Summer Fun!

Congratulations to the Marin County Fair on the most successful fair held to date! The 75th fair drew more than 84,000 paid admissions, up more than 6,000 last year. The fair staff is always looking for ways to improve the overall experience for fairgoers and a few highlights this year included the new shuttle service helping attendees avoid traffic and parking challenges, water refill stations for easy access to water, and a large video screen that displayed concerts live so not all had to be on the island to enjoy the show. Kudos to the amazing music line-up, spectacular fireworks show and impressive exhibitions including art, photography agriculture, poetry and more - Marin is home to many talented community members and it was truly celebrated this year at the fair.

The fair was the perfect way to kick off summer, but there is still a lot of summertime left to enjoy and much more available to do right here in Marin!

The Marin County Free Library (MCFL) always has amazing summer programs for children, teens and adults. Our Board of Supervisors supports Education as one of its ongoing missions, and we support MCFL’s efforts to become not just a place that supports reading but rather learning in general. In addition to the regular summer reading program offered to kids and teens where participants keep track of the minutes they have read and earn points for doing so, the library has an array of educational and fun opportunities for everyone. Here are a few of the many options available: children can participate in craft time, makers mornings and literacy opportunities; teens can choose from movie nights, dance parties and even fun-filled sleepovers; and for adults, there are book clubs, coloring clubs and interesting lectures on a variety of topics.

Continued on Page 2

One Step Closer—Marin Sonoma Narrows Update

Earlier this month construction kicked off for an additional 3.2 miles of carpool lanes through the Marin-Sonoma Narrows. This project is part of the overall Narrows project and gets us another step closer to completing the 17 miles of continuous carpool lanes through Marin and Sonoma Counties. While this progress is exciting, we still need an additional $276 million to finish the carpool lane in Marin County, complete a second phase at the new Petaluma Boulevard South Interchange and construct new HOV lanes between State Route 116 and Old Redwood Highway in Petaluma. Completing this project is a priority of mine and I will continue to work with our State and Federal partners to identify the remaining funds needed.
Summer Fun (continued from page 1)

The library also offers a “Discover & Go” program. With a Marin County Free Library Card anyone 16 and older is able to make reservations on-line at many local museums and cultural institutions receiving free and reduced rate tickets. Museums such as the Bay Model Visitor Center, the Lawrence Hall of Science and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts make the list. In addition, the library has free passes available to the Bay Area Discovery Museum in Sausalito available to check out for up to one week. I encourage you to check out the newly revamped library website to learn more about these programs and see what the library has to offer you: www.marinlibrary.org

With a total of 83 parks, open space preserves and pathways, Marin County Parks provides many opportunities to fill your summer days! In Novato we are particularly lucky to have one of my favorite County parks, Stafford Lake, right in our backyard. This 139-acre regional park offers users a variety of activities including: shore fishing (catfish, bluegill, and bass), nature trails, picnic areas with barbecue facilities, volleyball, a disc golf course, horseshoe courts, and last but not least our newest feature - Stafford Lake Bike Park. During summer, the park is open 7:00am to 8:00pm. There is a $5 parking fee on weekdays and a $10 parking fee on weekends. There is no entrance fee if you walk or bike into the park.

In addition to great places to visit, Marin County Parks offers a myriad of free activities for both adults and children including volunteer days, naturalist and family walks, and ranger activities. Volunteer days offer participants hands-on stewardship experience by helping care for our public parks and preserves through habitat restoration, trail improvement, litter pick up, and landscape maintenance. Naturalist and family walks provide the opportunity to connect with nature, learn about Marin’s diverse flora and fauna, and see and learn about animals in their own habitat. And finally, be sure to check out the calendar of family-friendly ranger activities, including: BBGs, bike rides, fishing, hiking, outdoor skill seminars, skateboard contests, star gazing and much more!

There are several great Parks events still to come this summer in Novato including: a Naturalist Hike through the Indian Valley Preserve on July 31, Perseids Meteor Shower Astronomy Viewing on August 13 on Mount Burdell; and Lake Fishing for Kids on August 28 at Stafford Lake Park – just to name a few! For a complete Marin County Parks calendar of events and more details about our parks and preserves, visit: www.marincountyparks.org/Depts/PK/.

FY 2016-18 County Budget

On June 22, the Board of Supervisors approved a two-year fiscal budget. This means we approved the FY 2016-17 County Budget and approved FY 2017-18 Plan. After the success of the County’s first ever two-year budget passed in 2014, we are continuing this effort of longer-term planning and a more streamlined process.

Marin County’s new $540.7 million budget reflects 4 percent growth on expenditures, maintains current services, builds up reserves, pays down liabilities and reflects the County’s highest priorities. Budget highlights include:

- **Investing in Road Maintenance** – including $19 million for road improvement projects, of which $7 million is supported by the General Fund

- **Reducing Unfunded Retiree Liabilities** - including a $1 million contribution to the pension rate stabilization reserve (bringing the total to $7 million) and a $10 million contribution to the retiree health trust fund (bringing the total balance to over $70 million)

- **Preserving Affordable Housing** - including a $1 million contribution to the housing trust for the furthering of fair housing and the preservation of affordable housing for families, plus $450,000 for a new landlord incentive program

- **Enhancing Mental Health Services and Homeless programs** – including increasing ongoing mental health programs by over $2 million, $400,000 to implement the Homeless Outreach Team, and a one-time allocation of $525,000 to acquire mental health transitional housing

- **Reducing Traffic Congestion/ Addressing Climate Change** - $1 million to implement our Climate Action Plan, including $500,000 for new public transportation incentives for County employees and $500,000 for building investments to reduce our carbon footprint

- **Implementing the 5 Year Business Plan** – including $500,000 in ongoing technology investments to provide improved e-government options, and $1 million in one-time investments to implement e-government and mobile apps

To learn more about the County Budget or to view the budget in its entirety, visit the County’s Open Budget Portal.
Join us for another great Novato Theater fundraising event—featuring Novato Theater Board Member Steve Rempe!

“Pure in the Sunlight”
An Evening of Poetry
with Steve Rempe and other local poets

Saturday, October 29th 7:00pm
The Buck Institute for Research on Aging
8001 Redwood Blvd, Novato

TICKETS: $25
for tickets and info: www.novatotheater.net
(415) 539-7155
Medical Cannabis Dispensary Application Period Opens—July 20

Last year, I, along with Supervisor Damon Connolly, was appointed to the Board of Supervisors sub-committee on Medical Cannabis. Following numerous public meetings, our Board, in December 2015, adopted an ordinance allowing the issuance of business licenses to up to four medical cannabis dispensaries in unincorporated areas of Marin (two along the 101 corridor and two in Central/West Marin).

The ordinance is intended to provide patients with safe access to medical cannabis, consistent with the voter-approved Compassionate Use Act of 1996 (which passed in Marin with 73% of the vote) and the state’s Medical Cannabis Program which was signed into law by the Governor last fall. The ordinance provides the regulations and structure that have been lacking to allow medical cannabis dispensaries to operate and provide care in a safe manner.

We are concerned about operators who might currently be operating rogue “businesses”. Our ordinance provides protections and safeguards so that cannabis does not end up in the hands of youth or those not holding a physician’s recommendation.

By licensing potential operators through a competitive and thorough application process, we are seeking someone who uses best practices and brings community benefits to the table. The selection criteria, which we adopted at our May 3 Board of Supervisors meeting, is designed to minimize any potential negative impacts on the surrounding community while providing safe access to qualified patients seeking care.

Location will be an extremely important issue, and we have developed the criteria in such a way as to address community concerns. Although up to four dispensaries can be licensed under the program, there is certainly no requirement that we license four – and we anticipate that selection will ultimately come down to the combination of the right operator and the right location.

The application period for prospective dispensary license applicants opened at 8:00am on July 20, 2016 and closes at 4:00pm on August 31, 2016. Application details can be found on the County’s Medical Cannabis Dispensary webpage.

The application process is estimated to take four to eight months. Once an application is deemed complete, an internal staff review and an advisory committee, appointed by the County Administrator, will review the applications. The final decision will be made by the County Administrator. Should an applicant wish to appeal he/she may do so to our Board of Supervisors.

Applicants must submit a business plan, security plan, financial documentation and a site plan. Applicants will earn “bonus points” for a community benefits plan that addresses a variety of factors such as local Marin ownership, living wage compensation policies, a community relations program, implementation of an educational awareness program that explains the benefits and potential abuses of cannabis, reduced pricing for low income patients and veterans, and labelling and warning requirements.

Newly enacted comprehensive state legislation, the Medical Marijuana Safety and Regulation Act of 2016, protects local control by requiring all cannabis-related businesses to have a local permit, license or authorization as a precondition to obtaining a state license. The timing of our ordinance works extremely well with the passage of this law. Many ask what happens if voters approve recreational use of marijuana? Our licensed medical cannabis dispensaries will continue as separate licenses in order to address the needs of medically fragile patients, and we anticipate that there will continue to be a dual regulatory system even if cannabis is legalized recreationally in California.

I appreciate the tremendous amount of community input and interest in this process to date. This is likely a process that will change over time as the program is implemented, but we are confident that we have an effective starting point that will achieve the goals around safe access to medical cannabis that were envisioned by the voters twenty years ago.

Quick Facts: Marin County Medical Cannabis Dispensary Ordinance

- To receive email updates on the process, visit the County’s Medical Cannabis Dispensary webpage and subscribe: [www.marincounty.org/main/medical-cannabis-dispensary-ordinance](http://www.marincounty.org/main/medical-cannabis-dispensary-ordinance)
- Marin County’s ordinance allows for a maximum of four dispensaries in unincorporated Marin: two along the 101 corridor and two in Central/West Marin.
- A dispensary must be at least 800 feet from schools, public parks, smoke shops, and other cannabis dispensaries to qualify for a license.
- A dispensary can only dispense to qualified patients or caregivers with current physician’s approval, and the dispensary must obtain and maintain verification from the recommended physician.
District 5 County Connection Newsletter

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: Fantastic Town Hall Meeting in Novato with Senator Mike McGuire

Above: Reading to the Head Start pre-school class at Lynwood Elementary School

Above: Ribbon cutting for Copperfield's Books grand opening in Downtown Novato

Above: I was honored to recognize those that served our country at the County Memorial Day event

Above: There's a train coming to town! The unveiling of the SMART ticket machine.

Above: Celebrating Novato Youth Center's 40 years of community service
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

Participate on a County Board or Commission

If you are a resident of Marin County and would like to participate in local government, consider applying for a seat on a Marin County Board or Commission. The Board of Supervisors is always searching for innovative, creative thinkers who are enthusiastic about our community and able to give their time and volunteer.

Board and Commission members serve in an advisory role to help direct policy by making suggestions and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Appointed commissions exist within the County as a whole, as well as the cities and towns, special districts and joint exercise of power authorities. Some positions are created by local elected officials and others are mandated by state statute.

A list of current vacancies, additional details about a particular Board or Commission, and details about how to apply can all be found on the County website: http://www.marincounty.org/depts/bs/boards-and-commissions/about-boards-and-commissions

South Novato Library Veterans Resource Center

Did you know… Military veterans in Marin County have a 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 South Novato Library has 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 has a dedicated computer station, printer and phone available at no cost to veterans. The center is 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.

Trained volunteer coaches are available to assist veterans on a drop-in basis on Wednesdays from 2pm-5pm and by appointment only Tuesdays through Saturdays from noon-5pm. For an appointment call, 865-201-4047. The branch is located at 931 C Street in Novato.
Upcoming Meetings

- July 26—Board of Supervisors Meeting
- July 28—7pm, TAM Meeting
- Aug 2—Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Aug 3—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
- Aug 9—Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Aug 15—10am, Transit District Meeting
- Aug 16—Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Aug 17—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
- Aug 23—Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Aug 25—7pm, TAM Meeting
- Sept 5—County Holiday (offices closed)
- Sept 7—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
- Sept 13—Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Sept 19—10am, Transit District Meeting
- Sept 20—Board of Supervisors Meeting
- Sept 21—1:30pm, SMART Board Meeting
- Sept 22—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”