

BEACHCOMBER

SINCE 1946



ON THE COVER

Cover design by Janet Tumpich

Daydreams, Marilyn Stiles

White Stoneware with Glaze, 7"x14"x9"

Once you have seen the magical and whimsical clay sculptures or 'critters' by Marilyn Stiles, you'll want to know the artist. Her lizards, toads, frogs, slugs, ravens, foxes and pigs speak volumes for the sense of humor and dignity she imparts to her clay friends. A reclining lizard reading a book on a path on a warm sunny day; a pig adorned with carpenter belt filled with tools ready for work; a pair of ravens in deep conversation on a tree limb, or a crafty fox with tilted cap who may have just raided the chicken coop. All anatomically fashioned so their true nature cannot be denied, yet so human in their pose and expression that the viewer can't help but smile and be amused.

Marilyn's signature turquoise-blue glaze is one she has used for many years and explains that, *"It's a white stoneware that I fire to cone 6, mid-range. I mix the glaze then add different colorants: copper, cobalt and iron. The amazing thing is that the process of creation is never boring and opening the kiln is either a surprise or a disappointment. There's always something new to learn or attempt ... I consider myself to be very fortunate...."Inspirations come from 'doing'. You may start with an idea or concept, but it inevitably transforms along the way."*



To view more of Marilyn's work, please visit: marilynstiles.com

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

People come to live in Muir Beach for different reasons. Some are looking to "get away from it all" and want to be left alone to enjoy the scenic beauty. Others revel in the tight knit community, participating in events and getting involved in local politics.

Whatever your preference, I hope you'll find something in this issue to interest you. On local issues, we have a variety of political perspectives in our viewpoints section for you to consider. We have a short story and a student essay, each one reflecting two very different times of life yet both illuminating the small moments that lend meaning and context to our lives. We have information on upcoming events and volunteer opportunities and, as always, good news from your neighbors.

As you read through, I hope the content will leave you feeling a bit more connected to this beautiful place.

*Happy Reading,
Joanie Wynn*



BBQ merchandising maven Kathy Sward

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The Beachcomber is a volunteer-run community newsletter published since 1946 (on and off) with a circulation of 200 (more or less).

Everything printed is solely the opinion of the writer and is printed in the form and condition as submitted. Anonymous submissions are not accepted. We reserve the right to edit for space constraints.

We want to hear from you! Please send your submissions to:
editor@muirbeachcomber.com

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NEWS FROM YOUR NEIGHBORS

Grandparents **Michael and Suzanne Miller** are over the moon with joy. Molly and Michael Plann have welcomed their daughter Delilah Alani to their family. Molly is Irish and in their language Alani means "dear one". In Hawaiian, it means "orange tree"; most appropriate for her hair color!



Joey Groneman is proud to announce Kaiya Rain, born December 3, 2014. Nicole, Stephan and big brother Sage Catalan are thrilled with the new addition.



From **Ania Fizyta & Harlan Wood**, new neighbors at 70 Sunset Way:

We moved to Muir Beach last August after asking the Universe for a dream home that would nourish our love and our creativity and match our magical lives.

We spent the first week jumping up and down with delight every morning, looking at that beautiful ocean! The awe just doesn't fade - we love being surrounded by so much stunning nature. Ania is a love and relationship coach, NLP practitioner, transformational healer and overall good witch working from her home office and in downtown SF and Mill Valley.



Harlan also enjoys working from home, he is a core creator and cofounder of the Enlightened Structure projects, working on global-scale collaboration systems and technologies that support enlightened civilization.

We are blissfully in love and excited to be getting married in Muir Beach this September and making many happy memories here! We are so enchanted by this warm community with this healthy blend of autonomy and connection among this group of brilliant and kind neighbors. We're looking forward to getting to know more of you

Good News from David Taylor



Virgil Taylor celebrates with siblings Cosmo and Mabel

My son, Virgil, recently graduated from Wesleyan with a double major in Studio Art and American Studies. In addition, he won the following prestigious awards:

JESSUP PRIZE

Awarded to two undergraduates each year who are deemed to show the greatest talent and promise for even greater excellence in sculpture, printmaking, architecture, photography, painting, or drawing.

BUTTERFIELD PRIZE

Established by the Class of 1967 and awarded to the graduating senior who has exemplified those qualities of character, leadership, intellectual commitment and concern for the Wesleyan community shown by Victor Lloyd Butterfield, 11th president of the University.

Here's an excerpt from the letter his professor wrote regarding the Butterfield prize:

It is Virgil's general presence which makes him so special, and the presence is not immediately easy to define. He is physically large, and somewhat extravagantly gay, and he combines these qualities in an irrepressible charm which conquers almost all he meets. Meeting Virgil is always a good thing because he is as big hearted and generous and helpful as any student I have ever known.

You need help printing, ask Virgil. You need help in the woodshop, ask Virgil. You need help hanging an exhibition, ask Virgil. But also you need help focusing this idea for your paper (due day after tomorrow), ask Virgil. Your heart is broken, Virgil's shoulder is soft as it is broad. He seems to be "there" for so many people in so many ways.

I mention his being gay, not just because it is part of how he presents himself, though it is very much that, but his manner goes very, very far to making everyone comfortable with, and more comfortable than they have

ever been, around gay people. He seems to make any boundary which someone might (secretly) have simply disappear. Instead of the duty of political correctness one is reminded quite simply of why the term "gay" took on its meaning. Virgil simply sweeps you up and lets you know what a feast— intellectual, social, in every way—life can be. He lets all who meet him —and that I think is almost everyone—encounter their own better selves."

NEW MBCC VOLUNTEER RENTAL COORDINATOR

By Laurie Piel

After 8 wonderful years as the Volunteer Rental Coordinator for our Community Center...it's time to move on and Labor Day will be my last day. We have a wonderful new member of the community who is taking over the position and I'm sure everyone will be as welcoming to her as you were to me. Her name is Amy Utstein.



Maud, Steve & Amy Utstein

Amy & Steve Utstein and their 13-year-old daughter, Maud, moved into 7 Seacape in April (along with their dogs Buffy and Stella) and they are thrilled to be joining the Muir Beach community. Amy is originally from Oakland and works at the Law School at UC Berkeley. Steve is originally from New Zealand and, after playing music for many years, now works at UCSF. Maud is about to start High School at Tam in the fall. They all like hiking and playing games of all sorts.

Speaking of games, Amy is interested in starting a regular Mah Jong game if there are any players out there – she's also happy to teach anyone who would like to learn. Email her at theutsteins@gmail.com if you'd like to play.

Over the summer Amy and I will be working together as she learns the ins and outs of the Center and she will start to take on parts of the job. So if you send me an inquiry about renting the center and receive a reply from Amy, please give her a warm welcome.

**Introducing: Christine Lehnertz,
General Superintendent,
Golden Gate National Recreation Area,
National Park Service**

Article and photo provided by Alexandra Picavet



Chris Lehnertz brings diverse experience to her position as General Superintendent for Golden Gate National Recreation Area, which also includes management of Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site. Most recently, Lehnertz served as Regional Director of the National Park Service's Pacific West Region, with responsibility for 61 units of the National Park Service in California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, western Montana, northwestern Arizona and Guam.

As Superintendent at Golden Gate National Recreation Area and its affiliated NPS sites, Lehnertz will be responsible for programs and facilities serving over 17 million visitors per year, the highest visitation in the national park system.

Prior to her assignment as NPS Pacific West Regional Director, Lehnertz was Deputy Superintendent at Yellowstone National Park. She also served as acting Associate Director for Cultural Resources in the National Park Service's office in Washington DC.

Lehnertz has 25 years of experience at the field, regional, and national level, working on public lands management and environmental management and policy. She has worked in environmental and policy positions in Colorado, Wyoming, and Washington DC.

She began her professional career as a seasonal fisheries technician with the State of Colorado, and also worked as a biological technician with the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Before joining the National Park Service, Lehnertz spent 16 years working for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A native of Colorado, Lehnertz has a degree in environmental biology from the University of Colorado. She lives in Sonoma County with her spouse, Shari Dagg, their cat Choco and their dog Thibodaux.

Chocolate Avocado Cookies

by Destin Layne Block

These cookies are ideal for anyone who likes to indulge a little while still staying health conscious – they are rich enough to satisfy those cravings for something decadent, and they are the perfect treat to bring to potlucks, picnics and birthdays.

The combination of avocado and chocolate (cacao) has long intrigued me; and the health benefits of both foods are well documented. Many of us are familiar with the healthy fats and omega-3 fatty acids found in avocados; however I was pleased to learn that avocados are highly prized for their ability to prevent unwanted inflammation.

According to the World's Healthiest Foods, an avocado's anti-inflammatory nutrients fall into five basic categories: phytosterols, carotenoid antioxidants, and non-carotenoid antioxidants including vitamins C and E, and the minerals manganese, selenium, and zinc.

The same goes for cacao beans, the root of chocolate, which are also rich in natural antioxidant compounds and flavonoids. These two superfoods add a wealth of nutrition and flavor in every bite.

Done right, these superfood cookies are unbelievably fluffy, light and not too sweet. Healthy fats along with only a few ingredients will satisfy that sweet tooth and keep you feeling light with a new spring in your step.



*Healthy Avocado Chocolate Cookies
Adapted from the Smoothie Lover*

Ingredients

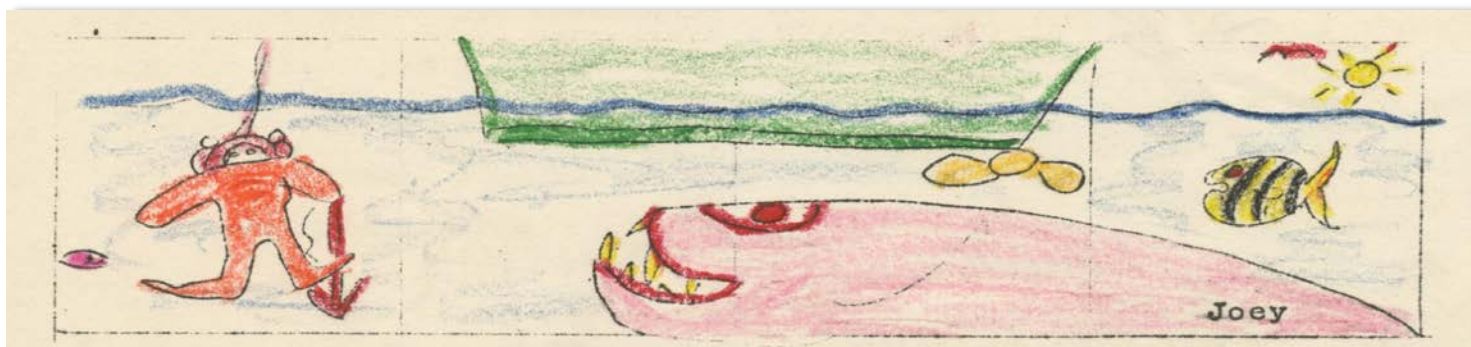
- 100 g. (3/4 cup) avocado flesh (Approximately 1 ripe avocado)
- 1/2 cup coconut sugar or coconut nectar (*feel free to substitute other sweeteners)
- 1 egg (or vegan egg substitute)
- 1/2 cup dark cocoa powder or cacao
- 1/4 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. In a blender or food processor mix together avocado and coconut sweetener until smooth. Add in the egg.
3. Mix in the cocoa powder and baking soda.
4. Stir in chocolate chips and chopped walnuts.
5. Place a large spoonful of cookie dough in a baking sheet. I prefer to rub coconut oil at the base. Note: the cookies won't spread as much as usual cookies either.
6. Bake for 8-10 minutes or until the cookies have risen and don't stick as much as prior to baking. Cool down. Store in the fridge and enjoy!

LOCAL TREASURES: ARCHIVING THE 1946-1966 BEACHCOMBERS

By Gail Falls



Artwork – September 1954

This *Beachcomber* that you are now reading has been appearing regularly for the past 41 years, since March 1974. There were also, however, 38 issues that appeared much earlier, between May 1946 and May 1966, which were unknown to most of us.

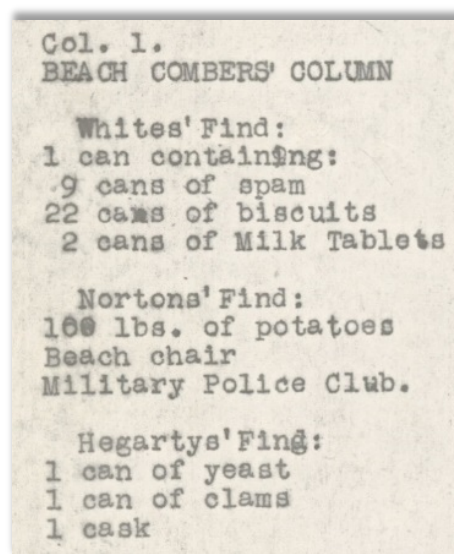
Started by John and Valery White (Reg and June White's children) and the Norton children, many other Muir Beach kids were involved in artwork and writing and as they grew up, other kids took their place; it was a collaboration of the kids (mostly high-school age) growing up in Muir Beach at that time.

Only one or two copies of these mostly single-page original exist and it is thanks to the original owners that we know about them. The drawings are delightful and every issue contained a list of stuff found on the beach, quite different from what gets swept in now.

As someone has said, 'they represent the sole ongoing historical record of that time that exists for this community.'

In order to make these issues accessible to all of us and to preserve the delicate originals, Bryce Browning, Julie Smith and I recently spent several afternoons scanning, very, very carefully, these fragile old pages. Maury Ostroff has offered to make PDFs of the collection available to everyone online at muirbeachcomber.com in the near future.

Thanks to Bryce's persistence in preserving the content of these old issues, backed by me and many others, and Julie's elegant computer and, particularly, her expertise, this wouldn't have been possible.



*Beachcombing finds - May 1946
Julie says it looks like something that
might have fallen off a WWII ship*



Gray Heron by Joanie Wynn

The Critter Report: Wild Child

By Dave MacKenzie

If you were born before the mid 80's, chances are good that you spent a lot of time outdoors as a kid, playing spontaneous and often unstructured games created from rocks, sticks, or even beetles. For many of us "nature-heads," the wildness of a childhood without many of today's techno-complications (two-job parenting, complicated daily commutes to school and after school activities, organized weekend sports, and the ever-present glowing digital displays) were just not an issue. So are kids today getting what they need to be involved with the planet earth and all of its issues? Is a wild nature connection important, even essential to proper human development?

These and so many other concerns are skillfully addressed in former Muir Beacher Scott Sampson's newest book: *How to Raise a Wild Child*.

Those of us who know Dr. Scott (as he was known on the incredibly popular PBS KIDS series *Dinosaur Train*), also know how passionate he is about dinosaurs, family, and the world around us. In the new book Scott provides us with an excellent guide to raising a "wild child," and much of the latest research into why nature is crucial to proper development and management of our civilization.



Scott and Jade Sampson birding on Muir Beach

Mining from his own experiences raising his daughter Jade, and from many other examples of experts and practitioners of outdoor and nature activities, Scott gives a specific set of tips and secrets for mentoring and growing your child to connect with nature. He also comes up with some clever mnemonics such as EMU: Experiencing, Mentoring, and Understanding, to help us see how the process of "wilding" can best be done.

Storytelling, seeing food as nature, and improving our schools for "wilding" are all subjects taken on by the book.

Scott divides children into three age groups. The youngest, ages less than 6 (the wolf pups), need unstructured play, with lots of dirt! The middle childhood period (ages 6 through 11) is the time of competence, so experiences such as "sit-spot" (staying in one place in the backyard for a while and observing sounds,

insects, birds, and just figuring out what is going on), provide new challenges. And the teens, 12 and up, need to see nature as place of adventure and socializing with peers, perhaps out of range of parents. That might include camping trips, developing navigation skills, and other alternatives to the glowing digital screens! Often the method of the Coyote, or trickster, is needed by the parent/mentor to initiate action in the child. The book is literally full of ideas on how to engage kids in nature based on real practices and the latest research.

So why is all this important? Scott argues that a "wild" nature experience is how we evolved, and until recently, all humans lived. So such experiences are essential to our proper development. If we can not connect to nature, we as a society will harm nature, and therefore ourselves. So "wilding" of our children may be the best bet for healing our stressed planet.

I am not coming close enough to really doing justice to this well written and organized book. Scott's style is imminently readable, scientifically based, and very optimistic. His vision includes "rewilding" of the cities, where most people in the world now live. He sees this strategy as a great way to get humans to reconnect with nature. In a time of global warming, terrorism, and so many other fears, the book's positive outlook is not only refreshing, it is a practical approach to really improving things. He gives many examples of real people who are doing amazing nature rewilding and teaching with great success. *How to Raise a Wild Child* is must read!

I was fortunate to have done a couple of nature walks with Scott and Jade when they lived in Muir Beach. His book has taught me much about how to improve my own mentoring skills with kids. A recent walk I led at Muir Beach for a group of girl scouts allowed me to try some new ideas, and they worked quite well! For example, I have learned to ask the kids more questions, rather than just giving them answers. Let them try first.

Obviously we are fortunate in Muir Beach to have such ready access to the "wild" and natural world. But do we use it properly to mentor our children? If you have kids, grandkids, or just need a positive view of our planet's future – read the book!

Thanks, Dr. Scott. Kudos for this one!



How to Raise a Wild Child,
Scott D. Sampson,
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015.

www.raiseawildchild.com

Amazon Books: \$25.00 or less.

Amazon Kindle Edition: \$11.99.

The Woman Who Is Not My Mother

By Marsha Roberts

(Submitted by Debra Hendsch)

I can hear her walking toward the front door, her sensible shoes shuffling closer and closer. But the door doesn't open yet. She is standing there, just on the other side. She's making the sign of the cross and asking the Blessed Virgin for courage. I know this because I have seen it many times from the other side.

"Who is it?" she says, her voice the size of a doll's.

Before I can answer, she says it again, this time pleading. "Who is it?" She's imagining the worst ... no, not imagining—remembering. It's wartime and they've come to take her and her family away. The words tremble through the door again ... "Please, who is it?"

I try to sound as cheery as I can. "Your daughter!"

"Who?" Mercifully, confusion spills over the terror, blunting it.

"Your daughter... remember me?" One day, maybe soon, she won't.

The door finally opens just a slice and she blinks in surprise. "Oh, I didn't know you were coming." The sight of her takes me aback, too. It always does. Even if I've just seen her the day before, the first glimpse is always a shock. The woman at the door isn't my mother. My mother would be appalled at the sight of this woman. "Why doesn't she comb her hair, or put on some lipstick, or wear a clean blouse, for god's sake? ", my mother would say.

"Why don't you comb your hair, or put on some lipstick, or wear a clean blouse?" Some days I actually say it before I can get ahold of myself. On those days, she fires right back. The anger that used to be folded neatly under her lets loose with full force. "What does it matter? I am old. Nobody sees me."

"We're going out now, Mom. People will see you."

"If I embarrass you, then I'll just stay home."

So, we go out. She's wearing the same thing she's worn for the last three days. A kelly-green t-shirt, topped with a turquoise cardigan—colors clearly unhappy with each other. At the grocery store, I get the usual looks from other middle-aged women. *How can you let her go out like this? Why don't you take care of her like she took care of you?*

And then it gets worse. We get to the checkout counter and she takes three candy bars from the stand and slips them onto the belt. I scoop them up and put them back. She grabs them again. I put them back. Her eyes well up and she starts crying—really crying. She says for all to hear that I won't let her have any candy and that I'm mean and why can't she have candy because after all, she doesn't have anything else—candy is her only happiness and I won't let her have it. By now our audience has turned into a jury. And they're disgusted with me.

"Diabetes," I want to explain.

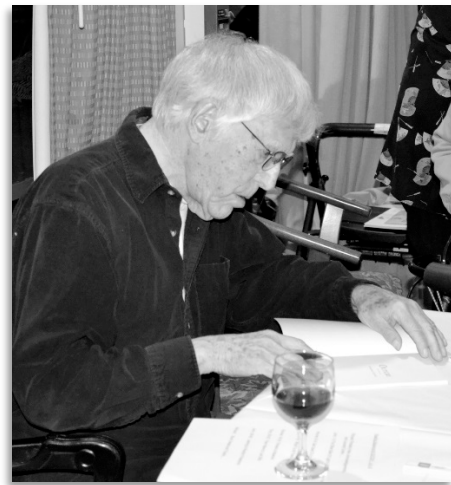
On the way home, I tell her about the senior center dance tomorrow. Would she like to go? I look over and do a double take. It's my mother. Her eyes are bright blue and her old smile is right there where it always was.

"Oh, yes," she says, she would love to go. And then, with a giggle, "Maybe I'll find a boyfriend!" Her cheeks are flushed like she's already whirling around the floor. She isn't my mother, but sometimes she reminds me so much of her.

Marsha Roberts lives in Mill Valley, California. Her short stories and essays have appeared in Gravel, Loud Zoo, Thrice Fiction and other ezines.

Richard O. Moore (1920-2015)

Submitted by Denise Moore



Poet and filmmaker Richard O. Moore—a co-founder of KPFA and KQED—died peacefully of natural causes Wednesday, March 25, at his home at The Redwoods in Mill Valley, CA. He was 95 years old. Though best known as an early documentary filmmaker for public television, Moore considered himself a poet first and foremost. His first book, *Writing the Silences*, appeared from the University of California Press in 2010 while his second book, *Particulars of Place*, will be published in April by Omnidawn.

Born in Ohio in 1920, Moore lost his mother to tuberculosis and was left in foster care in Los Angeles in the early '30s as his father sought work during the Depression. Sent to the University of California, Berkeley, in 1939, Moore was eventually expelled for his participation in pacifist anti-war protests, though he was later allowed back to complete his B.A. During this period, he became a member of the original circle of anarchist poets around Kenneth Rexroth—including Robert Duncan, Jack Spicer, Philip Lamantia, William Everson, Madeline Gleason, James Broughton, and Thomas Parkinson—the beginning of what is now known as the San Francisco Renaissance. At the time he was employed as a ballet dancer and the studio in

which he lived served as the meeting place for Rexroth's "Libertarian" (read, anarchist) group.

By 1949, Moore had given up dance for broadcasting, co-founding with his friend, Lewis Hill, and then-partner, Eleanor McKinney, the first public radio station in the U.S., KPFA. Though he would leave the station in 1952 over political disagreements, Moore found himself back in broadcasting two years later, as an early member of the public television station, KQED. In 1960, he accepted a CBS fellowship to Columbia University and began a lifelong interest in the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

After his return to KQED, he formed the KQED Film Unit with Philip Greene and Irving Saraf and directed a series of cinema vérité-style documentaries for PBS precursor National Educational Television. Among the films he wrote and directed at this time are *Louisiana Diary* (1963), concerning a CORE voter registration drive for African Americans in Plaquemine, LA; *Take This Hammer* (1964), examining racial tensions in San Francisco and featuring James Baldwin; *Report from Cuba* (1966), looking at Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution; and the ten-part series *USA: Poetry* (1966), famous for including the only sound footage of Frank O'Hara, and profiling everyone from Lawrence Ferlinghetti and John Ashbery to Anne Sexton and Louis Zukofsky. After forming his own production company, PTV, Inc., in the '70s, he would return to literary themes with his series *The Writer in America* (1975), profiling such writers as Toni Morrison and Eudora Welty. Subjects for other films included Duke Ellington, Dorothea Lange, Elijah Muhammad, and Darius Milhaud.

During the 1980s, Moore worked as president and CEO of Twin Cities Public Television in St. Paul, Minnesota. Retiring in 1990, Moore and his wife Ruth returned to Northern California, living in Point Arena. Having continued to write poetry long after he stopped publishing it, Moore was eventually discovered at a Squaw Valley Writers Conference by Brenda Hillman, though it would be several years before she learned of his connection to the San Francisco Renaissance. This was the beginning of his return to the poetry world, bolstered by the publication of his selected poems, *Writing the Silences*, edited by Hillman and Paul Ebenkamp, by the University of California Press in 2010. A second volume, *Particulars of Place*, edited by Hillman, Ebenkamp, and Garrett Caples, with an introduction by Cedar Sigo, is scheduled to appear in April from Omnidawn and is largely composed of poems written after his first book. His poems have appeared in many literary journals, including *Poetry*, *Volt*, *Redwood Coast Review*, and *Amerarcana*. He also privately published a number of chapbooks including *A Selection for Ruth* (1997), *China Diary* (2012), *Outcry* (2014), and *In Passing* (2015).

In his introduction to *Particulars of Place*, Sigo writes, "What I find most commendable about the *USA: Poetry*

series is Richard's choice to showcase so many heroes of the queer underground and without a trace of tokenism. His mindset dates extremely well. One would be hard-pressed to find another man so unencumbered by social divisions." This remarks extends to Moore's films on African American and revolutionary subjects, as well as to the political thrust of his poetry. Moore's work in both media displays a clear predilection for the underdog and a commitment to social justice that amounted to a passion. Even late in life, Moore remained true to his pacifist and anarchist roots and he could be found regularly at the weekly protest against the U.S.'s recent wars in the Middle East staged by Seniors for Peace on the sidewalk in front of The Redwoods.

Moore was preceded in death by his wife, Ruth, in 1997. He is survived by his daughter Flinn Moore Rauck and her husband John Rauck; son David Moore and his wife Kathryn Shanley; daughter Lisa Moore Nardini and her husband Paulo Nardini; son Michael Moore and his wife Janet Tumpich; son Anthony Moore and his fiancée Mary Thorsen; son Aran Moore and his wife Denise Lamott; grandchildren Daniel Rauck, Briannon Siv and her husband Tyty Siv, Caleb Moore, Matteo Nardini, Luca Nardini, Bianca Nardini, Maxx Moore, Kirsten Moore, Jackson Moore, Austin Moore; and great-grandchildren Demetrius and Genevieve Rauck and Sophie and Hannah Siv.

Looking for Signs of Intelligent Life: CSD, MBA, AND UPCOMING ELECTION

by Gerry Pearlman

The fledgling MBA's overriding concern with by-laws is not particularly encouraging. By-laws need not be controversial if they simply deal with housekeeping matters like meeting times, quorums, etc; and most important- the ability to be amended when necessary. A simple set should be adopted post haste to allow the organization to move on to its main purpose of tackling issues that impact the community. Do not wait until a consensus develops (an unlikely prospect anyway) but work with the solid corps already on board and let others join as they wish. There's a momentum that has already been established that is bound to wane unless it can attach itself to some issues of importance to the community.

The distinction between external affairs and internal ones is also counterproductive. Clearly it is easier to unite people against an external threat - a tried and true tactic used by good guys and bad guys alike. But it would be detrimental to our well-being to make it an either/or situation where attention to political practice within the community is given short shrift. One of the primary functions for any Muir Beach Association is gathering the best information available on matters of community interest, to be then further distributed to the broader community, so as to better inform individual and community decision making. To deny this ability

categorically to examining internal affairs is shortsighted.

How we are governed, what the CSD (Community Services District) can and cannot do, where the money comes from, and particularly where it is going, are important considerations for the future of the community especially since the majority of Muir Beach residents have limited to no understanding of how their elected government functions. Shedding light on these matters should not be beyond the purview of an MBA.

Around forty years ago, CSD budget expenditures were \$35,000. This year's proposed budget was recently approved at \$267,950. Revenues to meet expenditures come largely from water revenues and a portion of the county property taxes returned to the community. There is also a reserve fund of close to a million dollars accumulated over the years from budget surpluses. With federal and state taxes, the persons paying them have very little to say about how they are used. It would be a useful exercise for residents to understand the budget process better since this is where they can have a say on how their tax money is spent; and an MBA can be a useful tool to this effect.

The reserves are now slated to pay for repaving Sunset Way, storm drainage repair and improvements, and turnarounds for improving fire protection (these last two have sparked heated opposition by residents most affected by the action, but they are favored by the General Manager and what seems like a majority of CSD Board members at this time).

Whether an MBA can be helpful in sorting out some of the facts surrounding this controversy, or be of help in its resolution, is a decision they must determine on their own. However there is a considerable sum of our tax money involved, and it is important to get it right. In fact this is probably one of the few times you will ever be able to affect what is being done with your tax money!

The main reason the MBA was created was because the perceived limited powers of the CSD (water, roads, drainage and recreation)* prevented them from being able to address issues brought before them by entities like the National Park Service - no matter what the actual impact on residents. It is easy to understand the need for an organization to better confront outside threats to community well-being. Such an organization, however, may be equally useful in clarifying issues arising within the community. It should be clear that such an organization can never claim to actually represent the entire diversity that comprises Muir Beach, nor can it ever do anything legally binding on residents. Such action only resides within the limited powers of the CSD, and the five elected members who are its directors, two of whose terms are coming to an end this year; and who will not say whether they intend to run again.

The upcoming election is of paramount importance to the future development of Muir Beach, just as the establishment of any form of Muir Beach Association will

be, for it will determine how our tax revenues are spent; and that in turn will determine the type of vision that governs our future development.**The same leadership of the general manger and the Chairman of the Board have determined Board action and direction so many years that it's hard to remember when anything was different. And it would be wrong to say that not much has been accomplished by the old order. It's simply a good time for a change to see what someone else can do instead of government by default where no candidates emerge to challenge the incumbents.

Up to this date interest in the election to the CSD Board has been lukewarm to say the least with vacancies having to be filled by appointment from the sitting Board. In the June 2014 election of the 274 registered voters only 122 actually voted (44.5%). In the last Nov. election of the now only 261 registered voters, only 170 (65%) actually voted, a record echoing the rest of the country's disenchantment with the political process even though in this case your vote really can make a difference.

Can an organization like an MBA field a candidates night where interested parties can present their reasons for standing for election? It definitely would be helpful. They might also inform interested candidates on what is necessary, if they are considering running, like filling out the papers in the county elections office. "Every country gets the revolution it deserves."

*I believe there is a misunderstanding on the part of most Board members regarding the limitation of their powers. My contention is that while they can only act within their chartered specific powers i.e. spend money, regulate rates, pass ordinances, it does not prevent them from supporting resolutions in support of, or in opposition to, any other matter that might have a bearing on the community.

**For example last year plans for the playground were approved by the Board after rushed community input followed by minimal Board oversight. Both of these led to serious problems with the project. Work parties and donations have been brought to bear in the resolution of the problems, and in the end we will have a beautiful new playground, but the question remains as to what lessons were learned from the experience to prevent their reoccurrence in the future.

Comments on the Muir Beach Association

By Bob Jacobs

The purpose of this posting is to try to hold up a mirror on the goings on with no intention of criticizing or casting aspersions on anyone. I believe everyone who has been involved or commented on the MBA is sincere and really cares what happens in Muir Beach and its future. But, maybe a step back from any position to see what the situations and public dialogue look like would tell us, and that is exactly what I will end up commenting about.

First I do want to commend all of those who have spent time and energy on trying to protect Muir Beach interests, no matter what their attitude regarding the MBA or connection to it.

I think it is fair to say that the impetus for creating/recreating an association in the past year or more was driven by issues and conditions of great concern about the preservation of our community for the people who live here, neighboring communities and visitors. **Issues and conditions** such as repair of Highway 1, repair of Muir Woods Road, preventing a tour bus stop, calling for a limitation of the number of visitors to Muir Woods both to protect this treasure and reduce disruptive traffic, reduce the size of tour busses so that they would not be so disruptive and risky to traffic, and keep them off residential streets to reduce noise and protect privacy, called for Muir Beach voices to be raised! And, in fact, those voices were raised and had an effect. Although an appropriate organization lobbying for the causes may have been quicker, more efficient and more effective, the voices raised clearly represented a community consensus.

The attempts to formalize a Muir Beach Association has so far produced divisiveness in the community. Personal animosities have been aired in public. Personalized comments have been voiced instead of solely addressing the questions at issue. Dissenters are personally debated in public rather than simply addressing the subject. And, I will take personal issue with bringing in references to the MBCSD, which has no comparison or relevance to the MBA.

To elaborate, the CSD is a legal government agency, created by the vote of eligible voters in the community, under California State Law. It was created to provide perceived necessary services, and is audited by an outside auditor and monitored by LAFCO (a State agency) for properly fulfilling its mandate and capability to fund its activities. Its Board is elected in regular elections run by the County of Marin. This is representative governing.

I digressed on this point because I think it sheds some light on how the MBA should be viewed.

The "MBA" was in effect reborn as a way to lobby for community interests. While anybody has the right to express other views about what it should or should not be, the fact is that to be effective as a lobbying vehicle requires one unique feature - it must have community consensus. Liken this to an industry association, whose lobbyists are paid to press for positions which the member businesses agree about. They don't take on other causes while doing this work. If they do otherwise, they are fired. If the members don't agree, a point is not pursued or the association is reduced in impact by members leaving the association. While it is true that consensus requires definition, that fact should not be used as an excuse to roadblock progress. The proverbial 67% might be applied to, say, a minimum 50% of the community voting, or any other rational

percentages agreed upon as a start. These percentages could be revisited annually until they work to provide a reasonable number of the most important issues for the MBA to pursue. In other words, make it work.

It seems the track that the MBA is currently trying to follow does not have much chance of even developing a consensus concerning its very existence. I believe this calls for thinking outside the box. From the bottom up, how can one find consensus for an organization to be a lobbying vehicle to protect community interests? Instead of arguing about defining in by-laws what authority and subjects the organization will be cloaked with, why not let a demonstrable consensus on an issue dictate those subjects and positions that the organization will address? The MBA could be the watchdog to alert the community to potential issues of serious concern, provide facts and monitor meetings and actions, and report objectively to the community, and of course would be at the "table" when the community votes as a consensus on a subject. It also strikes me that membership may not be a useful term here. One might simply say all owners and full time residents of age are eligible to vote.

The mechanics of the voting are probably critical to validate proactive efforts of the MBA. It needs to develop a reputation within the entire political spectrum it will be trying to influence. My suggestion would be to explore whether a consensus may exist on a particular matter, through electronic means as well as meetings, before any official vote is taken. I would suggest two independent committees be formed to handle the voting. One would prepare and distribute numbered ballots in like numbered envelopes with the name on the envelope. This committee would require voters to sign and return the envelope with the ballot inside. They would remove the ballots from the envelopes, turn them over to the second committee for counting. The first committee would be responsible for preparing an unnumbered list of voters from the envelopes and safeguard the envelopes. The second committee would prepare and publish the vote count and safeguard the ballots. This provides the opportunity to check if any irregularities are suggested.

This dissertation is off the top of my head, and I do not infer it to be the only possible approach. It certainly is vague and incomplete, and is presented with the hope of inspiring a new kind of discourse.

My wife and I are either among or are the oldest community members (not to reveal our ages), Nina having been in Muir Beach for over 50 years and me over 30 years. I can assure you that what is happening with the MBA is not unusual. We tend to be very individualistic in Muir Beach. To ignore developing whatever consensus is possible only spells what we are currently experiencing. Sometimes this requires what many might view as unconventional. So, I will throw out one more thought. Community involvement is very important as many have already said. To that end I

would suggest that all ultimately elected or appointed officials take on an active responsibility to find replacements for themselves and their peers. Maybe terms should be limited.

I apologize for not being able to "enter the fray" earlier or again. But it has become a full time job just surviving. I request that no personal responses be made - I cannot see taking the time to read much and certainly to respond. If you feel this presentation is worth anything, take it and do something with it.

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

By Beth Begault

An interview with the proposed Muir Beach Advocacy Group (MBAG) coordinators Christian Riehl, Michael Kaufman, and Chris Gove

Why does the MBAG attend the Board of Supervisors meetings? Because that's where decisions get made that directly affect life in Muir Beach. By attending the BOS meetings, the MBA can keep the Muir Beach community informed.

How does the MBAG find out about the meetings that will address pressing issues? One way of finding out what's happening is by subscribing to the Board of Supervisors email list (explained below). Another way of finding out speaks to how important it is that we have a local organization. The MBA receives periodic emails from other neighborhood associations and from organizations like Citizen Marin and the Sierra Club, informing coordinators about important upcoming agenda items that the BOS will be addressing. The support network between local groups is a vital benefit of having an organized group in Muir Beach.

Where do the meetings take place? At the Marin County Civic Center complex. Travel north on the 101 and take the N. San Pedro Road exit, turn right, then a quick left turn, and you're there: Marin County Civic Center, 3501 Civic Center Drive, room 330 3rd Floor, Administration Building, San Rafael.

When and how often are the meetings? There's a BOS meeting most-but-not- all Tuesday mornings, beginning at 8:30, 9:00, or 9:30 a.m. The start time depends on the length of the agenda. It's important to go online the night before any meeting you plan to attend to double check the agenda because there can be last minute changes in the order or content.

How long do the meetings last? Depending on the agenda the meeting times will vary from a couple of hours to all day, and the board frequently adjourns and reconvenes multiple times throughout the meeting.

How can people stay informed if they can't make it to the BOS meetings? The MBA has quarterly meetings at the MBCC in February, May, August, and November, along with periodic updates when important issues arise. Besides that, it's easy to get information from the Marin Board of Supervisors web site. The left

side of the BOS home page has a Featured Links column that leads you to all kinds of helpful information, including: *Frequently Asked Questions, About the Board, Meeting Agenda Highlights, Search or Watch Meetings, Current Agenda, Participating at a Board Meeting, Subscribe*. The Subscribe option allows you to automatically receive an advance copy of the Board's agenda for every BOS meeting, and you'll always know what's happening.



The wildlife of Muir Beach make their presence known at BOS

What are some tips you can pass along from your experiences at the BOS meetings? There are two ways that members of the public can speak at the meetings:

When the supervisors are considering an ordinance or agenda item, they'll periodically invite members of the public to make comments. This involves standing in line behind the lectern (with microphone) and waiting for a turn. Comments are limited to three minutes, so it's helpful to practice in advance--a fair number of people end up tongue-tied at the lectern. You can pass six written copies of your comments to the secretary who sits to the right of the supervisors, either before or after you speak. The secretary will keep one copy and pass a copy to each of the five supervisors.

At some point in the day's agenda, there is an opportunity for general public comment that's not related to specific agenda items. The same three-minute rule applies.

Is there anything else you've noticed that's interesting? There's always a reporter from the Marin Independent Journal sitting quietly at the back of the room, tweeting updates to the IJ website. Sometimes other TV and radio journalists are present, and they've been known to hold their microphone right up to members of the public who are speaking at the lectern, creating sound bites that can end up on the radio or in the newspaper.

The MBA coordinators hope to see you at future BOS meetings. If you have a teenager with time on their hands this summer, consider bringing them to a meeting and maybe going out for a nice lunch afterwards. They may or may not love the experience, but it'll be a great civics lesson!

A Beautiful String of Moments

By Jonah Vogel

From Martha deBarros: My grandson Jonah Vogel is an eighteen-year-old with a strong focus on the natural environment and helping humans find their place within it. During the summer of his junior year, he took a six week trip on the Colorado Trail which covers five-hundred miles of the Rocky Mountains. The following piece was written two months after his return from that trip as a reflection on the feelings he gained from the experience. A young generation can be inspiring.



Whenever I used to think about my future as a whole I would get worried. Not about anything that specific but the vastness of life seemed overwhelming. I thought of my future as a reward that could be obtained or lost. I was perpetually worried I would fail to obtain the future I was meant to have. I justified my worried and unhappy state in the moment with the thought that the future would bring what I lacked.

Trading my immediate happiness for the promise of the future put me in a complicated situation. I counted on the future to bring me satisfaction but at the same time that reliance made me very anxious and uncentered in the moment. Everything seemed very high stakes. Each choice I could only make once and looking ahead felt like looking towards many harsh trials. I think this outlook is common among developing minds today. We are pressured to build our portfolio, to build our identity, and to heighten our ego. We are taught from the womb to grow, to become large and out of ourselves which can make everything seem all important. Each choice feels like a hurdle that if failed will leave you falling and useless.

The interesting thing for me is that it wasn't until I was given the chance to forget my future that I felt at peace with it. When I stopped thinking about who I would become and the trials I would need to pass to

get there, the future changed from an overwhelming idea to a beautiful string of moments.

This change came to me on a cool summer morning while twenty-six days into hiking through the Colorado mountains. It was eight in the morning and me and my two close friends, whom were my sole companions for the five hundred mile stroll, had been hiking for two hours prior. We had already watched the sunrise on the mountains and the dew evaporate from the flora surrounding our trail. We were strong and quiet having settled into a rhythm with one another, so as my feet flew forward my mind was also free to wander.

I started to think about my future and the things that I felt anxious about. I thought about tests and relationships. I thought about how much I needed to do to get to the place I should be, to get to completion. I thought about the things that for a long time seemed unforgiving and all important and I visualized holding those things in my right hand.

Then I thought about what I was experiencing and feeling in that direct moment. I thought about how centered and healthy I felt and how beautiful the world was. This was not hard to do with endorphins flowing through my blood stream and the humbling giants of the Rockies surrounding me. I thought about the sense of place and belonging that that moment held for me and I visualized holding that feeling in my left hand.

Now with both hands full I looked back at their contents. I held them and analyzed their value and place. The beautiful thing about hiking through the mountains all day, every day, for a quite a few days is that there is all the time one could ask for to think and sit with one's thoughts. So that is what I did. I held those two feelings in my palms and in my mind until the sun had risen from just above the mountains to almost overhead and I had drank enough water for my pack to feel slightly lighter and then I made my final analysis.

My decision was very clear to me. A lot of things were very clear to me at the time. I realized that all of my anxiety about who I would become and how it all should play out were irrelevant in the face of the feeling I held in my left hand. I realized that if I could obtain that feeling of centered happiness in each moment it didn't matter what type of life I chose to live.

All in an instant everything felt very manageable and I was filled with elation. I stopped thinking about my future as an external entity to be feared, I stopped worrying about who I would become and how I would

get there and instead I saw my life as a string of moments, a string that had started from my birth and would end with my death. I thought about my life in terms of each individual moment and I knew that if I could keep myself centered and healthy in each of them I would be ok. I would be happy. In that moment every moment all the way up until my last was exciting, manageable, and above all a gift.



I held that realization through to the end of my journey and I still hold it today but ever since I stumbled upon it I have been thinking about why I was so caught up in the confused reality I left behind on the trail. I thought about why I had focused on my image and my expectations of the future for so long and why I hadn't chose to focus on my happiness and who I was in the moment.

The answer I have come to is that the environment we are raised in simply does not promote that realization. We are robbed of the feeling of belonging that we are entitled to as a part of the system of life. We are told that the only way to fill the hole where that feeling is supposed to reside is with the pseudo rush of lust and vanity. From a young age we are asked what we will do and what we will achieve. We are surrounded by a man made world, a man made idea. We are surrounded by the achievements and the ego of humanity and told the only value we can attain in life is by adding to that world. Thinking about all this it is easy for me to see why I prioritized the world's view of me and my ego over my happiness. Those were the only things I had been told to nurture, not who I was in the moment and how I felt within myself.

Coming back from a world that was not created by a human mind but rather was the creator of the human mind put me in a forced third person. I saw and possessed the feeling of belonging that nature holds and I saw how it was stolen in our world. I compared the time I had with only my thoughts to the constant

stimulus of the human world. I saw people so afraid to be alone with themselves that every spare moment was spent staring into a screen that provided something else to think about. I compared the mountains that reminded me I was just a piece within a large system with the advertisements that singled me out and said I had no place until I bought what they were selling. I compared my need for water, food, sleep, and companionship with the millions of needs society forced me to take on as my own. But on the most fundamental level I compared the sense of contentment and clarity I had gained within the diverse kingdom of life with the numb and confused faces of the masses living within the homogeneous reality of the human world and it made me sadder than I have ever been in my life.

Sad that the average child is born into a world where they believe they are not good enough instead of into a world where their place within the cycle is a given. Sad that we are so lost in our egos that we forget that our life is a gift and treat it as a hardship from which we must rise. So if there is one thing I hope I can do with this speech it is to recreate a small piece of the feeling of living within the cycle of life within each of you and to combat the amnesia of this strange man made world we have for some reason fled to. Here is a letter the mountains wrote to me:

Dear Nothing,

You are neither significant nor special; you are one piece among a million other pieces; only a cell. You come, you live, you go, things keep going, things keep pushing forward unaffected by your flicker, your brief moment. Your image does not matter, your achievements do not matter, who you will become does not matter. It is all dust in the wind. But those facts are not important. Those thoughts should be of comfort to you. They should free you. Free you of your worries and expectations, your insecurities. Free you to forget your ego and feel this moment, feel the beauty and mystery of life. Spend time with your thoughts, with your most basic experience of the world. Forget what it is like to look in the mirror and instead simply exist. Feel your feet on the earth and that you are no more important than the grass growing beside you. Jump off the exponential growth of humanity and see your place in the circle of life. Do not live for the future or the past because they do not exist. Live only for your moment and your happiness. Forget your ego, forget who you think you are and instead just be.

The "Other" Community Center Offers Great Programs

by Paul Jeschke



Mill Valley Aquatics and Fitness Center Pool

Muir Beach residents are used to taking advantage of a wide variety of activities at our Community Center. But there's another Community Center nearby with programs and activities that are not available in Muir Beach -- most of them at bargain rates.

If taking a dip in icy water of the Pacific at Muir Beach sets you shivering, the indoor pool at the Mill Valley Community Center, heated to a very comfortable 84-degrees, may be a welcome treat. Use of the 23-yard pool is not limited to Mill Valley residents; Muir Beach residents are welcome to use the facility on a one time, pre-paid multi-pass or annual pass basis. A single dip costs \$10, but the rate goes down to \$7.50 per visit for a 20 visit pass and \$50 per month for an annual pass, probably the best workout deal in the county. The rates drop dramatically for kids and a two seniors household qualifies for less than \$60 a month. Yoga enthusiasts can participate in a daily class.

That's just the beginning of fitness on a budget at the MVCC, located on Camino Alto near Miller Ave. Those same fees include access to the second floor gym with dozens of weight machines, treadmills and Exercycle equipment, some of which are equipped for TV watching while working on cardio-vascular conditioning and burning off calories. Not sure how to use the machines without causing great bodily injury? The fitness center offers a complimentary orientation with a member of the fitness staff and private personal fitness training is available for \$35 for a half hour session.

The aquatics and fitness center offers so many group exercise classes you may tire out before being able to choose the right one for you. "Body Sculpt" may tempt your inner Jane Fonda/Arnold Schwarzenegger, or perhaps "Cardio Kickboxing," "Pilates," "Stroller Strides," the choreographed "Step" dance class or "Zumba" is more to your liking.

Classes are spread out throughout the day and weekend. There are Women and Men's locker rooms with showers.

The MVCC really excels at programs for kids. "Preschool Pandas" and "Busy Bees" covers ages 3-5 with three and a half hour classes and there are numerous late afternoon and early evening offerings for various age groups. Dance, karate, acrobatics, soccer and tennis -- the list of activities is almost endless.

Need to find summer activities for kids? "Camp Kaleidoscope" might fill the bill, or how about "Splash Camp" or perhaps baseball, tennis or golf or science camp? Dozens of classes too numerous to list here are available for adults and seniors. The Activities Guide is available online at www.millvalleycenter.org. Worth checking out.



Muir Beach Caring: Bringing People Together and Building a Stronger Community

By Bernard Halliwell



What is Muir Beach Caring?

Muir Beach Caring is the effort of a group of community-minded Muir Beach residents, spear headed by the Elderberries, to provide help and assistance to neighbors to make life easier. This help can involve meals during times of sickness, transportation to medical appointments, help with errands, occasional respite care, checking-in on people alone, and other ways in which neighbors could possibly help to ease the path of life.

What is the rationale behind Muir Beach Caring?

In American society, independence is emphasized, but there are times in life when a little help from others would make life so much easier. Yet most of us are reluctant to ask others for help, for example, when we

are sick or recovering from surgery or having transportation problems. We are so unaccustomed to asking for help that we simply do not know how to proceed.

Ideally we would have friends to whom we could turn with ease, but in today's world -- a world characterized by its mobility, its busy pace, its emphasis on individual initiative, and even, one might argue, a rather undeveloped sense of friendship -- most of us do not have people to turn to. Muir Beach Caring attempts to address this curious state of affairs. In Muir Beach what we do have is a sense of community and a pool of people who would be willing, if they were asked, to help people they do not know particularly well.

Muir Beach Caring can be effective because it can cast the net wide when it asks for help. It also keeps the person requesting help at one step removed, thereby shielding that person from the disappointment of asking people for help and finding that they are unable or unwilling to help.

What Services Does Muir Beach Caring Provide?

Muir Beach Caring tries to provide:

- Transportation to medical appointments
- Meals during times of illness
- Help with errands
- Occasional respite care
- Checking-in on people who are alone

Are There Services that Muir Beach Caring Does not Provide? Muir Beach Caring does not generally provide gardening, housekeeping, care-giving, or baby-sitting services.

How Do I Contact Muir Beach Caring?

Please call 415-320-MUIR (6847) or email muirbeachelderberries@gmail.com when you could use help. Someone will return your telephone call or email as quickly as is possible, usually within 48 hours.

How Much Lead Time Does Muir Beach Caring Need?

Generally, Muir Beach Caring would like to hear from you seven days before help is needed because it takes time to contact the pool of people willing to help and get responses back from them. We can try to find help on shorter notice, but, of course, that is more difficult.

How Does Muir Beach Caring Work?

Muir Beach Caring works in the following way: When you have exhausted the possibilities of your own social network, call or email Muir Beach Caring. A Care Coordinator will contact you to work out details of how neighbors can help. Those details will depend on the nature of the need. If there is a need for meals or visits when a person is ill or recovering from surgery, for example, the arrangements can be somewhat informal, but if there is a need to arrange specific transportation things work best if the Care Coordinator only places

requests with the community.

Generally, requests will be handled in the following way: The care coordinator will contact by email the pool of people in Muir Beach who might be able to help.

When the care coordinator locates neighbors who are able to help, Muir Beach Caring accepts the help of the neighbors on behalf of the requester, and the name of **those people**, with contact information, will be sent to the person who has made the request.

For transportation help, the person who has requested help should then call or email to confirm the arrangements with the person who has offered to help. This step makes sure that all the details are correct, that, for example, a person is picked up at the right time on the right day.

Once Muir Beach Caring has accepted an offer of help on your behalf, we ask that you honor that commitment. People set aside other activities to help you and that generosity should be respected.

Is There a Charge for Muir Beach Caring Services?

Muir Beach Caring is a community-based service, and there is no charge. If someone drives you in his or her car, you could offer to reimburse that person for gasoline. After the fact, you could also give some token of your appreciation, if you felt so inclined. You could also use the time with this person, always a person of interest in the neighborhood, as an opportunity to become acquainted. Perhaps you can stay in touch and return the favor sometime. And remember that some sense of reciprocity does enhance life for us all.

How are Volunteers Recruited?

Periodically Muir Beach Caring canvases the community to find out who would be willing to help when help is needed. If you would like to be added to our rosters of people to be contacted to help others, please send an email to: muirbeachcaring@gmail.com

How Much Time Does it Take to Help Others?

The amount of time asked of volunteers varies according to the particular request. We hope that ways can be found to incorporate help into the existing daily activities of volunteers. If someone is already driving over the hill, it may be a simple matter to drop someone off at a doctor's office. Often, two people can be found to work as a team to help, so that volunteers are not giving up too much of their day. A trip to a doctor's office, for example, can easily take up to half a day if only one person helps out. That person helping could run errands during that time. But on other occasions one volunteer might drop the person off and another volunteer could pick the person up for the return journey.

(Editor's note: In an interesting twist, after this article was submitted, the author, Bernard Halliwell, needed to avail himself of help from Muir Beach Caring. He is now recovering.)

YOUR STARRING ROLE: MOVIE NIGHT PRODUCER

By Anne Jeschke



Popcorn anyone? What's a movie without the theater's favorite snack and what's Muir Beach without a "Movie Night?"

The Elderberries are proposing Community Center screenings every two or three months of films that have been made by Muir Beach residents, documentaries involving members of our community or films of special interest to this area.

We have access to the films and have located equipment to screen them. What we don't have is a coordinator to stage the events. It's an easy job, but the very energetic Elderberries have discovered that they aren't quite energetic enough to take on another regularly scheduled community event. We need someone to organize the showings. The job shouldn't be huge; you could get a friend to help you. Two coordinators might be more fun than one. Or take it on yourself. Remember, if you're in charge, you're the producer and you can choose the movies!

The Elderberries continue to have more ideas – but regretfully each member of our small group has taken all the responsibility that we can handle. Twice a year we sponsor a catered community dinner for around 100 folk. Once or twice a year we hold a Book Exchange where you can bring or take any books you like. The monthly Muir Beach Book Club, initiated by Elderberries, now includes some 14 members, about half male and half female.

Our crowning achievement is Muir Beach Caring, where community members in need of assistance can ask for rides to the doctor, meals while they recuperate, company when alone, and more. Coordinated by Elderberries, community members enthusiastically supply the services needed. With very little effort, the "Movie Night" producer can have a big impact. We hope we can say, "Coming soon to the Community Center near you."

Call 415-388-2278 for more information or email: ajeschke@gmail.com and either Anne or Paul can give you additional information. And if you'd like to be an "idea person" instead of the movie coordinator, consider joining Elderberries. We meet at 77 Starbuck Dr. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM for a potluck dinner and a lot of brainstorming about our next big idea.

As they say in the previews of coming attractions, "You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll never be the same."

Debra Allen's Marin Real Estate Notes, May, 2015

We're still in a strong "sellers' market", with multiple offers expected on most new listings in the first few days or first week (provided the listing price is lower than what the seller expects to receive for the home). Homes that aren't selling in the first two weeks, may need price corrections to keep buyers' attention; as it's unusual for buyers to make offers lower than the initial asking price...they prefer to wait or go elsewhere to buy. Sellers can help buyers and their agents by having a full range of pre-sale inspections to give out before buyers make their offers, as many offers are being made without contingencies.

There are many homes selling even before they make it to MLS, and a very high sale in one area can drastically change the MLS statistics for that day. But, here are some interesting Multiple Listing Service comparisons in Muir Beach and some nearby towns, in the last 6 months:

Muir Beach, selling at an average of \$1,010. per sq. ft., under the initial asking price

Stinson, selling at an average of \$1,548. per sq. ft., over the initial asking price

Mill Valley, selling at an average of \$761. per sq. ft., over the initial asking price

Sausalito, selling at an average of \$777. per sq. ft., under the initial asking price

Tiburon, selling at an average of \$879. per sq. ft., under the initial asking price

Bolinas, selling at an average of \$644. per sq. ft., under the initial asking price

Corte Madera, selling at an average of \$675. per sq. ft., under the initial asking price

Larkspur, selling at an average of \$727. per sq. ft., under the initial asking price

(Please remember, the above are MLS sales only, no off-mkt sales; and only for single fam. homes.)

Holiday Arts Fair Returns

By Laurie Piel



Joy Perrin, Suzanne Miller and I have taken on the Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair.

The event is back in full swing, taking place December 12th & 13th on the 2nd (not the 1st) weekend in December. It promises to be as exciting as it has been in the past, but only if the wonderful artists and crafts people of Muir Beach offer their talents for sale. We have already heard from some first timers that they are interested in taking part. We really want this to be a true community event so to that end, not only will there be the normal vendors, but the Muir Beach organizations that support the community such as the Fire Department, Elderberries, Beachcomber, Men's Group etc. are all invited to join their colleagues, the MBVFA, Quilters & Garden Club and are offered a table. Since there are so many new residents, this might be a good place for these groups to showcase their organizations. We are bringing back the best of the past fairs... Café Q, Junior Artisans, and The Bar. Here are the particulars to join in on the fun... and make some money. Here is the key information:

Dates:

Set up: Fri., Dec. 11th
Fair: Sat., Dec. 12th (10-5)
Sun., Dec. 13th (10-4)

Entrants: Open to all Muir Beachers. Family members will be considered residents.

Entrance Rules: The work must be your creation. You do not have to manufacture it yourself.

For example, if you make a piece of pottery you do not have to have fired it yourself. You can use found objects in your art and can design the sweater but do not have to knit it yourself. There is no jury.

Cost: \$65/table. Two people can share a table if they don't think they have enough items to sell on their own.

Sales: Each vendor is responsible for their own means of payment.

Registration: By email ONLY to the MBArtsFair@gmail.com over a 48-hour period starting June 29th through midnight June 30th. Please include your name, contact information and your medium.

Acceptance: First come, first serve basis.

Table: Each Muir Beach resident can request up to 2 tables but only 1 will be assigned until we find out how many people are requesting tables. This being the first year, we do not have any sense of the turnout. Once everybody is accommodated we will honor the requests for a second table.

MB Organizations: Organizations that support MB such as the MBVFA, Quilters, Garden Club, Elderberries, Beachcomber, etc. are all invited and are offered 1 free table. If they request a second table it would be at the regular cost.

Non-Residents Vendors: Once all Muir Beach residents have been accommodated, we'll be reaching out for other vendors. We are hoping to get some of the favorite artists & jewelers that we've had in the past as well as look for new ones. Suggestions are welcome although we make no promises about those selections at this point.... it's too new.

Returning will be:

Café Q, helmed by Brenda Kohn
Junior Artisans, helmed by Sophie Conti
Shuttle, helmed by Anne Jeschke
Publicity, helmed by Denise Moore
THE BAR, helmed by Steve Shaffer....The profits from the bar will be donated to the CSD as a line item to be used for community events.

On set up there will be bagels and cream cheese for everybody. There will be sandwiches, and sweets available throughout the day for purchase but no caterer.

You should have received a flyer in your mailbox with all of this information. Please feel free to email us at MBArtsFair@gmail.com if you have any questions or if you would like another copy of the flyer.

NEW TO MUIR BEACH?? HERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED.....

(From Laurie Piel's Newsletter)

BISTRO: Every Wednesday morning at the MBCC from 10:00 to 11:45AM. Meet your neighbors for coffee and scones and even get a haircut when our Sassoon trained hairdresser friend Michael Gerber shows up. (Can be scheduled by calling Michael at 415/826-7798).

BOOK CLUB: An evening event that meets every second Tuesday of the month at the home of Gail Falls, 33 Ahab Dr. All are welcome. For more info contact Anne Jeschke: 415/388-2278

ELDERBERRIES: Meets monthly at 6:30pm every third Tuesday at the home of Anne & Paul Jeschke, 77 Starbuck. The meeting is a potluck supper and while eating the group discusses current community projects – book exchanges, community dinners, MB caring, the book club and looks to new ideas to bring the community together and serve Muir Beach neighbors. What began as a “seniors group” is now a community group open to all ages. For more info contact Paul at paul.jeschke@gmail.com or 415/388-2278 or just show up and enjoy a nice dinner with friends

GARDEN CLUB: Join the MB Garden Club and help make the Muir Beach Community Center even more beautiful. For more info contact Joey Groneman at joeygroneman@gmail.com or 415/383-2898
HATHA YOGA CLASS EVERY TUESDAY 10:30 AM – 11:30AM AT THE MBCC Teacher: Dan Kuja \$10/class and \$30 for a month. 1 hour...the classes are taught by Daniel Kuja and are built on flowing, breath centered sequences often interwoven with theme and music. Daniel describes his teaching style as compassionate, intuitive and non-judgmental for students of all levels.
Contact: danielkujayoga@gmail.com

MEN'S GROUP: FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH 7pm-9pm @ THE MBCC UPSTAIRS: Talk about anything you want with this men only group. For information call Harvey 415/388-0380

MUIR BEACH CARING COMMUNITY: If you are having medical or personal problems, and need assistance with errands, chores, deliveries, companionship or any other service that a neighbor might provide (day or night), call our dedicated line at 415/320-MUIR (6847). A member of the caring group will return your call within hours to discuss your needs, and provide volunteers to meet your requirements. You might want to write this phone number in your Muir Beach Directory so that it is easily available when and if you need help.

MUIR BEACH QUILTERS: The Quilters meet at the MBCC every Wednesday @ 1pm. All are welcome and you need not know anything about quilting! For more info contact Kathy Sward at kathylovesquilts@yahoo.com or 415/383-6762

MB VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT: For info about joining contact Steve Wynn at steve@muirbeachfire.com or 415/388-5456 The Mill Valley Market will donate 1% of your grocery receipts to the MBVFA. Just remember to say #7097 at checkout. AmazonSmile also supports the MBVFA. Once you designate the MBVFA as your charity of choice, Amazon will give them 0.50% of all that you buy. Go to AmazonSmile to sign up.

REDWOOD CREEK VOLUNTEER RESTORATION PROGRAM: Every Saturday 10am to 1pm and every Wednesday 1pm to 4pm. Contact Naomi LeBeau from The Parks Conservancy for this weeks location: 415/321-9668

TAI CHI: Every Monday (5:00P), Wednesday (8:30A) and Thursday (5:00P) at the MBCC. There is a small charge. For more info contact Kathy Sward at 415/383-6762 or kathylovesquilts@yahoo.com

VOLLEYBALL: Every Monday and Thursday at the court by the pump house starting about 6:30pm and often going until late.

WOMEN2WOMEN: A Muir Beach fund raising group, which financially supports “hands on” organizations actively concerned with the health and welfare of women around the world. For info contact Nina Vincent: ninavp@earthlink.net

If you'd like to be included on the community email list, just drop an email to Lauri Piel: muirbeachcc@aol.com

