

FRANKLY SPEAKING

A NEWSLETTER FOR AND BY MARIN COUNTY EMPLOYEES

The Future of Managing Our Finances

By **Matt Bronson**—CAO

The full consolidation of both departments will occur at the expiration of Michael Smith's term as the Treasurer-Tax Collector in January 2011.

In the midst of last fall's historic presidential election, it might have been easy to overlook Measure B, a local ballot measure about the creation of an appointed Director of Finance position for the County of Marin. Approval of this measure by voters, however, was an important step in improving the county's operations and modernizing how we manage our finances to meet current and future needs. ■ The Board of Supervisors (BOS) placed Measure B on the ballot to ask voters to create a new Director of Finance position appointed by the Board, and over time to consolidate the Auditor-Controller's and Treasurer-Tax Collector's departments into a single Department of Finance. Placing this measure on the November ballot was important, given the recent retirement of Auditor-Controller **Richard Arrow**.

The new structure is designed to modernize and integrate the county's financial management, and reflects recent steps to improve our financial systems. This management structure is used by a number of counties and nearly every city in California. ■ County Administrator **Matthew Hymel** recommended the consolidation of the two financial offices to the BOS and met

with impacted staff to discuss the consolidation. "Although I recognize the diligent efforts of both the Auditor-Controller's and the Treasurer-Tax Collector's staff in recent years, this structure will benefit the county organization over the long run. Over the next few years, I look forward to creating a single financial management team that

Continued on page 11



Photo by John Vogee

L to R: Karen Shaw (Treas/Tax), Danny Briones (Aud-Cont), Roy Given (Treas/Tax), Byron Karow (Aud-Cont), Hans-Christian Metz (IST), Maxx Gold (IST), Terry Corde (IST), and Vladimir Matyurin (Aud-Cont) collaborate on financial matters.

Laughter Yoga

By **Kathleen Roach**—H&HS

Laughter Yoga. Just saying these words makes folks smile. In an effort to bring some fun to the Marin County Fair this year, **Theresa Elaine** (H&HS) and **Kathleen Roach** (H&HS) introduced Laughter Yoga, headed by Sparkie Lovejoy, at the Prevention Pavilion. We invited people to take a one-minute laughter challenge and offered a Laughter Yoga training session. Most people who participated successfully completed the laughter challenge. ■ Laughter Yoga is a combination of tension-releasing laughter exercises combined with yoga breathing. Dr. Madan Kataria, a physician from India, did research on the therapeutic effects

of laughter and started the first Laughter Club. Dr. Kataria's wife, a yoga teacher, helped him design a sequence of simple laughter exercises with gentle yoga breathing for maximum benefits. Laughter helps you to breathe deep into the abdomen, reducing stress and aiding relaxation. ■ As our lives fill with more and more challenges, it is vital to develop a variety of stress-reducing methods. Laughter puts us intensely into the moment. Laughter Yoga aims to develop joyfulness, which is the unconditional commitment to having fun despite all the problems we face. ■ If you are interested in experiencing a laughter club, visit www.laughteryoga.com to find a club close to you. However you can manage to do it—find joy in your life every day. ■

Photo by Kathleen Roach



Teri Vyeniolo-Rockas, Project Coordinator for Play Fair Marin, and Sparkie Lovejoy, Certified Laughter Yoga Leader, take the one-minute laughter challenge.

Try it!
...sit or stand
...laugh
...keep on laughing
for one minute.

FRANKLY SPEAKING

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Reporter of the Quarter: **Lauren Houde**

Schedule

Articles Due	Publication Date
Friday, Mar. 6	Friday, May 8
Friday, May 29	Friday, Aug. 14
Friday, Sept. 4	Friday, Nov. 6
Tuesday, Nov. 24	Friday, Jan. 29, 2010



Lookin' Sharp

Next time something happens in your division, grab a camera. The *Frankly Speaking* Editorial Board is always looking for great shots of colleagues at work. Group poses with faces clearly showing are fine; action shots are even better. Use highest resolution and remember the basics: look for balanced light, frame the shot before you click, get close, and hold steady. One trick: brace elbows against your body and hold your breath at the moment you click. Take several frames to increase the chances of a great picture. Send photos to jbrown@co.marin.ca.us.

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.

Dear Fellow Employees,

It is my 27th year sitting on the Board of Supervisors. I am as pleased to be here now as I was 27 years ago, and extremely grateful to have known and worked with so many of you over the years.

2009 will be a year of many challenges and opportunities. The current economic downturn has many local governments in tough financial straits. However, the County of Marin remains fiscally sound. I believe that navigating the rough financial waters ahead will be our biggest challenge this year. It is a challenge I know we can meet—and without compromising the services and programs we are by mandate or policy bound to provide the residents of Marin.

I look forward to working with you to find ways to make county government leaner and more efficient than ever, yet as accessible and user-friendly as possible for the people who need and depend on our services. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to the people and County of Marin. I have no doubt that 2009 will be a year we can look back on with pride.

Hal Brown
President, Board of Supervisors



Photo by Janice Hughes

Hal Brown

Marin County Fair Goes Cyber

By **Steve Petterle**—P&OS

On September 24, the 2008 Marin County Fair re-created its magic once again. With help from the International Association of Fairs & Expositions, Fair Manager **Jim Farley** led a group of 150 viewers (representing 73 fairs throughout the United States and Canada) on a cyber adventure entitled *A Visit to the Greenest County Fair on Earth*—an interactive presentation of the 2008 Marin County Fair. Participants were treated to a visual tour of this year's fair over the Internet, while simultaneously plugged in to a conference call for interactive participation. It was almost as fun as being there in person, except they weren't. ■ Representatives from the West Virginia State Fair lauded the webinar, stating, "It was the best cyber seminar to date." Representatives from the South Florida Fair said they "stole/borrowed some ideas" for their fair. Other comments included "incredible," "awesome," and "neat"—clearly the cyber event was a success. ■

Record Win for Fair

Cheers to Cultural Services staff members celebrating their best-ever showing at the Western Fairs Association's annual achievement awards program held in January in Reno. The 2008 Marin County Fair earned 46 awards, eclipsing its previous amazing record of 31 wins in 2007. Among the 46 are 28 first place honors for categories such as New Non-Competitive Exhibit (The Green Life) and Innovative Use of Technology (Waterless Urinals). The Fair also won nine seconds, six thirds, and three honorable mentions. Exhibits Supervisor **Charlie Barboni** (CS) organized Marin's entries to the fair industry contest. Director **Jim Farley** (CS) says 2008's "Greenest Fair on Earth" modeled conservation practices now being picked up by other fairs nationwide. What's next? "Cool Green Fun" is the 2009 theme. The focus will be on "eco entertainment."

AIDS Memorial Quilt

Photo by John Grimo



HIV/AIDS Services staff in front of the AIDS Memorial Quilt display
L to R: Gloria Randriakoto, Sarah Grossi, Dr. Craig Lindquist,
Jonathan Botson, Dr. Ellen Rosenthal, and Dr. Mary Ellen Guroy

By Sarah Grossi—H&HS

A portion of the 54-ton 'Names Project' AIDS Memorial Quilt was on display at the Health and Wellness Campus Connection Center December 1 and 2 as part of the international commemoration of World AIDS Day in Marin County. The quilt, about the size of 275 basketball courts, has about 83,440 names and is made up of some 46,000

panels measuring three by six feet. Started in San Francisco 19 years ago, the quilt was sewn by friends, lovers, and family members to commemorate the lives of people who died of AIDS. The annual display is coordinated by the Marin AIDS Project (MAP), a community-based organization that partners with the county for a variety of projects, including observance of World AIDS Day.

According to the MAP, the Memorial Quilt has evolved as a potent tool in the effort to educate against the lethal threat of AIDS. By revealing the humanity behind the statistics, the AIDS Memorial Quilt helps teach compassion, triumphs over taboo, stigma, and phobia, and inspires individuals to take direct responsibility for their own well-being and that of their family, friends, and community. ■

MCERA Has Moved

By Charnel Benner—Retirement Administrator

Bursting at the seams, in need of additional staffing, and finding no space available at the Civic Center, the Marin County Employees' Retirement Association (MCERA) began searching for rental space in February 2006. It was apparent that it was far

more costly to rent and renovate than to purchase an investment-quality office building for the pension plan. After seven months of searching and seven months of construction, MCERA opened the doors to its new offices at One McInnis Parkway on November 17, 2008. This is at the intersection of Civic Center Drive and McInnis Parkway, convenient to the Civic Center. Green building methods and materials were used wherever possible, saving on energy use as well as disposal costs. ■



One McInnis Parkway

Photo by Woodmont Realty Advisors



PETTERLE'S PERSPECTIVE

By Steve Petterle—P&OS

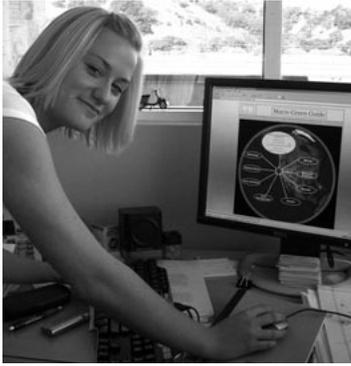
I can bend time. It's not something that I brag about, but it's a talent that I employ occasionally. If the days are passing slowly and I can barely wait for week's end, I just do a little time bending and the minutes, the hours, the days fly by in a flash. ■ Fortunately, it's a skill that can be learned. For me, the first step was to challenge my belief about time. Most people view time as an absolute—one minute always represents one minute. But I came to understand that time was only an absolute if it were viewed absolutely. This signified a change in perspective and opened the door for new ideas. ■ With this new mindset, I was able to move forward with the actions that I perceived were necessary to transform time. I practiced first on short periods, thirty minutes or an hour, and built up to days and weeks. It worked! And with some effort, I was able to refine the process considerably. ■ Simply put, it is possible to bend time by scheduling major dental work, minor surgery, or some other dreaded task for the near future. This action causes time to accelerate. For example, when I start to feel as though I'd like my work week to pass more quickly, I immediately make an appointment to have a root canal on Saturday morning. Time bends as my anxiety about the weekend builds and the weekdays suddenly become a blur. Of course, the root canal occurs on the opposite end of the time bend and results in a recompression, which has the effect of making the two-hour process feel as though it takes a week. Also, it kind of messes up my Saturday and I end up spending a good part of the day just trying not to drool. ■ Still, it's good to have options. ■

Illustration by Phoenixia Thomas

Green Gold

By Jerilynne Stewart—DPW

Photo by Jerilynne Stewart



Kemplen Robbins viewing a green website

It soothes, relaxes, and helps alleviate depression and anxiety. Worldwide, it is used to represent safety. It is the color green—and it is the basis for MarinGreenGuide.org, a new web portal for the community that links visitors to green resource websites.

From alternative modes of transportation to water resources to green building information, it's a one-stop site where visitors can research

green information. The concept grew out of the Department of Public Works' (DPW) desire to illustrate how county departments are embracing the green movement. ■ **Eric Lueder**, Real Property Agent for DPW's Real Estate Division and Interim Program Manager for DPW's Waste Management Division, said that DPW staff recently was asked two questions: 1) How do we get the word out about the great green things we're doing in the community, and 2) What is the most convenient method for the community to access this information? ■ Answers to both these questions included use of the Internet. A recent study revealed that most teenagers spend an average of five hours per day in front of a

computer monitor. Outreach to the new generation must be done in their medium. DPW's efforts target the 50-year-old and younger audience, and a blog for green-conscious youth is being considered. ■ A Google search for solar energy, for example, will offer MarinGreenGuide.org among the available options. The site features green forums, groups, associations, and organizations in Marin. ■ **Kemplen Robbins**, Engineering Technician for DPW's Waste Management Division, said, "You can offer us information about green events, and within a few hours the information, if appropriate, will appear on the website. Keeping it simple is good for everybody." ■

The Difficult Work of Change

By Bree Marchman and Jolie Clark—H&HS

Photo by Bree Marchman



L to R: Carmen Tristan, Julie Lenhardt, Jill Maier, Karen Hebert, Kim Contreras, and Luisa Ward

Michael* stood tentatively on the small stage and gazed at the audience. Music floated out over the crowd, and Michael began to sing. His voice was resonant and full of feeling, and the longer he sang, the straighter he stood. It was his graduation day. ■ When he first met his social worker, at the behest of his school counselor, he was so uncomfortable that he could barely speak. Haltingly, he described a home life full of acrimony and neglect, and a mother who was alcoholic, overwhelmed, and depressed. Now, he was barely recognizable as the boy hunched over in his seat in his counselor's office. As the song ended, Michael smiled and the audience burst

into applause. ■ Many social workers were involved in this family's transformation. An intake worker received a referral from a concerned neighbor, alleging that Michael was often unsupervised and that he would come to her asking for food. An emergency response worker was assigned to investigate the allegations and interviewed Michael and his mother about the difficulties the family was experiencing. Michael's mother agreed to work voluntarily with Health and Human Services, and consented to him being placed in a foster home while she received necessary substance-abuse treatment. An ongoing social worker was assigned to work

on a longer term basis with the family. She helped Michael's mother enter residential treatment and begin counseling. She also monitored the mother's progress on her treatment goals, while offering support as she was going through this difficult transformation. She found Michael a therapist and referred him to be assessed for learning disabilities through his school. A referral also was made to the adoption unit, so a worker could be assigned to help find Michael a permanent home if he were unable to return safely to the care of his mother. Luckily, Michael's mother was able to complete treatment successfully and obtain employment and stable housing. Although Michael was able to reunify with his mother, this was not the end of the story. The family continued to work with Children and Family Services and receive therapy, parenting classes, and other support until they were ready to move forward on their own. ■ While this type of work can be grueling and emotionally overwhelming, social workers feel privileged to assist families like Michael's who are engaged in the difficult work of change. ■

**The story of Michael is a composite; in order to protect the confidentiality of clients, names and other identifying details were changed.*

Editor's Note:
April is National
Social Workers'
Month

Is There a Doctor in the House?

By Jody Timms—H&HS

Yes, indeed! At the new Marin Health and Wellness Campus there are actually ten outstanding public health physicians performing a variety of services, among them administering programs, seeing patients, delivering babies, and operating on low-income women in our county. These dedicated H&HS doctors include: **Mark Jacobs**, OB-GYN, Perinatology; **Karen Bayle**, Internal Medicine; **Craig Lindquist**, Internal Medicine; **Robert Gelber**, Infectious Diseases; **Charles Bookoff**, OB-GYN; **Lynette McLamb**, Internal Medicine; **Catherine Mallouh**, Psychiatry; **Mary Ellen Guroy**, Infectious Diseases; and **Malini Nijigal**, OB-GYN. **Marty Schwartz**, a volunteer OB-GYN physician, has helped train many UCSF medical students through the years and **Fred Schwartz**, the

county's Public Health Officer, supervises programs and staff at the new campus. ■ For Mark, being a public health doctor means that, "When you see a woman with a particular problem, you know there will be many more women with that same problem. How is this woman like a thousand others? If I can solve this problem, perhaps I can create a systems change that will benefit the greater good." Lynette declares, "I've always been in public health, serving those in need and the most vulnerable." Charles sees himself serving the immigrant and underserved, and Fred summarizes by adding, "Our work connects us with our communities. We try to balance services focused on individuals, such as clinical care (screening and treatment), with efforts to identify

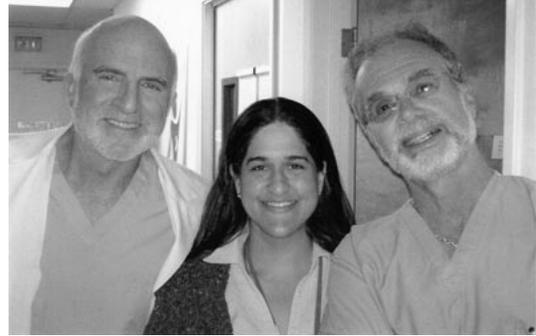


Photo by Maria Reyes

L to R: Drs. Charles Bookoff, Malini Nijigal, and Mark Jacobs

and address 'upstream' (fundamental and societal) factors, which affect the health of the community." ■ Given all that medical doctors do for us, have you ever heard of Doctor's Day? It's not quite as popular as Mother's Day. The first Doctor's Day was observed in 1933, but not made official by a U.S. House of Representatives resolution until March 30, 1958. We honor physicians' work and celebrate our doctors all year long. ■

Photo by Don Allie



Community Development Artists, L to R: Sharon Silver, Larry Grace, Vivian Lo-Lew, and Reid Thaler

tapped by staff to make our departmental signs and folders look alive with light and color. ■ www.sakuraofamerica.com/?q=node/140

Planner **Reid Thaler's** love of photography (he won an award in the last *Frankly Speaking*)

has introduced him to a variety of people. He taught photography at the San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind. While traditional photography is challenging for the sight-impaired, Reid was inspired by the participants' fascination with photography and the notion of experiencing life in two dimensions, regardless of the ability to see. He helped the participants make pinhole cameras and enjoyed experiencing photography through a different lens. Reid has photographed nature and landscapes, but his latest subjects are his children. ■

www.lumiograph.com

Before **Larry Grace** began his career in Building Safety and Inspection, he

studied music. These days Larry balances his left and right brain with his analytical work as a Building Inspection Services Supervisor during the week and his creative endeavors as a photographer on the weekends. Larry is a resident artist at the Riverfront Art Gallery in Petaluma. Lately he has incorporated music into his art by taking the forms and structure of music, such as fugues and voice leading, and expressing them visually. ■

LGraceStudio.com

Vivian Lo-Lew became inspired to make jewelry when she was on vacation in China, perusing a large market that offered beads. Her friend bought a beautiful pearl and asked her to use it to create a unique piece of jewelry. Her favorite piece is a necklace she made for her mother, using a piece of brown jade, taking into account her mother's style, dress, and skin tone. Vivian relies on her eye for design in her professional life in architecture, graphic design, and in her current work as a Planning Aide, reviewing designs and plans. ■

www.jewelry-by-vlo-design.com

Off the Clock

By Lauren Houde—CDA

Several of the staff at the Community Development Agency are talented artists whose creative inclinations enhance their work at the county, as well as provide work/life balance. For further information, visit the websites of these artists, listed below. ■ **Sharon Silver's** love of the feel of paper brought her to the county, coordinating records as a Senior Clerk Typist, and led her to the artist's easel, creating in watercolors, graphite, colored pencils, and metallic gel pens. Sharon finds a similar meditative zen-like process in drawing and in preparing files for imaging. She often is

Veterans' Service Officer **Mort Tallen** (H&HS) really does make a difference in the lives of our veterans. Last fall, Mort was honorably recognized for his service when he received the prestigious Jefferson Award from the American Institute for Public Service. A salute is due. ■



Photo by a friendly passerby

Katrina Raleigh and Niska

Last Labor Day weekend, Niska the Afghan hound competed in three grueling days of racing and lure coursing (chasing a mechanical object on a course). Niska thrilled her entourage and fans by winning the Iron Hound 2008 and (no surprise) Best in Show awards. A Niska fan club is in the works. Her agent is **Katrina Raleigh** (Library). ■

Lucy Burlingham (Library) gives her time by nursing injured and helpless squirrels, at home, through WildCare. When healthy, the little chompers are released into safe and food-plentiful locations. The problem, however, is that good release locations are becoming harder to find. If you know of any, please send Lucy an e-mail with information. ■



Photo by Janice Hughes

Lucy Burlingham

On vacation in Japan, **Roy Bateman** (CDA) got up close and personal with the culture. No pretentious five-star hotels or tourist traps for him. Roy mixed, laughed, and hung out using minimal financial resources. He is planning to offer a seminar on the joys of staying in cheap hotels and how he experienced Japan on a rewardingly simple budget. Stay tuned. ■



Photo by Josephina Camerons

Marta Osterloh and her gold medal

Outrageously loud and brightly colored spandex uniforms rightly complemented **Marta Osterloh's** (PD) exhilaration and joy last October at Boston's Charles River Regatta. The regatta, in its 44th year, is world-famous and attracts entries from over 20 countries. Marta is a member of the Marin Rowing Women's Grand Master 8+ team (as in eight rowers over 60 years old). Marta and her crew took first place and returned home with gold medals in tow. Big congratulations! ■

Monica Rudden (PD) was in the fifth row of David Letterman's *Late Show* when John McCain showed up to kiss Letterman's ring for snubbing Letterman three weeks earlier. ■



Photo by a happy guest

Curtis and Melissa walking down the aisle

Last fall, **Curtis Havel** (CDA) and Melissa Berry elevated Donner Lake's charm and beauty with matrimonial fervor. ■

Kristina Tierney (CDA) and hubby Jay welcomed a giggling Alyssa on Nov 2. **Stacey Laumann** (CDA) and husband Steve Moran-Cassese are thrilled with baby Max, born on July 1. **Victoria Cascio** (Assessor) and **Ross Cascio** (DPW) went to China last summer to adopt sweet Jasmine. ■

Last November a scoundrel, on trial for receiving stolen property, left a family of Yorkies in his hot stolen car. The smallest canines managed to crawl free through a window crack and were found whimpering by **Tracie Holland** and **Cathy Killinger** (DPW). They immediately provided care, notified the Sheriff, and went into action to save the others. All were rescued. The accused was found guilty and faces additional felony charges. Tracie and Cathy saved the day for the pups! ■



Photo by a friendly passerby

Jeri and John

There was no dithering from **Jeri Stewart** (DPW) when John Sutherland popped the question. But it wasn't until he followed up with a suggestion that her old pots and pans be tossed that she realized the true meaning of her life-altering decision. ■

Supervising Detention Nurse **Karl Finley** (H&HS) is a winner at work and on the football field, no matter what the score. A long-time Marin coach, Karl recently took over the program at Washington High, a public school in San Francisco's Richmond District. The Marin IJ recently noted his reputation for building players' confidence by providing effective structure and modeling grace under pressure. ■

Superlative Quiz

Matthew Hymel's (CAO) middle initial is H. What's up with that? (answer below)

Please e-mail the information from your department to the Odds & Ends columnist, Tom Vasgird, at tvasgird@co.marlin.ca.us.

Answer: Matthew's dad was so impressed with "Hud," the Paul Newman character from the movie of the same name, that he gave Matthew the middle name of Hudson.

Employees' Haiku

To mark National Haiku Poetry Day on Dec. 21, the *Frankly Speaking* staff invited county employees to wax poetic. So many of the three-line, 17-syllable verses were submitted that the Editorial Board had to limit publication to the best from each poet—with one exception. **Bob Beaumont** (DPW), who writes the regular haiku feature for this publication, and **Susan Adams** (BOS) held a haiku rally via e-mail. It's featured in the box below.

*In jury duty
Waiting around all day long
Could be at Nordstroms.*
—**Shelley Friedman** (Courts)

*Files, piling up fast,
No end in sight for me.
Need a vacation.*
—**Jason Baker** (Courts)

Here is the haiku about my niece.
I wrote it for her birthday. She was
born on the Winter Solstice.

*Born on Solstice Night
Heralding Long Days to Come
Sweet Princess of Light.*
—**Susan L. Adams** (BOS)

*What's before your eyes,
The mirror will not disguise
Love the skin you're in.*
—**Andrea Bizzell** (H&HS)

*Daughter calls to me
Drop what I'm doing again
Wants my company.*
—**Michael Infante** (Assessor's Office)

*Love is all detail
Movements, likes, dislikes, habits
No details, no love.*
—**Luis Luciano** (H&HS)

*Wide cold deep waters
Little tiny circling fish
Feisty frolicking.*
—**Nayem Lokhandwala** (H&HS)

*Dark watered storm waves
Crash into rocky shorelines
Spray lifts my spirits.*
—**Scott Callow** (CDA)

*A gray morning sky,
The raindrops softly falling
Birds still sing of sun.*
—**Patricia (Patty) Gurin** (DA)

*Rolled leaves on bushes
Hidden life safe, tucked within
Bespeckled with frass.*
—**Marge Gibbs** (DA)

*Five levels of "fun"
Four floors up and one floor down
But where is C-10?*
—**Kit Tiura**, CLS (IST/Courts)

Here's my contribution—it's in honor of
Lew Welch, author of the 1969 poem, *The
Song Mt. Tamalpais Sings*.

*Tamalpais sighs
The candle sunrise making
Sleeping Lady glow.*
—**Howard McFarland** (H&HS)

*On the dotted Line
Credit of Inequity
Layoff, where's the payoff?*
—**Brian Crosby** (Assessor's Office)

*How leaves have fallen
Yet grace adorns our table
Sweet sights come and go.*
—**Iris Mutio** (H&HS)

*Oh, budget, budget
Reconcile. We wish you peace
We need our paychecks.*
—**Carrie Ann Colton** (HR)

*A tap on my cheek;
Awake, I lift the covers
The cat settles in.*
—**Marna Kramer** (H&HS)

*Swallowing Boat and Sail
A Huge Monster Roams the Sea
This Monster—A Whale.*
—**Victoria Pollick** (H&HS)

*Stinging cold wind gusts
Autumn leaves tumble swirling
Brilliant orange and red.*
—**Fred Crowder** (Ag/Wts.&Meas.)

Making Membrillo (quince paste)

*Fresh quince from Dori
Lots of sugar and stirring
How delectable.*
—**Sharon Michelson** (H&HS)

This happened one evening recently in the
expanse behind my house at Hamilton.

*When the coyotes
finish their yipping, moonlight
still fills the meadow.*
—**Don Allee** (CDA)

Series between Susan Adams (BOS) and
Bob Beaumont (DPW):

*Haiku magicians
Use a few poetic words
To create feelings.*
—**Susan Adams**

*Some few words now take
In the caldron boil and bake
Haiku bubbling time.*
—**Bob Beaumont**

*Great Haiku Master
I am but a grasshopper
Learning from the best!*
—**Susan Adams**

*No, no, grasshopper
Tallest buildings doest thou leap
In a single bound.*
—**Bob Beaumont**

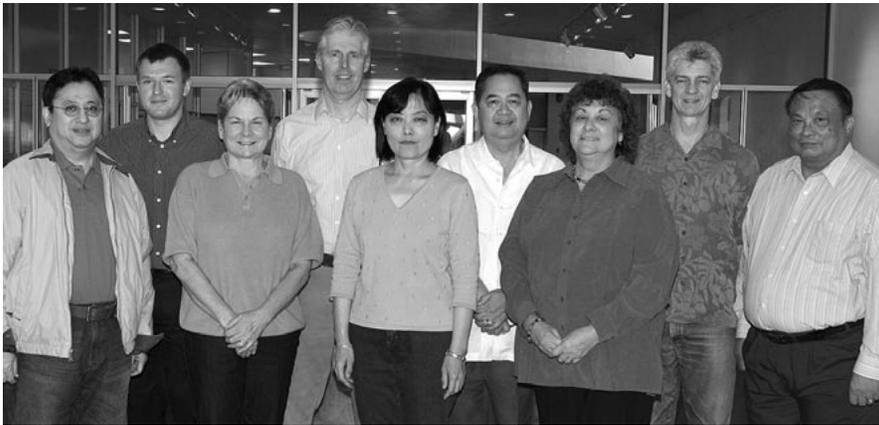
*...that's it for me now...
signing off in Haiku land...
... 'til Frankly Speaking!*
—**Susan Adams**

*Frolicking in the sun
Orchids vanish forever
Icebergs go drip, drip.*
—**Kimberly Contreras** (H&HS)

*Moonlight and insight
Drift through our winter's solstice
Observatory.*
—**Tom McCallister** (DA)

*Flashlight pierces night
Puddle gleams; tiny frog sits
On mirrored reflection.*
—**Anne Starr** (HR)

Photo by Janice Hughes



L to R: Victor Sumagaysay, Vladimir Matyurin, Marilyn Cannon, Tom Hubert, Ching Shen, Danny Briones, Sandy Barrett, Tom Barker, and Jerry Baniqued

Team of the Quarter

By Cathy Selmi—IST

The Auditor-Controller's Payroll Team brings a wealth of knowledge and skills to the daunting task of producing paychecks every two weeks for each and every county employee and once a month for retirees. That amounts to almost 8,500 checks a month. The team treats employees' and retirees' interests as if they were their own. ■ The

transition from the county's old accounting and payroll systems to SAP has not been without challenge. Working closely with the system over the last two years, the team learned the intricacies of SAP's payroll module. Throughout this transition, the team met all paycheck deadlines and provided all of the mandatory reports to the various

government taxing authorities on a timely basis. With their usual determination and resourcefulness, team members met the deadline for issuing accurate 2007 year-end W-2s and 1099Rs to employees and retirees. ■ The members of this team bring more than 100 years of experience working for the county to their endeavors. They are **Danny Briones** (began in 1989), **Marilyn Cannon** (1984), **Sandy Barrett** (1994), **Tom Hubert** (1998), **Ching Shen** (2001), **Jerry Baniqued** (1994), **Victor Sumagaysay** (1985), **Vladimir Matyurin** (2007), and Tom Barker, a consultant brought in during the transition from FAS to SAP. ■ They bring their skills and experience to work with the varied aspects of our payroll system including retirement benefits, leave accruals, remuneration statements, and the ongoing processing of thousands of hours worked day and night by employees of the county and special districts. ■ Assistant Auditor-Controller **Bryon Karow** says, "Congratulations on a spectacular job, never dropping the ball, and making possible the impossible." ■

EOC Goes to Jail

By Bruce Stahley—Sheriff's Office

The county's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff normally reports for duty at the Civic Center's Room 266 in the event of a disaster or major emergency. But what happens when the primary EOC itself is damaged beyond immediate use? This scenario was tested on October 23 in an exercise called Silver Sentinel 2008, in which the EOC was damaged by a simulated earthquake on the Hayward Fault. In this exercise, staff made its way to an alternate location capable of hosting the 50-plus member team—the county jail administrative and training area. ■ **Bijan Karimi**, Office of Emergency Services Assistant Manager, said, "This exercise gave us the opportunity to test the alternate EOC and validate that it could support a county-wide disaster response and



Staff trains in jail-alternate EOC during earthquake exercise.

recovery effort. We are now one of the few counties in the state with a fully functioning alternate location." EOC Director **Clarissa Daniel** (CAO) said the alternate EOC, although cramped, worked well enough to get the job done. ■ County employees are des-

ignated as emergency service workers in the event of a disaster. Persons interested in training in their emergency services roles may contact the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services at 499-6584 for information about opportunities and requirements. ■

"Preparedness prevents peril."

— Chinese proverb

Photos by Don Morosi

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Photos by Janice Hughes

BILL PRICE



OCTOBER

Bill Price has been the face of Richardson's Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) for 13 years. RBRA is a joint powers authority formed by the county and some cities to maintain the waterways of Richardson's Bay. His responsibilities include nautical safety, maritime patrol, environmental protection, vessel management, water testing, shore clean-ups, derelict vessels, grants, public hearings, and committee service. Bill responds to on-water emergencies, even outside normal working hours. He has close working relationships with homeowners, RBRA jurisdictional representatives, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, state agencies, and the Coast Guard. Bill recently implemented an innovative approach for intercepting drifting vessels, and a cost-saving agreement with Sausalito Police. He is working on mooring-related work, and a state water quality plan. ■ In this critical time of the RBRA's mission and growth, we are well served by Bill's conscientious stewardship, and fortunate to have him serving the agency and the County of Marin. ■

By Ben Berto—CDA

DENNY PHAN



NOVEMBER

Dung "Denny" Phan is the pride of the Health and Human Services Dental Clinic. Denny was hired by the county as a Registered Dental Assistant. With continued education, Denny earned the advanced certification of Registered Dental Assistant—Extended Functions. ■ Denny organizes mobile treatment sites, orients new staff, provides direct patient care, oversees the inventory of dental supplies and equipment, and coordinates with vendors and laboratories used for patients' crowns and dentures. He excels in gaining patients' trust and calming nervous parents and children. He also anticipates the needs of new dentists and helps them gain confidence in the busy clinic. ■ Denny's experience, organizational skills, and ability to multi-task play a major role in the clinic's ability to serve so many so well. His efforts have helped the clinic increase its daily treatment of patients nearly four-fold. Congratulations, Denny, for the well-deserved honor of being selected as Employee of the Month. ■

By Israel Gonzalez—H&HS

DAWN WEISZ



DECEMBER

Dawn Weisz, Principal Planner with the Community Development Agency, has spent the last several years working on the analysis of Marin Clean Energy (MCE). This project, also known as Community Choice Aggregation, may allow Marin to achieve a reduction of 300,000 pounds of greenhouse gases annually by drastically increasing our use of energy. She has spent countless hours coordinating experts, educating the public, and analyzing complex data. Dawn has always shown grace and professionalism, no matter what the venue, how late at night, or how complicated the questions from her various audiences. Dawn is a leader, a mentor, and a supremely smart and talented member of the county team. In addition to the enormous job that MCE has become, Dawn continues to manage CDA's Sustainability Team, including programs such as Climate Protection, Energy Efficiency, Renewables, Green Building, and Green Business. Dawn is, as former CDA Director Alex Hinds once said, the Siren of Sustainability.

By Dana Armanino—CDA



Photo by Janice Hughes



Vanard Goodman

2008 Employee of the Year

Vanard Goodman's extraordinary contributions as Senior Equipment Services Worker in DPW have earned him the distinction of Marin County's Employee of the Year for 2008. Vanard is responsible for repairs and maintenance of 500+ vehicles for various county departments. He is dedicated and always goes the "extra mile," servicing the fleet and lending a helping hand. His can-do attitude and positive influence on his co-workers are most appreciated. The honor brings Vanard a \$1,200 award, an engraved clock, flowers, balloons, an invitation to join the employee recognition committee, and recognition by the Board of Supervisors. Previous winners include **Bie Dellosa** (IST), **Pat Cunningham** (DPW), **Mischon Martin** (P&OS), **Catherine Condon** (H&HS), **Ron Johnny** (H&HS), **Liz Lewis** (DPW), **Phoenicia Thomas** (Fire), **Claudia Asprer** (H&HS), and **Marilyn Cannon** (Auditor/Controller's Office).

Top Tips for the New Year

By Anne Starr—HR

Making a resolution is easy; keeping it usually isn't. Do you want to improve your health, trim expenses, use time wisely, or have more fun in the New Year? One of these tips may help you put a good intention into action.

Keep your promise to exercise more, even when the weather is damp. Park at the east end of Sycamore Avenue in Mill Valley, and hit the paved multi-use pathway that hugs Richardson Bay and cuts through Bothin Marsh. "It's one of the best places to see birds," says **Kirk Schroeder** (P&OS). "It is an official IBA—Important Bird Area. Winter visitors find an array of beauty to appreciate in our parks—and without crowds." ■

Take a few minutes to be safe: "Don't just have an evacuation plan, *practice* it—if only once—with everyone who lives in your home. Also, make sure your smoke alarm works," says **Dennis Linney** (Fire). ■

Have fun and get in free: Volunteer for a four-hour shift at the Marin County Fair and receive two adult admission tickets valued at more than \$25. To reserve your spot on the 2009 county fair team, call **Charlie Barboni** (CS) at 499-7048 by Monday, March 2. ■

Know who you should call. Been ripped off? Got a consumer problem or question? The Marin County District Attorney's Office Consumer Protection Unit can answer your consumer question or help you resolve your consumer complaint through mediation at no cost to you. The unit can look into unethical or unfair business practices. "Call us at 499-6495," says **David Ball** (DA). ■

Spend less time working in the garden. "Put a comfortable chair or bench in a favorite garden spot and spend more garden time sitting quietly, doing nothing," says **Fred Crowder** (Ag/Wts.&Meas.). ■

Save money by drinking coffee or tea with a reusable mug. "Be proud and guilt-free, knowing that your reusable mug or cup helps the environment by reducing solid waste, conserving natural resources, saving energy, and

reducing greenhouse gas emissions," says **Jamie Tuckey** (CDA). ■

Plan an open space hike, look up a friend's home parcel, find every farmers' market in Marin, and more with interactive maps from the Geographic Information Systems team. You'll find more Marin detail here than on any commercial map site. Check www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/is/main/gis/ (public site) or <http://mine/mine/IS/main/gis/GISApplications.cfm> (the MINE). "Temporarily disable your pop-up suppressor, and have fun exploring," says **Fred Vogler** (CDA). ■

Avoid parking fines in the county lot this year. "If you carpool, use a carpool space and be sure to display your carpool sign in the parked car. Solo drivers, arrive five or ten minutes early to scout for an all-day space in the pit or the parking lot across Civic Center Drive," says **Edie Lawrence** (Sheriff), a.k.a. the Parking Princess. ■

Be prepared for spring. "Before storing small equipment (lawnmowers, etc.) for the rainy season, put in fresh oil, add stabilizer to the gasoline, fill the gas tank, run equipment briefly to circulate the stabilizer, store items, and then relax. When spring arrives, you'll be ready to go when others are visiting the shop," says **John Ferrari** (P&OS). ■

Need an official record as you get organized this year? Save time by visiting the Recorder's or County Clerk's offices early on a Monday or Tuesday, when it's less busy. Marriage, birth, or death records are at the Recorder's Office, Room 232 at the Civic Center. "If you're planning to marry—congratulations—pick up forms early and bring them back completed for faster service at the County Clerk's counter," says **Estrella Wilson** (Co. Clerk). ■

Get moving! Adults who participate in any amount of physical activity gain some health benefits. "For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least two-and-a-half hours a week of moderately intense activity, or one hour and fifteen minutes of vigorous aerobic physical activity," says **Ellen Szakal** (H&HS). ■

Roving Reporter

By Connie Siebler—Assessor-Recorder

February is 'Plant the Seeds of Greatness Month.' What advice would you give someone to help them achieve greatness?

Les Aaronson (H&HS): "Recognize who you are and honor that. Support your talents and abilities. Don't conform; be true to who you are."



Photos by Connie Siebler

Vilma Orellana (Courts): "To be the best you can be, strive to do the best you can in whatever you do."



Florence Shimano (Assessor-Recorder): "Greatness does not mean attaining fame or fortune. Achieving personal greatness may be as simple as trying to make a positive impact on the people whose lives we touch every day."



Allie Zaragosa (PD): "Be kind to others. It will help you career-wise and socially. The more eager you are to get to know someone, the better it will be."



Norman Zhou (Courts): "Work harder! The more you practice, the harder you work, the better results you get."



Haiku

By Bob Beaumont—DPW

On to the new year
Balancing the stuff of dreams
Making a new day.



A Quilt Above

By Bart Jones — Juvenile Hall

Marin County Juvenile Hall students made a quilt for a young boy waiting for a bone marrow transplant. The project, created and directed by **Victoria Gonzalez**, Volunteer Coordinator for the Marin County Library's Beyond Walls Project, was completed by the students in conjunction with a lesson on Civil War quilts. The "story board" quilt is a reproduction based on a slave quilt located in

the Smithsonian Institute. ■ The project provided an opportunity for the participants to give back to someone in need. The hands in the photo are of the student artists. ■ The program received enormous local attention, a first place cash award of \$50 to support the art program, and was featured on the cover of Juvenile Council of California Center for Families, Children and the Courts: *Beyond the Bench XVIII*. ■ This was the first quilt of a series completed in an ongoing partnership with Oakland Children's Hospital. ■

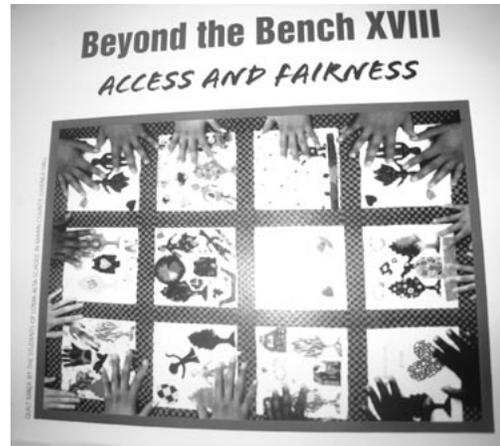


Photo by Bart Jones

First Prize quilt created by Juvenile Hall art students.

Opportunity for broader recruitment for specialized position

Like other public agencies, the county is experiencing a workforce shortage for key positions, including public sector accountants and financial professionals. Creating an appointed Director of Finance position helps address these trends by allowing the county to cast a wide net in recruiting the highest quality professionals for this key financial position, rather than limiting it to Marin County residents willing to run for elected office. The county also is able to set a higher bar of professional qualifications for this position. In addition, the consolidated Department of Finance will provide staff with opportunities for cross-training and experience in a variety of essential financial functions. ■

Cost savings through restructuring

Given the county's budget challenges, we need to explore every opportunity to reduce our costs while maintaining the quality of our services. Through this consolidation of two department head positions, the county will save at least \$100,000 annually without eliminating positions with existing employees. Over the coming years, the county will need to consider additional opportunities to adapt our structure and services to improve operations and be responsive to changing conditions. ■ As a next step, the BOS will create an appointed Director of Finance position that will initially oversee the functions of the Auditor-Controller's Office, given the retirement of the Auditor-Controller.

The full consolidation of both departments will occur at the expiration of **Michael Smith's** term as the Treasurer-Tax Collector in January 2011. During this time, the county also will explore related organizational changes necessary to place the Registrar of Voters, County Clerk, Public Administrator, and Central Collections functions, all currently part of the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office, into a structure where they fit best, or as required by statute. ■ The county is always looking for better and more efficient ways to provide services. Creating this new financial management structure is one step to help us do this and address current and future challenges. If you have any feedback on this new structure, please feel free to contact **Matt Bronson** at 499-3084 or mbronson@co.marin.ca.us. ■

The county is always looking for better and more efficient ways to provide services.



Photo by Joan Brown

The Treasurer-Tax Collector's office adds extra help as local property owners arrive to make payments in December.

Finances cont'd

From front cover

can help guide the county through the significant fiscal challenges we face," said Matthew. ■ Below are some of the benefits of this new structure:

Greater public accountability and oversight of county finances

Under the new structure, an appointed Director of Finance position will increase day-to-day accountability and oversight of county finances. Like other appointed county department heads, the appointed Director of Finance will be accountable for effective and efficient operations and subject to regular performance reviews. At the same time, to ensure independence, the Director of Finance can be removed only by a public hearing and 4/5 vote of the BOS. A Financial Audit Advisory Committee will be established and will include representatives of schools, cities, and special districts. ■



Photo by Joan Brown

Marlene Cornejo (Treas.-Tax) assists taxpayer at an extra information counter in the hall set up to handle the crowd.



Pedro Alegria places fair compost into bag for Cultural Services Commissioner Helen Willms.

Time & Treatment Transformation

By Anne Starr—HR

The Marin County Fair is living up to its billing as the Greenest County Fair on Earth. More than four tons of food and paper garbage collected at the 2008 fair were turned into compost over the course of five months and then applied to fairgrounds landscaping. Time and treatment transformed trash into rich, soil-boosting material.

A fraction of the compost has been reserved for green displays at recycling stations at this summer's fair. ■ The transformation began when fair food vendors disposed of food scraps and fair guests threw compostable cups, plates, and flatware into 36 collection stations set up around the fairgrounds. The stations were staffed by North Bay Conservation Corps members.

Pedro Alegria (CS) and his utility workers provided great support to the Conservation Corps crew. The Marin Sanitary Service was also a partner in the collaborative project. ■ The collected biodegradable waste was hauled to the San Rafael recycling center for treatment in a special indoor metal compost bin, where greenhouse gases were removed via filter. Three weeks later, the material was moved to an outside bin for curing. By mid-November it was ready to return in two big debris boxes. Now the rich compost is perking up plants around the Marin Center and the Exhibit Hall. ■ The alchemy that turned garbage to garden gold was itself green, thanks to labor from the North Bay Conservation Corps crew. ■ "Recycling old food and compostable trash into compost was a first for county fairs nationwide," said Fair Director **Jim Farley** (CS). "We diverted pre-consumer waste from food vendors and post-consumer compostable collection from fairgoers. It's cool to think of garbage coming back to us as a soil amendment." ■

The alchemy that turned garbage to garden gold was itself green, thanks to labor from the North Bay Conservation Corps crew.

WELCOME & FAREWELL!

Welcome to New Employees!

Listed in order of hire date from September 5 to November 26, 2008

Karen Lewis	Legal Asst., PD
Mary Parra	Legal Process Asst. I, PD
Mario Kalsou	Environmental Health Spec. I, CDA
Elise Holland	Planning & Resource Chief, P&OS
Greg Pickrel	Communications Dispatcher I, Sheriff
Linda Benson	Accounting Asst., CS
Bonny White	Librarian II, Library
Yuan-Ying Lin	Sr. Nutritionist, H&HS
Nichole O'Brien	Communications Dispatcher I, Sheriff
Mona Miyasato	Chief Asst. County Administrator, CAO
Keely Martin	Sr. Patient Account Clerk, H&HS
Adrien Whitaker	Communications Dispatcher II, Sheriff
Sara Pearce	Communications Dispatcher II, Sheriff
Hayden Brown	Deputy Public Defender II, P&OS
Dianah Webb	Intermediate Clerk/Typist, P&OS
Larry Daniel	Principal Personnel Analyst, HR
Luis Luciano	Sr. Clerk/Typist, H&HS
Rachel Williams	Intermediate Clerk/Typist, Retirement
Jean Iglesias	Sr. Clerk/Typist, H&HS
Thomas Alipio	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Eric Kress	Building Maintenance Wkr. I, DPW
Lenard Bourcy	Maintenance Electrician, DPW
Latoya Brown	Intermediate Clerk/Typist, Retirement

Farewell to Retirees!

Patricia Harper	Admin. Librarian, Library
Mark Brand	Licensed Mental Health Pract., H&HS
Elizabeth Emerson	Program Coordinator, H&HS
Alex Hinds	Director of Community Devel., CDA
Susan Altizio	Library Branch Aide I, Library
Roy Olson	Inspector, DA
Felicia Nealson	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Prudence Kerr	Secretary, H&HS
David Sexton	Community Svcs. Center Manager, H&HS
Debra Guidet	Inspector, DA
Lance Lowrie	Technology Systems Coord., H&HS
Patrick Higgins	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Priscilla McGee	Legal Process Spec., Probation
Jean Ricetti	Legal Process Asst. II, PD
Judith Naue	Court Processing Spec., Courts

Hail to Heritage Historians

Twenty-six county employees know so much about North American first peoples that they answered every question perfectly on the recent American Indian Native Alaskan Heritage Month quiz. From the 26, seven names were drawn and presented with the seven theme-related prizes including books, Navajo pottery vases, CDs, and a signed Navajo sand painting. The lucky recipients: **Fredi Bloom** (Probation); **Christine Cameron** (IST); **Jane Crownover** (Registrar); **Phyllis Gray** (Assessor-Recorder); **John Kluge** (H&HS); **Mo O'Connell** (CCS); and **Priscilla VanLiew** (CDA). The Human Resources Department provides information on the MINE in an ongoing effort to foster understanding of and appreciation for cultural diversity. Next up: **Carrie Ann Colton** (HR) invites employees to enter the next Heritage Quiz. It's on the MINE home page at the end of February. Learn more about Black History and be a winner.