REFLECTING ON TWELVE YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

This column appeared in the Marin Independent Journal on June 24, 2014

Now that the election is behind us, I wish to thank you, my community, for having allowed me the privilege of serving you for the past 12 years.

As a nurse practitioner and an educator, I never imagined that part of my life would be dedicated to being an elected representative. A very low voter turnout, along with the sentiment expressed by those who did show up that a change of representation was desired, means the Board of Supervisors will have a new look in 2015.

I have always cared deeply about my community and aspired to manage my work with integrity and honesty.

I tried to not make promises that I couldn’t keep, but kept the community’s concerns foremost in everything I did.

For example, we brokered the deal between the San Rafael Rock Quarry and the neighbors which all agreed was fair, even if it wasn’t all that everyone hoped for. The county’s Public Safety Building has a new home away from the Civic Center.

The body of work that was accomplished as I worked together with the community should give us all a sense of pride. We have pumps and drains in Santa Venetia, three new public transit shuttles in my community, new roads, bike and pedestrian pathways and children’s parks, a Health and Wellness Campus where nobody has to go bankrupt because they become ill and where almost all of our children can now receive the health care they need.

There is a vibrant public media center through our Marin Telecommunications Agency, which I was proud to have been a part of delivering.

There are new veterans programs, open space protections — most recently at Heron Hill — a wonderful grocery store and farmers market at the Marinwood Plaza and a countywide clean energy program.

continued on page 3
**Where’s the happiest place to be in Marin July 2-6?**

Exhibits, farm displays, headline concerts, nightly fireworks and 28 carnival rides... all free with one gate admission ticket, $17/adults, $15/seniors and children. Kids under age 4 are free!

**THE MARIN COUNTY FAIR!**

Watch a cool aerial video of last year’s Fair here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3M_4gjxkLg&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3M_4gjxkLg&feature=youtu.be)

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### MARIN COUNTY COMMISSIONS – Vacancies

#### LIBRARY COMMISSION VACANCY

**Representing District 1**

Application deadline is 5 p.m. July 11 for a Library Commission vacancy on the Marin County Library Commission representing Terra Linda, Lucas Valley, Marinwood, Santa Venetia, downtown San Rafael, Peacock Gap. The commission serves as a resource and liaison to the Board of Supervisors, the Director of County Library Services, and the community, to find ways and means of enlisting public interest in supporting and improving library services.

More info? Contact: Patrice Stancato, 415 473 7331

Online application: [http://eforms.marincounty.org/lfserver/GenBoardApp](http://eforms.marincounty.org/lfserver/GenBoardApp)

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#### ACCESS APPEALS BOARD VACANCY

The Board of Supervisors is recruiting for three vacancies on the Access Appeals Board as follows:

- Physically disabled representative
- Licensed contractor representative
- Public member

The Access Appeals Board hears written appeals brought by any person regarding action taken by the County in the enforcement of California accessibility requirements.

There is no application deadline; the vacancies will be open until filled. Apply online or learn more about the Access Appeals Board or the application process by contacting the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors at (415) 473-7331, CRS Dial 711 or PStancato@marincounty.org

[www.marincounty.org/bos](http://www.marincounty.org/bos)
A REFLECTION ON 12 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE  

Solar is on county buildings, hybrid and electric vehicles in our motor pool, and our county did the best financially of any county in the state by weathering the recession that hit us and by achieving the highest credit ratings possible.

I have always worked from the starting place of “healthy families, healthy communities and healthy planet.”

There is always more to do, but that will be up to the newly elected representative, San Rafael City Councilman Damon Connolly, when he picks up the ball in January of 2015. I have contacted him to wish him luck with the work he has ahead.

Finally, I will continue to work toward finding real solutions to the challenges we are facing when it comes to creating affordable housing opportunities for the people who are working here in our county, who are an important part of the fabric of our community and who suffer long commutes to serve us.

There is nothing to be afraid of and there is everything to gain when our teachers, childcare workers, clerks, in-home support service workers, and nurses can live side by side with us.

It is time to calm down, take a breath and let go of the fear that has blocked meaningful civil discourse on this topic.

As I move into the role of private citizen, starting in January, I look forward to new opportunities to advance the conversations and address what 77 percent of our Marin residents have said — that affordable housing is at a crisis state in our county.

So from the bottom of my heart and with deepest gratitude, thanks to all supporters who worked so hard for me during this election and over the years. I have learned much during my tenure as your District 1 Marin County supervisor and believe I am leaving the district in excellent condition.

Best wishes,
Susan Adams

City of San Rafael to Host “Homeless Action Plan” Meeting on Thursday July 10

The San Rafael Citizens Advisory Committee on Economic Development and Affordable Housing will hold a community meeting on the status of the City’s Homeless Action Plan. The meeting will include presentations from Ambassadors of Hope, serving homeless youth, and the Downtown Streets Team, an employment program for homeless persons. The San Rafael Police and Fire Departments will also report on fire prevention efforts and encampment removal to keep open space safe for all.

Residents and Downtown business owners are encouraged to attend and share their experiences and insights on this important issue.

July 10, 2014, 7:00 pm
San Rafael Community Center
618 B St., San Rafael

For more info, call 485-3383 or visit www.cityofsanrafael.org

MAMMALS IN MARIN @ THE LIBRARY!

David Herlocker, Marin County Parks Naturalist, will provide an overview of the many species of mammals that are found in Marin: from bats, deer, and the occasional black bear. He will also cover the species that we see nearly every day like deer and squirrels, and he’ll also talk about some of the seldom seen residents like mountain beavers and badgers.

When: Wednesday, July 9
Time: 12 noon
Where: Civic Center Library

Questions about this free program? Contact the Civic Center Library at 415-473-6058 or email laldrich@marincounty.org
A wide range of experts in Marin County are now collaborating to tackle what’s described as an epidemic: prescription drug misuse.

RxSafe Marin is a grassroots initiative to address the problem, fueled by the fact that drug overdose deaths and treatment admissions for prescription drug addiction continue to escalate in Marin County. One of four Marin adults needs help for substance abuse, alcohol abuse or mental health problems. More alarming is that an increasing number of children under 18 are in need of care for the same issues. In 2012, more people died in Marin from drug overdoses than of breast cancer or automobile crashes, and most of those overdoses involved prescription drugs.

Building on the work of community activists, the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Marin County District Attorney’s Office, the Marin County Public Defender’s Office, Marin County Office of Education each have officials co-leading the RxSafe Marin initiative alongside families, youth, pharmacists and health providers.

“This issue touches so many in Marin, beyond those with personal or family experience,” Public Health Officer Dr. Matt Willis said. “We feel that RxSafe Marin is breaking new ground by bringing together key voices from across the community – law enforcement, schools, community groups and medical personnel – to design some real solutions.”

At a June 19 meeting in San Rafael, participants brainstormed in separate action teams to address different aspects of the epidemic before convening to formulate plans for progress. The teams were law enforcement, data collection and monitoring, community-based prevention, prescribers and pharmacists, intervention, treatment and recovery.

In 2012, more people died in Marin from drug overdoses than of breast cancer or automobile crashes, and most of those overdoses involved prescription drugs.

Among the top recommendations were:

» Reduce narcotic prescriptions by 15 percent by 2015 by establishing common prescribing standards
» Protect the rights of those with pain to receive appropriate treatment
» Enhanced education for communities in safe storage and disposal of prescription medications
» Increased communication between law enforcement and prescribers
» Provide more drug diversion programs by 2016
» Create a cultural norm, through education and media exposure, wherein prescription drug misuse is culturally unacceptable
» Develop a community-wide report card of key statistics to track progress
» Invite others to join the RxSafe Marin initiative

Some specific RxSafe Marin goals include:

» Working with pharmacists so that lock boxes and safety information are available in every pharmacy
» Implement a countywide campaign to promote safe prescription drug use, storage and disposal
» Establishing permanent and accessible drug take-back/disposal sites in Marin
» Adoption of community standards for prescribing narcotics in Marin Emergency Departments and Primary Care settings
» Increase communication between patients, doctors and pharmacists about drug misuse

“Prescription drug abuse is a complex problem that impacts the whole community,” said Larry Meredith, Ph.D., Director of the County HHS. “We are really fortunate to have such strong partners interested in working together to address this problem. We all share the same goal of reducing the harm of prescription drug abuse — and saving lives.”

RxSafe Marin offers a range of experts who can provide educational programs for clubs or community groups. For more information, contact Erin Cochran at ecochran@marincounty.org or 415-473-2624.
continued investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Marin, coupled with outreach, has positively affected transportation choices and opportunities. That was the conclusion of the U.S. Department of Transportation in its final report on the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP).

Nonmotorized trips are viewed as critical components of the nation’s surface transportation system and associated impacts on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Total vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) in Marin has been reduced by an estimated 7.9 million miles over the course of a year, or nearly 21,634 miles each day — a statistic seen as critical progress by the Marin County Department of Public Works. Reducing VMT is a key factor, along with more efficient automobiles and better fuels, in meeting the nation’s goals of achieving greater energy independence and reducing the impacts of global climate change.

The federal report revealed that in Marin, since 2007:

» Bicycling and walking trips have increased 66 percent and 20 percent, respectively, which resulted in 7.7 million fewer vehicle trips annually

» Trips shifted to bicycling and walking have saved 1.6 million gallons of fuel and reduced carbon monoxide emissions by 515 tons

» 38.1 million additional nonmotorized trips with a commensurate reduction in driving trips for those over 16, which equates to 37 annual trips per capita countywide

» WalkBikeMarin, Marin’s implementation of the pilot program, directed funding to 36 infrastructure projects

» WalkBikeMarin added 24 miles of new facilities for walking and bicycling since 2007, closing gaps and connecting neighborhoods and communities to make walking and bicycling easier for all.

Marin projects funded through the NTPP included the Cal Park Hill Tunnel, Enfrente-Commuter Connection in Novato, Los Ranchitos/Las Gallinas Bike Lanes in San Rafael, and several stairway and sidewalk projects in Mill Valley, Larkspur and Tiburon, among many others. The projects served people of all ages and abilities, and provided safe, convenient places to walk or ride. According to the report, Marin benefitted with traffic congestion relief, low-cost travel alternatives and improved public health.

More info on the local program: www.walkbikemarin.org.
SMART Train “Quiet Zones” Public Meetings

SMART Quiet Zone Public Meetings have been announced by City of San Rafael officials. If you want more information about the 100-decibel train horn that will sound 4 times an hour at every street-grade crossing in San Rafael once the train begins operating, please attend one of the following meetings.

August 27th, 7-9 pm
San Rafael B Street Community Center

Sept. 18th, 7-9 pm
San Rafael City Hall, 1400 Fifth Ave.

Sept. 29th, 7-9 pm
Terra Linda Community Center
670 Del Ganado, SR

www.cityofsanrafael.org

Commuter Benefits Program
A New Requirement for Employers

San Francisco Bay Area employers with 50 or more full-time employees must register and offer commuter benefits to their employees by September 30, 2014 in order to comply with the Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program.

Commuter benefits encourage employees to take transit, vanpool, carpool, bicycle and walk, rather than drive alone to work. Research shows that employees are more willing to try commute alternatives when encouraged to do so by their employers. The Commuter Benefits Program will reduce traffic congestion and air pollution and improve quality of life for all Bay Area residents.

Employers can select from four commuter benefit options and decide which option will work best for their company.

Option 1 — Allow employees to exclude their transit or vanpool costs from taxable income, to the maximum amount, as allowed by federal law (currently $130 per month).

Option 2 — Employer-provided transit subsidy (or transit pass) or vanpool subsidy up to $75 per month.

Option 3 — Employer-provided free or low cost bus, shuttle or vanpool service operated by or for the employer.

Option 4 — An alternative employer-provided commuter benefit that is as effective as in reducing single occupant vehicles as Options 1-3.

For more info and to register, visit https://commuterbenefits.511.org/

RIAC REPORT IS DRAFTED
Now the County Needs Your Input On Regulatory Improvements

The Citizen Advisory Committee on Regulatory Improvements (RIAC) provides recommendations to reduce bureaucracy, achieve more timely review of development proposals, and improve communication between the County, interested organizations and the public.

The RIAC recently completed a report and the Community Development Agency is convening a workshop to share results and receive input on how the recommendations respond to real life customer experiences with the Community Development Agency’s development review process.

Building professionals and members of the general public are welcome to take part in this meeting.

WORKSHOP
Improving Development Review Process & Customer Service

TUESDAY, July 8TH, 2014
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Marin Health and Wellness Campus
Connection Center Conference Room
3240 Kerner Blvd. San Rafael

The Advisory Committee findings will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for consideration this summer (separate public notice to be provided).

This workshop is not related to the County Housing Element or regional planning initiatives.

More info? Contact Joyce Evans, County of Marin CDA (415) 473-3768.

The Advisory Committee Report is available here: http://www.marincounty.org/RIAC

TIDBITS... a little o’ this, a little o’ that...

According to Captain Shon L. Harris, Marin Area commander of the California Highway Patrol, only 27 out of 81 staff -- 33% -- live in Marin County. In the event of emergency, those out-of-county officers might have a hard time reporting for duty...

... A Glenwood resident has asked us to mention that yardwaste cans should not be put in the street until the night before pickup day; they are a nuisance to traffic and parking. Please ask your gardener to keep the cans on your property till regular pickup...
Before you shop for a new car, try to arrange financing with your bank, credit union or other financial institution to get the best deal.

If you are required to make a deposit, ask whether it is refundable and under what circumstances. Get a firm date for the delivery if the car is not on the dealer’s lot. Make sure this information is included in the contract.

Inspect the vehicle before purchase. Make sure there is no damage to the exterior or interior and that the mileage is not more than what you would expect a new car to have.

Do not sign any documents until you have read and understand them. Make sure there are no blank spaces and all of the verbal promises are included.

Remember the “three-day cooling off period” for canceling a contract does not apply to new or used car purchases.

Used cars typically are sold (private party or dealer) in an “as-is” condition. But under the law you have a right to purchase a “two-day option” (dealer only) to return the vehicle at no additional cost except for what you paid for “the option”.

In a new car purchase, there is no right to rescind – cancel the transaction. You buy it, sign the contract, drive off the lot, it’s yours. The purchaser has no right to return it unless you financed the car and you are turned down for credit under the terms and conditions noted in the contract. That is the only time you can walk away and go back to square one, get your trade-in back, if any, plus any deposit you have put down.

Of course if the car turns out to be a “lemon” during the first 18 months or 18,000 miles for significant defects that can’t be fixed after three or more attempts, you can seek arbitration or litigation to get the manufacturer to take the car back. Just a reminder, lemon law is for new cars and not for used cars.

More info? Contact the district attorney at 499-6495 or www.marincounty.org/da

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**CONSUMER TIP: BUYING A NEW CAR?**

1. Before you shop for a new car, try to arrange financing with your bank, credit union or other financial institution to get the best deal.

2. If you are required to make a deposit, ask whether it is refundable and under what circumstances. Get a firm date for the delivery if the car is not on the dealer’s lot. Make sure this information is included in the contract.

3. Inspect the vehicle before purchase. Make sure there is no damage to the exterior or interior and that the mileage is not more than what you would expect a new car to have.

4. Do not sign any documents until you have read and understand them. Make sure there are no blank spaces and all of the verbal promises are included.

5. Remember the “three-day cooling off period” for canceling a contract does not apply to new or used car purchases.

6. Of course if the car turns out to be a “lemon” during the first 18 months or 18,000 miles for significant defects that can’t be fixed after three or more attempts, you can seek arbitration or litigation to get the manufacturer to take the car back. Just a reminder, lemon law is for new cars and not for used cars.

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**GREEN TIPS ...**

**Kiss Your Gas Goodbye!**

If you’re looking for ways to reduce your family’s environmental impact, head for your garage.

Vehicles produce more than half of a typical household’s carbon dioxide emissions, spewing between 5 and 9 tons of CO₂ into the air each year. As horrific as that sounds, it’s a pollution source that any driver can reduce single-handedly.

The easiest thing is to drive less: walk, ride a bike, or take public transit. And when you do drive, choose a car that relies on battery power (which produces no tailpipe emissions) to supplement gasoline power or replace it altogether. Dozens of models are on the market.

Here is Sierra Club’s rundown of hybrid and electric cars.


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**Reduce Plastic & Greenhouse Gases**

**On the way to Zero Waste**

Now that we use reusable bags for shopping instead of new paper or plastic bags, and we are reducing paper trash with digital subscriptions, we have fewer options to re-purpose plastic or paper to line our garbage cans or contain our trash.

Making the change to a less plasticky lifestyle involves adjusting some old habits – like the convenience of tossing trash into readily available bags – but it can be done. What makes our garbage messy and smelly is wet, greasy and spoiled discarded food. If that material doesn’t go into our garbage cans, what’s left is dry and relatively inoffensive. In Marin we now can put our kitchen waste into our Green Yardwaste Cans for “beneficial re-use” to become compost, and keep the rest of our “waste stream” clean.

Zero Waste requires reducing the amount of stuff we buy that has to be thrown away. The next level is to re-purpose everything possible. Your food waste can find new life as compost for another crop. Your garbage receptacles can remain clean without bagging garbage. And you can help avoid greenhouse gas emissions by keeping food and organic material out of the landfill.

CALENDAR OF BOARD-RELATED MEETINGS

Board of Supervisors Meetings
BOS Chambers, 3501 Civic Center Drive
Suite 330, San Rafael
July 8, 22, 29
See the Supervisors’ meetings archive page http://www.marincounty.org/depts/bs/meeting-archive for starting time and agenda the Thursday before meeting date. This page will also advise dates, times and agenda for Marin Housing Authority meetings.

Marin Transit District All board meetings and public hearings will be held in the Marin Civic Center, BOS Chambers (Room 330 on the 3rd floor) unless noted. Regular meetings are the third Monday of the month at 10:00 am. http://www.marintransit.org/boardmeetings.html

Transportation Authority of Marin All board meetings will be held in the Marin Civic Center, BOS Chambers (Room 330 on the 3rd floor) unless noted. Regular meetings are the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm http://www.tam.ca.gov

HOMELESS POLICY STEERING COMMITTEE
Sept. 18, 3:30-5pm, Connection Center-Wellness Campus, Rm 109/110

Master Calendar on the County website: http://www.marincounty.org/main/calendar

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DISTRICT 1 “News & Views” is published monthly. DISTRICT 1 “Fast Flash” is published when there is “important news that can’t wait”
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All County publications are available in alternative formats (Braille, Large Print, or CD), upon request. Requests for accommodations may be made by calling (415) 473-4381 (Voice) 473-3232 (TDD/TTY) or by e-mail at disabilityaccess@marincounty.org at least four work days in advance of the event.
Copies of documents are available in alternative formats, upon request.