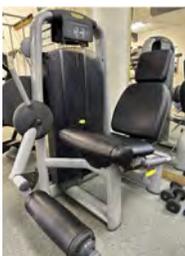


T H E  
**ECHO**

**September 2025**



- 2 Matt Greenberg** **MVMCC**  
MANAGEMENT UPDATE, In Memoriam, Classifieds, AlertMarin
- 3-4 John Hansen** **PAC**  
PAC & MVC LETTER TO RESIDENTS
- 4 Bill Davis** **MVEST**  
A Good Night's Sleep
- 5 Erma Wheatley,  
Fire Safe Marin** EmberStomp 2025 — Wildfire Safety Festival
- 6 Carolyn Corry** **MAR VAL**  
MESSAGE FROM MAR VAL
- 7-8 Carolyn Corry,  
Susan Hoff** Event Flyers
- 9 John Feld** **HOL**  
HOL MESSAGE  
HOL COMMUNITY EVENTS
- 10 Janie Crocker** Flyer Help Wanted
- Suzie Lahr** Beauty Is in the Eye of the Beholder
- 11 Janie Klimes** Come to Chair Yoga
- Marty Gelman,  
Michael Hagerty** Last Monday Lectures: How to Plan a "Good Death"
- 12 Jill Boland** Tips from the Park Market
- 
- Susan McMudie** Resident Honored at County Fair
- 13 Nancy Warren** Novato History Museum
- 14-15 Janie Klimes** News from the Marin Valley Gym
- 16 Lorna Sass** The Calming Power of Kindness and Gratitude
- 17 Karin Mortensen** Behold the Sun and Moon Together in Their Full Glory
- 18-19 David Gray** BIRD OF THE MONTH: American Kestrel Mother and Nestling
- 20** CALENDAR: September 2025

# Management Update

## Completed

- Pruning the first round of 100 trees
- Building two retaining walls
- Clearing all interior common areas for fire abatement, including the Club View Drive meadow
- Purchase of five new gym equipment items
- Estimate for repairing dry rot/termite damage on the lower east side of the clubhouse.

## In Progress

- Pruning all Park palm trees
- Reinstalling and landscaping the bench in front of pump house 1
- Bidding for asphalt work
- Cutback of Park-perimeter defensible space.



IN MEMORIAM  
**Barbara Matas**  
 August 19, 1942 – July 1, 2025

## Classifieds

Seeking **Handyman** to volunteer one hour to assist residents.  
 Call Ray 415-883-4182

Seeking **Computer/Electronics** help to volunteer one hour to assist residents.  
 Call Ray 415 883-4182

**Quilting Instructor** — \$paid  
 Paid quilting instructor wanted to help transform my father's vintage ties into a timeless baby quilt for future grandchild.  
 Call Sandy 415-902-5143

**ALERT MARIN** Register for AlertMarin at [AlertMarin.org](http://AlertMarin.org).

### Echo Deadline to Submit Articles

Email articles by the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month for the next month's issue with the subject "Echo" to Anila Manning at [anilahere99@gmail.com](mailto:anilahere99@gmail.com).

## THE ECHO 2025

**MARIN VALLEY MOBILE COUNTRY CLUB**  
 100 MARIN VALLEY DRIVE • NOVATO, CA 94949  
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 A MHB Group Region 8 Publication [www.mobilehomeboard.com](http://www.mobilehomeboard.com)

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE **Brad Witherspoon**

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**Serena Fisher, Michele Rodriguez**

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 CHAIR, PUB **Pat Thurston 415-884-0740**

# Letter to Residents

## PAC & MVC

### A Message from Your PAC and MVC Boards

by **JOHN HANSEN**

#### **This MVMCC Timeline Demonstrates the Original Intention of MVMCC to Become Resident-Owned**

*Given the efforts by the PAC Board and residents toward acquiring our Park, and with an influx of newer residents, this month seems like an excellent opportunity for an overview of some of the key milestones in the Park's history.*

**1969** The original developer of Marin Valley Mobile Country Club (MVMCC) was William Daugherty. Phase 1 development ended at the clubhouse.

**1972** Phase 2 added the homes beyond the clubhouse up Marin Valley Drive.

**1987** The Sades bought MVMCC, and at some point it became an over-55 community. Phase 3 expanded the Park even further to include the homes on Sunrise, Club View, Fallen Leaf, and Panorama.

**1988** Articles of Incorporation were accepted by the Secretary of State to form the Park Acquisition Corporation (PAC) as an organization of MVMCC mobile home owner-residents for purchasing said mobile home park and facilitating its conversion from a rental park to a resident-owned park.

**Late 1990s** The PAC Board agreed to purchase the Park from the Sades. Funding became the obstacle. The PAC reached out to the City of Novato (City) for assistance.

**1996** The City Council and Novato Redevelopment Agency of the City of Novato entered into a Joint

Powers Agreement that formed the Novato Financing Authority (NFA), whose purpose was to assist in financing the acquisition of and the operation and maintenance of mobile home parks, including MVMCC, in the City.

**1997** The NFA purchased the Park with bonds totaling \$16,070,000. The Senior Bond series 1997A document states that the owner (NFA) anticipates transferring all of its rights, title, and interest in the Project (MVMCC) to a yet-to-be-incorporated 501(c)(3) corporation (the Corporation). No City general funds revenues were ever used to make payments on the bonds. The sole source of repayment of the bonds was Park resident rents. The City of Novato never spent a dime to pay off these bonds; it was the residents' rents that were collected to pay off the bonds.

**2006** The PAC formed the Marin Valley Senior Community (MVSC) — a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation — as the entity that could take title to the Park if residents could purchase it. MVSC proposed to NFA that title to the Park be transferred from the NFA to MVSC. The NFA, the City Council, the Novato Redevelopment Agency, and Financial Security Assurance all had to approve or consent to any change in ownership. The PAC obtained a commitment for financial assistance to acquire MVMCC from the State of California MPROP fund.

**2006** A Memorandum from Novato

Assistant City Manager Neilan to the NFA states (1) the Park would have to be offered first to other public entities that had priority over MVSC, and (2) although the City's transfer of the Park to MVSC for low- and moderate-income housing would be a public purpose, an additional public purpose will need to be identified.

**2006** The NFA refused an offer by MVSC to purchase the Park. The NFA stated that keeping things as they were was superior to going forward with resident purchase. It was not the goal of the NFA to transfer the property if to do so reduces the financial viability of the Park or threatens the value of the residents' property.

**2011** The State abolished all redevelopment agencies; the NFA was disbanded.

**2012** The NFA transferred the Park to the City of Novato.

**2023** On **June 8**, Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report, "Novato's Chronic Fiscal Deficits: A Call to Action," was released, stating that the Park "operates at a substantial deficit, has ongoing deferred maintenance, and presents increasing administrative and financial burdens on the city." This is untrue, as the Park never operated at a deficit.

**2023** On **June 13**, Novato resident Dean Moser submitted a fully formed offer to the City of Novato to buy MVMCC for \$30 million. Park residents attended every City Council meeting

and retained an attorney to stop this sale. On **August 22**, the City dropped its consideration of the \$30 million offer.

**2023** The PAC Board established the Resident Ownership Discovery Committee (ROD-C) to explore and evaluate different models for resident ownership. On **December 6**, a community workshop introduced experts from two nonprofits that specialize in helping communities become self-owned: Resident Owned Communities USA (ROC USA) and the California Center for Cooperative Development (CCCD).

**2024** On **February 28**, A community workshop was held to discuss the analysis of ownership options evaluated by the ROD-C. On **March 6**, an all-resident vote confirmed continuing the process of forming a nonprofit corporation as the entity to take title to the Park at purchase. On **March 24**, another all-resident vote strongly affirmed that the current PAC Board members be listed as the Interim Board of Directors when filing Articles of Incorporation with the State to form a nonprofit public benefit corporation called Marin Valley Cooperative, Inc. (MVC). On **September 4**, the Articles of Incorporation for MVC were accepted by the State. On **September 19**, a community workshop was held to kick off the start of residents joining MVC. (Note to all Park residents: The joining paperwork is available in the clubhouse lobby; you can become a MVC member for a joining fee of \$25.)

**2025** On **June 19**, The PAC Board submitted an Acquisition and Financing Proposal Offer to the City of Novato. On July 16, the City of Novato responded to the PAC's submittal. On **August 11**, the PAC Board submitted a counteroffer to the City.

NOTE: A more complete timeline with footnoted references is available at [marinvalley.net](https://marinvalley.net/park-documents/) under "Park Documents."



415-847-7155 • [johnhansen.emt@gmail.com](mailto:johnhansen.emt@gmail.com)



# A Good Night's Sleep

by **BILL DAVIS**, MVEST Chair,  
Director, Novato Fire District

**A**re you ready for the hot weather and smoke? Is it going to be the **heat** or the **smoke** or the **fire** that ruins your good night's sleep?

## First, are you ready for the heat that is predicted for the next three months?

Living in this bucolic Novato environment —when every night the "automatic air conditioner" comes on, with the gentle Pacific onshore breeze softly floating over the western hills — is close to paradise. If you compare that to almost any other part of the USA, it's not the same. In some places, the nights are hotter than the days — and let's not even talk about humidity. But we know the next three months will differ from the last three because an occasional reverse breeze from the Central Valley is expected, which can carry a lot of heat. The bottom line is: This is the time to make sure you are in good shape, prepared, and comfortable. A word to the wise is sufficient.

**About that smoke.** Last year, we were fortunate here in Marin Valley to have a minimum of smoky days — but I think that was an anomaly. Two years ago, the smoke was thick and lasted a long time, affecting both our physical and mental health. I got depressed after the third day. Yes, we all get depressed once in a while, but that time was particularly difficult for me, and I don't ever want to go through it again. I felt choked up, short of breath, headachy, and claustrophobic. So, I keep my HVAC filter current and of premium quality. I also have an

air purifier in the bedroom — but even being top quality, it's not the same as pure, clean air. Then again, when you can't see out the window for more than 150 feet because what looks like fog is actually smoke, we're in trouble. Now would be a good time to buy one while they're in stock and not marked up. Plus, the tariffs proposed by the federal government might soon make such items even less affordable for many of us low-income senior citizens.

Let's turn the page to the **threat of our next fire**, whether from outside or inside the Park. Substantial work was done around the peripheral area of the Park by the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) under the direction of the Novato Fire District's vegetation management program manager, Sara Labberton, and their new US Forester, Elizabeth Neil. These experts mapped out exactly where the goats needed to browse to get the maximum benefit of the \$50,000 cost. They carefully studied the fire history here, evaluated potential problems, and designed a custom-fit plan for maximum fire prevention on the unique terrain of our remote senior community.

**Now it's your turn.** That debris and those pyrophytic plants around your home need to be properly cleaned up and pruned. If you can't do it yourself, please ask for help. We are all in this together in this closely spaced community. Our safe and secure future — and a good night's sleep — is in everybody's best interest. ■

# EMBER STOMP 2025 Wildfire Safety Festival

by **ERMA WHEATLEY** and **FIRE SAFE MARIN**

**E** mber Stomp is the perfect opportunity to get your fire safety questions answered by specialists who will all be at the Marin Fairgrounds.

Find out how to create Firescaping and a Fire Smart yard.

— what is the worst mulch to use?  
— what is the best? and where can you get it?

Watch and compare how mulch and materials ignite during the burn demonstrations every half hour.

Find out about grants to help protect your home. You could win one of five \$1000 home improvement prizes. Get the latest information on protecting yourself and your family and have a fun day at the same time.



**Wildfire Safety Festival**  
**SEPT 6TH**  
**Marin Fairgrounds**  
**Free Admission**  
**10am - 4pm**  
**LEARN MORE AT FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG**

## New features this year include:

- Burn demonstrations every 30 minutes, featuring a variety of materials and home hardening techniques, including a demonstration of how quickly a typical fence can ignite.
- A major focus on home hardening, with life-size exhibits of non-combustible gates, fencing, and decking from five different companies, allowing attendees to see and compare full-scale examples.
- New educational games where participants can simulate ember attacks on model structures to learn about vulnerabilities and protection strategies.
- Expanded landscaping and mulch demonstrations, including a continuous mulch burn comparing different types of mulch and their fire behavior.
- A large exhibit from MWPA (Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority) showcasing their projects and providing information on grants and programs.
- County Voluntary Self-Paced Evacuation, (sign up at [FireSafeMarin.org](https://www.firesafemarin.org)) will be integrated with the event, with formal check-in and tracking of participation.
- A raffle/drawing sponsored by CSAA Insurance, with five \$1,000 prizes for home improvements.

# Message from Mar Val

Dear Friends,

As I write this in early August, it is hard to believe that another summer has flown past us and we are already looking forward to the fall season. Hopefully, you have reservations for the Labor Day dinner on September 1, featuring all-American burgers and dogs.

One year ago, Mar Val was the fortunate recipient of a most generous and anonymous donation — lovely tablecloths and lamps for each Pub table and a popcorn machine. You can't even begin to imagine how many bowls of fresh popcorn have been thoroughly enjoyed by Pubgoers. There seems to be an unwritten rule among the popcorn lovers that Ed Johnson, Mr. Iceman, always gets the first bowl — I assume it is a quality-control issue. Vicki Waddell observed that while the lamps were quite attractive, they were really not giving off enough light. She talked with Gary McClendon, and a solution has been found. We look forward to improving the ambiance of the ballroom with the addition of some brighter lights this fall.

On 12 October 1810, Crown Prince Ludwig of Bavaria married Princess Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen. Munich officials invited the public to celebrate on fields outside the city

walls; the site was named Theresienwiese (Therese's Meadow). This was the beginning of Oktoberfest.



*I caught a moment with Janine Bradley, Prohibition Party flapper costume contest winner.*

Please join Mar Val in an American celebration of **Oktoberfest on September 26**. Chef Larry will be serving bratwurst and sauerkraut. The average price of a beer at Oktoberfest in Germany is 15 euros or 13 US dollars, but bar manager Anne has a real bargain for you — beer for only \$6, alcoholic or nonalcoholic. We will play some oom-pah-pah music, and perhaps a few of you braver ones will try the polka.

Start planning your costumes now for **Black Cat on October 25**. As always, there will be prizes for costumes for Best Female, Best Male, and Best Couple costumes. Cherrie's wonderful FaBOOlous Bakery will be selling delicious pies, cakes, and cookies. You also will have the opportunity to enjoy dinner from the

Park's newest caterer — Roadkill Café. Chef Larry will be serving "Poodles 'n Noodles" and "Guess This Mess." This event is Mar Val's only fundraiser of the year, and it provides monies to cover the annual cost of our liquor license.

Hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,

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





**Mar Val**  
**LABOR DAY DINNER**

**Monday, September 1**

**5 pm Cocktails 6 pm Dinner**

Hamburgers or Hot Dogs  
(Chili available)  
or  
Impossible Burgers or  
Morning Star Veggie Burgers

Potato Salad      Green Salad  
Frozen Dessert

\$17 per person

**Reservation deadline is Thursday, August 28, by 5 pm**

or when 120 reservations have been received.

Make checks payable to Mar Val.

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



# Mar Val Pub Night

Friday, September 26

5 pm Cocktails

5:30 pm Dinner

Bratwurst with Sauerkraut

*or*

Vegetarian Quiche

Potato Salad

Cookies

**\$15 per person**

**Reservation deadline – Tuesday, 5 pm, September 23**

(or when 120 reservations have been received).

For questions – call Susan Hoff at 707-365-9426.

# Home Owners League Message

Greetings,

## Community Call to Action

Do you have a few hours to spare and a desire to help others? **Ray Schneider**, who runs our “Just One Hour” program, is looking for a few good people to join his team of volunteers. These are the neighbors who can be counted on for small, essential tasks around the Park. Whether you’re an ace with TV setup, a wizard at light housekeeping (think ironing and laundry), or a computer troubleshooter, your skills are needed. He also has a perennial need for handy people and anyone who can lend a hand with office help or occasionally take trash cans in and out. If you’re available to help out once in a while, please contact Ray (415 883-4182) to be added to his list.

## Pool Gate Safety: A Reminder for Everyone

The pool gate is designed to keep everyone safe, especially children. Please remember to never leave it propped open. This is a safety mandate under California law, and failing to follow it could result in the pool being shut down. If you need to use the bathroom or changing rooms, please take a key, or ask someone to let you back in. The gate must be closed at all times when entering and leaving the pool area. Thank you for helping us keep our pool a safe and enjoyable place for all.

## The Marin Valley Players Are Back!

Get ready for more hilarity! The Marin Valley Players — **Sandy Zeichner, Michale Dancer, and Janie Klimes** — are planning a new show for the New Year. This won’t be a typical play, but a fantastic vaudeville show featuring a variety of resident talents — including dancing, music, and of course, plenty of comedy. Writing and rehearsals are set to begin soon. If you attended our sold-out previous shows, you know what a wonderful time it is. The cast, however, had the most fun of all. If you’d like to get in on the action, just ask one of the organizers how you can join the fun!

## Upcoming HOL Events



Mark your calendars! The next Marin Valley Craft Fair is scheduled for September 27, followed by a community dump run in October. Also, look for HOL’s next fund drive in September. Keep an eye on upcoming issues of the *Echo* for more details on these important events.

## Art in the Park: Call for Volunteers

Four pieces from the current show have been sold. Is this a record? After years of dedicated service, **Suzie Lahr** is looking to play a lesser role in organizing Art in the Park due to health concerns. The program, which enriches our community with beautiful art, needs your help. Suzie is also looking for a few fit individuals to assist with occasional art hanging. If you are comfortable climbing ladders, can carry large canvases, and have a good eye for design, please contact Suzie to learn how you can help continue this wonderful tradition.

## A Missing Mouse and a Lesson in Trust

Earlier this year, HOL was delighted to purchase a brand-new Mac for the library, providing residents with faster, more reliable technology. Unfortunately, the mouse that came with it has gone missing. We’re asking for its safe return. HOL discussed installing an additional camera to deter such sticky fingers in the future, but we decided we would rather appeal to the honor of our community. Please return the mouse so everyone can continue to enjoy the new computer.



# Flyer Help Wanted

by **JANIE KLIMES**

**W**e need one volunteer who lives between **14 and 46 Marin Valley Drive** to step up for flyer distribution.

Substitutes are also needed.

When I receive a flyer request, I will email or text you about its subject and deadline. You then notify me within two hours regarding your availability. I will deliver the flyers to your carport doorstep, along with a list of addresses. Once the flyer is distributed, let me know. That's it. Flyer distribution usually occurs once or twice a month and requires about an hour of your time. It's a great way to get your steps in and help out our community.

If interested, please contact Janie by text (preferred) at 281-414-3984, or email [janieklimes1948@gmail.com](mailto:janieklimes1948@gmail.com)

And kudos for those regulars and subs who have stepped up to the challenge:

- Mark Crocker**      **Tara Plocher**
- Michale Dancer**    **Ellen Jane Schulz**
- John Feld**            **Pat Thompson**
- Lisa Jackler**         **Gail Usilton**
- Meg Jordan**         **Erma Wheatley**
- Charlotte Kells**     **Rich Wilkerson** ■
- Anne Lakota**
- Elizabeth Lev**
- Mickee McInerney**

# Beauty Is in the Eye of the Beholder

by **SUZIE LAHR**

**W**onderful news: Four pieces from the current Marin Valley Gallery exhibit have been sold! Let's give a round of applause to the deserving artists and their delighted buyers.

It seems as though this summer has been a fly-by. How can it possibly be September? Well, since that is the case, we will be installing a new exhibit for the fall and winter holiday months. This is a heads-up to all Park artists to look through your creations and select several pieces to display in our next Marin Valley Gallery exhibit, to be installed on **Sunday, October 5.**



*Zen Dragonfly* by Meg Jordan

We have a wonderful check-in team to take down the current exhibit and check in new work. Our experienced display team then decides where each piece will be placed. Now, we are looking for assistance with the installation team; this position requires stamina and strength as well as the ability to climb a small ladder to tweak and place pieces on the wire system. Is that you, perchance?

If you would like to be a contributing artist or can help with the installation, please contact me at [suzielahr@aol.com](mailto:suzielahr@aol.com). We so appreciate that the gallery has enhanced our clubhouse interior with beautiful artwork for so many years now.

Let's keep it going! ■

# Come to Chair Yoga!

by **JANIE KLIMES**

**Tuesdays • 11 am • Fireside Room**

**W**e have an excellent new instructor, Laura Schepps, who has taught various movement classes, including stretching and relaxation-focused classes. She is experienced in chair yoga, with a focus on our age group, and uses a gentle and sensitive approach. Many of John Marino's movements are incorporated into Laura's classes.

Classes are provided on a sliding-scale of \$5-\$15. Laura is very student-oriented and will spend extra time with you after class to help with your particular needs for no extra charge.

**Heard in the hallway:** *It gets me out of the house ... It makes me feel so much better ... There's a lot of encouragement and no judgment ... Every week I can go a bit further!*

## Testimonials

*All stretches are performed in a chair. She has a gentle approach and allows you to go only as far as you are comfortable, working on lengthening and flexibility of the spine. It made me aware of standing and sitting straight instead of slumping. —Mark Crocker*

*I greatly enjoy this class and I think it will help with my flexibility. The breathing technique is also key because it helps increase our stretches. The movements are slow, which makes them safe as well. —Gayle Atkinson*

*This class is an excellent once-a-week addition for those of us who regularly do cardio work and weights but might forget the necessary stretching needed for safety and flexibility often lacking in our age group. —Janie Klimes*



# How to Plan a "Good Death"

by **MARTY GELMAN** and **MICHAEL HAGERTY**



Marianne York



Joan Nelson

**Monday, September 29 • 4:30 pm • Fireside Room**

**P**rofessor **Michael Hagerty**, formerly a member of the Marin County Commission on Aging and professor of psychology at UC Davis, will be speaking about the experiences of two Park residents who passed away in recent years.

Most Americans would prefer to die in their own homes, with a minimum of pain, and at peace with their loved ones — and most would call this a

"good death." Yet many will die in a hospital with no loved ones around.

Michael will talk about how to plan for a good death and how Park residents **Marianne York** and **Joan Nelson** — who died of cancer three and five years ago, respectively — managed to do so. Michael was Marianne's Power of Attorney and Joan's colleague in leading a class on "dying right." He will talk about their journeys step by step and what

you can learn from their examples. A video interview of Marianne describing her struggles and her solutions in working out her death on her own terms will be shown.

By the end of the talk, you will have:

- A sample letter to your family and friends describing your wishes, whatever they are.
- Knowledge of how to use California's Death with Dignity law. ■

# Tips from the Park Market

Presented by **JILL BOLAND**



# Resident Honored at County Fair

by **SUSAN McMUDIE**

**S**usan McMudie won an Honorable Mention at the 2025 Marin County Fair for her pastel, *Best Friends*.



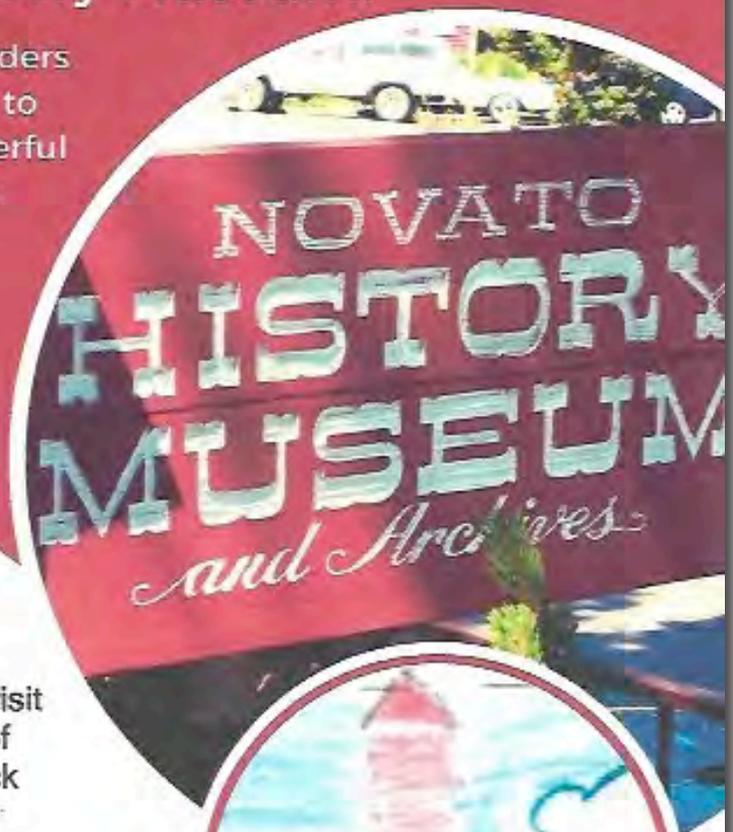
# Be a Third Grade History Docent

NHG



## at the Novato History Museum!

It's time for Novato third graders to enjoy time traveling back to the early days of their wonderful town thanks to the fabulous Third Grade tours at the Novato History Museum!



## What we need:

From March to June Novato's third grade classes are able to visit the museum and with the help of our docents are transported back to the 1800's and early 1900's.

Inside the museum they will experience what it was like to live in a home during the 1800's, work the land and hear the old train whistle! Downtown they will see early buildings of Novato and meet the amazing people who built this town!

If you would like to be a Third Grade Docent and join in on all the fun we would love to have you and quite frankly we need you! You will be trained and have an opportunity to shadow tours before you do your own and will be given all the materials you will need!



**More information**  
reach out to Laurie O'Mara:

📞 call or text 415.246.8168

✉️ [laurieomara124@gmail.com](mailto:laurieomara124@gmail.com)

**Thank you so much and we can't wait to time travel with you!**

# News from the Marin Valley Gym

by **JANIE KLIMES**



*Leg extension*

**T**hree months ago, I put up a signup sheet in our gym and was able to identify some folks who frequent the gym: the Gym Faithfuls.

Then I labeled each machine with an identifying number and asked this group for input about which machines they use, which are duplicated, which need repair, and which are barely used. After collating this information, I worked with Matt to identify the necessary changes, and he located the funds for some fairly new equipment.

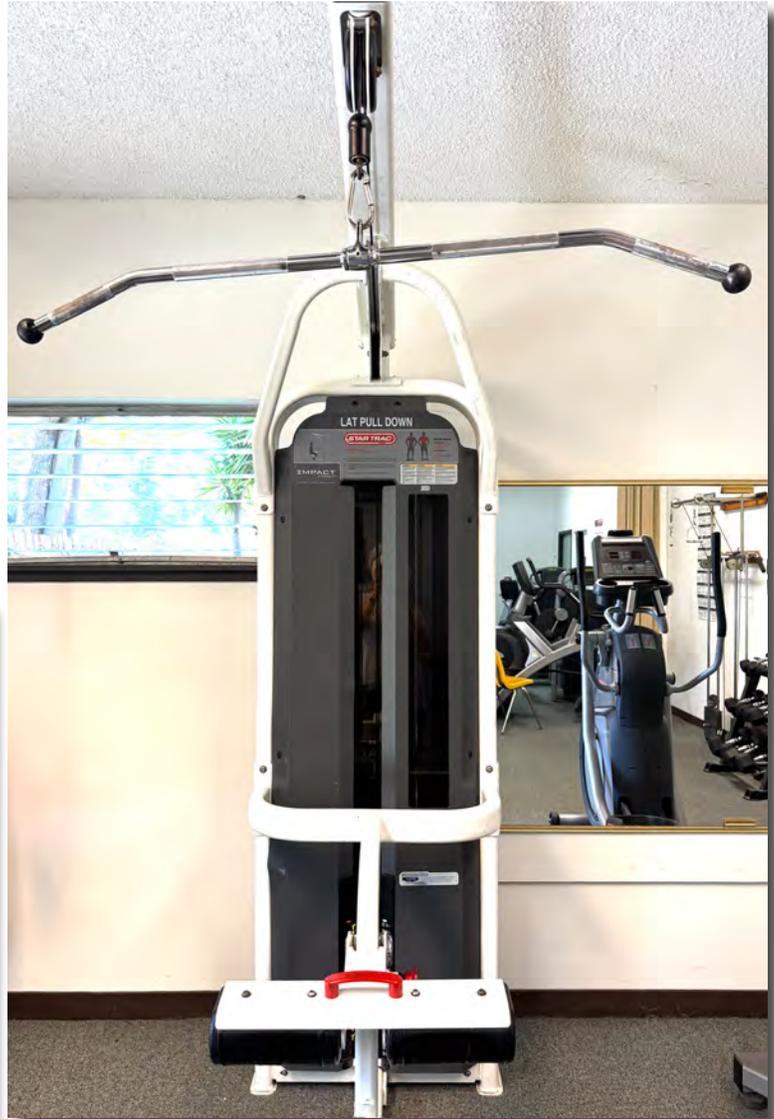
So when you go to the gym now, you will see improvements and changes based on input from the Gym Faithfuls. The old stationary bike had a pedal that frequently fell off, an electronic buzzing, and a difficult-to-read screen — it could no longer be repaired. We now have a safe and working bike. We added a leg extension machine specifically to build and tone the quadriceps, a leg curl machine to work those hamstrings, and a new lateral pull-down for the shoulders. We removed the incline bench and the old, unused treadmill.

Air conditioning is still being considered when the budget allows, and further culling of unused equipment is definitely up for discussion.

This is a work in progress; if you have any suggestions, please feel free to bring them to me at [janieklimes1948@gmail.com](mailto:janieklimes1948@gmail.com). ■



*Leg curl*



*Lateral pull down*



*Bike*

# The Calming Power of Kindness and Gratitude

by **LORNA SASS**

I lean toward being anxious, especially on these days of frequent foggy-brained forgetfulness, but I felt anxious on steroids about going to Sutter Health a few weeks ago for an abdominal sonogram.

I wasn't supposed to eat or drink before the 9:30 am appointment, so the rigid part of me got thrown off my usual morning routine. I also felt big-time annoyed with the whole establishment for sending me daily texts, emails, and phone calls reminding me of the appointment and the proof of medical insurance I needed to bring.

When I arrived, the security guard smiled and welcomed me warmly, and my tension started to melt. He directed me to the check-in, and of course they asked my name and birth date yet again. No request for the insurance cards I was reminded seven times to bring, since of course they were already on file from prior visits, so grouchy me did an inward shrug and put those away.

Then I noticed the photos of children on the receptionist's desk. I looked around the small, dark room and realized that after a stint for the NYC Welfare Department during my twenties, I didn't have to work a 9-5 job sitting in front of a screen in a tiny, windowless office for the rest of my life. As a freelance writer, I could structure my days however I wanted to and go for long walks in Central Park whenever I pleased. Lucky me!

I remained silent while the pleasant, soft-spoken woman checked me in on her computer. When she was



*Stapeliad bloom in my succulent garden*

done, I asked if I could register a complaint, and she nodded her head. "I know this isn't your doing," I said as gently as I could muster, "but it's super anxiety-producing to get daily phone calls, texts, and email reminders about the appointment."

She nodded and said that her mom recently had a sonogram and had the same complaint. "I understand," she said, gently nodding and looking me straight in the eye, and I felt seen and heard — always a treat for me since I never had that experience with either of my parents — and again, I felt more tension being released. I took a deep breath, and though I didn't realize it at the time, looking back I see how kindness and connection are right up there with gratitude as healing medicines.

I was invited into the next room for the sonogram and noticed that the practitioner was wearing a mask. She coughed a bit during the exam, and I asked if she was feeling ill. "No," she said, "it's my allergies acting up." She gently continued moving the probe and asking me to breathe in, hold my breath, and let go. Over and over the same words came gently out of her mouth.

Again, I looked around the small, windowless room and felt grateful

that I am retired and don't have to spend my day repeating the same words over and over. Indeed, I can spend the day out in the sun gardening or walking in the woods. I even like to joke that I've become rather feral, doing what I please when I please.

"Would you like to try a homeopathic remedy that saves me every time allergies leave me feeling itchy?" I asked the sweet woman after the procedure was over. "Really?" she responded with surprise, as if she was much more used to providing than being provided for. "Are you sure you can spare some?" she inquired shyly.

"Of course," I said and handed her the tube of homeopathic *Allium Cepa* pellets to try. "Whenever my eyes are itchy, I let three of them melt under my tongue, and within a few minutes the itchiness is gone. I hope they help you."

She was obviously touched, and we exchanged a spontaneous hug.

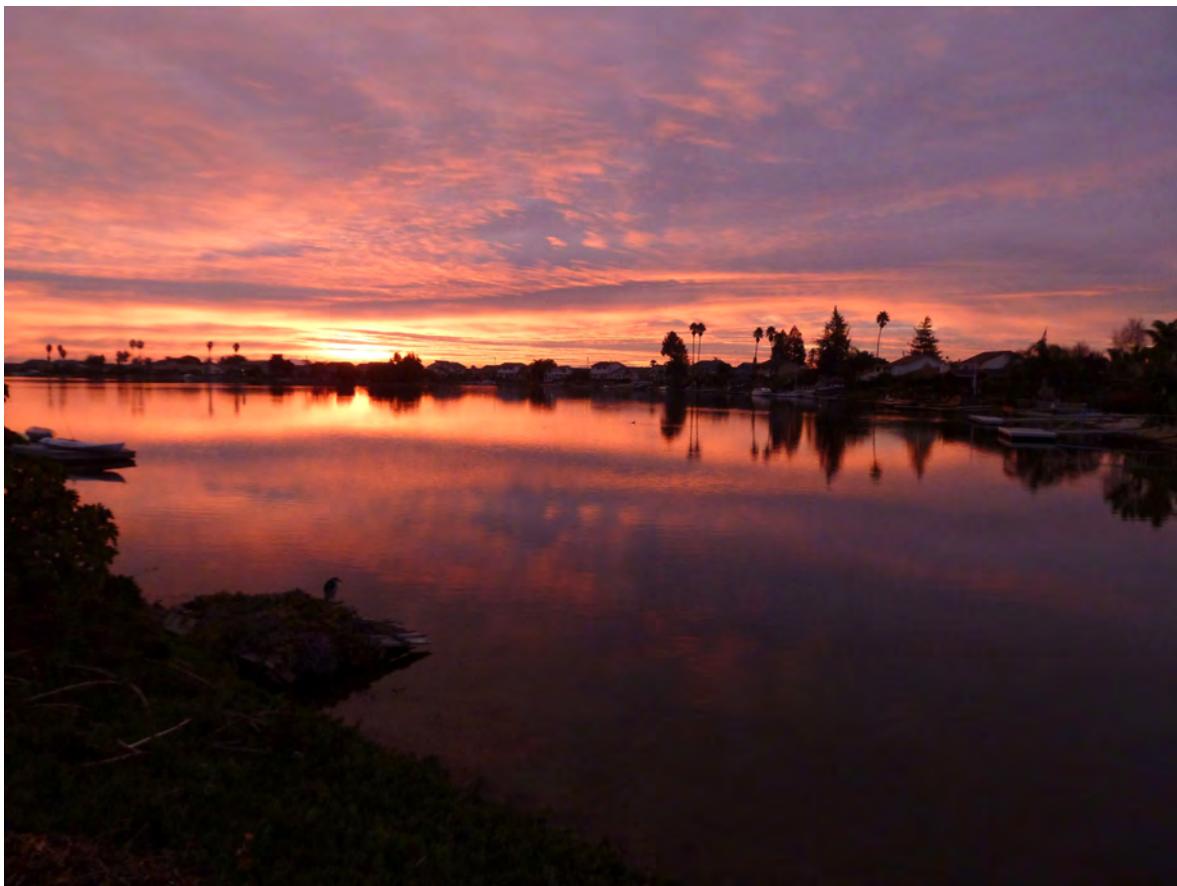
The test was over and my anxiety was gone. Yes, some of the relief came from having the tests behind me, but most of it came from the sweet exchanges I had with the Sutter staff. A feeling of gratitude washed over me, and I marveled that humans locked indoors all day in dark rooms could be so kind that they automatically brought out the kindness in me.

I left Sutter and went for a nice walk in the woods. Later that day, I got an extra bonus when the test results came back normal! ■

# Behold the Sun and Moon Together in Their Full Glory

by **Karin Mortensen**

**W**e know the glorious colors of the sunset. We know the quiet purity of the sky at full moonrise. Every full moon, we have the opportunity to see the color displays of the sun and moon together reaching across the sky at sunset/moonrise. Both orbs are of the same size to our eyes, and yet their glow is quite different. Interested? Let me help you.



The best place nearby for observation is  
**Pacheco Pond in Bel Marin Keys.**  
Go **half an hour before sunset on the day before a full moon.**

The best current times are  
**September 5 at 7 pm**  
**October 4 at 6 pm**  
**November 3 at 4 pm** ■

# American Kestrel Mother and Nestling

Text and Photography by **DAVID GRAY**

**A**merican kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) have a huge range that includes almost all of North and much of Central America. We have them here in our Park, but this particular exciting sighting was in Yellowstone National Park. I had climbed down a steep embankment just south of Mud Volcano to get to the edge of the Yellowstone River, in order to photograph bison across the river near some steam vents.



I heard the call of a raptor to my left and located the bird in a tree; it was a female American kestrel holding a mouse. How did I know it was a female kestrel? Kestrels exhibit sexual dimorphism: the males and females have visible differences not related to reproduction. In this case, their plumage is different — with reddish coloration on the female's wings and bluish-gray coloration on the male's wings that matches its cowl.



What struck me as odd is that the kestrel wasn't eating the mouse. Then I heard a curious plaintive call to my right, emanating from a dead tree. I watched the female kestrel fly there a couple of times, without alighting. You can see why she was interested.



I was about 25 yards from the nest, shooting on a monopod at 1,176mm (600mm with 2 @ 1.4X teleconverters) near dusk. I could hear the snorts of bison bulls above and behind me on the main road. Undeterred, I stayed still and continued photographing. I had never seen a kestrel nest or nestling before.



The mother made several attempts to deliver the mouse. The first few times, she had the mouse in her talons.



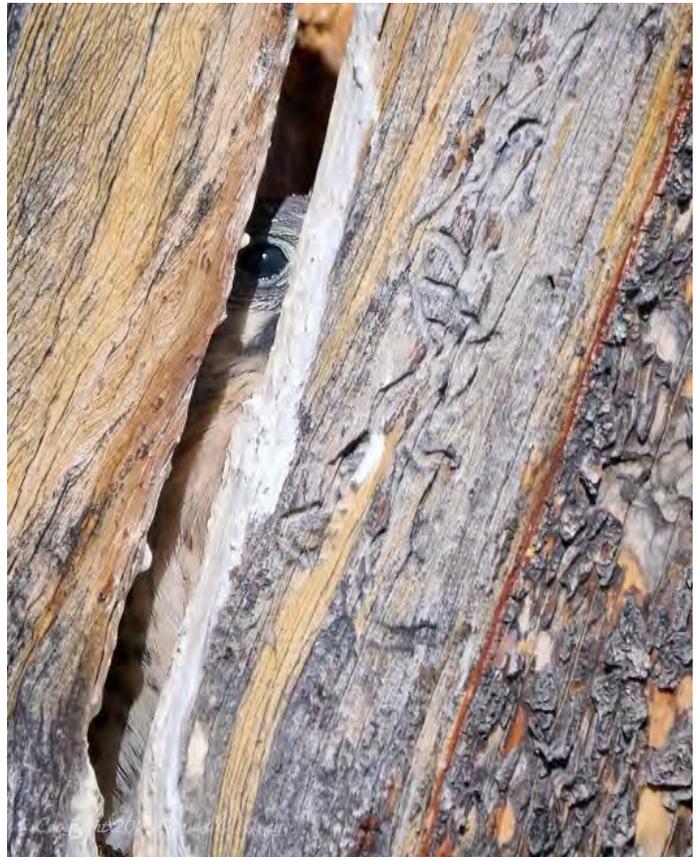
On her final attempt, she transferred the mouse to her beak and executed a perfect drop into the nest.



Even shooting at 20 frames per second, I unfortunately missed the drop itself but caught this shot immediately postdrop.



Satisfied with being fed, the nestling hunkered down into the nest and peered out at me for my parting shot



I backed away slowly from the nest and headed up the steep riverbank toward the snorting bison bulls that were about 30 yards away from our campervan. Moving slowly and deliberately, with my monopod collapsed to its minimum length, I made it to the campervan with mere looks from the two closest bison.

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Folks, now that we're in the most difficult part of fire season, please be aware that your roof and gutters collect pine needles, leaves, twigs, and branches, which are often referred to as KINDLING. Let's keep everyone in our Park safe by attending to your roof and gutter inspection and cleaning! ■

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji <i>Deck/David MacLam</i> 10-11 Water Aerobics <i>Pool</i> 5-7 <b>Mar Val Labor Day Dinner</b>	<b>2</b> 7:30-9 Taiji <i>Deck/David MacLam</i> 10:30-11:30 Craft & Chat 11-12 Chair Yoga <i>Fireside Room</i> 5 PAC Board Meeting <i>Ballroom/Zoom</i>	<b>3</b> 7:30-9 Taiji <i>Deck/David MacLam</i> 10-11 Water Aerobics <i>Pool</i>	<b>4</b> 7:30-9 Taiji <i>Deck/David MacLam</i> 11-12 Rollin' Root  4:30 HOL Board Meeting <i>Fireside Room</i>	<b>5</b> 7:30-9 Taiji <i>Deck/David MacLam</i> 10-11 Water Aerobics <i>Pool</i> 12 Mahjong 5-7 Pub	<b>6</b>  1-4 <b>EMBER STOMP</b> <i>Marin Fairgrounds</i> 6 Dancing <i>Meadow</i>
<b>7</b> 7:30-9 Taiji <i>Deck/David MacLam</i> 12-1 Group Strength Training <i>Bamboo Room Nan Watanabe</i>	<b>8</b> 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics <b>ECHO DEADLINE</b>	<b>9</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10:30-11:30 Craft & Chat 11-12 Chair Yoga <i>Fireside Room</i> 6 <b>City Council</b> <i>City Hall</i>	<b>10</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 5 Mar Val Board Meeting <i>Ballroom</i>	<b>11</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 11-12 Rollin' Root  6-10 Game Night <i>contact Ed Collins</i>	<b>12</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 12 Mahjong 5-7 Pub	<b>13</b> 6 Dancing
<b>14</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training	<b>15</b> 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics	<b>16</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10:30-11:30 Craft & Chat 11-12 Chair Yoga 5 MVC Meeting <i>Ballroom/Zoom</i>	<b>17</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 11 Ladies Bridge <i>Private, Fireside Room</i>	<b>18</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 11-12 Rollin' Root 	<b>19</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 12 Mahjong 5-7 Pub	<b>20</b> 6 Dancing
<b>21</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training	<b>22</b> 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics	<b>23</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10:30-11:30 Craft & Chat 11-12 Chair Yoga 5 <b>Oktoberfest reservation deadline</b> 6 <b>City Council</b>	<b>24</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 4 Book Club <i>contact Carol-Joy Harris</i>	<b>25</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 11-12 Rollin' Root 	<b>26</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 12 Mahjong 5-7 <b>Mar Val Oktoberfest Pub</b>	<b>27</b>  1-4 <b>Craft Market</b> <i>Ballroom</i> 6 Dancing
<b>28</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training	<b>29</b> 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 4:30 <b>Last Monday Lectures: A Good Death</b>	<b>30</b> 7:30-9 Taiji 10:30-11:30 Craft & Chat 11-12 Chair Yoga	<b>SEPTEMBER 2025</b>			