

FRANKLY SPEAKING

A NEWSLETTER FOR AND BY MARIN COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Just Like C.S.I.—Just Not As Often

By Ken Holmes—Coroner

The Coroner's Office doesn't solve cases in one hour, minus the commercials, but the techniques used are the same as on C.S.I. and just as intriguing. In the everyday operation of this small office of seven, the opportunities to employ television tactics don't spring up often. Widely recognized for looking into

accidents and other mishaps, the Coroner has many lesser-known responsibilities that occupy a significant amount of time. ■ Easily 60% of the cases handled are natural deaths that, for one reason or another, must be reported to the



L to R: Gary Tindel, Pam Carter, Jeff Sherman, and Jane Christensen

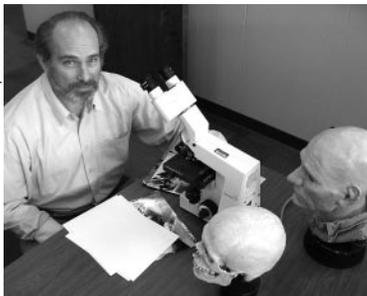
Photo by office staff

Coroner. Heart disease continues to be the most likely cause of death in Marin, followed by diseases of the lungs, then of the gastro-intestinal tract. ■ We are genealogists without the luxury of time. Unidentified people present great challenges to the Coroner's investigator,

who must not only seek their identities, but then locate and notify next of kin. State and national databases provide assistance in establishing positive identifications. Fingerprints, dental records, DNA, and other methods to

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Photo by Darrell Harris



Coroner Ken Holmes

Passport to Freedom

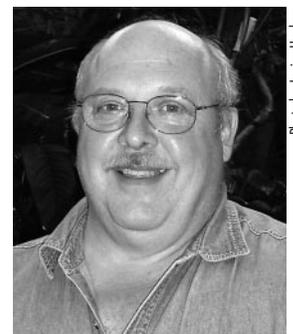
By Margaret Bohan—DPW

Tad handed over his Polish passport to the border guards and sat down in the station waiting room. Pretending to doze, he shifted positions occasionally and glanced through the window of the border policeman's office and saw him watching. The precious passport sat on the policeman's desk. Tad feigned fatigue, closing his eyes nonchalantly. After an interminable five-hour wait, the police chief handed the passport back and Tad, breathing silent relief, was free to board the train once more. So began **Tadeusz Zakrocki's** journey to Marin. ■ Now a successful Traffic Engineering Assistant with DPW, Tad has come a long way and overcome many obstacles to reach this status. Born at the height of the Cold War in the historic city of Krakow, Poland, under Russian domination, Tad gravitated towards engineering in high school. Barred from college because of his family's high social and intellectual standing, Tad worked in local government road and streetcar maintenance six days a week while studying at night. Five years later, he graduated from polytechnic college with a civil engineering degree. ■ The rise of the Solidarity union movement in the late 1970's led to civil

unrest in Poland. From the shipyards of Gdansk to the coal mines in the south, rebellion against the communist dictatorship spread. Tad's father was questioned by secret police several times, and Tad learned he himself soon would be arrested.

Broadcasts from Radio Free Europe indicated Russian troops were surrounding the Polish borders. Tad obtained a passport by bribing the local police. Even now, tears spring to his eyes when he relates how he packed a suitcase and kissed his wife and 4-year-old son, Marcin, goodbye. With his school chum, Jan, he traveled by train to Vienna. Tad's wife and son soon followed, crossing the border just days before it closed. ■ After about eight months, sponsored by his sister in Terra Linda, Tad and his family found themselves in Marin with no money, no job, and no English. Recognizing the need to learn the language, they all enrolled in Indian Valley College's

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Tad Zakrocki

Photo by Janice Hughes

Now a successful Traffic Engineering Assistant with DPW, Tad has come a long way and overcome many obstacles to reach this status.

FRANKLY SPEAKING

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Frankly Speaking is a quarterly publication for and by Marin County employees. Send articles, cartoons, photos, poems, etc., to **Joan Brown**, HR, Room 407, Civic Center. E-mail info to jbrown@co.marin.ca.us or send a disk using Microsoft Word, with hard copy attached. Identify disk with subject, your name and phone number. On photos, include all names and the name of the photographer. Digital photos must be shot at the highest quality setting.

Reporter of the Quarter: Colleen Weems

Schedule

<i>Articles Due</i>	<i>Publication Date</i>
June 8	August 6, 2004
September 7	October 29, 2004

Photo by Colleen Weems

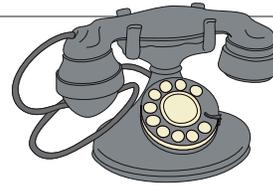


Out of the spire and onto the roof. The south end of the Civic Center recently became home to a family of faux owls, put in place to discourage wayward pigeons from taking up residence in the eaves of the Civic Center.

FRANKLY SPEAKING *Purpose and Priorities*
 COMMUNICATION • DIVERSITY • RECOGNITION • EDUCATION • NEWS • FUN • INTERACTION

The Marin County newsletter is intended for internal communication. The newsletter will not include partisan or non-partisan political activity, or issues related to labor disputes and grievances.

Got Urdu?



By Sue Kettmann—H&HS

The person in front of the reception desk is speaking a language no one in your office has heard before, and clearly does not understand English or any of the other languages spoken by your co-workers. Fortunately, there is a better solution to this problem than trying to get the message through pantomime or just shrugging your shoulders with the hope that the person gets it. ■ The receptionist gives the person a card bearing a list of different languages. The person’s face lights up as she points to her language. Now help is just a phone call away. ■ Last year Health and Human Services (H&HS) initiated a pilot program with Language Line, a Monterey-based international language company that provides real-time interpreter services by telephone in over 140 languages. In December, H&HS reported to the Board of Supervisors that the pilot program was overwhelmingly successful and recommended a trial expansion countywide. ■ Language Line is easily accessed through an 800-number telephone call. The caller identifies the language needed and is connected to a bilingual interpreter, usually within minutes. In addition to services for Spanish and Vietnamese customers, H&HS staff utilized translation services for Farsi, French, Korean, Portuguese, Punjabi, Tagalog, and Urdu. ■ Early this summer, a Language Line pilot will be rolled out in all Marin County departments. It will be implemented and funded through Telephone Services in the Information Services and Technology department. Watch for information and a schedule of meetings about the rollout of this exciting addition to customer service tools for Marin County employees. ■

Editorial Board Changes

The *Frankly Speaking* Editorial Board expresses its appreciation to **Kimberly Pitman** (H&HS), a charter member of the *Frankly Speaking* Editorial Board who has made invaluable contributions during her eight years on the board with her penetrating questions, superb follow-through, and broad knowledge. She will be sorely missed.

The Editorial Board welcomes **Heather Burton**, a Technology Support Analyst II with the Auditor–Controller’s Office. Heather has been with the county for two years, working on a countywide project to replace the current financial systems. She brings her love of writing, big-picture thinking, and capability for critical analysis, and the Editorial Board looks forward to her contributions from the perspective of a relatively new employee.



Heather Burton

Photo by Janice Hughes

81% Solution and Growing

By Jennifer Walter—Treas/Tax

Marin County employees are doing an outstanding job of recycling, salvaging more than 81% of reusable material! Keep up the good work by continuing to put paper and cardboard into the blue “toter” bins, and glass, aluminum, and plastic into the appropriate containers located around the Administration Building, Hall of Justice, and other county buildings. Contact Custodial Services at 499-6573 to dispose of large boxes, and call the Department of Public Works, Division of Waste Management at 499-6647 to handle classified or confidential material. Contact your copier maintenance service provider to recycle Hewlett-Packard and Canon printer cartridges. ■ Thanks for doing your part to preserve our environment! ■



Pamela Cringle (Treas/Tax)



Susan Francis (Treas/Tax)

Photos by Jennifer Walter

Photos by Janice Hughes



Rita Widergren



Avery Goldman

Top of the Year

By Shirley Trimble—HR/CCV

Two outstanding medical people were honored by the Board of Supervisors on April 27. **Rita Widergren**, R.N., P.H.N. (H&HS) was honored as Outstanding Supervisor of Volunteers for 2003-2004, and **Avery Goldman**, M.D. (H&HS and POS&CS) as the Outstanding Volunteer of the Year. ■ Rita, a Public Health Nurse, supervises Project Independence volunteers who assist newly discharged patients to transition from hospital to home. She demonstrates boundless, upbeat energy, dedication, and a belief in people. "Rita brings a richness of experience and expertise in home care. She inspires people to participate and backs up her volunteers and problem-solves with them. Project Independence has been an incredible success," says **Liz Rottger**, Division of Aging Program Manager. Four of six of Rita's adult children and two grandchildren joined her at the celebration. ■ Avery Goldman exemplifies excellence in his

two volunteer positions. A retired physician and director of the nursing home program for Kaiser Hospital, San Rafael, he is an ombudsman for Social Services (H&HS). He visits patients, monitors care, and investigates and helps to resolve concerns regarding resident care. Also a Frank Lloyd Wright enthusiast and docent with Visitor Services, Avery leads regular tours for visitors from all over the

Two outstanding medical people were honored by the Board of Supervisors on April 27.

world. In addition, he single-handedly developed and executed a training plan for, then orchestrated tours of the Civic Center for last year's Frank Lloyd Wright National Conservancy conference. He was acclaimed for his "tireless, cheerful work on the seamless execution of an extremely complicated plan." ■



Illustration by Phoenicia Thomas

PETTERLE'S PERSPECTIVE

By Steve Petterle—POS&CS

A group of visitors has just passed the entrance gate to Frank Lloyd Wright's Marin County Civic Center "Administration Wing" (don't get me started on that again). They pause for a moment and look around. They ask questions at the information booth. Their faces are filled with wonder as they step gingerly onto the escalator. Their excitement and anticipation is obvious. Slowly, the escalator moves forward, ascending steadily into this incredible building until they arrive on the second floor. Here, there are no directional signs, no indicators outlining their path of travel. And despite the wonderful information they received at the booth downstairs, confusion intrudes. Now the visitors, overwhelmed by Mr. Wright's spectacular creation, are uncertain about where to go, which direction to head. ■ Imagine for a moment Marin County "greeters" at the top of the escalator. They might be dressed to reflect the Civic Center motif in Cherokee red slacks, a tan shirt and a dome-blue vest. They could shake the hands of visitors as they disembark from the escalator. "Welcome to Frank Lloyd Wright's Marin County Civic Center," they might say. "May I be of service in providing direction?" they would ask. And one by one, each visitor could ask questions. "Where's the library?" or "Can you point out the cafeteria?" or "How do I get to the court floor?" And each question would be answered in turn. A greeter would kiss babies, point out photo opportunities, and even take pictures of couples who have no one else to hold the camera, yet wish to have their visit commemorated. ■ At the top of the escalator, there would be hugging and there would be tears, addresses and telephone numbers would be exchanged, friendships formed, memories created. And the greeters would greet and greet and continue to greet as long as there would be people who wished to visit the Civic Center for business or for pleasure. ■ And that would be a good thing. ■

Photo by Cindy Brown



Sixteen Japanese exchange students from Dominican University volunteered their time at the county's McInnis Park in January as part of the county parks' volunteer program. They planted penstemon, Mexican sage, and myoporum in the area by the canal path. The volunteers and staff worked through the language barrier to have a lot of fun. Ranger **Jen Pagram** (POS&CS) did a great job of showing them how to dig holes, put in fertilizer, loosen the roots, and then plant.

Star Team Leads Therapeutic Justice

By Brenda Frechette—H&HS

The court is designed to provide the structure and positive incentives needed to help participants avoid arrest and further incarceration.

There is a growing concern in the nation that our jails are becoming the treatment facilities of last resort for people with mental illness caught in cycles of re-incarceration. ■ Marin County first began to address this phenomenon 25 years ago when the Sheriff's Department and Community Mental Health joined together to provide psychiatric stabilization and medication treatment at the Marin County Jail. The jail mental health team (Crisis Specialists **Richard Dunkel** and **Michael Syroid** and Psychiatrist Dr. **Peter Vaughney**) currently works with an average of 90 to 110 inmates a month. ■ Many incarcerated individuals with mental illness have committed "survival crimes" or other nonviolent crimes related to their mental illness. Recent county interdepartmental efforts have focused on decreasing recidivism by providing ongoing outpatient treatment, structure, and support once these individuals are released from jail. ■ The Marin County Behavioral Health/Criminal Justice Committee works behind the scenes to develop policy and catalyze interdepartmental collaborations. Chaired by Supervisor **Susan Adams** (BOS), the committee comprises the criminal justice offices (Probation, District Attorney, Public Defender, Sheriff, and Courts); the Marin County Office of Education; Health and Human Services Division Directors of Mental Health, Health Services, Social Services, and Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco; San Rafael Police Department; and private sector representatives. This team effort

developed the groundwork that resulted in the state's awarding the Marin County Sheriff's Department a two-and-a-half year research grant to provide services for those with severe mental illness who are incarcerated. This is called the STAR (Support and Treatment After Release) case management program. This grant ends on June 30. ■ "Jim" is one of those individuals whose life has been changed due to this collaborative team effort. He grew up in Marin and was named an All-American in sports. He married in his teens, but his personality began to change and he was soon divorced. He slowly slipped away into a life of homelessness that lasted over 20 years. The local business community tried to support him through providing odd jobs in exchange for food. His behavior became more frightening (sometimes violent, threatening, and paranoid, sometimes confused and mumbling), he was often soaked in urine, and he was arrested and jailed numerous times. After being referred to STAR, Jim was hospitalized, and eventually put on conservatorship. Now he lives back in the community, at a group home, and is attending College of Marin. ■ STAR is unique in that it brings together staff from the Sheriff's Department, Mental Health, Health Services, and Probation, allowing for a coordinated team meeting daily with the same clients. The team consists of Mental Health Case Managers **Arinn Olson**, **Eli Grego**, and **Tom Forray**; Deputy Probation Officers **Lisa Turk** and **Vinnie**

Nahmens; Psychiatrist **Gail Clinton**; Nurse **Claudia Moore**; Deputy Sheriff **Carl McCosker**; and Administrative Assistant **Sam Rosales**. Other team members are Michele Deberge, a peer provider with Community Action Marin, Connie Borges with Ritter House, and Officer Joel Fay of the San Rafael Police Department. This intensive model provides the consistency and structure that clients with mental illness need to improve and truly change their lives. ■ Although the grant ends in June, Probation, the Sheriff's Department, and Mental Health have committed the county positions needed to keep the STAR program going, although at a reduced level. Due to the efforts of a grant-writing team headed by **Diane Slager** (CMH), the Marin Community Foundation is providing the rest of the funds needed to provide services for one more year. ■ What's the next step? Mental Health Court began April 8. Judge **Verna Adams** presides, with **Christine O'Hanlon** as the Deputy Public Defender. **Pamela Bousquet** is the Deputy District Attorney. The STAR team provides coordination, case management, and treatment. Participation is limited to enrolled STAR clients convicted of misdemeanors who want to take part, and have been approved by the District Attorney. Clients must meet the STAR program criteria, which include severe mental illness, eligibility for financial assistance, and Marin County residency. The court is designed to provide the structure and positive incentives needed to help participants avoid arrest and further incarceration. ■

Editor's note:

The author of this article, Brenda Frechette (H&HS), is interim supervisor of Jail Mental Health, STAR, and Coordinator of the Mental Health Court.



Photo by Janice Hughes

Employees celebrating 20, 25, 30, and 35 years of service were honored February 24 at the annual Employee Length of Service Awards ceremony. Pictured here are the 30 and 35 year honorees in attendance.

L to R: Dwain Johnson (H&HS, 35), Melanie Phelps (H&HS, 30), Jim Taylor (Probation, 30), Lynn Rivers Murray (Library, 30), George Buckle (DPW, 35), Mark Riesenfeld (CAO, 30), Marilyn Wronsky (Library, 30), and Maryellen Taylor (H&HS, 30).

Fair has the Wright Theme

By Steve Petterle—POS&CS

The 2004 Marin County Fair is on the Wright track—the Frank Lloyd Wright track. The 59th version of the event, opening Thursday, July 1 and running through Monday, July 5, will celebrate the legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Marin County Civic Center campus. ■ In order to tell the story, a team of Marin's finest, including Supervisor **Annette Rose**, Fair Manager **Jim Farley**, **Grace Holley**, **Charlie Barboni**, **Dick Tipping** (POS&CS), **Anne Ording** (DPW), and **Laurie Thompson** (Library), combined their skills to create the "Wright Pavilion." Working closely with Taliesin West (Frank Lloyd Wright's Scottsdale home and architectural school), they assembled all the Wright

stuff, selecting just the Wright drawings, models, photographs, and other memorabilia for display during the fair. The Berger House, Frank Lloyd Wright's other Marin creation, will be there as well, reproduced in "interconnecting blocks." There will be films, a gift center, and an interactive architecture play area to complete the experience. ■ Perhaps the most unusual feature will be the appearance of Frank Lloyd Wright himself (played by John Crowther) in a theatrical presentation, entitled *The Tragedies and Triumphs of Frank Lloyd Wright*. Two shows a day in the Showcase Theatre will allow fair-goers an opportunity to experience the architect up-close and personal. ■



Photo by Joan Brown

L to R: Jim Farley, Laurie Thompson, Annette Rose, Grace Holley, and exhibit designer Richard Graef review original plans of the Berger House in preparation for a fair exhibit.

And then there are the normal, everyday trappings of the Marin County Fair, including free entertainment (Tower of Power, the Village People, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, and War), free carnival rides, gardens, art, and bonsai! And food! ■ Take friends and family to the 2004 Marin County Fair. It's the Wright thing to do! ■



Frankly Speaking's own graphic designer, Rob Roehrick, created this year's Fair poster.

A significant step forward was taken recently as the Board of Supervisors approved Mill Valley architect Mark Cavagnero and Mill Valley landscape architect Manuela King of Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey, to execute the new master plan for the Marin Center. It is a project of the Marin Center Renaissance Partnership, a public/private venture to create the vision and raise funds for upgrades to Marin Veterans' Memorial Auditorium.

Who's Working Next Door?

By Sue Kettmann—H&HS

Do you know who is working next door to you? Over the last year, Health and Human Services (H&HS) staff has been shuffled in and out of 10 and 20 N. San Pedro to create Administration/Fiscal and Adult Services Administration hubs, both of which will provide for better program coordination. The last staff moved in just before the end of December, and on February 26, H&HS celebrated with a lunch party that had an unusual theme. The "Get to Know Your Neighbors" progressive luncheon and scavenger hunt found over 150



L to R: Zarina Raheemulla, Rosalind Tuthill, Chris Schuepbach, Elizabeth Thompson, Denise Martinez

staff wandering through both buildings during the lunch hour. They were greeted by open doors, program information, and a fabulous array of finger foods and desserts. A scavenger hunt with prizes challenged staff to identify designated "mystery" offices such as Vital Statistics, Public Guardian, Adult



Photos by Judy Williams

L to R: Jayne Carpenter, Marlene Reed, Luz Ortega, Vicki Nightingale

Services/Ombudsman, and the office of the Director. ■ To the refrains of, "I've talked to you on the phone!" and "I never knew you were right next door!" staff ate, drank, and merrily learned about the people and resources right next door. The event was such an overwhelming success that it will become an annual holiday celebration. ■

Congratulations to **Marilyn Ashley** (Courts) and **Pedro Oliveros** (PD), who were recently given plaques by the drug court team, recognizing their service as Adult Drug Court Team members, 2001–2004. ■

Photo by Josie Centeno



David Brown of the Public Defender's Office presents recently retired Chief Deputy Public Defender Frank Cox with the conditions of his "parole."

Recently retired Chief Deputy Public Defender **Frank Cox** and former Marin Public Defender **Harold Truett** became the initial recipients of their namesake award, The Harold J. Truett–Frank J. Cox Award for excellence in representing criminal defendants who can't afford their own attorney. Hal, the public defender for the first decade after the agency was created in the '70s, reunited with Frank who was one of his first hires. The four last attorneys Hal hired who are still in the office, **Gail O'Connor**, **Glenn Becker**, **Jim Nielsen**, and **Marta Osterloh**, along with Public Defender **Joe Spaeth**, presented the award during a party celebrating Frank's 33-year tenure. Alumni attorneys from as far away as Nevada City came to the celebration. ■

Tieng Keovanxat (Courts) went on a trailblazing tour of west Asia for over a month. Departing with her mother and aunt on January 28, Tieng traveled to Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. Some of the places she visited were Bangkok in Thailand, Da Nang in Vietnam, and Pakse', her hometown in Laos. In Pakse', she spent one night at The Southern Palace, which used to belong to her family. Some of her other accommodations were not as posh. She returned February 25, thankful for modern conveniences! ■

Gregory Fearon, well-known for short DVD budget presentations for H&HS at the BOS, completed a 75-minute DVD documentary (*Coastal Trail Expedition*) about ten coastwalkers' who hiked from Oregon to Mexico last summer. Find info on www.coastwalk.org. ■

Congratulations to brand new parents **Kathy Harrington** (IST) and Chris Carlton, who welcomed their daughter, Audrey Rose, on December 6. **Jennifer Vuillermet** (Co. Counsel) and her husband, Eric, welcomed baby Zoe, born February 2. Little Zoe made her acquaintance with her attorney friends when she was 5 days old. A son, Darren, was born to **Lisa DeAsis Lee** (DPW) and husband Derrick on February 4, and **Ken Corley** (Probation) and his wife, Kelly, had a son, Bobby, February 26. Two DPW babies arrived on the same day to the delight of families and co-workers. On March 8, son Cade Thomas was born to **John Neville** (DPW) and wife Catherine, and **Liz Johnson** (DPW) gave birth to little Quentin Michael. ■



Farhad Mansourian

Photo by Theo Do

An "Over the Hill" February lunch and "roast" were held in honor of **Farhad Mansourian's** (DPW) 50th birthday. Joining him were his wife, Mariam, and 75 employees, all invited by **Elly Ferrell** (DPW), the Charlotte Swig of the department. Guests wore black and the cake was decorated with black roses. ■

After the completion of the photovoltaic system installation on the general services building, **Gwen Johnson** (CDA) took a break with a lengthy tour of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand. Upon her return, she participated in the dedication ceremony for the county's first large-scale solar electric system. The main speaker was Dr. Donald Aitken, recipient of the "World Solar Award" and affiliate faculty member of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, who commended Marin County on its utilization of renewable energy resources. ■

Hawaii aficionado **Mari-Ann Rivers** (Co. Counsel) displayed her non-legal skills performing in "Ke Kaona...Hula Revealed" at Marin Center in March. ■

Photo by Lori Murphy



Phyllis Callahan and friend Pat Jay enjoy taking tea at the Ritz.

After spending a week in Paris among the baguettes, brie, and champagne, eating a tuna fish sandwich for lunch will not be the same for **Phyllis Callahan** (DPW). (She notes that "Versailles was an incredible adventure, finally seeing the Hall of Mirrors, Marie Antoinette's bedroom, the gardens...Sacre-Coeur.") On her last night, the cabdriver kissed her hand as she exited the cab—when was the last time that happened in San Francisco?! ■

In honor of National Public Health Week, the Public Health Division of H&HS presented Public Health Heroes Awards on April 8 to: Canal School Readiness Initiative; Marin County Homeless Outreach Program; Marin Food Systems Project; San Geronimo Valley Healthy Community Collaborative; STAR Team (see pg. 4); and the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program/Teen Tuesday Clinic. They represent community partnerships working to eliminate health disparities in the county. ■

Nancy Turner's (Courts) grandson arrived six weeks early, just in time for Christmas. Brendan Michael weighed in at 4 lb., 13 oz. on December 23, born to Nancy's son and daughter-in-law, Kyle and Cristina. **Maria Baker** (H&HS) and **Jack Baker** (DPW) also greeted their new grandson, Ryder Liam, on January 20. **Rick Carlsen's** (DPW) granddaughter, Brynna, arrived on March 9. ■

Photo by Lav Intrachit



Tieng Keovanxat at That Luang and on Highway 9 into Vietnam

Photo by Janice Hughes



Busy mom at Civic Center cafe pool.

Please e-mail information on the people in your dept. to Odds & Ends columnist Margaret Bohan, DPW, mbohan@co.marin.ca.us or fax her at 499-3799.

Workin' on the Nightshift

By Cathy Selmi—IST

Every hour of every day, the County of Marin is working for you. Health workers staff clinics 24 hours a day. Firefighters and sheriff's deputies protect Marin and its residents around the clock. Custodial staff cleans and polishes all the nooks and crannies at the Civic Center. The jail is staffed 24/7, not only by deputies but also by food services, custodial, and health workers. What is the night shift, and what makes a person decide to work this shift? ■ Before the use of electricity, most work came to a halt at sundown. It's hard to plow a field or build a house in the dark. As electric lights began to illuminate our homes, they also lit up office buildings and factories. Many industries realized they could save money by running their operations around the clock, decreasing down time and utilizing equipment more efficiently. During World War II, round-the-clock shift work was used to support the war effort. ■ Today, shift workers can work any number of schedules. The Marin County Fire Department works a 24-on, 24-off schedule. The Sheriff's Department works 12-hour shifts. Health & Human Services' workers frequently work 12-hour rotations while others are on 8-, 9-, or 10-hour shifts. Some people rotate their schedules between day and evening shifts while others work the swing shift (3–11 p.m.) or graveyard (11 p.m.–7 a.m.) exclusively. ■ Let's meet some of these people. **Jennifer Cetrangolo** has been a deputy sheriff since September 2002. She is currently on a six-month evening rotation (7 p.m. to 7 a.m.) at the jail. Jennifer works three days in a row, then has three days off. The following

week she works four days on, then has four days off. She says, "Each team has its own dynamic. My co-workers are the best thing about this shift." ■ **Andrew Smith** has been with the Sheriff's Department for ten years, and currently is a deputy sheriff. Andy has worked nights 90% of the time. "If I worked days, I'd leave the house about the time my children are getting up in the morning and would return home after they're in bed at night. Working nights, I'm able to spend time with my family." He says the best part of his job is the people he works with. The hardest thing for deputies to get used to is trying to sleep during the day. ■

**In recognition of their service,
May 12 is designated as
National Nightshift Workers Day.**

Jason Weber is a paramedic with Marin County Fire. Jason works 24 hours on, then 24 hours off for six days after which he has four days off. An average day for Jason and his team consists of about seven calls a day. Turnaround time for a single call is a minimum of two hours. The rest of their shift is filled with training, equipment checks, paperwork, and maybe a nap. Each team prepares and eats meals together, works out together and if they're lucky, they grab a few hours of sleep in the evenings. "Coming to work every day," is what he likes best about his job. ■ The Building Maintenance division of Public Works provides maintenance and custodial services to 53 county facilities. **Jim Zortman** says the custodial staff on swing and midnight shifts also serve as building



Photo by Don Keydon

Jason Weber at the tail end of a 72-hour shift

security. Many interviewed for this article said working at night is a more relaxed atmosphere and less hectic than day shift and gives people the ability to spend some daylight hours time with their families. ■ Health and Human Services provides many services around the clock. Child Welfare Worker **Raul Munoz** supervises a unique team that works days and serves on-call evenings providing a 24-hour emergency response to hotline (499-7153) calls. These calls regard suspected child abuse, or when children's parents or guardians are taken into custody and the children



Photo by Judy Williams

H&HS's Raul Munoz and Lorry Krone

would be left alone. **Lorry Krone** in Child Protective Services says the best thing about providing after-hours support is the opportunity to help kids in trouble. ■ We appreciate the services provided by folks willing to work non-day shifts. Their contributions and dedication contribute to the health and safety of all of us. May 12 is designated as National Nightshift Workers Day in recognition of their service. ■

One to Grow On

Have you ever wanted a beautiful garden, with colorful flowers and prize-winning vegetables? Now is your chance to learn how to create a healthy garden naturally. Classes sponsored by the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on May 22 at the Kentfield Campus of College of Marin, and on June 5 at the Hill Community Room in Novato. **Gina Purin** (DPW) says the \$30 fee includes your own worm compost bin, resource binder, bug chart, native plant guide, and pest plant brochure. To reserve a space, call **Colleen Rose** (DPW) at 507-2745.

Employee Team of the Quarter

By Phil Smith—CDA

For years, water quality at public recreational swimming beaches and streams has been of interest to many groups, including government agencies and the public. ■ Following a successful pilot program in 2002, Environmental Health Services (EHS) received a grant to run a full-scale program in 2003. A work plan and budget were developed to monitor, and make available to the public, a broad spectrum of water quality data representing the types and uses of recreational beaches in Marin. War in Iraq meant that senior inspector **Ed Megia** was called to serve in the military and wouldn't be leading the effort as planned. ■ **Robert Turner** and **Becky Tuden** of EHS stepped in to coordinate an outstanding team, including **Bruce McCarthy**, **Emma Deshazo**, **Joanne O'Grady**, and **Nancy Short** and sampler **Eulogio Rodas**. ■ While EHS coordinated the weekly water sampling by state and federal agencies, and several non-profits, **Kay Flink** and **Kim Hansard** analyzed the samples in the county lab.



L to R: Emma Deshazo, Becky Tuden, Robert Turner, Kim Hansard, Steve Petterle, Kay Flink, and Nancy Short. Not pictured: Bruce McCarthy and Joanne O'Grady.

Steve Petterle served as liaison with Parks & Open Space. Sampling results were used to give advisories to the public both on a 24-hour hotline and a website. Thanks to everyone for a fantastic job! ■

Grassroots Cultural Diversity

L to R: Christina Thomas, Leighann Jorin, Mark Jacobs, Sue Kettmann, Marian Esver, Lori Goldwyn, Ned Kroeger, Yzaida Miranda, Carisa Wilder, and Cesar Lagleva

Photo by Judy Williams



By Lori Goldwyn—H&HS

The Health and Human Services Department (H&HS) has been a pioneer in recognizing and valuing diversity in its operations. Beyond the obvious goal of having a workforce that reflects the community, H&HS has taken positive steps to address the underlying challenges that diversity presents. ■ In 2002, Director Dr. **Larry Meredith** convened a group of staff to begin a series of discussions about the implications of diversity within H&HS. The richness of the dialogues and exchanges of information and ideas prompted the development of a pilot group called the Cultural Competence Committee. Today's operating committee began last year with Larry's appointment of 16 ethnically and culturally diverse

staff from across all divisions. The committee's dual purpose is to advise H&HS on cultural competence issues, and offer the support and education needed to maintain a healthy, diverse workforce based on mutual respect. ■ The committee currently is examining the benefits and challenges of diversity in the department and is developing a

long-range vision for the coming years. In addition, it networks with other groups within county government that deal with diversity issues. At a recent meeting with the committee's co-chairs, Larry said, "It is gratifying to see the emergence of a grassroots, employee-initiated committee that is recognized and supported throughout the organization. It represents a growth opportunity for us to dissolve the artificial barriers, misunderstandings, and tensions that sometimes divide us. There is no question that the work of this committee enables us to better serve all of our clients, both external and internal." ■ For more information about the Cultural Competence Committee, contact H&HS co-chairs **Lori Goldwyn**, **Cesar Lagleva**, and **Christina Thomas**, or **Sue Kettmann** in Administration. Also, check out the Cultural Competence link on the H&HS website on the MINE. ■

Enter & Win Ninth Annual Vacation Photo Contest



Employees must be either the photographer or in the photo taken anytime since the fall of 2003. Previous participants are welcome! Any size or format (including high-res. digital) is welcome and should be submitted to **Janice Hughes** c/o DA Office, Room 130, or jhughes@co.marin.ca.us by September 7, 2004. Winning photos will be published in the Fourth Quarter *Frankly Speaking*, displayed in the Civic Center Cafe, and awarded prizes!

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Photo by Janice Hughes



JON WRIGHT

JANUARY

Starting as a Park Ranger with Parks and Open Space at the County of Marin in 1987, **Jon Wright** transferred to the Department of Public Works in 1993. As Building Maintenance Worker, Jon's excellent service has extended to just about every county building, including the jail, juvenile hall, and libraries. He also maintains the flood control pump stations and has done an outstanding job of keeping everything running well. Certified in pest control application, Jon serves on the county's Integrated Pest Management Commission. He co-managed the Gness Field airport in Novato and now supervises workers assigned from the Adult Offender Work Program. Jon leads by example and is highly respected among his peers. His willingness and ability to assume multiple tasks and responsibilities with a "can do" attitude, together with his enthusiastic personality, have made Jon invaluable to the Public Works Department, and we are very proud to have him.

By Margaret Bohan—DPW

Photo by Janice Hughes



MELONI GAIL PAGE

FEBRUARY

Meloni Gail Page, Personnel Technician, is a 21-year employee of the Human Resources Department. She has a "customer first!" approach to her work; her personal belief is that her job is not to explain, but to make sure the other person understands. Whether answering benefits questions or handling payroll issues, Meloni Gail shares her knowledge and expertise with clarity and kindness. She is one of the first contacts for new employees through the first-rate benefits orientation program that she co-leads biweekly. ■ Meloni Gail has served on the Customer Service Core Group as part of the County of Marin's Strategic Plan, and also works with a team of employees which is helping to develop a more efficient financial and payroll system for the county. ■ On a personal note, she is the proud mom of a high school basketball star, Zabrianna "Zay" Harrell, and loves spending time with her large extended family.

By Basia Tolszik Chiappolini—HR

Photo by Judy Williams



JUDY LOPEZ

MARCH

Judy Lopez, Sr. Clerk/Typist-Bilingual, has worked for the County of Marin for 10 years in H&HS, Public Health Tuberculosis Control. She is energetic, manages a high volume of telephone calls and clients, and processes an endless stream of paperwork, letters, and charts. Her outstanding work, positive attitude, and approachable manner greatly encourage collaboration among her co-workers. When Judy greets the clinic's clients, she often recalls names and personal stories by heart. With her easy manner and exceptional interpersonal skills, Judy readily establishes rapport with our patients. She listens to them and goes the extra mile to ensure that they have access to necessary health care services. Although the clinic sees a large number of clients, Judy is always pleasant and respectful, finding time to help them navigate the health care maze. Judy is an employee we can always trust to give 150% and is an integral part of our clinical operations.

By James Villella—H&HS



Photo by Joan Brown



Congratulations!

L to R: Liz Paris, Danielle Romo, Laura Armor, Diane Ooms, and Helen Stepler showcase the national award the Human Resources Training and Development Team received from the Franklin Covey Company for innovative implementation and follow-up activities of the Lessons in Leadership training initiative. They were in good company, as one of only eight organizations receiving an award. Other award recipients included the Honda Corporation, Pfizer, Inc., and the U.S. Marine Corps.

An Adoption Story—Three's a Charm

Photo by Cori Hult



Tom Vagird, wife Marion, and family dogs Molly and Max

Marin County seeks foster-adoptive families, particularly for school-age children. Tom is available to talk with anyone considering adoption. He can be reached at 499-6162.

For additional information, please call 499-7118 and ask for the Adoptions Social Worker.

By Bettina Murphy & Chua Chao—H&HS

Tom Vagird, an auditor with the county for the past eight years, and his wife, Marion, are proud parents of three children they are adopting through the foster care system. The Vagirds' journey to parenthood started about four years ago. After exploring the different adoption avenues, they decided to get licensed as foster-adoptive parents through their local public foster care and adoption agencies. They finally completed all the necessary paperwork in the spring of 2001. About four months later they received a call from their social worker about two siblings, ages 3 and 5, who were in need of a foster-adoptive home. Shortly thereafter, Tom

and Marion were introduced to Tasha and Daniel. There was instant attraction between the children and their prospective parents. About a year later, their older sister joined the family. ■ Tom and Marion have encountered many challenges in managing their "instant family." The children came from a very difficult environment and needed time and patience to build trust in adults. Tom observes that, "They can really push your buttons." Tom and Marion present a united front in providing structure and discipline, and use humor whenever possible to diffuse stress. Tom and Marion's relationship has grown stronger through parenting the children, and that positive relationship serves as an anchor for the children. ■ Tasha, 6, is a typical "type A alpha personality" who has informed Tom that "girls are better than boys." Daniel, 8, is a rough-and-tumble kid who loves sports. Teresa, 11, is very verbal, and openly talks about her feelings. All three adoptions are to be final in May. ■

(Editor's note: Foster parents care for children temporarily, from a few days to several years. Foster-adoptive parents provide foster care, but also are prepared to adopt if the child cannot be returned to the birth parent or family.)

Passport...

Continued from page 1

English as a Second Language program. Tad says his most difficult adjustment has been learning the language. He took any job he could, from house painting to landscape maintenance to dishwashing at Café Vienna. As his English proficiency grew, Tad began to read newspapers and discovered the county's Civic Center Volunteer program, headed by Joan Brown (HR). Joan referred him to Clara Arvai (DPW), now retired, and under her guidance Tad's volunteer experience started with engineering drawings. Eventually he was hired into a drafting position and the rest is history! (In February, he was honored at the Board of Supervisors Length of Service Recognition Ceremony for 20 years with the county.) ■ He gets indignant with

people who complain there is no freedom of speech in California. "It is shocking to me that people say we have a problem with freedom. They do not know—they should go to Poland for one year, go to work and earn what the wages are in Poland," he says. ■ Nowadays, Tad and his wife live quietly, bringing up their three children. Son Marcin is studying law at Hastings College and will spend his summer volunteering in the Marin County Counsel's Office. Daughter Madzia is a student at Santa Rosa JC, and daughter Anna is a talented, artistic senior in high school. Tad hopes that his children have a bright future. ■ As he positions the radar trailer to alert motorists to their speed and maintains traffic lights in the unincorporated areas, Tad sometimes reflects that from Vienna to Café Vienna, his life has turned 180 degrees. ■

"It is shocking to me that people say we have a problem with freedom..."

Roving Reporter

By Connie Siebler—Assessor's Office

"In honor of National Safety Week, what is your best safety advice?"

Chris Godley
(Sheriff, OES):

"Don't drive through deep water when it's rainy. If you can't see underneath, don't try to cross. We strongly urge people to make an emergency plan with their families. Decide where to go. We suggest an out-of-state contact. Prepare a disaster kit."



Photos by Connie Siebler

Scott Tipton

(Sheriff, Fire Dispatch): "If you have to call 911, remain calm. We are all highly trained and will ask the questions for the information we need. Let us do our job. We can get help there faster if people remain calm."



Susan Medina

(Sheriff, Crime Analysis): "From the analysis perspective, the best preventative advice is to remove your belongings



from your car. Lock your car, your home, and don't leave the garage door open. When you go on a hike, take your things with you. Think about what you're doing!"

Evan Hughes

(Sheriff, Patrol): "Be aware of your surroundings. Think about what you are wearing, what you're carrying with you, what you would do in certain situations. Just be aware of what's happening around you."



Haiku

By Bob Beaumont—DPW

California spring
Fifteen billion leaves appear
Money grows on trees.

Safe Haven



By Susannah Clark—BOS

What happens when a mother finds herself overwhelmed by the stress of life, with her newborn child in her arms, and decides for whatever reason that she cannot keep the infant? How can she give up the baby in a safe and responsible way? What resources are available to her at any time of the day or night? How can this baby avoid the fate of others who have been abandoned and died before being discovered? ■ In May 2003, Supervisor **Cynthia Murray** approached Marin County Fire Chief **Ken Massucco** to look into the feasibility of having Marin County fire stations designated as "Safe Havens" for newborn infants surrendered under the "Safely Surrendered Babies" law (Senate Bill 1368.) In May

2000 the California legislature passed the law, which allows the parent (or person with legal custody) to take an unwanted baby, three days or younger, to a designated drop-off site without fear of prosecution for child abandonment. No names are required, and babies who are safely surrendered to a hospital or other designated site are given necessary medical treatment and placed in a foster or pre-adoptive home. Forty-one other states have passed Safe Haven laws. ■ Until recently, the typical designated drop-off site was a hospital emergency department. Now, several counties include fire stations as designated drop-off sites. Through efforts by Chief Massucco and Supervisor Murray's office, all jurisdictions throughout the county joined in requesting the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to designate their 24-hour staffed

fire stations as Safe Havens. The BOS unanimously voted to support the Safe Haven designation, and the program will be launched June 1 with a large media campaign and public service announcements in Marin. Training of all fire personnel throughout the county is underway. ■ **Elinor Marcelous**, Manager, Child Protective Services (H&HS), worked with Cyndy Doherty of Marin Advocates for Children to develop the protocol for training firefighters and processing newborns surrendered to designated Safe Havens. Finally, with the help of **Melinda Montante** (H&HS), a page on Marin County's public website was created that lists all the county Safe Haven sites. Elinor said, "We hope we never see a newborn infant abandoned in Marin County, but if it happens, let it be into a Safe Haven." ■

"We hope we never see a newborn infant abandoned in Marin County, but if it happens, let it be into a Safe Haven."

C.S.I. ...

Continued from page 1

confirm identity are of little help without knowing where to start. Sometimes there are serious obstacles; for instance, someone from another country dying here without identification. "John or Jane Doe" cases can require as many hours as any "high profile" case worthy of TV or media time. ■ The Coroner sometimes employs experts in clay facial reconstruction to help with identifications. Forensic anthropologists help with skeletal identification, and entomologists provide valuable information concerning time of death by analyzing the insects and other small creatures found at the scene. In one case, a murdered woman was found bound and gagged at the edge of San Pablo Bay. Photos of a clay reconstruction of her face were circulated, and after many months of diligent work by several agencies, she was identified as a young mother missing from Mexico. In another case, a skeleton found under a house in San Rafael was identified as a local man missing for five years. ■ Community and public health are dependent on the findings of Coroner's investigations when any public hazard, such as a

communicable disease, is discovered. We work closely with the Dept. of Public Health in early detection, containment, and prevention of a wide variety of public dangers. We also take part in the readiness and prevention planning for mass disasters within the county, region, and state. ■ The Coroner's staff works with families to provide on-the-spot grief counseling and to explain to them what they may encounter following an unexpected death. The Coroner established one of the first grief counseling programs in the U.S. and supports this very active program, which is now part of the Family Service Agency. ■ Marin County does not have a central forensic morgue facility, so the Coroner uses local mortuaries for autopsies performed by contract forensic pathologists. There is no legal requirement that the Coroner himself be a physician. Families may choose a mortuary, but if no family is available, the Coroner's staff makes the decision based on geography. ■ Since Coroner **Ken Holmes** took office in 1999, another service has sprung from his office. He and Assistant Coroner **Gary Tindel** often can be seen barbecuing at large charity and community functions. ■ Anyone who loves dancing and fanciful fun can



Photo by Darrell Harris

Evidence



Photo by Ken Holmes

Coroner's Investigator Darrell Harris

wrangle an invitation to the now-fabled Coroner's Annual Halloween Costume Ball by calling 499-6043. Begun in 1999, this event is rivaled only by the New Orleans Mardi Gras in proportion and opulence. ■ Despite the nature of their work, you often can find a smiling face and some light humor when visiting in room 241. Everyone is welcome to stop by, ask questions, or attempt to answer the age-old question: Why is the Coroner's office right next to the cafeteria? ■

The Coroner established one of the first grief counseling programs in the U.S.

A Show to Check Out

By Sarah Houghton—Library

Get out the popcorn, sink into your favorite chair, and put down the remote! The Novato Branch of the Marin County Free Library has begun taping monthly episodes of *Book Talk*, a television program featuring local authors. ■ The February

program featured Novato librarian **Donna Mettier** in a conversation with Cara Black, San Francisco author of the Aimee Leduc mysteries, who talked about the off-the-beaten-track districts of Paris, France—the settings for her detective novels. Donna said of the program, “The talk was fascinating—she covered weird little neighborhoods of Paris that the tourists never see.” Cara also read from her debut novel, *Murder in the Marais*. ■ The March show was a discussion with Novato Historical Guild member Pat Willat of Mae Rodgers Ungemach’s book, *Novato Township:*

Land Grant to World War II, which collects the writings of early Novato pioneers. ■ “This show is a way for us to provide programming for folks who aren’t always able to make it to the library, including commuters and homebound seniors,” said Donna. In addition to providing outreach to the community, this program is operated almost entirely by volunteers.

■ Donna extends a special thanks to the Friends of the Marin County Library, which financially supports the program, and to **Joan Brown** and the Civic Center Volunteers for recruiting the outstanding production crew. The directing, camera work, and digital editing of the program are all done by volunteers, with training provided by Rick Tucker at the Novato Public Access Television (NPAT) studio. ■ *Book Talk* is shown on NPAT, cable channel 27 for Novato residents with Comcast Cable. The program airs every Monday at 2:30 and 8 p.m., with the same program repeating all month. New programs debut the first Monday of each month. Check it out! ■

Photo by Donna Mettier



Novato Library volunteers cue the action in the director’s booth at the NPAT Public Access TV Studio. **Left to right:** Mark Kubik, Flinn Moore Rauck, and Howard Celnik.

WELCOME FAREWELL!

Welcome to new employees, listed in order of hire date from Nov. 23, 2003 to Feb. 28, 2004

Name	Title & Department
Philip Ho	Assistant Engineer, DPW
Rocky Burks	American’s w/Disability Coord., DPW
Sean Crimmins	Deputy Probation Officer II, Probation
Matthew Bronson	Administrative Analyst III, CAO
Bruce Abbott	Assessment Record. Tech. I, Assessor
Heather Silacci	Comm. Dispatcher I, Sheriff
Leslie Moss	Comm. Dispatcher I, Sheriff
Ursula Hanks	Asst. Emergency Svcs. Coord., Sheriff
Caroline Ngumi	Child Welfare Worker II, H&HS
Rebecca Leonard	Deputy Sheriff Trainee, Sheriff
Theodore Keehn	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Jorge Amado	Child Welfare Worker II-Bil., H&HS
Edward Johnson III	Custodian, DPW
Margaret Harrell	Sheriff’s Services Assistant, Sheriff
Samuel Ruark	Assistant Planner, CDA
Dawn Brown	Planner, CDA
Ana Posada	Clinic Registered Nurse, H&HS
Anthony Cresci	Reprographic Technician, DPW
Julie Magnus	Librarian II, Library
Irene Delaney	Certified Nurse Midwife, H&HS
Karen Gandley	Certified Nurse Midwife, H&HS
Grant Beatty	Group Counselor I, Probation
Charles Harding	Group Counselor I, Probation
Karol Hosking	Risk Manager, CAO
Yvonne Lopez	Social Service Worker II, H&HS
Nancy Neary-Davis	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Aruti Aneja	Mediation Coordinator, Probation
Amy Van Doren	Transit Services Manager, DPW

Farewell to Retirees!

Diane Sherlock	Eligibility Worker II, H&HS
Alexis McBride	County Counsel IV, County Counsel
Allan Fisher	Telephone Maintenance Tech., IST
James Taylor	Deputy Probation Officer IV, Probation
Jose Vasquez	Planner/Evaluator, H&HS
John Gotts	Landscape Services Supervisor, POS&CS
Michael Gridley	Assistant District Attorney, DA

In Memoriam

Charmaine Derham, a third-generation Californian, ended her intense and long battle with cancer on December 13, 2003, at her home in San Anselmo. Charm completed her 27-year career at the Marin County Assessor’s office as an exceptional Senior Appraiser. Her integrity, pride, honor, and perseverance were widely recognized. She is survived by her partner of 32 years, David Murray, her best friend and sister, Mary Warnecke, and her mother and brothers. Charm loved the outdoors, especially the beach and Mount Tam; she loved the sun and enjoyed swimming. Charm bred her dog, Tomasina, with Guide Dogs for the Blind for many, many years.

Sgt. **Aaron LaVerne Stewart** won the hearts of his many trainees, though he lost his short battle with cancer. Aaron, who was born in Lawton, Oklahoma in 1935, was a truly dedicated peace officer with more than 30 years of service, spending the majority of his efforts training the rookies of the Marin County Sheriff’s Office. He chose his night shift assignment as senior officer at the Marin City Substation to train new recruits. His interests included fishing, hunting, and bowling, in addition to holding positions with the Marin Rod & Gun Club, the California Correctional Officers, and the Brotherhood of Teamsters—Local 960. He is survived by his favorite hobby—his daughters.