to meditate, I do have occasions when I observe something in our Park that pleases me: watching our goats scamper about our hills, the baby quail only a few days old scurrying behind their parents, the hummers buzzing about the feeders as they protect their territory, and the bunnies who don't move until I stealthily walk away. These observations bring me joy, and that feeling causes me to stop and reflect on other beauties that have had a

profound effect on my life, such as the angels who remain appreciatively in my memory bank. I decided to share two with you, as this might be the impetus you need to recall the angels in your life.

The first angel was a relative of my husband's. She lived in the town of Bridge of Weir in Renfrewshire, Scotland. Susan welcomed me with open arms, and while we did not have a great deal of time together, she managed to share with me all the joys of her life – from her prized rhododendrons to her 100-year-old thimble collection and, best of all, her family history.

The story of her leaving her homeland in Austria with her husband and two small boys within hours of German occupation, traveling by any means – mostly by foot and train – and finally changing their names from Wallack to Wallace as they arrived at the Scottish border was harrowing! She didn't describe it in that fashion, though. Rather, she looked at it as an extraordinary opportunity to live her life to its fullest! As she weaved through her storytelling, it was as if everything she recalled glowed in the aftermath of her memories. I often wonder: Was her joy founded in this adventure of a lifetime, in an overly optimistic attitude, or was it due to the satisfaction that her efforts and attitude helped her make it to

freedom? I will never know because, now deceased, she sits on a higher plane than I. Nevertheless, I will certainly cherish the lessons I learned from her story, such as perseverance and conviction. This is why I call her my personal angel.

My second angel is someone who lost her entire immediate family – her mom, dad, brother, and then husband – all in one year! These losses were not the result of a single car accident or COVID but rather horrible, debilitating, and long-lasting diseases that were as diverse in nature as the people themselves. She became the family nurse, tending to wounds, dispersing medication, cooking nutritious meals, consoling their sorrows, and running errands, all the while maintaining a joyous heart.

I ask myself: How do you overcome such continuous hardship of loss, one after another in such a short period of time? How do you find the generosity, the magnanimity of spirit to put yourself aside and serve your loved ones on a continual basis? I have no answer except to say maybe we are not intended to understand. Maybe our lesson plan is to simply observe, support, admire, and if possible, emanate the spirit of the angels who walk among us. They are here. We just need to find some quiet time to ponder the goodness of heart in the people we meet. ■

## Long-Term Care Insurance Help

by **CHERRIE DOUGHERTY**

**D**o you have long-term care insurance? Do you understand the benefits your policy contains?

I worked at Genworth LTC Insurance for 17 years and was a subject matter expert, trainer, and benefit analyst (claims adjuster).

I am happy to help anyone in MVMCC to understand their policies – to know when and how to file a claim, what determines eligibility, etc.

I do not sell policies. My experience is understanding policies and handling claims.

Contact me if you need help, [lhs1@comcast.net](mailto:lhs1@comcast.net) or 415-506-4123. ■

# Northern Harrier

Text and Photography by  
**DAVID GRAY**

I am closing in on my 100th contribution of *Echo* Bird of the Month articles. This one is going to be briefer than usual; the changing of the seasons and the perceptibly shorter days are making me into a lazy lima bean.

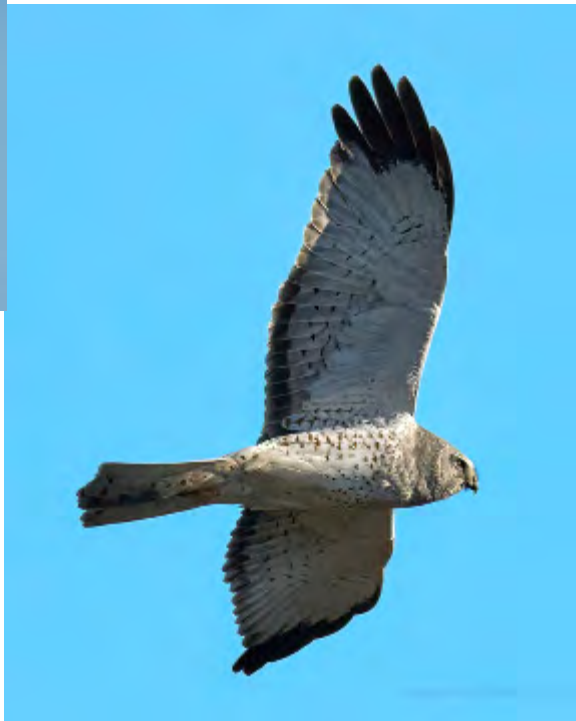
With that said, happy October!



*This juvenile female northern harrier was cruising about 20 feet above the ground looking for prey out at Salt Point State Park.*



*Northern harrier males in flight*



The northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*) is a small hawk, weighing a little over one pound and having a wingspan of about two feet. The male is mostly gray in coloration and is smaller than the female. The female has a more reddish-brown coloration mixed with gray, with the juvenile female being mostly reddish-brown. Both the male and female sport the telltale white patch at the top of the tail and the owl-like facial ring. The facial ring enhances its hearing of prey.

We have harriers in our area. I've spotted them out at Point Reyes, down at the Las Gallinas ponds, and on the Sonoma Coast, so it's worthwhile keeping an eye out for them.

The northern harrier hunts other birds, typically by flying low among the bushes and surprising unwary prey. They also hunt rodents and reptiles. ■

