



**JUDY  
ARNOLD  
SUPERVISOR**



**DISTRICT 5 COUNTY CONNECTION NEWSLETTER** July 2009

**County Budget Update**

Despite some signs of possible recovery, the economic downturn continues to take its toll. The County budget is impacted in many ways, including slowdown in property and sales tax growth, State revenue deferrals/reductions to County programs, market losses in pension holdings, leading to pension contribution increases beginning FY 2010-11, and greater demand for County “safety net” services, such as employment training, healthcare and other social services.

The Board of Supervisors passed a \$434.6 million budget for FY2009-10 on July 22, which includes \$8.5 million in budget reductions, and eliminating 44 vacant positions on top of the hiring freeze already in place. The budget also includes over \$1 million in anticipated savings from the Board of Supervisors, department management, and various labor groups volunteering to forego or defer cost of living adjustments in previously negotiated contracts. At the same time, we have increased the size of the County’s uncertainty reserves.

Over the past two years, Marin has reduced its budget by over \$15 million and eliminated over 70 positions. The County has consistently developed strong reserves, minimized debt service costs, and limited one-time revenues to one-time expenses. We have the highest bond rating among counties in the state, and one of the lowest rates of spending per capita relative to comparable counties.

Despite the County’s actions to close its own budget shortfall, the budget recently passed by State legislators and signed by the Governor imposes additional impacts, likely amounting to \$16-18 million in reductions to the County General Fund.

This includes approximately \$9.5 million in one-time borrowing of local property tax dollars, and \$7-8 million from already-reduced safety net services. Given the scope of projected shortfall in FY 2010-11, this will mean difficult choices ahead – including mid-year budget reductions in FY 2009-10.

*(continued on page 2)*



Visit the **County Budget Information** web page for regular updates on the budget process

Go to [www.co.marin.ca.us](http://www.co.marin.ca.us) Then click “County Budget Information”

**New Novato Community Clinic Opens**

One bright spot in these otherwise trying times is the recent opening of the Marin Community Clinics’ new Novato facility, which moved into new and larger quarters at 1600 Novato Boulevard. This move not only accommodates more patients and services at a time where demand is



Ribbon cutting for the new Novato Community Clinic at 1600 Novato Boulevard

rising, but it provides much easier access for patients. The old site on Professional Center Drive was on a hill, equally difficult to access from public transit and for those on foot who may have been injured or disabled.

The new three-campus layout of the Marin Community Clinics is the result of a capital fundraising campaign that raised \$9.4 million as of October 2008. Fundraising continues to reach the original goal of \$10.8 million for these facilities. Our community clinics are key to driving down emergency room visits, the costs of which affect all of us.

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## County Budget Update (continued from page 1)

The budget negotiated by the Governor and legislative leaders and passed by the Senate also stripped the County of over \$4 million in road maintenance funding from gasoline taxes (also known as HUTA). Elimination of this funding would have decimated Marin's ability to maintain our roads. Assembly member Jared Huffman worked very hard to restore local HUTA funding, and as a result, the version passed by the Assembly removed this provision from the budget. We owe Assemblyman Huffman a huge thank you for getting this takeaway out of the State budget. If you would like to thank him personally, send him an email at: [jared.huffman@asm.ca.gov](mailto:jared.huffman@asm.ca.gov).

However, the Governor issued approximately \$500 million in line-item vetoes, disproportionately impacting HHS programs. Perhaps the most chilling is more than \$80 million cut from child welfare programs to investigate and remediate child abuse. With this cut, the State also lost \$44 million in Federal funds for this program, and as a result of this and cuts to other services (where demand is soaring due to the economy), lost more than \$100 million in Federal funds overall. Although the State allocates funds for such programs, it is the counties who are responsible for providing the services, and these deep cuts to the most vulnerable simply push the State budget problem to county government.

County staff is currently assessing these impacts. We will be working to address these, along with the already-planned process to restructure the County budget for the long term. I encourage you to access the County budget online, as well as keep up to date on this ongoing process, at [www.co.marin.ca.us/budgetinfo](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/budgetinfo). This site also includes a brief video on the County's budget, documents, and resources, and a link for the public to submit budget suggestions you would like to be considered.

For more information on the Governor's signing cuts and their impact on county programs, visit the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) website at [www.csac.counties.org](http://www.csac.counties.org)

## Coming this Fall—County Budget Community Forum

I HAVE REQUESTED THAT THE COUNTY CONDUCT A COMMUNITY FORUM IN NOVATO ON THE LONG-TERM BUDGET PROCESS

This fall, the County is planning a series of community forums related to the long-term restructuring of the County budget. These forums will be held in various locations, and I have requested that one be held in Novato

The purpose of the forums is to provide an overview on County budget facts and challenges, and to invite the public to voice thoughts on potential solutions and priorities, as well as the role of County government in the context of current economic realities.

Stay tuned for details on date, time, and location.

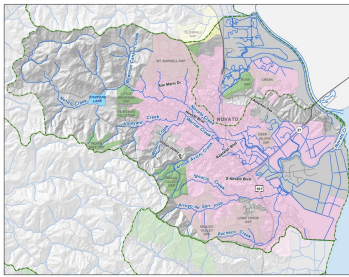
Prior to these forums, the Board of Supervisors will hold a workshop on September 29 to discuss potential policy options related to the budget as well as review budget suggestions submitted by the public and County employees. This workshop is open to the public, and will be held from 1:30-4:30 in the Friends of Marin Center room at the Marin Center. More information will be posted on the County's website in September.

## Draft Housing Element Now Available

The July 2009 Draft Housing Element is now available at [www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/main/housing/2009\\_update.cfm](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/CD/main/housing/2009_update.cfm). The Goals, Policies and Programs section of the draft will be the subject of the upcoming August 10, 2009 Planning Commission Workshop. Please follow the links on the Housing Element webpage for the staff report.

The Site Inventory Analysis section of the 2009 Draft Housing Element is currently under staff review. It will be the subject of the October 12, 2009 Planning Commission Workshop, and available for public review in September.

Public input is critical to the Housing Element update process. The County looks forward to continued input from all segments of the Marin community and appreciates your participation.



Novato Creek Watershed is the largest watershed in eastern Marin County. Novato Creek is joined by six major tributaries along its seventeen mile length

## Novato Creek Watershed Program

I am excited to announce that as the culmination of many months of discussions and effort, the County of Marin, City of Novato, North Marin Water District, and Novato Sanitary District are partnering to develop a Novato Watershed Program. Bringing this project to fruition has been a goal of mine for the past year, and I am very pleased to share this news.

This program will address flooding, water quality, water conservation and habitat restoration throughout the 44 square mile Novato watershed. The program is significant because it merges flood protection, pollution prevention and water conservation needs with creek enhancement objectives such as habitat restoration, erosion control and fish passage along Novato Creek and its tributaries.

In moving forward, the program will include extensive public outreach and provide several opportunities for feedback from the community. A technical working group will be convened in the fall which will include environmental scientists, community members, watershed groups, biologists, engineers and planners from the community and local agencies. Their responsibility will be to review work products, develop project scope and review relevant studies produced by staff and consultants.

The collaborative effort will put the partnering agencies in a strong position to garner state and federal grants. The funding will be used to identify and prioritize projects to benefit Novato Creek and its tributaries and to guide county and city project implementations.

Check for updates at the project website: [www.marinwatersheds.org](http://www.marinwatersheds.org).

## Marin Economic Forum Steering Committee Begins Work

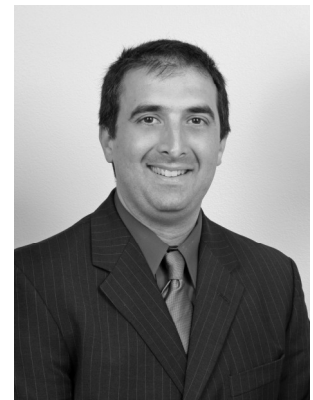
At the end of May, the Marin Economic Commission (MEC) selected Dr. Robert Eyler as the Economic Sustainability Coordinator who will drive the effort to launch the Marin Economic Forum (MEF). As one of the Board representatives to the MEC, I am pleased that we are moving beyond the years of study into action on the third of the County's "Three E's" (Environment, Social Equity, and Economy).

Businesses are the forefront of any economic development effort. However, social equity and environmental balance must follow as business and economic health improve. MEF aims to provide public education and outreach about the Marin economy, but also to connect small businesses, nonprofits, and local governments to each other and to sources of information and business that encourage growth of desired target industries within Marin's economy.

The goals of the MEF were recommended in the "Marin County Economic Sustainability Report" delivered to the Marin Economic Commission by the ECG Group in 2008:

1. Strengthen Marin's targeted industries and businesses through business attraction, retention, and cluster development activities
2. Create a forum for ongoing communication between the region's public sector entities and Marin's business community
3. Collect, analyze, and disseminate economic data and trends
4. Provide public education and outreach to relevant Marin constituencies
5. Coordinate across the many organizations, cities, and efforts with programs or resources to support a local sustainable economy

A steering committee has been formed to guide MEF's startup, including creation of the organization's structure and by-laws, identification of the work plan and funding model for the initial phase, and criteria and hiring process for an executive director for the MEF. The steering committee includes participants from southern, central, and northern Marin in a wide variety of business, non-profit, education, and local government roles. Find out more about the Marin Economic Forum at [www.marineconomicforum.org](http://www.marineconomicforum.org).



Dr. Robert Eyler, Economic Sustainability Coordinator for the newly-launched Marin Economic Forum

Dr. Eyler, who has roots in West Marin, is Chair of the Economics Department at Sonoma State University, as well as Director of the Center for Regional Economic Analysis



## My Vote on SMART Railcars

On July 15, the SMART Board voted on the type of vehicles it will specify for proposal. In discussion of the two types of railcars, one is technically referred to as FRA Compliant, meaning heavy DMUs. The lighter DMUs are referred to as Alternate Compliant, meaning they need an FRA waiver to operate with freight. I will use 'heavy' and 'light' for simplicity.

I voted, with the minority, in favor of the light DMUs. A recent *Marin I.J.* article summarized my vote as based on design. However, as this does not capture the primary concerns I stated before the vote, I'd like to offer a recap here.

First, I'd like to note how valuable the process was over the last few months. I'm struck by how much more information the board had by the time of the July meeting than it had in May—when I asked, and the board unanimously agreed, to get more information on several evaluation criteria (including hearing again directly from the manufacturers). That is better for the public and better for the decision that the board came to.

Next, I'd like to emphasize that each board member voted what they truly believe will make SMART most successful. All of the board members take their responsibilities to the voters very seriously, and that was evidenced throughout the evaluation process. As to the reasons for my vote, here's what it came down to for me:

As stated in the staff report to the Board, the heavy DMUs emit 5 tons of additional GHGs per day per vehicle. The consultant report equated the two car types because the heavier DMUs have higher passenger capacity. The calculation was changed to reflect GHGs on a per seat basis. My concern is that this assumed all seats are always full on the larger car – and although no analysis was performed on this specific assumption, all agreed that is unlikely. If you remove this assumption, I found the difference in GHGs emitted each day, over a 15-20 year assumed life for the cars, to be compelling.

Staff recommended the heavy DMUs because they require no waivers from the FRA; freight can run on the same track without temporal separation. I pointed out that there is now precedent for the FRA approving waivers for light DMUs in Riverline New Jersey, and Austin and Denton

Texas, all of which have freight mixed with passenger service. Project directors in Austin and Denton indicated that the waivers caused no project delay. They also stated that in reviewing the lighter DMU for safety, far from being considered less safe, the Crash Energy Management technology used for these cars was perceived by the FRA as “an enhancement” over current FRA standards.

Next, I was concerned about procurement risk. To date, no company in the US or world is building or has more than a conceptual design of a heavy DMU. SMART's staff report stated: “No FRA-compliant DMUs are currently in production...DMUs designed to FRA standards are not attractive transportation solutions in the world market.” Although manufacturers were quick to answer 'yes' to queries about possibilities of the heavy DMUs, the fact is these responses were unburdened by any actual experience building FRA-compliant cars.

SMART staff did a comparison on Regulatory Compliances, Mechanical, Operational, and Environmental Parameters, Procurement Factors, Diesel Fuel Consumption and Emissions. Where there is a SMART preference, the advantage is listed in favor of light DMUs. In particular, I am persuaded that the exterior moving noise, fuel consumption and emissions from the heavy DMUs made the light DMUs a superior choice.

And I do feel that the lighter DMUs are more compatible with Marin and Sonoma neighborhoods, schools, and downtowns that they will pass through. With required Positive Train Control and technology that will evolve as high speed rail is developed, the FRA has issued statements that its standards will also evolve.

My vote was based on believing that light DMUs are the future in the US. I believe that commuters, and the people and businesses who will be close to the tracks, deserve the least polluting, quietest, most human-scale train possible.

That said, the decision to issue an RFP for heavy DMUs has been made, and I will continue to work with the board and staff to ensure that the vehicle specified is the best it can be, and to close the gap in GHG emissions by focusing on ways to maximize ridership to make sure as many seats as possible are full on every trip.



SMART Board Agendas, Packets, Minutes — and now audio of Board meetings — can be found on the **SMART website** ([www.sonomatrain.org](http://www.sonomatrain.org), click 'Documents', then 'Board Archive')

TO FOLLOW MY TAKE AS A MEMBER OF THE SMART BOARD ON ONGOING SMART STARTUP ACTIVITIES, VISIT **MY WEBSITE** ([www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/bs/main](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/bs/main)) AND CLICK ON 'SMART' UNDER 'HOT TOPICS'.



## New Integrated Pest Management Ordinance

The Board of Supervisors adopted a revised Integrated Pest Management (IPM) ordinance on July 21, 2009. There are several improvements in the revised ordinance and policy, including:

- Creates accountability and infrastructure for IPM reporting and formalizes public access to information about pesticide use
- Requires development of a website that will allow greater access to information on pesticide usage as well as educational resources on IPM practices
- Spells out IPM reporting requirements, including the content, schedule, and format of the IPM Coordinator's reports to the IPM Commission and to the Board of Supervisors
- Details list of pesticides allowed for use and describes process for using Special Use Pesticides
- Requires that departments performing pest management designate an IPM Program Manager who is responsible for the management of the program within the department and reporting to the IPM Coordinator
- Defines "pesticide free zones" for turf grass areas, playgrounds and picnic areas



Supervisor Hal Brown and I were assigned to an IPM subcommittee that will look at additional items for possible inclusion to the ordinance. We will bring back any suggested revisions to the full Board of Supervisors for their consideration. Our goal is to complete this work within sixty days.

### GREEN HOUSE

**CALLS ARE ONLY AVAILABLE UNTIL AUGUST 6TH, SO CALL JOHANNA AT (415) 424-6594 TODAY TO RESERVE YOURS!**

### FREE—CYES "Green House Calls"

The California Youth Energy Services program offers free 'green house calls' to Marin County residents. Teams of professionally-trained Youth Energy Specialists will visit your home, install FREE energy saving equipment like CFL light bulbs and efficient showerheads. They will also provide you with a personalized energy-saving plan.

A CYES 'green house call' is a great way to help the environment, save money, and support young people all at the same time. Green house calls are only available until August 6th, so call today to reserve yours. Novato and San Rafael residents can call Johanna at (415) 424-6594.

## Resource for Marin's Current and Future Business Owners

Marin's business community is fortunate to have access to the Small Business Development Center at Santa Rosa JC. The mission of this publicly funded organization is to help North Bay residents who want to start a business or have a small business that they would like to grow. Business advisors are knowledgeable in a broad scope of industries and aspects of business management. Every meeting with advisors is free, confidential and designed for your specific needs.

SBDC satellite offices in Marin are at the Chambers of Commerce of Novato, San Rafael, San Anselmo and the Marin Employment Connec-

tion. The SBDC has helped thousands of business owners and also offers various low cost workshops. Have an idea for a new product? Their Sawyer Center can advise how to turn your idea into a marketable product. Need a guest speaker? Their advisors can talk on various business related topics.

The SBDC also offers free programs teaching youth, ages 14-27, valuable skills they will need as they enter the working world and the basics of starting a business. To learn more about how the SBDC can help you, or for details on upcoming events, visit their web site, [www.sbdcsantarosa.org](http://www.sbdcsantarosa.org) or call (707) 524-1770.

### Upcoming Workshops

#### Special Reduced Prices

Thanks to Marin WIB

COM Indian Valley Campus  
Building 12, Room 100

#### Using Social Networking to Market Your Business

Wed., August 19, 1-4pm  
\$25 for Marin Businesses

#### Market Your Business Where Your Customers Are

Series of 3 Workshops  
August 26, September 2,  
September 9, 1-4pm  
\$45 for Series



## DID YOU KNOW?

COUNTY PARKS & OPEN SPACE OFFERS FREE, FUN ACTIVITIES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

## Parks & Open Space August Events

### Saturday, August 1

10am to 2pm

#### Abbotts Lagoon

Visit this unique coastal habitat as waves of shorebirds and waterfowl arrive from their breeding grounds in Alaska and Canada. You'll also search the marshes and beach areas for interesting flowers and insects. Meet at the Abbotts Lagoon parking area on Pierce Point Rd.

### Thursday, August 6

9am to 3pm

#### Mount Tamalpais

Spend the day on the shady side of the mountain walking an 8 mile loop that takes us up the Cataract Trail, traverses the High Marsh and Willow trails, down the Kent Trail, and then back on the Helen Markt Trail. Meet at the lower Cataract Trailhead, just south of Alpine Dam on the Bolinas/Fairfax Rd.

### Sunday, August 9

9am to 2pm

#### Birds of Bolinas Lagoon

Every autumn, our shores are visited by millions of birds that arrive from the boreal forests and tundra of the far north. Some stop here for refueling before continuing south, others stay until spring. Witness the spectacle of migration as we discuss the importance of our coastal wetlands. Meet at the Bob Stewart Trailhead, just east of the Las Baulines Nursery on the Olema-Bolinas Rd.

### Wednesday, August 12

6pm to 9pm

#### Nature for Kids: Evening at Deer Island

Take a short walk to a quiet meadow where we can enjoy a picnic dinner while we look and listen as the creatures of the night begin to stir. We'll talk about owls, coyotes, insects and other animals that come out at night. From Atherton Ave, go south on Olive Ave and turn left at Deer Island Rd (Novato).

### Saturday, August 15

9am to 3pm

#### Five Brooks to Mud Lake

This walk takes us into the "back country" of the Point Reyes National Seashore, high upon the ridge that separates the Olema Valley from the ocean. By this date we should be able to check out this season's crop of red-legged frogs. This 6.5 mile hike includes a moderate 2.5 mile ascent, but the rewards are worth it. Meet at the Five Brooks parking area (5 miles south of Olema on Hwy 1).

### Saturday, August 15

9am to 11am

#### 1st Annual Stand-Up Paddle Board Race

Feel the Aloha Spirit amongst the palm trees of McNears Beach! We'll start with a short run along the beach and follow with 3.5 miles of paddling. Registration begins at 8am; the race begins at 9am (rain or shine). Meet at the park's Snack Bar (201 Cantera Way, San Rafael). Parking fee.

### Thursday, August 20

10am to 3pm

#### Tomales Bay State Park

Descend slowly through a beautiful forest of Bishop Pines and enjoy a leisurely lunch on one of the finest beaches in the county. Meet at the Jepson Trailhead (just south of the entrance to Tomales Bay State Park, on Pierce Point Rd).

### Saturday, August 22

10am to 2pm

#### Wildlife of Limantour Estero with David Lukas

This area has been through quite a transformation since last summer. The marshes have been altered to allow natural processes to reshape them, and the dam that once created a large pond in Muddy Hollow has been breached to allow easier access for migrating salmon. Come witness how migratory birds and other wildlife are responding to these changes. Meet at the Limantour parking area.

### Saturday, August 22

11am to 2pm

#### End of Summer Family Skate Day

Marin's largest skate park is turning 5! Bring the family and a picnic lunch to celebrate. Meet at McInnis Park Skate Park. Just after the rail road tracks, take the first left then take the first right and follow to the end (350 Smith Ranch Rd, San Rafael). Skateboarders must wear helmets and pads.

### Sunday, August 23

10am to 12 noon

#### There and Back Again Horseback Ride

Ranger Karen Killian will lead a fun 2-3 hour ride to explore open space, learn about the Bay Area Ridge Trail, and to meet new riding partners. Meet at Willow Tree Stables (3777 Vineyard Rd., Novato). Bring water and snacks and be in the saddle and ready to ride by 10am! If you need to rent a horse, call Willow Tree (415.897-8212). Reserve your horse before the ride.

### Tuesday, August 25

10am to 2pm

#### Nature for Kids: Baltimore Canyon

See how many different animals live in the many habitats above Larkspur Creek. Compare the life found in the cool redwood forest and the dry chaparral. Meet at the Crown Rd Trailhead (end of Crown Rd, Kentfield). From Sir Francis Drake Blvd, go south on College Ave, right on Woodland Rd, left on Evergreen Dr; continue uphill to the intersection with Ridgecrest; 50 feet uphill from this junction, go left on Crown Rd and follow to end.

### Sunday, August 30

10am to 2pm

#### Galls and Gallmakers at Mount Burdell

Many devious creatures have devised ways to trick plants into growing galls (structures that shelter and feed them.) Examine an array of bizarre and beautiful galls and learn about the life cycles of the gallmakers. Meet at the MCOSD gate (end of San Andreas Dr, Novato).

For more information on upcoming Parks & Open Space events, visit [www.marinparks.org](http://www.marinparks.org)



Judy Arnold, Marin County Supervisor

DISTRICT 5 COUNTY CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

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August 2009

Calendar grid for August 2009 with days of the week and dates.

September 2009

Calendar grid for September 2009 with days of the week and dates.

Schedule of Events

- August 4—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• August 10—Planning Commission Workshop on Draft Housing Element
• August 11—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• August 17, 10am—Transit District Meeting
• August 25—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• August 27, 7pm—Transportation Authority of Marin Meeting
• September 1—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• September 7—Labor Day Holiday, County Offices Closed
• September 21, 10am—Transit District Meeting
• September 22—Board of Supervisors Meeting
• September 24, 7pm—Transportation Authority of Marin Meeting
• September 29—Board of Supervisors Meeting Also: Budget Workshop, 1:30-4:30pm, Friends of Marin Center Room, Marin Center

All Board of Supervisors, Transit District, and TAM Meetings are open to the public and are held in the BOS Chambers in the Marin Civic Center at 3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 329.

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

Go to the County of Marin website at www.co.marin.ca.us
Click on "Board of Supervisors"
Click on "Meeting Archive" near the top of the page

BOS meetings are webcast live. To watch:

Go to the County of Marin website at www.co.marin.ca.us
Click on "Board of Supervisors"
Click on "Live Video Broadcast" near the top of the page

BOS meeting webcasts are also available online for replay by the next day. Click "Meeting Archive" from the Board of Supervisors page.

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