

FRANKLY SPEAKING

A NEWSLETTER FOR AND BY MARIN COUNTY EMPLOYEES

The Marin County Free Library is proud that, on average, each year each of our residents visits 7.6 times and borrows an average of 10 books.

100 Years of Info and Empowerment

By Laurie Thompson—Library

Library Journal, the premier publication for librarians, has awarded the Marin County Free Library (MCFL) three stars for excellence in library service. After evaluating over 7,000 public libraries throughout the United States, *Library Journal* awarded stars to only 256 libraries, based on four per-capita service indicators—library visits, circulation, program attendance, and public Internet computer use. The Marin County Free Library is proud that, on average, each of our residents visits 7.6 times and borrows an average of 10 items annually.



Children at Camp Thayer in southern Sonoma County, reading library books delivered by the Marin County Free Library, circa 1935. One of these delivery boxes survives in Library Administration at the Civic Center.



Images courtesy Anne T. Kent California Room

County Librarian Virginia Vail Keating is seated at her desk in the Marin County Free Library, then located in the basement of the courthouse in downtown San Rafael, circa 1936.

MCFL is one of 30 “starred” libraries in its expenditure category nationally and one of only 16 starred libraries in California. The full report is available at www.libraryjournal.com. ■ How did we get here? ■ In 1876, William Poole, a pioneer of the public library movement in the United States, defined the public library as, “an agency established by state law, supported by local taxation or voluntary gifts, managed as a public trust, and open to every citizen of the city or county that maintained it.” This same philosophy inspired the California Legislature to pass the County Free Library Law

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Highest Honor to the Fair

By Steve Petterle—P&OS

Impressive as this year’s award is, it’s even more remarkable that the Marin County Fair has won this award four times in the last 12 years.

“In the county fair world, it’s like winning Oscars for best picture, best director, best actress and best actor, all combined into one!” Those were **Jim Farley’s** (CS) words as he described the significance of winning the Louis B. Merrill Award from the Western Fairs Association for the 2008 *Greenest County Fair on Earth* Marin County Fair. Stephen Chambers, Executive Director of the Western Fairs Association, adds, “Marin County is the national model...” Impressive as this year’s award is, it’s even more remarkable that the Marin County Fair has won this award four times in the last 12 years. Congratulations, Jim and crew. ■ And



Photo by Janice Hughes

Fair Team — Front row, L to R: Christian Gutt, Jean Joseph, Lonnie Garey, and Grania Flanagan Second row, L to R: Linda Benson, Cindi Dauenhauer, Ann Albertoni, Marion Boyd, and David Zoellner Third row, L to R: Antonio Ramirez, Chris Haeuser, Charlie Barboni, George Pegelow, Larry Elliott, Tony Taubert, and Jim Farley Not pictured: Pedro Alegria, Cynthia Price, Bonnie Yuen

speaking of awards, the 2009 Marin County Fair is a winner in the making. The fair team is parlaying last year’s success into some *Cool Green Fun* for an even bigger and greener event. The fair comes to Marin from July 1 through

July 5. Entertainment will include *Creedence Clearwater Revisited* and eco-hero Steve Trash in his *Big Green Magic Show*. For more details about this year’s county fair, check out MarinFair.org. ■

FRANKLY SPEAKING

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Reporter of the Quarter: Anne Starr

Schedule

Articles Due	Publication Date
Friday, May 29	Friday, Aug. 14
Friday, Sept. 4	Friday, Nov. 6
Tuesday, Nov. 24	Friday, Jan. 29, 2010
Friday, Feb. 26, 2010	Friday, May 7, 2010



Vacation Photos Wanted!

It's entry time for our 14th Annual Vacation Photo Contest. Employees can be either the photographer or in the photo taken any time since the fall of 2008. Previous participants are welcome! Printed or high-resolution digital photos should be submitted to **Janice Hughes**, c/o DA's Office, Rm. 130, Civic Center, or jhughes@co.marin.ca.us by September 4. Winning photos will be published in the Fourth Quarter *Frankly Speaking* and displayed in the Civic Center Cafeteria. Thanks to again to Marin Filmworks for donating \$25 gift certificates for the top three winners.

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.

Our own Marin County YouTube!

By Janell Myhre—Sheriff's Office

The screenshot shows the GChannel website interface. At the top, there's a search bar labeled "Search G-Channel" with a "Go" button. Below the search bar is a navigation menu with options: "County Home", "Most Recent", "Most Popular", "Categories", "Marin YouTube", and "Help". The main content area is titled "Most Recent" and displays a grid of video thumbnails with titles and dates. Visible titles include "Marin's Green Commuters", "Flood Control 2/10/09 Webcast", "Supervisors 2/10/09 Webcast", and "OES Disaster Council 12/11/08".

Have you ever wondered what would happen if you could share your Marin County departments' good deeds with thousands of people? Well, you can. ■ The Marin County GChannel is like our own YouTube. This innovative way of sharing and communicating information is here for county employees and residents to use and enjoy. ■ Immediate information, archived forever in digital format, is at your fingertips. You can access the GChannel at www.marinchannel.org. Live and archived information is available in webcasts. There are hundreds of GChannel entries online right now, with more being produced every week. ■ If you can't make it to the Civic Center for an important meeting, or must miss an item on the Board of Supervisors agenda, or want to share a county presentation or training with others, GChannel can solve all of these problems with a click of the mouse. You can watch GChannel videos online, on local public access stations, or on the county's own YouTube channel. ■ Many Marin County efforts already are on the GChannel, including public service announcements, documentaries, training videos and videos about county services, Marin County Green Business information, Civic Center Volunteers, and the work Marin County is doing for our homeless population such as Project Homeless Connect. Also available is information regarding current events in the county, such as SkyTans presentations or a video of the new Health and Wellness Campus opening. You can also view the Get Ready Marin training. You can see it all online, at your convenience. ■ The GChannel is a great county service and resource. If your department is interested in putting something on the GChannel, contact Jerry Kay at jerry@kayproductions.net. ■

Stress: County has plan to help you cope

Daily news about the economy and various industry crises contribute to a rise in individual stress levels due to the multiple life adjustments that may be required. If you are feeling overloaded, please remember that the county provides all benefit-eligible employees with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The EAP is a service designed to help you and your eligible family members manage life's challenges. If you need help, call:

Employee Assistance Program
 Toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
 800-227-1060

All EAP contacts and referrals are confidential.

If you have questions or would like a brochure about the plan, please contact one of your Human Resources benefits representatives weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.: **Meloni Gail Page**, 499-7006; **Joy Fossett**, 499-7447; **Freeman Suen**, 499-7843; or **Anthony Wesley**, 473-4317.



Photo by Reid Thaler

Matrix GIS Team L to R: Ray van Cleave, Margaret Moster, Fred Vogler, Dennis Healey, Brian Quinn, and Frank Godino Not shown: Chris Edwards

New GIS Online with Maplinks

By Fred Vogler—CDA

If you want to know where something is, a good way to find it is to look at a map, traditionally a large piece of paper. Today, maps also are digital files that can be displayed on any device with a viewing screen. ■ There is a technology, body of knowledge, and a way of working that is known as Geographic Information Systems (GIS). GIS is a computer-based technology that creates, stores, organizes, analyzes, and displays maps of anything that can be represented graphically. The mapped entities have real-world coordinates directly tied to the earth's surface, which means you can see everything in relation to everything else. If a picture is worth a thousand words, a GIS map is worth ten thousand. You immediately can see the connectedness of all things. Attributes (facts) about those mapped entities are included with the map so that you can inquire about and analyze those characteristics. ■ The county has a very sophisticated GIS operated by a team of experts in the Community Development Agency and Information Services Department (with experts in a few other departments as well). Together, we provide digital maps and data, and applications that show these maps on county

computers and the Internet. ■ We use GIS to help county employees see the information we have to manage. GIS lets us become more efficient and productive by improving business processes and facilitating work flow. We can become more knowledgeable as well (and correct mistakes we never saw in the paper world). By shifting some tasks to a computer information system, we free ourselves to do more sophisticated work or provide more direct attention to customers. Having GIS on all county computers and the

Internet allows everyone to see the same things, thus providing better communication, and more clarity and understanding. Look at our public GIS applications on the Internet at www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/is/main/gis and at MarinMap's web site: mmgis.marinmap.org. ■ We want people to see GIS as a normal part of daily life in the digital age. We want GIS to become as commonplace and useful as e-mail, increasing everyone's geographic literacy as we go about our business. As wireless connectivity and portable devices become commonplace, GIS applications such as ours will answer the "What?" and "Where?" questions on demand, almost anywhere. ■

**If a picture is worth a thousand words,
a GIS map is worth ten thousand.
You immediately can see
the connectedness of all things.**



PETTERLE'S PERSPECTIVE

By Steve Petterle—P&OS

I'm not ashamed to admit that sometimes I use a thesaurus when I write. But I try to use it as little as possible, following some of my previous experiences. ■ There was a point in my life when I was somewhat dependent upon a thesaurus. It became most evident many years ago in the writing of one specific letter, where my desire to perfect a writing style became a driving compulsion, an impulse, a craving. My letters weren't good enough—I wanted to make them better, more original. And I wouldn't let it go. ■ It was a simple letter, at least it started out that way. "Thanks for the opportunity, etc., etc." But the more I wrote, the more it began to feel contrived, ordinary, dull, mundane. Back then, I wanted everything I wrote to be memorable, superb, tremendous. So I opened the thesaurus. Things quickly got out of control. ■ For perspective, the last paragraph of my draft letter before using the thesaurus read: *Unfortunately, this area is not within our jurisdiction. We suggest that you contact the City of Mill Valley directly for further information.* ■ It seemed rather boring, lackluster, and mind-numbing to me. With the help of my thesaurus, I translated it into: *Discontentedly, this milieu is not surrounded by our province. We advocate with the aim of making you drop a line to the Municipality of Grind Gorge unswervingly for supplementary statistics.* ■ The person who opened and read my letter called to ask if I was okay. They were genuinely concerned. I guess I went too far. Now I don't rely on my thesaurus so much. It sits on my desk collecting dust, amassing grime, stockpiling grunge, accruing debris. It feels good to write without a crutch. ■

Illustration by Phoenicia Thomas

Nurses Help the Homeless

By Margaret Levine—H&HS

Photo by Margaret Levine



Britton, before Transition to Wellness

Photo by Andre Harris



Britton, at Next Key Center

Transition to Wellness is a collaborative medical respite program for homeless people who are released from the hospital. The pilot program is funded by Sutter Healthcare, Kaiser Permanente, the Marin Community Foundation, and the County of Marin. The project recently received a generous grant from Kaiser's Community Benefit Fund. Current capacity of the program is four respite beds at Homeward Bound's Next Key Center, a treatment facility adjacent to the New Beginnings Center in Novato, and one motel bed in San Rafael. Sr. PHN **Margaret Levine** (H&HS) is the nurse case-manager. Support Service Worker **Andre Harris**

(H&HS) provides linkages to critical county and community services. Both are part of the Aging and Adult case management team supervised by **Rita Widergren** (H&HS). ■ In the first four months of operation, 20 homeless people were placed in the program. Of those 20, 12 were placed in transitional housing upon release rather than returning to the streets. This statistic is compelling because it shows that with focused support, homeless individuals can overcome the obstacles to attaining secure housing. ■ At left is a picture of Britton (his first name only) taken at Motel 6 when he first was introduced to Transition to Wellness following hospitalization at Marin General Hospital (MGH) for pneumonia. The first statement he made was, "I want to thank everyone who had anything to do with me having this bed to sleep in. I woke up and took a hot shower today. That is such a gift." After seven days he was discharged to the Mill Street Homeless Shelter in San Rafael where he stayed successfully for five weeks. He then



Photo by Cris Jones

Student nurses provide a human touch for the homeless in San Rafael.

experienced a severe increase in his chronic obstructive pulmonary disease symptoms and was re-hospitalized at MGH. ■ At left is Britton at the Next Key Center following his second hospitalization at MGH. He is very proud of celebrating 60 days clean and sober and is making great efforts to quit smoking. With Andre's support, Britton applied for general assistance during his first Transition to Wellness stay. He is now receiving general assistance which makes him eligible to go to New Beginnings Center upon release from the respite bed. ■



Photo by Kathleen Ranch

Team working with homeless people discharged from local hospitals
L to R: Rita Widergren, (with student nurses Sarah Bailey, David Hoey, and Lindsay Bearer), Margaret Levine, and Andre Harris

MMRC First to Win New National Award

By Anne Starr—HR

The Marin Medical Reserve Corps (MMRC) was presented the first Community Resilience Award in the nation by the Surgeon General's Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps. ■ The corps develops partnerships among active and retired medical professionals and other interested Marin residents to help educate, train, and deploy volunteers and resources in the event of a large-scale local emergency such as an earthquake, epidemic, or terrorist attack. ■ To qualify for the recognition, the MMRC team demonstrated outstanding resilience in "the four R's": robustness (strength to withstand a stressor); redundancy (backup elements are available); resourcefulness (capacity to identify problems and mobilize resources); and rapidity (ability to act quickly). ■ Competition from other Medical Reserve Corps units across the United States was intense, according to Program Manager **Brian Waterbury** (H&HS). He credited the MMRC's devoted volunteer physicians, nurses, mental health experts, dentists, trades people, chaplains, administrative assistant **Florence de Losada**, and the many others who make up the corps. "I have

"I am so proud of the MMRC. This award is a testament to the quality of the volunteers who are making sure that Marin County will be well prepared in the event of a disaster," says Supervisor Susan Adams.



Photo by Dave Fortman

Marin Medical Reserve Corps Manager Brian Waterbury, center, accepts the first Community Resilience Award from Rear Admiral Robert Williams, Acting Deputy Surgeon General, left, and Capt. Robert Tossato, Director, Surgeon General's Office of the Civilian Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps.

said it many times but am going to say it again: I am truly honored to be associated with such a wonderful group of dedicated individuals," said Brian. In addition to excellent volunteer support, the MMRC has been "very, very blessed to have the full support of the Board of Supervisors and senior management in the county." The MMRC was established in 2004 and Brian is the sole employee. ■ Brian accepted the award in early April on behalf of the 288 members of the corps at the Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness, and Response Training Summit in Dallas, Texas. ■



L to R: Lauren Houde, Cynthiarose "Cyno" Connolly, Kathleen Suhrke, Dawn Weisz, Charles McGlashan, Leslie Alden, Jamie Tuckey, and Omar Pena

Community Choice Aggregations

By **Lauren Houde**—CDA

The board of the newly established Marin Energy Authority (MEA), composed of nine elected representatives from the county and member cities and towns, gathered on February 5 for their first board meeting to begin their charge of collectively studying, promoting, developing, and managing energy programs that will address climate change. The meeting marked the culmination of five years' hard work by staff who visited local jurisdictions and attended public forums to engage in dialogue and ask and answer questions. Principal Planner **Dawn Weisz**, Planning Aide **Jamie Tuckey**, Assistant Planner **Omar Pena** (all CDA), Supervisor **Charles McGlashan** and aide **Leslie Alden** (BOS), and Supervisor **Hal Brown** and aide **Cyno Connolly** (BOS), are to be commended for the successful creation of this Joint Powers Authority, an agency independent from the county. They have made establishing a brand-new organization from the ground up look deceptively easy. ■

The first charge of the board, chaired by Supervisor McGlashan, is to decide whether Marin County will proceed with implementing a Community Choice Aggregation program (CCA). ■ Community Choice Aggregation was established by the California legislature in 2002 (AB 117) to give cities and counties the authority to procure electricity on behalf of customers within their jurisdictions. Under a CCA program, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) would deliver the electricity to customers and continue to read electric meters and issue monthly bills. Customers would have the choice of being automatically enrolled in the Marin Clean Energy (MCE) program or continuing to get their power from PG&E. MCE would reduce Marin's greenhouse gas emissions by providing twice as much renewable power initially as Marin receives now. MCE also promises to make prices more stable over the long term by decreasing reliance on imported fossil fuels. In addition, MCE

will fuel small, locally based green businesses. MCE will enable local decision-making over what kinds of power Marin utilizes. For more information, see www.marincleanenergy.info. ■

During its start-up phase, MEA will be housed under the Community Development Agency (CDA). Dawn Weisz will split her time with the CDA Sustainability Team to serve as the Interim Director for MEA. Administrative support will be provided on a part-time basis by Jamie Tuckey, **Kathleen Suhrke** (CDA), and **Lauren Houde** (CDA). Many others will continue to donate their time and expertise to the establishment and success of this organization. The efforts of so many dedicated people have truly been a study in collaboration. MEA has been funded by the Marin County Board of Supervisors during the start-up phase, with the expectation that the county will be reimbursed should CCA be implemented. ■ For more information, please visit www.marinenergyauthority.org or attend a board meeting held at 7 p.m. the first Thursday of every month at 1 McInnis Parkway, San Rafael. ■

Marin Clean Energy (MCE) will enable local decision-making over what kinds of power Marin utilizes.

Try to Top This!

By **Jeri Stewart**—DPW

Carpool savings can be substantial. Three persons in a mid-sized vehicle commuting 20 miles to the Civic Center from the East Bay can save about \$728 a month over the same three persons traveling separately, considering vehicle operating costs, tolls, and commute stipends. Add \$22 per month for a similar commute over the Golden Gate Bridge. ■ There's been nothing but rave reviews from County of Marin

carpoolers since Caltrans opened the first phase of the Highway 101 southbound carpool/bus/motorcycle lane in February. The new lane shaves 15 to 20 minutes off travel time from Sonoma County during the morning peak commute. ■ In celebration, Green Commute Program held a Carpoolers' Appreciation Event February 16 through March 2. Foam antenna toppers were handed out to County of Marin carpoolers. Program staff then spotted marked vehicles at various county parking lots. A drawing was conducted and three

vehicle owners, **Anita Erola** (HR), **Kathy Ah San** (Treas/Tax), and **Lourdes Bascara** (Public Guardian), won travel blankets. ■

Participating County of Marin carpoolers will have another chance to win prizes during the month of June. Top your antenna with a Go Green Get Green ball. For details, email **Jeri Stewart** (DPW) at jstewart@co.marin.ca.us or give her a call at 499-6519. Go green! ■



A terrific antenna topper

Photo by Heather Bergman



Lisa with Gracie and Sasha

Meet Gracie and Sasha, the latest in vaudeville duos! These show biz birds do it all. According to talent scout **Lisa Cassidy** (Co. Counsel) their signature song is the whistle theme from *The Andy Griffith Show*. For an encore, they even belt out screeching cat howls. How cool is that? On a private note, their rehearsal space is Lisa's shower stall. But that's more than we needed to know. ■

It's amazing what some people will do to get into the Loch Lomond Yacht Club. Take **Curtis Havel** (CDA) and his so-called 25-foot yacht. Curtis (aka Captain Curt), even with his charm, still had to volunteer to tend bar and tell jokes in order to get in. And the best part—everyone is laughing and having a great time. ■

Maybe sympathy cards should be sent to the Registrar of Voters' Office. **Elaine Ginnold** (Treas/Tax) was surprised to hear that Governor Arnold unexpectedly called for a special statewide election on May 19, thus forcing vacation cancellations and reshuffling of summer plans. ■

Proud mother **Tami Fehrenbacher** (Library) opened the *New York Times* to find a feature article on her daughter, Jill Fehrenbacher. Jill is a founder of the Greener Gadgets Conference that was held earlier this year at the McGraw-Hill Conference Center in midtown Manhattan. This was a gathering of premier inventors, designers, and leading company representatives who are making consumer electronics more eco-friendly for all of us. ■

Neshama Franklin (Library) is a professional storyteller, of sorts. This spring she appeared at the Julia Morgan Center for the Arts in Berkeley to tell the story of *Imelda in Bolinas*. Imelda, a visionary non-capitalist, was instrumental in keeping the Bolinas Freebox (free clothes, toys, etc.) functional, operational, and free for many years. Thanks Neshama for keeping the storytelling tradition alive. ■

Laney Morgado (DPW) and hubby Jason proudly welcomed daughter Kaia last October 17. **Bill Hernandez** (Sheriff) and wife Trisha appreciate sleep more than ever now with the arrival of little William on February 17, their first. **Brian Rockwell** (CAO) and wife Lisa added to the New Year with newborn daughter Coraline on February 21. **Eric Richardson** (Sheriff) and wife Jodi haven't lost their edge with little Jack, born February 18, who now is fourth in line at home. **Ernest Klock** (DPW) and wife Nicole rolled out the proverbial red carpet for son Porter on February 28. Hats off to new parents everywhere. ■

Photo by a passing tourist



Alysanne Taylor and Eva Patterson

Alysanne Taylor and **Eva Patterson** (both Library) had the happening of a lifetime while visiting Guyana last January. They experienced Barack Obama's inauguration from the viewpoint of the local Guyanese people. It was all spontaneous parades, flag waving, music, and dancing in the streets! Most touching, however, was the excitement locals expressed as President Obama pledged to bring clean drinking water to developing countries like theirs. ■

Cheers to grandparents. Let's hear it for **Bill Kelley** (CDA) and little Adin Tanner Kelley, who made his debut on last November 28. **Joan Brown** (HR) can't stop talking about granddaughter Josephine Marie, born on January 22 for added New Year's excitement. ■

Tom Vasgird (Aud. Cont.) should have been paying attention during the heavy February rainstorms, instead of reading *Mad Magazine*, when walking his Belgian Shepherd, Katie, and mini-Schnauzer, Charlie. Walking next to an overflowing stream, he didn't notice that Charlie had fallen in and was being carried away. It took Katie's barking and knee-slamming to get her human's attention to save Charlie. But Tom was hardly the hero. ■



Amber Dooley (Co. Counsel) puts her passion for the ocean in practice and action. She has been helping to rehabilitate baby seals at the Marine Mammal Center for the last eight years. The love and understanding she feels for these scared and helpless baby pups is not deterred by frequent bites and nips. She also wants everyone to know that the Mammal Center reopens in June and will be visitor-friendly and accommodating for all. For info. visit www.marinemammalcenter.org. ■

Melissa Davis' (Prob.) Marine son Lance Corporal Tanner deployed March 28 to Iraq and is expecting to be back home for Christmas. ■

Superlative Quiz

Bryon Karow's (Aud-Cont.) middle name refers to a famous American hero. What's up with that? (answer below)

Answer: Arthur, after General Douglas MacArthur, the Medal of Honor winner and Supreme Commander of US Forces in the Pacific during WWII. As a little boy, Bryon was nicknamed "General MacArthur" by his family.

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

Social Groups

By **Nancy Grisham**—Co. Counsel and **Rick Fraites**—BOS

Throughout the county workforce, employees with common interests or hobbies have gathered to form social clubs. These groups meet during lunch break or after hours. Most are open to new members. Could that new member be you?



Photo by Rick Fraites

L to R: **Tanya Albert**, **Maureen Parton**, **David Escobar** (standing), **Bob Beaumont**, **Leslie Alden** (standing), **Susannah Clark**, **Cynthia Connolly**, **Liza Crosse**, and **Katie Rice**

Board of Supervisors' aides and others gather over lunch to describe their latest reads. They choose their own books, yet often the aides are on the same wavelength. For example, at one gathering, every book shared had something to do with one of the world's cultures. At another, world history was the common thread. After books are read and reviewed, they are shelved in the aides' mini-library, located in "Aides' Row," for sharing with other interested readers. ■



Photo by Rick Fraites

Melanie Phelps speaks during a speech competition.

Want to polish your communication skills or learn to speak comfortably before a group? Standing Orations, the local Toastmasters club, fosters confident communication and effective leadership. The club provides a supportive, fun, nurturing environment in which to practice interviews, run meetings, compete, learn to evaluate, share ideas, and prepare for opportunities. Composed mainly of county employees, Standing Orations meets Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m. For more information, contact Standing Orations president **Melanie Phelps** (H&HS) at 499-4214. ■

A Life/Work Balance Group group was started in the Public Defender's office to develop activities beyond work, enhance members' lives, and help them to view the world in a broader context. Activities are eclectic and have included holding an exhibit of members' artwork, bowling, and attending a professional baseball game. The group is open to new members. Contact **Bonnie Marmor** (PD) at 499-6321 for information on joining. ■

The long-established Golf Group has a loyal following. The goals are to have fun and enjoy friendly competition during the 19-week season. Twenty two-person teams and a group of substitutes play weekly on Tuesday evenings at the Indian Valley and Peacock Gap golf courses. The season closes in August with a tournament and awards banquet. As the season starts, participants pay to cover their costs. For details, call **Joe Spaeth**, Marin County Public Defender, at 499-6321. ■

Miriam Martinez (BOS) and **Connie Lazzaretto** (DPW) have been going on long walks after work for several years. They walk several days a week and alternate scenic routes, all well over a mile long. Their goals: stay healthy, enjoy the sights, and share companionship. Occasionally they coordinate walks with visits to the Thursday night Farmers' Market in San Rafael. If you'd like to walk with them, contact Miriam at 499-4268. ■

Several county employees believe doodling sharpens the mind, reduces stress, and creates art. **Sharon Silver** (CDA) has been doodling since childhood and believes it can be meditative and a learning enhancement. "In high school, I doodled during lectures and it helped me concentrate," said Sharon. "In college biology, I aced the frog dissection exam by doodling frog parts while studying." ■

Sandy Barrett (Aud-Cont.), **Kathleen Sahrke** (CDA), and others get together several days a week at noon to crochet. They are able to take a break from phone calls and go to the county library on the fourth floor of the Civic Center, where they can work on their craft projects, talk quietly, and share patterns. ■



Photo by Rick Fraites

L to R: **Nicki Azarbaksh**, **Inge Lundegaard**, **Jack Liebster**, and **Don Allee**

An informal jam session for musicians meets Fridays around noon, usually at the "rug room." Typically, six to 12 people attend, some with acoustical instruments, and some who are vocalists. They play a variety of music, including folk music, 60s and 70s rock, and more. For information, call **John Wilson** (IST) at 499-5062. ■

The Public Defender's Book Club meets monthly or quarterly, depending upon the length of the book. Books are chosen by consensus. Members read the book, then get together to discuss it. Their goal is to celebrate reading, reflect upon the human condition, and explore the landscape of the soul. Anyone interested is invited to participate. Please contact **Bonnie Marmor** (PD) for more information at 499-6321. ■

A couple of scrapbooking groups ceased with the retirement of some members. If there is interest in starting a new one, **Sandy Barrett** (Aud-Cont.) is willing to act as a consultant, as she has been an enthusiastic scrapbook keeper for years. Her phone number is 499-6161. ■ These are just some of the possibilities. There must be other skills and interests in our multi-talented county workforce. Find others with the same interest and get started. Bon voyage! ■



Back row, L to R: Rick Langhals, Mike Rakitnichan, Greg Pryor, Greg Ingrassia, Shane Blair, Jed Learned and David Siebe
Front row, L to R: Kathy Tobin, Phyllis Gray, Gail Drury, Wendy Sorensen, Connie Siebler and Wendy Patterson

Team of the Quarter

By Cathy Selmi—IST

The Assessor-Recorder's (Assessor) Customer Service Steering Committee was originally organized in 2002 to help implement the county's Strategic Plan. The steering committee, consisting of **Shane Blair, Gail Drury, Phyllis Gray, Greg Ingrassia, Rick Langhals, Jed Learned, Wendy Patterson, Greg Pryor, Mike Rakitnichan, David Siebe, Connie Siebler, Wendy Sorensen, and Kathy Tobin**, looks at ways to improve

customer service within the department and to enhance service provided at the Assessor's two public counters, along with requests received by phone, fax, and e-mail. Since its inception, the committee has suggested and implemented many changes, including customer service comment cards, revisions to documents to clarify complex matters for taxpayers, and guidelines for courteous communications with the public. ■

Responding to suggestions taken from comment cards, the committee updated the public website to make it easier to find information. They also improved the automated phone tree utilized by the public for information. ■ The department now produces a quarterly newsletter which is distributed to all Assessor staff. Within its pages are useful tips and ideas for providing better customer service and suggestions for ways to be more involved in the department. ■ The Green Subcommittee is charged with the task of developing best practices for conservation in the Assessor's Office. One of their actions was to have water filters installed on the department's sinks to provide employees with filtered hot and cold water, saving money and resources. ■ Assessor-Recorder **Joan Thayer** said, "Since 2002, when formed, this team has raised the bar for improving customer service internally and externally in conformance with the county's Strategic Plan at minimal cost. The group is highly imaginative, inventive, and motivated, working with little if any direction from management." ■

Effective Teamwork Leads to Top CCV Honors

By Anne Starr—HR

Photos by Janice Hughes



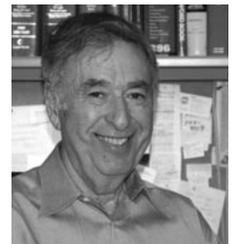
Doug Allen, Supervisor of Volunteers of the Year

Effective teamwork in the Assessor-Recorder (Assessor) and District Attorney's (DA) offices led to top honors for

Doug Allen (Assessor), the Supervisor of Volunteers of the Year 2008-09, and **Paul Peterzell**, the Civic Center Volunteer of the Year 2008-09. ■ Doug, an Assessment Recording Supervisor, coordinates a team of volunteers working on a paper-to-digital conversion project to improve access to public records. The job is "literally years ahead of schedule" thanks to dedicated volunteers, Doug

says. ■ There is no particular secret to being a good volunteer supervisor, Doug says. "I admire and appreciate the fact that our volunteers want to make a difference. I try to make them feel welcome and part of the team." He recommends that others consider volunteers as a resource. "Would you benefit from extra help? Try it and decide if it works for you," says Doug. ■ Volunteering definitely works in the DA's office, where Paul Peterzell belongs to a team of seven volunteer mediators. He joined the team in 1998, and has mediated disputes among hundreds of people. ■ **Bob Nichols** (DA), the deputy district attorney in charge of the consumer unit, invited Paul to volunteer after he retired from a career at the *Marin Independent Journal*. "I volunteer because I

thoroughly enjoy helping people and learning new things, and it keeps me in touch with the community," Paul says.



Paul Peterzell, Civic Center Volunteer of the Year

"People who call us generally are grateful that they have found an office that exists to help them." ■ Paul credits his supervisor, **David Ball** (DA), with making his volunteer work a pleasure. "David finds just the right balance between providing guidance and leaving enough space for his volunteers to develop their skills," says Paul. ■ Congratulations, Doug and Paul! ■

**Congratulations,
Doug and Paul!**

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

Photos by Janice Hughes

JIM TOTH



JANUARY

Everyone loves to work with **Jim Toth**. He has been a key member of the MERIT group, which is responsible for supporting and updating the county's SAP fiscal software since its formation in 2005. He is the lead Basis Administrator, which means he has the responsibility for keeping the SAP system up and running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Jim learned something completely new when he joined MERIT. His previous experience was as a software programmer, and he now manages hardware systems.

■ A county employee for 11 years, Jim constantly goes above and beyond the call of duty. He will always respond to late night phone calls or e-mails to help a teammate or client. Jim is a calming presence in time of stress and pressure. Outside of work, Jim enjoys fly-fishing, Argentine tango, and golf. His MERIT teammates join the rest of the county and congratulate Jim for this well-deserved honor. ■

By **Angie Hisanaga**—IST

ELLY FERRELL



FEBRUARY

Elly Ferrell is a phenomenal organizer who is dedicated to her work. As manager of the county's Printing Services, she oversees print projects from county departments and a number of outside agencies. She handles a broad spectrum of projects, ranging from massive, complicated reports to simple copies and business cards. Many of her tasks involve last-minute, urgent requests. In her 36 years of service she has earned a reputation as someone who always can be relied upon to get the job done accurately and professionally. ■ Elly also helps with a number of special functions, including the Marin County Craft Fair, where she sells her beautiful hand-knit scarves. She volunteers to help with the county's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program by conducting annual garden tours. ■ Elly truly deserves recognition as Employee of the Month for her exceptional work ethic and dedication to her colleagues and the residents of Marin County. ■

By **Sharon DeMartini**—DPW

QUIANNE HUNTER



MARCH

Quianne Hunter is a secretary with Parks and Open Space (P&OS). She raises the bar for customer service, responding to public inquiries, facilitating park reservations, and treating everyone with courtesy and respect. Working with IST staff, Quianne was instrumental in launching the new online park and facility reservation system. Currently, Quianne supports P&OS's popular and growing volunteer and environmental education programs, providing information, coordinating events, distributing publicity, maintaining the community contacts database, and supporting efforts of field managers and staff. ■ Quianne provides essential back-up services in the busy administrative office, revealing the traits her co-workers appreciate and the department relies upon—she's friendly, dependable, has an undeniable sense of humor, and is the ultimate team player. Quianne never fails to bring a smile to one's face and is a shining example of excellent customer service, quality teamwork, and service to staff and community. ■

By **Cristina Torresan**—P&OS



In Memoriam

Linda Jadeson, a bilingual nutritionist at the H&HS Health Clinics, died unexpectedly on February 28. For more than seven years, Linda counseled pregnant women on diet and nutrition as part of the Sweet Success diabetic program in the Maternity Clinic and for the Women, Infants and Children Program. Linda believed that "what I do today is very important because I am exchanging a day of my life for it." ■

Venise "Vinnie" Nahmens passed away from illness on March 24. Vinnie, a Deputy Probation Officer, served the Marin community for more than 25 years and was known for her dedication and hard work to help her defendants over the years. According to her friends and colleagues, she was "a light that shined brightly on all who knew her." Vinnie is survived by her mother, step-father, and sister. ■

Dave Dell'era passed away unexpectedly on April 18. Dave had worked in the Department of Public Works as a Building Maintenance Worker since 2001. His supervisor, **Richard Wallace**, commented Dave was appreciated as a conscientious, self-motivated worker who always got the job done. Dave is survived by his parents and his brothers and sisters. ■

Inauguration Inklings

By **Danny Maples**—Sheriff's Office

I started April 6, 2008, a cold, drizzly day, with Sergeant **Fred Marziano** (Sheriff), Deputy **Dan Marrett** (Sheriff) and his K-9 partner Verona, and Parking Enforcement Officer **Barbie Sorensen** (Sheriff), assigned as part of a County of Marin security team at a private fundraiser in Kentfield for then Senator Barack Obama. The sun broke out just in time for Senator Obama's arrival. As he passed by he smiled and waved from his vehicle to the cheering crowd gathered on the street. ■ Fred was in contact with Senator Obama throughout much of the day, including the opportunity to shoot some hoops with him. Senator Obama passed Fred the ball and said, "Put it up." Even with such pressure on him, Fred made the shot. During Senator Obama's speech, Fred couldn't believe this was the same man he had just shot hoops with. ■ After his speech I escorted Senator Obama to the street to meet his supporters. We made small talk and he thanked me for being there. Senator Obama greeted every person, including some kids running a lemonade stand nearby. He was a very normal, personable man with a great deal of command presence. ■ Some Marin County employees had the good fortune to attend the inauguration and agreed to share their experiences. ■

Auna Harris (Sheriff) attended the inauguration with her aunt. They took refuge in

the area directly behind the Capitol Reflecting Pool. Not even the cold weather could dampen their spirits and excitement of being a part of such an historical event. ■ **Herman Clark** (Sheriff, Mounted Posse) attended with his sons. Their seats were close enough to the podium that all the pomp and

Photo by passerby



L to R: Auna Harris and her aunt Toni Adams-Robinson at the inauguration



L to R: Herman Clark and his sons Matthew and Brian at the inauguration

Photo by passerby

circumstance was palpable. He felt everyone was in a great place emotionally that day. ■ From **Christine Gimmler's** (CDA) vantage point the Capitol dome was visible in the distance. However, her attention was on the nearby Jumbotron. Later, she watched the presidential parade from



Mark Burbank and family standing next to you-know-who

Photo by passerby

the comfort of a nice, warm office building. ■ **Mark Burbank** (Fire) traveled to Washington D.C. with his wife and children for the inauguration. Due to the crowds, cold weather, and having small children in tow, they watched the event on a big screen at their hotel. ■ With only a week's



L to R: Teresa Taylor-King and friends at the Mid-Atlantic Ball

notice, **Teresa Taylor-King** (H&HS) bought her plane ticket to attend the inauguration. She fought off the cold

weather by wearing the most clothes she had ever worn in her life. Later, she attended the Mid-Atlantic Ball, saw the First Couple dance together, and got good photos. ■ Approximately 2 million people attended the inauguration, but not one arrest was made. Is this a sign of great things to come? ■

Roving Reporter

By **Connie Siebler**—Assessor/Recorder

In honor of April Fool's Day, what is the best prank you've either pulled on someone or someone has pulled on you?

Dennise Colla (IST):

"There was a pay phone outside the store where I worked. When the employees came in, at 6:30 or 7 a.m., each one stopped and called the manager to say they were sick. After four or five people, he was wondering how he was going to open the store!"



Photo by Connie Siebler

Raymond Anciaux (H&HS):

"I used to manage a unit with L.A. County. I had one of the staff call reception all day, asking to page 'Aprila Foola,' which she did. The entire staff enjoyed that one."



Photo by Michael Eckart

Greg Ingrassia (Assessor):

"My friend had always wanted to work for one of George Lucas' companies and had submitted a resume. He received a call from a "Lucas Recruiter" to meet at a restaurant for an interview. He arrived with his portfolio in hand, only to find about ten of his friends drinking margaritas and cheering his arrival."



Photo by Connie Siebler

Aaron Malilay (DPW):

"My car being stolen! My cousin did it and she got a friend of hers to help her. They hid it in a different parking structure and didn't tell me the truth for about two hours."



Photo by Connie Siebler

Haiku

By **Bob Beaumont**—DPW

Rampant miracles
Entwine themselves about us
Even as we sleep.





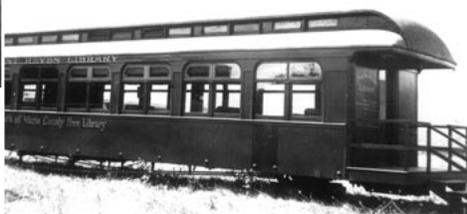
The Civic Center Branch of the Marin County Free Library, circa 1962, in the recently opened Civic Center

100 Years of Info cont'd

From front cover

in 1909 and the Marin Board of Supervisors to pass a resolution in favor of a free library system for Marin in 1914. ■ Forward-thinking citizens including Daisy Lawton, a Tomales school teacher, and Anne T. Kent, a librarian from Long Island who had married into the prominent Kent family, traveled to hamlets and ranches throughout Marin, talking to parents, teachers, and local leaders about the need for making books accessible to all, particularly those in outlying and rural areas. ■ On February 14, 1927, the doors of the MCFL opened in the basement of the old Marin County courthouse in San Rafael. **Murial Wright**, former librarian for Tuolumne County, was the first library director. Marin County residents, numbering about 27,400 at the time, embraced the new library system, checking out over 36,000 books during its first year of operation—about 1.3 books for every resident. Today, the Library's circulation has expanded exponentially. With a current population of approximately 248,000, the Library loaned 1,516,094 items during fiscal year 2007/08. ■ Twelve branches of the MCFL were established during its first decade. Several communities in West Marin chose unusual venues for their libraries. The Bolinas Branch was started in a houseboat donated by a local resident. The innovative residents of Point Reyes Station

remodeled an old railroad car, outfitting it with custom shelving and desks. ■ From the beginning, an important mission of



The Point Reyes Station Branch of the Marin County Free Library, located in a former railway coach, in 1931

the MCFL was to make books and learning available to children and students. Until 1966, when school districts had established systems of their own, an important service of our library was to provide local schools with books, maps, and other educational materials. In the early years, the Library also sponsored a program which shipped books to young people attending summer camps. ■ **Virginia Vail Keating** became Library Director in 1935. Her philosophy was to foment a love of reading among young people in Marin and to serve the needs of diverse Marin townships by catering collection development to their interests. Library services expanded significantly during her 33-year tenure.

Innovations included creation of a non-circulating collection on Marin and California history—today's Anne T. Kent California Room—and implementation of bookmobile service in 1948 to the most remote areas of the county. During the 1950s, Mrs. Keating worked with Frank Lloyd Wright on the design for the new main branch of the Library at the Marin County Civic Center. ■ By 1971, the regional library plan was completed, with newly constructed facilities in Novato, Fairfax, and Corte Madera. Smaller branches catering to the diversity of West Marin have been maintained and the bookmobile continues to provide services to remote locations.

■ In 1974, the MCFL implemented an automated library circulation system, the fourth such system in the nation. In 1995, the Library was instrumental in the creation of MARINet (marinet.lib.ca.us), a consortium of city and county libraries which share a single online catalog. That same year the Library began offering Internet access to the public. ■ As times have changed, so has the Library.

Today, feature films on DVD and bestsellers on CD circulate alongside printed books. Online services continue to expand, encompassing everything from tutoring and reference to electronic books and databases, including access to local history via the California Room's digital archive (www.co.marin.ca.us/library). Marin County librarians provide computer classes and tutoring on the use of online databases, searching the Internet, the basics of e-mail, using Microsoft Word, and Excel. They organize lectures, workshops, book clubs, and story times for children. ■ In 2009, as in 1909, the public library is a cornerstone of democracy, ensuring that all who walk through our doors can freely access the information and technology that empower them as individuals. ■



The Marin County Free Library Bookmobile at Marshall School, 1948



A group of children outside the Novato Branch of the Marin County Free Library at the Community House, circa 1928

Photos by Mary Donovan



Twenty different organizations sent staff to participate in the Road to Work.



Tim McClain, an employment development counselor with the Marin Employment Connection, describes services.

Task Force Finds Roads to Work

By Racy Ming—H&HS

The Marin Employment Connection of Health and Human Services (H&HS) and the county Probation Department have joined forces to form the Probation-Employment Task Force. The goal of the task force is to reduce recidivism in our community by connecting people on probation to the workforce community. Task force members include **Racy Ming**, **Andrea Bizzell**, **Eric Petersen**, and **Tim McClain** (H&HS), and **Teresa Torrence-Tillman**, **Kathleen Paulsen**, **Melissa Davis**, **Lynda Triplett**, **Cynthia Fix**, and **Jeff**

White (Probation). ■ The task force put on a resource fair entitled *The Road to Work* at the armory on January 13.

People on probation were required to attend by their probation officers and in some cases as part of their sentencing. Eighty-nine probationers came to the fair, and 20 different organizations sent staff to speak with the attendees. ■ The program included a keynote speaker, short inspirational talks by three people who turned their lives around and are now successfully employed, and short presentations by each of the agencies. Attendees found out about services of interest to them. The plan was for every person to leave with a next step in mind. Some attendees won prizes and gift cards in a raffle. ■ The overall feedback was very positive. Many cited the inspirational speakers as the best thing about the event. Many also mentioned feeling valued and cared about by the large number of organizations present. Going forward, the task force plans to repeat the Road to Work event on June 16. ■

Poster by Roehrick Design



New Café Does Double-Duty

By Anne Starr—HR

There's a new place to buy coffee, lunch, and healthy snacks at the county's Marin Health and Wellness Campus. But the Blue Skies Café is more than a destination for a great organic salad. It's also the site of a dynamic work training program for clients of Buckelew Programs, a nonprofit organization that serves people with mental illness.

It took close coordination between the county and Buckelew to establish the café. **Jeanne Miche** (DPW) and DPW colleagues arranged for the coffee cart and related equipment. **Jennifer Vuillermet** and **Thomas Lyons** (both Co. Counsel), and **Terry Toner** (DPW) drafted the concessionaire's agreement and request for proposals. Jeanne and H&HS staff including **John Grima**, **James Villella**, **Kerrie Desbiens**, **Margaret Kisliuk**, **Sparkie Spaeth**, and **Linda Armstrong** helped administer the RFP and selected Buckelew—after a popular taste testing session!—to be the vendor. Linda, the H&HS Nutrition Program Manager, reviews the menus, and Kerrie, the H&HS Facilities Manager, helps facilitate the operation.

Private and state grants underwrite the program; the county provides the space, the coffee cart—and many of the customers. Blue Skies Café is open to the public 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays at 3240 Kerner Blvd., San Rafael. For more details, call 456-4950.

WELCOME & FAREWELL!

Welcome to New Employees!

Listed in order of hire date from Nov 27, 2008 through Feb 18, 2009

Jean Hughes	Senior Clerk/Typist, DCSS
Victoria Gonzalez	Community Library Spec., Library
Cynthia Hiroshima	Senior Clerk/Typist, H&HS
Barbara Barry	Admin. Secretary, HR

Farewell to Retirees!

Philip Youngholm	Technology Systems Spec. III, Library
Audrey Andrus	Supervising Purchaser, DPW
Kathy Harris	Legal Process Asst. II, DCSS
James Innes	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Mary Lee Bulleri	Secretary, Sheriff
James Nash	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Charles Thompson	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Richard Arrow	Auditor-Controller, Aud-Cont.
John Rohrbacher	District Attorney Inspector, DA
Kenneth Canziani	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff
Rosa Ortiz-Gruhn	Licensed Mental Health Pract.-Billing, H&HS
Steven Nash	Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff