

BEACHCOMBER

Muir Beach Neighborhood News

Issue 250 July 2010



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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader:

The four 2009 issues of the *Beachcomber* are now ready for viewing on muirbeachcomber.com. Click on Archives to go to the back issues index. Currently the *Beachcomber* website is an archival site only, with the 2006-2009 issues featured so far. We are working on ways to capture the many decades of the *Beachcomber* beginning in 1946. Stay tuned!

This is our annual BBQ issue, chronicling the mammoth task of planning for and hosting the “best Memorial weekend party in Marin.” Twenty-five hundred holiday revelers show up year after year to party, dance to the music of Andre’s All Stars, eat chicken barbecue or vegetarian tamales, drink beer donated by Lagunitas Brewing Company, buy raffle tickets and shirts, and support the Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department. Coverage of the month-long preparation, the big day, and post-BBQ activities begins on page 15.

We hope to see many of you at the *Beachcomber* fundraiser on August 14th (see invitation on page 3 for details). It has been three years since Ted Elliott’s TR Elliott wine tasting fundraiser for the magazine and we are ready to party again to raise money for the *Beachcomber*. Be sure to come and check out the great silent auction items generously donated by our beloved local artists as well as dance to the fabulous music of Steve Shaffer’s band, Freddie and the Freeloaders. Kids are welcome (and free) so bring the whole family!

Next issue: October 2010

Submissions Deadline: September 20, 2010

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Cover Painting by Joy Perrin

“Cowtrack Ranch, Nicasio, CA”

Transparent watercolor on paper, 12” x 16”


www.joyperrin.com

Photograph by Black Cat Studio

UPFRONT


The *Beachcomber* Salutes

The Graduates of 2010




Congratulations Maxx

Maxx Moore graduated from the 5th Grade on June 16, 2010, from Strawberry Point Elementary School. He will be attending Mill Valley Middle School in the fall.
Photograph by Michael Moore



Ian and Bret Bowyer

graduated 8th grade at Mill Valley Middle School. Bret will be attending Tam High next year. Ian will go to Marin Catholic High School.
Photograph by Bob Bowyer



Kara Grace Ketchum

graduated with her BA in Art History and a minor in Sociology on May 16th from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA. Kara graduated with Honors in Art and Cumma Sum Laude.
Photograph by Gregory A. Ketchum, Ph.D.

You Are Invited to a Benefit for the

BEACHCOMBER

An Evening of Music and Dancing with the fabulous Freddie and the Freeloaders
(back by popular demand!)

Muir Beach’s very own Steve Shaffer and his band

Saturday, August 14, 2010
8 pm – 11 pm


Muir Beach Community Center

\$20 per person in advance or at the door
Children are FREE and welcome!

No Host Bar * Hors d’oeuvres * Silent Auction including the paintings of local artists Larry Yamamoto, Tom Soltesz, Joy Perrin, Bernard Halliwell, and Brad Eigsti.

Come out for a great night of music and dancing and support your local magazine!

Please reserve in advance by dropping off your check made out to “*Beachcomber*” to the *Beachcomber* mailbox at the southern end of Pelican Mailbox Row. All proceeds benefit the *Beachcomber*.



Freddie and the Freeloaders, from left: Dan Silva, piano (San Rafael); Curtis Uejo, alto saxophone (Danville); Johnny Walsh, principle arranger and guitar (Danville); Steve Shaffer, band leader and tenor saxophone (Muir Beach); Ron Rosano, drums (Greenbrae); Jake Myers, bass (Oakland). Not pictured: Dr. Dave Kell, soprano saxophone and 2nd tenor saxophone (Tiburon).
Photograph by Ron Rosano

The *Beachcomber* thanks Freddie and the Freeloaders for their generosity in providing the entertainment for this fundraiser. The band is available for private parties and special events. Contact Steve Shaffer at 415.389.1722/steve@planbwiz.com for more information.

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*David Leivick and Linda Gibbs
announce the marriage of their daughter*

Sarah Gibbs Leivick
to
Stephen Christopher Szczerban
son of Walter and Marbeth Szczerban

Sarah and Chris were married May 15, 2010, in Wilmington, Delaware. The ceremony was held at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church and the reception took place at Greenville Country Club.

Sarah and Chris are both attorneys in New York City. They met at Boston University, where they both graduated summa cum laude, Sarah with a B.A./M.A. in Political Science, and Chris with a B.S. in Finance and a B.A. in Political Science. Sarah graduated cum laude from Georgetown University Law Center, and is an associate at Kasowitz, Benson, Torres & Friedman LLP. Chris graduated cum laude from Harvard Law School and is an associate at Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz.

*Sarah Leivick and Chris Szczerban
Photograph by Jubilee Photography*

women2women's India Day

By Nina Vincent

The Muir Beach women's group women2women will be putting on their second fundraiser to benefit the women and families of India. The event will take place at the MBCC on Sept. 12, 2010, from around 3 pm - 7 pm. Suggested donation: \$25. Times are subject to change so please look for upcoming fliers and emails.

The event will include an hour yoga class with Susy Stewart, speakers from SEVA, as well as our very own Bill Stewart. There will be a silent auction, Indian food, yoga dance, and more. If you have something you would like to donate for the silent auction (a service or an item), please contact Nina Vincent at 595-2739, or email me with the subject heading 'silent auction donation' at ninavp@earthlink.net. Also, if you know of any Indian restaurants, or entertainers who might be able to contribute to our India Day, please contact Nina. Please save the date and invite friends and family to join us in supporting our global community of women. Thank you for your support.

women2women is a local community of women committed to raising awareness of the injustices suffered by the global community of women.

Mission: To raise money through fundraisers to serve women who are deprived of choice in their lives.



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Beachcomber Wins Printing Award

By Paul Jeschke

The *Beachcomber* garnered a prestigious award for "superb craftsmanship" in printing quality.

The San Francisco Club of Litho and Printing House Craftsmen presented a Silver Impression Award in the magazine category to *Beachcomber* Editor Linda Gibbs during a ceremony April 8 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Burlingame.

"I'm always pleased to see first time entrants earn awards," said Blair Drefus, who chaired the competition. Judges selected winners from more than 100 entries submitted by 21 printing companies.

Gibbs submitted the October 2009 issue at the suggestion of Dave Semling of Mill Valley Services, the *Beachcomber's* regular printer. "He's been extremely supportive," Gibbs said, "and provides complimentary color covers to show off the work of our local artists."

During a "West Marin Report" interview with Brenda Kohn on KWMR radio, Gibbs praised graphic designer Dee Turman for "her beautiful work" and said the Impression Award "really belongs to all of Muir Beach because in addition to the staff, there are contributions that come from all over the community. There's just been such a great response to



*The Beachcomber's success in winning a Silver Impression Award from the San Francisco Litho Club is celebrated by Editor Linda Gibbs, left, along with Circulation Manager Anne Jeschke and Reporter Paul Jeschke after a celebration at the DoubleTree Hotel in Burlingame.
Photograph by David Leivick*

the magazine and this belongs to everyone."

The San Francisco Litho Club has conducted the competition for twenty years as part of its education and scholarship outreach. The *Beachcomber* is published four times a year. Gibbs has edited the magazine since 2007.

Goodluck and the Karibu Spirit

By Joanie Wynn

In Swahili, karibu means "welcome." We heard it often on our trip to Tanzania last June as we were greeted everywhere with warm smiles and kindness. When we learned that our lead mountain guide, Goodluck Charles, was planning his first visit to the United States, we were thrilled at the chance for karibu reciprocity.

During his many years as a guide, Goodluck had led groups from virtually every corner of the world to stand on the "rooftop of Africa." He, however, had never traveled beyond the borders of his own country. That was about to change.

His American adventure began with an invitation from a group of female climbers from our trip. They had experienced the adventure of a lifetime and wanted to return the favor.

Visas for travel to the U.S. are extremely difficult to obtain, especially without significant wealth or political connection. As he approached the U.S. Consulate, Goodluck passed a long line of Mercedes and BMW's parked outside and thought to himself, "I don't stand a chance." But after



*Goodluck looks out over Muir Beach as he starts his hike up Coastal Trail.
Photograph by Joanie Wynn*

a long and document-laden process, he left the embassy elated, visa in hand. As he hopped on his bicycle to head home, he could hardly believe his incredible good fortune, thinking, "God is great and He has a plan for me."

He stood on the tarmac gazing up at KLM's enormous blue and white bird, a Boeing 777. His first ride on an airplane was equal parts excitement and fear. He was so nervous that he didn't eat for the entire ten-hour flight to Amsterdam. All of those in-flight movies that provide a distraction for the more experienced air traveler were completely lost on Goodluck. His mind was racing with thoughts of the incredible adventure that lay ahead.

Finally, he arrived at JFK where he was met by two of the women. Delivered into the heart of Manhattan, he was intoxicated with the sights, smells, and sounds of New York—the streets filled with people, the impossibly tall buildings, the lights of Times Square.

He visited our famous Lady Liberty, the original gesture of American karibuni. He was reticent to climb to the top of the Empire State Building which seemed ironic for someone who regularly stands at 19,340 feet. He liked the neighborhoods of Brooklyn, where people tended their gardens and children played outside.

He found remarkable the quantity and frequency of meals but found his corner deli where he got coffee and a bagel each morning. He loved pizza and French fries, but his all-time favorite was baby back ribs, which he described as "Oh My God."

The photos on his camera revealed his perceptions of the City. They weren't typical tourist sites but things that seem ordinary to us: subway stations, buses, billboard ads, huge retail outlets. There were interesting people of all nationalities and persuasions, including two men kissing on a park bench.

Perhaps our photos of Tanzania might seem strange to him as well. After all, why would anyone want a photo of a herd of goats on the side of the road, or a woman carrying a large bundle on her head, or barefoot kids gathered around a well?



Goodluck visits Muir Woods with Steve and Joanie Wynn.

Leaving the sensory overload of NYC, he headed west for an eight-day visit to the "left coast." When we met him at SFO, we noticed that he was still getting accustomed to our escalators and moving sidewalks. As he stepped gingerly onto each one, we were reminded of how far he had come and how foreign everything must still seem to him.

On the drive back from the airport, we listed a few of the things we hoped to do with him, including kayaking on the Bay. "Oh No!" he exclaimed adamantly, "I don't swim. I will stay on land!" Goodluck was a terra firma kinda guy.

First stop, Muir Woods. We hiked through mist and light rain and were enveloped by the forest giants. Goodluck excitedly pointed out various plants and flowers, taking photographs of each one. He was in his domain, surrounded by nature, exploring on foot. Exactly one year before, on the other side of the planet, Steve and I had been walking with Goodluck doing this very same thing. It felt like we'd come full circle.

The next day, the sun broke through and Muir Beach welcomed our Tanzanian guest with her glorious beauty. We hiked down to the beach and up along Coastal Trail, past Pirate's Cove to Coyote Ridge. Goodluck was extremely concerned about snakes and poison oak, which Steve had taught him to recognize. Other than that, the hike was relaxing for him and he chatted happily about his life back in Tanzania.

Goodluck is 32-years-old, a very serious young man with many plans for his future. Like so many in Tanzania, his life has not been easy. At the age of seven, his father died and he was taken from his mother to live with his uncle. His stepmother was unkind and his childhood was hard. Several years ago, his real mother became ill and he went to care for her, spending most of his savings on her medical treatment until, sadly, she passed away.

He works hard as a mountain guide, summitting a dozen or more times per season. He saves all of his tip money and has managed to buy a small plot of land and a collection of cinder blocks which he hopes to someday use to build a house.

Goodluck cares deeply about the porters and he is a role model for them, encouraging them to save and helping them to find ways to make money in the off-season. Forward-thinking like this is still rare in Tanzania where most people are concerned with survival on a day-to-day basis. He wants to set up a savings account for the men and to help them plan for their futures.

With a true entrepreneurial spirit, he hopes to set up a website to promote his guiding services to Americans and Europeans for mountain treks and safari trips. Along with his own language, Swahili, he speaks very good English, French, and some German. In short, Goodluck is exceptional



Ryan Wynn and teacher Lauren Sidle listen as Jackson Coe, a Strawberry Point first grader, practices his Swahili words for Goodluck.

Photograph by Steve Wynn

and we all recognized and appreciated this on our trip with him. As we walked together, I felt honored to get this glimpse into his life. I also felt proud to share our beautiful homeland with him as he had shared his with us.

On the hike back, I took a chance. I talked him into trying the kayak which I promised would offer him a unique perspective on the Bay. I enticed him with stories of sea lions and pelicans. "Steve will keep you close to the shore and the water will be calm," I assured him. "OK," he resigned, "I will try it." If he liked it, I would be the hero. If not, I teased him that it would be payback for the grueling 15-hour summit day that I had endured on Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Steve gave him a brief tutorial on the beach at Sea Trek before taking off in our tandem. Goodluck's heart was pounding and his palms were sweating, but before long, he had taken out his camera and was snapping everything in sight. He wanted proof to show his friends back home and when he stepped from the boat back onto the sand, he was absolutely triumphant. "Amazing!" he exclaimed.

The days flew by. We took him for the requisite Blue and Gold Bay Cruise and tour of Fisherman's Wharf.

Tuesday he visited Ryan's school. As the children sat in a circle gazing up, he traced his finger across the large world map to show the long trip he had made from Tanzania. He told them about the different ecosystems on Mt. Kilimanjaro. He taught them a few Swahili words and the eager first graders grinned at him as they each took a turn to say "asante sana" (Thank you very much).

Wednesday, Goodluck accompanied Steve to the volunteer firemen's meeting and afterwards, he shared a pint with the guys at the Peli.

Thursday night was volleyball, where locals gathered around and greeted him. Chris Grove kept him supplied with carne asada and cold beer. He felt at home enough to join in the game and everyone was impressed with his skills. Apparently, he'd played volleyball in school, so he was quite an asset on the court. "Come back, anytime, Goodluck. We could use you," they said, patting him on the back.

The culmination of his visit came Saturday night when we held a screening of our documentary, "A Journey of the Heart: Tanzania" at the Community Center. Goodluck had been the lead guide on the climb featured in the video and the screening was held in his honor. About sixty people came, all bringing donations of mountain gear and clothing for the porters. Steve and I were touched at the outpouring of support and we were proud of the way our community had welcomed Goodluck with such warmth and generosity.

The next day, as he was hiking along the road, a handful of neighbors honked and waved, "Hey Goodluck!" If only for eight days, he had become one of us, an honorary Muir Beach citizen.

On his last evening with us, Goodluck said, "This feels like home. We are family now." We felt the very same way.

The karibu reciprocity we had hoped to impart was returned to us tenfold. As Steve and I shared Muir Beach with Goodluck, we also got a chance to share Goodluck with Muir Beach and, in so doing, felt even more connected to the community we sought to share. Through new eyes, we saw how deeply blessed we are in this beautiful hamlet and how Muir Beach personifies the true karibu spirit. For this we are extremely grateful. Asante sana.



Goodluck paddles out into Richardson Bay. Photograph by Steve Wynn

Meet Your Neighbor: Walt Postle

Story and Photographs by Laurie Piel

This edition of “Meet Your Neighbor” took me to lower beach for a visit with long time resident Walt Postle. You can always see Walt around Muir Beach with his dog in tow. He has always been a vociferous supporter of this community and I’ve seen him in action at some of the NPS meetings. Here is a bit of who he is and how he came to Muir Beach.

I have often stopped and chatted with Walt Postle as he walked his dog around the neighborhood, first Davey and now Lila, but hadn’t seen him since his diagnosis of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. So I asked if he would be interested in sharing his story with us for this column. He accepted, fitting me in before driving to UC Irvine to attend the graduation of his godson.

Walt was born in Shotley Bridge, County Durham, England. One of seven children, he grew up in the mining village of South Moor in the northeast county of Durham. His father was a coal miner as were several generations of his family—a tough hard life by all accounts. The hardship of that life is well known but Walt is the first person I have ever met who actually lived it. His mother had none of the “modern conveniences” and worked tirelessly to help feed and clothe her children. As a child, Walt caught all of the childhood diseases, nearly died of pneumonia when he was two, and at age eight caught tuberculosis. He was in the Royal Victoria Hospital in Newcastle when the Germans bombed the town in 1941. All of his illnesses meant missing a lot of school and he ended up going to a private school in Durham. He has a low opinion of the English educational system as he felt it had basically set him up to fail and just be fodder for the mines. Fortunately, his mother’s love of the United States (she visited in 1947) had encouraged some of his siblings to emigrate. He followed suit and in 1950 at the age of 17 he sailed on the SS Washington to live in Runnemede, New Jersey with his sister Ruth who had married an American soldier. The games he won on shipboard provided the \$20 he had to get him started in the New World.

With a green card in his pocket, the draft looming and the Korean War underway, he joined the U.S. Air Force. He was stationed at the then secret Thule Air Force Base in Greenland, 750 miles north of the Arctic Circle, the U.S. Armed Forces’ most northernmost installation. Walt said, “You step outside and take a deep breath and wish you hadn’t. It was so cold it made your lungs freeze.” And, of course, jokes about the lack of sun at midday were a staple. From there, he was sent to Victoria, Texas. If you’ve ever been to the hot humid state of Texas in the summer you’d know it is the antithesis of Thule, Greenland. There a deep breath sears your lungs from the heat and dust. Talk about yin and yang! While in Texas Walt became a U.S.



Walt relaxing at home between painting military miniatures.

citizen. Like his mother he is a fan of America. I asked him why he prefers to be called Walt rather than Walter and he responded, “Because it is typically American, casual.”

He quickly realized that to succeed in the U.S. you needed a college education. Compliments of the GI Bill, he attended Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, receiving an AB degree in labor economics in 1957. One of the main reasons he chose Miami was that they didn’t allow cars on campus, creating a community of the students. He loved the sense of community. It’s not surprising then that Muir Beach eventually became his choice of a hometown. After graduating he spent six months in New York City and decided that was enough of the Big Apple and headed out Route 66 for California in a 1953 Desoto.

Once in San Francisco, he landed a job as a labor market analyst with the government of the State of California, writing



One of the fully garrisoned medieval castles... don’t miss the soldiers in the crenelated towers.



This case is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Walt’s spectacular collection of military miniatures

1966 he was hired by the U.S. Department of Labor as the Regional Economist for the Western states and Pacific territories.

Walt first saw Muir Beach when he attended a Thanksgiving party in 1958. He recalls that the most important thing the host wanted people from the City to bring was bottled water because the local water was a bit unreliable with respect to taste.

Walt moved to Fairfax in 1962, and when, in 1973, the commute became too much he remembered that Thanksgiving dinner and went looking in Muir Beach for a new home. Although he loved Muir Beach, he was told that it wasn’t a desirable place to live since there were



You have to start somewhere and this is Walt’s first piece... as you can see the detail work is amazing. I can’t even imagine handling a brush small enough to do such intricate work.

occupational guidance materials for schools, preparing estimates of employment and unemployment, and writing reports on local job markets. The guides were based on interviews he had with people in all walks of life and were used to help young people choose a career. While working he continued his education receiving a M.Sc. in World Business from San Francisco State University in 1960. In 1966 he was hired by the U.S. Department of Labor as the Regional Economist for the Western states and Pacific territories.

he feels guilty if he considers hiring someone to work on his house or yard.

Walt spent the rest of his career working for the U.S. Department of Labor. He described himself as being “self employed in government” managing and directing large-scale management information systems and a wide-ranging program of labor market research. One of the many things he is proud of is the pioneering work he did in the 1970s in conjunction with a major national laboratory: creating distributed computer networks, setting up one of the first email systems, creating computer graphic systems including statistical maps, and producing socio-economic-demographic data for every place in America. This work was done on primitive computers and was very difficult. The analytical tools and databases used the 1970 Census to support the early civil rights programs and to spread economic development money rationally around the country. One year Walt logged over 100,000 miles interviewing people around the country. With that many miles in one year, I’m not sure he was home enough to qualify as a California resident that year.

Walt’s favorite hobby is collecting and painting in oils, military miniatures. He started in the late 1970s and now has an incredible collection of about 4,000-5,000 pieces in every scale from 15mm to 120mm. Military miniatures are not toy soldiers but high quality metal sculptures painted with “the objective to produce an accurate, detailed and realistic painting of uniforms, equipment accoutrements, and flesh.” His collection includes “a small collection of artillery; everything from German flat figures and war games armies to highly detailed portrait figures.” He also has a couple of fully garrisoned medieval castles in 15mm and 25mm scale, a complete collection of Civil War “monitors” both Confederate and Union (think USS Monitor vs. CSN Merrimac), about 100 ships all in the same scale; pre-dreadnought battle ships, WWI and WWII battleships, modern warships and royal yachts all in 1/250 scale. These models are made in Germany, and given the scale, are remarkably detailed. He said, “I ran out of space for large figures and I now concentrate on flats.... I have a set of 200 standard bearers of the army of Louis XIV that I’ve painted at least twice and am in the third attempt to get them right. Never finish.” And that does not include Hannibal and his war elephants, chess sets, and civilians. So next time you run into him, ask if you can see his collection, it is quite spectacular.

When Walt shares a chuckle or talks about his godchildren his eyes twinkle and he just lights up and you can’t help chuckling with him. He’s still a bachelor so there’s still time for the ladies to share in that chuckle. We chatted for four hours and the time just flew by and yet I feel like I’ve only scratched the surface. I know I’ll be back for another afternoon chat to pick up where we left off.

“The Road to Hell is Paved with Good Intentions”... LaRochefoucauld or “How Not to Respond to a Crisis in the Community”

By Gerry Pearlman

The outpouring of concern by the community over the National Park Service’s probable eviction of the Alcala family from their long-standing residence in the former Banducci property was impressive. I was, however, also dismayed by the lack of a coherent response to an apparent genuine crisis facing the community.

While the attempts at organizing a response to the crisis were certainly sincere and well meaning, they seemed to lack a unified strategy that combined the interests of the Alcala family and the concerns voiced by individual community members.

The issue was initially presented to the CSD Board at its regular meeting, and a person was entrusted with the responsibility of organizing a general meeting to formulate a response. This idea was abandoned without any further discussion in favor of an “inside track” approach to one of our elected representatives with any larger participation by the community discouraged.

Then letters of support condemning any action by the NPS were solicited, and a lot of meetings and emailing took place while whatever facts pertaining to the events taking place faded more and more into obscurity.

NPS was confronted by the community about this matter in a meeting ostensibly called to explain their work this past year on the Diaz Ridge trail and the Lagoon project. They listened dutifully as individual members of the community voiced their concerns. While everyone did have the opportunity to express themselves, I do not think

this type of individual response is a very forceful way of communicating with a government agency.

The proper way in my estimation to deal with bigger government is not by individuals, but by the smaller government, which more closely represents them. When the issue first came to the attention of the CSD, it would have been better to appoint a committee to study the matter and come up with coherent recommendations, after a thorough evaluation of the facts at hand and ascertainment of the Alcala position. After development of such a position paper, which may even have included some other concerns like the model farm proposal, support from the various community groups (Quilters, Garden Club, MBVFD, Equestrians, etc.) would be solicited.

With such letters of support in hand, the CSD would be in a much better position to negotiate with NPS as a true representation of the community’s position.

Any time we are faced with a crisis, we should have in place a procedural process for dealing with it. As I have suggested above, a small fact-finding committee to begin with, general meetings to receive community input chaired by the committee, presentation to the CSD of the results of the committee’s work, endorsement by the CSD and further negotiations by the CSD based on the Committee’s recommendations. Success may not be inevitable, but it would certainly be a less frustrating way of dealing with a crisis, and more significant, a coherent response based on reliable community input and put forward by those elected to represent the community.

the CSD water system combined with the new Seacape water system, bringing good water to lower Muir Beach, which had tolerated brown water as the norm. Also, he was a driving force to establish the Muir Beach parklands, on a part of which our Community Center was later built.

Well over a decade ago, attacks strangely began on the sign. First the whale was torn off its chains and stolen. Then one night a truck struck the sign, partially destroying it. Next, an apparently very heavy vehicle hit the sign in such a way that the two supporting 4 x 4 uprights were actually broken.

Later on an attempt was made to identify White Way as Butterfly Lane by posting a sign near the corner (note that the thousands of butterflies which used to migrate through Muir Beach had all but disappeared due to an ecological disaster). At this time it came to light that the MBCSD actually did not have the authority to legally name a street. Only County Planning has this authority. A 911



*This innocuous sign denoting the gravel lane between Sunset Way and Seacape Drive has quite a history in Muir Beach.
Photograph by Linda Gibbs*

call, which erroneously referred to Highway 1 and Butterfly Lane for location, caused a delay of almost 10 minutes in the arrival of the County medical emergency vehicle. The delay of medical care for a heart problem could have been disastrous; fortunately it was not. This surely demonstrated the need for a formal naming and sign to avoid potential future problems. Residents of nine houses use White Way as a primary access route to their homes.

Nina White, Richard’s wife, applied to County Planning to have the road officially named Great White Way. This set off a flurry of objecting activity on the part of four neighbors. They held several meetings (as told by the fly on the wall) in order to plan the campaign to defeat the naming applied for by Nina. They never did talk to Nina directly about their objections nor attempted to negotiate. As a result, instead of a single perfunctory hearing on the application, several hearings were held over a period of more than six months.

The MBCSD wrote a letter of support for the application, as did Fire Chief Sward and three neighbors who use the road as regular access to their homes. Our Fire Chief pointed out the safety issue, as all fire maps and County emergency response vehicles possessed identification of “Great White Way” in Muir Beach. When this information was brought to the attention of Marin County Sheriff Robert Doyle, he

checked county records and discovered that “Great White Way” had been identified in several County computer systems for a number of decades. He requested the hearing officer at the Planning Department to officially name the subject road “Great White Way.”

Some mean personalized comments were made at the hearings by opponents of the naming application. In order to placate some of the anger, the hearing officer acknowledged arguments that the proposed name was too long, and asked Nina if she would accept “White Way” as the official name. She graciously responded affirmatively. One would have thought that nothing further of note would occur in this matter.

The Marin County Department of Public Works, Road Maintenance Section, installed a generic sign on Nina’s property at the intersection of Highway 1 and White Way. Within a few months the sign was stolen off the top of the metal pole. Road Maintenance promptly made a new sign and replaced the missing one.

More recently in late April of this year, not only was the blue and white sign on top of the metal pole removed, but the entire pole and concrete it was set in were taken. Such vandalism is both trespassing and theft of County property. To compound the results of this act, the Road Maintenance crew, when replacing the sign, pointed out that the revenue provided for funding of their budget comes from the gasoline tax which we all pay. They said that means replacing the sign eliminates the filling of some potholes. One very much wants to believe that none of one’s neighbors would be involved in, approve of, or countenance such vandalism.

Can it be that of all the standard street signs in Muir Beach, the White Way sign is somehow an “attractive nuisance” that draws vandals from far and wide?

Maybe as you drive Highway 1 and pass White Way you might see the sign still there. And, if you do, try envisioning “Great” as the first word for the name of that narrow, dirt road about the length of a football field. Doesn’t this fit the indigenous culture of Muir Beach, vis-à-vis the icon of our volunteer Fire Department? A little amusement can be a good thing!

Muir Beach’s “Great White Way”

By Bob Jacobs

Old timers will remember the three-by-five-foot wooden sign at the corner of White Way and Shoreline Highway. Across the top in white letters it proclaimed “GREAT WHITE WAY.” It had an oval cut out in the center in which hung a wooden whale (hand-carved by our water manager of the time, Click Pickens). It bore the title “JUMINITH WHALE” taken from a poem written by Richard Allen White. It became a landmark for many of Marin County’s residents and trades people.

Several decades ago the Muir Beach Community Services District honored the memory of Richard Allen White for his services to the community while President of the MBCSD Board, by naming the little road Great White Way. Subsequently, the above-described sign was erected by community volunteers. Richard was instrumental in having



*Ryo at 2 days
Photograph by Nikki Ishibashi*

Our grandson Ryo Clive Ishibashi was born just after midnight on June 21st to Nikki and Rex Ishibashi, at their home in Mill Valley. Gently delivered with the exceptional help of our gifted Muir Beach resident and midwife, Yeshi Neumann.

Nikki (formerly of Muir Beach) and Ryo are both doing well.

YAY! We are so excited and so in love! —Peter and Lea Wood

Dampened Eggs, Not Spirits

Story and Photographs by Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk

In general, parents were miserable. Even though it wasn't yet raining, the fog gathered into drops that plunked on our heads and rolled around our hoods to find our necks and noses and eyelashes. Our potluck meals stayed in our cars and we sent Christian and Tessa out to hide the eggs and treats for the little ones. The group intending to celebrate Easter with a family egg hunt at the BBQ grounds was small, and not entirely resolute: Hannah and Stella Eigsti, Tessa and Camila Pares, Christian and Adrianna Bender, Anna Rauh, Tiana Vincent-Pearlman, and Nataya Bassett. We spotted downturned mouths on several children and wondered why we weren't in front of fireplaces instead of tromping through knee-high, sopping grass. We put on brave faces for the kids.

But it was cold.

We urged the kids to quickly go and find the eggs, stomping our feet and gritting our teeth. What a bummer that the weather was so ghastly. In a matter



Jon and Anna Rauh and her grandparents, Charles and Sandra Hobson, are well prepared.



Scott Bender, Antonio Pares, Laura Van Amburgh, and Nina Vincent put on brave faces.

of minutes, the weather gurus had assured us, we'd be standing outside and unprotected when the real storm hit. Hurry, hurry, hurry, children.

Just when we were all ready to call it quits, reinforcements arrived. The Moore clan with Maxx, Jackson, and Austin preceded Ryan Wynn. Like a bundled pied piper, Joanie Wynn marched way out into the field, flinging candy and eggs into the grasses. In her wake, the children clamored over each other, gathering up treats and no doubt leaving several unfound for visiting animals or weed whacking volunteers at the BBQ months later.

Little fingers were covered with dye from eggs not meant to be moistened and round faces were plastered with wet hair, sticky bits of candy, and smiles. Not quite what Lisa Eigsti had envisioned when she had organized the event, but not a washout either. The kids were happy and a little piece of that holiday magic remained.

Perhaps it wasn't quite so cold after all.



Poster by Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk



Hannah Eigsti has on the perfect Easter frock.



Once again, the ticket booth becomes the gathering place for Camila Pares, Hannah Eigsti, Christian Bender, and Adrianna Bender.



Adrianna Bender is ready to brave the weather in search of treasure.



The clamoring begins—Denise Lamott and Aran Moore try to hold back the kids so Joanie Wynn can "hide" the treats.



And they're off!



Look what Stella Eigsti found!



Tiana Vincent-Pearlman and Stella Eigsti find the perfect, dry spot to enjoy their spoils.

Hair Styling Added to Bistro Experience

By Paul Jeschke

Now you can now get coiffure with your coffee. At least 10 Muir Beach residents have stopped schlepping over the hill for hair appointments and are regularly getting clipped at the Community Center during Wednesday Bistro.

Hair Stylist Michael Gerber is the man wielding comb, clips, scissors, and blow dryer. He presides over an impromptu barbershop-salon near the fireplace while Lonna Richmond's coffee, Nancy Knox's succulent scones, and electric community conversation take center stage at the other end of the room.



Bonnie MacKenzie is appreciative of Michael Gerber's hair cutting skills and thinks "it's wonderful" to avoid going over the hill for styling.

Photograph by Paul Jeschke

"He's fantastic, fun, and it's so convenient," enthused Bonnie MacKenzie while looking in the mirror and admiring her new 'do. "Michael's a good listener and he knows hair."

Gerber, who learned his trade at Vidal Sassoon, started cutting hair at the Community Center early this year at the invitation of long-time friend Peggy Chiang. "I did five on the first day and people keep signing up," he said. "So far everyone has come back."



Even customers with less than a full head of hair get expert attention from hair cutter Michael Gerber.

Photograph by Anne Jeschke

It's not without precedent; hair cutting took place at the Community Center a few years back, but was eventually phased out.

"I've only had two other barbers besides you in my adult life," Bryce Browning told Gerber as snippets of hair fell to the floor. "I want you to do this for a long time," he said, asking the barber to make it "long on the sides and short on

top."

Fire Chief John Sward also took advantage of Gerber's tonsorial talents at the urging of his wife, Kathy. "The haircut is beautiful and has a really nice flow," Kathy Sward said. "And it's so convenient. I can't get John John to deal with stuff." She's so pleased with the arrangement that she has volunteered to coordinate Gerber's schedule.

The hair cutter shows up at Bistro at least once a month, but he's willing to make the trip from San Francisco more frequently if at least two people schedule appointments. He retired last year as a recruiter for building system engineers, but quickly got bored and began accepting offers to cut hair at his clients' homes and offices.



Hair Cutter Michael Gerber sweep up clippings that will be bagged and sent to the Gulf Coast to help the oil spill cleanup.

Photograph by Paul Jeschke

"I don't do it at my home because I don't want hair in the butter," Gerber laughed.

Haircuts at the Community Center are \$25 for work that would cost "maybe \$80 at a salon," MacKenzie said. "He's wonderful and really takes care." She's considering adding gelled "spikes" at her next appointment.

Gerber asks all his customers to wash their hair before it's cut and to make certain conditioner is thoroughly rinsed out.

"I cut hair with tension," he explained. "I have to grab it with my fingers and if the hair is oily, it slips through."

Don't expect to see helmet-like hair dryers at Bistro. And don't ask for color change. "I never did wet work—you know, curlers. Just blow dryers." Along with his California license number, Gerber's business card explains his work philosophy: "No salons, no products, no stress."

Creative customers in Muir Beach have even found a way to recycle hair clippings. The hair is swept up, bagged, and shipped to the Gulf Coast where it's stuffed into nylon stockings and tied together into "booms" that soak up oil from the massive spill.

"This Muir Beach contribution is predominantly grey," Gerber observed sotto voce.

May 8th BBQ Work Party

Story and Photographs by Maury Ostroff

Morning broke over the freshly mowed field. Earlier in the week the open field had been cut down, but the area immediately around the stage, the cooking area, and the beer and T-shirt pavilions were still overgrown, even more so due to the recent rain, more than usual for the month of May. Once again it was time to transform this quiet portion of the Redwood Creek Watershed into the venue for the best BBQ in Marin County, an annual event that has somehow come together every year for the past 38 years.

The sun rose higher in the sky, and the team slowly gathered their tools and other gear and prepared for the hard work ahead. Aran Moore volunteered to lead the expedition, and he looked out across the open savannah from whence they came. A herd of zebra could be seen in the distance across the plain at a watering hole, but Moore turned his attention to the other direction and the jungle he knew they had to clear. Slowly, but determinedly, he led the brave band into the forest, their machetes hacking away at the dense undergrowth. Time passed and sweat poured, but they knew they couldn't stop. Finally they reached their goal, a remote outpost where one could get clothing and other trade goods. To the expedition's surprise, the outpost had just been cleared from the debris left by the torrential rains of the Monsoon season. Captain Moore approached a man bearing a broom and said, "Dr. Steinbach, I presume?"

Bret Bowyer and Hans Piotter came ready for work, and Chris Gove outfitted them with weed whackers, instructing them on the fine points of those tools, and



Bret Bowyer tries his hand at weed whacking.

let them at it. The boys were eager to learn, as they knew this was the first step towards their initiation. The ceremony was less than a month away, and they knew the adult members of the tribe would be watching them to see if they were worthy. The ordeal was a difficult one, and required a commitment and sacrifice from the boys that would turn them into men. They hoisted their hefty spears, and donned their helmets and heavy leather tunics, and went out in search of the great woolly mammoth that roamed the valley. Their job today was not to try and hunt them by themselves, but rather to clear the brush for the main hunting party to follow. Still, they had to be ready in case they encountered other dangers, like saber tooth tigers wandering in from the nearby Redwood forest.

Nina Vincent oversaw the unloading of the supplies from the cargo ship. This was not her first humanitarian mission to feed the hungry, and it wouldn't be her last. She was familiar with all the challenges of providing food to a large group of people. Besides the basic logistics, there were the problems of dealing with the local officials as well. Sometimes there were issues dealing with other aid groups, but in this case everyone was getting along fine. Joey Groneman, Tayeko Kaufman, and Janice Kubota were also in the area helping to clear the devastation wrought by the hurricane, (or was it an earthquake?) But none of that bothered Nina, because the warm feelings of a communal meal made it all worthwhile.



In his exuberance in trimming back the trees, Aran Moore inadvertently lops off Dave Elliott's head.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ



Aran Collier and Everaldo Cardoso de Souza rake up the trimmings.

Arlene Robertson leaned on her broom and took a moment to reflect. It had been a hard year on the ranch, and she paused after clearing out the farmhouse and the barn. She knew what she was up against, but she was not going to be deterred. They had started by trying to steal her cattle, but then they tried to take the ranch by causing a stampede of buffalo across her modest homestead, and she had just finished cleaning up the mess. She knew a showdown was coming, so she carefully took down the rifle and loaded it. This was her grandpappy's rifle, the same one he had used at that crucial moment at Gettysburg many years before. He had not backed down from a fight, and neither would she. Sure enough, at high noon the desperados came riding up from over the hill, all whooping and hollering and carrying on. But she stood her ground, and when they approached she said in a quiet but firm voice, "Y'all are welcome, but you've got to behave,

and you've got to have your tickets, and if there's going to be any drinking you're going to need a wristband." The gap-toothed leader sneered at her. "We don't need no stinking wristband," he said. Arlene decided she didn't really need to use the rifle, and instead twirled her lasso and with a quick flick roped him clean and yanked him down off his horse, where he fell right into a mud puddle. The rest of the gang burst out laughing, and Arlene knew she would have no more trouble with this bunch.

Michael Kaufman looked out over the newly mowed area, and watched as the grass and other debris was raked into piles and hauled away. One more year had passed, and the great cycle of the seasons was upon them again. It was his role to get the people to plant the crops that would sustain them. Yes, there were other sources of food, and sometimes a goat or a sheep from the flocks was served as meat, but everyone knew that the primary source of sustenance for the village was the annual grain harvest, and this year was no different. Throughout the empire, different means were employed to get the people to work. Some kings used brute force and slave labor, while in others the High Priests would cajole the people with tales of the Gods into bringing forth the grain from the earth. But that was not his way. He preferred to talk directly to the people and explain to them the reason for their hard work in the fields. If they planted now, and waited for the river valley to flood from the winter rains, they would store enough grain to last the rest of the year. But how much the harvest would yield was hard to predict, as perhaps that was up to the Gods to decide. But maybe there weren't many gods, what if there was only one God? But if there was only one God, how could one explain the chaos in the world?

The afternoon wore on. It was now the bottom of the 9th inning, and the Giants were behind by two runs. Chief Sward had managed this group of veterans for many years now, and he thought about the lineup and the batting order coming up, and decided maybe it was best to just let them swing away. The leadoff batter, Everaldo Cardoso de Souza, lined a single down the left field line, and took a long lead off first base, threatening to steal second. Aran Collier strode to the plate, and after taking the count to 2-2, hit a bloop fly to center that fell in for a hit. With runners on first and second, Eric Groneman smashed a double to the alley in left center, scoring Everaldo, but Collier had to hold up on third. Fleche Phoenix was up next, and glanced back at the dugout for a sign, and then dutifully laid down a perfect bunt going down the first base line. Collier scored the tying run, and with one out and Groneman on third, Gerry Pearlman walked confidently to the batter's box. The hated Dodgers decided it was time for a pitching change, and their manager called for their closer from



Using advance telekinetic skills, Aran Moore moves the cashier's booth out into the field. The chain in front of the booth is definitely NOT connected to a truck, but was photoshopped into the picture to fool everyone.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ



Chris Gove illustrates what can happen when you spend too much time behind a weed whacker.

the bullpen. Pearlman watched as the big left-hander walked to the mound and took his warm-ups. Then came the first pitch, a high fastball for a called strike one. A change-up was tipped foul for strike two. Pearlman dug in and was ready, and then an inside fastball that he swung on and with a crack both the ball and part of the bat went flying - the ball straight up the middle past the pitcher who couldn't field it because he was dodging the broken bat, but Groneman was already speeding home and Pearlman raced to first and the throw was late and the run scored! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant!

"Hey, I think the handle on that rake is cracked."
"Hunh?"
"Your rake, I think the handle is broken."
"Oh. Yeah, I guess it is."

With the day's work done, it was time to pack up and put the tools away, and start planning for the next work party. The field of dreams was one step closer to fulfilling its destiny.

Epilogue:

Astronauts Maxx Moore and Jackson Moore walked briskly to the launching pad, and headed to the elevator that would take them into the rocket ship. Back at mission control, Admiral Scott Bender prepared for the countdown. This was to be an emergency launch, done right at sunset in order to make the rendezvous with the orbiting space station. After the Global Warming meltdown of '38, much of humanity had now migrated out to the stars, including several descendants of Muir Beachers. Keeping tradition going, they were going to have the 162nd annual Firemen's BBQ on Alpha Tau Ceti, but it was discovered at the last minute that the supply of special barbecue sauce had not survived the harsh



Dave Elliott and Nina Vincent are all smiles after lunch.

atmosphere on the outer planets. Back on earth, a new recipe was formulated that would be better suited for extraterrestrial conditions, but there was no time to lose, as the BBQ would be held the next day, so a last-minute launch was organized. Rocket science had changed dramatically in the past century, as the earth's atmosphere had become heavier and more power was needed to escape into orbit. It turned out that the secret ingredient which was added to the rocket fuel as an accelerant was the same spice added to the barbecue sauce. Before packing the volatile liquid into the cargo hold of the ship, chief scientist Christian Bender slipped a few drops into the fuel tank. With astronauts Maxx and Jackson strapped in, the countdown to another successful barbecue began: "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, ..."



Camaraderie of a job well done with Chris Gove, Michael Kaufman, and Bob Hayden.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ



May 15th BBQ Work Party

Story by Barbara Herwitz • Photographs by Jim Herwitz

In between days of nerve-wracking rain showers, the second 2010 Work Party arrived at the picnic grounds. The first order of business was dealing with a squealing fan belt in Harvey Pearlman's truck. Happily, Chris Gove was ready for action. After surveying the engine and a brief consultation with the assembled automotive experts, Chris dove under the truck and, miraculously, the squeal was soon gone. Harvey suggested that his truck might serve as an excellent raffle prize at the BBQ this year! The work party crossed the bridge and moved on to attack the other projects of the day.

Weed whacking, brush clearing, chipping, and cleaning ensued with Work Party Chair Aran Moore and Chris Gove giving direction. After the comprehensive overhaul that took place leading up to last year's barbecue, there were fewer major projects to address and the work proceeded at a steady, easy pace. Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk did a masterful job of weed whacking, while Joey Groneman and Arlene Robertson energetically cleared brush. John

John Sward powerwashed the sales booths. Rob Allen (and his canine sidekick, Leah), Brad Eigsti, Bob Hayden, Fleche Phoenix, Paul Jeschke, Eric Groneman, Aran Collier, and Michael Kaufman all contributed mightily to the cleanup efforts.

Nina Vincent, Work Party Food Chair, and Tiana Vincent-Pearlman arrived with supplies for lunch and Anna Tom brought the fixings for a delicious buffet, complete with cold cuts, cheese, tomatoes, avocados, and cookies. Joey Groneman contributed a delectable, homemade cherry cobbler to the mix. Amadeo Banducci joined the group for lunch.

As luck would have it, the Muir Beach firemen in attendance had barely finished their cobbler when they were called away to attend to an injured bicyclist on Highway 1—a fitting end to a successful morning of hard work for the 38th Annual Muir Beach Firemen's Barbecue.



Scott Bender gets his gear together.



Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk shows her weed-whacking form.



John John Sward powering up.



Brad Eigsti battering down the hatches.



Arlene Robertson and Joey Groneman plan their attack on the weeds.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ



Barbara Herwitz and Nina Vincent carry in lunch supplies.



Tiana Vincent-Pearlman is a willing and able helper.



Aran Moore clears brush.



Brad Eigsti and Jim Herwitz take a break.



"Is the chicken ready yet?"



Anna Tom, Barbara Herwitz, and Nina Vincent prepare a delicious buffet.



Now, THAT'S a sandwich!



Duty calls! John John Sward and Rob Allen respond to the emergency.

May 22nd BBQ Work Party

Photographs and Text by Linda Hulley

Surely there is an innate desire to be of service that dwells inside most all of us, and it was on display this bright, blustery Saturday morning. It was inspiring to see so many people out working to shape up the picnic grounds for the annual MB Volunteer Firemen's Barbecue, or were they just out having fun? It was impossible to say. But there was a lot going on in the way of nipping, snipping, whacking, cleaning, hauling, splinter-pulling, and of course, lunch. The kids and the dogs added a playful, festive mood to the day. The title of this story should be WORK IS FUN. Wouldn't it be nice if the whole world worked this way?



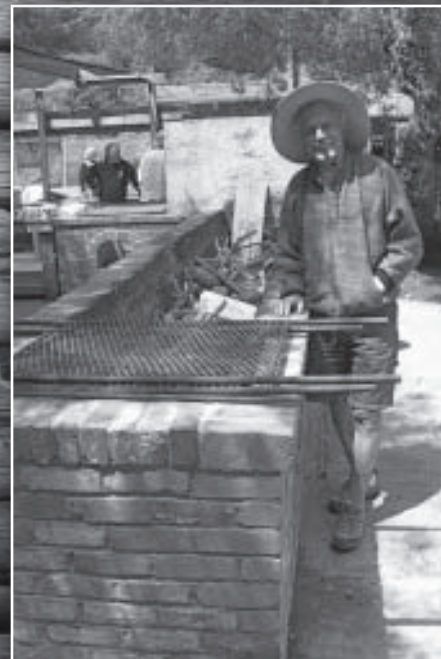
Steve Wynn wears the shirt that denotes what the day is all about—VOLUNTEERS!



Two top-of-the-line volunteers: Anne Jeschke and John Sward



Mike Moore says, "Let's do it with clippers, nippers, and saws."



The heart of the matter: the barbecue pit and the cooks. Gerald Pearlman, along with other cooks, will barbecue more than 1,000 chickens!



A barbecue takes lots of talking (AKA planning): Nina Vincent and Anne Jeschke



Dave Elliott pruning trees so the stage will be visible. (BTW, that is NOT the stage in the background.)



The BIG LAWNMOWER, being handled by volunteer Chas Kingsbury with emotional support from Jessie Kingsbury.



Harvey Pearlman, the cute guy who makes the water work.



Austin Moore and Ryan Wynn are neighbors and best friends, and they're both six.



Tiana Vincent-Pearlman and Austin Moore playing by Redwood Creek, like seldom seen fairies-of-the-woods.



The new fireman, Fleche Phoenix, and the old fire chief, John John Sward.



"You say that dog stole your sandwich?" asks Kathy Sward. "That's too bad!"



This is the dog, Maya Gove, that stole my sandwich.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ

BBQ Prep Week

By Linda Gibbs

So much goes on behind the scenes during the week running up to the BBQ. Here are a few of those activities taking place in Muir Beach and beyond.



The Shirt People gather at the Banducci Ranch three days before the BBQ to check in new inventory. From left: Leslie Riehl, Lonna Richmond, Laura Van Amburgh, Brenda Kohn, Anne Jeschke, and Kathy Sward (T-Shirt Chair). Photograph by Linda Gibbs



Brenda Kohn pushes the rickety cart of fire department clothing from the Community Center to the car, destined for the Banducci Ranch where it will join the new stock ready for transport to the shirt booth on BBQ Day. Photograph by Linda Gibbs



John John Sward stores 25 gallons of BBQ sauce next to the 7 tubs of baked beans in the walk-in cooler at the Banducci Ranch. Photograph by Linda Gibbs



Shirley Nygren shows off her newly planted BBQ centerpieces. The Muir Beach Garden Club has been making the table decorations for the last five years. Photograph by Linda Gibbs



Fletch Phoenix loads his van with supplies for the BBQ following a major shopping expedition at Costco organized by Bob Hayden. Photograph by Paul Jeschke



Joey Groneman and Tayeko Kaufman of the Muir Beach Garden Club plant the beautiful table centerpieces with petunias, alyssum, marigolds, coleus, potato vine, dahlias, and ferns. Photograph by Linda Gibbs



The Happy Dessert Bakers gather on Friday night at the Green Gulch Kitchen, ready to bake cookies, brownies, and poppy seed cake. They will be back again on Saturday night. Back row, from left: Al Kile, Arlene Robertson, Bethany Villere, Kent Andrews, Michael Kaufman, and Gail Falls. Front row, from left: Shirley Nygren, Tayeko Kaufman (Desserts Chair), Joey Groneman, and Julie Smith.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ

May 29th BBQ Work Party

Photographs and Text by Julie Smith



Cuco Alcala and Eli Pearlman adjust the position of the entrance sign.



Shirley Nygren and Joey Groneman decorate the stage with the patriotic red white and blue garland.



Eli Pearlman shows his dad, Harvey, how to get the bread ready for the oven.



Leslie Riehl and Lonna Richmond stock the tee shirt shelves.



So we'll all have squeaky-clean hands, John John Sward delivers the portable sink to the porta-potty area.



What would the final Work Party be without some last-minute repairs? Cuco Alcala, Eric Groneman, and Amadeo Banducci are on it!



Camila Pares, Hannah Eigsti, Adrianna Bender, Tiana Vincent-Pearlman, and Stella Eigsti invite everyone to "Have a grate Lunch!"



Bonnie MacKenzie, Nancy Knox, and Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk wrap the eating utensils in paper napkins and set out the condiments.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ



Meanwhile, up at the new water tank construction site, Julie Smith is caught red-handed dumpster diving for some 2x4s to keep the soft drink cases off the ground.
Photograph by Outi Onorato



Ryan Wynn bravely bites his lip while Dad, Steve Wynn, goes mining for the splinter.



Lisa Eigsti's lunch spread, complete with beautiful green salad and fresh strawberries, was enthusiastically consumed by the hungry crew.



Signs, signs, signs – is there no end to all the signage we need? A smiling Brad Eigsti, Sign Production Chair, puts the finishing touches on the starburst sign announcing the 38th Firemen's BBQ.



Tiana helps mom, Nina Vincent, pour ice into the cooler while big brother Eli gets a head start on the chips.



Shirley Nygren gets the taco stand ready for the Nacho crowd.



Janice Kubota and Kathy Sward share a giggly moment in the tee shirt booth.



The picnic tables have arrived!

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ

May 29th "Volunteer Dinner"

Story and Photographs by Anne Jeschke

The volunteer party held the night before the barbecue is growing, and the fun is growing at the same time. This year close to 100 people enjoyed the pre-barbecue celebration.

Cuco and Consuelo served the world's best tacos, cooking meat, potatoes and tortillas nearly the entire night to satisfy the crowd. And satisfy the crowd they did!

The rest of the fare was potluck, and despite days of work readying for the coming barbecue, many individuals took the time to prepare a signature dish for the volunteer party. There were oohs and aahs as Chris Gove carried in two of his justly famous flourless chocolate cakes. There were rice dishes, beautiful salads, vegetable sides, and more.

The wine and beer were flowing and everyone was relaxed. The preparation work was over. Conversations reflected the

excitement of the barbecue and the neighborliness of the workers. The party went late, and then there was clean up. Tired revelers headed home to set alarms for an early morning start.

Every year someone must spend the night at the barbecue grounds to provide security for the supplies left for the next day's barbecue. Aran Moore and Denise Lamott turned even this task into a party! Jackson Moore turned 10 and invited a number of friends to spend the night at the picnic grounds with him. They set up tents early in the evening and near the end of the party, a giant cake was rolled out. What must it be like to have 75 neighbors singing "Happy Birthday" and cheering for you as you blow out the candles? Certainly a birthday to remember!



Cuco and Consuelo Alcala cook their famously delicious food as a gift for Barbecue volunteers.



Jackson Moore celebrated his 10th birthday at the volunteer party, and helped the community by camping in the field with his friends to protect the supplies that were in place for the Barbecue. Back row, from left: Laura Pandapas, Paul Brunner, and Lynda Silva. Front row, from left: Jackson Moore, mom Denise Lamott, Noah Golden, Maxx Moore, and Christian Bender.



Chris Gove not only volunteers many hours, he also cooks his well-known chocolate cakes for his fellow workers.



Maia knows that the volunteer party is for gourmets and gourmands. At least she didn't attack caretaker Chris Gove's cakes!

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ

THE 38th Annual Firemen's BBQ

Photographs and Text by Julie Smith



Julie Smith, Muir Beach Paparazzi
Photograph by Linda Gibbs



Troy Bassett looks on while Kathy Sward writes up the invoice for Janice Kubota's stylish new eco-friendly shopping bag that's big enough to hold all the week's groceries.



Even though he doesn't live in Muir Beach, Hank Almarez comes down from Washington State every year to be part of the chicken-cooking team.

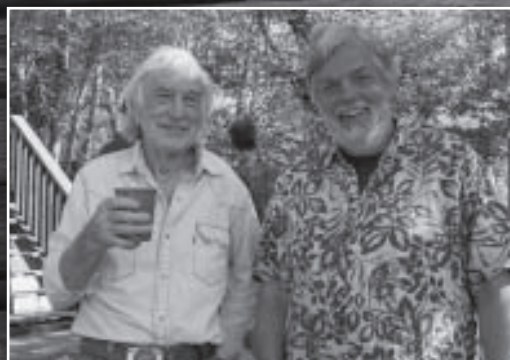


Wendy Johnson, Tessa Pares, and Elizabeth Levie put the finishing touches on a last-minute sign announcing that the red & black beans with yams tamales are gluten-free and vegan. YUM!



Steve Shaffer is at his usual post dishing out huge helpings of perfectly barbecued chicken dripping with that famous BBQ sauce.

Three pretty girls were required to keep track of all that salsa and hand out the eating utensils and paper napkins. They threw in a little silly fun too!



Bob Winkelman and John John Sward do a little celebrating. How many BBQs have these two comrades attended?!



Tyler Albin Onorato, son of Tony Onorato and Kelly Albin, had a great view of the crowd from his perch way up high on the fence.



This guy's cargo looks as whopper-jawed as his dangling license plate. And that was BEFORE the truck negotiated the bumpy parking lot... wonder how far he got before it all collapsed in a heap!

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ



The "Welcome" sign spells out the BBQ Day rules – No BYOB, No drinking in the parking lot, No driving while intoxicated, I.D. required for that red "drink" bracelet, No jumping the yellow "Caution" tape. Have a nice day!



A never-ending line at the ticket booth kept Debbie Crenshaw and Greg Ketchum hopping almost all day.



Gerry Pearlman, veteran BBQ-er extraordinaire, defies his 75 years with an energetic performance of The BBQ Chicken Dance. That was at the beginning of the day...



Well-traveled "sweatshop-free" certified organic logo gear starts out in Texas, gets pigment dyed in Missouri, moves on to the Carolinas to be spun/knitted/sewn, and ends up in Kathy Sward's brother's printing facility in Kansas for printing of the MBVFD logo.



Valeria (Cuco and Consuelo's granddaughter) and her mom Lilliana had fun at Valeria's first MBVFD BBQ. The baby, radiant in her pink MBVFD tee, stole the show with her cheery toothless grin.



What would BBQ Day be without Cuco Alcala and Eric Groneman flipping and basting chicken all day in the BBQ pit?



Deb & Rob Allen's kids have grown up and left home, but were on hand to help out in the raffle booth. Deb spends months every year gathering donations for the popular and 100% profitable raffle.



The rock climbing wall is always a favorite with the Jubilee Jumps crowd.



Brent Smith, proud "parental," shows off daughter and son-in-law Kris and Jeff Nelder. Grandson Jake has bragging rights on his belly button.

THE 38TH ANNUAL FIREMEN'S BBQ



"DANG IT, the kitchen sink is right here on the list - I TOLD you not to forget it! And the cell phone service down here stinks, I just don't know how we'll manage..."



Dean Sward, Angie Banducci and Jes Sward's youngest, had more party than he could handle.



"Two at a time is about all I can handle, Honey, but the next dance is all yours!"



BUSTED! "Sorry, girls, no beer drinking allowed in the parking lot."



Gail Falls and Al Kyle checked I.D.s and fitted potential beer and wine drinkers with festive red bracelets.



Always cheerful and smiling, Kathleen Call and Levon Sagatelyan are cashier booth veterans!



Maury Ostroff kept the vegetarian tummies happy with the steaming hot tamales. Wendy Johnson and Dee Hayden have customers waiting.



MBVFD logo gear flew off the shelves with Team Outi Onorato - Linda Gibbs - David Leivick on the job!



Once again, Andre's All Stars brought the house down with the music we all love - the crowd danced and danced and danced till they dropped!



Even the beer is world-class! Graham Groneman, right, ladles the Lagunitas Brewing Company ale into pitchers ready for the thirsty beer drinkers.



Salad, salad, and more salad... looks like Judith Yamamoto is having way too much fun in the kitchen!



You can always count on Nina Vincent and Harvey Pearlman to be having more fun than anyone dancing!



Joey Groneman and her niece Malaney Roberts take a time-out for a picture.



Representatives from the Park Service and Sheriff's Department were on hand all day to keep the peace. They were served up extra generous portions of BBQ chicken by Dee Hayden and Kathie Fisher.



Over 40 dozen cookies, several batches of poppy seed cake and brownies later, Shirley Nygren and Ian Magnus from Camino del Canyon are running out of desserts by mid-afternoon!



Comrades Bob Hayden, Michael Kaufman, and Jon Rauh finally have a chance to relax. The weather cooperated after a most bizarre May, the party-goers "played well with others," everyone had fun, the bands, The 85s and Andre's All Stars were over-the-top terrific... all making this year's Firemen's BBQ a rousing success! Kudos to all!



Everaldo Cardoso de Souza stirred the yummy baked beans all day long, and he's still smiling!



Al Kile nicely explains to this astonished fellow that he can't bring his cooler of beer into the party. (Can't he read???) And besides, this is a fundraiser!



Near the end of a full day of shooting for the Beachcomber, Julie Smith re-unites with hubby Brent and grandson Jake. Kudos to yourself, Julie!

Photograph by Kris Nelder

May 31st Post-BBQ Cleanup

Photographs and Text by Julie Smith



Laura Van Amburgh, Cleanup Chair, was at the picnic grounds before 8:00 am and by 10:00 am almost everything was washed, neatly stacked, and ready for storage!

Laura Van Amburgh looks on while Susy Stewart bravely volunteers to wash all those BBQ sauce-stained aprons and towels in her washing machine.



Bean bucket washer-outers Dee Hayden and Nina Vincent give Susy Stewart a hard time for hogging all the dish towels.



The Junior cleanup crew (Siena Klein, Camila Pares, and Tiana Vincent-Pearlman) took time out to make a little bed for their pet banana slug and sing a sweet lullaby to help her go to sleep.



Nina Vincent, Work Party Food
Photograph by Julie Smith

Wrap-Up From the Chairs

Saturday Work Party Lunch Brigade

By Nina Vincent, Work Party
Food Chair

All went smoothly this year. Turkey, ham, salami, and roast beef were bought, hauled, put out, slapped on bread, accompanied by avocado, tomato, lettuce, onion, pickle, mayo, mustard, and cheese. Nuts, chips, cauliflowerer, carrots, cookies,

fruits of all colors and sizes were included in the landscape of lunch. It seemed that the volunteers were well fed, and the dining hall was filled with good cheer and lively anticipation of the big day.

We had a suggestion and a request from several of our vegan/vegetarian volunteers: more edibles for their particular palates. A suggestion of hummus as a sandwich smear was noted and will be included in the list next year.

I was fortunate to be able to assist on all four Saturdays this year (no pre-school camp outs, fundraisers, kiddy shows

to attend). It is fun to see how each lunch provider has their own style of layout, and choice of special goodies. It was lovely to spend time with folks in the magical setting as it transforms itself from a wild winter wonderland to a sparkling dining, assembly line kitchen. Each year I volunteer to provide food on the first Saturday so I can sweep (or dig) out the accumulation of fallen debris from the winter months. The counter tops are covered in leaves, sticks, and muck. There is something very satisfying about turning this squirrel, bug, and slug habitat into a friendly kitchen and dining area under the canopy of trees. How lucky are we to live in this place!!!

Great thanks to my lunch providers: Anna Tom, Caroline Patterson, Lisa Eigsti, and Laura Van Amburgh (for breakfast). And a great big thank you to Cuco and his family for their once again amazing dinner the night before. The tacos were delicious, the nopale salad my favorite, and the green and red tortillas a treat. Cuco and Consuelo assured me that they will be coming back to join us next year and many years beyond. Gracias Cuco, Consuelo, and family!

And a special thanks to Michael Kaufman who every year makes the Costco run and restocks the drinks, chips, salsa, cookies, nuts, and other yummy treats.

Until next year when we shovel leaves, staple paper, sweep debris, and enjoy our most amazing community. Peace. Nina

38 and Counting

By Michael Kaufman, Overall Chair



Michael Kaufman,
Overall Chair
Photograph by Julie Smith

On Sunday, May 30, 2010, the Muir Beach community celebrated the 38th annual Volunteer Firemen's BBQ, and by most accounts it may have been the best BBQ in recent memory. The picnic grounds looked better than ever, the publicity was just great, the raffle prizes had something to please everyone, the volunteers showed up and worked their Muir Beach magic, the food was

wonderful and we sold more than ever, the bands rocked as usual, and the weather could not have been better.

Having chaired the BBQ for a few years, I am always amazed, but not surprised that a community as small as ours can put on the best party in Marin. The hours of planning and the level of coordination and cooperation needed to make the BBQ a success speaks volumes for the type of members that make up our community. So on behalf of the Volunteer Firemen, our neighbors and friends, and the Fire Association Board, we thank you all for making this annual event such a success. The BBQ and the parcel tax in support of the fire department helps keep our volunteers prepared, and our community safe.



Steve Shaffer,
Chicken Order
Photograph by Julie Smith

From the Pit

By Steve Shaffer, Chicken Order Chair

This was an exceptional year on all levels. I always order 22 cases of the largest fresh chickens available (Foster Farms Chickens). These are 3.5 to 4 lb. birds that arrive at Safeway in cases with approximately 13 to 14 whole chickens in each case. The chickens are then all removed from the cases and the staff in the butcher shop quarters each one and repackages them into large plastic bags and return them to the cases.

It's a fairly intense operation, and at the end of it, the band saw has to be totally dismantled, sterilized, and put back together.

Even though the chicken is delivered to Safeway on the Friday afternoon prior to the BBQ, the order is placed two weeks earlier and Safeway gives us the best price that they have between that date and the day we pick them up on the morning of the BBQ.

In the past we have uniformly had two cases left over and this year (for, I think the first time ever) we cooked all 22 cases. We had chicken ready all day, never experienced any delays, and still had adequate reserves for the volunteers at the end of the day. It was a great day in the pit.



Tayeko Kaufman,
Desserts
Photograph by Julie Smith

BBQ Desserts

By Tayeko Kaufman, Chair

What is the recipe for making yummy desserts for the annual Firemen's BBQ? A lot of effort, time, dedication, fabulous neighbors who like to bake, and the generosity and hospitality of our neighbors and friends, Green Gulch. This year we made 39 dozen of 4-ounce chocolate chip cookies, four commercial flats of brownies, and 3 commercial flats of poppy seed cakes. In addition we had 100 of Danny Hobson's fantastic oatmeal, chocolate chip cookies with almonds, 3 dozen nutritious and delicious vegan cookies from Erin Pinto, and a beautiful banana cake loaf from Sandra Allen. Add that up and it was our best year ever in sales. We only had a few unsold cookies which were consumed before they made it to the cleanup work party on Monday.

consecutive nights. Our crew has not changed for several years now: Arlene Robertson, Al Kile, Bethany Villere, Kent Andrews, Shirley Nygren, Joey Groneman, Julie Smith, Gail Falls, Michael Kaufman and this year, Michelle Robertson, Arlene's youngest daughter visiting from New Zealand made up the dedicated baking crew.

With the beautiful weather anticipated for this year's BBQ, Michael requested on Saturday that we make additional cookies. I had already purchased the additional eggs and butter and was a little concerned about baking into the wee hours by myself. Shirley Nygren was the first to respond with "No problem. Do we have the supplies?" So instead of leaving at 10 pm, our fabulous cookie monsters made 2 more batches of cookies or about 9 dozen more and did not get home until after midnight.

Loading the van we always borrow from Michael Moore on Saturday night, I was reduced to tears just thinking about the generosity of Green Gulch and all the Muir Beachers who work tirelessly every year to make this BBQ a reality. We live in a very special, unique place and the annual firemen's BBQ fundraiser just reinforces for me how lucky we are to be a part of this community.

For over a decade now, Green Gulch has generously donated all the supplies and their facility to the bakers. We arrive at 7:30 pm and bake until midnight for two



Debra Allen, Raffle
Photograph by
Julie Smith

MBVFD Raffle Wrap-Up 2010

By Debra Allen, Chair

Of the 100 prizes that were donated by locals and beyond, 69 were won by Muir Beachers! Of those 69 Muir Beach winners, 41 of them turned in their raffle stubs before the event. (You can see the prizes and winners on the firemen's website, www.muirbeachfire.com)

The total raffle sales were down about \$1,000 this year, and I noticed fewer neighbors returned their raffle stubs than ever before. Some told me they were too busy, some said they were traveling, and I'm sure the economy was in play, as well.

But, I was so pleased to see some neighbors not only return their 25 stubs, but ask for more; and I had a small group who purchased 50, 100, and one even purchased 200 tickets! Those donations really help the department, so thank you so much!



Fleche Phoenix,
Trash/Recycling
Photograph by Linda
Hulley

Trash/Recycling

By Fleche Phoenix, Chair

Clean up for me post BBQ started at 7 am and went till noon. Needless to say, this was a decent sight more than just clean up. But overall there was a noted improvement in garbage disposal by the attendees and overall awareness regarding recycle.

I still think we need to explore the possibility of acquiring biodegradable cutlery and the likes for next year. We would be one step closer to green, which would be a huge impact saver all around.



Kathy Sward,
T-Shirts
Photograph by
Julie Smith

Shirt Wrap

By Kathy Sward, Chair

The final preparations for the merchandize booth started when a hearty group gathered on the Thursday prior to the big day to pack and check the 500 pieces that had arrived in our new shipment. We examined each piece to make sure they weren't damaged and checked to see that the order was correct. We re-packed them and then on Saturday morning took them along with more than 700 pieces of stock

from the community center to the picnic grounds and shelved them. Sunday morning we hung samples of all of our wares around the structure creating lots of excitement and then we were ready for the rush of customers.

Sales were actually a little less than last year, but we still took in more than \$10,000 in just over five hours. Most of our sales

I tried to get a variety of prizes this year, like the Rocket Boat Ride by Blue & Gold Fleet and special Honey from Redbluff (a guy who takes care of Muir Beach bees), a gorgeous Vermont Teddy Fireman Bear, the Spa Party at Mill Vali Salon worth \$1,500, Private Dance Lessons, Go Kart Racing, Baseball tickets, tickets to many plays, overnights, great books, store certificates, artwork, great restaurants, and chocolate and wines, for example. Just a couple of people didn't want to receive their raffle prizes, but then seemed to be OK when they traded them.

It's always easier for me to deliver prizes to Muir Beach Winners, rather than to Petaluma or SF or who-knows-where winners...so if you're able next year, PLEASE buy raffle tickets, so the percentage of Muir Beach winners of 2011 raffle is 75% or even higher!

P.S. I enjoyed seeing some grown-up Muir Beach "kids" return for the BBQ, like Michael Miller and his wife from Colorado and my daughter who flew in for the weekend from Iowa. For this event to continue to attract those who grew up with it and now live elsewhere...well, that's just so neat to know. What a special Community!



Bob Bowyer, First Aid

First Aid Report

By Bob Bowyer, Chair

Eight kids that needed Band-Aids, three kids with stinging nettles, and one woman that sprained her ankle.

this year were short sleeve tee shirts. Usually the day starts out cool and foggy, so fleece vests, sweats and hoodies, which cost more, go flying off the shelves. Then, in the afternoon when the sun shines over the field, people come running for tees and tank tops resulting in double sales for the day. However, although the weather reports were a little scary leading up to Barbecue Day, it was an absolutely perfect day.

At the end of the day all of the cold weather wear and unsold inventory had to be boxed up and unloaded at the community center, but it was worth it. All told, thirty-three of our friends and neighbors made it all work.

So thanks and big hurrahs go out to Troy Bassett, David and Laurie Brandt, Paul Brunner, Coleen Curry, Linda Gibbs, Deb and Dave Hendsch and their friend Lynda Wyckoff, Barbara Herwitz, Anne Jeschke, Brenda Kohn, Janice Kubota, David Leivick, Dana and Tony Mekisich, Lorna Newlin, Outi Onorato, Lonna Richmond, Leslie Riehl, Scott Sampson, Toni Simmons, Sala Steinbach, Janet, Cosmo, and Virgil Taylor, Laura Van Amburgh, Nina Vincent, Jim White, Natasha, Avila, Stephane, and me.

June 5th Post-BBQ Debrief

Photographs and Text by Julie Smith



Enough pizza, fresh green salad, Lagunitas IPA, and wine kept everyone in a festive mood during the BBQ Debrief held one week after the event.



John John Sward speaks about the barbecue from his perspective as the Fire Chief of the MBVFD and the Chair of Music, BBQ sauce, and Charcoal-Ordering.



Michael Kaufman, Overall Chair, leads the lively discussion of what went well, what needs work, and how to make next year's BBQ even better.

MUIR BEACH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT



MBVFD Incident Log

Compiled by Paul Jeschke

April 3, 11:28 am

Muir Woods

Assisted visitor with tongue laceration.

April 17, 10:20 am

Muir Beach

Abandoned vehicle partially blocking Seacape Drive at intersection with Highway 1.

April 23, 2:15 pm

Muir Woods Road

Bicycle accident one mile from intersection with Highway 1. Rider tossed over handlebars and suffered possible dislocated shoulder and concussion. Transported to Marin General Hospital.

April 25, 11:30 am

Muir Woods

Victim of bicycle accident transported to Marin General Hospital.

May 2, 4:30 pm

Highway 1

Assist biker complaining of chest pain 1/2 mile east of Green Gulch.

May 7, 8:30 am

Slide Ranch

Extinguish campfire on hillside.

May 8, 4:30 pm

Deer Park Fire Road

Hiker twisted knee. Refused treatment.

May 16, 12:10 pm

Highway 1

Victim of bike accident at entrance to Banducci Ranch road transported to Marin General Hospital.

May 24, 8:10 am

Steep Ravine

Jeep over side of hill.

May 26, 5:50 pm

Muir Beach

Extinguish smoldering fire in Overlook bunker.

May 26, 7:40 pm

Muir Beach

Assist victim of allergic reaction.

May 30, 2:00 pm

Highway 1

Hit-run vehicle accident.

May 31, 3:45 pm

Highway 1 and Panoramic

Automobile accident.

May 31, 5:15 pm

Steep Ravine

Auto accident.

June 4, 2:00 pm

Muir Beach

Tree down on shoulder of westbound Highway 1.

June 9, 3:30 pm

Muir Woods

Medical assistance.

June 11, 6:55 pm

Highway 1

Motorcycle down at milepost 8.5. Driver assisted with possible dislocated knee and injured wrist.

June 13, 5:00 pm

Muir Beach

Motorcycle down. Driver transported to Marin General Hospital.



“Yukata Memories” Ruffled Off With Much Fanfare

Story by Judith Yamamoto
Photographs by Claire Johnston

The Quilters’ April Fools’ Raffle & Cocktail Party was so much fun!

There were hors d’oeuvres! There was great music by Freddie and the Freeloaders, there was dancing, there was sitting around talking and eating. There were Quiltinis!

There was the drawing of the lucky winning ticket! The quilt, “Yukata Memories,” was won by Sharon Rowbury (and her partner, Martin Linder), who were happily ecstatic, so everyone was happy.

We sold many raffle tickets, both before and during the party, and we made almost \$2500 for our worthy causes.

We even baked a birthday cake for our birthday boy, Saxophone Steve, and his wonderful band.

What a party!



The Community Center was rockin’ with the Raffle and Cocktail Party sponsored by the Muir Beach Quilters on April 10.



Freddie and the Freeloaders provided the evening’s music.



At the Quiltini Bar, Christian Riehl shakes up a Quiltini (Vodka, Cranberry Juice, Triple Sec, and Rose’s Lime Juice) with the assistance of Claire Johnston and Leslie Riehl.



Partygoers applaud the band in front of “Yukata Memories,” the quilt made by the Quilters and raffled off the night of the party.



“Who will be the Lucky Winner?” asks the expectant crowd.



Sharon Rowbury and her partner Martin Linder, residents of Muir Beach, are the happy winners of “Yukata Memories.”



Enjoying the party, from left: Richard Kohn, Paul Jeschke, Anne Jeschke, Linda Gibbs, and David Leivick.



Kathy Sward passes out Saxophone Steve’s birthday cake (a chocolate torte made by Outi Onorato) to the band.



David and Laurie Brandt dance into the night.

Photograph by Julie Smith



In the Center of Things

By Laurie Piel

There has been a change in the email address for booking rentals in the Center. The address I had originally chosen turned out to be too hard to understand when spoken, i.e., over the telephone, and too confusing to remember easily. So, the new email address is: muirbeachcc@aol.com. I hope this choice serves everybody well. So please make a note and delete the old address from your address book.... Thanks!

In another attempt to resolve late night noise problems at the Community Center, we suggest the following: If you notice excessive noise after hours, please leave a voice mail at 415/388-7804 or send an email to noise@muirbeachcsd.com. Please also first call the Community Center 415/383-9969 for a reminder to the renter. If no action is taken, a second call/email is in order. If there are two or more complaints registered, then we will have a discussion with the renter about withholding the portion of the renter's deposit held as security against after-hours noise.

Once again the Center is less busy than a year ago. There have been several last minute cancellations for health reasons as well as lack of attendance for some events. The quiet spring continues that way into summer and fall.

In the beginning of April there were a few private events held by Muir Beachers. In the last half of the month women2women held a meeting, and there was a community meeting with the National Park Service to review current projects and the status of the residents of the Banducci Ranch.

May started with some local rentals and culminated with the evening screening of Steve and Joanie Wynn's documentary about Tanzania. Their special guest was overwhelmed by his welcome. Don't miss the full article on page 5 for all of the details. And, of course, May brought the BBQ! I try not to accept bookings on the weekend of the BBQ because volunteers are in and out of the building and shed bringing items from the Center to the BBQ grounds. Unfortunately, I had to miss the BBQ this year... a first for me and hopefully the last.

June's weekends were mostly filled with events booked for private events by residents. However there were two notable exceptions: women2women held a meeting and Paul Smith brought his Contemporary Opera Marin musical talents to the Center again. The two short operas performed on June 27th were "First Love, Last Orders"—a "Pub Opera" literally planned to be performed in a pub—and "Send for Mr. Plim," an opera about a sad sack trying to please his many customers in a fancy department store. Both were comic operas and suitable for children. Paul also is planning an opera about the Day of the Dead. So, look for information about that event to be held on October 30th. We are so lucky as Paul brings these operas to us as a gift to the community. You can also see Paul's other performances of his Contemporary Opera Marin and The Tiburon Chamber Players at the Tiburon Music Festival (tiburonmusicfestival.org) each June. Paul is the Festival Director.

We only have a few events booked in July so now's the time to pick a date if you want to have a gathering.

August 14th brings a "must attend" event... the *Beachcomber* Fundraiser (see invitation on page 3). Music will be provided by Steve Shaffer's band, Freddie and the Freeloaders. They were such a big hit at the Quilters' Raffle Cocktail Party that they are back by demand. Come support your award winning magazine and help it be all that it can be. If you can't attend, just put a donation check in the *Beachcomber* mailbox on mailbox row and we'll drink a toast to you. The weekend of August 28th & 29th brings the 3rd Annual Garden Club Rummage Sale. Situated at the junction of the Muir Beach parking lot and Pacific Way, the Rummage Sale is the place to be to help the Garden Club fund their next round of improvements to the Community Center. So, save your white elephants and extraneous objects, be they d'art or otherwise, and bring them down to be sold. For more information please call Joey Groneman at 383-2898.

On September 12th women2women will hold a fundraiser for the women of India. Turn to page 4 for more information about this worthwhile event.

October is turning out to be the month for weddings this year. Two of our residents have family weddings booked to begin the month. Then to finish with a flourish, Saturday, Oct. 30th Paul Smith will bring an opera based around the "Day of the Dead" celebration to be followed the very next day by our annual children's Halloween party on the 31st.

The first weekend in November is our own annual "Day of the Dead" celebration and Harvey Pearlman already has some ideas percolating in his fertile brain.

Don't forget Bistro continues every Wednesday from 9:30 am to 11:30 am and we hope to see you there!



The Critter Report: Climate Change Or Just Another Cycle?

By Dave MacKenzie

When we watch nature, be it birds, weather, or earthquakes, there is often a tendency these days to blame unusual events on climate change (aka: "global warming"). Or maybe could it be that we are just seeing natural cycles or random events which have been going on for millions of years?

This year in Muir Beach, for example, I have noticed a number of odd occurrences, or so it seems. For example, birds such as the Varied Thrush (similar to an American Robin, but with a dark breast band) were hard to find in the winter. Some years, they are common, maybe the most common bird in Muir Woods National Monument. Where were the Rufous-Crowned Sparrows (an uncommon, but regular breeder on very steep slopes such as in Kent Canyon or on the Sun Trail)? Many years they are not hard to find if you know where to look. Could it be that climate change had somehow affected these species? The Varied Thrush, for example, which breeds in the northern forests, may not have needed to come south in a mild winter to find food.

In these cases we may just be seeing cycles. Varied Thrushes, in particular, are known to be an "irruptive" species, meaning that some years we have lots of them and some almost none and that does have something to do with their food sources. This is known because biologists have kept data for many years, and over time the cyclic trends become clear (maybe with a bit of statistical analysis). Another example is the cycles of lemmings due to their food going in cycles, and the result is a cycle in the occasional "invasions" into the U.S. of such cool species as the Snowy Owl (almost totally white but with some sharp black detailing!).



Rufous-Crowned Sparrow

What about long-term? Well, the only way to find out about long-term effects of something like climate change is to get lots of good data. In order to resolve the subtle short-term effects from a long-term trend, good data is the only way to go.

So what do the data show? Well, data from PRBO Conservation

on breeding birds in areas such as the Farallon Islands show correlations of seabird food supplies with both cycles and long-term trends which may be linked to climate change. Other groups have been collecting other types of data, and yup!, climate change is real. Exactly what all the effects will be is yet to be seen.

Here's some random data for Muir Beach this year. Personally, I saw no Gray Whales passing in the migration period at the end of April. Did anyone else see any? There seems to be something going on here!



Varied Thrush

What has been increasing in Muir Beach this year is sightings of certain species. Since I have set up a "Critter Cam" in our backyard, I have found that Gray Foxes pass every night, as do Raccoons and Striped Skunks. Many other persons have been seeing these species regularly, including a sighting of a family of foxes on Pacific Way. The well-fed River Otter seems to hang out in the flooded forest just downstream from the footbridge and there have been many accounts of it swimming by in the front lagoon or even ambling along Pacific Way. Apparently Slide Ranch lost a few chickens to a River Otter (maybe our fat one!) and they solved the problem by caging the chickens! At least one bold Coyote has been seen a few times in the upper Seacape area around the homes, including one night in our backyard. Look out those of you who still have outdoor cats in Muir Beach! Cats are a common target of our native Coyotes.

Another sign of change, and in this case it was really due to introduction of the species from Europe on the East Coast, is the Eurasian Collared Dove, which was seen several times this Spring in Muir Beach and also in Stinson Beach. This dove is a bit bulkier than our regular Mourning Dove, and gives a WHO-WHO, ...whoow, call to locate others. Is this species here due to climate change? Probably not in this case, as the species is native to Europe and somehow showed up in Florida a number of years ago and has spread very rapidly across the U.S.

So bottom line, it's the data! Without good scientific data, it's all just speculation as to exactly what is going on.

Illustrations by Dave MacKenzie

COMMUNITY INFO

WEEKLY IN MUIR BEACH

These activities take place at the Community Center unless otherwise noted.

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tai-chi - 6:30 - 7:30 pm \$22.50 per month• The Bookmobile Noon – 1:00 pm 1st and 3rd Mondays, Mailboxes, Highway One across from Pelican Inn. For more information, 415.499.7544. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tao Flow Yoga 6:30 – 8:00 pm Taylor's zendo, 1821 Shoreline Hwy. Contact David Taylor for more information: 383.2240. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tai-chi - 8:00 - 9:00 am• Bistro - 9:30 – 11:30 am. Organic fair trade coffee, \$1.50 per cup; additional cups 25¢ each. Featuring fantastic fresh-baked organic scones by Nancy Knox, \$1.50 each.• Muir Beach Quilters - 11 am. No fee.• CSD Board of Directors Meeting – Meetings of the Board of Directors of the Muir Beach Community Services District are open to the public and are generally held on the 4th Wednesday of the month, every other month, at 7:00 pm. Notice of Board Meetings are posted 72 hours in advance, as exact dates may vary. |

| THURSDAY | SUNDAY |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tai-chi - 6:30 - 7:30 pm• Volleyball - 6:00 pm - late At the courts on Muir Woods Road. No fee.• Iyengar Yoga 6:30 - 8:00 pm Taylor's zendo 1821 Shoreline Hwy. Instructor: Susy Stewart 415.388.1549 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green Gulch Zen Center 8:15 am Meditation Instruction 9:15 am Meditation (zazen) 10:15 am Lecture 11:15 am Tea 11:45 am Discussion with lecturer 12:45 pm Lunch for Program Attendees (\$8 donation) Children's Lecture and Program 1st Sundays 10:00 - 11:30 am |



Photograph by Julie Smith

Community Center Drop-in Use
Daytime hours if the Center is not scheduled for other activities. Users responsible for cleanup.

Community Center Rental Policies
For any rental inquiries, please email Laurie Piel at muirbeachcc@aol.com.

SUPPORTING THE BEACHCOMBER

Move over Tomales, Mill Valley, Mt. Tamalpais, Point Reyes Station. Make way for a historic first:

The Muir Beach Refrigerator Magnet!

A tumbled Italian marble tile with the famous Beachcomber masthead, 1 3/4" x 1 3/4"

\$10 for one, \$9 each for two, or \$8 each for three or more.

All proceeds benefit the Beachcomber.

Beachcomber Beach Towel

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