



Happy New Year!

Happy New Year! 2015 was a busy year and it is hard to believe we have launched into a new year already. I am thankful to live in a community with such an engaged and active constituency. Looking back, I am proud of what we accomplished together this past year.

To highlight just a few of our accomplishments:

- Efforts to reopen the downtown Novato Theater are moving along. The Theater applied for a building permit with the city; the project went out to bid and a construction budget is in the works; the Mill Valley Film Festival plans to partner with the Novato Theater; theater seat sales and naming rights contributed to fundraising efforts; and construction is scheduled to begin in late 2016.
- Led by a subcommittee of Supervisor Connolly and myself, the Board of Supervisors adopted its first local ordinance to allow limited licensing of medical cannabis dispensaries in the unincorporated areas of the county. The first licenses are expected to be issued by summer 2016.
- Marin County Free Library partnered with the Novato Unified School District to open a new South Novato Library Branch on school property—doubling the size, creating a collaborative learning environment, and expanding efforts to make the Library more accessible to all. We also instituted an amnesty program for children’s late fees and are rolling out a program to issue library cards to all students in the Novato Unified School District.

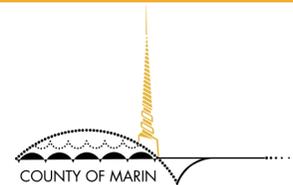
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Congratulations—2015 Novato Citizen of the Year!

Each year a Novato resident, who is deeply involved in civic activities and dedicated to the welfare of the community, is selected to receive the Novato Citizen of the Year Award at the annual Paint the Town Red Event. I want to extend my sincere congratulations to Alan Dunham for receiving this distinguished award for 2015.

Alan moved to Novato in 1943 and has been active in the community ever since. His contributions to the local community and the world are exemplified in the many projects he spearheaded through Rotary such as leading a group of Rotary volunteers to build a patio at the Hamilton Military Museum, initiating and co-chairing Rotary’s Books and Art Around Town, a monthly reading and art program for youth, and working on a world community service project to provide clean water to the Philippines. Alan has served on the Board of Directors of the Novato Youth Center and Novato Ecumenical Housing and co-chairs the Rotating Emergency Shelter Team (REST) of the Presbyterian Church where they provide meals and shelter for homeless men in the winter months.

Alan’s generosity knows no bounds. He volunteered his services as an architect to design many projects in the community such as the gardens and community rooms at Rotary’s three Nova-Ro housing projects for seniors, design of the Stafford Lake Gate House, a porch at the Gary Gates announcer’s booth, and a snack shack at San Marin High School. Thank you Alan Dunham for working selflessly to make the Novato community a better place!



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Happy New Year (continued from page 1)

- The Board of Supervisors adopted an updated Climate Action Plan to provide new and more aggressive goals on emission reductions in Marin County. Strategies include: encourage the use of energy from renewable sources; identify and act on power-saving efficiencies; support alternative transportation programs; promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling programs; and push for water conservation.
- Looking to increase voter participation in local elections, the Marin County Elections Department is going to cover the costs of vote-by-mail postage. The program will kick-off with the June 2016 Presidential Primary Election.
- SMART made great strides in 2015 including: completed track construction for Phase 1 (Downtown San Rafael to Airport Blvd North in Santa Rosa) and began testing trains in preparation for passenger rail service; received an \$11 million grant from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to purchase three additional rail cars, which will boost SMART's seating capacity by 35 percent; and looking towards the future expansion of passenger rail service to Larkspur, SMART received final environmental clearance from the Federal Government and was allocated \$20 million in the Federal Budget to complete the 2.2-mile link from downtown San Rafael to the Larkspur Ferry Terminal.
- Stafford Lake Bike Park in Novato celebrated its grand opening on August 22. It is the North Bay's first public bike park and is designed to provide opportunities for riders of all ages and skill levels in a safe, fun and exciting bike riding experience – all in a setting which is expected to reduce inappropriate use in sensitive natural areas.
- The Board of Supervisors held three successful and well attended public workshops to discuss strategies to address housing challenges in Marin and preserve existing low and moderate-income housing.
- The County approved a five year business plan to provide for better customer service as well as a better workplace for our employees. The plan focuses on four key subjects: diversity and inclusion; innovation and change; growth and development; and communication and engagement.

Moving ahead to 2016, I look forward to continuing to work with you and to address issues that are important to the community. A few of my priorities in the coming year include: the re-opening of the downtown Novato Theater which will not only be of great economic importance to our downtown but will also provide a community cultural center where live music, performing arts, film and simulcast showings will have a year-round venue in Novato; getting Phase 1 of SMART passenger rail service up and running as well as continuing efforts for Phase 2 service to Larkspur; and supporting Marin Strong Starts' effort to provide quality preschool, daycare, and healthcare for all children in Marin County.

Veterans Resource Center Opens at South Novato Library



Military veterans in Marin County have a new one-stop shop to help them find information about the services and resources available to them, courtesy of the Marin County Free Library and state funding. The recently renovated South Novato Library has opened a Veterans Resource Center (VRC) with books, DVDs and pamphlets on topics of specific interest to veterans and their families such as state and federal benefits for veterans, housing, health care, education and employment. The VRC will have a dedicated computer station, printer and phone available for free use by veterans. The center will be of particular aid to veterans who don't have access to computers or have challenges accessing technology. Increasingly information about veteran's services is becoming available online.

Through February, the VRC will have a volunteer to assist with drop-in appointments for veterans on Wednesdays from 2-5 PM. The Library hopes to increase the drop-in times and will announce future hours as soon as they are established. The branch is located at 931 C Street in Novato.

Sean Stephens serves as the Marin County Veterans Service Officer. He is another excellent source of information for local veterans and can be reached at (415) 473-6193.



2015 Look Who's Getting It Done Award Goes to... Tracy Rivkin



On July 20, 1968 Eunice Kennedy Shriver strode to the microphone at Soldier Field in Chicago and convened the first Special Olympic Games. She ended by reciting the Special Olympics oath: Let me win, But if I cannot win, Let me be brave in the attempt.

Since that day the Special Olympics has become a part of American culture and is also a part of Marin County.

A very special woman, Tracy Rivkin of Novato, has been instrumental in spearheading this cause in Marin and she is my recipient of the 2015 Look Who's Getting It Done Award.

Tracy and her family have lived in Novato for thirty years. Tracy became inspired to help people with developmental disabilities after watching a troubling television program about institutions for people with developmental disabilities. She began to volunteer with the Special Olympics.

To share a little about the Special Olympics – they are the world's largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, providing year-round training and competitions to more than 4.5 million athletes in 170 countries. The organization helps raise awareness and through sports, it showcases the skills and dignity of participating athletes. In addition, it brings people with and without intellectual disabilities together to see and take part in the transformative power of sports.

Since 2001, as Co-Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, Tracy has been a tremendous asset to the Special Olympics Marin Games. I have had the great pleasure of working with Tracy over the years as I've attended the Special Olympics Marin Games at Terra Linda High School. Last year 350 athletes from nine counties in Northern California participated. Tracy is clearly the behind the scenes guru bringing everything together from the bands playing (last year featured the Stanford University Band), to rest stops for the athletes, to

Michael Pritchard's inspiring speeches, to the coordination of over 300 volunteers that help make the event a success. In addition to all that, Tracy somehow finds the time to also be the Head Bowling Coach at the Marin Games.

With over 30 years of professional event and project management experience, Tracy has made an invaluable contribution to the organization and the success of the Special Olympics Marin Games.

Through her fundraising efforts in supporting the Special Olympics, Tracy realized that locally raised funds provided to the Special Olympics did not always stay in the Marin community. So in 2012, Tracy along with other concerned parents and volunteers from Marin launched "Marin's Best", a 501C3 that supports social, educational and athletic activities to enrich the lives of members of our local community who have developmental disabilities. One hundred percent of donations raised by Marin's Best stay in Marin. Their efforts include: providing in-kind services, raising funds for Marin-based organizations like the Special Olympics Marin Games, expanding existing programs in the community, and partnering with other non-profit organizations to enhance experiences for the developmentally disabled.

There are approximately 200 million people with intellectual disabilities around the world and the organizations that Tracy works with are making great strides to reach and inspire these individuals. To learn more about these organizations, to learn about volunteer opportunities or to make a donation, visit: marinsbest.org and/or specialolympics.org.

Thank you Tracy Rivkin for your inspiring, tireless work. You truly are "Getting it Done"!

LOOK WHO'S GETTING IT DONE AWARD

In 2007 I started the annual LOOK WHO'S GETTING IT DONE AWARD. I make this award every year in January.

The award recognizes someone in the 5th District who "got something done" for our community. The winner is featured in my County Connection article in the Novato Advance, in my newsletter, and on my County webpage.

Past awardees include: June Haugen, Haley Pavone, Mary Jane Burke, Kenneth Harth, Elizabeth DeRuvo, Patty Bennett, Ken & Charlene Casey, and Rob Hart.

If you would like to nominate someone for the 2016 Look Who's Getting it Done award, please contact my aide Tanya Albert at: TAAlbert@marincounty.org.

South Novato Library Grand Opening

In partnership with the Novato Unified School District, the Marin County Free Library has a new South Novato location. It is approximately 6,000 square feet - double the size of the former branch in the hangars. The new location is conveniently located near the Hamilton K-8 public school, the North Bay Children's Center, the Novato Charter School and the future commuter rail station for the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit line.



South Novato Library Grand Opening

Sponsored by The Friends of the Novato Libraries



Please join us in celebrating the Grand Opening of the South Novato Library, located at the Community Education Center.

Visit the new library space, Maker Space and join us for story times, and other hands on activities.

Saturday, January 30, 10-2

South Novato Library

931 C Street

All Library events are free. Call 415.5063165 or visit www.marinlibrary.org



Requests for accommodations may be made by calling (415) 473-3220 (voice/TTY) or 711 for the California Relay Service or Emailing library@marincounty.org at least **four work days** in advance of the event. Copies of documents are available in alternative formats, upon request.

Novato's 2015 Large and Small Businesses of the Year

The Novato Chamber of Commerce announced the Large and Small Businesses of the year for 2015 at their annual installation dinner on January 14th.

Kiosk, a full-service marketing agency that delivers strategic data analysis, top-flight creative technology and excellent client services was named the Large Business of the Year. Kiosk was founded in 2004 in Liverpool and opened their downtown Novato office seven years later in 2011 and has grown to employ nearly 40 full-time staff.

Kiosk has quickly become an enormous asset to the Novato Community. Not only do they hire local staff, they have overseen several marketing and rebranding efforts such as Visit Novato, Shop Local and North Bay Life Sciences campaigns which have greatly impacted the local business economy.

Kiosk is an exemplary employer offering benefits to their staff ranging from office-space upgrades, ergonomic accommodations and wonderful benefits programs including medical insurance, 401k plans and generous vacation and PTO (paid time off) allowances along with ongoing education and job-related certification training. Kiosk has donated countless hours of pro-bono work to many charitable organizations and in 2015 they supported Homeward Bound of Marin, Doctors without Borders and the Novato Theater.

Kiosk's generosity towards employees and the community, along with their innovative and creative marketing strategies, make Kiosk one of Novato's most valuable businesses. Congratulations to Kiosk on this well-deserved award!



Cameron Coffey & Kaye Professional Corporation (CCK), a tax and accounting firm located since 2004 in downtown Novato was named the Small Business of the Year. CCK has grown in size over the years employing a staff of 10 and continues to provide personalized service to approximately 1,500 businesses and individuals.

CCK is committed to the community which is illustrated by its involvement with the Novato Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club. CCK is also involved with many non-profit organizations in Novato serving youth, elderly and at-risk families such as the Novato Youth Center, the Novato Human Needs Center, LITA and the Novato Fire Foundation.

CCK is an engaged and professional small business and its contributions to the community of Novato are substantial. Congratulations CCK for receiving this distinguished honor!



Fun with Photos—Newsletter Photo Gallery

I had the privilege of participating in several great events since our last County Connection Newsletter published. I thought I would share a few photo highlights with you here...



Above: Enjoying the wonderful company of Sam Dolcini at the Marin County Farm Bureau lunch



Above: Hanging with local drama students who helped me showcase the Novato Theater in the 4th of July Parade



Above: A fun-filled day at the grand opening of Stafford Lake Bike Park in Novato



Above: With my Aides at Former Novato City Manager Michael Frank's Retirement Celebration



Above: With Congressman Huffman checking out the inside of the SMART train at the unveiling event in Cotati



Above: Talking with first responders at a SMART emergency response training—which was a great success

Marin County Parks News & Events



Check out the **Marin County Parks quarterly newsletter** — it is chock full of FREE activities to take full advantage of Marin’s natural wonders during the season. Learn about the projects we’re working on as well as the free programs we offer including Community Volunteer Days, Naturalist Programs, and Ranger Activities. You’re sure to discover something for you and your family to enjoy. Visit: <http://www.marincountyparks.org/depts/pk/main/newsletter>

- News
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Naturalist-led Walks
- Naturalist-led Family Walks
- Ranger Events
- Dog-friendly Hikes

Meet Our New County Department Heads!

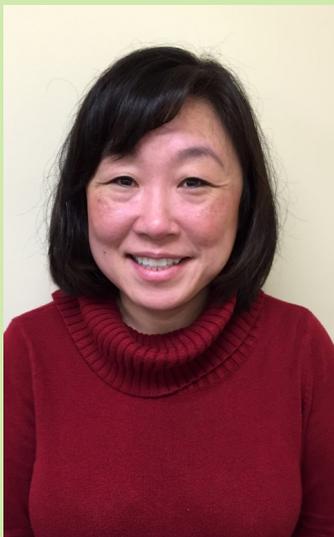


Pat O'Brien—Interim Director of Parks

Pat O'Brien, who led the East Bay Regional Park District for 22 years before retiring in 2010, has agreed to lead the Marin County Parks department for an interim period while we search for a permanent replacement for the retired Linda Dahl.

O'Brien was General Manager for East Bay Parks and received national recognition for his leadership. He was named “Legend in the Field” by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration in 2009. O'Brien has served as Chair of the Political Action Committee for the California Parks and Recreation Society and Executive Director of the California Outdoors Recreation Partnership. Locally, O'Brien has served on the Marin County Parks Community Open Space Tax Oversight Committee and joined the Marin County Parks and Open Space Commission in August 2015 (of which he is currently taking a leave of absence).

O'Brien has lived in Marin County for 24 years and has served as a governmental affairs consultant since his retirement from East Bay Parks. He has a master’s degree in philosophy from San Francisco State University. He is already proving to be a huge asset to our County Team!



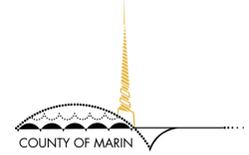
Mary Hao—Director of Human Resources

Hao has served as Human Resources Director for San Francisco’s Juvenile Probation Department since September 2013, working closely with the City and County’s Human Resources Department. Previously she held titles of Employee Relations Manager, Grievance/Discipline Manager, and Managing Employee Relations Representative - all within San Francisco’s Human Resources Department.

Hao said she was attracted to the Marin position after hearing about the 5-Year Business Plan adopted in 2015. “That excited me because I want to think strategically about the organization and how it ultimately serves the residents,” she said. “The plan asked and addressed big questions about service delivery. I could tell that much thought and discussion went into it. I have worked a long time in public service now and I believe the success we have in local government depends on how well services are delivered. It has to be a team effort.”

Hao grew up in San Francisco. She has a bachelor’s degree in history with specialization in Asian American studies from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Hao’s first day on the job will be February 16. We look forward to having her on-board!



Judy Arnold, Marin County Supervisor

DISTRICT 5 COUNTY CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

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February 2016

Calendar grid for February 2016 with days of the week (SU to SA) and dates 1-29. Some dates are highlighted in green, yellow, blue, or pink.

March 2016

Calendar grid for March 2016 with days of the week (SU to SA) and dates 1-31. Some dates are highlighted in green, yellow, blue, or pink.

April 2016

Calendar grid for April 2016 with days of the week (SU to SA) and dates 1-30. Some dates are highlighted in green, yellow, blue, or pink.

Upcoming Meetings

- Feb 2—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Feb 3 —1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
• Feb 9—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Feb 15—County Holiday (offices closed)
• Feb 17—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
• Feb 22—10am, Transit District Meeting
• Feb 25—7pm, TAM Meeting
• Mar 1—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Mar 2—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
• Mar 8—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Mar 15—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Mar 16—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
• Mar 22—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Mar 24—7pm, TAM Meeting
• Mar 28—10am, Transit District Meeting
• Apr 5—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Apr 6—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
• Apr 12—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Apr 18—10am, Transit District Meeting
• Apr 19—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• Apr 20—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
• Apr 28—7pm, TAM Meeting

Board of Supervisors, Transit District, and TAM Meetings are held in the BOS Chambers in the Marin Civic Center: 3501 Civic Center Dr., Suite 329.

SMART Board meetings are held on the First Floor at the SMART office in Petaluma: 5401 Old Redwood Highway, Petaluma.

Start times for BOS meetings can vary. For start times and agenda packet materials for upcoming as well as minutes of prior meetings:

=> Go to the County of Marin website at www.marincounty.org. In the "Board of Supervisors" section, click "Minutes/Agendas/Webcasts"

BOS meetings are also webcast live. To watch a meeting live or to replay at a later date:

=> Go to the County of Marin website at www.marincounty.org. In the "Board of Supervisors" section, click "Minutes/Agendas/Webcasts"

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