

## Happy Anniversary

We congratulate these volunteers who celebrate their anniversaries this month and thank them for their ongoing involvement!

23 years	<b>Arthur Marthinsen</b> , Health Consultant, Community Development Agency
21 years	<b>Linda Davis</b> , Mediator, District Attorney's Office
19 years	<b>Shirley Trimble</b> , <i>Volunteer View</i> Writer, Human Resources
13 years	<b>James Selfridge</b> , Aide, Fire
11 years	<b>Tom Zarraonandia</b> , Steward, Parks
10 years	<b>Sue Baty</b> , Arts and Crafts Instructor, Point Reyes Library
8 years	<b>Susan Bunker</b> , Library Beyond Walls Liaison, Library
6 years	<b>Victoria Chin, Genny Duffin, Janice Dushkes, Jill Engelbrecht, and Erica Schafer</b> , Senior Peer Counselors, Health and Human Services (HHS); <b>Jane Karp</b> , Internet Tutor, Civic Center Library
5 years	<b>Rick Bartolacelli</b> , Docent, Civic Center Library; <b>Richard McGrath</b> , Flag Raiser, Cultural Services
4 years	<b>Gary Bennett, Terry Norton, and Kathryn Thyret</b> , Ombudsmen, HHS; <b>Frankie Baxter</b> and <b>Deborah Gregor</b> , Event Aides, Human Resources (HR)
3 years	<b>Larken Bradley</b> , Senior Peer Counselor, HHS; <b>Clayton Noack</b> , Tutor, Probation; <b>Lisa Jack</b> , Shelver, Novato Library; <b>Tim McClain</b> , Marin Employment Connection Assistant, HHS; <b>Bruce Bowser</b> and <b>Duncan Hopkins</b> , Stewards, Parks
2 years	<b>Roberta Cohen, Arlene Heitner, and Elizabeth Ferris</b> , Senior Peer Counselors, HHS; <b>Steven Davis</b> , Incident Management Team Volunteers, Fire; <b>Andrew Uyesugi</b> , Student in Parks Intern, Parks
1 year	<b>Victor Aguila</b> , Spanish Tutor, Novato Library; <b>Christine Camilleri</b> , Patrol Volunteer, Parks; <b>Susan Conard</b> , Administrative Assistant, HHS; <b>Valerie Lels</b> , Financial Abuse Specialist Team Volunteer, HHS; <b>Nancy Oswald</b> , Administrative Assistant, HHS



### Volunteer Notes

#### You're Invited: Let's Celebrate!

April is Volunteer Month in Marin and the Civic Center Volunteers team is ready to celebrate. All volunteers and interns serving in county departments are welcome at an afternoon reception on April 21. A private tour of the Marin Center precedes the gathering. Your e-invitation should have arrived in your inbox. We look forward to your response! Missing your invitation? Call **Robyn Nguyen** at 415-473-7407.

#### Join the Fair Team

Want to volunteer at Marin's biggest annual event, the award-winning county fair? To apply, email Fair Manager **Charlie Barboni** at [CBarboni@marincounty.org](mailto:CBarboni@marincounty.org).

#### CCV Staff

**Anne Starr**  
Coordinator of Volunteers  
Phone: 415-473-7167  
[ASTarr@marincounty.org](mailto:ASTarr@marincounty.org)

**Joy Fossett**  
Student Internships Coordinator  
415-473-7447  
[JFossett@marincounty.org](mailto:JFossett@marincounty.org)

**Robyn Nguyen**  
Administrative Assistant Intern  
Phone: 415-473-7407  
Fax: 415-473-6557  
[RNgyuen@marincounty.org](mailto:RNgyuen@marincounty.org)

**Volunteers:**  
**Shirley Trimble**, Writer  
**Barbara Webb**, Writer  
**Nick Yanchunis**, Copy Editor  
**Tony Cresci**, Graphics Tech Asst.  
**Steve Sarhad**, Database Consultant  
**David Mandel**, Grant Consultant

**Administrative Volunteers:**  
**Mike Carri, Joanne Elder, Deborah Gregor, Annet Katan, Veronica Morino, Linka Watridge**



## The Volunteer View

The Monthly Newsletter for Marin County Civic Center Volunteers

Volume 39, Issue 4

April 2016

### Josefina Perez helps peers face challenges and live healthy, independent lives



Josefina Perez

"The ACASA program saved my life!" exclaimed Civic Center Volunteer **Josefina Perez**. "When I first retired, I had nothing to do except go to the mall and shop." Fortunately an acquaintance recommended Marin County's ACASA (*Amigos Consejeros a Su Alcance*) program as a good place to volunteer. Now an ACASA senior peer counselor, Josefina serves monolingual Spanish-speaking clients aged 60 and up.

Senior peer counselors help their clients maintain meaningful connections and live independently. Clients may be lonely or facing health or financial issues. "When I do something good for someone and work with my heart, I feel rewarded," Josefina said. "Being a peer counselor is a very big part of my life."

Josefina became a senior peer counselor in 2011 after completing training. She has contributed more than 1,000 hours

serving seven clients -- natives of places like Mexico City and El Salvador who missed their cultures and friends as they faced challenges of aging. One client felt so isolated that Josefina visited three times a week instead of the usual weekly meeting. Another client had had a stroke and could not talk. Josefina worked with her for two years, helping her to speak again. Currently Josefina visits two clients in Novato as a friendly listener, offering emotional and social support.

On Fridays Josefina and seven fellow ACASA counselors meet with their staff supervisor, Health and Human Services Mental Health Practitioner **Laurie Hunt**. They discuss ongoing work and solve problems as a team. "Josefina is an exceptionally warm, caring and empathic senior peer counselor," said Laurie. "She has worked with many different types of older adults and developed a strong bond with each client. It is not uncommon for her to have two or three people in her caseload, and she goes above and beyond in her commitment. We are so lucky to have Josefina in ACASA."

A native of Guadalajara and raised in Mexico City, Josefina moved with her husband to Chicago, where she worked in medical centers. In her forties, she came to Marin and worked as a waitress for 27 years in her family's Mexican restaurant, Celia's, with locations in San Rafael and San Francisco. The restaurant was started by her mother's sister and is still operated by the family.

Josefina likes socializing with her many friends and traveling around Northern California, which she calls "a piece of heaven."

By Shirley Trimble

## Who's New & Welcome

**Gricelda Andrade**, Student Library Aide, Novato Library

**Preeti Bishop**, Attorney, Public Defender

**Jasmin Demil**, Medical Records Assistant, Health and Human Services (HHS)

**Jeannie Duong**, Nutrition Wellness Program Intern, HHS

**Fiona Farrell**, Teen Shelver, Novato Library

**Eber Garcia**, Teen Shelver, Novato Library

**Paul Hacker**, Nutrition Wellness Program Intern, HHS

**Kaitlin Law**, Certified Law Student, Public Defender's Office

**Grissel Magana**, Library Aide, Novato Library

**Earl McCowen**, Patrol Volunteer, Parks

**Marty McCowen**, Patrol Volunteer, Parks

**William Migely**, Family Connections Intern, HHS

**Melissa Milder**, Dental Student Intern, HHS

**Gilberta Pierson**, Veterans Benefits Coach, South Novato Library

**Maria Lastenia Reales**, Senior Peer Counselor, HHS

**Mercedes Rodriguez**, Public Assistance Call Center Intern, HHS

**Paymon Safapay**, Equal Employment Opportunity Intern, Human Resources

**Min Sohn**, Nutrition Wellness Health Education Intern, HHS

**Erin Stewart**, Community Health Policy & Prevention Research Intern, HHS

**Cecilia Wolf**, Environmental Health Intern, Community Development Agency

## Intern Mike Carri helps organize events for students



Mike Carri

UC Berkeley student **Mike Carri** interns a full day every Friday with the Human Resources Department's Civic Center Volunteers team, helping to prepare for events and conducting research and analysis. He was drawn to the internship because he wished to do community-based

work. For his first project, he organized a career day at the Marin Civic Center for underserved middle school girls. The event included a tour and interactions between the students and employees of the County of Marin and Marin Superior Court, including Judge **Kelly Simmons**.

Mike now is conducting a survey to gauge interest in a proposed career event for high school students.

Mike has attended school full-time while working full-time and brings practical skills honed in the private sector. He has worked for Sunday Streets and Sports Basement, both in San Francisco.

"I have a strong interest in learning about and contributing to the community," he said. "This internship with the Civic Center Volunteers office staff is very meaningful for me. I'm treated as part of the team."

Mike is a third-year student at Cal majoring in political science. He lives in UC housing in Albany. His career goal is to work in local government. He said, "I have a passion for open and transparent government and social justice. I also like to work on projects where the community and government work together in partnership."

Student Internships Coordinator **Joy Fossett** said, "It's great having Mike here. He comes in with drive and passion for his work and invests himself in all that he does. Mike is great at working with details and really excels when examining the bigger picture. We're incredibly lucky to have him on our team."

In his spare time, Mike is an enthusiastic marathon runner. "I love running on Mt. Tam and around Pt. Reyes," he said. "I also participate in cycling races and triathlons."

By Barbara Webb

## 'Plant warrior' Paul Minault battles parkland invaders



Paul Minault

"Volunteer weed whacker," says Civic Center Volunteer **Paul Minault** with a grin when describing his role with Marin County Parks. An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) volunteer, Paul hunts down invasive weeds in county parklands. He also works with groups under park staff leadership. When Paul moved from Mill Valley to San Rafael he wanted to continue the type of volunteering he had done with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and state parks. As an environmental and land use lawyer, his current assignment with Marin County Parks is a natural fit.

When people think of environmental pests, they may envision birds, rodents, and insects, but invasive plants can be just as – or even more – damaging. Volunteers like Paul help wage an often literally uphill battle against invasive plants. "We're able to work alone or in small groups to eliminate pioneer infestations," Paul said. "We can do work that's inefficient for larger groups or

contractors." The work is difficult, as many species reproduce faster than IPM volunteers can remove them. "Some plants, like the pampas grass, can produce 100,000 seeds a year, a million in a lifetime," he said.

Everyone can help fight invasive plants, and Paul's main tip is simple: Keep invasive plants out of our yards. That alone "would make a huge difference," he said. "Over 90% of invasive plants came from neighborhoods. Invasive plants can spread their seeds for miles by wind, water, and wildlife." Even if you don't see a plant spreading, that doesn't mean its seeds aren't germinating somewhere far away. "You can find isolated trees deep in Marin's wildlands completely covered in English ivy, the berries from which were carried there by birds," he explained.

Marin's most visible invasive plants are French broom (*Genista monspessulana*) and Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) – evergreen shrubs with dense, yellow flowers in the spring. Another common invader is Himalayan blackberry, also known as Armenian blackberry

(*Rubus armeniacus*), which spreads along creeks and in dense thickets. Invasive trees include blue gum eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and acacia (various species).

"Paul is a well of knowledge about invasive species," said Parks Volunteer Coordinator **Greg Reza**. "His true passion is seeking and destroying invasive pampas grass but he is an equal-opportunity plant warrior. We are grateful to have him."

Paul emphasizes the enjoyment of the experience. "It's fun," he said. "I like the solitude of working alone in nature, and also like to work with people outdoors in an informal, down-and-dirty way. We work and eat together, and when we go home, we've produced a result we can see. It's almost like the spirit of the old communal harvest, something that's gone from our lives now."

To learn more about volunteering with the IPM team, contact Greg Reza at 415-473-3778 or [GReza@marincounty.org](mailto:GReza@marincounty.org).

By Nick Yanchunis



Volunteers remove invasive plant from Marin open space land.