



From the desk of....

What a year we had in 2010! The economy remained sluggish. The unemployment rate in Marin was the highest in recent memory exceeding the 8% mark. Homeowners in Marin were facing foreclosures and the ranks of homeless including families with children broadened.

At the same time, the County achieved an AAA bond rating and continued to have a healthy capital reserve to complete road projects, to work on identifying the final location for the emergency operations facility, to complete the highway 101 HOV lane expansion with a Class 1 bike/pedestrian pathway from the top of Lincoln Hill to Central San Rafael, to open the much anticipated Cal Park Tunnel and to build new children's parks. A new community Farmer's Market was opened in Marinwood. Money for a new Housing First Program was allocated and 35 new Section 8 vouchers specifically for homeless vets were accessed. After 8 years in office working on issues relating to the San Rafael Rock Quarry, they now have a new operating permit and reclamation plan and the Peacock Gap Peninsula will have a newly paved Point San Pedro Road by 2012. The Marin Clean Energy Program was successfully started. Marin General Hospital made the transition back to the public with a loan from the county (which was paid back with interest).

A 25 million dollar structural deficit was eliminated through employee attrition, department restructuring and working more efficiently with 180 positions being eliminated. Employees worked with management to extend the age before retirement from 55 to 61+, COLAs were put on hold and health benefits including retiree health benefits were adjusted to provide more cost savings. Our County remains in the best condition of most of the other 57 counties in the State.

I am honored to have been re-elected for a 3rd term to the Board of Supervisors and will be serving in 2011 as the president of the board

and the vice president of the Association of Bay Area Governments. It appears the economy is recovering, albeit slowly. The county will continue to meet the challenges ahead. Health and Human Services is about to join the Partnership Health managed Medicaid program which will improve access and save dollars in Marin. We are coordinating our efforts with the Partnership to provide health care to our children with funding partners. The passage of the \$10 Vehicle License Fee will improve transportation options for our seniors. Watershed projects are in various stages of development and implementation. The Marin Energy Authority will pay back the loan from the county in the first half of the year and the county will be off the hook for the co-signed initial loan. The revenues will allow a continued investment into clean, renewable energy projects.

State legislation SB375 mandates regional government agencies work with their local government members to create a "Sustainable Communities Strategy" that considers land use, housing, transportation and decreasing green house gasses (see article on page 9). I believe the best planning comes from the ground up and that there are changes that need to occur through state regulation and legislation in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) to allow local governments the tools they need to meet the requirements within the context of the needs of the community...for example, senior assisted living residences should be allowed to be counted and conversions of market rate units to affordable low income units should be allowed to be fully counted...

As you can see, we have our work cut out for us...but I know that the people of Marin are engaged in our community issues and we can achieve whatever goals we set for ourselves. I am looking forward to rolling up my sleeves and working side by side with you in 2011.

Happy New Year from all of us here in District 1!

Susan L. Adams

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Senior Access celebrates Family Caregiver Holiday Social

It was a dark and stormy night – the rain was cold and harsh; the wind rattled the windows, yet guests arrived dressed up for the Second Annual Caregiver Family Holiday Social at Senior Access.

Supervisor Adams greeted guests and joined in the festivities; an evening of magic and music, designed to delight the senses and celebrate community.

Senior Access is Marin's favorite social club for folks with memory loss, providing a mix of mind and body fitness, expressive arts and person-centered care to the growing number of Marin's older adults with memory loss and providing respite to their family caregivers.

The Family Holiday Party was sponsored by Marin County Supervisors Susan Adams, Hal Brown and Steve Kinsey; with food from Drake Terrace; entertainment by The Great Ernstini and Barry and Annie Ernst. Here's to creating a dementia-friendly Marin!



Susan Adams and Cris Chater, Executive Director of Senior Access at the Second Annual Family Caregiver Holiday Social.

Cal Park Tunnel opens!



DPW Engineer Craig Tackaberry and Project Manager Dave Bernardi at opening



Pathway provides access for those on bicycles, in wheelchairs and under their own power. For more information and photographs so to: <http://www.tam.ca.gov/index.aspx?page=184>

The Cal Park Hill Tunnel Rehabilitation and Multi-Use Pathway provides a safe and efficient non-motorized alternative path of travel between two major transit facilities in Marin County, the Larkspur Ferry Terminal and the Bettini Transit Center in San Rafael. The route is built primarily within the existing railroad right-of-way, reducing travel time between these important public transportation facilities while eliminating traffic conflicts. We now have an accessible path that is open to non-motorized commuters, recreational cyclists and pedestrians of all ability levels. The tunnel was designed to accommodate the shared use of the right-of-way with future commuter passenger rail service.

Seats open on Cultural Services Commission

There are several terms expiring on the Cultural Commission and applications are being accepted to fill them. District 1 and 5 each have one seat expiring and there are three at large positions that are open. To view the purpose and duties of the commission and the qualifications to serve, go to the following website:

<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/bs/members/mcbds/Brdpage.cfm?BrdId=96>

The deadline for receiving applications will be 1/25/11 and appointments will be scheduled for 2/1/11.

Applications can now be submitted online at: <http://199.88.77.92/lfserver/GenBoardApp>



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Succulents in the garden

Learn about the origin of succulents and how to incorporate these beauties into your garden. These camels of the plant world are timely additions to everyone's plant lists because of their versatility and, by their very nature, sustainability. Succulents create wonderful habitat gardens for birds and pollinators. They also add architectural interest and drama to our environment.

Marin Master Gardener Jessica Wasserman will explain how to grow succulents in the garden and in containers; plus offer advice on how to keep them

alive over our wet and, sometimes frosty, winters. She will also show how easily they can be propagated; these are the plants that keep on giving.

When: **Thursday, January 6, 2011, noon to 1pm**

Where: Marin County Board of Supervisors Chambers, Room 330, 3501 Civic Center Drive, San Rafael

If you would like more information about this **free** program, please contact the Civic Center Library Reference Desk at 415-499-6058.

Community Service Area 6—channel maintenance Gallinas Creek

A **CSA 6 Advisory Board** meeting has been scheduled for **Tuesday, January 11, 2011, 6:30p.m.-8:30p.m.** in Room 410B at the Civic Center. Staff will provide an update on Las Gallinas Creek dredging project study and an overview of the County watershed program. All available materials for this meeting can be downloaded via the county calendar announcement:

<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/SysApps/Calendar/pub/EventDisplay.cfm?event=14283>

Room 410-B is located on the fourth floor of the building's administrative wing. The easiest way to enter the administrative wing is through the gate at the southern most end of the building (closest to N. San Pedro).

Creekside Park Renovation — Hal Brown Park at Creekside

by Steve Petterle

The renovation of Creekside Park, recently renamed Hal Brown Park at Creekside, in honor of Marin County Supervisor Hal Brown, is nearly complete! Although reopening of the park was set for October, the project hit a couple of bumps that are delaying completion until February. But the revitalized park will be worth the wait. If you’ve walked by lately, you’ve noticed the playground is beginning to take shape—the climbing wall, the kid-sized Clapper Rail and Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse nests, a 17-foot tall climbing net, and the sand play area are all there.

But the park isn’t just about play. Its unique relationship to Creekside Marsh along Corte Madera Creek offers learning opportunities for the five schools within walking distance. The amphitheater is designed specifically to provide a forum for education. When combined with the Marsh and Mt. Tamalpais Overlook, the park’s relationship with the mountain, the creek, the marsh, and the community will be strengthened.

For more information, visit marinparks.org, click “Our Work” and “Parks Projects” for the link to Creekside Park Renovation. If you have questions, contact Principal Park Planner Steve Petterle at spetterle@co.marin.ca.us or (415) 499-6394.

From dream to reality:



Renderings of plans for park renovations



Shotcrete work on elevated stream feature



Stone walls coming together



Clapper rail nests!



Workers stretching out the climbing net

All photos by Steve Petterle

San Rafael Rock Quarry— update from DPW

On September 28, 2010, the Marin County Board of Supervisors approved the Surface Mining and Quarrying Permit # Q-72-03, Amendment 1 for the San Rafael Rock Quarry (the Quarry). Since approval of the Permit, County staff have met several times with the Quarry to review and ensure compliance with Permit conditions.

Various relatively minor in nature submittals and noticing permit conditions have been implemented. The County developed an internal permit oversight program and assigned staff to manage the Permit oversight, consultant contracts, and routine inspections.

On November 12, the Quarry made an initial deposit of \$100,000 with the County to fund the County's staff permit oversight efforts and initial consulting services. Also in November, the County issued two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to 44 mining, reclamation and air quality consultant experts to peer review technical, Quarry-submitted information.

On November 29, 2010, a Conforming Amended Reclamation Plan (CARP) and Financial Assurances

Cost Estimate (FACE) were submitted to the County. In December, five proposals were received in response to the two RFPs and are currently under review or in negotiation. County staff continues to review the submitted CARP and to conduct periodic inspection of quarry activities.

The quarry continues to be in compliance with all permit conditions. We expect the next permit milestone to be the Quarry's forum to discuss the purchase of a vacuum sweeper.



Aerial view of the Quarry

Parks and Open Space — Winter opportunities to pitch in:

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8. 9AM TO 1PM

Rick's Broom Patch

A decade ago, devoted volunteer Rick Thornton and friends removed a massive pioneer patch of invasive French broom on the Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Divide. Though Rick passed away, we've maintained the site with the help of community volunteers. Help us carry on Rick's legacy! The project involves moderately strenuous activity on uneven

ground. **GETTING THERE** Meet at the end of Manual T. Freitas Parkway in Terra Linda. *Lunch will be served at noon.*

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22. 9AM TO 12PM

Bald Hill Broom Bust, Part I

Join the Open Space District, the Marin Municipal Water District, and the Marin County Bicycle Coalition as we combine forces to maintain an important fire break along our shared property boundary. The work involves moderately strenuous activity on uneven ground. Meet at the intersection of Worn Springs Fire Road and the Deer Park Trail. *Call Greg Reza for directions. Lunch will be served at noon.*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 30. 9AM TO 12PM

Stafford Lake Habitat Restoration

We're launching the next steps to reclaim the northern shoreline of Stafford Lake. We'll gather and haul fennel plant seed heads, pull young French broom, and remove fennel plants and roots to make way for natives and a healthier ecosystem. The work involves moderate to strenuous activity on gentle slopes and uneven terrain. Meet at the Stafford Lake Park playground (3549 Novato Blvd, Novato).

For more activities including ranger or naturalist led hikes go to: <http://www.maringov.org/Depts/PK.aspx?CFID=24641248&CFTOKEN=75555008>

Warm Wishes warms hearts and hands

About 300 volunteers gathered at Unity in Marin church in Novato early on a December Saturday morning to assemble packs with warm clothing for those in our communities living without shelter.

Volunteers assembled 5,000 packs with gloves, socks, caps, scarves, rain ponchos and holiday cards from schoolchildren, working in assembly lines, singing carols and carrying boxes to cars waiting outside.

Deliveries of backpacks were made to agencies around the Bay Area, including Ritter Center, Homeward Bound, and the St. Vincent de Paul Societies of San Francisco and Marin County. Other volunteers planned to hand out packs to individuals on the streets of San Rafael, San Francisco and Berkeley, among other cities.

Warm Wishes started when San Rafael resident Bill Hamm, experienced the joy he felt from giving the gloves off his hands to a homeless man on the street 17 years ago. The man's gratitude inspired Hamm to buy a few hundred more pairs of gloves at the Novato Target and hand them out to homeless people a few days later.

Hamm's high school friends, family and family friends now join corporate and individual volunteers with their time and donations to keep the program going, which costs about \$50,000 a year to run, said Mary O'Mara, MarinLink's executive director. Mary reports a budget shortfall this year due to the weak economy and the growing need.

For more information on Warm Wishes, and how you can help, go to www.warmwishes.org. To donate, go to www.marinlink.org.



Founder Bill Hamm is a picture of the joy he feels giving to others in need. Volunteers handling the materials assembled for the packs.

Some good news—Marin's financial picture

Given the economic downturn, there has been a lot of bad financial news this past year, but there has also been some good news that may have been overlooked. Positive financial news in 2010 include the following:

- Nationally, we are no longer seeing negative economic growth but the growth has not been strong enough to generate jobs. Locally, this means we are less likely to see negative property and sales taxes, but our revenues will be relatively flat for the foreseeable future.
- As part of the County's long-term restructuring plan, **important community services were maintained at a lower cost to taxpayers.** Including:
 - Sheriff-Coroner merger saves \$400,000 annually
 - Auditor-Tax Collector merger saves \$200,000 annually
 - Moving Mediation Services to the District Attorney's Office saves \$200,000 annually
- In July, the Marin Healthcare District fully repaid its \$12.5 million loan with \$340,000 interest. This short-term loan from the County helped Marin General successfully transition from Sutter Healthcare without a disruption in important community hospital-based services.
- In fiscal year 2009-10, the County Retirement system earned about 8.8% or over 1% above their earning assumption.
- The County once again received the highest bond rating available to California counties

from Standard and Poor's

- In September, taking advantage of historically low interest rates, the County refinanced and secured an additional \$40.7 million in bond proceeds without increasing their annual debt service payments. If these bonds were issued today, given recent increases in interest rates it would have resulted in about \$12 million less in bond proceeds.
- By creating a lower cost plan for new employees and capping annual increases in costs, the County has reduced its long-term liability for retiree health by \$18 million over the past four years.

The County benefits from strong fiscally conservative leadership and a cohesive working relationship among the department directors and management. This means we are all pulling together with common goals and strategies. In an effort to be transparent and accountable, the County's budget information is available online at:
<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/AD/main/BudgetInfo.cfm>

Matthew Hymel
 County Administrator

Pueblo Park

What happens when people in the neighborhood get involved? When funding was identified by Parks and Open Space to renovate and improve this neighborhood park, project designer Steve Petterle went to the community and asked for



their ideas. A great committee developed of interested parents and residents of the neighborhood, researching ideas online and in other parks, interviewing the experts (children), and guiding the process. Everyone rolled up their sleeves, too, throughout the construction phase. Great job!



Susan taking the oath of office from County Administrator Matthew Hymel

Swearing in—the honor to serve four more years



Susan signing the necessary paperwork

Sustainable Communities Strategies

You will be hearing more and more about SB 375 implementation as communities start grappling with how to put into practice what California legislators passed in 2008 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and their impact on our environment. One of the guiding principals developed to help communities organize their efforts is something called Sustainable Communities Strategy. For this, we direct you to an excerpt from report of the Joint Policy Committee—Regional Planning Program Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Bay Area Air Quality Control District (BAAQCD), Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) (*there will be a test on this later...*)

“Background and Purpose: At its meeting of September 18th, 2009, the Joint Policy Committee (JPC) adopted *Policies for the Bay Area’s Implementation of Senate Bill 375*. The *Policies* have also been adopted by the other regional agencies in 2010.

Central to the implementation of SB 375 is the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), an integrated transportation and land-use plan which is required to accommodate a twenty-five-year projection of the region’s housing need (including housing for all economic segments of the population) while simultaneously reducing greenhouse-gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to target levels specified by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

SB 375 specifies that the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy be prepared by ABAG and MTC and that it be adopted by MTC as part of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) adopted by ABAG must also be consistent with the Sustainable Communities Strategy. However, the regional agencies, individually and collectively, have very little authority over land use. **That authority rests almost exclusively with local governments.** A realistic

transportation and land-use strategy can, therefore, only be prepared with local governments participating as partners and co-leaders. The adopted *Policies* speak at length to building and nurturing that local-government partnership.”

As Vice Chair of ABAG in 2011, Supervisor Adams is particularly interested in seeing local governments work with community partners and the public to articulate what Sustainable Communities Strategy means to their community. We will be providing a monthly update in our newsletter to keep you advised of local efforts.

Another vehicle to bring the community into the discussion will be videotaped interviews with local elected officials discussing the importance of this process and how people can get involved. This video will be posted on the G Channel by February 1 and will solicit viewers’ comments on a website that was created: <http://scs.abag.ca.gov/>. Also on that site are draft documents associated with the SCS to keep people up to date on the progress of this regional planning process.

Public meetings are also being planned.

To see the complete JPC report, go to:
<http://www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy/jpc%20375%20lg%20engagement.pdf>





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Calendar — January, 2011

Board of Supervisors Meetings, January 4, 11, 25, Board of Supervisors Chambers, go to website for starting time and agendas, www.co.marin.ca.us/efiles/BS/AgMn/cybagnda.htm

LAFCO, January 13, 7:00 p.m. San Rafael City Council Chambers, lafco.marin.org

ABAG, go to website for agenda and time of meetings, www.abag.org.

Marin Transit District, January 31 , 10:00 a.m., BOS Chambers, www.marintransit.org

Transportation Authority of Marin, January 27, 7:30 p.m., BOS Chambers, www.tam.ca.gov

Criminal Justice Behavioral Health Committee Meeting, January 26, 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Room 324, Civic Center

Public is always welcome. Check websites to confirm meeting date and time.

If you wish to subscribe to the Cyberagenda, there is a link on the Cyberagenda page to do so. This will include notices of **Marin Housing Authority** meetings, dates for which change each month.

Marin G Channel:

View the recent forum we hosted on **State Banks**. Ellen Brown, an expert in banking and finance, provided background on the banking system and discussed why a state bank could be a way for the state of California to get a handle on its fiscal future.

Also, you can listen to the discussion during the Board of Supervisors meeting regarding banning single use plastic bags, updates on the County's efforts to reduce the cost of government, etc.

It's better than reality TV because it's the real thing! **It's what's happening.**
<http://www.co.marin.ca.us/g-channel/Default.aspx>



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