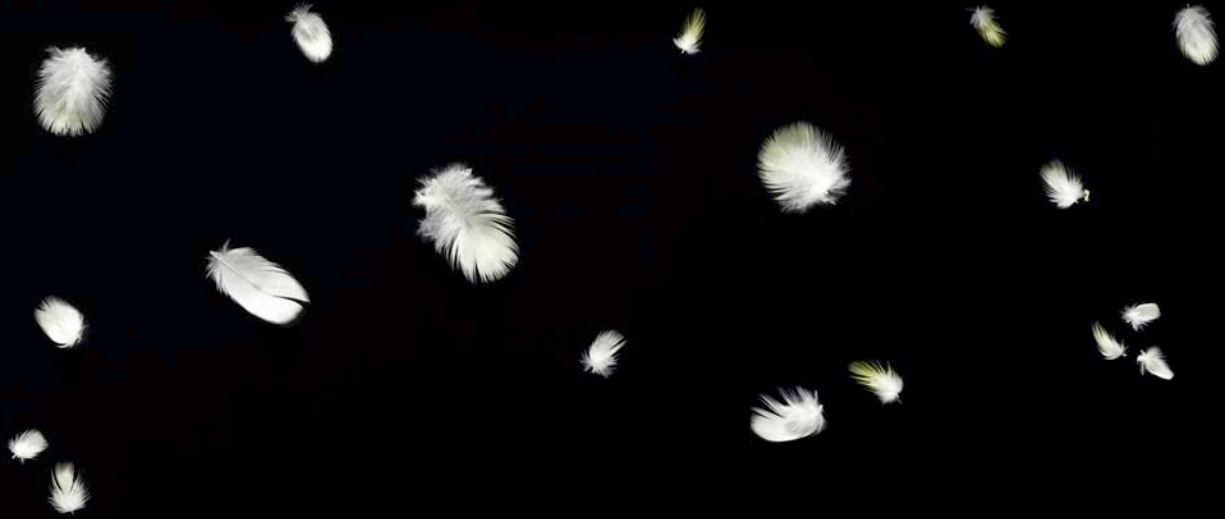


BEACHCOMBER

SINCE 1946



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2023



We congratulate Dean Sward for graduating from Mill Valley Middle School, pictured here with grandpa Amadeo Banducci.
–Angelina Banducci



Congratulations to Zora Paul! She graduated from MVMS in June and is headed to Tam High. Go Hawks!
–April Randle



Carlotta graduated from Marin Horizon School and is heading to Tam High.
– Beatrice Chorinsky



Camila Pares graduated from Tamalpais High School and will be headed to UC Santa Cruz in the fall.
– Laura Van Amburgh



Ronan Corbit graduated from 8th grade from MVMS and Belle Corbit graduated 5th grade from Strawberry Point Elementary.
–Kasey Corbit



Bea Littler graduated this spring from MVMS and is excited to join her sister Evie at Tam High in the fall after spending her summer coaching the sailing camp at the Sausalito yacht club.
–Simon and family

Sara Moss graduated from the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, with a double major in sociology and environmental studies and decision making. In the fall, she will begin a study abroad program in Cape Town, South Africa focused on human rights and multiculturalism.
– Debbie Findling



Maud Utstein graduated cum laude with a major in Communications from the College of Wooster in Ohio this past May.
–Amy Utstein

A Turtle Takes a Walk

Once upon a time Redwood Creek teemed with fish, birds, frogs and logs, offering a sunny spot for many western pond turtles.

Alas, the last turtle was seen years ago but when designing Big Lagoon, ponds and logs were added for them as we awaited a clutch of eggs to turn up needing care. Just north of here one was exposed during road work and a team moved them to a special hatching facility at the SFZoo to grow into a size less vulnerable to otter, raccoon and toads. At memorable release events they came to live in lower Redwood Creek. Crews checked in on them often but after a bit of time we couldn't find Turtle 7 or 9. sigh! But we were happy that all the others seemed to be doing well, growing and riding out the storm waters.

Just a month ago, Muir Woods volunteer Charlotte was doing a rove and carefully checking in on the redwood-y scene. She thought a log jam up in Cathedral Grove looked a tad different than the previous week, looked more closely and asked others if they, too, saw a turtle sunning itself on an extended branch over the water. All agreed: a turtle. She excitedly told the rangers and Aquatic Ecologist Darren Fong made a visit and determined it was Turtle 9!

What a journey from Muir Beach up the creek nearly four miles over the years to find a home in the habitat enhanced in the 2019 creek work! We can hardly wait to learn Turtle 7's story!

And, we eagerly are at work on SHE2 (salmon habitat enhancement phase 2) with all the hopeful possibilities for baby salmon, turtles, salamanders and us!

SHE2 motto: Best Wishes li'l Fishes....we hope you grow up with turtles!

A message from Charlotte: one never knows what one will see on a walk, but the more you look and the closer you pay attention wonders will await you!

—Mia Monroe

The *Beachcomber*, our neighborhood news, is published quarterly by and for residents, friends, family and former residents of Muir Beach. Published since 1946 (on and off), circulation 170 (more or less).

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Contribute your essays, poems, stories, photographs, artwork, announcements, reviews – anything that celebrates Muir Beachers 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 except for readability and general appearance.

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ON THE COVER

Reverie #3

from the *Invocation* series

Mixed media collage (photograph,
botanical drawings, text, tissue
paper and feathers)

Mary Daniel Hobson

©2021

www.marydanielhobson.com

2023 MUIR BEACH HOLIDAY ARTS FAIR REGISTRATION INFORMATION

It's time to register for our Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair. It is open to all Muir Beach residents before allowing non-residents to apply. This is a community event that gives back financially to the community for community events. We hope that if you don't want to participate as an artist, that you'll volunteer to help make this community event a success. Volunteer information will be available closer to the event.

Fair Dates:

Set up: Fri., Dec. 1st (9-8)
Fair: Sat., Dec. 2nd (10-5)
Sun., Dec. 3rd (10-4) (and then break down)

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

Entrance Rules: The work must be your creation. You do not have to manufacture it yourself. For example, if you make a piece of pottery you do not have to have fired it yourself. You can use found objects in your art and can design the sweater but do not have to knit it yourself.

Cost: \$75/table. Two people can share a table if they don't think they have enough items to sell on their own.

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

Registration: Please register by email ONLY to muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com by **August 31**, including the following information: your name, contact information (phone number, MB address and email), a short statement about your work, and a picture or two of it. We also need a check for \$75 made out to Laurie Piel, and dropped in her mailbox at 9 Starbuck by **September 15**.

Acceptance: First come, first served. There is only 1 table available to each Muir Beach resident. Placement within the Center will be made based on availability and genre.

MB Organizations: Organizations that support Muir Beach such as the MBVFA, Quilters and the Garden Club are offered 1 free table. Please register. Please note if you would like a second table, the decision of availability of a second table will be made closer to the event.

If you are new to the Beach or missed the fair last year, please take a look at our website: <https://www.muirbeachartsfair.com> and take a peek at all of the wonderful folks we had in 2022.

—Laurie Piel, muirbeachartsfair@gmail.com
www.muirbeachartsfair.com

Neighborhood thank yous...

I would like to say thank you to Mike Moore for helping out (more than once) with a fallen and blocking the road tree. Thanks for keeping our roads and community members safe.

—Angelina

Mike's BBQ Wine Booth "bar top" with Lonna's inscription deserves a moment. We loved both, of course. The high table was appreciated by many, we could see it from the Wine Booth...

—Sarah Nesbitt



Free Lending Library box



Steven Moss and Debbie Findling at 75 Sunset Way invite neighbors to take a book to read and/or bring a gently-used book to donate at their blue Free Lending Library box, located midway down the community path from Sunset to Pacific Way.



THE SCARF: In The Time of
Crash and Dash an Act of Kindness

A lovely scarf, a remembrance from a sun filled day in Healdsburg, was gone. We were not sure where it was lost but Lucy had it when we left the restaurant. I remember the quick, skilled movement of fold and loop as she placed it around her neck. It wasn't till late the next afternoon that we discovered the scarf was missing. In retracing our steps we remembered that we had stopped to pick up the mail the night before on the way home. Oh well!



As we started out that evening we drove down to the mailboxes and there it was. Carefully hung from a mailbox handle. An act of kindness, a shout of civility, an affirmation of the fact that I live in a special place.



Thank you kind soul,
—Lucy Vincent and Richard Weiner



Global Voices in Contemporary Photobooks

An exhibition at the San Francisco Center for the Book
July 15 - October 1, 2023

This exhibition offers a wonderful chance to experience the range and depth of Datz Press publications, which are made with exquisite attention to detail and design. My book *Offerings* will be there along with books by Bryant Austin, Jane Baldwin, Barbara Bosworth, Linda Connor, Lonnie Graham, Sangyon Joo, Alyssa Fujita Karoui, Younghea Kim, Sal Taylor Kydd, Rhonda Lashley Lopez, Minny Lee, Wayne Levin, Amanda Marchand, Chris McCaw, Alyssa Minahan, Hendrik Paul and more. You can learn more about their publications at datzpress.com.

San Francisco Center for the Book is located at 375 Rhode Island Street, San Francisco, CA. The exhibit is open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10am - 5pm. Learn more at sfcfb.org



Mary Daniel Hobson, Offerings (Special Edition, Datz Press, ©2019)
The special edition includes a book covering 25 years of mixed media photography, plus a print, a feather, an accordion book of Milagros, a map and more all housed in a black box with gold lettering.
Learn more at marydanielhobson.com



THE OTHER JOHN MUIR

A tale of survival: 6 VW bugs over 800,000 miles

-Durand Begault with Charlene Modena

We of course know John Muir as a legendary figure in Americana, a name after which many things are named honorifically, including a national monument, a housing division, a beach, the Muir Fleabane (*Erigeron muiri*), and in Atlanta, a “General Muir” burger. But some of us here at the beach also hold diverse and possibly fuzzy memories of a John Muir other than the famous naturalist. Yes, I’m speaking of John Muir (b. 1918, d. 1977), the author of “HOW TO KEEP YOUR VOLKSWAGEN ALIVE. A Manual for the Compleat Idiot” (first copyright 1969, still in print). Lavishly illustrated and actually useful, he wrote that “While the levels of logic of the human entity are many and varied, your car operates on one simple level, and it’s up to you to understand its trip...its Karma depends on your desire to make and keep it- ALIVE”. And despite John Muir’s well-intentioned advice, one wonders if the Volkswagen beetle in fact contributed anything to the Karma and survival of its owners, who I have discovered are numerous in Muir Beach. In fact, the alternate title of the following memoir could be “*Why Am I Alive?*” after driving a Volkswagen Beetle for so many years and for hundreds of thousands of grueling, danger-filled miles. Remember when driving was an adventure? When you might try and repair your own car? Beetle owners were cursed in this manner.

By the way! This missive will not be about the esteemed Volkswagen Bus. It deserves a separate article from its owners, past and present. Currently the darling of van life photos and a yearly tease from Volkswagen about a US release of an electric version (you can get a camper in Europe called a “California”, but you can’t import it to California), I’m certain there are equally strange and terrifying stories for the Bus, the Karmann Ghia, the Thing, and whatever else. This is a bug story.

When I was a kid in the ‘60s-‘70s, our neighbor had a ‘55 “split window” bug where the left and right turn signals were little arms that popped out and flashed behind the windows. My parents owned two cars: a ‘58 bug and a ‘62 bug. I recall the ‘58 came with no gas gauge; when the tank was empty and the car sputtered, you used your foot to switch to the emergency tank for an extra liter. When I became eligible for highway accidents (i.e., I had received my driving license) I got a ‘64 gray bug which within a year I drove into another car on 7th and Ashby in Berkeley. The body was trashed but the engine and transmission were serviceable, and so my father and I, being thrifty (broke), found a rusted pinkish ‘61 body without those essential components abandoned in a field near Felton. We paid \$150 and had the two cars grafted together...a frankenbug was born!



Charlene with her 1971 edition of John Muir’s life-saving repair manual (photo by Beth Begault).



Left: My ‘61 frankenbug somewhere on Tioga Pass. Right: I couldn’t resist trading up my ‘69 for a ‘69.

Continued on next page

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I had good intentions for this car that were never realized. The red paint was sorely faded, exposing primer and rust spots. I would occasionally attack the rust spots with sandpaper because I intended to go to Earl Scheib someday (“I’ll paint any car for \$29.95”). One person I know got a Scheib paint job and wondered why there were lumps on top of the car—turned out they had painted over the insect parts that were on top. There was also the matter of those 12”x12” paint flakes flying off and sticking to the windshield. Due to my earnest sanding, the car ended up looking like it had acne or a contagious rash. At that point I figured a paint job wasn’t worth it.

So you could replace parts fairly easy on Volkswagens (note the perky gray right fender on the frankenbug) and a great place to get those parts was the “pick your own part store” lot. Cash-strapped bug owners were let loose in a riotous fenced compound (complete with a sadly chained junkyard dog) and directed to the area where mountains of wrecked Beetles lay in wait for stripping/recycling. These lots were always an eye opener to the perils of accidents and mishaps, with a sea of broken windshields, crumpled car bodies, burn marks, etc. One would stumble on various personal items in the wrecks during a search for a rear-view mirror or a glove box door. Here was a crumpled bag of Beer Nuts. There was a single tennis shoe, and a pool cue. How were these items connected to the moment of impact and mishap? I found out indirectly that Beetles were really good at protecting a driver when they rolled over (say over an embankment) but were horrible to be rear-ended in. A small bump would compress the bumper so you couldn’t open the engine compartment. A rear-end collision over 10 mph would actually cause the seat to fly off the flimsy attachment rail, with you still in it. And the steering wheel didn’t collapse--I guess to keep the

driver from going directly into the gas tank by benefit of impalement?

And...the bug was incredibly easy to hotwire and otherwise steal, even temporarily. Charlene Modena’s ‘62 beetle (see photo) was stolen not once, but twice in San Francisco. A handy mechanic at C&R in Tam Valley (still kicking!) solved the hot wire problem and missing ignition by providing two wires with alligator clips for her use. Problem solved!

A then 17-year-old Beth Begault left her old-but-new-to-her bug for a half hour visit at a friend’s house, and the bug went bye bye....a week later recovered, stripped for parts...but with the key helpfully still in the ignition.

My frankenbug was missing a front bumper, so the license plate was attached with a bungee cord. The radio compartment was a cavernous hole, making for some natural air conditioning on the highway. The emergency brake spring kept popping out, and to activate the brake I would wedge a chunk of wood underneath. I kept a brick behind the seat to put in front of the tire. San Francisco parking was exciting to say the least. As the brake system would predictably fail over time (shame on me), there was this exciting feeling of the brake pedal getting progressively squishy, and the car “scraping” to a halt. I tried to use the Muir book to repair my own brakes (a primitive shoe caliper pressured by an oily fluid, a design dating from Roman chariots) and was rewarded with significant cost savings and by the discovery that it was possible to drive from Lake Tahoe to San Francisco without brakes, using only the emergency brake. True story. So much of the car was “analog”--the brakes and the

Continued on next page



Left; Charlene pictured in her ‘62 beetle somewhere near Corte Madera in the ‘80s. Right: After 8 trips across the US and Canada, to Maine and back, the momentous occasion when Charlene’s odometer clicked over to 0.4 miles, which would have read 100,000.04 if the Beetle odometer could display numbers over 99,999.

VW Bugs

Continued from page 7

steering system were mechanically connected, not voltages sent to a digital processor as with modern cars.

Do you recall tire “recaps”? These death tickets could be installed on your worn-out VW tires for \$10 each at Sears Roebuck auto shop. They were good for about 15,000-20,000 miles and then would peel off in chunks as you drove, making you eligible for a date with your trusty VW jack, a primitive tool that relied on a 6-inch piece of metal contacting the ground and a spring lever-release device designed by Leonardo da Vinci’s dumber brother Moe. The ground was rarely flat, making for exciting deviations from perpendicular. And it could bend the frame of the car itself.

At some point the gas line broke, which leaked into the floorboard and eventually ate away the rubber mat, so I had a view of the road as I drove. A thrifty mechanic offered to weld it underwater (gas + sparks = not good). A helpful neighbor who knew of John Muir the author made an external gas line underneath the car, out of a bent pipe and a couple of aircraft clamps. A luxury feature of this car was interior heating, activated by turning a knob, especially helpful since the radio was missing. The hot air came from something called the “heater box” which was near the bottom of the engine and the exhaust pipe. That eventually succumbed to rusty holes, which allowed the tail pipe to feed exhaust and carbon monoxide directly into the car. After figuring out why I was getting so sleepy on the road, even in the middle of the day, an old sleeping bag proved to be a better alternative for providing warmth to driver and passenger.

When I put too much weight on the horsehair padded rear seat (I was hauling around a 140-pound fender Rhodes electric piano, which had 73 keys...it wouldn’t have fit with 74, let alone 88), the springs would sometimes short out the 6-volt battery underneath that was barely powerful enough for a golf cart. The electrical system was truly amazing: If you turned the headlights and the windshield wipers on AT THE SAME TIME, the lights would dim, and the wipers would slow to *lento* from *molto andante*. In snowy situations I drove with my arm out the window, using a glove to clear a modicum of visibility. Anyway, with a dead battery you just got folks to push it, and you dumped the clutch in second gear. A miracle car.

Charlene has a blood-curdling story about a forced-choice, life-or-death drive across the Golden Gate Bridge with her 6-volt bug. She was innocently heading to work during a massive wind and rainstorm when the heavens (practically) opened up and screamed the following challenge: “HEADLIGHTS, WINDSHIELD WIPERS, OR RADIO?”

YOU CAN ONLY HAVE TWO OUT OF THREE WITH YOUR 6-VOLTS!!!!” She chose headlights and windshield wipers but had to leave her radio off, thereby missing the traffic advisory for small cars to STAY OFF THE BRIDGE in the storm. She noticed that every other car stayed far away from her, though she had no idea why without the ability to hear the warnings, leading to a humbling epiphany after she survived that particular drive from hell: “I need a different car.”

I also recall that with all 6 of my bugs, the engines were good for about 60,000-80,000 miles max, at which point it would “suck a valve”, meaning the car would basically die wherever you happened to be because the engine was ruined... for me on the Bay Bridge at midnight, or on the 101, and almost always at night. One tow truck ride, a week without wheels, and thousands of dollars later, the engine would be fixed, and I could drive again with death on my proverbial shoulder.

So my father eventually bought a used ‘69 which I envied and desired unnaturally, given my life with frankenbug. As a young adult I thought I deserved this car with 120,000 miles on it that had a working heater and a gas gauge. Sure enough he sold it to me, and I put another 300,000 miles on it. I did discover that the heater worked so well, I melted a passenger’s heel off their shoe. It was stolen for a detour to Tijuana and returned to me by the San Diego police, now missing its radio and various parts: natural air conditioning once again! At one point I was told to replace the fuel pump, and I complied. But suddenly, instead of running out of gas after 10.2 miles, I was running out every 6 miles (the gas gauge didn’t really work). The mechanic took a look at the gas tank and it turned out it had imploded- its sides had sucked in thanks to the new fuel pump. When this ‘69 finally broke its frame after 320,000 miles (I had now taken several trips to the moon and back, in terms of total Beetle mileage), my mechanic found an exact used clone of this beauty and sold it to me for \$2000 (he was waiting for the next valve to suck, repeat customers being his life blood) and I put another 200,000 miles on that one (see photo).

By 1997, I was done. I sold the car to my sister and got a Toyota. And I still wonder, all these years later...Why am I still alive after 35 years of Beetles? But more importantly: I couldn’t have done it without you, John Muir!

Ps: Have a VW bug story or photo to share? Write me at dbegault@outlook.com and possibly keep the glories of the Volkswagen Beetle alive in the hearts and minds of our neighbors via a future edition of the *Beachcomber*.

Critter Report: Peregrines, River Otters, and P36

By Dave MacKenzie

As we pass through spring and summer, many Muir Beach critters are nesting, denning, and searching for new territories.

Those speeding meteors of the avian world, Muir Beach's Peregrine Falcons, put on quite a show recently. Four chicks successfully fledged on our local cliffs, an event that has undoubtedly repeated itself for thousands of years. Several MB'rs commented to me about the loud screaming "fights" which could be heard about our community. Those lucky enough to watch any details of this activity witnessed the world's fastest bird species practicing (as the juveniles do) to be fast powerful hunters. In fact, Peregrines are the fastest animal of any kind, and have been clocked at up to 242 miles per hour in a stoop (powered fast dive, straight down toward their prey). This is almost half the speed of a commercial airliner! Typically they will dive at a passing shorebird, but even the big Western Gulls are sometimes taken. With other successful nests in our area this year, there may be as many as nine or ten juvenile Peregrines from the Marin coast who will be searching out new territories in the fall migration. Look fast! (And learn the sound of their "scream". This is often the best way to detect a Peregrine).

In mid-May, Ernst Karel detected a pair of River Otters traveling up Redwood Creek. He and I had set up a trail camera near the Hwy 1 bridge as part of the ongoing River Otter Ecology Project. We were anxious to see if otters were successfully reproducing in the watershed this year. However, the two animals recorded were not likely new pups as pups would still be learning how to swim at that date. Yes, otter pups have to be taught to swim by their moms, and sometimes other 'helper' otters, as that critical skill is not innate! At this point, we do not have any specific evidence of pupping. It has been several years since we had any new family of otters in Muir Beach. Maybe the low salmon counts are part of the cause. We will keep watching through the summer. If anyone sees, or thinks they saw, otters in the creek (or at the beach), please let me know! In the past they have been observed far up into Muir Woods.

This spring Muir Beach had a special visitor named P36, a young mountain lion which was GPS-collared

near Santa Rosa. P36 apparently crossed the western flanks of Mt. Tam, then Frank Valley Road and Diaz Ridge and travelled to the headlands of the Golden Gate, before turning around and heading back north to Sonoma County. During this well-documented route over a fourteen month period, P36 also visited parts of Mill Valley and the entire Tiburon peninsula, plus much of the coast up to Bodega Bay. The research team from the *Living with Lions Project*, headed by Dr. Quinton Martins, received daily location readings from P36's GPS radio collar to document this journey. Apparently P36 is just a yearling searching for new digs. Stymied by the awesome water gap of the Golden Gate, P36 turned back north. This yearling has to avoid the area of western Sonoma County, dominated by a mature male cougar, P31, which might kill P36 if it finds him in its territory. It seems to me that this territorial searching by young male lions might account for the many sightings of cougars in Muir Beach over the years. They were just passing through!

Spittlebug in Muir Beach

Dr. Vinton Thompson wandered into our yard in 2018 and asked to take samples of a spittlebug located on our Monterey Cypress. It turns out that we have a new spittlebug found in Muir Beach and other parts of the Bay Area. His research paper was published just recently, and for those who are interested I have provided the link below:

[VINTON THOMPSON New San Francisco Bay Area spittlebug of the genus Clastoptera Germar, 1839 \(Hemiptera: Cercopoidea: Clastopteridae\) makes unique mineral-crusted spittles](#)

VINTON THOMPSON, Division of Invertebrate Zoology, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, New York, 10024-5102, U.S.A. [Email: vtompson@mcny.edu](mailto:vtompson@mcny.edu)

– Leslie Riehl

From Sarah Nesbitt:

A VINTAGE YEAR

This year, the MBVFA BBQ Wine Booth was given extra love. Thanks to our generous wine donors, the dedicated servers who signed up, the reliable set-up team, all of our committed volunteers and of course, our unique community and annual visitors who made this important fundraising day more memorable than ever. We are grateful! Vintage Champagne and sparkles forever to Denise for all her help once again and to our wine donors, Brenda and Richard Kohn, Barbara and Jim Herwitz, Thierry Lovato (merci beaucoup - encore), Kathryn Stebner, Mike and Janet Moore, Nikola and Joseph Tede, Robin Terra and Tim Crosby, Kerry and Rob Wynn, Norbert Schnadt, Vanessa Justice (always a surprise on the day) and Dylan Kennedy for helping select wines on behalf of Simon and Vanessa Littler.

Cheers! Until next time...



Morning shift with Lonna and Suzanne, photo submitted by Denise Lamott.



Lotta flew in from London to work with Nicki on final shift, sales soared!



Sandor dealt with his jet lag at closing time, all jolly good.



Kathy and Sarah mid-afternoon, sunshine promised in each pour.

Photos by Sara Nesbitt



Norbert, Trish and Gary set up bright and early and stayed the distance.



Mike Moore crafted a beautiful table for us, which inspired inscriptions.



BBQ Wrap Up

The true community spirit of Muir Beach was alive and well and on full display at the **49th Annual Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's Barbecue** on Memorial Weekend, Sunday, May 28. Neighbors of all ages rallied together for the weeks leading up to the barbecue to help make it a big success. From clearing and cleaning up the event site during the Saturday work parties to baking homemade treats, making signs, ordering supplies, selling merch, and tickets, parking cars, slinging beers, pouring wine, prepping and serving food and so much more... this tremendous undertaking requires dozens of Muir Beachers chipping in and being a part of the greatest annual fundraiser in Marin. All told we raised over \$35,000 for the MBVFD.

There are so many people to thank for this herculean effort, including the MBVFD firefighters and **Chief Chris Gove**; the MBVFA Board - **Paul Brannan** (treasurer, tickets, all things \$\$), **Lisa Eigsti** (merchandise), **Brenda Kohn**, **Ellen Littweller** (secretary, barbecue sauce and beans), **Nina Vincent** (volunteer coordinator), **Frank Schoenfeld** (tickets), **Eli Pearlman** (kid zone), **Deb Ketchum** and **Michael Kaufman**. Huge thanks to our sponsors **Recology**, **Lagunitas Beer**, **Ball** (recyclable aluminum beer cups) **Greg Kidd** (chicken), **Gabe Leis** and **Joe's Taco Lounge** (burritos for all the Saturday work parties and salsa for the veggie meals), **Green Gulch**

Continued on page 23-24



BBQ photos by Julie Smith, Laurie Piel, Denise Lamott, Victor Chiong.

The Muir Beach Grass Band - *A Brief History*

Around the beginning of 2021, Muir Beach resident Don Piotter received a banjo from Amazon, except he didn't order one. He contacted them and was told they don't take returns. Don doesn't play music, but he knew I played keyboards and guitar and presented the banjo to me. He didn't know that I have always been a little "banjo curious."

Top row from the left: Mark Pandapas, Micheal Caulfield, Bob Bowyer

Middle row: Renee Boeche, Robin Terra, Sandor Hatvany, Bryce Bowyer

Bottom row: Paul Tollefson, Jane Bowyer



Bryce Bowyer on drums, Bob Bowyer on Banjo



Mark Pandapas



Bob, Paul

A couple months later I was walking my dog on Sunset and met Mark Pandapas who was walking his dog. We had seen each other at Muir Beach events before, but we never really talked. I told him that I had just started to

learn the banjo and he said he had started to learn the bass a couple years before. I proposed we form a band, and in that moment The Muir Beach Bluegrass Band was formed. I proposed a few songs (like the theme from the Beverly Hillbillies of course) and I set a date for our first session a few months later.

My son Bryce, who was born and grew up in Muir Beach, was already playing rock music with me and some other amateur musicians about every month at my house just for fun. I didn't want to play for an audience. I embraced the Irish concept of session music: musicians

and music-lovers coming together to enjoy playing music in their homes or at the local pub just for the joy of playing music and socializing. My wife Renee and my mother Jane, who lived at Muir Beach with us on the weekends, were also participating in some of those home rock sessions. They agreed to join in the bluegrass band on vocals and percussion. Irish national Micheal Caulfield lived across the street from me on Seacape and was also participating in those rock sessions on guitar. Unknown to me, he also played the mandolin. He joined us. That summer I asked Vocalist Robin Terra from Sunset, who was also participating in some of those rock sessions, to join the band and she agreed. A few months later Mark learned that Sandor Hatvany who lived on Starbuck played the violin. He was totally in. We were now a full fledged bluegrass band!

Continued on page 15



Top left: Jane Bowyer



Left: Paul Tollefson, Charles Kingbury, Sandor Hatvany

Below: Bob Bowyer



Renee Boeche, Mark, Charles, Robin



MUIR BEACH VOLUNTEER FIRE NEWS

On Saturday July 29th Muir Beach firefighters Brad Eigsti, Chris Vallee and David Taylor participated in a wildland firefighting training exercise organized by Marin County Fire Department. This was a controlled burn arranged to train the West Marin volunteer departments.

We worked with Bolinas Fire. Other departments included Stinson Beach, Inverness, and Nicasio.

The usual training opportunities are often not available to us as they are held during on weekdays when we all work. It was great to get hands on

instructions from senior fire service personnel and work with our peers and colleagues from the coast. It is certainly different to work in thick smoke and hot flames.

The controlled burn took place on the Dolcini Ranch adjacent to the Hicks Valley firehouse. The cows were quite interested in all of us at first and we learned that cow dung burns very well.

-David Taylor



Grass Band

Continued from page 13

Later that year Micheal told us he was moving back to Ireland. It was a great loss. Luckily I found Mill Valley vocalist and mandolin player Paul Tollefson who fit right in. Somehow Laurie Piel found out what we were doing and offered to have us play at the Muir Beach 2021 Xmas Faire. Our band had been together for less than a year and we had a blast.

Renee and I both retired in January 2022 after 32 years as emergency room physicians. We now had a lot more time to spend playing music. Our band played at my retirement party at the Travis Marina bar overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge that Spring. We opened for The 85's, a legendary Mill Valley cover band and frequent appearances at the Muir Beach BBQ.

Then in the summer of 2022 Sandor suddenly moved back to the United Kingdom. Another tremendous loss. Mark lobbied for long time Muir Beach resident Charles Kingsbury (Chas) to join the group on guitar and vocals. He was a great fit and amended our band name to just The Muir Beach Grass Band. The name fit. We play a style of Bluegrass music labeled "New Grass": songs that originate from other musical genres but are played with traditional bluegrass instruments.

Laurie Piel invited us to play again at the 2022 Xmas Faire. Then this Spring Sandor emailed me that he was returning for the Muir Beach BBQ and wanted to have a reunion with the band. I arranged for an event at the Pelican Inn on the Wednesday following the Muir Beach BBQ. We were all thrilled. With Laurie

Piel's help I approached the Pelican Inn manager Noel and proposed that I start "The Muir Beach Society." He agreed that roughly once a month on a Friday evening I could organize live music. Muir Beach has an English pub and now that pub has session music. The Muir Beach Grass Band played at the first Muir Beach Society gathering in July. We were joined by Mill Valley resident and Emmy nominated multi-instrumentalist Jan Stevens.

In August, The Muir Syndicate played a mix of jazz fusion, rock, punk and blues featuring Muir Beach resident Kathryn Stebner on vocals, Mill Valley guitarist Craig Herzog, San Rafael bassist Chris Boateright, Bryce Bowyer on drums, Jan Stevens, and I played Keyboards, guitar and banjo. Another Muir Beach Society gathering will occur again in October and I hope to see you all there!

—Bob Bowyer



FROM THE NET, MUIR BEACH VOLLEYBALL REPORT.

Thursday night Volleyball is back in full Swings, Bumps and Spikes. Come on out, join your Muir Beach neighbors and get your Serve on.

Games start every Thursday around 7:30 and go until the last game. Hard rain usually cancels the evening fun.

The last game is played to 21 and is generally a "must win" contest !

Ages 14 and Up. All experience levels are welcome.

Games can be moderately competitive with a lot of spirit and laughter.

Non-Players can sit by the fire, enjoy your favorite beverage, cheer and/or heckle.

Free Beer and snacks may be provided ... come find out.

—Brad Eigsti



Thank you Muir Beach Disaster Council Co-Leaders, Robin Terra and Susannah Kennedy

by **Liz Salin**

Robin and Susannah have been serving as co-leaders of the Muir Beach Disaster Council (MBDC) for the past 2 years. The MBDC coordinates 15 neighborhood liaisons who provide a link to information about disaster preparedness to their neighbors. The Council works with MB Volunteer Fire Department chief Chris Gove, Marin County disaster councils, and Green Gulch disaster council lead, Thiemo Blank to be ready for optimal response to potential disasters of wildfire, earthquake or flooding. This is grass roots community at its best - organizing to educate and empower neighbors to be ready to protect themselves, their families, and neighbors.

During their tenure, Susannah and Robin have solidified the neighborhood liaison group by having regular monthly radio drills and meetings. They helped create the first Muir Beach Evacuation Drill in coordination with our MB fire department and county fire and disaster officials. They've spearheaded updated radio purchases, shared helpful information via Beachcomber articles and flyers, instituted a WhatsApp liaison network, and met with other West Marin coastal radio experts and community disaster personnel. In September, liaison Kerry Wynn and a second to-be-determined partner will take the helm. We're in very capable and resourceful hands with our new in-coming leadership.

Robin Terra has lived full time in Muir Beach for the past 6 years but was recruited about 9 years ago to become a neighborhood liaison by founding MBDC leader Barbara Piotter. Although Robin was then only a part time resident, with Barbara's enthusiasm about how resident volunteerism benefits the whole community, she couldn't say no.

Barbara Piotter laid the foundational work by actively making connections throughout Marin County and beyond, making sure Muir Beach had the needed supplies if/when we became temporarily isolated during a disaster. Through coordination with other communities in Marin—as well as county and state disaster preparedness groups, Robin and Susannah have continued that tradition and the MBDC now has a large support network to rely on.



Susannah Kennedy and Robin Terra - both will continue to serve as neighborhood liaisons. Photo by Rob Wynn

Although disasters are serious business, Robin enjoys the drills, meetings, and classes as a fun way to develop skills and get to know each other better as a connected and resourceful community. She embraced becoming more active including taking part in drills and simulations with the fire department. She vividly remembers a disaster drill where people were assigned to play a role as an injured resident. One participant was a 12-year-old boy—when she asked him about himself and his 'injuries,' he answered: "I'm a 45-year-old woman with a head injury." Everyone burst out in laughter.

After the Disaster Council emerged from the COVID shut down, Susannah Kennedy was recruited and she and Robin became co-leaders, taking over from Kasey Corbit. Susannah joined after moving to Muir Beach in 2020. She found it a gift to meet and get to know neighbors casually through her role. Knowing a little bit about each other means an automatic connection that can be extended to offering information about upcoming preparedness events and relaying unusual information as needed i.e. flooding, or that smoke cited is actually a controlled burn. "We are a friendly, easy and now well-connected group," she says.

Robin and Susannah describe the importance of inviting connection and offering a sense of security. Neighbors can then more easily problem solve because they know each other and have worked together before an emergency happens.

Reminder: Looking for one more neighborhood liaison member (for Pacific Way)

Thanks again for your leadership and reminding us of the possibilities of solidifying community by working together.

Thank you to our team of dedicated Muir Beach Disaster Council Neighborhood Liaisons:

Liz Salin	Denise Lamott
Danny Hobson	Nikola Tede
Alexis Chase	Nicki Clark
Robin Terra	Shawn Roberts
Susannah Kennedy	
Timothy Hinkle	Thiemo Blank,
Steve Somers	Green Gulch
Skip Rudolf	Disaster Lead
Kerry Wynn	
Sarah Nesbitt	Chris Gove,
Barbara Piotter	Muir Beach Fire Chief



(Right) Muir Beach Disaster Council members cleaning and evaluating the disaster supply trailer: left to right, Robin Terra, Shawn Roberts, Nikola Tede, Liz Salin, Barbara Plotter, Susannah Kennedy, Steve Somers and Chris Gove. Photo by Skip Rudolf



**Muir Beach
Evacuation
Drill**

**Saturday, June 11, 2022
9:00am
Santos Meadow**

Look for emailed specific instructions / Sign-up for alertmarin.org

In cooperation with Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department, Office of Emergency Services/Marin County Sheriff, Southern Marin Fire, National Park Service, California Highway Patrol & assisted by the Muir Beach Disaster Council

(Left) 2022 Muir Beach Disaster Council members at last year's evacuation drill: left, Janice Kubota, Vanessa Phillips, Robin Terra, Chris Gove (fire chief), Alexis Chase, Danny Hobson, Liz Salin, Susannah Kennedy, Barbara Piotter and Denise Lamott; (above) event signage



**Susannah and Robin with incoming MBDC Leader, Kerry Wynn (middle)
Photo by Rob Wynn**

2023 Muir Beach VFD's 49th Annual BBQ RAFFLE PRIZES, May 28th 2023 WINNERS

- 2724 J. SMITH 1. Skate Deck and Store Gift Certificate from **Proof Lab**, Mill Valley, \$140.
- 1388 D. SWAED 2. San Francisco Summer of Love Candle by **Scents of SF**, \$40.
- 390 D. SWAED 3. From **Artist Ellen Litwiller**: Set of 12 Cards, \$35.
- 5944 G. WINDLOT 4. **Kona Earth Peaberry Coffee** and an **Airscape Canister**, thanks Steve/Joanie Wynn!, \$105
- 174 J. SWAED 5. Reclaimed Crab Pot Rope Doormat from **Seaside Weavers**, Humboldt, \$65.
- 1596 E. SPARY 6. Bottle (500ml) of **Chileno Valley Olive Oil**, Marin, \$30.
- 5449 D. BROWN 7. Certificate for One Dozen Frosting Filled Cupcakes from **SusieCakes**, Greenbrae, \$51.
- 5728 L. WINDLOT 8. **Author Albert Flynn DeSilver's Writing as a Path to Awakening + Singletrack Mind**, \$40.
- 541 M. KENZIE 9. **Dr. Bronner's** 32 Oz. Organic Soaps:Hemp Baby Unscented and Castile Rose, \$34.
- 7061 A. BESTER 10. Store Certificate to **Tivoli Decor** (vintage with a touch of whimsy) in Sausalito. \$100.
- 2101 C. DUNN 11. **Joe's Taco Lounge**, Mill Valley, Meal Card, Thanks Gabe! \$50.
- 1214 S. SCHENKEL 12. Handmade (10) Muir Beach Photo Greeting Cards, by **Laurie Piel**, \$30.
- 2825 C. CONTI 13. *The Coasts of CA* and *The Forests of CA* from **Heyday Books**, \$110.
- 5961 G. WINDLOT 14. Desert Gift Set from **Juniper Ridge**, \$35.
- 1098 P. DE FREY 15. A Bike Headlight and a Bike Taillight from **Light and Motion**, \$140.
- 4889 D. CANNON 16. A Soprano Ukulele from **Magic Flute**, San Rafael, \$65.
- 1188 H. CASE 17. Organic Beeswax Crayons (Classic and Skin Tones) by **Filana**, \$42.
- 3144 DE SANDO 18. A One Hour Massage w/Diane McDonald at **Align Chiropractic Studio**, Mill Valley, \$125
- 1792 ROSA NU 19. **Berkeley Repertory Theatre** Voucher for Two Tickets to a Performance, \$160.
- 2837 B. BARNARD 20. From **Artist Ellen Litwiller**: 2 Dish Towels (Oyster and Crab), \$35.
- 1516 R. DUNN 21. Store Certificate to **Nugget Market**, Corte Madera, Tiburon, etc., \$75.
- 1368 J. J. 22. From **Sean Maley of Guarantee Mortgage**, Dinner at the **Buckeye**, Mill Valley, \$125.
- 5901 G. WINDLOT 23. **Dr. Bronner's** 32 Oz. of Organic Soaps:Hemp Cherry Blossom and Green Tea, \$34.
- 5812 G. WINDLOT 24. An Autographed (3 players) Football from the **SF 49ers**, \$50.
- 267 (PHONE) 25. **Author Albert Flynn DeSilver's Singletrack Mind + Writing as a Path to Awakening**, \$40
- 5219 BEBOLT 26. **Easy Breezy** Frozen Yogurt Card and Harper Pup from **Jellycat**, \$75.
- 5443 B. BROWN 27. Certificate for Brownies from **FairyTale Brownies**, Mill Valley, \$100.
- 3453 M. LAATSCH 28. *The Works* at **Mill Valley Car Wash**, \$45.
- 172 CASE 29. From **Artist Ellen Litwiller**: 2 Dish More Towels (Oyster and Crab), \$35.
- 1315 R. BACA M. 30. Ginseng Bonsai and Pot from **Green Jeans Garden Supply**, Mill Valley, \$189.
- 3198 J. DAN M. 31. **New York Puzzle Company "Insects"**, \$22.
- 9215 M. MIKE (PHONE) 32. **Dr. Bronner's** Large Gift Basket with Organic Coconut Oil Body Products, \$65.
- 2021 B. BENDER 33. **Womanswork** Garden Digger Gloves and Garden Harvesting Sheers, \$37.
- 1990 TEDE 34. Gift Certificate for Seeds from **Renee's Garden**, Felton, \$35.
- 1570 R. RINCK 35. Cheese Tasting for Two from **Pt. Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company**, \$100.
- 2631 D. L. AN 36. **Author Albert Flynn DeSilver's Writing as a Path to Awakening + Singletrack Mind**, \$40
- 1350 D. DAN 37. Another Reclaimed Crab Pot Rope Doormat from **Seaside Weavers**, Humboldt, \$65.
- 235 H. HANSEN 38. **Author Emma Bland Smith's** Signed copy of *The Gardener of Alcatraz*, \$17.
- 2047 J. WELLS 39. **Dr. Bronner's** 32 Oz. Bottle Organic Soaps:Hemp Tea Tree +Sandlewood Jasmine, \$34
- 540 D. BROWN 40. **Grilly's**, Mill Valley, Meal Cards (two @ \$20. each), \$40.
- 2729 K. KETUM 41. **The Spinnaker**, Sausalito, Dinner Letter, \$125.
- 8266 T. CHASE 42. **New York Puzzle Company**, Vintage Sunset, Cabin Collage, \$22.
- 921 M. BEBE 43. A Fire Extinguisher from **Waterstreet Hardware**, Sausalito, \$30.

- 3791 R KANN 44. Summer Pack from **In-N-Out Burger** (t-shirt, beach towel, lip balms, erasers, playing cards, lunch tote, pen, lanyard, stickers and 6 meal cards), **\$160.+**
- 777 SAGE CASTALAN 45. Author **Albert Flynn DeSilver's Singletrack Mind + Writing as a Path to Awakening**, **\$40**
- 383 SWARO 46. **SFMOMA**, Two Museum Guest Passes, **\$60.**
- 1573 HALEY 47. Another *The Works* at **Mill Valley Car Wash**, **\$45.**
- 2973 LINAMOR 48. **Dr. Bronner's** 32 Oz. Bottle of Organic Soaps Hemp Peppermint and Almond, **\$34.**
- 1862 GUNDEL 49. **Mountain Play**, Two Tickets to June 10th Performance of *Into the Woods*, **\$110.**
- 1458 WHITE 50. Gift Certificate to **Two Neat** (Cards and more) in Mill Valley, **\$50.**
- 108 BENDER 51. A Grocery Tote and \$50. Gift Card from **Driver's Market**, Sausalito, **\$65.**
- 225 HANCOCK 52. From Artist **Ellen Litwiller**: Another Set of 12 Cards, **\$35.**
- 5480 BENDER 53. **Sloat Garden Center** Gift Card, **\$25.**
- 1473 WHITE 54. A Certificate for more Brownies from **FairyTale Brownies**, Mill Valley, **\$100.**
- 1253 ZWISER 55. **New York Puzzle Company**, Vintage *Sunset, The Mission*, **\$22.**
- 1818 DEAN 56. French Roast Coffee (5 lbs) from **Lappert's**, Sausalito, **\$34.**
- 852 GUNDEL 57. One Month of Unlimited Yoga Classes at **The Studio**, Mill Valley, **\$165.**
- 3830 CHRISTIAN 58. Stand Up Paddle or Kayak (2 hours rental time) from **SeaTrek** Sausalito, **\$60.**
- 3227 CHASE 59. **Dr. Bronner's** Small Basket of Organic Lotion, Balms, Soap, Sanitizer +Lotion, **\$45.**
- 167 SWARO 60. A Pair of Cascade Forest Soy Wax Candles from **Juniper Ridge**, **\$56.**
- 3275 KUBOTA 61. Author **Albert Flynn DeSilver's Writing as a Path to Awakening +Singletrack Mind**, **\$40.**
- 1662 KOENE 62. A Poncho and Hat from **Proof Lab**, Mill Valley, **\$88.**
- 7238 EILSON 63. More Handmade (10) Muir Beach Photo Greeting Cards, by **Laurie Piel**, **\$30.**
- 2601 LEWIS 64. Gift Card to **Good Earth Grocery Store**, **\$150.**
- 1256 PARES 65. *Friday Night on the Wheel* Workshop for two at **Mill Valley Pottery Studio**, **\$130.**
- 1120 LOTKOT 66. **Dr. Bronner's** 32 Oz. Bottle of Organic Soaps Hemp Citrus + Sandlewood Jasmine, **\$34.**
- 2971 SILVA 67. Another *The Works* from **Mill Valley Car Wash**, **\$45.**
- 3046 DEAN 68. More **Grilly's**, Mill Valley, Meal Cards (three @ \$20. each), **\$60.**
- 1853 DIANO 69. A Recycled Dump Truck filled w/Vegan/Mineral Based Skin Products from **CA Baby**, **\$65**
- 1741 HERWITZ 70. Forest Gift Set from **Juniper Ridge**, **\$35.**
- 6026 H POTTER 71. From the Schutlz Museum: **Peanuts** Purses, Socks, Magnets, Books, T-shirt and Six Museum Passes, **\$200+**
- 4030 BRADER 72. Two Tickets to Dec. 13, Opening Night, Nutcracker by **SF Ballet**, **\$265.**
- 5001 WELT 73. **Sausalito Picture Framing** Certificate to Frame or Print, **\$200.**
- 1013 REIMERS 74. A Grocery Tote filled with Edible Goodies from **Trader Joes**, Greenbrae, **\$100.**
- 2218 DUTTS 75. Multi-Color 3x4 Reclaimed Fire Hose Floor Mat from **Oxgut Hose Co.**, Vallejo, **\$316.**
- 255 PIEL 76. A Custom **Hampui Hat**, Thanks Willee! **\$325.**
- 228 YESHI 77. A Bay Sail for two Aboard Schooner Freda B from **SF Bay Adventures**, Sausalito, **\$200.**
- 1371 REBECCA 78. From **Muir Beach LAN** (local internet), a credit to your account, Thanks Leighton! **\$500.**
- 5077 JOHN 79. **Claremont Hotel**, Berkeley: One Night's Stay, **\$495.**
- 5398 DRUMBECK 80. Framed Oil Painting, *From the Backside of Tam*, by **Artist J. Thomas Soltesz**, **\$800.**

Thank you prize donors and also to those who purchased raffle tickets!
Debra Allen, deballen@deballen.com



Croquet at the Nortons'

By Charlie Stump

Tom and Paula Norton lived above us in one of the oldest houses at Muir Beach. It was accessed from Sunset Way by a steep dirt pathway with intermittent sets of railroad tie stairs. The small, two-story home was built on a slope with the front entrance through the kitchen where something was always cooking – usually Tom's legendary beans – and where used hardback books and discarded magazines were piled haphazardly along the entryway. It was always dark in the back bedrooms, but the living room was lit by a row of south-facing vertical windows with no coverings. A set of glass French doors lent an unexpected elegance and opened onto an old deck which the adults wouldn't allow the kids to play on because it was creaky and weak. The dark grey siding of the house was worn, aged by coastal weather. The roof was flat with a covering of black tar paper and gravel; a stove pipe chimney pierced it on one end, making the house resemble an old tug boat. Despite its age and humble appearance, the home was warm and welcoming. It smelled like good food. My family visited often, particularly in the late days of summer when the Norton's entertained their neighbors with potluck croquet parties on the coastal crab grass lawn that offered a spectacular view of the cove and Big Beach.

At these parties, the lawn was edged with faded blue canvas-covered butterfly chairs, rickety rattan furniture, and a round, yellow metal table supported by rusty legs. Wire croquet wickets had been strategically stuck into the lawn and colored wooden balls and mallets randomly filled a large basket. While they mingled and played croquet, the adults smoked Salem and Pall Mall cigarettes and drank Olympia beer in white cans. Their laughter was spirited. The games were rousing and usually won by my dad, or Charles Borden who was always very competitive, or Tom if he had his pot of beans simmering the way he wanted and could break away from the kitchen. The adults would let us kids play after they finished – we'd charge the lawn seeking our favorite colors in the mallets and balls. Invariably, one of us would smack a ball too hard sending it into the coyote and monkey brush lining the edge of the lawn. All too often a ball would be hit so hard it made its way downslope towards Geraldine Kanenson's house and whoever hit it had to navigate a narrow, overgrown path to retrieve it, watching out for sticky spider webs, poison oak and the occasional yellow jacket hive hidden in a hole in the ground.

The moms brought sourdough bread, small logs of Italian dry salami with thick skins, salads, pungent fondue cheese pots warmed by small Sterno flames, and "kitchen sink" casseroles. These offerings – along with Tom's pot of beans, boiled hot dogs, and rye crackers – were placed on the yellow table scarred with rusty paint bubbles where hot dishes had been placed many times before. My mom always brought a large green salad in a green glass bowl with wooden salad tongs. She dressed the salad with her mix of olive oil, red wine vinegar, garlic salt and black pepper. As she had taught me, I ripped apart my sourdough bread and mixed the pieces into my salad; it was her version of homemade croutons. We ate on heavy ceramic plates and used dark wooden bowls for the beans. The kids drank Fresca and Squirt; the adults, beer and wine. When Mayor Joe and Mary were there, the adults prudently sipped Joe's Portuguese Pink. The families' dogs milled about seeking tidbits, except for Louie the Tick Dog who roamed the perimeter hoping for someone to toss him a scrap. Most everyone did and Paula would allow him to lick the used bean bowls before carting them off to the kitchen for a good washing. If he was lucky, Louie also got a small ham hock bone from the bean pot, which he would squirrel away at the base of the hill just above the house.

It was there that we kids would run after lunch to get the biggest pieces from the cardboard pile. Sue, Larry, Aran, Mike and I climbed the well-worn path to a level area where the Yamamoto house would eventually be built. We carefully placed our cardboard pieces on the grass to guide them to the left of the lawn area below. Our aim had to be precise because just above the croquet lawn was Tom's glass pit – a large hole in the ground filled with shards of green, brown, and clear glass from broken wine and whiskey

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

bottles. We never knew why it was there but we obviously avoided it when sliding down the hill at great speed. It was generally assumed – in a very serious way – that you’d die if you slid into the pit. Gripping onto the cardboard edges and lifting them slightly off the ground to protect our knuckles from being skinned, we shoved off to generate as much speed as possible to make for the perfect ride. As we shot down the slope, lifesaving techniques included steering feet first to prevent a rollover, and digging the heels of our Keds into the ground to slow our descent as we approached the bottom of the hill. If we veered toward the glass pit, we instantly rolled off the cardboard – getting scraped and dirty and pricked by the unforgiving purple star thistle, but we didn’t get shredded to death by the jagged glass. Once landed, we’d jump up to ascend the trail to ride again, careful to avoid another slider barreling down the dry grass.

I was bushed after a potluck croquet party at the Nortons’. But the bean stains on my striped t-shirt, dirty pants with the ironed-on knee patch torn half way off, remnants of a sticky spider web embedded in my shaggy hair, and scraped arms, all combined were proof that it had been a great day.

“Every Country Gets the Revolution It Deserves” (Joseph de Maistre 1811)

By Gerry Pearlman

With never ending elections on the horizon, the prospect of ex-president Trump making a come back attempt, and succeeding, is not the worst thing that could happen to the country. Much more detrimental to present and future generations would be the complete loss of faith in the rule of law and the idea of justice as the basis of a civilized society. In today’s morass of partisan politics the old anarchist adage of “law being nothing more than chains for the poor, and spider webs for the rich” seems more true than not. If Trump manages to avoid his just deserts once again, it would surely signal the end of civilized discourse, and the rise of a more fascist state. Even if he only manages to avoid the consequences of some of the many indictments against him, and is proven guilty on some of them, it would not be sufficient to tarnish his reputation, or call attention to his miserable record in and out of office.

Can anyone with a modicum of intelligence not believe Trump is guilty of every single crime he has been accused of. Yet he still manages to escape the consequences of his wrongdoing with the aid of a bevy of willing lawyers coming to his defense. It is the very “law” he has broken so many times that has protected him from prosecution and conviction. Murky legal concepts like “beyond a reasonable doubt”, and the even more absurd idea that should he succeed in another presidential election, he would have the power to pardon himself.

How anyone could still have faith in the rule of law if it allows Trump to escape once again from the consequences of his dismal record is beyond belief. How many times does anyone have to witness the truth of the law being *spider webs for the rich and chains for the poor* with so much at stake.

Has it been so forgotten that there is no memory at all of fighting the second world war against the fascist powers? With all the misery that the second world war entailed, one would think a lesson had been learned. Yet here we are again facing the same prospect of pain and suffering from yet another fascist leader. Even more distressing is the rise of fascist leadership in so many other countries around the world at this time! Much more is at stake than the rise of one fascist leader or another. It is the semblance of any idea of justice surviving the onslaught of the lies hurled against it, and the dark days that lie ahead should Trump emerge unscathed from the crimes he has undoubtedly committed. A more muscular response to the threat of fascism is more in order now than ever!

Long, Long Ago

By Gail Falls and Anne Jeschke

We have again used Gail's daughter's college thesis to share some Muir Beach history. This is synthesized (but mostly word for word, with permission, of course) from "Women and Community in Muir Beach" by Lesley Litwiller, December, 1989.

"In 1919 Antonio Numes Bello built 'the Tavern' – a large, green structure. It was operated as a hotel and resort. Bello filed papers for this area in 1923 and "Big Lagoon" became "Bellow Beach."

Jacob Weil, a New Yorker, and his partner Louis Harris, bought this unincorporated area from Bello in 1928. They built cabins around the Tavern for overnight guests. The land was subdivided and they sold properties here for the next twenty years. In 1940 the area was renamed from Bello Beach to Muir Beach.

The property was sold in 1945 to the O'Brien's, who attempted to revive the resort after World War II. In 1963 a group from Mill Valley bought the property. They tried first a store, and then a restaurant, which both failed

Finally in 1968 "a wealthy Marin citizen anonymously offered \$125,000 if the state would match funds to buy the beach and create a public park. This was accepted and completed in 1969."

"When the state got control, they razed the Tavern and cabins against the residents' wishes. They also tried to level the sand dunes on Big Beach. Two teenagers, Lisa Moore and Sue Stump, rushed down and blocked the bulldozers while their mothers, Ruth and Janet, made a flurry of phone calls to Sacramento. In this way, the sand dunes were saved."

Comet and Lois, a Pony and a Mule

When my son was 6 years old, the best age ever by the way, we picked up a full sized pony at the Modesto livestock auction yard. Comet I would estimate to be in his late 30's but still had the sparkle in his eyes of a 6 year old. So we brought him home to our small ranch along the Stanislaus river above Oakdale. He was all ribs and full of lice. We bathed him fed and brushed him. Comet we soon learned was more of a dog than a horse. He loved Douglas and bonded with him the first time he rode him. Right away we knew we had a good one. Comet loved to be rode. He was a real working horse that didn't appreciate being retired. He wasn't much of a trail horse and loved to hop right up to third gear as soon as you put the spurs to him. Feisty fast and responsive he would gallop full tilt across the pastures turn and spin on a dime.

As summer rolled along I would see Doug shirtless in his shorts and little tennis shoes with no socks climb to the top rail of the fence and give a call out to Comet. Comet's head would pop up while the rest of the horses grazed. He'd run over to that fence and let Doug crawl on to his back. Then off they'd go, Doug laying across his neck hanging onto his mane with his tennis shoe heels digging into his bony ribs. Comet would tear off at full tilt zig zagging across the different pastures keeping Douglas on his back as he would inevitably begin to slide off, then back to the spot they started from. After what always appeared to be a thrilling ride Doug would slide back on to the top rail of the fence, and then they would both wander off on their own ways. I remember the first time I happened to notice this routine and asked Doug why he didn't ask me to saddle Comet. He just strolled off stating "it takes too long." A few years later I asked Doug what he liked better, riding his two stroke 80 dirt bike or Comet. He replied, "my dirt bike of course! I can steer it!"

Now my daughter Emily had Lois. Lois was an old retired forest service mule about the same age as Comet. Lois was safe, quiet, willing and able. And always way ahead of us green horn cowboys. She had the same expression of bored annoyance with everything we did around the ranch. She was a great asset when I packed her in the high country and never needed a lead rope. She and little 3 year old Emily had the same disposition. They both would rather be doing something else when it was time for a family ride but quietly went along with the program. Emily was cute as could be in her cowgirl or Pocahontas outfits sitting up in her little black saddle on top of old, bored Lois. She would sway back and forth with pig tails bouncing as we strolled around the pasture. I think our rides were shorter than the prep time. Emily was never much of a cowgirl and Lois preferred retirement.

–Jeff Swarts

BBQ Wrap Up

Continued from page 11

(baking space and ingredients for the desserts), the **Conti Family** (crepe donation), Bill the chicken guy at Safeway, Starbucks in Strawberry Village (Sunday morning coffee), the dozens of businesses and individuals that donated to the raffle and wine booth, and everyone that came out and bought food, drinks, merch and raffle tickets.

Once again, a tremendous thank you to all of the committee heads and their fabulous crews of volunteers: **Deb Allen** (raffle); **Jesse Rudnick, Frank Piazza, and Graham Groneman** (beer booth); **Sarah Nesbitt and Norbert Schnadt** (wine); **Jesse De Voss, Matt Silva and Steve Schaffer** (chicken); **Sophie and Annabelle Conti** (crepes); **Tayeko Kaufman** (desserts); **Barbara Piotter** (veggie meals); **Laura Van Amburgh** (kitchen); **Joey Groneman** (decorations); **David Taylor** (first aid tent); **Andre Pessis** for coordinating the music and to the awesome bands **Andre and the All Stars** and **Pardon the Interruption** for rocking the crowd; **Brad Eigsti** (hand-made signs and event poster); **Brett Sibley** (supplies); **Ana Rauh** (non alcoholic drinks); **Julie Smith and Laurie Piel** (paparazzi); **Renee Boeche** (security); **Skip Rudolph** (back bridge patrol); **Jon Rauh** (portapotties); **Don Piotter** (garbage & parking); **Chris Gove** (Sat work parties, ice); **David Piel, Nina Vincent, Peter Evans** (parking); **Deborah McDonald** (Sunday volunteer breakfast); **Aran Moore** (charcoal); **Cuco and Consuela Acala** and a generous Muir Beach benefactor for providing tacos for the Saturday night work party; and so many others! I am sorry if I forgot anyone! We appreciate everyone's help.

Save the date - Sunday, May 26, 2024 - for the 50th MBVFD BBQ celebration! Please contact me for volunteer and sponsorship opportunities at denise@deniselamottpr.com.

It takes a village, and we need you!

—Denise Lamott

BBQ photos by Julie Smith, Laurie Piel, Denise Lamott, Victor Chiong, and Lisa Eigsti.

Photos continued on page 24



BBQ Wrap Up

