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# BEACHCOMBER

Muir Beach Neighborhood News

Issue 252 May 2011



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## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader:  
As most of our readers are now aware, Linda Gibbs, after her total transformation of the *Beachcomber* to an award winning publication, has decided to step down in order to pursue her own writing career. She is handing the baton over to me, and I can assure you this is one tough act to follow. I will do my best continuing to draw on the multiple talents that exist in Muir Beach and perhaps a few from outside. Please help me out with any suggestions, ideas, submissions you may have so we may continue to maintain the high quality attained under Linda’s leadership. —Gerry Pearlman

## Letters to the Editor

Hi Linda,  
Thanks for doing such a great job as editor of the *Beachcomber*. I wish you the best for your future endeavors. I will send the doc without an x as you suggested. Thanks again. —Lou Sian, GGNRA

## CIRCULATION INFORMATION

### Ch, Ch, Ch, Changes.....

By Anne Jeschke

We are making a few small changes in the circulation department. Instead of 12 monthly renewal dates, there will be four renewal dates a year. Your renewal date will be later in the year to reflect the one issue missed in March of this year.

You will receive a renewal envelope in your *Beachcomber* on your renewal date. If you have not renewed within a month, you will receive one reminder notice before your subscription is closed. Prompt renewals are greatly appreciated! Of course, you may re-subscribe at any time.

Remember that *Beachcomber* subscriptions make great gifts for family and friends of Muir Beach residents. The cost remains the same, a good buy, at \$25 a year for residents, and \$35 for those who receive their issue by mail. You are always encouraged to add a bit extra to your yearly subscription as a donation to help us cover every rising costs of publishing this very special local magazine.

The *Beachcomber* mailbox is the last box on the right on “Mailbox Row”. Although the address states 19 Seacape, all deliveries go to the box across from the Pelican Inn.

### Next issue: July 2011 Submissions Deadline: June 14, 2011

Email: gnpearl@hotmail.com  
Drop: *Beachcomber* mailbox, last one on the right (south end)  
Mail: Editor *Beachcomber*, Sunset Way #220, Muir Beach, California 94965; 415.380.5056

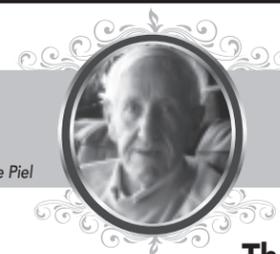
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#### Beachcomber Staff

Editor	Gerry Pearlman
Graphic Design	Dee Turman
Reporters	
Greater Muir Beach Neighbors	Judith Yamamoto
MB Community Center	Laurie Piel
MB Volunteer Fire Dept. & Roving	Paul Jeschke
MB Volunteer Fireman’s Assoc.	Anne Jeschke
Nature	Dave MacKenzie
Masthead	Larry Yamamoto
Archivist	Laurie Piel
Photographer	Julie Smith
Circulation	Anne Jeschke
Front Cover Painting by Beth Nelson	
“Muir Memory of Summer”, Gouache/collage	

## UPFRONT



Photograph by Laurie Piel

## WALT POSTLE 1932-2011

By Walt Postle

### The King’s Speech, September 3, 1939 Great Britain Declares War on Germany

*A week or so ago, I saw the movie “The King’s Speech”. It reminded me of where I was more than 70 years ago. I was in a mining village in County Durham, England, with the improbable name “Quaking Houses” visiting one of my uncles-far, far away from any conceivable battlefield.*

*I had just turned seven on September 1 and was out to play. I was called into the house where the old codgers sat around a radio listening to our top politicians moan and groan about having to go to war again with the Germans and someone called Hitler, a little man with a little moustache and a lot of bad habits.*

*When the Prime Minister was done laying out the reasons for the King’s Declaration of War, all the coal mines started to blow their whistles and sirens. Some people banged their pots and pans. I remember this well because my sisters teased me for weeks about the enthusiastic*

*celebration of my birthday on September 3—even getting the Prime Minister to go all out by declaring war.*

*It was no joke, because war did come to “Quaking Houses” and the coal miners. Some of my relatives paid a full bill during the next six years.*

Long-time Muir Beach resident Walt Postle reached out to the “Elders” group shortly before his death to make sure we all learned something from his situation. He put together a comprehensive list of things that needed to be done in order to have an organized and well thought out death and then he shared his personal experience at the group’s first meeting. Walt’s normally booming voice was more like a whisper, but he still managed to get through a detailed presentation on important steps to be taken in preparation for the inevitable.

—Paul Jeschke

Folks: The following are the notes used in my presentation at the Community Center on confronting old age. —Walt

### Muir Beach Baby Boomers 18 January 2011

#### Overall Goal

To stay in my home on Sunset Way, Muir Beach, California until I expire from natural causes in 2012—when I’m 80 years old. Dying any time beyond 09/01/2011 will be excellent achievement and devoutly to be wished.

#### Financial Affairs

“When I was young I thought that money was the most important thing in life; now that I am old I know it is.”

—Oscar Wilde

Absolutely true: you must find out how much cash you have available because your spending patterns will change as you grow older as will your income patterns, (think about midi-care). Also, you might find yourself saddled with horrible costs for health care. Round up ALL your insurance policies; automobile, home, life—make sure you know what you’ve got. Do the same thing with ALL your pensions stocks and bonds etc., Find out what you own (every penny) and where the documentation relating to the asset can be found. Do this job before you lose your marbles—don’t wait.

Pay close attention to your health care insurance policies and keep track of who is paying for what. (I ended up with at least half dozen firms supplying various nostrums and I have an incurable disease!) While you’re at it, put together a list of MDs that are participating in your care—you never know when you need to get one of them to sign a form or a letter. I found myself dealing with a blizzard of paper many of them wanting some MD to sign it.

#### Getting Back and Forth—Transportation Issues

**One of the worst days of your life is the day the DMV deems you unfit to drive.** Remember that the DMV is hot to get the old folks, like you and me, off the road and has all sorts of little tricks; so watch it. There is no public transportation out of Muir Beach and it is unlikely that there ever be one given the sparseness of the population, the ready availability of private cars as well as the kindness and readiness of our neighbors to help.

The folks in Muir Beach require a solution that is above all flexible, takes advantage of the strengths of private automobiles and the powers generated by the simple

act of neighbors helping neighbors. In my opinion, public transportation in the Marin Parklands has been tried and found wanting—it's too rigid, costs too much doesn't go where it is wanted etc. Draw up your own list of pros and cons but by my reckoning private automobiles beat little buses every time.

My "important" travel is to the MB mailboxes; friends' homes in Corte Madera and Berkeley; Tiburon Library, Mill Valley Safeway, Mollie Stone and other grocery stores in Southern Marin. Draw up your own list as well as a list of folks, friends and allies who might be amenable to giving you a ride now and again. It might be useful to draw up a consolidated list of places where the local carless want to travel.

If you are eligible, get a **handicapped placard**; get a DMV identification card if you need one; check out your need for auto insurance (you may still require a set of wheels). If you decide to get rid of your auto make sure all requirements for a gift or sale are met. Watch out for rip-off artists who think because you are old, you are stupid.

#### Household Services

It is more than likely that you will be required to **re-direct your expenditures** to pay for work you'd done yourself when you were hale and hearty. I did all my own work around my house from vacuuming the living room to planting the daffodils. I now need by some accounts, a housekeeper; a gardener; a handyman; a dog walker; and a computer geek plus others. You should line up your options for help and your preferences with respect to which you might want to do the job.

I also think it is a good idea for the folks with a mortal disease to investigate membership in the "Hospice by the Bay"—a program funded by Medicare and managed by local talent. It has a budget of about \$30 million a year; several hundred volunteers and experts; and its services are available 24/7. They don't do cures and provide palliative care only. Finding this organization was (and is) a Godsend to me.

### Email to Muir Beach Dogowners

Muir Beach Dogs postle@wildblue.net

Folks: I sent NPS a comment on their official Dog site that I had no intention of obeying any and all regulations they may promulgate with respect to dogs on Muir Beach. I think the next step NPS will take will be to push for parking fees on all Parkland lots—they are so desperate to raise revenue for their various slush funds—I think the doggy folks should get the NPS regs added to their list of useless red tape that Obama has ordered to be

#### "Death Panels" and Other Essential Paper Work

You should take the time to do your end of life planning. This is in my experience a very disagreeable job (thinking about your own funeral has nothing to recommend it but...) but one that must be done to help the folks who succeed you to carry out your wishes. The health professionals need guidance about your care and you are the only person who can provide it. Give the Docs a break tell them what you want or what you will and will not tolerate. Do it while you have all your faculties.

#### You need to prepare a Will

There is a lavish amount of good advice on this document available on the web backed by 4,000 years of experience. Do it while you are in good shape and have all your knives and forks. If there is a lot of money involved in your estate; watch out for long lost nephews and other interlopers—they spring up like mushrooms. Some lawyers like a good family fight and will grind on until the estate is exhausted.

#### Advance Health Care Directive

There are two key parts of this document—first decide what medical treatment you want (discuss with your docs and lawyers) and second, lay out your funeral arrangements. There is lots of good advice on the web on how to prepare this document.

#### Durable Power of Attorney for Management of Property and Personal Affairs

This is the last document I will sign. I recommend caution before you assign the powers contained it to other people.

#### Care Givers

This is a hard job, a very hard job—requires the patience of Job and all the Saints. Your best recruits are your very best friends. I know. Casual acquaintances may have their own priorities, which don't match yours.

Who do you know well and can be trusted with your "secrets"? Prepare a list.

complied with by the federal agencies; also we should engage Lynn Woolsey; Kinsey, McGlashan to write nasty letters to NPS top brass. Remember NPS doesn't respond to citizenry-only to the politicians. I've seen them in action. Let's get the pols riled up. Best regards.

—Walt

*Good advice still from beyond the pale and a sterling example of the character of our departed neighbor and friend.*  
—The Editor



## Life in the Unemployed Lane

By Isaac Pearlman

As a graduate student during 2008 and 2009, I was secure in my university bubble. Reading about the subprime mortgage crisis and ensuing meltdown of the U.S. financial system was vaguely disturbing. While the heart-wrenching reports of those who lost their houses, their jobs, and their credit were certainly alarming, they were tempered by the fact those of us in the university hardly felt any personal impact. Certainly we had relatives and acquaintances that lost their life savings in the stock market, and we had a few friends who, as the most recent hired, quickly became the first to be fired at companies desperate to purge their payrolls and assure investors that everything was okay. But these were vague stories, whispered as we relaxed with family during Thanksgiving break or as we recuperated with friends after final exams were over. We conceded to our fellow students as we conversed in the cafeteria that the increasingly shrill media was reverently shouting unemployment statistics and lack of consumer confidence, but times couldn't be *that* bad. We still had our loan payments flowing in, we were able to pay our tuition and our living expenses, and some of us even had part-time jobs that gave us some cash. Our ace-in-the-hole would be our spiffy higher education degree. How could these shiny certificates fail to provide for us? Life was rough, but we were poor graduate students living the no-frills life and already accepting the fact that we lived on credit—a fountain of easy wealth that, unlike the majority of small business owners, prospective home buyers, and almost everyone else, was not taken away from us.

And then we graduated. The day after we changed our tassels to the other side of our brims, threw our caps in the air, and recovered from drinking ourselves silly in celebration, we awoke ready to start finally earning some *real* money and become productive members of society. But instead our hangovers were accompanied by a double slap across the face with an absurdly high loan repayment plan and a devalued market for our degrees. The debt cycle we fall into after receiving a bachelor's degree has been widely documented: In 2008 almost 70 percent of graduating seniors received loan a repayment plan for their debt

along with their diploma. The average nationwide student debt was \$23,200. This represents a 24 percent increase since 2004 (Project on Student Debt, 2010). If you throw in graduate school debt as well, many graduates are starting their careers with forty to sixty thousand dollars of debt. (If you go to law school or medical school, this is the bottom end of the loan spectrum.)

While college students do plenty of stupid things with their money, the issue isn't mismanagement. The issue is sharply rising tuition costs. For example, tuition at all the University of California schools rose 32 percent in one year and is 300 percent higher than it was ten years ago (CBS News, 2010). Many universities desperate to recoup losses from their plummeting portfolios and reduced public funding are unabashedly *cutting* education and student services while at the same time charging students vastly more for a poorer quality educational experience.

The graduating classes of 2008, 2009, and 2010 get to enjoy an extra kick in the gut. Not only are we paying more for our degrees, thanks to the financial crisis, but also our hard-earned diplomas are worth significantly less in the job market. Since last year for example, the average salary of a graduate with a bachelor's degree fell about \$1,000 lower. While some students who majored in engineering and computer science are getting slightly more for their degrees, this is tempered by the decline of other majors including liberal arts, which fell from an average starting salary last year of \$36,445 down to \$32,555 this year, an 11 percent decrease (Examiner, 2010). And the cherry on top: people with master's degrees and/or years of experience are applying for entry-level positions for which they are highly overqualified!

For all that is ballyhooed about unemployment statistics, very little is said about underemployment stats. *Underemployment* occurs when someone who is overqualified ends up working in a position that does not need their high skill set, resulting in inefficiency. And economists, some of the same precocious ones who for years assured us that our markets and

financial systems were sound, snidely point out that underemployment is another trend of a recession. But to be perfectly clear, I am not trying to say that being underemployed is worse than being unemployed. My heart goes out to those who have no employment, rising expenses, and decreasing financial resources to pay their bills. These people in general have become the doormats of our toxic system, unwitting victims guilty only of wanting the American consumer dream and believing credit agents when they were told they could have it all for a low monthly payment.

As I fill out application after application for entry-level positions, I find my sense of indignation growing, especially because I possess three degrees and have paid over \$50,000 in tuition. All of us graduates have not only impeccable grades, but also loads of extracurricular activities, work experience, and polished references. Yet the job landscape is as barren as the Sahara. Several friends who returned to graduate school with the specific goal of working in local government have given up, conceding that because of the hiring freeze most cities and counties are wielding as a suture for hemorrhaging budget deficits, temporarily working elsewhere is better than waiting for the recession to pass. Most universities are in the same boat. Many large nonprofits advertise that the best way to get a foot in the door is to work an unpaid internship for an indeterminate period of time and hope an opening in your specialization pops up. (Never mind about how to actually pay your living expenses on top of student loan payments during this period of free work.) Those desiring work in the corporate sector can find jobs, albeit at a much lower salary than before and in a market that seems to place a higher value on actual work experience than on a fluffy degree.

And finally, we must play the demoralizing waiting game. I would much prefer an instant, professional rejection of my application than what has increasingly become more and more common: a month (and often longer) of suspenseful waiting until finally one of my repeated inquiries digs up one of several possible alternatives: Due to the billions of applications received for this position, the process is taking much longer than anticipated (most likely). Your application has been rejected but the organization felt no need to inform you of this fact (second most likely). Additional bizarre scenarios include the position was filled before the announcement was sent out, the open job became a victim of budget cuts and vanished off the face of the earth, or the

organization apparently self-destructed because emails and phone calls to every single person listed on their website are ignored. To be fair, a large cause behind this sick cycle is that many organizations have downsized their human resources department during a period in which they are besieged with reams of applications for any open position.

The most disappointing thing about this situation is that local governments, universities, and nonprofits are exactly the institutions that need these recently graduated, bright, articulate, and socially savvy students. Degrees are becoming more and more interdisciplinary to reflect the entrenched problems facing our financial, social, and environmental systems, and rightfully so. Effective communication and management of these issues has drastically changed in just the last couple of years. And in the years to come, millions of baby boomers will be retiring and taking to their vacation pastures large amounts of institutional knowledge. The time is now to get young and sophisticated workers into the workforce so they can begin the tasks needed to help their companies and organizations adapt to the ever-quicker changing world. This seems to make logical and smart institutional sense, but then again, what do I know? I'm just another unemployed person skimming the want ads.

Sources

- <http://www.projectonstudentdebt.org>
- <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/02/02/national/main6164634.shtml>
- <http://www.examiner.com/entry-level-careers-in-national/early-report-shows-lower-average-salary-for-class-of-2010>

*Isaac Pearlman graduated from the University of California at Santa Barbara with a master's degree in Environmental Science & Management. He holds a B.S. in Environmental Systems and a B.A. in Literature from the University of California at San Diego. He served for two years in Peru with the Peace Corps. He is currently part of the California Sea Grant State Fellows Program assigned to California Department of Parks and Recreation working to identify climate change adaptation strategies to protect the habitats and species living in State Parks but fully expects to be back in the unemployed fast lane in six months when the Fellowship ends.*

Email: [isaac.pearlman@gmail.com](mailto:isaac.pearlman@gmail.com)

# Muir Beach Halloween 2010

Photographs and text by Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk



An eclectic mix of Benders! Poseidon Scott, Fallen Angel Suzanne, Hula Adrianna, and Gangster Christian.



Annabelle Conti had better watch out or that thing could take an eye out. Poor Sophie Conti!



Two generations of Conti's with Maurice's parents, Hugo and Isabella Conti.



Careful of those dastardly characters, Christian Bender and Massimo Conti.



Jake Schick and Christian Bender are two gangsters who are too cool for school.



Poster by Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk.



Pirates of the Muir Beachean! Brad and Lisa Eigsti, Nina Vincent, Sophie Conti, Laura Van Amburgh, Aran Moore, and Denise Lamott set sail for fun and riches.



The itsy bitsy spider, Stella Eigsti, spins an adorable web.



What a royal family! Toni Simmons, Scott Sampson, and Jade Latimore provide a little grace to the party.



Eek! Camila Pares and Hannah Eigsti look ready for some mischief.



Power ranger Ryan Judge is good at protecting his mom, Angela.



Oh yum! Gangsters Jean Pauley and Jake Schick "steal" some pizza while Massimo Conti peeks from behind.



Jackson Moore actually is a real football player. That outfit ended up going to the finals in Florida!



The stuff nightmares are made of. Could this Grim Reaper really be Ryan Wynn?



Anna Rauh may look like a tiger, but she's really a pussycat for mom Danny Hobson.



Could a mother/daughter team look any better for Halloween? Troy and Nataya Bassett take home the prize!



Tiana Vincent-Pearlman and Nataya Bassett are devilishly cute.



Tessa Pares is Wednesday (Tuesday? Friday?) Addams.



Could Brad Eigsti be any more artistically talented?



I tawt I taw a puddy tat! I did! I taw Jade Schick's puddy tat with mom Jean Pauley and dad John Schick.



A match made in heaven! Scott Bender's Poseidon and John Schick's Viking rule the seas.



Don't mess with Agent Maxx Moore.



Lynda Silva rocks her look. Is that a jackalope?



Uh oh, it looks like Scott Bender's toga may have slipped. Sorry Joanie Wynn!



Is that a hot dog? Or is it just new pet Wanda that Austin is holding on to?



The parade of costumes begins with leaders Tiana Vincent-Pearlman and Hannah Patterson-Weisberger.



John John Sward thinks Matt Silva's mini-me clown is downright creepy.



Guess who Austin Moore was rooting for?



Going batty, Daniella Silva?



## Muir Beach Group Forms to Consider Problems of Aging

By Paul Jeschke, Gerry Pearlman

White Caps, Act 3, Ancient Mariners, Model Ts, The Final Curtain Society, Phoenix Group were some of the suggestions as to what they might call themselves in place of Elders or Seniors. No

agreement yet as to what the final designation might be so there is plenty of time to augment the possibilities.

Muir Beach is a great place to live, but a challenging locale for older adults dealing with everyday problems of aging. Now a group of concerned Muir Beach residents has formed a group to explore common concerns and examine opportunities to make "aging in place" a more realistic and practical alternative to moving "over the hill" and living with adult children or taking up residence in a senior citizens facility.

Group members also expressed interest in improving social opportunities by forming a book club and arranging hiking trips and similar outings.

Representatives of West Marin Senior Services have attended two meetings and presented detailed explanations of their services. Jody Timms, one of four care managers at WMSS, covers southern Marin, including Muir Beach. People come to WMSS in a variety of ways—referred by doctors, agencies, or themselves. The care manager will come to a resident's home and do a needs assessment. WMSS can provide canes and walkers at no cost, rides to the doctor, counseling, regular contacts, and referrals to other services.

The need for a group to discuss common problems of aging in Muir Beach has been a frequent topic of discussion, usually among a small circle of friends. Late last year, a number of individuals decided to look into forming an active group with regular meetings and an agenda responsive to individual needs. Those ideas were explored at an informal dinner meeting attended by Gerry Pearlman, Martha de Barros, Bob and Nina Jacobs, Judith and Larry Yamamoto, Marilyn Laatch and Anne and Paul Jeschke. They decided to extend an invitation to the entire community and the first regular meeting of the organization was held at the Community Center in January.



### Notes on April 19 meeting

The meeting began with neighbor and legal authority on estate planning, Levon Sagatelyan addressing the assembly on the basics of revocable living trusts, durable power of attorney, simple wills, and other related matters for getting our affairs in proper order.

The "Elders," an unofficial name, meets at the Community Center the third Tuesday of the month. Meeting times alternate between noon get-togethers one month and 6:30pm gatherings the next. They are potluck affairs and participants are asked to bring a dish to share and a beverage. The May meeting will be May 17 at 12-noon.

Other issues addressed after the keynote speaker were:

Interests and concerns raised by members have included co-op and shared housing, finding reliable and responsible caregivers who are willing to come to Muir Beach, difficult transportation arrangements, health care and financial planning, home improvements to facilitate mobility and putting together a list of reliable vendors and contractors.

- Creation of an emergency team to help out residents who need immediate attention before long-term care can get organized
- Book Club organization
- Research on Senior Centers published by Area Council on Aging—do we need one?
- Inclusion of younger community members
- Lists of providers for household services

Random notes on the February meeting included information on the ride sharing site for Muir Beach—a newly funded federal transportation

program for seniors where volunteer drivers get reimbursed for gas and other expenses—the meals on wheels program now serving West Marin, an assisted living facility or coop housing at the David Schwartz property on Cove Lane and importing entertainment from groups like ROAR and Bread and Roses.

The following interest or task groups also emerged at this meeting:

- Seeking speakers for meetings - Bob Jacobs
- Transportation—increasing use of web site - Bonnie MacKenzie

- Book Club - Bonnie, Sala Steinbach
- Nature Walks - David MacKenzie
- Paid help handbook, household and health - Alan Steinbach
- Co-housing exploring the possibility - Marilyn, Anne Jeschke
- Coordinating with Green Gulch - Martha and Lee Debarros

The group welcomes new members. For further information, contact Gerry Pearlman at 380-5056 or [gnpearl@hotmail.com](mailto:gnpearl@hotmail.com) or Paul Jeschke at 388-2278 or [paul.jeschke@gmail.com](mailto:paul.jeschke@gmail.com).

## Locals Rally to Keep Muir Beach Dog Friendly

By Joanie Wynn



The new National Park Service Dog Management Plan proposes banning dogs from Muir Beach and the Coastal Trail and Fire Road. In response, a group of concerned Muir Beachers has formed a committee to inform residents and to offer solutions that would help maintain the original multi-use recreational mandate of the GGNRA and keep the historic character of Muir Beach intact.

The group's website, [KeepMuirBeachDogFriendly.com](http://KeepMuirBeachDogFriendly.com), encourages dog-lovers to make their feelings known with an action plan and links to an online petition and NPS comment form. They also have a resolution, which is being endorsed by local agencies, and which will be used to inform and educate elected officials.

One aspect of the NPS plan that was particularly troublesome was the suggestion that Little Beach could be an alternative for dog walkers. As Muir Beach locals

know, Little Beach is not accessible without crossing the main beach or driving along neighborhood private roads. Most of the time, the rocks are impassible because of



Photograph by Barry3

surf and tides. There is no public parking on Sunset Way or Pacific Way. All spaces are on private property. All lanes are fire lanes. Extra and illegally parked cars would create a hazard for the surrounding

community in terms of blocking access to emergency vehicles. For those who would arrive on foot via the road, there are no amenities or services for Little Beach. No trash cans. No toilets. In addition, Little Beach oftentimes has no beach at all during the winter or at high tide. Squeezing people over to that beach for use with their dogs is not a reasonable alternative. Formally stating and implementing such a plan would require appropriate impact studies and input from our community.

The initial NPS comment period closes May 30<sup>th</sup>. If you'd like more information, please check out the website and take action. And if you'd like to get involved "on the ground", please contact Joanie Wynn to pick up postcards for distribution.



Photograph by Steve Wynn



## 2010 Recap of the Redwood Creek Restoration at Muir Beach

Story and photograph by Lou Sian

The Redwood Creek Restoration at Muir Beach is a National Park Service project to restore the natural function of the creek and floodplain system. A key partner in this multi-year, multi-agency project is the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. As many have observed over the years, Muir Beach is a complex and intricate system that provides critical habitat for migrating coho salmon. The coho salmon, steelhead trout, and California red-legged frog are federally-listed species that would benefit from the project, but the restoration project is not solely for salmon. Restoring the creek, lagoon, and floodplain ecosystem would benefit other wildlife and the people who enjoy viewing them.

Phase 2 in 2010 completed several steps toward improving the way the Redwood Creek system conveys water and sediment to the Pacific Ocean. A new channel was excavated and made ready to connect with the main channel upstream of the Pacific Way bridge this summer. The GGNPC led crews of volunteers in weeding and planting tens of thousands of native plants to protect the new channel and multiple areas of the restoration site. Meanwhile, the existing channel was excavated and the fill was used on site. Two miles of the Coastal Trail were improved, thus improving emergency access. Campbell Grading constructed 0.1 mile of new Coastal Trail with rolling dips, rocked pools, check dams, and a seasonal wet crossing to slow erosion and sediment from getting into Redwood Creek. A second frog pond was constructed. Construction happens during the summer and fall months to minimize impacts to nesting birds and migrating fish. Winter is a dramatic time to see how the water flows through the newly-added features.

Phase 2 was supported with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, State Coastal Conservancy, U.S. Department of Transportation, the Parks Conservancy and the National Park Service.

In November 2010, Phase 2 was capped off with what has become an annual celebration at Muir Beach known as Welcome Back Salmon. After a morning of planting, weeding, and beach cleanup, about 75 people gathered to celebrate on the beach where the creek meets the ocean.

Artist and storyteller, Ane Carla Rovetta created a salmon sculpture especially for the event, made of willow branches, manzanita berries, grass, and pomegranate leaves. (The sculpture now resides in the new Muir Woods plaza). It made a fitting center piece for people to gather around the camp fire. Ane Carla led children and adults in making their own sculpture in miniature out of natural materials, and later told a riveting Native American story about the redwood-related origin of salmon.

Traditional fire-tender Peter Bergen united the diverse group in a common experience as they watched him coax fire from natural fibers, wood and friction. Several people stood to share poems and stories and to talk about the restoration project. The highlight of the event was when Ann Swoveland, Joan Vallis, Lauren Topete and Reace Ramirez said the traditional salmon blessing in Coast Miwok. They are Coast Miwoks, descendents of the original inhabitants of the Redwood Creek watershed, and members of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria.

The next steps of the ecological restoration project include more volunteer days of weeding and planting, public information hikes, and planning for this summer's Phase 3 to begin in July 2011. To learn more about the 2011 actions and Welcome Back Salmon, check out the webpage at <http://www.nps.gov/goga/naturescience/muir-beach.htm>. You may also call (415) 561-3054.

Lou Sian is a park ranger at Muir Woods National Monument.



Welcome Back Salmon  
Sculpture by Ane Carla Rovetta  
Photograph by Lou Sian



## The Critter Report: Cut Those Trees! Chase Those Birds!

By Dave MacKenzie

The landscape in Muir Beach is changing. The next phase of the “Big Lagoon” project (I still like that name, even though there really isn’t going to be a BIG lagoon), will involve realigning part of Redwood Creek and more. In a move to improve Muir Beach’s chances of surviving the potential Big Fire, lots of trees are being removed up the slopes from the creek and all across the community.

Most of the trees, which present fire hazards in Muir Beach, are Monterey Pines and Blue Gums (aka: “Eucalyptus”), which aren’t native species. So aside from the obvious issues of changes to views, privacy, and the “look” of a neighborhood, are there any critter issues with tree removals?

Several locals have expressed concerns over the removal of nesting sites for hawks or other raptors. We have Red-Tailed Hawks, Red-Shouldered Hawks, Great-Horned Owls, and occasionally White-Tailed Kites, which nest in tall pines and Eucalyptus. Where will these interesting birds go?

Red-Tailed Hawks are very adaptive birds, and do well around humans and their homes and highways. Almost any tall perch, such as a lamp pole along a freeway, is fine for a hunting location to drop on the prey. And in Muir Beach, with our frequent coastal winds, hovering is also a common method of hunting. I suspect that Red-Tails will not be affected by our tree removal, as they will find cliff nesting sites or other trees for nesting purposes, A Red-Tailed Hawk nest below the Muir Beach Overlook has been used for many years.

The same is probably true with the other three species I mentioned. They are all pretty adaptable, so not to worry. What about other species?

Many of our local nesters, such as Western Scrub Jays, Spotted Towhees, or Western Bluebirds, have evolved closely with our coastal brush habitat and don’t need large trees for nesting. Removing a few predator perches nearby may actually help these birds be a bit safer from sneak attacks.

Another benefit to removing Monterey Pines and Eucalyptus has to do with habitat restoration. Both

of these tree species effectively “poison” the ground beneath them, allowing for little growth of native brush. Look under these trees and you won’t see much besides needles and leaf litter. Removing the trees can lead to a more vibrant growth of native plants, mammal, and birds.

Some species of birds will be affected. Near our home on Starbuck Drive, some 40 Monterey Pines were removed this year. An array of Pygmy and Red-Breasted Nuthatches and a few other birds fond of the cones or trunks of these pines for foraging are not now as common. But there are still plenty of trees nearby for them to hunt around. So overall, things are fine.

What about Monarch Butterflies? In past years, large flocks (in the 1000’s) of these orange and black beauties would winter in the pines and Eucalyptus of Muir Beach. In recent years they have been uncommon. While the lack of butterflies has mostly to do with loss of breeding habitat elsewhere (and other theories), it could also be partly due to the aging of some of the big pines in Muir Beach. By removing many, but not all, of these trees, a lower story of newer growth plants can help provide an improved habitat for the Monarchs as well. So we have to cut smart, not just cut. I notice from observing my own yard that new pines spring up quickly in a year or two from the many cones, which have dropped seeds over the years.

So when you hear the chainsaws and see the trees going away, remember, most critters will probably do all right both in the short and long run. They may even do better.



*Dave MacKenzie has been contributing nature articles to the Beachcomber for 13 years, which is when he and his wife Bonnie moved to Muir Beach. Dave does engineering consulting from his home office, but also spends a lot of time searching the Redwood Creek Watershed for interesting critters. His unfulfilled desire is to see and photograph a mountain lion in the wild. At this point he has only seen tracks, kills, pets and photos. Help him out with timely reports and primed cell phone cameras!*  
Photograph by Bonnie MacKenzie

## A Rubber Plantation in Thailand

By Gerry Pearlman

Rubber plantations in Thailand I am told have better working conditions than the other main rubber exporting countries in Southeast Asia-Burma and Malaysia. I expected a plantation as a place with lots of workers, but found instead a single individual in charge of 900 rubber trees, which he attended every night and day of the week except Sunday.

The work consists of three phases: tapping, collection, and mixing with water and acid which coagulates the mixture so that it can then be rolled through two presses into its final sheet form.

The tapping very much dependent on weather and temperature conditions-the sap won’t flow well in the sun or the rain where can be diluted-takes place in the evening around 10pm. 900 trees are given a small diagonal cut about ¼ inch wide around one side or the other of the tree trunk. The cut because of the small size allows a steady stream of sap to flow into a small cup attached to the tree right below the lower end of the diagonal cut. How anyone can do this to 900 trees in eight hours using only a headlamp for guidance is beyond my imagination.

Then after a break the collection process takes place where the 900 cups offer up their contents of raw rubber sap. This task adds another two hours to the workday.

All of the collected sap is then taken to a work shed where it is mixed with water and acid to get the desired consistency before being sent through large hand operated presses to become the sheets. The finished product after drying in the sun is picked up by the owner of the plantation and taken to market (presumably a wholesaler). On good days the maximum number of sheets produced in this manner will be 17. On the low end it might be 7 or 8.

The split between the plantation worker and the owner of the land, presses, and trees themselves is 60% to owner, 40% to worker who has put in a 12hour day and gets to rest in the afternoon.

Immigrant labor has the same problems of exploitation by some unscrupulous owners the world over. But they are also an integral part of the economy of the host countries, because being paid less and lowering the cost of production in other ways (virtually no benefits), they are creating a more attractive product for Thailand’s export market by lower production costs. Not only does the national economy benefit in the

classic balance of payments model that characterize the import/ export markets but it has a multiplier effect as well.

Immigrants not only work longer and harder for less money than nationals. They benefit the national economy, not only by the exports they create boosting the overall economy in the world market by the lower priced commodity, but also by infusing local economies with all their own local purchases. Yet because of their vulnerability-lack of work permits, undocumented status, they are often subject to abuse.

Still they are better off than remaining in their country of origin where there was no chance at all of the economic opportunity that would have allowed them to better their own lives there.

Sound familiar! So now you know a little bit more about where all those tires on your cars come from!



Photograph by Myatthu

### Concluding Unscientific Postscript Elephant Rampage in Khao Sok: 'One dead, Tourists injured'

Two male elephants fought over a female on a trekking ride through Khoa Sok National Park, north of Khoa Sok, trampling one tourist to death and leaving several others with injuries. A Swiss woman has been killed, and an Australian woman, and two other victims are being treated for injuries in Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

## MBVFD Report

By Steve Wynn

After almost thirty years of outstanding service as chief of our fire department, John John Sward will be retiring next year and handing over the reigns of the MBVFD. The fact that we have a VFD is largely due to the dedication and commitment of John John. We can't thank him enough.

I am honored to be chosen as John John's successor and, as the next chief of our fire department, my mission will be to continue to provide life and property protection services with an integrated approach to pre-hospital care, fire prevention and control, public education and emergency management.



Headshots by Steve Wynn

We are having an extremely exciting and busy year. Michael Kaufman and the members of the Volunteer Fireman's Association have succeeded in acquiring grant money from Fireman's Fund Heritage Program, Gallagher-Tarantino Insurance Brokers and the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company to purchase a new, fast-attack truck. This 4WD truck, designated as Squad 660, will be used to respond to everything from vehicle accidents, trail rescues and other emergency medical calls to downed trees and fast-attack fire suppression. The VFA has also received an Assistance to Firefighters grant for the purchase of an additional truck which will bring our fleet up to 2 fast attack trucks and our old faithful pumper truck, 676.

The VFA is also working tirelessly on plans for a new firehouse. Thanks to the expertise of Laura Van Amburgh, the design phase is almost complete. In addition to providing protection for all of our trucks and equipment, the new firehouse will also give our volunteers a place to wash off contaminants from emergency calls and provide a classroom setting for continued training and education.

As a new member of the Volunteer Fireman's Association, I have been impressed by the dedication and continued hard work of Michael Kaufman, Brent Smith, John John Sward, Scott Sampson, Laura Van Amburgh, Bob Hayden, and, joining the Board as the new Treasurer, Leslie Riehl. Each member brings a unique perspective to the table to ensure that hard questions are asked and innovative plans are implemented. I don't think many people know the amount of work that these people put into the operation of the VFA. Their efforts are commendable and it is an important job that must be done to ensure the operation of the fire department and continued protection of our community.

Recently, we have enrolled all of our volunteers into a six-month EMR (Emergency Medical Responder) course and a continued EMR education and re-certification program that will keep our volunteers up to date with the latest EMR training and techniques.

I'd also like to welcome four new volunteers to our team: Maurice Conti, Ricardo Lopez, Dr. David Taylor and Leah Vermulen. They are great additions to the department and I look forward to working with them.

I am truly excited about the future of our MBVFD. As the annual BBQ event approaches, I am reminded of the amazing community we serve and it is your contribution, in time and money, which keeps funding available for equipment, supplies and continued training. Thank you for your continued support and... see you at the BBQ.

## Here We Go Again

One more time, Memorial day is coming down the line at breakneck speed. And off course for old timers and new, it means tooling up for the Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department's annual barbeque. An event that began 40 years ago as a fundraiser which might have brought in a couple of hundred dollars if we were lucky, has after much honing of the original formula, can now produce a gross income of \$40,000 plus. It's still the same old formula of BBQ chicken, booze, tee shirts, and a raffle, but the original attendees keep coming back and bringing their friends and families as well so it's much bigger now.

And the size is not all that's changed. Our modern fire department volunteers are head and shoulders above the scraggly, somewhat dysfunctional original volunteers. They are much better trained and have topnotch equipment.

And that development is all well and good, but there is another aspect to the event that is often overlooked. It is the outpouring of community participation that is integral to the success of the BBQ. There is nothing else in the life of the community that brings individual

members together in this way. People, who may not have seen one another all year, find themselves working beside their neighbors. It's a unique opportunity for the community as a whole to get to know one another a little better.

It is work however, and make no mistake about it. From the late night baking of desserts in the Green Gulch ovens, to assembling the beans and salad, barbecuing over one thousand chicken quarters, doling out and getting the donated booze, cutting the grass and fixing up the venues, displaying the latest line of MBVFD apparel, getting the graphics together and posted up, taking care of the vegetarians, getting and raffling off hundreds of donated prizes, and being a pit boss for any these integral parts of the day, is a wonder in itself to behold.

Not since the building of the community center and the response to isolated natural disasters has there been anything that can bring the community together in this fashion. It's work, but it's also a work party that helps to make Muir Beach the special place that it is!

-The Editor

## Volunteer Assignments 2011 BBQ

DEPARTMENT	BOARD MEMBER	COMMITTEE CHAIR	CONTACT INFORMATION
Baked Beans	Bob Hayden	Aran Collier	388--1188; aran@sunfirstsolar.com
BBQ Sauce	John Sward	John Sward	383-4961; johnjohnmastermason@yahoo.com
Beer/Wine	John Sward	Jesse Sward	381-8465; angiebanducci@hotmail.com
Cashier	Bob Hayden	Bob Hayden	381-7165; rbhayden@pacbell.net
Charcoal-ordering	John Sward	John Sward	383-4961; johnjohnmastermason@yahoo.com
Chicken Order and Pickup	John Sward	Steve Shaffer	389-1722; steve@planbwiz.com
Chicken Cooking	John Sward	Amadeo Banducci	383-0113; amadeobanducci@hotmail.com
Clean-up	Laura VanAmburgh	Laura VanAmburgh	389-8396; vanamburgh@mac.com
Decorations	Laura VanAmburgh	Muir Beach Garden Club/ Joey Groneman	383-2898; joeygroneman@gmail.com
Desserts	Laura VanAmburgh	Tayeko Kaufman	388-5018; tayekosk@yahoo.com
Expense/Donations	Laura VanAmburgh	Tayeko Kaufman	388-5018; tayekosk@yahoo.com
Field Work	Michael Kaufman	Chris Gove	497-3487; cgove@yahoo.com
First Aid	Bob Hayden	Bob Bowyer	388-3138; bigbowyer@gmail.com
Flyer	Laura VanAmburgh	Bryce Browning	383-1148; browning@yahoo.com
Food Prep	Michael Kaufman	Laura VanAmburgh	383-4152; rarearthca@earthlink.net
Food Servers	Michael Kaufman	Laura VanAmburgh	383-4152; rarearthca@earthlink.net
Ice	Bob Hayden	Paul Jeschke	388-2278; paul.jeschke@gmail.com
Jubilee Jumps	Michael Kaufman	Paul Jeschke	388-2278; paul.jeschke@gmail.com
Lost and Found			
Monday Clean-up	Laura VanAmburgh		
Music	John Sward	John Sward	383-4961; johnjohnmastermason@yahoo.com
Nachos		Shirley Nygren	388-4935; muirshirley@aol.com
Non-alcoholic Beverages	Laura VanAmburgh	Bryce Browning/ Julie Smith	383-1148; browning@yahoo.com
Parking	Scott Sampson	Chris Gove	497-3487; cgove@yahoo.com
Permits/Security	Michael Kaufman	Michael Kaufman	388-5018; michaelkaufman@yahoo.com
Printed Materials	Laura VanAmburgh	Bryce Browning	383-1148; browning@yahoo.com
Propane	Michael Kaufman	Dave Elliott	259-7397; dmclean@gmail.com

Publicity	Brent Smith	Brent Smith, Paul Jeschke	381-1532; brentsmith@polarismktg.com
Raffle Tickets and Prizes	Laura VanAmburgh	Deb Allen, Rob Allen	383-1854; dalien@fhallen.com
Road Signs: Placement	Brent Smith	Harvey Pearlman	388-0380; ninavp@earthlink.net
Saturday Night Dinner	Laura VanAmburgh	Laura VanAmburgh	389-8396; vanamburgh@mac.com
Saturday Night Security	Laura VanAmburgh		
Security Coordination w/ State Parks	Brent Smith	Brent Smith	381-1532; brentsmith@polarismktg.com
Security Gate	Bob Hayden	Al Kile	383-4725; alkile1@sbcglobal.net
Shirts	John Sward	Kathy Sward/Laura Van Amburgh/Ian Magnus	383-6762; kathylovesquilts@yahoo.com
Sign Production	Brent Smith	Brad Eigsti	380-0831; imprints@earthlink.net
Supplies	Bob Hayden	Fleche Phoenix; Bob Hayden & Scott Sampson	381-7165; rdhayden@pacbell.net
Ticket Sales	Laura VanAmburgh Anne Jeschke	Greg Ketchum	388-4204; drgreg@talentplanet.com
Toilets	Brent Smith	Jon Rauh	388-7526; jonrauh@gmail.com
Trash/Recycling	Bob Hayden	Fleche	342-1304; velofleche@hotmail.com
Veggie Meals	Michael Kaufman	Lynda Silva	383-7796; lyndagr@aol.com
Visa	Laura VanAmburgh Anne Jeschke	Levon Sagatelyan	388-3417; levonatty@aol.com
Volunteer Coordinator	Anne Jeschke	Anne Jeschke	388-2278; ajeschke@aol.com
Website	Laura VanAmburgh	Julie Smith	381-1532; julie@polarisinteractive.com
Work Parties	Scott Sampson	Aran Moore	415-250-7347 ©; aranm@sunfirstsolar.com
Work Party Food	Scott Sampson	Nina Vincent	388-0380; ninavp@earthlink.net



**MBVFD Raffle Prizes as of 4/18/11**

(tickets \$1.00 each, winners announced at the 5/29/11 event, need not be present to win)



**THINGS TO DO & PLACES TO GO:**

- Stay in the Guest House (2 nights), Green Gulch Farm/Zen Center, Muir Beach
- Event Tickets (for 2) to the Indy Grand Prix of Sonoma in Aug. at Infineon Raceway, \$150.
- Oakland A's Baseball Tickets (for 6 of you), thanks to Jenn Rogers
- Visit (for 10 kids) the Bay Area Discovery Museum & *Pierre The Penguin Book*, \$100. +
- A Cruise for 4 to Alcatraz Island, thanks to Michelle Phillips
- Yoga Classes (series of 4) by Susy Stewart of Muir Beach, \$60.
- A Night at The Bear Valley Lodge & 2 Lift Tickets
- Paintball (for 2) at Paintball Jungle, American Canyon, \$130.
- A Tour (for 4) to the Conservatory of Flowers, SF + *Trees of SF book*, *Pomegranate Press*
- Beginner Belay Lessons at Planet Granite Climbing, SF, \$68.*
- Golfing Green Fees (for 2) at Indian Valley Golf Club, Novato
- A Room for you at The Inn Above Tide (thanks to Felipe), Sausalito, \$390.
- It's time 4 of you learn to Curl, from Bay Area Curling, \$50.
- Tickets (for 2) to the 2011 Marin County Fair, \$30.
- Spend the Night at Bella Vista B&B, Larkspur, \$175. (Thanks to B. Villere & FAM.)
- Surfing (gear rental) from 2 Mile Surf Shop, Bolinas, \$50.
- Car Washes (2) at Mill Valley Car Wash, \$56.
- Dancing (4 group lessons for a couple) W/Pick School of Ballroom Dancing, SF, \$140.

- One Night at The Sandpiper Lodge, Stinson Beach
- Go Bowling or Ice Skating (6 of you) at Yerba Buena, SF, \$66.
- Skiing at Sugar Bowl, Tahoe (lift tickets for next season)
- Sunset Sail (for 2) with SF Bay Adventures, Sausalito, \$90.
- A Special Night at The Lodge at Cavallo Point, Sausalito, \$356.
- Giants Baseball Tickets donated by Jon Rauh of Muir Beach
- Membership (3 month, full facility family mbrshp.) to Marin JCC, \$586.
- An Overnight at the Pelican Inn, Muir Beach



**FOOD, DRINK & RELATED TO PARTAKE:**

- Tequila (2 bottles) from Magave Tequila (for those 21+)
- Cheese or Cooking Classes at Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Co., \$50.
- Meal at Frantoio, Mill Valley & a Signed Bottle of their Olive Oil, \$70+
- Chicken & Sides* and *Steak & Sides* (2) Grilling Books from Sunset Publication, \$30.
- Gelato Cake from Noci Gelato, Mill Valley, \$40.
- Hot Sauce from Cholula, Mexico & a Certificate to High Tech Burrito, Mill Valley
- Pizzas at Pizzeria Picco, Larkspur, \$50.
- Dine at Tra Vigne, Napa, from Sara Zander, Senior Loan Originator, \$75.
- A Tea Sampler Bag & Mug from The Republic of Tea
- Breakfast at the Half-Day Café, Kentfield, & Lunch at Café del Soul, Tam Valley, \$50.
- A Gift Card from Max's Restaurant, \$50.
- A Set of Table Linens (8) from Rough Linen, San Rafael
- Grade A Vermont Maple Syrup (1 quart!) from Hidden Springs, Vermont
- Dinner at the Spinnaker, Sausalito, \$75.
- More Hot Sauce from Cholula, Mexico & Take-out at Grilly's, Mill Valley, \$50. +
- Eat at Sam's Café, Tiburon, \$60.
- Lots of Stuff (hats, t's, tin...) from Anchor Steam Brewing Company, SF
- Certificate to Hog Island Oyster Co., Marshall, \$50.
- Jams (3) from Inna Jam, Berkeley & a Certif. for Breads from La Boulange, \$40+
- Burgers at the Counter Burger, Corte Madera, \$50.
- A Meal at the Buckeye Roadhouse from Sean Maley, Sr. Mortgage Advisor, \$75.
- A Tea Box from Mighty Leaf Tea Company, \$35.
- Dine at the Parkside Café, Stinson, donated by Linda G. & David L. of Muir Beach, \$50.
- Tassajara Cook Book* from Gibbs Smith Publishers
- A Custom Wooden Serving Board by Dave Elliott of Muir Beach, \$50.
- Big Basket of Chocolate from Ghirardelli, SF
- A Magnum of Champagne (for 21+) from Mumm Napa (thanks to Julie from camp MGH)
- Dinner Cruise on the Bay from Hornblower (thanks to Michelle Phillips!)

**TREASURES TO KEEP & PLACES TO SHOP:**

- Autographed Pro Bowl Football (#s 4, 94, 52, 85 & 21) from the SF 49ers
- A Black baggallini Around Town Bag, from Debra Hendsch, Muir Beach, \$75.
- Woodstock Puzzle & Playing Cards from Hippie Geek, Tennessee
- A Starfish Muir Beach Platter by Lorna Newlin of Sausalito Pottery
- Marin Mountain Bike Trail Guides*, by Bike Map Dude & A Stinger Taillight, from NiteRider
- Stainless Steel Water Bottles from Earthlust
- Decals for Bird Safety & CA Wildflower Seeds from windowalert.com & createdbynature
- Store Certificate to Marin Filmworks, San Rafael, \$25.



63. A Decoupage Bird Tray from Rock Flower Paper
64. Graffiti Suitcase from Mary & Paul of Muir Beach
65. An Autographed Hockey Puck (#40) from the San Jose Sharks, \$30.
66. Shop at Cabaline Country Emporium & Susan Hayes Handwovens, Point Reyes, \$55.
67. Hedge Trimmer, Safety Glasses & a Hat from Bucks Saw, Novato, \$100. +
68. Pet Bowls and Mat from Toss Design
69. Certificate for Funny Cards & Stuff to Two Neat, Mill Valley, \$50.
70. Autographed Ball Cap (Willie Brown) & Book from The Oakland Raiders
71. Pots, Herbs & a Certificate to Johnny's Seeds (organics), Maine, \$50. +
72. Store Certificate to Lando, Mill Valley (thanks Joan!), \$50.
73. Fire Extinguisher from Firemaster
74. A Bag of Travel Goodies from Debra Hendsch, Muir Beach, \$50-\$75.
75. A Skate Board Deck, Beach Towel & Sticker from Proof Lab, Mill Valley

**ART, THEATER, MUSIC, BOOKS & BODYWORK TO ENRICH:**

76. Tickets to a Concert of your choice at Shoreline Amphitheater, \$80.
77. Bath Lovers Gift Basket from EO Products, Corte Madera, \$60.
78. Lots of California Travel Books, from Lonely Planet Publishers, \$80
79. A Watercolor, "Houseboats" by Ben Farnham, Sausalito, \$250.
80. Stillness Bk. & Certif. for a Cranial Sacral Session, Charles Ridley of Muir Beach
81. Go see a Show (2 of you) at the Marin Theater Co., Mill Valley
82. Architecture & Old Fashioned Poultry Coop Books from Shelter Publishing, \$70.
83. A Watercolor by Brad Eigsti of Muir Beach
84. Attend (4 of you) a Performance of *Table Manners*, by Ross Valley Players, \$100.
85. Sculpture Garden Tour (for 4) of di Rosa, Napa, \$60.
86. DVDs from Grace Cathedral, SF
87. Tickled Pink (Rose Products) Spa Basket from EO Products, Corte Madera, \$60.
88. Acupuncture by Nina Vincent of Muir Beach
89. Seats (for 2) to the Marin Symphony, \$140.
90. *Patios, Sheds & Kids Rooms* (3) Books from Sunset Publication, \$45.
91. Entry Passes (for 2) to SF Museum of Modern Art, \$36.
92. Watch a Play (for 2) at Marin Shakespeare Company, San Rafael, \$70.
93. Lavender Spa Basket from EO Products, Corte Madera, \$60.
94. Enjoy Theater at the Berkeley Rep (2 of you)
95. Stretching Poster, Stretching & Running Books + DVD from Shelter Publishing, \$75. +
96. Lots of Green Apple Skin Care Products from Juice Beauty, \$250.
97. Live From the Archives Vols. (5 CDs vols. 13-17), from KFOG, \$85.
98. Contemporary Earthenware Sculpture "Nine", by Lea Wood, Muir Beach, \$350.
99. An Oil Painting by Tom Soltesz, Muir Beach, \$700.
100. Pretty Party (for 20 ladies 21 & over) at MilVali Salon, \$1,500.



(If you would like more raffle tickets, please contact Debra Allen 415 279-3751 or deballen@deballen.com)

**A Note From Your Fire Chief**

Dear Neighbors,

We're coming up on our 39th Firemen's Barbecue, an event that began after a house, a small cabin and a lot of brush around the Dairy went up in flames on three separate occasions within a short period of time. It became very clear that we needed a fire department. And when that happened it turned out to be one of the best things that brought this diverse community together.

Way back then we could survive on donations—old fire coats and boots and fire hoses from Hamilton Air force Base and an outdated 1951 International fire truck acquired from the County -and we were ready to roll. I was chosen Chief, so I went to Tam Valley Fire Dept. each week for two years to train, and I brought everything I learned back to this bunch of ready-to-goers. We owe a big "Thanks, Guys" to all those first volunteers!

We were just a bunch of young guys and ladies, and we were training and trying to figure out how to make money to get this Department to happen, because donations only go so far.

A party! We'll sell barbecued chicken, and salad and beans, and beer and soft drinks and have a raffle, and design a tee shirt and have live music and we'll dance and have a great time. We got to know one another, not just the fire people, but also the volunteers who helped throw the fundraiser. We learned to work side by side with new acquaintances and we pulled off an event that was talked about around the globe—and it still is. (The amazing thing is that it's still happening.)

That was 1972!

But times have changed...

OSHA regulations put a lot of pressure on our department. They determine the requirements for our equipment and turnout gear and training and we are no longer able to use outdated donations—everything has to be up to date, and that costs a lot! Just to outfit one volunteer with the approved gear for wild land and structural fires costs around \$4,500. And that's just the clothes; there's also equipment, training, and on-going maintenance and radios; the existing Mera radios cost \$4,000 each, and at a Chief's meeting today I learned the next required radio system will most likely cost \$6,000 each. Eleven radios—\$66,000!

So I want this barbecue to be the best ever—except for the next one; after 40 years of service, that one will be my last, with the first 20 years and the last 10 years serving as Fire Chief.

Over 100 fabulous prizes have generously been donated to the raffle—so buy lots of raffle tickets, as this could be the biggest bargain in your life! We hope to sell 8,000 tickets this year, so with over 100 prizes, if you buy one ticket, your odds are at least one in 80. Fill out your 25 stubs, write your check for \$25, (increasing your odds 25-fold) and drop them in the box. But please, if you aren't able to buy tickets, it's important for you still to drop them into the box so we can sell them to someone else. The raffle is a major source of money as it's all profit, except for the printing cost. So when you see the purple envelope, there are your tickets.

This year we're implementing more cost-cutting measures in order to see a profit that's better than half of the day's income. We're looking for donations of supplies as well as money, and our Firemen's Association, along with all our other volunteers, is working hard to accomplish this goal. You can help not only by volunteering, but also by purchasing raffle tickets, and selling them to your friends, relatives and co-workers. Ask for more tickets and sell 100!

Hopefully you'll be one of our hundred plus volunteers who help at the work parties and at the Barbecue. Remember, May 29th is the day not only to raise millions of dollars for our Fire Department, but a day to spend enjoying your wonderful neighbors, the music, the food and the good vibes. See you there.

Chief John Sward

**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"> <li>Tai-chi - 6:30 - 7:30 pm \$22.50 per month</li> <li>The Bookmobile Noon - 1:00 pm 1st and 3rd Mondays, Mailboxes, Highway One across from Pelican Inn. For more information, 415.499.7544.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tao Flow Yoga 6:30 - 8:00 pm Taylor's zendo, 1821 Shoreline Hwy. Contact David Taylor for more information: 383.2240.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tai-chi - 8:00 - 9:00 am</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Muir Beach Quilters - 11 am. No fee.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>

THURSDAY	SUNDAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tai-chi - 6:30 - 7:30 pm</li> <li>Volleyball - 6:00 pm - late At the courts on Muir Woods Road. No fee.</li> <li>Iyengar Yoga 6:30 - 8:00 pm Taylor's zendo 1821 Shoreline Hwy. Instructor: Susy Stewart 415.388.1549</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>



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:

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

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Shop at Mill Valley Market, give code #7094 to the cashier before the end of the transaction, and 2% of your total receipt will come back into our community to the Beachcomber. Spread the word. The more we shop, the more Mill Valley Market gives. Please support your community magazine by supporting those who support us.

www.millvalleymarket.com

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