

# BEACHCOMBER

SINCE 1946



## Inside

Music at the Beach .....	2
47th Annual Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's BBQ .....	3
2019 Community Dinner .....	4-5
In Loving Memory .....	5
Bistro Scones .....	6
Our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner .....	7
2019 Fire Dept. BBQ .....	7
The Critter Report .....	8-9
Local Artist Shows Work at Berkeley Art Museum Exhibition .....	10
On a Clear Day .....	10
Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair 2019.....	11
Enforced Silence .....	12
Short-Term Rentals .....	13
Potholes.....	13
BBQ Raffle Tickets .....	14
Poem .....	14
New Flooring Installed in MBCC.....	15
Mustard Blooms, Heather Fades .....	16
On the Cover.....	16

## Music at the Beach



*Kawai Piano Gifted to Muir Beach Community Center.*

Our community has been fortunate to have located a generous donor which has allowed us to upgrade our aged piano. Mr. and Mrs. Nick Carlin of Mill Valley are to be recognized for this remarkable gift. It is a 51 inch tall Kawai piano with a gleaming mahogany case. These large upright instruments (our older piano was about 45 inches) have a sound brilliance which approaches that of a baby grand. Size does matter.

Paul Smith recently performed here and was very pleased with our new piano and hopefully will find that it will not always be necessary for him to bring in a grand piano for

most of his performances here as he has done in the past. And thanks to Paul for donating a piano bench to complete the acquisition. The only dollar cost to the community has been the moving fee and a custom made quilted cover to protect our new investment.

Our old piano was awarded to a young woman in Sausalito who arranged for it to be moved to her home and is delighted to have it. I am hopeful that this new piano will make it possible for us to develop a program of enhanced musical performances and special evenings designed around musicians anxious to present their Music at the Beach.  
– Lloyd Gross

*Beachcomber* is a community newsletter published quarterly by and for residents, friends, family and former residents of Muir Beach. Published since 1946 (on and off), circulation 200 (more or less).

Submissions may be sent to the **Beachcomber mailbox** on mailbox row or emailed to **editor@muirbeachcomber.com**

Contribute your essays, poems, stories, photographs, artwork, announcements, reviews and kid stuff – anything that celebrates Muir Beach and our community.

Everything printed should be considered solely the opinion of the writer and printed in the form and condition as submitted.

Beachcomber exercises no editorial control over content or distribution, except for readability and general appearance.

Acquisitions: Anne Jeschke  
Circulation/Website: Maury Ostroff  
Design: Janet Tumpich  
Editorial Support: Kate Somers

# 47<sup>TH</sup> MUIR BEACH VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S BBQ SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2019 - NOON UNTIL 5PM SANTOS MEADOWS ON FRANK VALLEY ROAD



**LIVE MUSIC BY ANDRE'S ALLSTARS & SOUL SKA**  
**FOOD, FUN, DANCING, DRINKS, RAFFLE, T-SHIRTS, KIDS PLAY ZONE & MORE**  
**PARKING \$20 PER VEHICLE • CARPOOLING ENCOURAGED**

**FREE TO THE PUBLIC • ALCOHOL PURCHASED ON-SITE ONLY • NO B.Y.O.B.**

**ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE MUIR BEACH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT.**  
**SPONSORED BY THE MUIR BEACH VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSOCIATION**

The 47th Annual Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's Barbecue Fundraiser is a fun event for the whole family with delicious food, activities for the kids, and dancing to live music by local favorites Andre Pessis and his All-Stars and opening band Soul Ska. An annual Memorial Day Weekend tradition in Marin, the event this year takes place on Sunday, May 26, from noon to 5pm at Santos Meadows on Frank Valley Road. Just follow the signs on Highway 1 from Muir Beach.

The Firemen's Barbecue, known widely as Marin's "Party of the Year," but more importantly a vital fundraiser for our very dedicated Volunteer Fire Department. Some of Marin and the Bay Area's best musicians will rock the stage

while Muir Beach firefighters and community members tend to smoky grills, and lend a hand serving food and drinks, selling merch, parking cars, cleaning up and most of all having a great time as ambassadors of Muir Beach. Sought after raffle prizes are offered and, for the kids, there is a special play zone with climbing walls and bounce houses.

Barbecue chicken and vegetarian tamale lunches, hand-made desserts, plus sodas, beer and wine will be available for purchase, as are clothing and other items featuring the famous Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department iconic dog logo. The day's activities end with a raffle of more than 100 prizes that include fantastic accommodations, airline tickets and gift certificates

from popular Bay Area and beyond restaurants and attractions.

We would love for all community members to get involved: find a volunteer spot or two (food & drink sales, parking, garbage, set up, clean up and more); come out to the Saturday afternoon work parties in May (check Next Door and mailboxes for details); sell raffle tickets to your colleagues and friends; bring your buddies to the barbecue and encourage them to support the MBVFD by purchasing merch, raffle tickets, food, drinks and more. To find out more, please contact me at [Denise@DeniseLamottPR.com](mailto:Denise@DeniseLamottPR.com) or call (415) 381-8793.

Let's make this the best Barbecue yet! Thank you!

*-Denise Lamott Moore*

# The 2019 Community Dinner

*By Bernard Halliwell*

A treasured community dinner was held on Friday, March 22nd, thanks to the efforts of the Elderberries. About ninety people gathered to drink wine, and then sit down and dine together. The convivial crowd included a large number of younger people who sat together at the long wooden table near the windows overlooking the deck. How refreshing it was to have the intermingling of generations.

The Elderberries are a small group of Muir Beach people who meet to plan activities that will promote a sense of community in Muir Beach. They sponsor, among other things, these annual dinners, a book exchange, and the Muir Beach Caring telephone line to help people out when help is needed. Active members include Anne and Paul Jeschke, Gail Falls, Bob Jacobs, Kathy Sward, Marilyn Laatsch, Nina Vincent, and Beth Nelson.

Meetings are held at the Bistro at 11 AM on the 3rd Wednesday of the month and people who are interested are encouraged to come, and even support the Elderberries by offering to help at events. A number of people have supported the work of the Elderberries: Frank and Barbara Schoenfeld, Janice Kubota, and Bernard Halliwell, among others.

The name of the group is taken from the Elderberry, a tree-like shrub of which two species grow in Marin County: the Red Elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) and the Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea*, previously known as *S. mexicana*). The Red Elderberry has

pyramidal clusters of white flowers in spring, followed by red berries in the fall. The Blue Elderberry has flat topped cluster of white flowers in spring followed by blue berries in the fall.

At this time of year the Red Elderberry is in bloom along Frank Valley Road, in Green Gulch, and along trailsides in the hills around Muir Beach. When you are out for a walk or a drive, take a look, and note.

In the United Kingdom a species of elderberry flowers are cultivated for elderberry wine, elderberry water and elderberry syrup. Elderberry water is a popular non-alcoholic choice to drink in pubs. The syrup can be added to champagne for a delicious breakfast drink or an aperitif or used in deserts. These products are deliciously fragrant. Elderberry! What a wonderful name for a group of people trying to bring a delicious fragrance to the community.

Several years ago, the Elderberries envisioned community dinners as a relaxed way to bring people together to become acquainted or reacquainted and as a time when new residents of the community could be introduced. The idea harkens back to the past when friends, family, and people, used to gather around a table to leisurely dine and converse. So many wonderful exchanges used to happen at such times, but in recent years, with our on-the-go life styles and eternal to-do lists, such traditions have fallen by the wayside. We wave and smile and exchange friendly

greetings as we come and go, and the years slip away without us becoming seriously acquainted. How wonderful it would be to return, the Elderberries thought, for a moment to the old ways. They wanted to provide an opportunity for sharing, for becoming acquainted without the worry of having to bring a pot luck dish or having the conversation drowned out or disrupted by music or some form of entertainment.

One cannot help but reflect on the importance of meals together in developing social relationships and enriching our lives. Thoughts go back to the film, *Babette's Feast*, and numerous other films where people sit around tables and things happen.

From the beginning, the Elderberries discarded the throw-away mentality of paper plates and plastic cutlery. Anne Jeschke and Gail Falls went to Kamei Restaurant Supply in San Francisco and bought plates and metal cutlery. Anne found fine fabrics in a thrift shop that could be turned into tablecloths. And Barbara Schoenfeld took things one step further and bought some fine black fabric with various polka-dot designs, and skillfully sewed them into tables cloths for the small round tables.

Marilyn Laatsch located a caterer to help. He has been a treasure. His name is Chuck Collision, he lives in Novato, and he has worked extensively in preparing food, including helping with the Edible School Program in Berkeley that

*Continued on next page*

## Dinner

*Continued from previous page*

Alice Waters started. He has provided good and reasonably priced food for each community dinner since the inception 5 or 6 years ago. There is always a vegetarian/vegan option. This year the theme was Thai.

Paul Jeschke keeps an eye out for much of the year for some good and reasonably priced wines. He likes to go to K & L Wines on Howard Street in San Francisco, but the right wines can be found elsewhere, such as in Mill Valley Market and Costco. This year while in Panama, he received an email about a good wine that was being sold at an excellent price, and from the top of a mountain in Panama he sent back an email asking K & L Wines to save him a case.

The organization of the dinner is a large task, but the real work takes place on the day of the dinner when half a dozen volunteers assemble to put up the tables and chairs, set the tables and arrange flowers. The flowers, incidentally, are picked from local gardens. This year Janice Kubota and Bernard Halliwell went out into their gardens to gather flowers. The rain was falling heavily, and Bernard in particular was soaked to the skin as he picked Shasta Daisies, *Salvia leucophylla* (a native sage), Hummingbird Sage, Montbrecia, scented geraniums and more. In Muir Beach gardens there are always flowers and foliage for the table.

The Elderberries bring in a crew of young people to help with the

clean up, which for ninety people is a large task. Five young people are recruited to help and they are paid an honorarium.

This year Hannah Eigsti was in charge. She was assisted by Stella Eigsti, Zora Paul, Ronin Corbit, and Dean and Jackson Sward.

The Elderberries do try to cover most of their expenses. When there is a short-fall, the CSD usually helps out.

Nina Vincent took on the task of master of ceremonies. The one important ceremony of this occasion is the introduction of people who are new to the Muir Beach. The intent is to welcome them warmly and give each of us an opportunity to recognize them and introduce ourselves when we can. People introduced this year were Richard Chapman and Sonya Martin with their six-year-old daughter Eve (Sunset); Heidi Stubler and Adam Brown (Starbuck); Leigha Heydt and her partner Shannon (Sunset); Richard Bernard and Shawn Roberts who have been working lovingly on the McGee's house on Starbuck; Simon Littler and Vanessa Philips (Sunset); and Elisha Singer (Sunset); and Diana Estey (Starbuck).

A convivial time was had by all. This is an event not to be missed. Next year take note, Make your reservation, and mark your calendars as soon as you receive a notice.

When you go, you may have what comes to be a special memory.

## *In Loving Memory of*

**Lee Lüssen de Barros**

**“Let your practice be a celebration of life.”**

—*Seido Lee de Barros*

Lee was born on November 5, 1936 in Brooklyn, NY. He passed away peacefully on March 6, 2019, surrounded by family, friends, and members of his Sangha.

Lee's life-long interest in religion and philosophy led him to move to the San Francisco Zen Center where he was ordained as a Brown Robed Priest. He was a Dharma teacher in the Suzuki Roshi Soto Zen lineage. He founded a meditation group at San Quentin Prison and taught at Dominican College, the Redwoods Retirement Community, and the Dharma Eye Zen Center. Lee also served the homeless as a priest, a counselor, and a friend at the San Rafael Homeless Center, and he was a member of the Interfaith Counsel of Marin.

Lee was an avid birder, reminding friends and family to, *“If you are feeling lonely, fill the bird feeder.”* He is survived by his spouse, Martha Freebairn-Smith de Barros, his son Marcus de Barros, his step-children Sutton, Maria, and Laura Freebairn-Smith, his brothers Frederick de Barros, Paul de Barros, and Patrick de Barros, six grandsons (Paul, Trent, Jonah, Ben, Dylan, and Sean), and many nieces and nephews.

# Bistro Scones

By *Lemon Zest*

Bistro at the Community Center is open every Wednesday from 10 am. Come by early, linger long and treat yourself to a fragrant ginger scone.

Nancy Knox crafted the current recipe calling upon her knowledge of chemistry to enhance a scone recipe brought to her by Kathy Sward.

## Recipe Notes:

Use a Cuisinart for 3 pulses (seconds) for dry ingredients, next add the chilled butter cubes and pulse for an additional 6 to 7 seconds so that butter chunks crumble. Bag and then toss in ginger. Refrigerate if not baking immediately.

Oven temperature of 450 degrees is used at Bistro along with double baking sheets to protect scone bottoms.

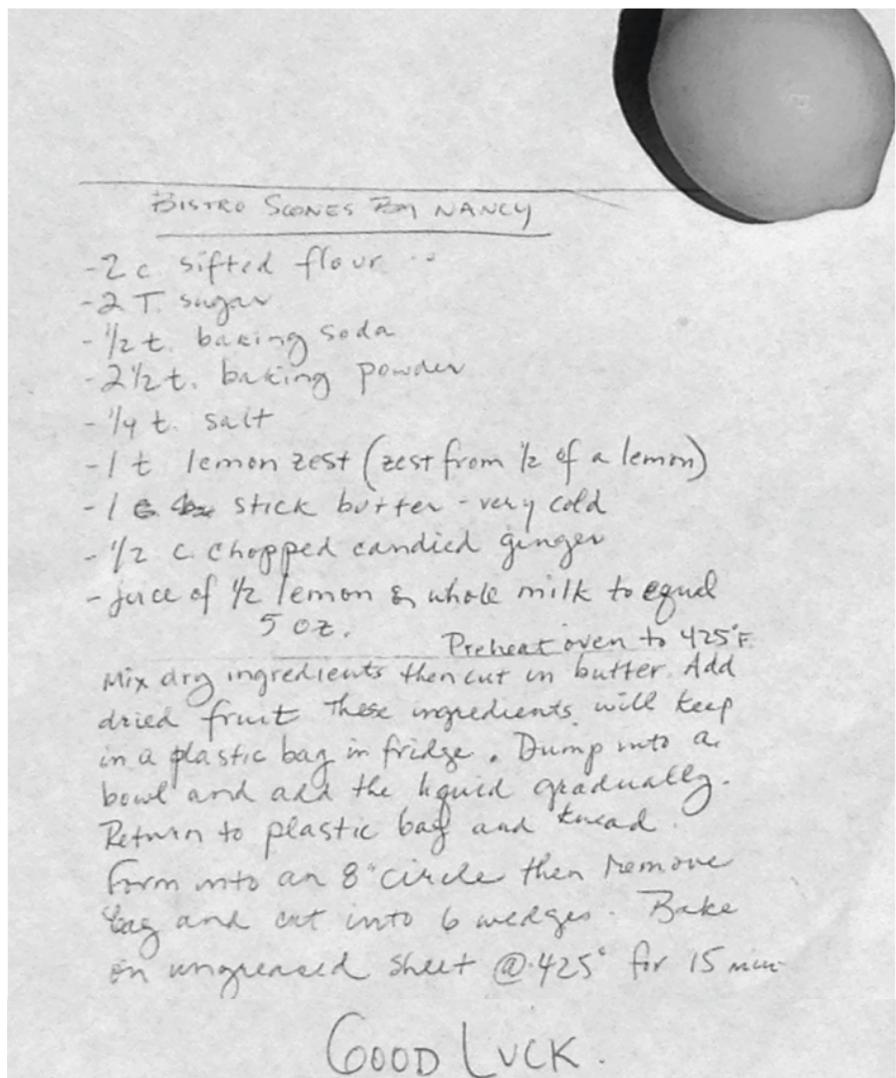
Dried cranberries and orange zest can replace ginger and lemon.



L to R: Nancy with apprentices Charlene, Lonna, Kathy, Janice



Photos by Tyler Knox.



# Our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

**MAY 25TH, 6 PM**

*By Nina Vincent*

It's that time of year again: Saturdays in May work parties, orders placed for beer, wine, t-shirts, and chicken. Picnic grounds cleared, ticket, beverage and tamale booths prepared. The Muir Beach Volunteer Firefighter's annual BBQ fundraiser is upon us.

Are you going to be there? Will you give our community a bit of your time, sweat, and laughter? We hope you will.

And to thank so many of you that do, we will once again be celebrating our commitment to volunteerism, community and fun at the Saturday night Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. For those of you who are new to the community the Saturday before the BBQ is a big day. We come together to stack the Merch shelves, touch up and put up Brad's amazing signs, prepare garlic bread, salads, beer booths and the music stage. Together neighbors, friends and community members come together to work.

Please join us. There are stories to tell as we slice and wrap garlic bread. Giggles and opinions stack one on top of the other beside the sweats and T's in the Merch Booth. And of course varied lengths of legs dangle off the music stage as we break for lunch in the sun and admire the way we have, once again, pulled off the groundwork for THE GREATEST BBQ EVENT SINCE WOODSTOCK.

Saturday, May 25th (and any other Saturday in May that you have to give), come down to the picnic grounds as early as you can and join us for work and the fun.

THEN AFTER THE WORK AND FUN ARE DONE JOIN US FOR THE Saturday May 25th 6pm Volunteer Appreciation POTLUCK Party. Cuco and Consuelo's Taco's - like no others you've tasted before will be the main course. YOU BRING side dishes, salads and desserts. Plan to help clean up if you are a die hard - stay til the end kinda partier.

Remember: the MBVFD BBQ happens only when YOU contribute. So let's celebrate AGAIN!! And again, and again, and again.

If you would like to work on the day of the BBQ check in with Denise Moore or Nina Vincent and we will find a place for you to contribute. I promise!

SHOW UP FOR YOUR COMMUNITY AND WE WILL SEE YOU THERE MUIR BEACHERS!!

# 2019 Fire Dept. BBQ

In the coming days we embark on the preparations for this year's BBQ and we need your help.

Over the years this event has raised a significant portion of the operating funds for our fire dept. but it's also been so much more.

The Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department and its fundraising arm the Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Association are a dedicated group of volunteer men and women tasked with our public safety. Every year we have the honor of hosting the BBQ. Over the last several decades, the community has turned out in substantial numbers to help put this event together because, to quote somebody famous "it takes a village." For the past several years, participation by community members has dwindled as the number of guests have been stable at around 3,000 and our costs have skyrocketed. We have had to pay substantial amounts each year for things that in years' past the community has helped with. In previous years we could count on 30 plus people at our work party's now we are lucky to see 10 and getting people to service all the positions on the day of the event has proved difficult.

My experience with this community and the attitude of public service has changed my life and I/ We are asking for your help. Step up to the plate and lend a hand at both the BBQ and its preliminary setup and it's all important cleanup the day after. If you used to help please help again but just as important if you are new to the community lend a hand and discover the spirit that makes this community something that attracted me and many others. Thanks in advance,

– Chris Gove, MBVFD Fire Chief

# *The Critter Report:* THE SOUND

*By Dave MacKenzie*



*Bobcat in brush.*

*(Note: This article originally ran in the Beachcomber August 1997.)*

The stunning sights and scenes of Muir Beach thrill all of us regularly if we're paying any attention at all. But as spectacular as this visual feast is, the sounds of Muir Beach are also amazing and worthy of our attention.

Crashing surf, wind-blowing fog, distant foghorns, and even the absence of the drone of a nearby

highway are things most people in the world don't enjoy every day. And there are other, more mysterious sounds.

One evening in early July I decided to go for a walk down by the Fireman's Barbeque area. Gone were the hectic sounds of literally thousands of revelers on Memorial Day, and gone was the amplified

sound of music and dance. Instead the gentle babble of Redwood Creek and a slight breeze in the alders formed a more meditative background. Along the water, where excited children had then vied for a chance at the rope swing, the melodious and flute-like song of numerous hidden Swainson's Thrushes now dominated the forest. Steller's Jays pecked noisily on the wooden counters from a never-ending supply of remnants only true scavengers would still consider food. As the sun slipped beyond the ridge, the scene grew very quite.

### *“And then I heard THE SOUND.”*

I've tried to decide how best to describe THE SOUND, since I may never hear it again. Also I want all of you to try and imagine it; because maybe you will hear it. A howl? A whoosh? A bit like an exaggerated and greatly extended Darth Vader exhale? Definitely big lungs, out-breathing, raspy, deep, and mammalian. Mammalian? Why not a bird? No, not a bird. I know birds, and any bird that size was long extinct. Perhaps a reptile, but not from these parts. This was too big, too deep.

If you've ever heard a big Buck Mule Deer blow it's challenging whoosh! in the fall, you have a clue. And I recall Olympic Elk which make a somewhat similar sound. But it took binoculars to truly tell me the source of THE SOUND.

From where I was standing near the white-picket riding ring, the Heather Cutoff Trail zigzags right up the side of Frank Valley like the route to Base Camp 4. Above the trail is a steep slope with a few open areas in the Coyote Brush which follow up to the ridge where it all tumbles into a thick forest of Bay Laurel on its way down into Horse-Camp Canyon. It was in one of the clearings, in the falling light, where I saw the two big Bobcats, facing off in some unclear but obviously primitive challenge. And the big one was making THE SOUND.

Lynx rufus is a gorgeous animal. From where I viewed, I could see the two cats were not the same. The larger and clearly much more muscular orange-colored cat on the right, and the leaner, smaller and grayer cat on the left. The Orange was probably the one we call Coastal Bob, and his creamy undersides with chestnut stripes were clearly visible. The two cats were locked in a face-to-face snarl of white-streaked jowls, white-tipped ears, and tails held high. Their faces were striking and reminded me perhaps of some extraterrestrial Kabuki-like masks complete with serious fangs. The tails were also amazing. Twelve to fifteen inches of vertical white and brown bent horizontally for the top couple of inches. And the tails twitched and weaved as the tension, and THE SOUND, intensified.

Finally the background Darth Vader whoosh! gave way to a low almost dog-like growl and the big

paw swipes began. A right, then a left, and both cats swinging and moving deftly back and forth and then Coastal Bob charged, flinging himself directly at The Gray. A complete head-over-heels flip over The Gray with the cats seemingly touching paw-to-paw as though highly electrified and then arcing apart. Wow! Was I glad they were about a hundred yards always (but much closer in my binocs).

The smaller Gray had not submitted. Coastal Bob stood back. After a few more feints he began to carefully back off and move cautiously up the slope. Clearly The Gray was not to be easily defeated. The smaller cat moved down the slope (more or less toward me), it's tail held high, the white trim and right angle bend showing obviously above the brush like some sort of periscope saying: "Watch out – I'm still here!" And Bob, turning a couple of times to watch, continued up the slope, no longer willing to tangle with The Gray.

What actually happened here? I like to think The Gray was defending territory, but more particularly perhaps a couple of kittens nearby in the brush. Coastal Bob was the aggressive male, perhaps the father, but he could not dominate. I wonder how often this sort of challenge occurs. THE SOUND was gone.

Muir Beach has many sounds. Pay attention, there are more than you think. Who knows what you might see if you check them out.

# Local Artist Shows Work at Berkeley Art Museum Exhibition

**No Horizon: Helen Mirra and Sean Thackrey**, is an exhibition at the Berkeley Art Museum from July 3 through August 25. A Muir Beach resident, and active community participant, Helen lives just across from the Overlook in Muir Beach. Helen was on retreat as the Beachcomber went to press, but we gathered the following information about the show from other sources.

The information from the University of California states: “This exhibition brings together two artists whose work embraces the simple act of seeing as an inspiration to deep reflection and understanding. Mirra and Thackrey have both had longstanding engagements with Zen and their approaches to art reflect the discipline of simplicity and the recognition of the sublime as bare experience. Helen Mirra’s recent art practice is shown in woven wall pieces that capture the nuances of her somatic experience (breathing, standing, sensing) and the conditions of the geography she encounters and moves through (air, ground, sky). Each small-scale weaving presents a rich and restrained irregular grid of drifting color, shape, and texture.”

From the Wikipedia site, we learned that Helen

“...has an extensive exhibition history in North and South America, Europe, and Japan,[24][25] and participated in broad international exhibitions such as the 11th Havana Bienal, the 30th São Paulo Art Biennial and the 50th Venice Biennial. A fifteen-year (1995-2009) survey of her work, *Edge Habitat*, was presented in 2014 at Culturgest in Lisbon, Portugal, and

the corresponding publication *Edge Habitat Materials* was published by White Walls.[26]. She was a Senior Lecturer in Visual Art and Cinema & Media Studies at the University of Chicago (2001-2005)[27] and a Loeb Associate Professor of the Humanities in the department of Visual and

Environmental Studies at Harvard University until 2013.[28] She has been an artist-in-residence at University of California at Berkeley,[29] and a guest of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program.[30] She lives in Northern California.[31]”

– *By Anne Jeschke*

---

## On A Clear Day

I’ve been told, that on a clear day, you can see forever.

Thirty years in beloved Stinson Beach, i hadn’t spent much time in Muir ‘Beach. My wife and i got an invite from “Max”, the magic and pampered black cat, and we are charmed by your lovely village. John Muir has been a hero of mine, ever since i heard that he climbed a tree and strapped himself to it’s top during a storm, so he could feel the experience. Also, how he would grab a blanket and a loaf of bread, and head out to the mountains.

He too followed the California Dream, leaving his domineering dad in Wisconsin, in pursuit of greener pastures. His religion became nature’s absolute beauty and grace, which is mine as well.

He influenced our society, helping to preserve Yosemite, create the Sierra Club, and most likely, we can credit his devotion to the preservation of west Marin. Those “Rebels with a Cause”, who fought to give us what we amazingly have here, must have loved John as much as i do.

When he built his cabin on Yosemite Creek, he constructed it to allow the creek to flow through one corner, so he could hear it.

He wrote of, “jumping tirelessly from flower to flower”.

Staying in Muir Beach must cause me to look closer at this man, a prophet naturalist, said Emerson, who got to meet him.

John almost lost his sight in an accident, and this galvanized him to, “be true to himself”, which inspired his walk to Florida and passion for nature.

My lady Simone and i continue to visit your lovely village as we tend darling Duncan, zany Zorro, and mellow Mollie .where i write this now. Muir Beach is divine in the spring with blue and purple running down the hill sides. We are honored to be here. My compliments to all you with the good taste and blessed fortune to reside here.

I am grateful for the opportunity to share my thoughts, this cloudy Saturday morning. I can’t see forever, but i can see San Francisco.

ONward...

–*Oshen Oshenia*

# Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair 2019

By Laurie Piel

It's time to start thinking about registering for the annual Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair. Suzanne Miller and I are excited to be back at the helm.

We hope everyone had a chance to come to last year's Fair as it was a magical event with the MBCC beautifully decorated by Suzanne. Overall there were 32 individual artists and once you add in the members of the Quilters, Garden Club and Junior Artisans we had over 50 fabulous artists...and that doesn't include the great options at the Muir Beach Volunteer Fireman's Association's table.

We have many new residents here at the beach who may not know that the Quilters began the fair over 40 years ago with just themselves. By the time Suzanne and I took it over a few years ago there were juried artists along with the quilters and some residents. When we started, we had two priorities...to showcase the many artists of Muir Beach and to donate money to the CSD specifically for community events. Every Muir Beach resident or family member who wanted to participate could...and did.

Once everyone is accommodated, we open it up to others from around the bay and have had artists from as far away as Nevada City. Previously the profit from the beverage bar was the basis for all of the donations to the CSD and averaged around \$1,000. Last year Carol Gross instituted a food donation program and now both the kitchen and the beverage bar, headed by Steve Shaffer, are profit centers. Carol and

Steve had a friendly competition and there's nothing better than a little competition to spur people on. So, last year we were proud to donate \$2,800 to community events.

Suzanne and I would like thank all of the people who stepped up to make it such a great event. It's a labor of love from the community and somehow a simple thank you seems insufficient and yet it's all we can offer... and, of course, the opportunity to do it all over again! The fair is December 7th & 8th. We are bringing back the best of the past fairs... Café Q (free coffee and tea for all), the Junior Artisans/Kids table (it's never too early to get the kids' creative juices flowing), donated yummy food for purchase (yes, there will be hot dogs again) and, of course, the Beverage Bar. We will be looking for volunteers to help it all run smoothly. For those who want to sell their wares, here are the particulars to join in on the fun... and make some money.

## **Dates:**

Set up: Fri., Dec. 6th (all day)

Fair: Sat., Dec. 7th (10-5)

Sun., Dec. 8th (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 fire it yourself. You can use found objects in your art and can design the sweater but do not have to knit it yourself. This is not a juried event.

**Cost:** \$65/table. Two people can share a table.

**Sales:** Each vendor is responsible for their own means of getting paid.

**Registration:** By email ONLY starting 12:01am Aug. 2nd through midnight Aug. 4th. to [muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com](mailto:muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com) That's the 72 hour period from Friday through Sunday of the first weekend in August. Please include your name, contact information (including phone number, MB address & email address) and your medium.

**Acceptance:** First come, first served basis - 1 table available to each Muir Beach resident. Requests for extra tables will be assessed close to the event .

**MB Organizations:** Organizations that support MB such as the MBVFA, Quilters and the Garden Club are offered 1 free table. Please register!

**Non-Residents Vendors:** Once all Muir Beach residents have been accommodated, we will reach out to other vendors. We will hope to get some of our favorite artists & jewelers from the past as well as new ones. Suggestions are always welcome.

We will be putting a flyer in your mailbox with all of this information closer to registration. Please feel free to email us at [muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com](mailto:muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

For those of you who are new to the Beach or missed the fair last year, take a look at our website: [muirbeachartsfair.com](http://muirbeachartsfair.com). It's not too soon to start thinking about being part of this community tradition.

We can't wait to see what this year will bring and we look forward to seeing everybody there.

# Enforced Silence

By Suzanne Bender-Van Spyk

Near the end of 2018, our home became vastly more quiet. Gone was the near incessant ringing of our landline telephone, which would occasionally start us awake at 1 a.m. only to transmit the automated voice of a robocall on the other end of the line. We had decided to upgrade our home phone system to one that included automatic call blocking. Now, if someone wishes to call us, they are asked to “Press 1” the first time they call in order for our home phone to actually ring. Failure to do so means we never hear a peep. It took some time for us to get used to the newfound silence, but the benefits were immediate and gave all of us a warm glow of privacy.

As such, we were totally unaware when, on March 21, our landline ceased to work at all. We had found a downside to our robocall-less nirvana. Thankfully, my sister tried to reach us, and alerted us via text to the bizarre fast beep she encountered upon dialing our home line. It turns out we couldn’t make outgoing calls, or receive incoming calls. I went online to the AT&T trouble reporting website (repair.att.com) to report the issue, but landed on a page indicating I’d have to call for help with my trouble ticket. That number is 611 in California from your cell phone or a working landline. The phone representative took my information and assured me the phone line would be up and working within 3 days.

Over the course of the next 2 weeks, I checked the status of my trouble ticket online (it had disappeared), and called AT&T five more times

to inquire as to when our landline would be repaired. The only consistent answer I received was that there was a “problem with a cable”. Every time I contacted AT&T, I was told it would be another 3 days. And another 3 days. And another 3 days. I couldn’t have conference calls with my clients and I couldn’t fax a medical record to my son’s doctor. Our AT&T M-Cell and WiFi calling help improve the cell coverage at our house, but we still experience long periods of silence during calls on our cell phones whenever we try to use them in Muir Beach. This situation was becoming more than inconvenient.

Living in Muir Beach, we’ve grown accustomed to being low on the list of priorities for our utility, delivery, and road maintenance providers. We’ve had our account with AT&T for 18 years now, and are up to 4 cell phones plus our landline. Unfortunately, that doesn’t mean we’re a valuable customer. We’ve consistently lost service for at least a week at a time, several times a year, for years now. We’ve always just chalked it up to one of the costs of being allowed to live in this uniquely beautiful location. However, this was one of our longer outages, and it took a full two weeks to get our phone line back in service. In the meantime, AT&T did not text or email me with any status updates, despite repeated requests that they do so. It hit home that the days of our landline service are probably numbered.

If you’ve never mapped out the phone system in Muir Beach, here’s

some food for thought. Our actual, copper landlines are decades old, running on poles from Panoramic through Muir Woods to a switch on Pacific (by the Pelican Inn). From there, smaller lines distribute phone service throughout Muir Beach via poles, and underground on Seacape and Starbuck. Copper, as with everything in life, degrades over time. As a result, fewer lines can support the phone signal without continued maintenance, repair, and replacement. Compounding this maintenance requirement is the fact that fewer people are choosing to use landlines, here and throughout the United States. If something goes wrong with a landline, AT&T will typically just switch a customer to an unused line that still works.

Unfortunately for Muir Beach, at some point we will find that there are fewer working lines than customers. There have long been rumblings in the telco world. As long ago as 2009, AT&T started communicating with the FCC about permission to phase out analog landline telephone service.

In 2016, AT&T sought to decommission landlines in California. Under bill AB 2395, AT&T could have discontinued landline service as long as an alternative service was available in the area. Ostensibly this would have allowed AT&T to modernize their IT infrastructure at the expense of over 10 million copper landlines in California. That bill didn’t pass, but AT&T is still declaring its

*Continued on next page*

# Short-Term Rentals

By Nina Vincent

## Silence

*Continued from previous page*

intention to end copper POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service) by 2020, arguing that digital phone service is the future of telecom.

In Illinois in 2018, AT&T ended the monthly federal subsidy for low-income landline customers, in a move intended to push landline customers to go wireless. And, now there are 20 states that have enacted telecom modernizations bills that effectively allow a legacy telephone provider to exit their landline business based on approval by the FCC.

I am all for technological advances, but given the remote nature of our location here in Muir Beach, it seems unlikely that AT&T will invest in bringing fiber optic or digital technology to our doorsteps. The pros of a landline for a community like Muir Beach are significant; a landline doesn't go down in a power outage or an internet outage (like VoIP) and it doesn't need charging (like a cell phone). So where does all this leave us in an emergency? I'm starting to miss the sound of my telephone ringing...

## Potholes

To report a road maintenance related problem, such as a pothole, broken sprinkler, malfunctioning signal, broken or missing sign, litter, graffiti, landscaping, lines and markers, etc... please use the form:

Report-a-Problem

<https://csr.dot.ca.gov/>

Years ago, and after a long hiatus from walking down Sunset Way I noticed a surprising change in the number of cars driving up and down our little dead end street. Where are they coming from? Where could they be going? I brought those observations to you then via the Beachcomber. I asked that we bring awareness to the increasing number of VRBOs that were taking over homes once inhabited by community participating folks and families. I was concerned.

Well I'm here to mention once again – with a bit more urgency in my heart – WE ARE LOSING COMMUNITY.

'Oh Nina, for goodness sake, calm down. It can't be as bad as all that, really.'

I fear it is as bad as all that. Today on my walk with Bella and Nala I counted from the end of Sunset, and including Pacific Way no less than 18 empty homes and units; homes being used as VRBOs, second homes or houses with in-law units that were once rented for long-term tenants now being used as short-term rentals.

I have not endeavored to count the number of short-term rental/VRBO/second home houses on Seacape, Ahab or Starbuck but you go ahead, and add them to the twenty homes down here where I live and then consider this:

We have a vast number of long-term community members, the folks who gave birth to so many of our beloved events: BBQs and Quilters, Bistros and buildings like the Muir Beach Community Center, who are now in their 70s and beyond. They are still

holding up so much of what keeps the word 'community' connected to the place we call Muir Beach. They are tired. They have been asking, pleading and searching for new, younger folks to step forward and keep the traditions and foundation of our community alive.

How will we do that if there is no where for new community members to live? I invite you to speak with and learn from any community members you like in both Bolinas and Stinson Beach about what happens when your community becomes a real estate cash cow. I work in Stinson Beach, I hear from those folks on a regular basis how sad they are to be living on streets with no residents. I am alarmed at how devoid of neighbors my own neighborhood street is.

Muir Beach – it is time we decide if we want to become a second home, short-term rental community or not. If not – we need to start having civil, honest, and concerned conversation about how to change the direction we are headed.

Ideas? Interest? Concerns? Comments? Please – let me know. Perhaps we can come together and brainstorm? I love this community deeply. I don't want to see it go the way of other West Marin communities. Do you?

I am not interested in fighting, pointing fingers or blaming. I am interested in great minds coming together to solve the problem we are faced with. As I say to TJ whenever I remember: It is not you and me against each other; it's you and me against the problem. Let's address it. Now. Before it's too late.

# BBQ Raffle Tickets

By Debra Allen



*Raffle ticket booth 1993, Debra Allen and children.*

Hi Neighbors:

You should have received 25 Raffle Tickets in your local boxes in early May. The tickets are \$1.00 each, and you can return them in the envelopes provided prior to the BBQ, or bring them to me in the Raffle Booth on the day of the BBQ, Sunday May 26.

If you are unable to purchase tickets, you can return the unused tickets so we can resell them. If you're not the Raffle type, but still would like to help, you might consider donating \$ (there is a place on [www.muirbeachfire.com](http://www.muirbeachfire.com) site to do that).

Now days, I am able to display the 50-100 raffle prizes in a fancy

booth, and I've got a real spinner for the tickets; but, I thought you might enjoy this photo of me in 1993 with Sandy and Thomas keeping busy by my side. Back then I had a table in the field, and I decorated a box to put tickets in. No idea where the prizes would have been, but they all got delivered, I'm certain. Anyway, thank you so much to those of you who always donate prizes and who ask to purchase more than 25 tickets; and a big thank you to the newcomers who are proving to be very generous!

[debra.allen@compass.com](mailto:debra.allen@compass.com)  
(415) 279-3751

## The Place I Want to Get Back To

The place I want to get back to  
is where  
in the pinewoods  
in the moments between  
the darkness  
and first light  
two deer  
came walking down the hill  
and when they saw me  
they said to each other, okay,  
this one is okay,  
let's see who she is  
and why she is sitting  
on the ground like that,  
so quiet, as if  
asleep, or in a dream,  
but, anyway, harmless;  
and so they came  
on their slender legs  
and gazed upon me  
not unlike the way  
I go out to the dunes and look  
and look and look  
into the faces of the flowers;  
and then one of them leaned forward  
and nuzzled my hand, and what can  
my life  
bring to me that could exceed  
that brief moment?  
For twenty years  
I have gone every day to the same  
woods,  
not waiting, exactly, just lingering.  
Such gifts, bestowed,  
can't be repeated.  
If you want to talk about this  
come to visit. I live in the house  
near the corner, which I have named  
Gratitude.

—Mary Oliver

submitted by diana

# New Flooring Installed in Muir Beach Community Center

Events at the Community Center should be a bit quieter if claims by the manufacturer of the new floor prove true. The recently installed floor, a vinyl product, should dampen sound by 30%. It feels soft underfoot. As you walk, the flooring absorbs pressure like a sponge and almost feels bouncy. Even better, the maker of Acura Max Plank boasts that it cleans easily and never need waxing, is scratch, stain and fade resistant, and is waterproof.

The floor, mottled brown with gold highlights, was recommended by CSD Director Victoria Hamilton-Rivers and was the first choice of the CSD's Facility Committee and District Manager Mary Halley. It was paid for from Measure A – county funds that must be used for recreation purposes. The cost will be \$30,000 or less.

There is also new porcelain tile in the bathrooms and new carpet on the stairs, the balcony, and on the

riser that is used by musical groups. All are in warm browns. Tiles in the fireplace area were installed by John John Sward, and the detail on the fascia are handmade tiles from Mendocino.

Interestingly, the old tile floor did not have to be removed, as a floating floor was installed over the existing floor.

Some thirty years ago, the Muir Beach Community Center had a floor covered in a sheet vinyl material in a neutral grey color. At that time a committee existed to make decisions about the community center, according to Marilyn Laatsch, who was on that committee. It was decided that a new floor was necessary, and Marilyn took on the task of researching what would best serve the community as flooring. For three years Marilyn researched by visiting other community centers, speaking with various flooring companies and

their experts, and reading materials about the best flooring in public buildings. Nearly everyone she talked with said that wood floors were impossible, because women's stiletto high heels ruined the wood beyond repair.

Finally, Marilyn found tile that would match the terra cotta on the hearth. She brought samples to Bistro, to CSD meetings, and to community gatherings. A consensus formed and the ceramic floors were installed by a workman known as "the best in the county". They were beautiful, according to Marilyn. And the floors remained that way as long as the community members did the cleaning. But eventually, cleaners were hired to keep the floors clean, and that brought a change in the flooring. The cleaners used a product that turned the floors to a dark brown the first time it was used, and they remained that way up to the present.

– Anne Jeschke



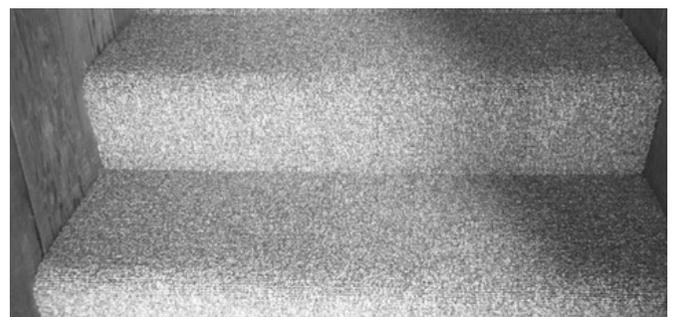
*New flooring.*



*Bathroom tile.*



*Old flooring.*



*Carpeting.*

# Mustard Blooms, Heather Fades

By Paul Jeschke

Spring is busting out all over Muir Beach. Trees and flowers in vibrant yellow, red and lavender brighten paths and hillsides. This brilliant display of nature's beauty thrills the senses just as the spectacular heather bloom is making a final stand.

Let's pay tribute to this year's heather crop. Heavy winter rains produced perfect conditions for the bluish-red blooms that cascade through the upper portion of the former Banducci Flower Farm. Now more than 60 years old and untended for many years, the heather put on an especially spectacular display this winter.

Amadero Banducci planted half a dozen varieties in the mid to late 50's. He and his crew, which included Cuco Alcala, carefully pruned the plants every three years. The result was a blossom-choked stalk that was popular in floral bouquets. Banducci sold the blooms at the wholesale flower mart in San Francisco.

"They were as soft as a baby's bottom," Banducci recalled. "Now they feel like a porcupine because they haven't been cared for and there is no longer a market for it."

Since the National Park Service bought the property, it has done extensive restoration work on the Redwood Creek watershed near the picnic grounds and Frank Valley road. With the exception of maintaining the Heather Cutoff trail, little has been done to the rest of the property and the heather is showing the neglect.



"The plants are all dried out and woody," Banducci said. "It's a field of stumps in there. You need a compass to navigate." Monterey Pines have also taken over large portions of the former flower farm.

While the heather is showing its age, it will be around for a while, Banducci said. It has deep roots and good soil and will continue to bloom for many winters to come to the delight of locals and visitors who frequently stop along Highway 1 to photograph the colorful display.

Winter rains and temperatures have a big effect on the flowering season. Some years the heather is in full bloom in late November and occasionally not until February. "You used to be able to put the stalks in water and they would stay fresh for a long time," Banducci said. "Now they're dried out and the blossoms drop quickly."

## ON THE COVER

*Eyeshrooms*

Watercolor Pen on Paper  
5.5" x 8.5"

Stella Eigsti



Stella is a Muir Beach artist who likes to have fun with all the locals at the beach, and mushroom hunting with her Dad is a big part of this.

Stella says "You have to have a good eye for mushroom hunting, like Amadeo Banducci." This watercolor was inspired by her eye for finding mushrooms with her Dad.

Stella took art classes in 5th grade and has chosen art for her elective since Kindergarten.