



M A R I N C O U N T Y
SUPERVISOR
KATE SEARS

GIVING THANKS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

At this time of year we reflect back on what has transpired and begin to look ahead to the New Year. This is also a time to extend our gratitude to those who have an impact on our lives and on our communities. 2013 brought a great deal of community engagement to many issues affecting Marin and our district, often bringing new insight about the values we share.

Below are just a few examples of the many activities in our district and around Marin. I am proud of the terrific staff here at the County and grateful to be able to serve the residents of Southern Marin. This is a challenging job, but there is never a dull moment! I look forward to working with all of you in 2014 to continue to make Southern Marin the best part of the County. On behalf of my staff, I send you and yours best wishes for a wonderful holiday season, full of community, of sharing and of service.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

I want to first thank the 40 appointed community members from our district who serve on various boards and commissions that make such a difference to the County. Here is a link to see what openings may be coming up on our many boards and commissions:

<http://www.marincounty.org/depts/bs/boards-and-commissions/current-openings>

There are so many ways to be involved in our community, whether you coach a team, tutor students after school, pull invasive weeds on open space lands, work at a homeless shelter or soup kitchen, serve on a non-profit board – the list of opportunities and needs and the talent to serve seems limitless here. We are all fortunate to have so many engaged and generous people, especially in Southern Marin. In addition to the Board and Commission appointments, did you know that over 8600 people volunteer with the County in over 80 different professional capacities, from fire lookouts to filing, ushering, library services and so much more. Contact Volunteer Coordinator [Anne Starr](#) at (415) 473-7167 for more information. One example of a group in Southern Marin that came together to benefit the entire community: our own Marin Clean Highways in Strawberry, who worked tirelessly to get the stretch of Highway 101 in Strawberry cleaned up, enlisting cooperation from the County, businesses, CalTrans and neighbors. We are all grateful for the community members who step up!

I represent you and the County on numerous boards and commissions myself, including the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Golden Gate Bridge and Transportation District, SMART, Marin Energy Authority, Richardson's Bay Regional Agency, the Marin Telecommunications Agency, the Marin Transit District and the Transportation Authority of Marin. That's just a sample! See below for just a few details of what we've been working on.

A SAMPLE OF HOT TOPICS AND UPDATES FROM 2013

- **Energy, Climate Change and Preparing for Sea Level Rise:** I am Vice-Chair of the Marin Energy Authority, which was formed to address the need to dramatically reduce our greenhouse gas emissions resulting from energy consumption – the biggest threat to our climate. It has been a remarkable success story. In 3½ years the agency has grown to include all the cities and towns of Marin, as well as the City of Richmond, and serves 120,000 ratepayers, procuring from 50% - 100% renewable electricity for its customers. ♦ Energy efficiency programs are also at the heart of MEA's mission: the less energy we use, the less we need to generate or procure. MEA launched a \$4.1M energy efficiency program focused on energy assessments and retrofits of single-family, multi-family and small commercial buildings with a Green Loan program to help alleviate up-front costs. Check the website: <https://mcecleanenergy.com/ee> for details. ♦ We celebrated the one year anniversary of the largest solar installation in Marin – the 1 MW project at the San Rafael Airport. The County has also installed 538 kW hours of solar PV at various County facilities and there are plans to add another 462 kW of solar by 2015. ♦ All of these projects are important steps to mitigate the effects of climate change, but we must also prepare for the inevitable consequence of global warming: sea level rise, which will affect all of our communities, whether or not they are adjacent to the shoreline. In my role as a Commissioner on the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), I have become deeply engaged in understanding how we can approach this slow-moving catastrophe at the local and regional level. I have also launched a Southern Marin Sea Level Rise Pilot Project to develop understanding of the impact of sea level rise and possible adaptations and mitigations in our bay front communities between the Sewerage Agency of Southern Marin (SASM) treatment plant in Mill Valley and Marin City. In the coming weeks and months you will be hearing a great deal more from me on this topic. Stay tuned and get involved!

- **Local Land Use:** 80% of Marin is open space, parkland or under agricultural use, which makes Marin the least developed of the nine Bay Area counties. We are so fortunate to have the passionate stewards of the land that have protected our natural resources. The focus of development has, since the '70's, been along the "urban corridor" of 101, but this has limited housing development, making Marin one of the most expensive places to live, as well as one of the most beautiful. ♦ We had many hearings and community conversations on housing issues, such as Priority Development Areas and the Housing Element. While there was a great deal of misinformation and some heated debates on these issues, I very much appreciated the active engagement of so many residents, the thoughtful commentary, and the ongoing commitment to finding the right balance between new housing, protecting open space, and maintaining community character. ♦ One of the long-standing prospective development sites in District Three has been 110 acres of ridgeline property in Tiburon known as Easton Point, adjacent to Old St. Hillary's Open Space. The long-awaited Environmental Impact Report will be coming to the Board of Supervisors for certification in the very near future. ♦ Also, the Board adopted a Stream Conservation Area ordinance that would have governed building in

and adjacent to our extensive watershed areas, providing habitat protection as well as guidance and clarity for property owners. Unfortunately, the ordinance has been challenged in court and is on hold, pending the outcome of the lawsuit.

- **Legislation:** I supported our floating homes residents in Sausalito to achieve parity with mobile home communities, allowing them to buy their marinas and create co-ops, if the opportunity arises. ♦ I also brought resolutions before our Board in support of lead-free bullets to reduce the levels of lead in the wild and in the systems of birds and mammals affected by this deadly poison in the environment; and ♦ a statewide moratorium on fracking until it can be done safely, in accordance with the Clean Water Act, and with full disclosure of locations, chemicals used and disposal policies.

- **Traffic, Transportation and Roads:** Traffic continues to be a major topic in many of our communities. We continue to encourage reducing car trips and the use of other forms of transportation besides automobiles. I am working daily to reduce delays on Shoreline Highway, Almonte Boulevard, and Tennessee Valley Road. The Department of Public Works is consulting with an expert on light timing to help restore better travel time. ♦ The County has responsibility for over 400 miles of roads in Marin. This year, half the streets in Paradise Cay were rebuilt and repaved - a long-awaited project, and other streets in our district received improvements, as well. ♦ The Lomita Safe Pathways project, funded by a Safe Pathways Grant in 2011 from Measure A transportation sales tax revenues, brought a wide pedestrian sidewalk and bike lane striping to Lomita Drive, a heavily used corridor for school and recreational commuting. Stroll the new sidewalk on the edge of the Horse Hill Open Space Preserve and enjoy the views. ♦ Marin Transit's Muir Woods Shuttle carried a record-breaking 77,486 passengers so far in 2013, up from 54,154 in 2012. Operational changes in 2013 included additional service frequency, new routing, and increased vehicle capacity. ♦ The Muir Woods Shuttle will operate on Saturday, December 21, for the popular Winter Solstice and again on the day after Christmas, Thursday, December 26, through New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1, 2014. Leave your vehicle at home and ride the shuttle to the woods! ♦ Marin Transit also instituted the 219 Tiburon-Strawberry shuttle, part of a Countywide effort to bring smaller transit vehicles to communities to relieve congestion and enhance service. ♦ The National Park Service (NPS) has begun a process to examine visitation to Muir Woods which heavily impacts 101 and Tam Junction and Shoreline Highway. A proposed reservation system has wide community support. Some components of the plan, however, including the proposal for a parking lot on Dias Ridge and Panoramic Highway, have met with strong community opposition. Supervisor Kinsey and I do not support a parking lot at that location. We are composing a letter to the Park Service offering comments on their plan, which will be considered at the December 17th Board of Supervisors meeting. Public comment on the plan has been extended by NPS to January 11, 2014.

- **Health and Safety:** Unlike many states, California and the County embraced the Affordable Care Act and, not coincidentally, we've had far more success since October 1st in signing up the estimated 11,500 uninsured Marin residents who would otherwise not have health insurance or would be underinsured. Having everyone in Marin insured means that health care is more efficient and affordable for us all. For more information and to learn more about ACA implementation in Marin, go to www.coveredmarin.org . There will be an informational meeting on **Monday, January 6 from 1:30-3:00 PM** at the Health and Wellness Campus, 3240 Kerner Blvd., San Rafael. ♦ The Sheriff's office has instituted a new online tool called CrimeReports aimed at improving communication between residents in unincorporated areas of Marin County and law enforcement. This tool allows residents to view local crime data in near real-time status. ♦ This has been the driest year on record in Marin, and though we hope the winter rains will be coming soon, there are many aspects of fire prevention that our communities should be aware of. The Autumn Lane neighborhood in Tam Valley set a great example working with local firefighters from Southern Marin Fire, Clement Tree Service, the Tam Community Services District and nearby public land managers at the Golden Gate National Recreation Area to clear limbs over their street so that emergency vehicles could get through safely. More details Autumn Lane's fire safe work day will be coming your way soon. ♦ And here are some tips from the Department of Weights and Measures on buying firewood: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qwx_DM1P6w

COMMUNICATIONS

Our office has made a particular effort to communicate with the residents of District Three and keep you informed about upcoming events, issues in our district, breaking news, and the essential services that the County provides, such as the building and maintenance of our roads and bikeways, our parks and trails, land use decisions, and attention to our health and safety.

I encourage you to [Sign Up](#) to receive updates from my office and check the County's website frequently, www.marincounty.org, and click on "subscribe" to stay informed. By working together, we achieve so much more and are able to truly sustain this beautiful environment. I also invite to read "Your County at Work – Highlights of Programs and People Serving Marin County" <http://marin-yourcountyatwork.org/>

As 2013 comes to a close, we mark the passing of Nelson Mandela who, through his dignity and grace, the quality of his forgiveness, his commitment to justice and human rights, the scope of his vision and the strength of his hope, symbolized the best of our values. Let's honor his memory by working together to manifest those values as we meet the challenges of 2014.