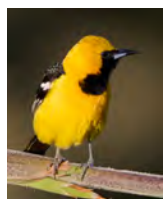


T H E ECHO

August 2026



**2 Matt Greenberg
Karen Casey**

3 Brad Witherspoon

4 Bill Davis

4-5 David Gray

6 Carolyn Corry

**7-8 Carolyn Corry,
Susan Hoff**

9 John Feld

10 John Feld

Ed Collins

Jeanne Skybrook

11 Nan Watanabe

Janie Klimes

12 Ed Collins

13 Kathryn McMudie

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15 Jill Boland

16-17 Lorna Sass

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Tick Bites

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Remembering My Father

Blocking Unsolicited Calls

Classifieds

CREATURES OF THE MONTH: Hooded Oriole, Fawn, and Snowy Egrets

CALENDAR: August 2026

MVMCC Management Update

- We have a new 2026-27 adopted budget for operations and CIP (capital improvements).
- Five trees are scheduled for removal with more on the way after inspections
- Perimeter cutback is in progress
- One retaining wall completed with one in progress and one scheduled
- One driveway completed
- Goats have been busy cleaning up all around the perimeter
- Management is in planning phase for all future Park maintenance for the summer



Welcome to Marin Valley!

by **KAREN CASEY**

The Greeters Group aims to welcome all new residents to Marin Valley and share information about our much-loved community.

Effective July 1, the Greeters Group has new leadership.

Pat Higgins and **Richard Wilkerson** have graciously agreed to co-chair this committee. Their experience as greeters will help make this an easy transition, and either Pat or Richard can be contacted with any questions about the Greeters Group or for additional information. Pat's cell: 415-846-9312; Richard's cell: 415-846-9189; email for either: pat2nature@yahoo.com. See p. 6.



Directory Update

New

Juliette Hanauer
 55 Marin Valley Drive
 415-302-5755
hanauerjuliette@gmail.com

Changes

Joy Dal Santo
~~drtypaws@gmail.com~~
joydalsanto@gmail.com

Echo Deadline to Submit Articles

Email articles by the 8th of the month for the next month's issue with the subject "Echo" to Anila Manning at anilahere99@gmail.com.

THE ECHO 2026

MARIN VALLEY MOBILE COUNTRY CLUB

100 MARIN VALLEY DRIVE • NOVATO, CA 94949

415-883-5911 / 415-883-1971 FAX

www.marinvalley.net

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Lucinda Daly, Brynda Foster, Anne Glasscock,

Mike Holland, Julie Manson, Tom Nadolski, Ellen Jane

Schulz, Pat Thurston, Richard Waibel, Janet Willett

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PAC BOARD

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VICE PRESIDENT **Meg Jordan 415-599-5523**

VICE PRESIDENT **Greg Smyth 512-351-5501**

SECRETARY **Carol-Joy Harris 415-883-2824**

TREASURER **Stephen Plocher 415-302-9043**

AD HOC NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE **Brad Witherspoon, John Hansen**

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MVEST **Bill Davis, Chair; Pauline Clucas, John Feld, David Gray, John Hansen, Pam Hyer, Erma Wheatley, Brad Witherspoon**

OPERATIONS & CAPITAL PROJECTS **Jay Shelfer, Chair; John Hansen, Brad Witherspoon,**

POLICY **Alan Gump, Chair; Serena Fisher, John Hansen**

TECH TEAM **David Gray, Chair; Steve Brandon, Ron Citroen, John Feld, John Hansen, Julie Manson, Timo Navsky, Erma Wheatley**

WEBSITE **Erma Wheatley, Chair; Anila Manning, David Tetta**

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1ST VICE PRESIDENT **Ed Collins 415-377-7696**

SECRETARY **Anne Lakota 415-713-4606**

TREASURER **Tara Plocher 415-302-5992**

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES **Janie Crocker 281-414-3984**

AT LARGE **Kamala Allen 415-306-6865**

AT LARGE **Jill Boland 415-827-3381**

AT LARGE **Michale Dancer 415-519-3395**

AT LARGE **Charlotte Kells 617-306-0265**

AT LARGE **Sandy Zeichner 415-902-5143**

STANDING COMMITTEE:

OWL COMMITTEE **Ro Rigney, Chair; John Feld, David Gray, Alan Gump, Anne Lakota**

PARK MARKET **Jill Boland, Chair; Lynda & Dave Baker, Ginger**

Christie, Mary Coyne, Edgar Furlong, John Hansen,

Sally Harris, Susan Hoff, Anne Lakota, Joan Leopold,

Gary McClendon, Deb McNeil, Sue Meyer,

Steve & Tara Plocher, Michael Thiercof, Brad Witherspoon

MAR VAL BOARD

PRESIDENT **Carolyn Corry 415-370-6403**

1ST VP, BAR MANAGER **Anne Glasscock 415-601-3047**

2ND VP/RESERVATIONS **Susan Hoff 707-365-9426**

SECRETARY **Connie Marelich 415-382-3350**

TREASURER **Vicki Waddell 415-382-8684**

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DIRECTOR, LOGISTICS **Larry Cohen 415-883-7786**

CHAIR, LIBRARY **Sandee Duncan 415-883-3034**

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

Letter to Residents

A Message from Your PAC and MVC Boards

by **BRAD WITHERSPOON**, *President*

Building a Healthy, Nurturing Community

Most Marin Valley residents feel very fortunate to live in a beautiful, vibrant, and caring community such as ours. Indeed, living in an intentional community provides numerous benefits, including independent living as we age, the opportunity to develop deep social connections, opportunities for personal growth, and lower living costs through shared resources.

A 2025 study by the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care found that seniors in the top 25% of retirement communities live longer than those who remain in individual living situations — on average, about 2.5 months longer, with some studies showing an increase of as much as 7 to 10 years. A healthy community thrives when trust, respect, collaboration, and inclusivity are valued. It encourages open communication, shared goals, and mutual support among its members, fostering a sense of belonging and well-being.

Yet fostering a healthy community takes a great deal of effort. Intentional communities are fragile socioeconomic living organisms that require constant care and attention in order to survive. If not properly cared for, communities can devolve into environments characterized by interpersonal conflict, intolerance of differing perspectives, passive-aggressive interactions, and the proliferation of gossip and dissent.

Our close proximity to our neighbors and frequent interactions increase the risk of hurt feelings caused by careless words or actions. Political tensions are high in our country. How many of you have strained or even severed relationships with someone in the community because of how they voted?

A Role for Everyone

Each of us plays a vital role in making our community one that values trust, respect, collaboration, and inclusivity. To ensure the continued well-being of our community, it is essential that we actively nurture good relationships by maintaining open lines of communication. By regularly engaging with and supporting one another, we contribute to a culture where everyone feels valued and heard. Have you noticed that someone in our community hasn't been seen for a while? Reach out with a call or a visit. It is not uncommon for seniors to experience feelings of depression, isolation, and exclusion as we age. Perhaps someone in our community has experienced the loss of a loved one — a spouse, partner, or beloved pet. A kind word and a warm hug can do wonders to lift their spirits.

Differing Perspectives

Maintaining good relationships with like-minded people may prove easy enough. However, the real challenge comes when

we encounter members of the community who don't share our views and opinions. It may help to remember that listening to differing perspectives can broaden our worldview, challenge our cognitive biases, and perhaps even foster deeper empathy. Of course, there are boundaries to tolerance. Racial bigotry, anti-immigrant sentiment, anti-semitism, and anti-LGBTQ beliefs should be challenged, especially in a community that strives to foster inclusivity.

Over the next 18 months, our community will encounter further challenges to the nurturing environment we seek to create as PAC negotiates the City's transfer of Park stewardship to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, as was intended when NFA assisted residents in acquiring the Park in 1997. It is likely that differing perspectives on processes and decisions will arise, challenging our community's capacity for constructive listening and effective compromise. PAC is committed to fostering a healthy community characterized by open communication, shared objectives, and mutual support, ensuring that everyone feels welcomed and encouraged throughout this process. The question remains: Are you ready to come aboard?



Brad Witherspoon
Brad Witherspoon
PAC PRESIDENT
spoonsf@yahoo.com
415-218-9583



Crystals — Beautiful and Dangerous

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

A friend of mine told me that her house would have burned down if she hadn't been home — and all because of a lovely crystal.

The crystal that started the fire was inside the house and behind a window. Sunlight coming through the window hit the crystal, which refracted and focused the light and condensed the energy into an intense focal point, igniting a piece of wood on her coffee table. If she hadn't been home at the time, she said, she would have lost her entire home that day.

She added that she loves crystals, has always respected their energy potential, and still owns many of them. Today she keeps them well away from direct sunlight.

So how do crystals work? They collect light waves and blend them into a focal point, compressing the sun's energy into a tiny, intense pinpoint of light. This concentration multiplies the heat exponentially at that spot. If the focused light lands on a flammable material such as fabric, paper, or wood, it can create an ignition point that

may smolder, then ignite, and turn into a rapidly expanding fire. Hopefully, you catch it before that happens.

Dark-colored materials are even more vulnerable because they absorb light energy and convert it into heat much faster than lighter, more reflective surfaces.



As the sun moves across the sky and strikes a crystal, the focal point also moves. This process creates rays of light that are

beautiful to watch as they dance silently across your walls. Crystals can even create brilliant rainbows inside your home, resembling a kaleidoscope of colors in motion.

Crystals are peaceful, calming, and beautiful. Their mystical powers are legendary. Many people find them therapeutic. They are even musical — possessing acoustic resonance. A diamond, the ultimate romantic symbol, is also a crystal. However, as with a lovely diamond engagement ring, you need to be very careful about where you place it. ■

Smoke Events Update

by **DAVID GRAY**, PAC Tech Team, *Chair*

This summer is already shaping up to be a bad one for wildfires in Colorado and Utah, and we should all be prepared for wildfire smoke billowing into our Park.

Having fresh N95 masks on hand is crucial. Indoor air filtration with a HEPA filter is recommended; check and/or replace filters at least annually. The clubhouse has HEPA-filtered cooling spaces available in case of emergency. MVEST also has N95 masks available during a smoke event on a first-come, first-served basis.

Smoke from wildfires is hazardous above certain thresholds. It can permanently damage your lungs, whose interior surface area (if flattened) is about the size of a tennis court. People with impaired respiratory function are particularly vulnerable. COPD, asthma, and lung cancer can all be exacerbated by smoke and, without good air filtration, may require a trip to the ER or even hospitalization.

Park Management purchased and installed a PurpleAir particulate detector in 2019 that monitors smoke particles in our neighborhood (thank you, Matt!). The PurpleAir dual sensor can detect particulates that are invisible to the human eye, including PM2.5 and PM10 particles. PM2.5 particles are the smaller and more dangerous of the two. They lodge more deeply in the lungs, and coughing is not effective at clearing them. These particles are 2.5 microns or smaller in diameter — less than 2.5 millionths of a meter. By comparison, a human hair is about 50 microns in diameter. The larger PM10 particles are still measured, although their health effects are generally less severe.

I supplemented the original Marin Valley Clubhouse PurpleAir sensor two years ago by installing one at my home after the original dual sensor began reporting a degraded sensor. That sensor has been moved and is currently inside the clubhouse, where it reports only indoor air quality. During the recent controlled burn at Saint Vincent's, my sensor reported 169 (RED — UNHEALTHY), while the indoor Marin Valley sensor reported 60 (YELLOW — MODERATE).

Park Management has purchased a replacement sensor, and installation is anticipated in late July. The intent is to have both an outdoor sensor and an online indoor sensor. Once these plans are fully implemented, remember to look at the higher-reading sensor to determine the outdoor air quality.

Both the Marin Valley PurpleAir monitor and my PurpleAir monitor are available to read at <https://MarinValley.net/air-quality/>, or by clicking on the PurpleAir logo at marinvalley.net on the right-hand side of our homepage, so you can quickly check current air quality and determine whether an N95 mask is appropriate for outdoor activities. Click on a sensor to display a widget (a solid-colored panel on the map) with more precise data, along with several days of historical data. See image to the right.

If you don't use the internet, you can rely on your nose and eyes. If you can smell strong smoke or see haze against our hills, you're advised to wear an N95 mask outdoors. Be aware, however, that our senses gradually become inured to the smell of smoke and the haze. Instrumentation is the best way to determine when protective action is needed.

N95 Masks

Wearing a well-fitting N95 mask is strongly recommended for any outdoor activity during a smoke event. In dense smoke, a new N95 mask lasts only about two hours. Nancy Warfield and I also wear N95 masks while driving during heavy smoke events because cabin air filters in cars are not adequate. If we can smell smoke, we put on our N95 masks. An indoor HEPA filter will also help remove smoke particles that enter your home. Your lungs will thank you.

The widget changes color as air quality worsens. (See image below.) The widget is green because the air is low in particulates — i.e., good air. Note that presently, the Marin Valley Clubhouse sensor is dimmed because of its degraded dual sensor.



Color Key

0-50: GREEN — GOOD

Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk with 24 hours of exposure.

51-100: YELLOW — MODERATE

Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people with 24 hours of exposure, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.

101-150: ORANGE — UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS

Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects with 24 hours of exposure. The general public is less likely to be affected.

151-200: RED — UNHEALTHY

Some members of the general public may experience health effects with 24 hours of exposure; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.

201-300: PURPLE — VERY UNHEALTHY

Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone with 24 hours of exposure.

>300: DEEP PURPLE — HAZARDOUS

Health warning of emergency conditions. Everyone is more likely to be affected with 24 hours of exposure. ■

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN FELD



We are grateful to the Novato Fire Protection District for providing the goats this year for wildfire mitigation.

Message from MarVal

Dear Friends,

The current Mar Val Board of Directors has been reelected and is looking forward to planning some exciting events for the coming year. Board members are listed on the masthead of the *Echo*.

There is one change among our Committee Chairs. For some 14+ years, **Karen Casey** — better known as “**KC**” — has skillfully and creatively led the Greeters Committee. This committee works quietly behind the scenes but plays a vital role at Mar Val. All new residents are welcomed to the Park by members of this committee, who share information about Park activities, answer questions, explain the functions of PAC, MVEST, HOL, and Mar Val, and invite newcomers to attend a complimentary Mar Val dinner event.

After leading this committee so admirably for many years, KC has decided to pass the torch. We are delighted that **Pat Higgins** and **Richard Wilkerson** will be the new co-chairs of the Greeters Committee. We warmly thank KC for her many

years of service and dedication to Mar Val. KC was named Mar Val Volunteer of the Year in 2018. Pat summed it up best: *It is going to take two of us to replace KC.*

There seems to be some confusion about signing up for Mar Val dinners, so let's see if we can simplify the process. At most events, you will have a choice of entrée, usually a meat or vegetarian option. At some events, such as Thanksgiving or the Jazz Brunch, no choice is necessary — you may enjoy every dish that is offered.

Please read the signage on the counter and write down your entrée choice. Four steps are necessary to secure your reservation:

1. Sign your name.
2. Choose an entrée.
3. Place your check in the reservation box.
4. Complete these steps before the posted deadline.

Following these simple directions will be a great help to **Susan Hoff**, Mar Val's Second Vice President and Reservationist. She will greatly appreciate your cooperation.

One more housekeeping matter. Please do not fold up chairs and lean them against tables to save a seat. They can slip down, creating a significant hazard for folks walking around the ballroom. If you wish to save a place, please use that person's name tag or write the person's name on a sticky note or paper napkin. We all want to help keep everyone safe and prevent possible falls.

I hope you will join us for our next two events: **Prohibition Party** on August 15, featuring the infamous Roy's Meatloaf or Myrna's Macaroni & Cheese, and our **Labor Day** celebration on September 7 with hamburgers or hot dogs. Please see the flyers in this *Echo* for details.

As we enter the fall season, Mar Val has a full schedule of events ahead.

Hope to see you soon.

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





PROHIBITION PARTY

Saturday, August 15

5 pm Cocktails 6 pm Dinner

MENU

Roy's Meatloaf and Myrna's Macaroni & Cheese
Coleslaw
Rolls
Chef's Surprise Dessert



Flapper Costume Contest

Winner gets a free *Bathtub* Gin & Tonic

\$17 per person. Make checks payable to Mar Val.

Reservation deadline: Wednesday, August 12, 5 pm

(or when 120 reservations have been received)

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



Mar Val
LABOR DAY DINNER

Monday, September 7

5 pm Cocktails 6 pm Dinner

MENU

**Hamburgers or Hot Dogs or Impossible Burgers
or Morning Star Veggie Burgers**

Included:

**Chili, Macaroni Salad, Green Salad
Frozen Dessert**

\$17 per person

**Reservation deadline is Thursday, September 3, by 5 pm
or when 120 reservations have been received.**

Make checks payable to Mar Val.

Questions — call Susan Hoff @ 707-365-9426

Home Owners **HOL** League Message

Hello, Neighbors!

Bird & Wildlife Shelf in the Library

Following the recent owl box cleaning, the installation of our new bat colony home, and the magnificent "All About Owls" presentation featuring a stunning Great Horned Owl, we have officially dedicated a new library shelf to books about Marin birds and wildlife.

Several wonderful donations have already been received, but we would love to grow this collection. If you have any books about California birds or local wildlife that you are willing to part with, we would be delighted to receive them. Please contact **Ro Rigney, Anne Lakota, or John Feld.**

A Scenic New Bench for the Park

Thanks to a recent generous donation, we have decided to purchase a new bench. After much deliberation and scouting for the ideal location in the Park, it will be installed along the path connecting Panorama Drive to the top of Fallen Leaf Way. We found the perfect spot about halfway up the trail that overlooks the bay and fields, situated under wonderful shady trees. See p.10.

Art in the Park

A reception will be held on September 20 to honor everyone who has submitted artwork over the years to the Marin Valley Art Gallery. **Suzie Lahr** and **David Gray** will be hosting the event. If you have contributed art in the past, keep an eye out for your email invitation!

The next submission deadline is November 15. Previous submissions

have included paintings, drawings, etchings, photographs, sculpture, 3D works, weavings, crafts, and poems. You have plenty of time to get creative!

Gym Updates & Scheduling

Fitness classes are held in the gym once or twice a week, usually led by Janie Klimes. The schedule will soon be posted on the gym wall. Please note that these classes have priority use of the space. You are welcome to use other equipment while a class is in session, or simply return when the class is over.

We have received several inquiries about installing air conditioning in the gym and repairing the saunas. Unfortunately, the City has informed Matt Greenberg that it plans to renovate or replace the gym at some unknown point in the future, and no major repairs or alterations are permitted until then. Based on our past experiences with delayed roof repairs, ADA modifications, and many other projects, it is reasonable to assume that these City projects may not happen for several years — if ever. For the foreseeable future, we will have to work with the gym as is.

Resident Input & Maintenance Request Forms

Need to report a repair or suggest an improvement or community change? Resident Input and Maintenance Request forms are available in the mail slots just around the corner from the clubhouse main counter. They are also available on our website at <https://marinvalley.net/resident-input-maintenance-request-form/>

HOL will review your submission and provide an update within two weeks.

We hope this system helps resolve your concerns in a timely manner.

Upcoming Dump Runs

The next community dump run is expected to take place in late September or early October. Because we receive so many requests for more frequent collections, we are actively looking for an additional driver to help out. If you are willing to assist **Ed Collins** with scheduled collections and trips to the dump, please contact him at mretc@hotmail.com.

Massage Chair Repair & Care

As many of you know, we have a wonderful donated electronic massage chair in the library. Because it is somewhat temperamental and gets a lot of love, it occasionally needs maintenance. We are currently scheduling to have it repaired.

To help keep this extraordinary machine in tip-top condition, please ensure that children do not use the chair without adult supervision.

We hope to see you 1–4 pm on Saturday, July 25, at the Marin Valley Truck Sale in the parking lot north of the clubhouse and in the ballroom for ice cream and fancy toppings. In the ballroom Saturday, August 1, 3–5 pm, will be our next drum circle, and Mondays, from 2:30–3:30 pm in the Bamboo Room, are more Silver Dragon Wellness classes. The next craft sale will be Saturday, September 12 from 1–4 pm.

Stay healthy, eat well, and take care of each other!


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

Celebrating Generosity

by **JOHN FELD**

We are incredibly fortunate to live in a neighborhood where generosity is a constant theme. Over the past few years, Marin Valley residents have stepped up time and again to support various Park activities with cash or by donating their time. In particular, our Legal Fund and Park Market have received wonderful support and continue to welcome contributions to help defray expenses. Your continued generosity is deeply appreciated. Recently, that spirit of giving extended beyond our borders in a wonderful way.

A Tradition of Giving Back

To the best of my knowledge, this tradition was started years ago by Marv Weissensee, a longtime resident and realtor. He donated a portion of each sale to the Humanitarian Fund, which General Manager Matt Greenberg used to help neighbors temporarily struggling with rent and utilities. While that fund is now depleted, the legacy of giving lives on.

Our neighbor, Trish Brady — a realtor with Coldwell Banker, retired CPA, and valued member of our PAC Financial Committee — previously donated a generous \$300 to the Park Market to help fund one of our new refrigerators. In the Marin Valley Directory, she also pledges to make a donation to the Park for every local sale she handles.

I recently received a call from Mark Adams, a nonresident and realtor with Berkshire Hathaway, who has worked with many buyers and sellers in Marin Valley. Wanting to give back to the community that has trusted him with their homes, Mark generously sent us a \$500 check and left it up to us to decide how best to use it to help our Park thrive.

This beautiful gesture builds on a tradition of local businesspeople investing back into Marin Valley. Our hope is that this can serve as a blueprint for other realtors, contractors, and service providers who want to give back to Marin Valley in the future. We can't wait to hear your creative suggestions!

Let's Start the Conversation

What would you like to see added to Marin Valley? Share your ideas with me directly, or start a discussion thread with your neighbors on our official Nextdoor MVMCC group at bit.ly/4eFUGqn.

As an alternative to Nextdoor, our Facebook group was recently revamped for Marin Valley residents exclusively. Go to the Search Facebook box on the top-left corner of any Facebook page. Type "**Marin Valley**." When you see the option to "Join," simply request membership, and I will approve your request. This is a private group for Marin Valley residents only. Please help keep it polite, friendly, and kind. ■

Drum Circle

by **ED COLLINS**

**Saturday, August 1
3–5 pm • Ballroom**

Donations \$10–\$15 / No one turned away

Sahar Pinkham, musician and drummer extraordinaire, will be teaching and leading drumming at 3 pm. Some drums and percussion instruments will be provided, but please bring any that you may have. Many household items can be used as drums. No experience necessary. Sahar will teach techniques and a variety of rhythms, and perhaps have a jam session later. He'll have discounted drums for sale. Come early or call Sahar at 707-331-5640 if interested in a drum or in lessons. ■

Neighbors Rockin' Out, Having Fun Playing Music Together

by **JEANNE SKYBROOK**

**Friday, August 7
7–9 pm • Fireside Rom**

We've had a lot of fun at our first two jams. Please join us for our next one. This is an all-instrumental jam, which means singers too! And if you really don't have even a voice to share, then come and enjoy the music and the connection with each other. Everyone is Welcome!

Bring the *Daily Ukulele Book*, the yellow one, or get it at fleamarketmusic.com, if you want all the songs. It works for all instruments. I will make copies of the songs we will be playing. For a download of the book to your device, contact me at 415-302-3010, jm.skybrook@gmail.com. ■

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN FELD





THE ART
AND
SCIENCE
OF
LIVING
WELL

Increasing Longevity and Lowering Mortality Risk

by **NAN WATANABE**

Older adults who strength train just twice weekly reduce their risk of dying from any cause by nearly 50%. This makes resistance training one of the most powerful tools for healthy aging.

Tips to get started with strength training at Marin Valley:

- Schedule two strength-training workouts each week, keeping them short (20–30 minutes).
- Choose 6–8 exercises that work your entire body.
- Progress gradually by adding resistance every few weeks. ■

Source: Kraschnewski JL et al. 2016. "Is Strength Training Associated with Mortality Benefits? A 15-year Cohort Study of US Older Adults." *Preventive Medicine*, 87: 121–127. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26921660/>



*I will be hosting an informational meeting **Tuesday, August 11, at 4 pm in the Fireside Room** explaining my class called "I Want to Live Longer and Be Healthy." I will define the class, the commitment, the class set up, and length of sessions, so you can see if it's right for you. Questions? Email janieklimes1948@gmail.com.*

Part 1 • Strength: The Fountain of Youth

Why Building Muscle After 55 Is One of the Best Investments You Can Make

Growing older is inevitable.

Growing weaker doesn't have to be.

When many of us think about exercise, we picture a treadmill, a brisk walk, or perhaps a yoga class. Those activities are wonderful for our hearts and overall health. But according to longevity research, one type of exercise stands above all the others when it comes to preserving our independence as we age: **strength training**.

Muscle is far more than something that helps us look fit. It protects us from falls, supports healthy bones, improves blood sugar control, and allows us to continue doing the activities we love.

Why Muscle Matters More Than Ever

Beginning in our 30s, we gradually lose muscle, and that loss accelerates after age 60 unless we challenge our muscles. This process — called sarcopenia — can reduce balance, mobility, confidence, and independence.

The encouraging news is that adults in their 60s, 70s, 80s, and beyond can build strength through resistance exercise. Our muscles remain remarkably adaptable throughout life.

Think Beyond Today

Ask not, *How fit do I want to be today?* but, *What do I want to be able to do when I'm 85 or 95?* Building strength today is an investment in your future independence.

Strength, Muscle, and Power

Strength	Muscle	Power
Ability to produce force	Amount of muscle you have	Ability to produce force quickly

This Month's Functional Check

Chair stand test: Stand up and sit down from a chair 10 times without using your hands.

Balance test: Stand on one leg for 10 seconds, lightly holding onto a counter or wall if needed.

Carry test: Carry two moderately heavy grocery bags comfortably from the car to the kitchen.

Janie's Take Strength training isn't about becoming a bodybuilder. It's about preserving the freedom to travel, play with grandchildren, garden, carry groceries, and remain independent. Every workout is an investment in your future.

Challenge of the Month

- Complete two strength-training sessions each week.
- Practice 10 chair stands every day.
- Add a quality protein source to breakfast.
- Take the stairs whenever practical.

Next month: *"Building Muscle After 55" — how much weight to lift, machines versus free weights, repetitions, recovery, and the biggest myths about strength training.* ■

River Rafting

by **ED COLLINS**

I have been leading rafting trips for over 30 years — guiding professionally for four years, and for 24 years leading trips on the American and Klamath Rivers for family and friends. I have guided on rivers ranging from Class 2 to Class 4+ and rafted Class 5 rivers.

I'm wondering if there is interest among Marin Valley residents in doing a rafting trip later this summer. There are several options — from one-day trips (though the driving makes for a long day) on the Russian River, Cache Creek, or the American River to a longer adventure.

The Russian River offers an idyllic float, while Cache Creek on the Middle Fork of the American can feature Class 2 rapids. For a little wilder ride, the South Fork of the American offers class 3–3+. The Klamath is especially fun because the water is warm enough to enjoy floating in the river, but it would require a three- or four-day trip because of the six-hour drive.

If you're interested, contact Ed Collins at mretc@hotmail.com, text 415-377-7696, or sign up on the clubhouse counter. ■



Class 1: Easy — Calm, flat water with a gentle current and tiny waves (sometimes called riffles).

Navigation: Virtually no obstructions, and the route is wide and obvious.

Class 2: Novice — Straightforward, easy rapids with clear, wide channels that can be navigated without scouting from shore.

Navigation: The current is a bit faster, and you will bounce over small one- to three-foot waves. Basic paddle strokes are helpful for maneuvering around the occasional visible rock, but mistakes usually have only minor consequences.

Class 3: Intermediate — The sweet spot for recreational thrill-seekers with rapids that feature moderate, irregular waves that can reach 3 to 5 feet and are sometimes difficult to avoid.

Navigation: You will encounter faster currents, narrower passages, and obstacles such as rocks or short drops that require precise timing. Team paddling is a must, and you can expect to get thoroughly splashed.

Class 4: Advanced — Powerful, turbulent, and intense water that requires continuous, precise boat handling under pressure.

Navigation: Rapids are longer and may feature large,

unavoidable waves, holes, and restricted passages. The route is often obscured from the boat and may require scouting the path from the riverbank before running the rapid.

Class 5: Expert — The upper limit of commercial whitewater rafting. These are long, violent, highly obstructed, and unpredictable rapids.

Navigation: Rafters face massive, unavoidable waves, steep drops, boiling eddies, and complex routes that demand split-second decision-making. Due to the high risk and physical intensity, rescue options are limited, and safety teams are often stationed along the river.



Above photos: Ed Collins, front left, on a Class 5 Cherry Creek River rafting trip.

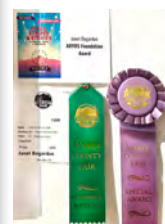
Marin County Fair Awards Residents

by **KATHRYN McMUDIE**

"Stars, Stripes & Stories" was the 2026 fair theme. **Susan McMudie** entered three paintings in the Fine Arts exhibition. Her medium is pastels. Two of the three sold, which excites any artist.



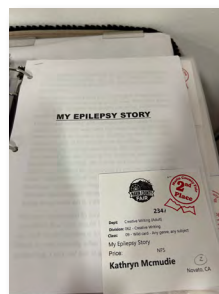
The Elephants' "Eternal Bond" took second place.



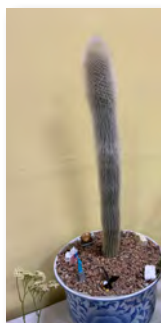
The River Otter received Honorable Mention.



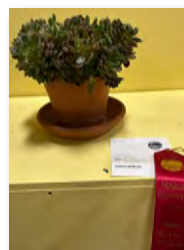
Janet Bogardus entered two acrylic paintings. Both sold! The painting above received an Honorable Mention and an ARYIIS Foundation Special Award. This foundation sponsors and supports the Fine Arts and Hobby Arts at the Marin County Fair. The award recognizes talented local and student artists for outstanding work. ■



Kathryn entered the Creative Writing — Adult competition with "My Epilepsy Story," which took second place.



I also entered a cactus titled "The Silver Torch," which took third place.



This beautiful display of aeonium won second place.



"White House, Rose Garden and the Ellipse." was accepted in the wheelbarrow category.

Tick Bites

by **JOHN FELD**

If you walk in long grass or hike in nature, it is always wise to check yourself for ticks when you return home. Many tick species bite humans and feed on blood, and some can quickly transmit serious infections. The three major tick-borne illnesses are **Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, and tick paralysis.** Other tick species can also cause a variety of health problems.

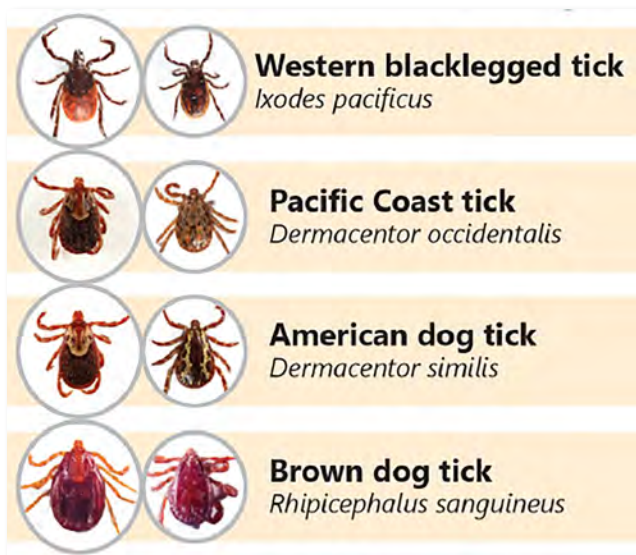
While Lyme disease gets a lot of press, it is rarely fatal, though it can lead to serious long-term consequences. Rocky Mountain spotted fever and tick paralysis are potentially more dangerous because they can be life-threatening.

In our area, ticks that bite humans can survive for up to two years without feeding on blood, so they can attach to people even in less-frequented areas.

Ticks to Be Especially Careful of

Western Blacklegged Tick — The primary carrier of Lyme disease in California. It is found in wooded, brushy, and humid environments. Adults are active from fall through spring, while the tiny, poppy seed-sized nymphs are most active in spring and summer.

Pacific Coast Tick — Commonly found in brush and woodland areas across California. It can bite humans at any life stage, is a known carrier



of Rickettsia (which causes spotted fever), and can also cause tick paralysis.

American Dog Tick — Found mostly in open grassy areas, clearings, and along trails. Only adult females typically bite humans, and they are known carriers of Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

Brown Dog Tick — Primarily affects canines but occasionally feeds on humans. It is more common around homes, kennels, and yards than in the wild and can also transmit Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

Soft Ticks — Unlike hard ticks, these do not remain attached for long periods. They take quick blood meals and then leave.

Different ticks in other regions can also cause these and other serious illnesses.

Not everyone bitten by an infected tick becomes infected. Only about 2–4% of people who experience a tick bite develop a tick-borne disease. Watch for redness at the bite site. A localized reaction is common, especially in people who have been bitten before. However, if the redness expands beyond four inches, seek immediate medical attention for prompt antibiotic treatment.

Identifying tick species and diseases can be tricky. This identifying chart (<https://bit.ly/4an3ery>) can be helpful, but if you are unsure what is attached to your skin, assume the worst.

If you find a tick crawling on you, brush it off and dispose of it. If it has already bitten you, it will still be attached. Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible, then pull it straight out. Do not twist, burn, or smother the tick. Avoid touching it with your bare hands; use gloves or tissues if necessary.

Do not use alcohol, formalin, or other liquids, and do not use tape. These methods can interfere with later testing of the tick. If the tick's mouthparts break off and remain in your skin, consult your physician.

Place the tick in a clean, sealed container or zip-top plastic bag with a slightly moistened piece of paper towel or cotton. Record when and where you were bitten.

Wash your hands and the bite area thoroughly with soap and water after removing the tick.

If you develop a rash or flu-like symptoms within 30 days of a tick bite, seek medical attention immediately. Ticks found on humans or animals can be identified by mailing them to a public health laboratory (download the submission form here: <https://bit.ly/4f86DwW>). Testing can identify the tick species and determine whether it carries pathogens, but it cannot diagnose Lyme disease or other infections in people.

Tick paralysis is a rare condition caused by neurotoxins in the saliva of certain attached female ticks — most commonly the American dog tick and the Rocky Mountain wood tick in North America.

Tick activity varies by species and life stage.

- **Nymphs** are responsible for most Lyme disease transmission. About the size of a poppy seed, they are most active from March through July.
- **Adults** are most active during the cooler, wetter months of October through June. They are larger and easier to spot. However, in mild climates such as Northern California, ticks may be encountered year-round in wooded or grassy areas, especially in brush and leaf litter.

To protect yourself while hiking or exploring, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into your socks or boots. Use an EPA-approved insect repellent containing DEET or picaridin. Thoroughly check your body, clothing, and pets after returning indoors.

Infection Rates

- **Adult ticks:** Generally, about 1–2% test positive for Lyme disease bacteria.
- **Nymphal (young) ticks:** These smaller ticks pose the greatest risk, with infection rates averaging 2–15%.

The risk of infection from a tick bite varies significantly by location. While the overall risk remains low across most of California, infection rates can spike in certain endemic areas. For instance, in parts of Marin County, infection rates can reach 5%. In parts of Mendocino County nymphal infection rates as high as 41% have been recorded. In the foothills of eastern Butte County, up to 25% of collected ticks have tested positive. In Chicago the average is 50%!

Pay attention after walking through grassy or brushy areas. With the increasingly hot weather caused by the expected El Niño, it is likely to be a bumper year for ticks. ■

“Sell By” Labels Now Banned in California to Cut Food Waste

by **JILL BOLAND**



Sell by” labels reached their own expiration date due to a California food labeling law on perishable products, which requires new label wording, effective Wednesday, July 1.

The bill, which passed in 2024, to help cut food waste and consumer confusion, standardizes labeling in the state by limiting manufacturers to a few terms: **“best if used by”** or **“best if frozen by”** to indicate when a food item is at its peak quality, and **“use by”** or **“freeze by”** to indicate when a food item is no longer safe to eat.

The law applies to all products except for eggs and infant formula. (Infant formula is the only product with standardized, federally regulated date labels in the U.S.) For everything else, there are roughly 50 variations of date labels, usually shaped by the requirements of individual states that vary across food products — a source of confusion for consumers — when to toss out aging food products.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, more than one-third of food sold nationwide ends up going to waste, in part because consumers throw away food they think has gone bad when it hasn’t and that usually, “dates are not an indicator of the product’s safety.”

Under the state’s bill, “sell by” dates can still be included on products as long as they are “coded” — information that is aimed at retailers rather than consumers. Manufacturers and retailers have a grace period to finish selling products made before July 1. ■

Remembering My Father

Father's Day 2026

by **LORNA SASS**

Remembering my father is a fairly painful experience, but when I think of him as a human being who survived considerable trauma, some of that pain is melted by compassion.

My dad escaped Hitler's Germany in his late teens with his immediate family. They settled into a dark apartment in Astoria, Queens, and he soon met my mother, who lived down the block. Their budding romance was quickly interrupted when he was drafted into the Army to serve in the Pacific. He ended up in the Motor Corps on the island of Saipan, where one of the worst battles of World War II took place.

Though he frequently watched war movies on TV, my dad never spoke about his time in the Army. But when I pressed him a bit, he told me that when his best buddy lit a cigarette in their shared foxhole, he caught enemy fire and was blown to pieces.

Like most Holocaust survivors and war veterans in the decades before anyone spoke of PTSD, my dad

pushed his traumatic memories deep into his unconscious and went on to fulfill the *Father Knows Best* dream of the 1940s: buy a little-box house in the suburbs on the GI Bill, raise a family, weed the lawn and barbecue on the weekends, and take mambo lessons.

My father was the nice guy on our suburban block who dropped everything my mother needed him to do whenever a neighbor sent out an SOS. Although he never finished high school, he was brilliant at repairing just about anything and loved being the local hero. He owned and ran Sass Auto-Electric Service on W. 53rd Street in what was then Hell's Kitchen, a rough neighborhood in Manhattan, and commuted about an hour each way every weekday. When he returned home from work around 7 pm, after being stuck in traffic, he expected dinner to be on the table and proceeded to recount what went on at work. His work stories didn't hold my interest, and I don't recall him ever inquiring about my school day or my life.

During these years, he remained a loyal son to his parents and would stop by their home several times a week on his way to work, bringing them treats such as preserved meats from Schaller & Weber, a famous German deli in Manhattan. Neither of his parents adapted well to America. His father worked as a schlepper at Bloomingdale's, rolling racks of garments to various departments. My grandmother remained at home and seemed quite depressed.

During school holiday breaks, my father would drive me to Astoria to pick up my grandmother, and then he would drop us off at Radio City Music Hall to see the Rockettes kick up their heels to live orchestra music. (My great love of Art Deco goes back to those days in that glorious place.) My father would slip my grandmother enough cash to cover the tickets and lunch afterward at Lindy's, a nearby Jewish restaurant famous for its blintzes and cheesecake. I had little to talk about with my grandmother and always felt embarrassed when she tucked the extra onion rolls into her purse — a sign of frugality and scarcity that my father inherited.

After my father died of leukemia in his mid-70s, I found a letter he had written to his mother during those years. In it he expressed how difficult



it was that she was always angry and never satisfied with anything he did. So sad — and yet he remained a devoted son.

My father earned a very good living and always carried a big wad of cash in his wallet, but he never stopped feeling poor. He doled out a weekly allowance to my mother, but she always had to beg and plead for anything beyond the basics. I got the message early on that I needed to flirt with him to get anything extra I might want. But even flirting didn't help when I was around 12 and begged him to pay for summer camp in upstate New York. Since all of my friends were going, I was determined to make it happen, so I decided to surprise him by earning the money myself. Somehow I got the idea to sell magazine subscriptions for a commission. A kind neighbor named Elliot Schwartzman bought dozens of subscriptions to give to his clients for Christmas, and I swiftly earned the five hundred dollars needed to pay for camp. I proudly put the money in an envelope and presented it to my father.

After a moment of shock and disbelief, my father — who almost never expressed anger — became outraged. "How dare you?" he said. He threw the money into my lap and said, "If I want you to go to camp, I'll pay for it myself," which he eventually was shamed into doing. But the message I took from this unfortunate experience was that no man would like me if I were financially independent — a message that took years of blah-blah therapy to turn around.

I never felt as though I had much in common with my dad, and I never quite understood what my mother saw in him aside from the chance to escape her own family, shell-shocked from fleeing Russia and the Cossacks. While my mother and I were reading *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, my

dad's reading was largely restricted to *Reader's Digest*.

My mother already had her BA by the time she married him, and she always assumed that I'd go to college. But the most my father could imagine for me was becoming either a secretary or a kindergarten teacher, and he balked so much at paying college tuition that I ended up taking out a student loan and paying it back myself after graduation.

Sadly, my younger brother, Philip, was autistic and schizophrenic and wreaked havoc on our family on a daily basis. My mother, little sister, and I did most of the caregiving, while my father, who seemed to have an easier time connecting with boys than with girls, befriended his two nephews in the absence of a son who could communicate. In recent years, these cousins told me how proud my father was of me for everything I had accomplished, but I don't recall him ever revealing those feelings of pride directly to me.

So it was with equal parts sadness and compassion that I remembered my father on this recent Father's Day. I honor the fact that he provided food, housing, and stability, and I marvel that he didn't regularly seek solace in alcohol or cigarettes, given the traumas he survived. But I deeply regret that I did not have an emotionally available father who encouraged me to become all that I could be. ■



Lorna with her parents

Blocking Unsolicited Calls

by **LORNA SASS**

Do you get as annoyed as I do when the phone rings and it turns out to be a solicitation call?

At first, I tried blocking the callers, but that didn't seem to work. So I asked my smart new friend, ChatGPT, how to stop these interruptions. Within 30 seconds, it told me to go to [DoNotCall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov) and enter my phone number and email address. It took me under a minute to complete the request online, and within moments I received an email confirmation.

There is also an option to phone in this request (888-382-1222), but I didn't find that process easy or successful to navigate.

It's too soon for me to report just how effective this is, since the website states that it can take telemarketers up to 31 days to stop calling. But my fingers and toes are crossed.

"Chatty" also told me I can turn on Silence Unknown Callers on my iPhone, but I haven't tried that yet.

Editor's note, from ChatGPT: The National Do Not Call Registry applies mainly to legitimate telemarketers. It generally does not stop illegal scam or spoofed robocalls. ■

Classifieds

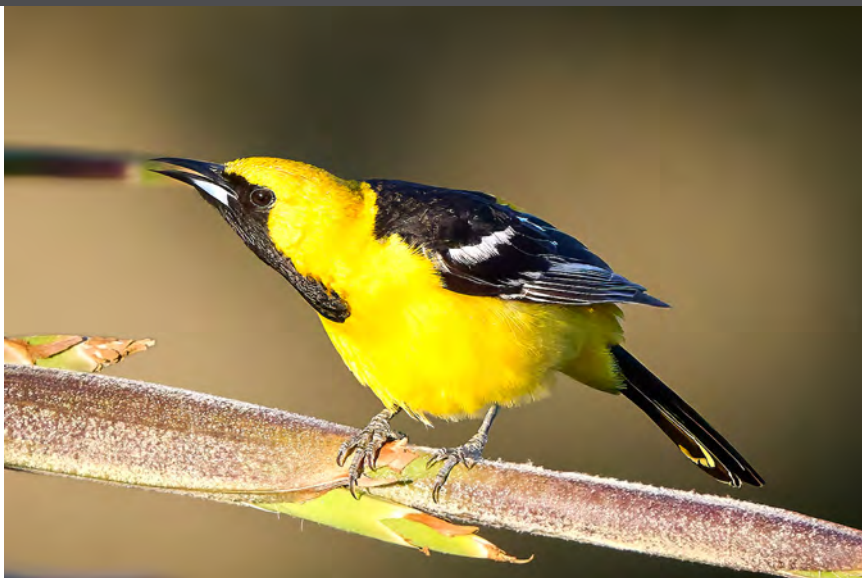
I've just driven from Canada with only my clothes. If anyone has any furniture they no longer need, I would be grateful for any donations for my new home in the Park.

Buddhist Meditation — Thursdays, 9–10 am, 55 MVD, sit 1/2 hr, share 1/2 hour. Free, all welcome. Starts August 13.

Thanks, Juliette Hanauer
Hanauerjuliette@gmail.com
415-302-5755

Hooded Oriole, Fawn, and Snowy Egrets

Text and Photography by
DAVID GRAY



Hooded oriole male 1



Hooded oriole male 2

Sometimes just walking around our Park is pretty spectacular for seeing birds and wildlife.

One afternoon while on the deck of the clubhouse, I heard the chatter of, and then spotted, a gorgeous Hooded oriole (*Icterus cucullatus*) in a palm tree. They come north to California during mating season. In California, the males have bright yellow heads and bodies (flame orange in Mexico), with deep black wings and tails sporting white bars. Their mask is the same deep black color, as is their beak. The females are a less vibrant yellow, lack the black mask, and have light brown wings with white bars.

Hooded orioles are particularly drawn to palm trees; I've spotted them before in the palms around the Park. The reason is straightforward: they build hanging nests under the palm fronds. The females construct their nests in just a few days, using their strong, pointed beaks to perforate the palm fronds and then weaving grasses through the holes to support their intricately woven nests. They lay one or two clutches of three to seven eggs, which take about two weeks to hatch.



Deer and fawn 1



Deer and fawn 2

Snowy egrets fishing



The next morning, while picking up a friend to go hiking at Rush Creek, I spotted a California mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus californicus*) and her tiny spotted fawn at the northern end of our Park off Scenic Drive. While editing the photos for publication, I noticed that the fawn's eyes are blue! That got me wondering whether their eyes are blue at birth, like leopard cubs'. Nope! It turns out that blue eyes in California mule deer are a very rare occurrence — roughly 0.7% of the population has this genetic mutation. So if the fawn survives to adulthood, we may have a blue-eyed deer in the Park for years to come. The eye color is barely visible in the second photograph when zoomed in on the digital edition.

Rush Creek is one of our favorite spots to hike. It is reasonably close by, just off the Atherton exit on northbound 101. There are always birds to see, and the hike is fairly easy. These snowy egrets (*Egretta thula*) were out fishing in the main pond, catching minnows.

Fire season is off and running in the U.S. West after a dry winter. Please take some time to look all around your house from its skirting to five feet away (Zone Zero), and clear out any leaves, pine straw, grasses, weeds, and wood scraps. ■

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AUGUST 2026						1 3-5 Drum Circle <i>Ballroom</i> 6:30 Dancing <i>Meadow</i>
2 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training <i>Bamboo Room/ Nan Watanabe</i> 3-4 Silver Dragon Wellness <i>Bamboo Room/ Will & Susi Banuelos</i>	3 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji <i>Deck/ David MacLam</i> 10-11 Water Aerobics 2:30-3:30 Silver Dragon W. <i>Bamboo Rm.</i> 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung <i>Ballroom/ Jay Sheller</i>	4 7:30-9 Taiji 11-12 Chair Yoga <i>Ballroom</i> 2-3 Craft & Chat <i>Library</i> 5 PAC Bd. Mtg. <i>Ballroom/ Zoom</i>	5 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung <i>Ballroom</i> 6-7 Silver Dragon Wellness	6 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Rollin' Root 4:30 HOL Board Meeting <i>Fireside Room.</i>	7 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 12 Mahjong <i>Private, Fireside Room</i> 5-7 Pub 7 Music Jam <i>Fireside Rm.</i>	8 ECHO DEADLINE 6:30 Dancing
9 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training 3-4 Silver Dragon Wellness	10 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 2:30-3:30 Silver Dragon Wellness 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung	11 7:30-9 Taiji 11-12 Chair Yoga 2-3 Craft & Chat 4-5 Janie's Longevity Corner	12 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 5 Mar Val Board Mtg. <i>Fireside Rm.</i> 5 Prohibition reservation deadline 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung 6-7 Silver Dragon Wellness	13 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Rollin' Root 6-10 Board Game Night <i>Fireside Room/ Ed Collins</i>	14 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 12 Mahjong 5-7 Pub	15  5-7 Mar Val Prohibition Party 6:30 Dancing
16 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training 3-4 Silver Dragon Wellness	17 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 2:30-3:30 Silver Dragon W. 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung	18 7:30-9 Taiji 11-12 Chair Yoga 2-3 Craft & Chat 5 MVC Bd. Mtg. <i>Zoom</i>	19 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 2:30-3:30 Ladies Bridge <i>Private</i> 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung	20 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Rollin' Root  Artists' Reception <i>Fireside Room</i>	21 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 12 Mahjong 5-7 Pub	22 6:30 Dancing
23 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training 3-4 Silver Dragon Wellness	24 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 2:30-3:30 Silver Dragon W. 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung	25 7:30-9 Taiji 11-12 Chair Yoga 2-3 Craft & Chat	26 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 4 Book Club <i>Carol-Joy Harris</i> 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung 6-7 Silver Dragon Wellness	27 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Rollin' Root	28 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 12 Mahjong 5-7 Pub	29 6:30 Dancing
30 7:30-9 Taiji 12-1 Group Strength Training 3-4 Silver Dragon Wellness	31 6 Trash 7:30-9 Taiji 10-11 Water Aerobics 2:30-3:30 Silver Dragon W. 5:30-6:30 Nei Gung					