

Happy Anniversary

We congratulate these volunteers who celebrate their anniversaries in June and thank them for their ongoing involvement.

- 27 years** Brian Saunders (SR) Clerk, DOF
- 15 years** Nancy Sakellar (PtRysSt) Aide, Pt. Reyes Library
- 10 years** Sue Baty (PtRysSt) Aide, Inverness Library; **Maritza Wilson** (Nov) Sr. Peer Counselor, H&HS
- 9 years** Maureen Blumenthal (Inver) Shelves, Inverness Library
- 8 years** Sanny Perlas (SR) Patient Advocate, H&HS; **John Polman** (CM) Driver, Fire
- 7 years** Frank Cox (SR) OES Vol., Sheriff; **Gloria R. Jones** (MV) and **Carole Sherick** (SR) Liaisons, Library Beyond Walls
- 6 years** Evelyn Jaffe (Tib) Liaison, Library Beyond Walls; **David Roberts** (Nov) Driver, H&HS
- 5 years** Wyna Barron (MC) Liaison, Library Beyond Walls; **Nora Lee Cornett** (SR) OES Vol., Sheriff; **Jacqueline Ford** (Nov) Sr. Access Reader, Novato Library and Liaison, Library Beyond Walls; **Jane Solomons** (SR) Internet Tutor, Civic Center Library and Aide, So. Novato Library; **Isidoro Weitzman** and **Tikva Weitzman** (Tib) Sr. Peer Counselors, H&HS
- 4 years** Joann Cassidy (SA) Admin. Asst., Probation
- 3 years** Cloann DiGrazia (Nov) Accounting Clerk, ARC; **Judith Hanks** (MV) Intern, PD; **Cristine Insley** (Nov) Advocate, H&HS; **Jim Laveroni** (RP) Investigative Aide, DCSS
- 2 years** Gleneda Borton (SR) Paralegal, PD; **Keith Denebeim** (MV) and **Colleen Fulkerson** (Antioch) Lookouts, Fire; **Belinda Ingraham** (MC) Legal Asst., DA; **Jenny Mendez** (MV) Data Entry Support, H&HS; **Sue Smith** (Okld) Patient Advocate, H&HS; **Debra Ziegler** (CM) Shelves, Corte Madera Library
- 1 year** Sarah Butts (SR) Intern, Civic Center Library; **Sally Elshout** (Nov) Shelves, Novato Library; **Kay Feallock** (SA) Nursing Student, H&HS; **Steven P. Harris** (SR) FAST Team Vol., H&HS; **Melissa Ladrech** (Kent) FSA Mental Health Intern, H&HS; **Kelly Ridgway** (S Rosa) Admin. Asst., Sheriff



Volunteer Notes

You're invited to Joan Brown's Retirement Reception!

A champagne reception for CCV Manager and founder Joan Brown will be held Thursday, June 23, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Marin Civic Center. Because no taxpayer money is used for retirement celebrations, there is a \$10 charge. **Reservations are required.** To add your name to the invitation list, please email SLWhite@co.marin.ca.us or call (415) 499-7407.

In Memoriam

Wade Brightbill, a CCV since 1987 in the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit, died May 14. His supervisor, **David Ball**, said it was "an absolute joy to be in his presence." Wade, the 2002-2003 Volunteer of the Year, will be greatly missed.

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Susan Levine and **Eric Roddie**



The Volunteer View

The Monthly Newsletter for Marin County Civic Center Volunteers

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CCV founder Joan Brown retiring



CCV Manager Joan Brown

Talk about **impact** with a capital **I!** With her big laugh and uncanny talent for matching people with opportunities to serve, Civic Center Volunteers Manager **Joan Brown** has devoted her 32.5-year career to creating and nurturing an award-winning Marin County volunteer program.

The Civic Center Volunteers (CCV) program, which Joan named by her third day on the job, has had a tremendous impact on the county, generating a total of more than \$125 million of in-kind services over the years. Thousands of volunteers and interns have been recruited, placed, and, in many cases, counseled and guided toward personal successes. Volunteers have contributed in virtually every county department, and even Joan finds it "astonishing" that the program has grown from literally zero the first month to more than 8,400 volunteers in 2010.

It all started in January 1979, just after the enactment of California's Proposition 13, which sharply reduced property tax revenue to counties. At the time, the public was anti-government and women's

lib was flourishing. Joan was hired as a temporary half-time employee for 12 weeks at \$5.54 an hour to set up a pilot program to see if anyone would volunteer for county government.

"Those early days were exciting. The *Marin Independent Journal* ran an article listing 25 jobs available and generated 55 phone calls in three days," recalled Joan. "At the end of three months, my job was extended. By fall, I was regular-hired in the then-Personnel Department." Through the years, the program has reflected the community, starting with re-entry women, incorporating retirees as Marin has grayed, and recently welcoming recession-impacted job hunters wanting to contribute their skills as volunteers. "CCV has moved with the times," Joan said.

Joan's passion for participating in local government was sparked during a trip to the Communist-ruled Soviet Union when she was 23. She mentioned the Berlin Wall to her official guide, a young woman who insisted that the wall was a figment of U.S. propaganda. "I was dumbfounded that a contemporary who spoke five languages didn't believe that the Berlin Wall existed. I was struck by a government's ability to control information to its citizens and the reality that if you don't participate in democracy you can lose it," she said. "The act of citizen participation in local government is a cornerstone of democracy – and of the CCV program."

A minister's daughter raised in a family that emphasized service, Joan graduated from Northwestern University, taught elementary school, and was deeply involved in environmental, political, school, and other volunteer causes for 15 years before joining the county.

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Who's New & Welcome

Samantha Allen (Nov) Dental Asst, H&HS
Rick Bartolacelli (SR) Docent, CC Library
Lauren Bollinger (Nov) Shelver, So. Novato Library
Cindy Bower (Nov) Shelver, Novato Library
Kyla Burke-Lazarus (SF) Tutor, Novato Library
Eryka Chimal (SR) Outreach Asst., H&HS
Simone Dvoskin (Nov) High School Intern, PD
Jordan Egli (Nov) Shelver, Novato Library
Noelle Ferguson (SR) Homevisit Parent Partner, H&HS
Jody Hammond (SR) Social Media Intern, HR
Loni Hrynk (Ptma) EHS Tech., CDA
Iralyn Jequinto (Daly City) Intern, H&HS
Jackeline Mazariegos (SR) Event Aide, H&HS
Jayne McDonagh (SA) Tutor, Novato Library

Rich McGrath (SR) Bldg. Maint. Worker, CS
June Moynihan (Nov) Social Media Specialist, HR
Pet Muoh (Okld) Intern, H&HS
Diana Nava (MV) Connection Center Asst., H&HS
Cathy Pangan (Pacifica) Intern, H&HS
Richard Peterson (SR) Data Analyst, HR
Darwin Rodas (Nov) Shelver, Novato Library
Barbara Schill (PtRysSt) Shelver, Inverness Library
Cecille Silver (SR) Administrative Aide, Probation
Kyle Smith (S Rosa) Processing Asst., Courts
Nuri Sutter (MV) Office Aide, Registrar of Voters
Adrienne Vincenti (Saus) Clerical Aide, H&HS
Mulu Yimer (Okld) Intern, H&HS

Joan Brown *(cont. from page 1)*

She established CCV with professional standards. "I knew from teaching that if I didn't have high standards at the beginning, I would not be able to add them later," she said. The CCV office still screens candidates, uses contracts and timesheets, and coaches staff, although Joan's manual typewriter has long since given way to a computer. Generous doses of concern, appreciation, egalitarian treatment, and recognition for volunteers are also essential to CCV, which has served as a model for other local government volunteer offices around the U.S.



Pictured at the Board of Supervisors Spring 2010 Volunteer Recognition event: Supervisor Susan Adams, Volunteer of the Year Dr. Peter Schmid, Supervisor Judy Arnold, CCV Manager Joan Brown, Supervisor Steve Kinsey, Supervisor of Volunteers of the Year Rochelle Erem, and Supervisor Charles McGlashan.

Joan's innovations over the years have enriched life at Big Pink and beyond. The successful 10-year Job Coach program, in collaboration with Community Mental Health, partnered volunteer coaches with clients with persistent mental illness to support them while they gained confidence and mastered a volunteer assignment. Joan also launched the Civic Center Gift Shop and 16 years ago started *Frankly Speaking*, the employee newsletter for and by employees, and established its editorial board for guidance. She has served as its only editor-in-chief. Through the CCV office, she guided an annual employee recognition event for many years. She also established regular volunteer recognition ceremonies to celebrate the accomplishments of outstanding volunteers who had completed their contracts.

Meanwhile, she influenced the field of volunteer management by co-founding the National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government and doing national and international training. Joan and the program have been recognized dozens of times, including the first Acts of Caring Award from the National Association of Counties and the Volunteer Administrator of the Year Award from the international Association for Volunteer Administrators.

"I think it is so important for residents to be involved in local government," professed Joan. "Every time I make a good match, I get a high – something good happens and creates a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction. I've loved being able to work with so many people, including those who have volunteered in the CCV office – currently a team of 17! Moreover, I'm continually inspired by the truly gifted county employees who have done an amazing job using volunteers and interns with a broad range of skills and experience, from entry level to seasoned experts."

Marin County Supervisor **Susan Adams**, president of the Board of Supervisors, said, "Joan Brown has been an innovative leader in the area of community service and volunteerism. She has had the unique knack of matching the right people to the right jobs and in the process saving millions of dollars for the Marin County taxpayers. Her shoes will be hard to fill and she will be missed. We wish her many wonderful adventures during her retirement!"

Looking ahead, Joan said spending more time with grandchildren, family, and friends will be a high priority in retirement. She also plans to consult, continue her community volunteerism, and travel, including scuba diving trips.

We salute Joan's creative initiatives, broad influence, and positive impact. Thanks, Joan!

by Shirley Trimble

CCV participants reflect on founder's influence

What do **Joan Brown** and the Civic Center Volunteers program she created in 1979 mean to volunteers, interns, and the county employees who supervise them? Answers are diverse yet there's a common theme: meaningful service. Here are highlights from scores of comments sent to *The Volunteer View*. All submissions will be presented to Joan when she retires! **To add your comment**, e-mail SLWhite@co.marin.ca.us or call (415) 499-7407 by Tuesday, June 14.

"Joan has made the volunteer program the success that it is, contributing millions of dollars in service each year, but more importantly, positively affecting thousands of lives, not only those of the people served, but of the volunteers themselves, who quickly learn that giving to others is the best way to enrich your own life."

Sherri Inenaga, former volunteer, HR

"If you want an ego boost, be interviewed by Joan Brown. Joan can deftly ferret out every single positive aspect of your personality and life history. She exudes her enthusiastic support for whoever she's talking to."

Erica Schafer, volunteer, H&HS, former BOS

"Joan brought a rare combination of qualities: a boundless enthusiasm for the job at hand, a deep understanding of all that was involved, and a profound love and respect for the work of her volunteers."

Arthur Comings, volunteer, *Frankly Speaking* newsletter

"Joan has always put her 'passion into action' when assisting all of us in Social Services as we address difficult issues every day. Her commitment to foster children and to all of those in our community who are vulnerable and struggling is evident in her ever-present desire to make Marin a better place. Her impact has touched many lives and will continue to be renewed in each generation of children we serve."

Heather Ravani, Asst. Director, H&HS-Social Services



Joan Brown, right, in 2000 with Liz Paris (HR) and volunteer George Duncan during strategic planning



Joan chairs a Frankly Speaking Editorial Board meeting.

"Joan, you are a beautiful person inside and out. The example you have set in recognizing all employees and volunteers makes Marin special and it is in large part because of you."

Mike Daly, Chief Probation Officer, Probation

*A volunteer coordinator named Brown
 Helped us serve, up town and down.
 She gathered our hours
 As if they were flowers
 And never greeted anyone with a frown!*

True Heitz, volunteer, Library

"Joan was more than just my volunteer supervisor, she was my life mentor. She not only taught me basic office skills, but she taught me how to deal with issues that life throws your way and how to always keep a smile."

Christina Delnevo, former volunteer, HR

"Joan exhibits the essence of what makes an outstanding leader of a volunteer organization: energy, optimism, open-heartedness, efficient but flexible organization, curiosity, booming good humor, high standards, and endless compassion."

Carol Kerr, Supervising Clinical Psychologist, CMH

"Although we have not met personally, I am very appreciative of all Joan has done for the community. My granddaughter, a special needs young lady, and I have been volunteering for Library Beyond Walls for over six years. Our patrons have been so grateful that there is a coordinator that cares enough to have a homebound program that provides them with library materials when they cannot get to a library themselves."

Evelyn Jaffe, volunteer, Library

"Joan's passion launched the County of Marin's stellar volunteer program many years ago, and she and this county never looked back! Of special interest was her commitment to preserving and celebrating the legacy of the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Marin Civic Center and Civic Center tours and docent program."

Jim Farley, Director, CS

"Joan's enthusiasm for volunteer work is contagious and inspiring. I left our first interview feeling incredibly heard and seen. As life unfolds, Joan is not someone I will ever forget."

Tiffany Welter, volunteer, Marin Advocates for Children, former H&HS