

FRANKLY SPEAKING

A NEWSLETTER FOR AND BY MARIN COUNTY EMPLOYEES



Natalie Russell

Janet Neal

John Rader

Mike Infante

Photos by Mike Kelleher

Changing...One Interaction at a Time

By Connie Siebler and Mike Kelleher—Assessor's Office

Outside firms often solicit fees for providing services that taxpayers can get for free by calling or visiting the Assessor-Recorder's office.

You've heard the Beatles sing about the Taxman: "There's one for you, nineteen for me...if you get too cold, I'll tax the heat...if you take a walk, I'll tax your feet..." ■ The staff of the Assessor-Recorder's office is changing the gloomy image of this government division, one interaction at a time. Do you want someone to explain how to find your property on a parcel map? View a record of survey? Find out

when your grandmother was born in Marin County? See the original deed for the property you want to buy? Just ask the Recorder's office. Do you want to get a list of names and mailing addresses of all property owners within a half mile of your house? Give the Assessor's office a call. The staff is cross-trained to minimize referring clients to other departments or other areas within the department. ■

Joan Thayer, Assessor-Recorder, is proud of her staff. "We have been told we have the best customer service our clients have ever seen. It has always been a focus." The offices experience steady contact with people who are confused about the process of assessment, and feel trapped under the weight of their tax obligation. These often tense moments are opportunities to extend care and kindness. Assessor-Recorder staff can provide clarity about intricate tax laws and empower

Continued on page 11

Have no fear. Just open up the packet and press the ON button...a voice will walk you through...

Photo by Rick Fraites



Supervisor Susan Adams displays the life-saving device.

A True Lifesaver

By Rick Fraites—BOS

About a month ago a 66-year-old prospective jury member suddenly collapsed in the jury orientation room from a suspected cardiac arrest. Through the use of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the application of an Automated External Defibrillator, the stricken individual survived. ■ Where would you find an Automated External Defibrillator in such an emergency? ■ County emergency officials have placed 26 units at prominent locations throughout the county's campuses. They are the small metal boxes with a glass window that are affixed to the walls of the hallways. Inside each metal box sits a life-saving apparatus. The box holds an

Automated External Defibrillator, better known as an AED. The AED contains a battery-powered device that is used to restore a person's heartbeat after a severe heart attack. ■ If an unfortunate event arises and you need to employ the AED, HAVE NO FEAR. Just open up the packet and press the ON button. The next thing you hear will be a voice that will walk you through the lifesaving exercise. Remain calm and follow the step-by-step spoken instructions. You may save a life. ■ The idea to make AEDs readily available on county property was promoted by county Supervisor Susan Adams, a former nurse. "It had to be the nurse in me, but after I had been in office for a few weeks I realized that there was a

Continued on page 11

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Editorial Board

- Joan Brown, Editor-in-Chief, Human Resources, Civic Center Volunteers, 499-7167
- Heather Burton, Aud—Cont. Office, 499-6169
- Jack Govi, County Counsel's Office, 499-6117
- Cio Hernandez, H&HS, 507-2848
- Larry Kay, Public Works, Nicasio Corp. Yard, 446-4421
- Kelley Litz, H&HS Admin., 20 N. San Pedro Road, San Rafael, 499-6924
- Megan Numair, Staff to Editorial Board, Human Resources, Civic Center Volunteers, 499-7407
- Joe Spaeth, Public Defender, 499-6321

- Design: Rob Roehrick, Roehrick Design
- Copy Editor: Bill Pryor, Civic Center Volunteers
- Photographer: Janice Hughes, D.A.'s Office
- Proofreaders: Leslie Miller and Christina Walcoff, Civic Center Volunteers
- Printing: Marin County Printing Services

Frankly Speaking is a quarterly publication for and by Marin County employees. It is accessible with paychecks, on the MINE homepage, and at www.co.marin.ca.us—enter *Frankly Speaking* in the search box. E-mail articles, cartoons, photos, poems, etc., to jbrown@co.marin.ca.us. For articles please identify subject, your name, and phone number. For photos, include all names and the photographer's name. Digital photos must be shot at the highest quality setting.

Reporter of the Quarter: Janice Hughes

Schedule

Articles Due	Publication Date
Friday, Feb. 28	Friday, May 9
Friday, May 30	Friday, Aug. 15
Friday, Sept. 5	Friday, Nov. 7
Friday, Nov. 29	Friday, Jan. 30, 2009



Photo by Robert E. David

Charles McGlashan

Dear Fellow County Workers,

Welcome to 2008!

This should be a challenging and exciting year for all of us. Major moves for departments within the Civic Center, construction of our new health campus, ongoing planning for our new safety center, state budget challenges, increasing focus on climate change and environmental management in our own operations, and numerous retirements within our workforce all will add challenge and intensity to our work lives.

We maintain our commitment to acknowledging and recognizing individual employees and teams of employees for their hard work and dedication. Your hard work in all regards has earned the county a reputation as a business that delivers outstanding customer service, the life-blood of good government. We've received excellent marks in our two first biennial community surveys as a government and business that cares well for our constituents.

With respect to external policy, we've made a good start in our work on traffic management and affordable housing. New shuttles and bus routes, and the "gap-closure" project for our freeway in San Rafael, will make a big difference for our employees who commute to work. The Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP, 2005) is already making a difference on this difficult problem with data that shows an up-tick in bicycle and pedestrian use.

New housing projects show us how to implement such developments in in-fill locations, and we are committed to doing more work of this nature. We are excited about the vision laid out in our new Countywide Plan passed in November 2007, and look forward to beginning our work on its implementation.

With our mutual dedication to this work, we are confident that 2008 will indeed be a good year. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,
Charles McGlashan
 President, Board of Supervisors

Oops! Regretfully, in the last issue, two of the photo contest winners were printed with mismatched credits and locations. Thanks again to Todd and Dave for their exceptional shots.



Village Street Parking by Todd Lando (Fire) Riomaggiore, Italy



Tranquil Waters by Dave Bernardi (DPW) Halls Harbor, Nova Scotia

In Memoriam

On November 5 Deputy Public Guardian **Edward (Ned) Kroeger** passed away after a lengthy illness. Before joining the Public Guardian's Office, Ned worked for more than 25 years as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker for Community Mental Health. Ned was known for his kindness, compassion, and a sense of humor that could boost the office even during the most difficult cases and hardest times. ■

Toby Olsen, Court Services Supervisor, passed away in November. For more than ten years Toby contributed her great ideas, energy, and dedication to Marin's justice system. ■ She will be missed by her many friends and colleagues in the Court. ■

In December, **Bill Cyders** passed away unexpectedly while visiting his family in Oregon. During his 20-year tenure with IST, he was a leader on many technology projects, including the county's first website and the development of the MINE. After retiring two years ago, he worked with the H&HS and the Registrar of Voters. According to IST Director **Dave Hill**, Bill was a smart problem solver, a compassionate provocateur, and an extremely hard worker. ■

Get Ready Marin!

By Kellie Moore—Fire

Have you seen the yellow signs sprinkled throughout the streets of Marin? Big yellow signs saying GET READY MARIN! What is it that we need to get ready for, you might ask. In a 1995 Grand Jury report about disaster preparedness in Marin, the single most important finding was "most residents in Marin County are not prepared to deal with a major disaster." The more training, skills, and supplies community members have, the more capable they will be of assisting themselves and others in the event of a disaster. ■ On September 29, 2007, the Marin County Fire Department, in conjunction with other fire agencies throughout Marin, and the County of Marin Board of Supervisors, supported the countywide launching of the "Get Ready!" program. ■ To help prepare our community members for self-reliance and helping family and neighbors during an emergency, the "Get Ready!" program is a two-hour course that can be taken either at a participating location or on-line. ■



"GET SMART!" disaster professionals say the most important thing we can do is be prepared to survive for 72 hours in our homes. This first line of defense, called "Shelter in Place," will save the most lives. To help you prepare, the Marin County Fire Department training teaches you what to do before, during, and after a regional disaster. ■ GET TRAINED! That's all it takes—two hours. You owe it to your family. You owe it to your neighbors. You owe it to your community. You owe it to yourself. ■ GET READY! Sign up now for the "GET READY!" Disaster Preparedness Program by visiting the website: www.GetReadyMarin.org, or calling the Marin County Fire Department at 499-6717. ■ Be Smart. Be Prepared. Get Ready! ■



L to R: Aaron Jarvis, Bill Roberts, Ben Ghisletta, Rick Racich, and Alisha Branning

Photo by Kellie Moore

This van wasn't painted, it was wrapped, in huge sheets of vinyl heat-treated to make the images permanent. It shows a striking illustration of a storm drain leading to a creek that contains fish and egrets

Photo by Eric Lueder



MCSTOPPP staff L to R: Howard Bunce, Gina Purin (sitting), Jennifer Lueder, and Terri Fashing

with a backdrop of Marin's mountains. Larry Laino at the county garage provided space for the project. MCSTOPPP staff will use the van for field work. Thanks to the support of DPW Director Farhad Mansourian, Marin County Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP) staff is now "driving home" their message on creek care throughout Marin with this latest acquisition.



PETTERLE'S PERSPECTIVE

By Steve Petterle—P&OS

Excuse me for interrupting, but it's not my fault. I've developed the habit from calling too many voice-activated telephone systems. For example, when I dial 5-1-1 to check on my morning commute, here's what I get: "Welcome to the Bay Area's 5-1-1. Main Menu. I can give you information on traffic, public transportation, TransLink or more choices. Say which you'd like or press 0 for touch tones. To hear a complete list of what's available, say 'what are my choices.' You can also interrupt me or say 'help' at any time. Now, what can I get you?" At first, I waded through the entire 24-second message because I didn't want to be rude—and I wanted to know my options. The next time I listened only until I received permission to interrupt. From that point, I quickly became out of control. Ultimately, I stopped waiting for permission entirely—I just interrupted whenever I wanted. ■ I can't say that I'm proud of my newfound practice, particularly when I call the county's automated general information line at 499-7000. The county greeting is far more friendly than 5-1-1 and other voice-activated telephone systems. It's shorter, too. As a result, I feel more uncomfortable interrupting. It often takes me two or maybe three attempts. Finally, when I do interrupt, I really don't feel good about it. ■ I suppose there's someone I could talk to about this matter—someone who would listen and then give advice. But evidently my attention span is now somewhere less than 24 seconds. I'm not sure that I could sit still without interrupting. ■

Illustration by Phoenixia Thomas

Fires!

By Kellie Moore—Fire

The more than 15 fires in Southern California last fall are still vivid in our memories, and most of all for the Marin County firefighters who were dispatched to battle them. ■ On October 21, 2007, the Marin County Fire Department sent a strike team of five engines with two leaders; the Tamalpais Fire Crew was led by Fire Captain Specialist **Tim Walsh** and Fire Apparatus Engineer **Graham Groneman**. Overhead positions (responsible for personnel, financial, or camp management) were held by Deputy Chief **Rich Lopez** as Operations Section Chief and Fire Apparatus Engineer **Breanna Buchanan** as Facilities Unit Leader. Fire Engineer Paramedic **Eric Scovel**, as Field Observer, was assigned initially to the Magic Fire, then was sent to the Poomacha Fire. Administrative Services Officer **Phoenicia Thomas** was assigned to the Harris Fire as Equipment Time Officer. Fire Marshal **Scott Alber** went to the State Office of Emergency Services as a Public Information Officer.

It was a long two weeks of battling fires, winds, and conditions that some may never experience again in their careers.



Members of the Marin County 'Tam Fire Crew' ready to take action on a spot fire at the Poomacha Fire in San Diego.

Photo by Pete Ryan



Photo by Battalion Chief Tim Thompson

This home was saved from the first flash of fire at the Harris Fire in San Diego. The firefighters had removed photographs, family memorabilia, etc., but unfortunately, several hours later another fire came through. The house was lost, but the possessions were saved.

■ About a week before the Southern California fires began, the fire department was gearing down and beginning to say good-bye to the over 60 seasonal firefighters who joined us this 2007 fire season. Instead, some of these individuals were sent south to help in the suppression efforts there. ■ Their first assignment was to save as many homes as possible in a designated area. For the next 48 hours the firefighters' adrenalin kept them going as they worked their way through neighborhoods similar to those in the hills of Marin. The entire time they kept in mind their personal safety and departmental mission of "providing the highest level of life and property protection through aggressive fire control, integrated pre-hospital care, fire prevention, public education, and emergency management." ■ Battalion Chief **Tim Thompson** said, "The battle to get people out and save homes went on through the night and the next day. Each engine company engaged the fire at structures in various levels of fire involvement, making tough saves. They cut burning decks and eaves away

from homes, ripped burning siding off houses, and used well-placed hose lines to protect structures before they ignited." ■ The strike team returned on November 4, and most of the overhead personnel went home, too. It was a long two weeks of battling fires, winds, and conditions that some may never experience again in their careers. Not much more than a week later, in anticipation of more severe Santa Ana winds, the Marin County Fire Department received requests for another strike team of engines, as well as a dozer strike team, to report to a Southern California staging area, so they loaded their equipment and headed south again. They ended up fighting the Malibu fire that started two days after Thanksgiving. This also was a large fire, involving 4,900 acres and 53 homes, but less dramatic than the October firestorms several weeks before. ■ Battalion Chief Thompson said, "The performance of Marin's fire personnel confirmed that we are doing things right; the many hours of training, the money spent on equipment, and the hiring of personnel all paid off." ■

Keeping Our Bay Healthy in 2008

By Gina Purin—DPW

The Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP) encourages every Marin resident to do any one of the following on a regular basis. Help the 3,000 miles of creeks in Marin that drain into the bay and ocean. The Bay Area Stormwater Managers Association publication provides:

Five things you can do for the bay

- 1. Pick up at least one piece of litter every day**—there's plenty out there. Litter left on streets can flow to storm drains and straight into the bay.
- 2. Get back to basic soap**—not antibacterial soap for hand washing. Avoid soap products with the active ingredient triclosan, a registered pesticide that accumulates in the bodies of humans and ultimately in fish and can be toxic to aquatic organisms.

3. Use fluorescent light bulbs—reduce your energy consumption by using compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) or Light-Emitting Diodes (LEDs). Dispose of them safely at the household hazardous waste facility so that mercury doesn't find its way to the bay. In Novato, call 892-7344. In all other areas of Marin, call 485-6806 or go to www.marinrecycles.org.

4. Get rid of your fat the right way—cooking fat, that is. Don't pour cooking byproducts like fats, oils, and grease down indoor drains including disposals, instead place in the trash. Call 1-800-SAV-R-Bay or your local sanitation district.

5. Oil and water don't mix—a single oil change, dumped into a creek or storm drain, can pollute almost 16 miles of creek. If you change your own oil, recycle it at one of Marin's 12 free locations. Go to www.mcstopp.org for a list of free recycling locations or call 499-6528.

H&HS Announces New Medical Director

By Deb Mullaney and Jami Ellerman—H&HS

Photo by Janice Hughes



Dr. Craig A. Lindquist

Craig A. Lindquist, MD, PhD, has recently been selected to serve as the new medical director for the Department of Health and Human

Services. ■ Dr. Lindquist has served as Medical Director of the county's HIV/AIDS Specialty Clinic since 1990. He was at the forefront of the county's early response to the AIDS epidemic and was instrumental in bringing many clinical trials to the Specialty Clinic, increasing access to emerging therapies for patients with limited resources and limited treatment options. Most recently, he has provided leadership in planning the integration of the public health clinics, as the various programs prepare to

co-locate to the Health and Wellness Campus in 2008. ■ Throughout his years of service to the county, many co-workers have been lucky recipients of a variety of organic fruits and vegetables grown on his farm in Sonoma County. One of his many interests is in the preservation and trading of heirloom seeds (vegetablesofinterest.typepad.com) and sharing, with great humor and wit, tales of their origins. ■ Dr. Lindquist's expertise, vision, and leadership will be key factors in assuring the success of the county's efforts to deliver exceptional health care to our growing community. ■

Oil Spill Response

By Michael Frost and Liz Lewis—DPWV

On a foggy November 7 morning, the container ship Cosco Busan collided with the Bay Bridge, spilling 58,000 gallons of oil that impacted shoreline from Stinson Beach south to Ocean Beach and San Francisco Bay from Richmond to Hunter's Point. More than 1,000 people responded to the incident, including more than 450 federal, state, regional, and local agency officials, and volunteers from Marin County. ■ The county activated the Emergency Operations Center to manage daily coordination with local jurisdictions, preparation of media releases, managing a public information hotline, and posting updates to the county website. They also had a staff member at the Incident Command Post in San Francisco to facilitate response efforts among local agencies, and state and federal authorities. Among those departments involved in the protection and clean-up efforts were Marin County Fire, the Sheriff's Department, Public Works, and Parks and Open Space. Their efforts included extensive coordination with other local fire and police departments and with state and federal agencies. The county's Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) water rescue team conducted reconnaissance surveys and assisted with the placement of floating booms to contain the oil. "We



Photo by Julia Barnes

Contractors deploying oil absorbent booms

had the training, the material, and the command structure in place prior to the oil spill. Our county's team response was awesome," explained Public Works Director and USAR Commander **Farhad Mansourian**. ■ Marin's clean-up and monitoring efforts focused on protecting sensitive creek and marsh ecosystems at Bolinas Lagoon, Las Gallinas Creek and marshes, Corte Madera Creek and marshes, Bothin Marsh and Seminary Marsh in Mill Valley and their surrounding harbors. ■ The Marin County Fire Department, Bolinas Volunteer Fire Department, and the Southern Marin Fire District provided incident-specific training to over 100 residents who then assisted with oil spill clean-up at Marin beaches. This training effort was spearheaded by **Julia Barnes**, a Public Works Hazardous Materials Specialist, and **Phoenicia Thomas** with Marin County Fire. ■ State and federal officials called for the demobilization of nearly all protective operations on December 20. Efforts from that time forward

focused on the next phase of spill recovery, which was monitoring for and focusing on hot spots as they arose. ■ The county staff involved in this operation are too numerous to mention but their collective effort was an essential factor in successfully protecting Marin's sensitive and prized waterways. ■

"We had the training, the material, and the command structure in place prior to the oil spill. Our county's team response was awesome."



Photo by Eric Scovel

Chris Snyder (Fire) helping volunteer with protective gear.

Photo by Sue Blachwitz



Far Right: Garland Murphy, Race Walker of the Year

You've probably seen him speeding along tracks and trails, in parks and shopping malls. His feet skim the ground and his arms pump. His hips have that funny roll. His name is **Garland Murphy** (H&HS). He is a competitive Race Walker. Race Walking provides the same cardiovascular benefits as running, with only one-third the impact! Not bad for a sport that's easy on the joints, light on the wallet, and requires no equipment except shoes. And Race Walking has been an Olympic event since 1905. At age 60, Garland is the Northern California Race Walker Alliance Program's (NOCRAP) Most Outstanding Race Walker of the Year. Go Man Go! ■

Photo by Guillermo Castaneda



Liza Purtell (HHS), Michael Purtell, Michael Smith (Treasurer-Tax Collector), and Liza's Mom

They've known each other since high school, been in love for two years, and on December 7, 2007 Michael and Liza Purtell were married in the pres-

ence of their parents, by our very own marriage commissioner **Michael J. Smith**, in a civil ceremony here at the Marin County Civic Center. The glowing bride is the former **Liza Castaneda** (H&HS). They are happily expecting their first bundle of joy in June. ■

We love the good news. **Long Truong** (Courts) and wife Phuc Nguyen welcomed baby Hayley Hy Truong born October 25, 2007. David Truong (Courts) is Hayley's uncle. ■

Please e-mail the information from your department to the Odds & Ends columnist, Tom Vaszgird, at tvaszgird@co.marin.ca.us.

Niccolo James Machotka Farley arrived with clockwork precision at 9 p.m. on October 23 for a masterful debut performance! And the applause meter was not able to register **Jim Farley's** (Cultural Services) and Danielle Machotka's excitement. Let's offer a deserved standing ovation to the new proud parents. ■

One door closes and a new one opens as **Tom Vaszgird's** (Aud-Cont.) wife, Marion, received a Special Education Teaching credential in December. Marion began the program two years ago at Sonoma State University. Now the real work begins. ■

Though they had been anticipating the stork's delivery, **Deborah Lewis** (PD) and husband David Williams only had seven hours notice that they would be meeting their adopted newborn son at a Placentia, CA hospital on October 14, 2007. Corey Eugene Williams arrived home with his parents in San Francisco two days later. Congratulations, Deborah and David! ■

A mother couldn't be prouder. **Kathleen Suhrke's** (CDA) talented son Jason is not one to let anything get in the way of his show biz dream. This 21-year-old graduate of Petaluma High School took extensive training in acting and production in the Bay Area, created his own independent production company, acted in and was involved with several local productions, and moved to Hollywood. Since then, his acting and production credits include *Weeds*, *Heroes*, and *Fallen Angel*. ■

Helen Stepler (HR) has a new grandson! Hayden Miles Stepler was born Nov. 7, to Helen's son, Kevin, and his wife, Kathy. Hayden is Helen's third grandson and joins cousins Owen, 2, and Dylan, 6. ■

Anita Erola (HR) has a humorous memoir in the newly published *Novato Poetry Farmer's Almanac, Volume III*. Volumes I and II are available at the Novato Library. Poets meet the first Wednesday of each month at Dr. *Insomnia's Coffee* in Novato to share, read, and support one another. ■



The Chen-Harding's wedding day

Suzanne Bourguignon (DPW) married Jeff Harding on October 7 in a redwood grove at the CYO Camp in Occidental (western Sonoma County). Two weeks later, Suzy and Jeff spent a glorious honeymoon in New Zealand where they enjoyed many days riding their bikes and having great adventures on the South Island, traveling in a rented campervan they lovingly named "Bertha." Both changed their last name to Chen-Harding at the start of the new year, honoring Suzy's mother's maiden name, Chen. ■

Cheri Brannon (Courts) visited the Galapagos Islands in October. She sailed, snorkeled, hiked, beach combed, and shared space with all of the Galapagos creatures for two weeks. ■



Cheri Brannon in the Galapagos

How many of us can describe a family vacation as a magical experience beyond expectations? **Richard Langhals** (Assessor) along with wife, Wendy, and daughters, Kelsey and Kylea, did it all. The Langhals family delighted in a fall Caribbean cruise on the Disney Magic. They visited Hemingway's former sanctum, swam with the sharks, visited the Grand Caymans and Cozumel, ate rum cake, and created memories to be treasured for a lifetime. Rich, we're all happy for you and your family. Now about those sharks you swam with? ■

Photo by Diana Casanova

Photo by passerby

One Book One Marin

By Nancy Davis—Library

What if everyone in the county read the same book at the same time? This is the idea behind *One Book One Marin*. The notion is that discussions and events based on the book bring together members of the community, encourage the exchange of ideas, and enrich the reading experience. This project is sponsored by the Marin County Free Library, other Marin libraries, Dominican University, the Marin Education Fund, Friends of the Marin County Free Library, and local bookstore Book Passage. ■ Administrative Librarian **Pat Harper** describes how the book is chosen: "Our criteria include a living author who either lives in Marin County or who writes books with settings in our area. The book must

The notion is that discussions and events based on the book bring together members of the community, encourage the exchange of ideas, and enrich the reading experience.

be available in Spanish as well as English. It must be a book that we believe will launch discussions and appeal to a wide range of people. Last year's "one book" was *Daughter of Fortune*, by best-selling Marin author Isabel Allende. ■ This year's selection is *Saving Fish from Drowning*, by Amy Tan. Says Pat, "We selected *Saving Fish from Drowning* because it explores many issues relevant to Marin County residents, including cultural differences and the effects of international travel on travelers and the countries they visit." ■ In Tan's

2005 novel, 11 Americans on an ill-fated art tour find themselves deep in the Burmese jungle. Cultural misunderstandings and a series of hilarious situations lead to their kidnapping by a renegade jungle tribe. The tribe believes that one of the members of the

group is the messianic leader who will save them from the brutal Myanmar government. Satirical and entertaining, the novel comments seriously on the ironies of modern life and is especially relevant given recent political unrest in that area.

■ Numerous events are planned to accompany the reading of the book. A highlight will be an evening with Amy Tan at Dominican University on May 6. Discussion groups and programs relating to the setting and themes of the novel will be held at various sites around the county. ■ Join your friends, neighbors, and co-workers in reading, thinking about, and discussing *Saving Fish from Drowning*. Keep up to date on events by checking the website at www.OneBookOneMarin.org. ■

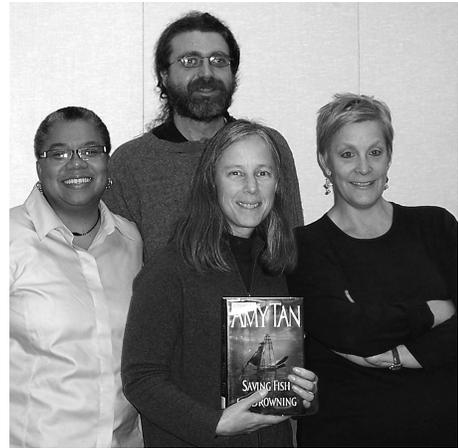


Photo by Nancy Davis

Administrative Librarian Pat Harper holds a copy of Amy Tan's *Saving Fish from Drowning* with Librarians Eva Patterson, Damon Hill, and Kathleen Fitzhugh Remitz.

My Most Influential Book

By Norma Johnson—Courts

Knowing there are avid readers with divergent tastes and in honor of *One Book One Marin*, *Frankly Speaking* decided to ask book lovers of the county which book has influenced them the most and why. ■

Here are some responses:

"*Simple Abundance* by Sarah Ban Breathnach," said **Heather Giusti** (Courts). "It's a daily reading that helped me see 'all of the little silver linings' there are, even when the going can get rough. It influenced me to see the positives over the negatives and to 'keep it real.'" ■

"*Keep the Aspidistra Flying* by George Orwell," said **Jedediah Learned** (Assessor). "It reminds me that for all our efforts and ambitions, economic and social progress continues at an astonishingly languid crawl; it's actually pretty hilarious." ■

"*A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean," said **Mark Brown** (Fire). "It describes Norman's search for answers about himself and those he loves, and he finds that not all questions can be answered. Sometimes you have to rely on your own faith about yourself and your loved ones." ■

"*The Power of Intention* by Wayne Dyer," said **David Nicholson** (DPW). "It induced a major paradigm shift in my thinking." ■

"*The Secret* by Rhonda Byrnes," said **Jeri Stewart** (DPW). "It has changed the way I think and feel about my life. Believing in the 'Law of Attraction', as has been done for millennia, connects each of us deeply to our true selves, to that which is meant to be ours, to whom we are meant to be." ■

"*The Tipping Point* by Malcolm Gladwell," said **Drusilla Davis-Miller** (Library). "It reminds me how little things can have a very big consequence." ■

"*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee," said **Linda Aldrich** (Library), **Audrey Andrus** (DPW), and **Rose Sibeto** (Assessor). "After I read this book, I hoped that when I grew up I would be as good a person and a parent as Atticus Finch, and that I would always remember to walk a mile in another person's shoes before I judged them," said Linda. ■

"*The Holy Bible*," said **Simone Rivers** (Probation), **Michael Martin** (Assessor), **Sheri McConnell** (Courts), and **Betty Jackson** (Probation). "In it I can find everything that I need for life, balance, peace, and happiness," said Simone. ■

Photo by Janet Lirette



Front Row, L to R: Dee Gosha, Evelyn Colindres, Yzaida Miranda
Middle Row, L to R: Christine Stipp, Jackie Jew, Pru Kerr, Janet Greenwood
Back Row, L to R: Linda Metz, Diane Beetham, Sharayn Forkel
Not Shown: Linda Mariscal.

The Team of the Quarter

By Jennifer Walter—Treasurer/Tax Collector's Office

This quarter's outstanding team is the Public Health Nursing Immunization Department of Health & Human

Services. Members of this dynamic team are **Diane Beetham** RN, PHN, Clinical Services Administrator in Public Health; **Christine Stipp** RN, PHN, Immunization Program Supervising Public Health Nurse; **Sharayn Forkel** RN, PHN; **Linda Metz** RN, PHN; **Jackie Jew** RN; **Linda Mariscal** RN, PHN; supported by **Evelyn Colindres**, **Dee Gosha**, **Pru Kerr**, **Janet Greenwood**, and **Yzaida Miranda**. ■ The team collaborates with community groups and other county departments to provide protection for children and their families against measles, mumps, polio, diphtheria, chicken pox, and the flu. They handle approximately 120 calls per month, 90% of which are related to adult and children's immunizations, travel vaccinations, flu shots, and TB testing. Many callers need information that can only be provided by one of the nurses in the department. The staff is extremely professional and very responsive to the needs of all its clients, spending as much time as is necessary to answer questions and comfort those who are

anxious or fearful about receiving shots, especially children. ■ An audit was performed by the State of California Immunization Branch in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control when it visited the Immunization Clinic a few months ago. It gave the group outstanding honors for their excellent service and business practices, citing it as a model clinic for the State of California. ■ Team Supervisor Christine Stipp said, "They are a tremendous team, and they are incredibly dedicated and committed to providing service. Each member seems to know what the other is thinking, which enhances their ability to work cohesively and get the job done quickly and efficiently." ■ The Immunization Clinic is located at 910 D Street, San Rafael, where childhood and adult immunizations, travel vaccinations, flu shots, and tuberculin skin tests are provided at low or no cost on Tuesdays and Fridays from noon to 4:00 p.m. For further information, call 415-473-6891 or 415-473-6007. ■

Winners All

By Angela Nicholson—H&HR

Human Resources' Division of Equal Employment is enthusiastic about the response by county employees celebrating state recognized Heritage Months. ■ The biographies of 16 influential Hispanic individuals were posted on the MINE Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 to celebrate **Hispanic Heritage Month** and were followed by a quiz. Fifty-four employees who scored 100% on the quiz were awarded two tickets to **Tango Buenos Aires** at the Marin Center. ■ From an additional drawing, **Raymond Anciaux** (H&HS), **Mary Ann Gallardo** (DPW), **Gail Wiemann** (Library), **Gregorio DeLuna** (DCSS), **Cecilia Castaneda** (H&HS), **Anthony Kwong** (H&HS), **Teresa Leon Varela** (DA), **Mirta Cuevas** (H&HS), **Marlene Cornejo** (Treas/Tax), and **Josie Cenicerros** (PD) won prizes which included the soundtrack to the movie **Mambo Kings**, CDs by Celia Cruz,



L to R: Pamela Cringle, Gail Wiemann, Karen Kindig, Yzaida Miranda, Marlene Cornejo, and Josie Cenicerros

posters of a reproduction of an artwork by Judith Baca, and a children's book, **Harvesting Hope**. ■ In November, employees celebrated **American Indian Heritage** with another quiz also found on the MINE. In a drawing of the 67 employees who scored perfectly, **Nayeem Lokhandeala** (H&HS), **Libby Pope** (H&HS), **Pamela Cringle** (Aud-Cont.), **Karen Kindig** (H&HS), **Alisia Lellis**

(Sheriff), **Martha Kassin** (Library), **Raymond Anciaux** (H&HS), **Fredi Bloom** (Probation), and **Kerry Livingston** (Library) won prizes which included American Indian pottery, Hogan and Mesa sand paintings, CDs by Buffy Saint-Marie, and **The Art of American Indian Cooking**. ■ Congratulations to all the winners, and keep your eyes open for upcoming Heritage Month celebrations. ■

October

Hispanic Heritage Month

November

American Indian Heritage Month

Photo by Angela Nicholson

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Photos by Janice Hughes

MARINA CASSIMUS



OCTOBER

Word Processing Operator **Marina Cassimus** has dedicated 12 years of service to the Marin County Probation Department. Marina started with the county as a Legal Clerk and within a year was promoted to Word Processing Operator. ■ The tasks of a word processor can be hectic, with time pressures and detailed work in large volumes. Marina's extreme accuracy and speed in completing her duties are greatly appreciated by probation officers she serves. She is cheerful and handles the stress of the job with a smile and a sense of humor. Marina is effective in accommodating the needs of the courts, probation officers, and attorneys. ■ She credits Senator Milton Marks for her inspiration to work for the County of Marin and believes that, while employed by Senator Marks, she gained her attention to detail and ability to achieve goals. Marina's organizational skills and the admiration of her coworkers make her an outstanding choice for Employee of the Month. ■

By Gretchen Melendy—Probation

ROSIE HERNANDEZ

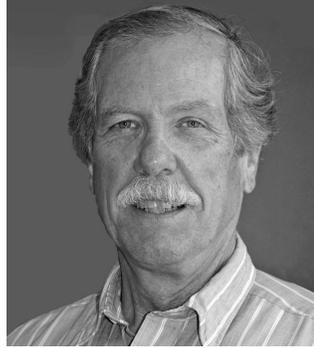


NOVEMBER

In her role as a Bilingual Child Welfare Worker, **Rosie Hernandez** (H&HS) investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect and provides emergency response services to children and families in Marin. For more than three years, Rosie has handled this challenging and emotionally draining work with poise and compassion, finding good solutions to difficult problems and giving support to clients. She provides exceptional services to the Marin Latino Community. Rosie generously shares her time and energy with several work groups focused on improving practice standards within Children and Family Services, is a member of H&HS's cultural competence committee, and leads a committee devoted to highlighting the outside interests and activities of her fellow employees. ■ Rosie brings a natural warmth and smile to this difficult work every day. She epitomizes the kind of person who strives to improve the lives of those around her, and has a tremendous positive impact in countless ways. ■

By Heather Ravani—H&HS

RALPH MEDSGER



DECEMBER

A 12-year veteran of Public Works' Communications Division, **Ralph Medsger** has a vast knowledge of electronics and excels at putting it to good use. He was instrumental in the implementation of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA) system which conducts county public safety and other radio communications. Ralph is an expert in the arcane world of radio trunking, simulcasting, microwave theory, T-1 lines, voters, routers, repeaters, antenna propagation, and diagnostic programs. His genuine concern for emergency services operations makes him invaluable to the effective operation of MERA. ■ Ralph can diagnose complex technical problems over the phone, working with technicians at remote locations. ■ Ralph's greatest attributes are his infectious and unwavering positive attitude and calm demeanor. Never without a smile, he is always available to provide advice and assistance on any technical problem. Congratulations and thank you. ■

By Michael Frost and Liz Lewis—
Public Works



Photo by Janice Hughes



2007 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR — BIE DELLOSA

Bie Dellosa's extraordinary contributions as Senior Systems Support Analyst in IST have earned her the distinction of Marin County's Employee of the Year for 2007. Bie is responsible for maintaining critical databases, tracking thousands of records, and performing hundreds of file transfers. She is a dedicated "behind-the-scenes" employee who keeps important county operations flowing along. The honor brings Bie a \$1,200 award, an engraved clock, flowers, and recognition by the Board of Supervisors. Previous winners include **Pat Cunningham** (DPW), **Mischon Martin** (P&OS), **Catherine Condon** (H&HS), **Ron Johnny** (H&HS), **Liz Lewis** (DPW), **Phoenicia Thomas** (Fire), **Claudia Asprer** (H&HS), and **Marilyn Cannon** (Aud-Cont).

Network of Care

By Lisa Sepahi—H&HS



Program Manager Nick Trunzo, in the Division of Aging, visits the Network of Care website.

Photo by Janice Hughes

Ever wonder how to find information on services available in Marin and were not sure where to look? A solution is at hand through Network of Care (NOC), a virtual one-stop information shop offering a directory of available services and resources. NOC is a consortium of individual net sites, each dedicated to a specific area of service. For Marin there are NOC sites for Kids, Behavioral Health, Seniors, and Children, Youth, and Families. ■ The Kids' site is a resource sponsored by First 5 Marin, and offers resources for families with

children 0–5 years of age. The Behavioral Health site is a resource for individuals, families, and agencies concerned with mental health. The portal for these and other sites can be accessed via www.networkofcare.org. Each site features a searchable directory of services and an extensive library of articles on many subjects related to Aging, Children, and Mental Health. There is also information on insurance and links to local, state, and national resources. ■ The site also provides a tool for tracking legislation, along with an instant e-mail message capability linking you to your local lawmakers. The site offers a unique opportunity for users to create a personal health record folder which can help you keep track of medical information, articles saved from the library, and a list of favorite or frequently viewed services. ■ Network of Care has also formed a partnership with 211, the toll-free information and referral line to ensure information provided is up-to-date and accurate. Together, the two services offer a wealth of information and guidance on how to access the many services available in the county. ■

Women, Take Care of Your Heart this Valentine's Day

By Julie Van Winkle—H&HS

Eight million American women are living with heart disease, and over 400,000 have heart attacks each year. Heart disease is the number one cause of death for American women; it kills six times as many women as breast cancer. Some of the risk factors for heart disease include smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and a sedentary lifestyle. ■ Although chest pain is the most common symptom, women are less likely than men to feel chest pain during a heart attack. More women than men experience symptoms such as back pain, nausea, or fatigue. Because women often describe their chest pain as pressure, tightness, or an ache, it is important to take milder chest pain seriously. It

may feel like discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes and may come and go. Some other common symptoms include shortness of breath, sweating, and pain in one or both arms. Since many lifesaving treatments work best if given within the first hour, early detection is important. Learning to recognize symptoms and get help quickly could save your life. This Valentine's Day, take care of your heart by learning the symptoms of heart attack and reducing your risk factors for heart disease. Your loved ones will thank you. ■



Roving Reporter

By Connie Siebler—Assessor's Office

March is International Idea Month.
What's the best idea you have ever had?

David Cloutman

(Library): "Majoring in Philosophy. It gave me an education that I use to better understand myself, and all of my experiences, both professional and personal."



Photo by Connie Siebler

Carlo DiMesio

(Sheriff): "Devotion to my family, consisting of my wonderful wife, Rosemarie, and our four children. For me, they give life purpose and meaning."



Photo by Jim Rippe

Phyllis Gray

(Assessor): "The best idea I ever had was to marry my husband, as he is the only one who will put up with me!"



Photo by Connie Siebler

Liz Clark

(Treas/Tax): "I managed a Beta Program in software development that was manually based. I thought, 'this is odd.' So, I set up a website; now it's all internet based."



Photo by Connie Siebler

Haiku

By Bob Beaumont—DPW

Shimmering night sky
Boundless worlds I'll never touch
Fill my eyes with stars.

Although chest pain is the most common symptom, women are less likely than men to feel chest pain during a heart attack.

Changing cont'd

From front cover

taxpayers with information that may help them find ways to address their problems and ease their anxieties. Walk into any of the offices and you are likely to be welcomed by a smiling face and a kindhearted attitude. Among others, **Cam Norton** or **Victoria Cascio** may greet you in the Assessor's office. In the Recorder's office you might find **Diane Wishnak** or **Don Wylie** asking how they can help. In the Business/Personal Property office, **Jodie Hawley** or **Georgia Clima** may assist with your property statement. ■ The customer service approach is very proactive; staff exercises every opportunity to inform taxpayers of the financial breaks written into California tax laws. You may see **Mike Rakitnichan** at the front counter, patiently guiding a new property owner through a series of perplexing supplemental tax bills. **Carolyn Schuch** assists people over 55 who are looking to downsize their properties and carry their tax base to their new residence, if they meet certain conditions. **Diane Fredericks** and **Sheila McBrien** send out claim forms for a homeowner's

exemption that can provide a \$70 annual savings for properties used as a primary residence. **Peggy Greenland** assists homeowners in qualifying for tax relief from properties damaged by fires and flooding. **Bruce Abbott** will gladly get you started in doing genealogical research through the birth, marriage, and death records. **Linda Driskell** may get you started in a parcel combination. **Gloria Sweeney** will help get the record straight when you move your boat to Marin County. ■ The county's strategic plan was the guide for an initial Customer Service Committee, which was active for several years. After a short hiatus, the committee restarted with a new focus and membership. The current Customer Service Steering Committee operates under an open forum format and comprises employees **Shane Blair, Gail Drury, Phyllis Gray, Bob Halligan, Greg Ingrassia, Jed Learned, Wendy Patterson, Greg Pryor, Mike Rakitnichan, David Siebe, Connie Siebler, Kathy Tobin,** and Assistant Assessor **Rick Langhals**. Volunteers for the committee come from every division in the department. They conducted a survey to get an idea of what their fellow workers were

concerned about, and set up subcommittees to address these concerns. They currently offer phone etiquette tips via e-mail, and accept nominations for a quarterly "STAR Award." They are working to improve the accessibility and ease of use of the internal departmental database and documents. They worked with **Mark Pioli** to improve the department's website. They are standardizing office policy, publishing a departmental newsletter, and revising the confusing verbiage on assessment notices sent to the Marin County property owners. They revamped the "phone tree" so that callers get to the correct person to answer their questions and address their concerns more easily. There is even a "green" committee, headed by **Shane Blair**, which is working on sustainability and lessening the department's impact on the environment. ■ Times are changing, and the Assessor-Recorder's image as the bad guy is crumbling, at least in Marin. Imagine, if John Lennon had experienced the level of courtesy the Assessor-Recorder office provides, he may have sung a different tune: "If you need some help, come in and see me...! I'm the taxman. I'm as nice as can be...!" ■

There is even a "green" committee, headed by Shane Blair, which is working on sustainability and lessening the department's impact on the environment.

Lifesaver cont'd

From front cover

need to distribute AEDs at key locations throughout the county's campuses. I knew of other public facilities that already had the AED device placed at key locations and lives had been saved," said Supervisor Adams. ■ **Mike Giannini**, Emergency Medical Officer for the Marin County Fire Department, and former County Administrator **Mark Riesenfeld** quickly joined the effort to move the concept through the necessary process and ensure that the county purchased the most reliable and cost-effective product available. ■ Although it took almost two years to receive final approval and funding, Supervisor Adams said, "Having that available AED to save this person's life was proof positive that our efforts were well worth it." ■



Photo by Kathleen Roach

During Marin County's Second Annual Bi-National Health Week, residents received health screenings, learned about nutrition, oral health, immigration issues, and access to children's health insurance. Participants were offered flu shots, as well as readings for blood pressure, body mass index, and anemia. These events were led by a team of Marin County Health and Human Services (H&HS) staff, some of whom are pictured here, from **L to R: Barbara Goodman** and **Brian Waterbury** check in with **Rayana Egea** and **Haley Mears** at West Marin's Bi-National Health Week Event at the Point Reyes Dance Palace last October. **Marcos Hardman** (center) represents one of the many community organizations; he is a case manager from the Marin AIDS Project.

WELCOME FAREWELL!

Welcome to New Employees!

Listed in order of hire date from September 9 to November 6, 2007

Ursula Floden	Library Asst. II, Library
Nathan Kelly	Library Asst. II, Library
Mary Poor	Sr. Clerk/Typist, H&HS
Vladimir Matyurin	Accountant I, Aud.-Cont.
Hanna Pepper	Mental Health Nurse Pract., H&HS
Camille Bosworth	Deputy Public Defender II, PD
Anthony Milani	Child Welfare Wkr. II, H&HS
Noah Bruce	Mental Health Pract.-Billing, H&HS
Rebecca Ng	Supervising Environmental Health Spec., CDA
Viviana Greene	Environmental Health Spec. I, CDA
Lee Lancaster	Group Counselor I, Probation
Yuliana Valenzuela	Group Counselor I, Probation
Roderic Cannon	Sr. Programmer Analyst, IST
Jodie Hawley	Assessment/Record Tech. I, Assessor
Michele Kinnaman	Librarian I, Library
Caleb Jones	Road Maintenance Wkr. I, DPW
Steven Ditlevson	Road Maintenance Wkr. I, DPW
Nick Codiroli	Road Maintenance Wkr. I, DPW
Sharon Parks	Eligibility Worker I, H&HS
Heidi Nakamura	Eligibility Worker I, H&HS
Lealya Thomas	Principal Planner, CDA
Michael Edwards	Microbiologist I, H&HS
Milagros Maldonado	Child Welfare Wkr. II Billing, H&HS
Lillian Jang	Sr. Clerk/Typist, H&HS
Alison Clayton	H&HS Program Coord., H&HS
Eric Newburn	Comm. Tech., DPW
Carmen Lienkaemper	Library Asst. I, Library
Carly Bonnell	Eligibility Wkr. I, H&HS
Erika Martinez	Library Branch Aide II, Library
Sharon Marrero	Sr. Clerk/Typist, H&HS
Melanie Doyle	Library Tech. Asst. I, Library
Jackie Bamford	Member Svs. Tech., Retirement
Lee Hamovitz	Assessment/Record Tech. I, Assessor
John Sanchez	Park Ranger, P&OS

Farewell to Retirees!

Brion Reed	Bldg. Maintenance Wkr. III, DPW
Dennis Mc Queeny	Sheriff's Captain, Sheriff
Mary Hyams	Supervising Child Support Officer, CS
Dorothy Martin	Admin. Svcs. Associate, DA
Rebecca Johnson	Sr. Environmental Health Spec., CDA
Sylvia Harris	Librarian I, Library
Elizabeth Mac Quarrie	Eligibility Wkr. III, H&HS
Catherine Moreno	Eligibility Supervisor, H&HS
Crandon Losee	Child Support Division Accountant, CS
Yun Bin Hsu	Sr. Accounting Asst., Probation
James Flageollet	Chief Deputy Counsel, Co. Counsel
Cynthia Barnard	Supervising Environmental Health Spec., CDA
Eunice Mc Carthy	Library Assistant I, Library
Clifford Mellen	Assessment/Record Tech. II, Assessor
Charles Hsu	Ag./Wts. & Meas. Insp., Ag./Wts. & Meas.
John Childers	Asst. Assessor-Valuation, Assessor
Carol Starr	Director of County Library Svcs., Library



Calling All Pet Lovers!

Now is the time to submit shots of your dearly beloved four-legged friends, amorous reptiles, or any variety of non-human species you share your home with. The call is for variety and humor. Printed photos or digital pictures (high resolution) are welcome and should be submitted to **Janice Hughes**, c/o DA's Office, rm. 130, Civic Center, or jhughes@co.marin.ca.us by February 22. Selected shots will be published in the Second Quarter *Frankly Speaking* and displayed in the Civic Center Cafeteria.

Photo by Janice Hughes



Mary Anne McDonough, DA Victim Witness Coordinator, received a Children's Champion Award for her work with the Jeannette Prandi Children's Center at a semi-annual event at the Falkirk Mansion in December. She was presented the award by District Attorney Ed Berberian.

Go Green!

By Art Brook and Saaid Fakhrazadeh—DPW

On September 11, 2007, the Board of Supervisors approved a one-year Green Commute Pilot Program, which went into effect on October 7, 2007. The program pays \$4 daily to a maximum of \$20 a week to regular-hire employees who commute to work by public transit, vanpool, carpool, bike, or walking. The \$4 is part of the employee's income and is included when calculating retirement pay. ■ In the first pay period of the Green Commute Program, 272 employees registered and 222 participated. In the two following pay periods, we reached highs of 383 registrations and 252 participants. We encourage you to register and participate in this program if you have not already done so, to help reduce traffic congestion. ■ As you may have noticed, construction on the Route 101 High Occupancy Vehicle Lane Gap Closure in San Rafael is well underway, and starting in 2008, Segment Four, from downtown San Rafael to North San Pedro Road, moves into full roadway construction mode. Highway lanes will be narrowed and realigned due to construction activities, thereby reducing already strained capacities. By focusing on green commuting (transit, shared riding, bicycling, and walking), we can make a difference through our personal actions. As little a reduction as 10% in traffic volume can make a tremendous difference in traffic flow. ■ In the near future, the county plans to reward those making the greatest contribution to green commuting with various prizes. Register and participate as a Green Commuter to be in the running! Go to the MINE bulletin board and look for Green Commuting Registration and Participation. ■

Employees display their musical talents during a jam session at the Annual Employee Craft Fair on November 13 in the Civic Center Café.

L to R: Steve Morse, Jeanene Gibson, John Wilson, Bob Fagan, Bene DaSilva, Pat Echols, and Jim Selmi



Photo by Janice Hughes

The 2007 Marin County Fair, Aquatic Adventures, captured a record 31 individual achievement awards, including 15 first place awards. It was also one of four fairs to receive a special featured program award for cultural marketing with its multi-cultural International Day celebrating global cultures and diversity. Congratulations again to all involved.