

# BEACHCOMBER

SINCE 1946







## The Library at the Community Center

*By Laurie Piel*

The MBCC has always had a repository for books upstairs on the “mezzanine” overlooking the Great Room. Over the years, it had become a dumping ground for unwanted books, old magazines and miscellaneous ... well...stuff. The mice had had their way with the old tomes and to say that it smelled musty would have been an understatement.

*Continued on next page*



## Marin Emergency Radio Authority Update

*Submitted by Janet Tumpich*

According to Dave Jeffries, Deputy Executive Officer at Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA), “We have been stalled for a while in delivering the equipment shelter that because of the route along SR1 requires a CalTrans and CHP permit and CHP escort. It took a couple of months.”

On Thursday, 01/25/24, the shelter arrived at the Muir Beach site. Dave explains that “after the shelter is in place, there will be some wiring and connections and then Motorola and Nokia will schedule times to install their equipment in the shelter and on the monopole.

The shelter will contain the radio and microwave equipment needed to provide coverage in the Muir Beach area and portions of the coast for law enforcement, fire and public works agencies.

The brown pole you see to the right will hold our radio antennas and you can see our generator back up (white box) to PG&E power at the back left.

This is one of 18 sites that support the county-wide system, and we anticipate having all of our radio users on the new system in October 2024.”

Dave Jeffries

[WWW.MERAONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.MERAONLINE.ORG)

*MERA Communications Shelter being placed at the Muir Beach site. Photo by Dave Jeffries*

## The Library

*Continued from previous page*

Maury Ostroff and I had often spoken about putting together a usable library in its place but we all know how that goes...time just disappears. But last fall a catalyst appeared in the form of Simon Littler who wanted to donate his entire library to the Center. The Center didn't have anywhere nearly enough room to accommodate all of his books considering there were many books already there that needed to stay. Also many of the current books as well as some of Simon's books were no longer a good choice for our library but great for some of the local libraries. The Quilters cleared out all of their unwanted books and publications and created an area for their collection. Kasey Corbit and I spent a few days sorting through the books on the shelves and the boxes from Simon and got about a third of the way through before the Center needed that space to look good for a rental. That meant it was time to ask the community for help. We put out a call in the EventsLetter for a work party on October 25th and we were thrilled at the turn out. Pat Duff,

Claire Leffler, Tennessee Nelson, Sarah Nesbit, Sarah Marshank and Janet & Michael Moore all turned up to join in the backbreaking work. By the end of the day the entire space was cleared, books were shelved in a loose sense of genre and all of the extraneous books were hauled off to deserving libraries. It was quite the feat and Kasey and I continue to be grateful to the team. Before anyone could really work in that area it needed to be cleaned so the MB Holiday Arts Fair paid to have it well scrubbed and disinfected. The final distribution of the books by genre has yet to happen, but we will have a place for local Muir Beach authors as well as the standard designations. To give it that Muir Beach touch, Brad Eigsti has volunteered to make the signage for the categories. No decisions have been made as to how the library will work but once it is in condition to be used we'll turn to the community for ideas. Kasey and I hope it will be a welcome addition to Muir Beach life.

– Laurie Piel

---

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).

**Email:** Submissions, request to subscribe, or questions to:  
editor@muirbeachcomber.com

**Mail:** *Beachcomber*, 19 Seacape Dr., Muir Beach, CA 94965

**Visit:** muirbeachcomber.com

**Donate annually:** \$25 for local delivery, \$35 for snailmail

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.

Acquisitions: Kate Somers

Circulation/Finance: Beth Begault

Website: Julie Smith

Design: Janet Tumpich

## Inside

The Library.....	2-3
MERA Update.....	2
All's Fair in Arts & Crafts 2023.....	4-5
Coastline.....	6
Our New Resource Navigator.....	7
Beachcomber Financial Report.....	8
Critter Report.....	8-9
Straight from the Horse's Mouth.....	10-11
Steep Ravine Cabin #3.....	12-13
Green Gulch Bread Bakery.....	14-15
Remembering Kathy.....	15
Perfect Conditions for an Elk Hunt.....	16-17
The Other John Muir, continued from August 2023 <i>Beachcomber</i> ..	17
4th of July on Little Beach, c.1967..	18
Muir Beach Grass Band.....	19
Muir Beach Real Estate Recap.....	20
AWE.....	20
The Lunatic Fringe.....	21
Home Again.....	22-23
Praise Ye the Sun.....	23
Save the Date for the 50th Annual Firemen's BBQ.....	24

---

## ON THE COVER

*Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair 2023*  
Photography – Mira Klein

Our residents have always been the foundation of the Holiday Arts Fair and it's a joy to have the *Beachcomber* share this with the community. – Laurie Piel

# All's Fair in Arts & Crafts 2023

*By Laurie Piel*

The 2023 Muir Beach Holiday Arts Fair has been put to bed but the memories are very sweet. The Fair is the community events version of the MBVFA Memorial Day BBQ. The BBQ funds the Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department and the Fair helps fund community events like the Summer & Winter Solstices, Day of the Dead, Muir Beach Friends & Neighbors events, Paul Smith Concert Series and new events in the future now that we have a smart TV in the Community Center.

We had some behind the scenes machinations... last minute additions and cancellations but everything fell into place... and even the weather cooperated. We had fabulous artists of both old and new friends, we partnered again with the California College of the Arts, our music was amazing and we even had a fortune teller! Everyone had fun and I think all of the artists did well. With some of our profits, the fair has already bought new linens for the community to use. After all of the bills are paid, the Fair will definitely surpass the \$1,000 we gave to the CSD last year.

As always, there are many thanks to be given. It's a labor of love from the community and somehow a simple thank you never seems sufficient although my gratitude is all that I have.

Even before the artists have finished their work, the people who tell the world about the fair are hard at work. Janet Tumpich Moore creates the incredible poster every year and Debra Allen provides beautiful copies designed to withstand the weather. Julie Smith is our webmaster and Denise Lamott gets out the publicity to the entire bay area... and I mean entire. Some attendees told us that they saw the information about the fair on KTSF Channel 26, the largest Asian-language and Chinese-language broadcast station in the US.

Those that swing a hammer and put up the infrastructure are never seen so their donation of time is from the heart... my heartfelt thanks to Shoshanna & Chloe Kirk, Ellen Litwiller and Sarah Marshank for their time and hard work.

Continuing my thanks with the kitchen volunteers.... Alecia Singer assumed the responsibility for the kitchen again. We decided not to ask the community to

donate savory contributions. Instead I made two soups, one with meat and one vegetarian, Nina Vincent made her delectable chili, the Pelican Inn donated a huge pot of their beef stew and Gabriel Leis, once again, fed the attendees with his yummy burritos. His contributions to all of the community events cannot be underestimated. Community donations made via SignUpGenius were only for sweets, bread or cornbread to accompany the soups, chili and beef stew. It was quite the avalanche of cornbread when I thought we were short and so many people just turned up with cornbread. Hopefully, I've learned my lesson... the community always shows up! Each year we try to make the kitchen a little easier. I think the standardized price list helped and Alecia & I will work on the request process. The many people donating food were: Beth Begault, Suzanne Bender, Beatrice Chorinsky, Danny Hobson, Wendy Johnson, Janice Kubota, Marilyn Laatsch, Melissa Lasky, Deborah McDonald, Samantha Melendy, Outi Onorato, Karen Roeper, Alecia Singer, Julie Smith, Kate Somers and Barbara Zachariassen and the unsung cornbread donations at the end... I'm sorry if I've forgotten someone. The Kitchen's running team of Suzanne & Scott Bender, Nicole Emert, Carol Gross, Janice Kubota, Marilyn Laatsch, Melissa Lasky, Sarah Marshank, Samantha Melendy, Don Piotter, Lonna Richmond, Jackie Russell, Liz Salin, Alecia Singer, Pam Swarts and Nikola Tede, although swamped with lots of cornbread at the end, managed to get it all organized and keep it running smoothly. And special thanks to the Benders who closed on Sunday!

Next I'd like to thank Alexis Chase who took on the Junior Artisans table AGAIN. Beatrice Chorinsky, Danny Hobson, Shoshanna Kirk and Heidi Stubler-Brown oversaw the Junior Artisans table. The Junior Artisans, not surprisingly, had some of the most fun items for sale... We had some new folks at the table and some moved up to their own table. Our Jr. Artisans were Paige & Callie Brown, Nico Chorinsky, Chloe Kirk, Vincent Piazza and Anna Rauh.

This year we had three people sign up as Floaters which gave me and others a break... thank you to Barbara Poole and Nina Vincent... and I am personally grateful to Charlene Modena.

*Continued on next page*

*Continued from previous page*

The Beverage Bar held up well under the resourceful watch of Harvey Pearlman, David Piel and Steve Shaffer. A fabulous new beverage option was provided by Samantha Melendy and Chris Gove.... an espresso coffee bar... cappuccinos and lattes including the traditional heart of foam! Samantha has already said she'd be willing to return in 2024... YAY!

With the return of "The Lounge at the Fair", music maven, Bob Bowyer, took our live music to the next level with many different styles. Everybody loved having a place to sit and enjoy the music, each other, food from the kitchen and warm drinks from the beverage bar. Over the two days our musicians were: The Acoustic Trio (Bruce Barrett, Joe Massey, and Johnny Walsh), the Muir Beach Grass Band (Bob Bowyer, Renee Boeche, Bryce Bowyer, Chas Kingsbury, Mark Pandapas, Robin Terra and Paul Tollefson) and Larry Lasky, Robin Terra & Steve Utstein got together and played a set. A totally different vibe was provided by The West County Youth Ensemble - Giselle Turkalj (cello), Elias Lerner-Zehrer (cello), Benjamin Margulis (violin) and Isadora Page (flute) whose repertoire consisted of classical music and holiday classics. They were a great addition!! We would love to add to the fair musical talent so if you would like to perform this year, please contact Bob Bowyer at [bigbowyer@gmail.com](mailto:bigbowyer@gmail.com) who will be heading up the Lounge again.

There is more than one way to support the fair and financial donations are a major part of the equation. Peter Lambert & Linda Lotriet were kind enough to give a monetary donation in lieu of their usual wine contribution. Our other contributors were: Katherine Bicer, Leigha Heydt, John & Prital Jeffrey, Christine & Sefton Murray, Garrett Paul and Bethany Villere.

We had some new artists this year Katy Biller (baskets), Ryan Kunkel (3D printed ornaments), Nya Van Leuvan (jewelry) and a special shout out to our CCA artists: Arleth Vega (silver work) & Jacqueline Zheng (soaps).

But it's our incredible Muir Beach artists that make this fair so amazing every year. Debra Allen, Emily, Becky (& Lala & Kate) Carroll, Olivia Carroll-Weisel, Kasey Corbit, Craig Eichenbaum, Hilary Gross,

Susannah Kennedy, Mira Klein, Ellen Litwiller, Janet Tumpich Moore, Jennifer Terra, Robin Terra, me and, of course, our three legacy organizations... The Garden Club, MBFVA and the Quilters. Needless to say, without them there would be no fair at all.

This year I will continue to work with Lynda Grose Silva to partner with the California College of the Arts to bring in up and coming talents. Just as we nurture our own Junior artisans, I've always felt that the fair should be a place where new artists can find a welcoming home. You may not know that Lynda was the Chair of the Fashion Design Program at CAA and is still a professor of critical studies there. She is a Founding member of the Union of Concerned Researchers in Fashion and a board member of [remake.world](http://remake.world). You can find the work she is currently doing with the Goodwill Label Research Project in the [EventsLetter](http://EventsLetter). It is an honor to have her bring her knowledge, expertise and connections to the fair.

A good time was had by all and I look forward to seeing everyone Dec. 7th & 8th for the Muir Beach Arts Fair 2024... see you all at the Fair!



*Photo by Robin Terra*





*Coastline, photo by Robin Terra*

# Our New Resource Navigator

By Laurie Piel & Marilyn Laatsch

In March of 2022 the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services launched a new embedded social worker pilot program in West Marin. They hired Caren Gately, as a Social Service Worker II based at the West Marin Service Center in Pt. Reyes. Caren is a 6th generation Marinite who has worked for years in related county programs and is extremely knowledgeable about what resources exist. For the past five years she has been an HHS Resource Navigation Specialist for older adults in Marin. She clearly has a passion for service and a deep knowledge of available resources and can access the array of support and services necessary for us to enjoy health, well-being, safety, and self-sufficiency. She currently works as a case manager for Bolinas and Stinson Beach with bases in both places and now, thanks to Marilyn Laatsch's persistence, added one day a month in Muir Beach. A small group of about 10 met with her on January 16th and she was amazed at the turn out. Through our discussion she realized how much need there is here at the Beach. She said she will be recommending that she have a base here as well as Bolinas and Stinson.

Currently, Caren will be visiting Muir Beach each month on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 1-3 pm at the Community Center. Her purpose is to be an advocate and facilitator for seniors here needing help with transportation, food, caretaking and related needs. During her 2 hour window here she may also make a home visit if that seems appropriate. Caren would like any interested resident to call her cell: **415-306-3565** and make an appointment with her for her visit here. It will help her make her time with us more efficient. She is hoping to get more time for us as well.

During our conversation she spoke about some of the other sources of help available such as **www.seniorathome.com**.

Some county programs are based on low income. If eligible, one could have a visiting county caretaker at one's home for light housekeeping & cooking for around \$15 per hour. Most in-home care (private pay) starts at around \$25/hr. and likely to rise as overall costs rise. There is a large group of Fijians living in Vallejo,



*Caren Gately, photo courtesy  
Marin County*

several of whom do caretaking in Marin and have excellent referrals including here in Muir Beach. She can facilitate working with these types of groups.

Another of our big issues is transportation. She mentioned Catch-a-Ride, Travel Navigator & others. She was not as familiar with the county's program but had heard that Ubers & others like them often will not travel

out to West Marin even after they've agreed to so they don't show up and the resident is left on his/her own. Beth Nelson is applying for travel vouchers now to test how this works for us here. She'll report back soon. Also, one could call Fernando Barreto, Supervisor Rodoni's staffer for transportation with questions as well (**fernando.barreto@marincounty.org (415) 473-3092**).

There was some discussion of creating some housing in Muir Beach for caretakers that could be shared among those in need here. An extra bed & bath or small out building. Caren is interested in helping us problem-solve these issues as well.

When it comes to food, **www.westmarin seniorservices.org** also provides resource information for us. The case manager assigned to us is Steve Simac and Caren encouraged us to make contact with him as well. This is the only agency that can provide some kind of meal delivery to us at this time. We might also try to create a service with Good Earth. Apparently their store in Fairfax once made lunches for a school or two in West Marin.

It was suggested that Caren could send useful info to us through our Muir Beach Caring program (Joani Marinoff is our coordinator). How that would work based on accessibility to resident's emails is yet a question to be worked through.

Caren was so helpful and full of information that it felt like the door is beginning to open to resources available as we get older and our needs change. Thanks to those who made it happen and we look forward to having her resources available to us. She says she's a big texter. Here's how you can reach her:

**Caren Gately, cell: (415) 306-3565 or  
CGately@marincounty.org**

# BEACHCOMBER FINANCIAL REPORT, JANUARY 2024

By Beth Begault

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Beachcomber membership drive this year. A few donors in particular (you know who you are!) have made a huge difference in our ability to keep the presses running. Your donations allow Muir Beach's local news quarterly to keep on keeping on—now in its 78th year!

Printing costs account for the majority of the annual budget, and all of the staff labor is volunteer. Costs per issue vary by number of pages and by design decisions (color pages vs black-and-white). On the low end, it costs about \$600 for a black-and-white issue with a color cover. Costs run to \$800 and up in issues that print some interior pages in color. We're always hoping to gather at least \$3,000/year in donations to cover the cost of publishing four issues per year. So far in this fundraising season, donations are up a little over last year, but we haven't met our \$3000 goal. Donations are gladly accepted and appreciated year-round, and no amount is too small.

YEAR	\$ AMOUNT	# OF DONATIONS	AVG \$ PER DONATION
2014	\$3,100	83	\$37
2015	\$2,005	59	\$34
2016	\$1,850	51	\$36
2017	\$125	5	\$25
2018	\$1,655	40	\$41
2019	\$2,445	65	\$40
2020	\$2,590	67	\$39
2021	\$3,160	65	\$48
2022	\$1,430	27	\$53
<b>2023</b>	<b>\$2234.25</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>\$53</b>

## ACCOUNT BALANCES AS OF 1/28/24

BUSINESS CHECKING	\$1,279.09
BUSINESS SAVINGS	\$1,900.75
<b>TOTAL CASH ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>\$3,179.84</b>

# Critter Report: *The Cleanup Crew*

By Dave MacKenzie

Life has evolved to reproduce by growing to a mature age, and growing takes calories. That means that everything eats something: single-celled organisms eat bacteria, cows eat grass, and wolves, given a chance, eat cows. Who eats the dead, decaying, and putrid bodies of roadkills, or cows that died of disease or old age? Answer: the avian cleanup crew, the Vultures!

To be fair, there are a lot of other things besides vultures which eat dead stuff. Bacteria, coyotes, Ravens, and a host of other critters are not going to pass up a chance for calories, even gross ones by human standards. (Actually, humans are also pretty good at eating aged or fermented foods of all kinds!). But for general stinky cleanup task, vultures are the most picturesque.

Our everyday road cleaner, the Turkey Vulture, has a long family history of evolving clean-up skills. For example, to find the dead meat it so loves, the TUVU (bird bander's code for the Turkey Vulture), soars on updrafts and thermals to either spot other birds circling a certain area, or, with its excellent sense of smell, to detect a carcass from on high. I have seen a group of vultures feeding on a deer carcass hidden in deep brush (a good hiding trick of Mountain Lions), which could not have been spotted from the air.

Another obvious adaptation to feeding on bacteria infested meat is the featherless head of the TUVU. Most vultures share in this feature (including the old world vultures, which are not closely related to the TUVU).

Once I spotted a raccoon carcass just off Hwy 1 near the Pelican Inn. It had been in the ditch for about a week (and was starting to get very bloated), so I figured the CalTrans cleanup crew was not going to clear it soon. I dragged it behind some Cypress trees and put up a trail camera to see who might visit. I got quite a show!

The Turkey Vultures were the first on the scene, that very afternoon. Then the ghoulish feast began as one of the vultures punched a hole in the bloated belly and stuck it's head way inside. When it came out, it was pulling many yards of intestine with it, out maybe ten feet or so from the carcass. And so the meal began.

*Continued on next page*





*Turkey Vulture drying its many wing feathers. Photo by Dave Mackenzie*

The vultures made a good start at consuming this gross mess, but that night a coyote appeared and was interested. But it took a couple of nights before the canine dug in for its own meal. (Coyotes are particularly spooky around trail cameras, as the infrared LEDs do give a slight shine at night.) At that point, a large part of the carcass was already missing. Other visitors (mostly at night) included a Bobcat (sniffed it, but not interested and moved on), and a couple of Raccoons, who did not hang around either; perhaps this was a close relative! Within a week, almost everything except the larger bones were gone, and the vultures were there every day doing their job.

But not everything about the TUVU is so gross. A friend of mine, who studied ornithology at Cornell, told me that of the various rescue birds that the university kept for study, the Turkey Vultures were the most interesting. She said they loved to play with the many baby and pet

toys provided to them for their amusement. TUVUs are smart! And they like to play games!

So how do you know when you are looking at a TUVU? Well, first, they are really large soaring birds, the largest you will normally see in Muir Beach except for Brown Pelicans. Eagles and other really big raptors are rare here, and the Red-Tailed Hawk is smaller. There are two other vultures in California, the Condor and the Black Vulture, but you are unlikely to see either here (in the near future). TUVU's wobble back and forth a lot while flying, which is distinctive.

So next time you see one or more Turkey Vultures soaring over Muir Beach with their tilting float on a thermal, remember that these are some of your more helpful neighbors keeping our community clean and safe!

# Straight from the Horse's Mouth

*Jessica Pinto, LMFT, CEIP-MH*

In the heart of the pandemic Stephanie Holdenried, CEIP-ED and I were inspired to create a program that would bring kids safely together in person to connect with horses, nature and one another. At that time, more than ever before, kids were in desperate need for a space to unplug, get dirty, and have fun...and so Marin Ranch School was born! We believe that learning can be (and should be!) joyful and that nothing builds a positive sense of self like good old fashion hard work and the gratifying experience of contributing to a community. We know from personal experience that life on a ranch can be a model for how to live in a more grounded, authentic and connected way everywhere else and the skills learned with horses can be carried outside the corral and applied to all relationships. We absolutely love that several local Muir Beachers have joined us on this journey!

Ranch School is one of many equine assisted educational and therapeutic programs offered at the Golden Gate Dairy Stables. Ocean Riders has three Certified Equine Interaction Professionals (myself, Stephanie, and Judith Forrest, LMFT, CEIP-MH) who facilitate the pro bono public outreach programs for Ocean Riders as well as our own for-profit programs which support the operations of the ranch. Whether we are facilitating a group for kids, corporate team leaders, or folks who would otherwise not have access to horses, our programs are rooted in the philosophy that the horses are our revered partners and teachers in this work. We honor them as wise, intuitive and sentient beings deserving of their own autonomy, agency and freedoms.



*Devon and team dumping manure at the compost piles*

These values are indivisible from Ocean Riders' horse keeping philosophy. It is essential for program participants to feel safe in order to benefit from their experience with the horses and a sense of safety can only be fully accessed when the horses are also living within their own neuroception of safety. In other words, healing with horses is not healing for anyone if it is done at the expense of the horse. To support this, Ocean Riders offers to the best of our abilities a species appropriate lifestyle for our horses and ensure that all of their health and wellness needs are met. We also take it a step further, as the Fall 2023 Ranch School groups learned when we studied the "10 Freedoms." These include the freedom to experience empowerment, agency and choice, to have access to privacy, to frolic and have fun, and (possibly the most important of all) the freedom to be themselves. If you know any of our horses, you know that they are true characters with their own unique, lovable "horsenalties"!

Horses have played an integral role for humans throughout the entirety of our history. They have carried us through new territories, into war, plowed our fields, pulled our wagons, and toiled to support the evolution of man. After the Industrial Revolution horses earned a small promotion from beasts of burden to serve us in sport and recreation and to become very large (very expensive) pets. But now there is yet another revolution brewing in the long, intertwined history of horse and human. With the field of equine assisted learning and therapy expanding rapidly in recent years more research is supporting the efficacy and power of this work, and more people are recognizing horses as wise and intuitive beings with many gifts to offer us, not just as partners in sport and recreation.

Facilitating Ranch School groups for the past 3+ years has certainly been a joyful learning experience for us and it has inspired us to embark on a new journey to expand the reach of this program. We are currently developing a "How to" Training in Ranch School for equine professionals and therapeutic riding centers. We would like to see the Ranch School philosophy spread far and wide to further support this cultural shift that is happening in the equestrian world. As horse people we know that more than 80% of the time we spend at the ranch has nothing to do with riding and yet there are

*Continued on next page*

*Continued from previous page*

so few opportunities for people to learn about horses that are not traditional riding programs. With the expansion of Ranch School, we aim to contribute to elevating the standard of the equine assisted learning and therapy field and to be advocates for the horses who work in it. When we are in the presence of horses who have been given the freedoms that we all deserve something beautiful happens within us. The science supports this and yet there is also something magical about it. The horse has served so many important roles in our lives, perhaps now for the first time in history, we can serve them.



*Lola, Francesca & Geisli*



*Ellie & Ben hugging Bear*



*Bell and Power Pony*



*Ellie & Apache, Hugh & Pico, Lauren, Ben & Bear, Francesca & Nugget*

*Photos by Jessica Pinto*



### *Some History...*

In 1903 William Kent purchased over 600 acres of land (for a reported \$25/acre), most of which he donated to the state in 1928 for the formation of Mount Tamalpais State Park. He retained ownership of a smaller oceanfront parcel where in the 1930s his son constructed 13 Steep Ravine cabins plus a small home for his family. The US Army conscripted the cabins and built barracks nearby for the duration of World War II, and returned the cabins to the Kent Family in 1945 when the war ended. During the war some people gave up their cabins, which allowed the High Family to acquire cabin number 3 in 1945.

The cabins were leased to friends and family of the Kents for \$450/year, even after the Kent Family sold the remaining Steep Ravine property to the state in 1960 for ten dollars. For the following 15 years, the state was a more neglectful landlord of the property than the Kent Family had been. In 1975 all of the lessee families were evicted and the cabins fell into a state of disrepair, before 10 of the original cabins were rehabilitated in their current form in 1983.



*The High kids (1970s)*



## STEEP RAVINE CABIN NUMBER 3

*Then and now*

*By Ken and Gail High and Beth Begault*

### *Then...*



*A photo of #3 from 1970s*



*Watercolor by Ken's mother, Christine Miller High*

Ken High's family leased cabin #3 from 1945 until 1975, when all of the tenants were evicted by the state. His childhood and his children's

childhoods were full of rough-and-tumble adventures there—fishing for trout in freshwater Steep Ravine Creek and for perch in the ocean, year-round swimming, body boarding on plywood, surfing, horseshoe pitching, and lounging in the three nearby hot springs. Then there was the inevitable labor of putting things back together after storms—hauling sand, rebuilding primitive lean-tos on the beach. Ken described those early days at Steep Ravine as being very much like a miniature version of life in Muir Beach, where the little community pitched in to help each other keep things running.



*Ken's mom holding a caught eel*



*Gail sent this photo of Ken at the Steep Ravine cabin, cleaning an eel. c.1974. One of our favorite activities was fishing for eel which are really delicious.*



*Photo from above the cabin...*

**Now...**



Cabin #3 still sits on its breathtaking perch overlooking the Pacific Ocean, nestled within the cluster of 10 remaining cabins and campsites (plus the camp host/former Kent Family cabin) that comprise the Steep Ravine Cabins and Environmental Campground. After the state evicted all the lessees in 1975, some years of neglect ensued until the cabins were rehabilitated around 1983, with the kitchens, bathrooms and primitive gravity water pipes all removed.

Cabin #3 is now considered an “overflow” cabin and hence is often vacant, in stark contrast to the other 9 cabins that remain fully booked year round. It’s as beautiful as ever in its simplicity, and it still contains 30 years of High family stories and memories that it will never tell.



Given how Mick Sopko's bread has nourished so many Muir Beach families over the years, I know that this sweet history of his days at Green Gulch will be of interest to our community. It has been reprinted with permission from Mick from the January 25th San Francisco Zen Center's Sanga Newsletter.

– Kate Somers



## Green Gulch Bread Bakery: A Brief History

But our spiritual way is not so idealistic. In some sense we should be idealistic; at least we should be interested in making bread which tastes and looks good! Actual practice is repeating over and over again until you find out how to become bread. There is no secret in our way. Just to practice zazen and put ourselves into the oven is our way. — Suzuki Roshi, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, "Repetition"

The Green Gulch Bread Bakery was founded by Mick Sopko where he served as manager for over 16 years, from November 2007 to December 2023. The bakery was located in a 500-square-foot space built behind the GGF kitchen, with funds provided by a generous anonymous donor.

SFZC's earliest business, the Tassajara Bakery in San Francisco, also operated for 16 years, from 1976 – 1992, when it was sold to Just Desserts Bakery. Mick worked at Tassajara Bakery from 1981 until it was sold, and for an additional year under the new owners.

With a two-person crew, the Green Gulch Bread Bakery's production has provided bread for GGF residents, guest and visitor sales, several local wholesale accounts, the seasonal Mill Valley Farmers' Market, and a neighborhood weekly subscription service.

Annual production has been about 17,000 loaves, or about 350 per week. During its production life, the Bakery has produced over ¼ million loaves and generated almost a million dollars in gross income.

The Bakery has also taught over 50 workshops of up to 20 people

each. The workshop was called "Fundamentals of Bread Baking" and participants learned the basics of dough fermentation, forming and baking, and were able to take home a freshly baked loaf.

The Bakery started taking on apprentices in 2012, first for six

*Continued on next page*





## Green Gulch Bread Bakery

*Continued from previous page*

months at a time, and then for a full year's commitment. There were a few people, for various reasons, who weren't able to stay for the full time, but most did. Of the dozen or so students, at least three wound up working at bakeries or even owning their own (such as Jo and Rosie at **Rise Up!** in Applegate Valley, OR.)

The bakers' working day started at 4 am or 5 am and ran until noon, Wednesday through Sunday. The bakers weren't always able to attend early morning meditation, but often joined evening zazen and participated in one-day and seven-day sittings.

When the Green Gulch Farm Sunday Public Program was at full peak before Covid, upwards of 100 – 200 people commonly attended. At the tea gathering after the talk, the Bakery joined the GGF flower and vegetable stands, selling up to 50 loaves to the day's visitors, as well as providing 25 loaves for the kitchen's public lunch!

The Bakery worked closely with the GGF kitchen for their bread needs. Bread was almost always provided for lunch—normally 4 – 15 loaves, depending on guests and current staffing, using an average of 100 loaves a week. Periodically pizza was made for dinner—usually 32 pies, in three bakes between 5:30 and 6:15 pm. Eventually, a routine of every other week was established. No one complained!

During the 3 years of Covid, the Bakery's production went down, but was still strong for the grocery stores we supplied. In fact, during the early lockdown days, our Muir Beach neighborhood deliveries went from

an average of 15 or so per week, to 40 and even 50 or 60 as new stay-at-home customers signed up.

Mick Spoko retired at the end of August, 2023 and his assistant, Sam Groter, took over a modified production schedule. Sam is in the bakery 2 days a week, which covers the needs of the community, as well as a couple of easily serviced neighborhood accounts.

“Sukey and I are on the way to Enso Village, after 30 years in this beautiful valley. To the many people responsible for making the Bakery happen—especially Sam, Fu Schroeder, Linda Cutts, Emila Heller, and Arlene Lueck—thank you for all your help!”

—Mick Sopko, November 2023

### **Remembering Kathy...**

*By Beth Nelson*

Remembering Kathy Sward on the 6th of January. It is still hard to believe one is not going to round a corner in Muir Beach and see her. When you ran into Kathy, she would stop in surprise, her eyebrows would shoot up and her 1,000 watt smile would remind you what true community kindness felt like in Muir Beach. She retained a little girl optimism, like everything would always be okay. She had a natural curiosity, and a natural artistic bent. On her death certificate under profession, it says “Quilter.” I loved that. Her creativity, her generosity, her friendliness, her love of this place she called home and her devotion to John John and her family ... all of this

I remember from my first days here. She made one feel loved.

We miss you Kathy.

**Kathryn Ann Sward**

1944 - 2022



*Kathy with Harvey and Gerry at the Christmas Fair, Muir Beach 2017.*

*Photo by Beth Nelson*

## Perfect Conditions for an Elk Hunt *By Jeff Swarts*

It snowed the past three days. It was the first real snowfall of the fall. I had paid \$675 for an over the counter Colorado public land bull elk tag, just because of the inclement weather. When it snows, the elk migrate down from the higher elevations making them more accessible to old solo hunters like myself.

I headed out just before dawn. There was 4" of fresh snow on the ground. I headed up the mountain via a deep stream bed to hide my flashlight beam. A sharp 20-degree breeze out of the East stung my face. Eventually after gaining some elevation and distance from my camp, I began pushing a group of does in and around the juniper trees dotting the rolling hills below the huge mesas that make up the south west Colorado landscape. I noticed a coyote doing the same as he kept a careful eye on me.

Then my colorful hike turned from watching the morning glory: a sunrise of red bands across the sky with the colorful scattered clouds and the symphony of deer bounding through the fresh snow... to business. I had just crossed two fresh Bull Elk tracks!

Their tracks told me a lot. Apparently my slow push of the does with my Coyote hunting partner had alarmed them as well. They hurried up the mountain directly into the wind, criss-crossing each other and often stopping to look back to try to see what was causing the commotion.

They weren't too alarmed. They had not seen me, but the does were nervous and that made them nervous. After an hour or so I noticed their pace had slowed to a casual walk.

Then they curved their path to the north east looking for another bedding spot while weaving in and out of tight brush and timber.

Realizing they were feeling safe enough to bed down, again I moved off their trail slipping carefully to the north, perpendicular to their path, and the wind. I knew that they would want to see their back trail when they bedded so I planned to approach them from a different angle, but I also had to be careful to not disturb any other bedded animals like the main herd and deer that could ruin my hunt. After sneaking 40 yards or so I changed my direction back to the east where I thought they could be. I looked earnestly up the hill for the bedded bulls amongst the sage and juniper trees walking ever so carefully, I knew I was close.

Then as I slowly stepped out from behind a Juniper tree the still bedded bulls swung their enormous antlered heads towards me. I froze. They saw movement but they weren't sure what I was through the thin branches. I took a free hand 100 yard shot at the closer bull through the dancing bows. At the rifles report they both jumped to their feet and headed back they way they had come. I quickly threw another shell into the chamber, as they ran through the trees along their original path I fired again, the impact of this round caused a glistening snow cloud to fly up off one of the bull's hide and hang in the morning sunlight.

They continued to run and so did I, paralleling them for about 40 yards. Then seeing a bit of an opening I dropped to one knee. Luckily one stopped just after I did and I could

just make his lower half out through the trees. I quickly took another 100 yard shot and saw him fall to the ground without any movement. I shot him right through the heart.

With ringing in my ears and the deafening stillness around me I slowly climbed the hill to the Bull and admired his massive set of 7x6 antlers pointing down the hill towards me. Upon further inspection I noticed that my bull had one slug in his chest and one through the neck, yet I saw blood splattered snow and another set of tracks continuing past my bull and up into the forest. I realized I had also shot the other bull through the lungs. (The one the snow flew off off). So I hadn't missed on my first shot after all.

I have learned not to push a wounded bull; they are very hardy and I would lose him for sure. They have been known to run for miles on adrenaline.

After breaking my Bull down: gutting, skinning, quartering and hanging him in a nearby tree I headed down the mountain with 50 lbs of boneless meat.

I returned the following morning and began to follow the blood splattered snow and tracks. I crept slowly through the thick timber after the wounded bull. He was hit bad. He could only walk 15 feet or so before collapsing and creating a melted snow bed yet continued slowly up hill.

After 20 minutes or so I jumped him out of his bed. He went 30 yards and froze looking back at me. I could just make him out through the dense branches. I put a second slug through him diagonally and dropped him.

*Continued on next page*

*Continued from previous page*

He was a handsome 6x5 bull. My buddy and his partner tagged him, quartered him and packed him out. He is officially their bull and will feed their young families this winter.

It's unfortunate that I had mistakenly shot and hit both animals, but luckily it worked out for everyone but the two Bulls.

After 3 days and 5 pack trips at a mile and a half from the truck my bull was down the mountain. I managed to get him out all on my own. Then after a very long day of driving, 4 days of aging and two days of butchering, grinding and wrapping my freezer was full. I had 200 ponds of steak and burger.

This latest hunt remains fresh and present in my memory as all my hunts do and gives me a complex set of feelings of accomplishment and sadness. I am much more hesitant to kill now that I've mastered the art. And try to take mature animals that have had a long life. After all, we are all the same. We all suffer when we lose our loved ones.

This fact was very apparent when I was packing my first load out. I had his antlers over my pack as I walked past a herd of 9 cows and a spike. They stood and watched me go by before trotting off. They recognized that I was no longer a threat to them but were sad for their loss. We saw it in each other's eyes.

Harvesting your own meat is very ancient and unsanitary compared to the way we deal with modern domestic animals and meat production. But it is an intrinsic part of our human nature that continues to be passed down through the generations for a fortunate few.

This is a continuation of the VW bug story published in the August, 2023 Beachcomber issue: *"The Other John Muir"* by Durand Begault with Charlene Modena

*Steve Somers writes:* I took possession of my first of two old bugs in the summer of 1969. It was a pale blue circa 1959 without functioning tail lights that my older brother drove from LA where he was doing his Alternative Service to Alaska then back East. I think it cost me a well-worn 35MM camera in an even up trade. I am amazed to this day that a nice New Jersey shore cop didn't ticket my 17 year old self and my then girlfriend, now wife, Kate, as we rolled along the beachfront in the dark looking for a place to throw down a sleeping bag. It died shortly thereafter.

Next came a dull red '64 with rotten floor boards, soft brakes that I had to curl my foot under each time to pump, windshield wipers that had to be supplemented by a gloved hand during major snowstorms in Upstate NY, and a starter that often required me to crawl under the car in frozen weather to hit the solenoid with a wrench. The alternative was to jumpstart it myself by getting it rolling enough for me to jump in and jam it into second gear, whereupon it mostly started like a charm. I would drive it up steep Adirondack/Catskill/Pocono highway hills in the truck lane maxing out at 30-40 mph and down the other side in the passing lane at 70-80 mph all the way home to Philadelphia. The strain to get uphill was worse with a passenger – forget having two. The worst though was my anti-war, shagged self having to jumpstart it down Kate's driveway in front of her conservative Republican father. Looks like we all lived to write about it.



*Steve Somers' Bug; the flower is a Eugene McCarthy campaign sticker, 1968.*

*Another survivor writes:* About that gas pedal: the bug accelerator cable was a tensioned wire with one end attached to the throttle control on the engine and the other attached to the gas pedal with a simple hook....the cable traversed through a narrow tube, and when the hook broke, the cable would disappear into it. To keep driving after such a mishap, I wrapped one end of some fishing line to the engine throttle, and then along the outside of the car attached the other end to the rear view mirror... to drive, I rolled down the window and pushed down on the fishing line to accelerate! That made shifting with the right hand while steering with the knees challenging.





## 4th of July on Little Beach, c. 1967

*By Charlie Stump*

Early in the day Mike (Moore), Ducci (Mike Banducci), Todd (Lamont), Bruce (Balfour) and I dug a big hole in the sand on Little Beach - large enough for all of us to sit in - my green, army surplus folding shovel coming in handy. We topped the pit with a sheet of plywood and then covered that with sand. No one else would know it was there. Off to the side, we dug and covered a trench to serve as both our entrance and the point of departure for the firecrackers we would chuck out, scaring the daylighters out of anyone walking over our munitions post.

It had been Todd's idea to go to Chinatown in San Francisco to get firecrackers for the 4th of July - quite an undertaking for preteens. Mike, Bruce and I joined him in hitchhiking to Tam Junction and hopping a bus to the city. Chinatown was intimidating to rural kids our age, but Todd - with his in-your-face demeanor - approached a young teen on the street and within minutes we purchased a brick of Black Cat firecrackers.

As we constructed our subterranean den, Mayor Joe and John Mello came in from a morning on the water carrying wet, slimy burlap sacks full of ling cod, rock cod and cabezon. They hoisted their small red and white motor boat into the boat hanger and told us that this 4th of July fish stew would be the best ever. I cringed. Fish stew was not high on my list of party food. Joe mentioned that they had come across Tom Norton swimming way out beyond the cove by Bird Rock and Tom told them his beans were simmering on the stove. Now that sounded really good to me.

Our underground lair worked well until Ducci decided to toss in a lit firecracker as the rest of us prepared to climb out. It had a short fuse and exploded before we could cover our ears. I couldn't hear. For a while at least. Deafness was followed by a ringing sound, and then at last, by the muted sound of Ducci's voice asking if I was okay. I shook it off as Mike, Bruce, Todd and I treated Ducci to a long and vulgar verbal thrashing. As he laughed, we pinned Ducci down to deliver titty twisters and cow bites, thereby ratifying our revenge.

Late in the afternoon groups of families and neighbors strolled along Sunset Way and down Cove Lane to Little Beach, carrying tin-foil covered ceramic bowls and black iron pot filled with food. Saw horses were set up

on the sand with sheets of plywood on top for all the casseroles, salads, jugs of wine, tasty desserts, and at one end a big punch barrel. The latter was off limits to the kids because it contained Mayor Joe's Portuguese Pink, to the delight of the adults. We kids were satiated with Kool-Aid and Fresca. The annual bonfire was built and carefully tended by the grownups. These communal incendiary gatherings predated the formation of the Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department - the adults were extremely mindful to avoid a brush fire. A couple of black pots filled with John Mello's fish stew and Tom Norton's beans were placed on flat rocks near the fire to keep warm. The kids huddled around roasting hot dogs and marshmallows, Todd with three hot dogs and two marshmallows on his one stick.

The hot beans and roasted wieners would burn our hands through the flimsy paper plates we used, and if not careful, the plastic spoons would get soft. Mike, Bruce and I carefully placed our plates on the sand and waited for the food to cool, blowing on small spoonfuls before eating. Always on the lookout for Todd, a notorious prankster, because he might kick sand on our plates. The saving grace being that Todd loved to eat and would often be occupied for a time with his own plate.

As dusk turned to darkness, Mayor Joe - using his cigar - ignited cone fountains at the water's edge. Gordon Mosteller climbed to the top of the boat hanger to shoot off fireworks over the cove. They hissed and whistled and the water and cliffs lit up with the brightly colored explosions. The younger of us burned sparklers, black snakes and Black Cat firecrackers. The teenagers - my brother Larry among them - had barrel bombs and cherry bombs, and occasionally accommodated the little kids' requests to light a whole pack of firecrackers at once.

With the last of the fireworks exploded and the food and drink devoured, we ran and played in the dark while the adults packed up the food containers and garbage. The saw-horses and sheets of plywood were carried by the men to Mayor Joe's green pickup truck parked at the bottom of Cove Lane. Kids were called by their parents, and neighbors - laughing and talking loudly - finally said goodnight. Our hidden munitions fort would collapse with the morning tide. Next July we would build it again.

## “MAKE A JOYFUL SOUND...”

By Beth Nelson

On 7 January, the day after Epiphany, the Pelican Inn was once again host to The Muir Beach Grass Band - an ever changing array of talented local musicians and singers bringing joy to the garden room during the bleak days of winter. (Did you know that Harvey Pearlman and Jim White built the Garden Room?)

Friends, families, children and patrons of the Pelican Inn were dancing in the aisles and closing out the Christmas holidays with happiness. Community, fellowship, food, drink and conversation all mixed together in what Muir Beachers do best. Hidden talents surprised us, as with so many things at Muir Beach. Multi-generational, the way we like it. My grandmother would have called it “Good clean fun.”

It’s nice to be back at the Peli where over the years we’ve convened for many different groups and reasons. Remember the Ladies Night from about 2009? I was told by someone once that there were Freezer Parties, when the power would go out and people would bring their food to cook. The Muir Beach Grass Band can be added to the list of enjoyments at our only “local.” Certainly it has been an enhancement for the neighborhood.

There is a wonderful song the band sings at their finale each time they perform. It’s called “Make a Joyful Sound” by the String Cheese Incident. As we start putting on our coats and scarves for the cold walk home, everyone starts clapping and singing with the band these lovely Words... “Na na na na na na naaaaahh MAKE A JOYFUL SOUND!”

And that is exactly what it is, a joyful sound.

*Band photo by May Liang, additional photos by Robin Terra*



## 2023 Muir Beach Real Estate Recap



Muir Beach had 3 home sales in 2023, which is a typical amount. The average Muir Beach sold price per sq. ft. in 2023 was in the mid \$1,300 range, which reflects just one of the many ways we determine value. Insurance companies were writing fewer new policies on California homes in general. Loan rates were higher, which meant some Marin buyers could not qualify for homes they wanted. Rentals became more popular. While the rest of Marin slowed a bit in 2023, Muir Beach and its coastal cousins stayed on a typical steady track and even had some records broken!

—Debra Allen, Realtor  
DRE#02083469,  
Coldwell Banker, Mill Valley

Photo by Debra Allen

## AWE

I imagine most of you feel as I do: so thankful to have the wonders of the world right near at hand! Now we can literally feel even better as we learn that science is catching up with what seems so obvious: **awe** makes us happier AND healthier, slows time and fosters a sense of connection. We seem to be more generous, too!

Our “home habitat” is full of the classic scenes of **awe**: sunsets, crashing surf, redwoods. It is real and although it seems watching a video can bring on similar sensations and responses, it is nothing like the authentic thing (after all, the real thing has negative ions, the act of breathing the bracing air and opportunities to volunteer).

Learn more about this in a recent article that offers specific examples of how to seek, cultivate and share **awe**, and the story is set in **awesome** Muir Woods!

### 5 Ways to Chase Awe at Muir Woods National Monument · National Parks Conservation Association ([npca.org](http://npca.org))

I responded after reading this article by experiencing Muir Woods with a fresh, beginners mind and it inspired me to develop my own public programming. One example is when I invite the public to give a gift to the forest with each breath of CO2 while accepting the reciprocity of O2 from the trees: letting the woods feel/fill you with **ahhhawe!** Usually this comes after a reminder of photosynthesis, the threats of climate change and how redwoods offer so much to help Gaia.

Here’s my list of **awe** that I often feel at Muir Beach: pausing to listen to the frog chorus; watching the fog roll in; finding an intact sand dollar; from the cliff bench waving to someone friendly below on beach; seeing a message in the sand and making one in return; and the cloud and surf symphony. I hope you let me know what your **awe-some** experiences are!

Every moment of **awe** is renewing, refreshing, plus reassuring, especially during these times when Rachel Carson, in *The Sense of Wonder* (for me I might now refer to this book as *The Sense of Awe*) eloquently writes: “Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is symbolic as well as actual beauty in the migration of the birds (and monarchs!), the ebb and flow of tides, the folded bud ready for spring. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrain of nature - the assurance that dawn comes after night, spring after winter.”

Mia Monroe  
Marin Community Liaison  
Outdoor Recreation Planner  
Planning and Environmental Division  
Golden Gate National Recreation Area  
National Park Service



# The Lunatic Fringe

By Gerry Pearlman

Long ago and far away, when I was growing up in the last century, there used to be a place called the “lunatic fringe”. This is where most extreme views were comfortably ensconced. They were comfortable enough in this enclosure; and more of a source of amusement to the rest of us. So what happened that allowed the lunatic fringe to all of a sudden become mainstream; and a legitimate source of information for all who cared to listen to what formally had been considered mere ranting and raving.

I suspect the emergence of the lunatic fringe as a credible source of information is coincidental with the rise of social media like Twitter; and establishment of powerful stations like Fox news who chose to champion them on the airwaves. It is not so far back that one does not remember Trump’s extensive use of Twitter as a platform to reply to his critics of the time.

As for Fox New’s adoption of an alternate reality, it seems like they found themselves a gold mine that they could milk for the audience share that governs these matters. So they just kept on running with their exclusive support of this very bad station. Even losing a defamation suit that cost them dearly could not slow them down.

It should be noted that members of the extreme right were not the exclusive inhabitants of the lunatic fringe. The extreme left could also lay claim to membership, but not in such great numbers as the extreme right.

If it is true that the platforms of social media and powerful broadcast entities like the Murdoch empire were in the main responsible for anyone escaping the lunatic fringe label, then it would be wise to begin thinking about a good telecommunications policy for a society. It would have to be something that takes into consideration and does not run afoul of the second amendment rights protecting free speech.

But it must also be able to favor truth over lies; and not give lies equal status with truth. The media create the reality we have to live with and it would be foolhardy to underestimate their importance in influencing the society.

Rules governing fairness and balance have to be created and in some cases reinstated that make clear the difference between truth and Bull Shit. (The latter being knowing you are lying when you make a statement which you claim is true, but you know is false) Eliminating bull shit may be hard on the lunatic fringe, but certainly make life better for the rest of us.

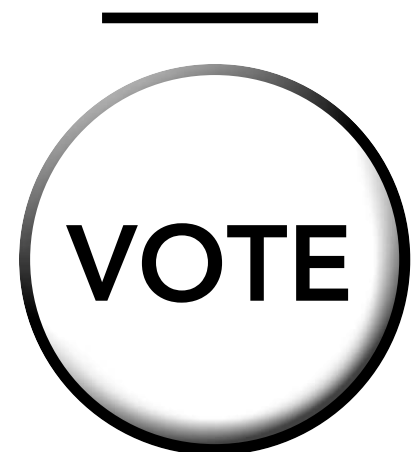
Another important reform that would make life easier for the rest of us would be **establishing election day as a national holiday**. If voting is to be taken seriously than serious steps should be taken to make it more accessible, not less so.

Streamlining registration allowing teens to register before turning 18 is one way toward greater accessibility; voting by mail with

free postage another. Restoring voting rights to the formerly incarcerated still another way along with strengthening civic education; and improving physical accessibility would also help accessibility. Offering absentee ballots and implementing accessible voting machines as well as easy access to voting locations by offering transportation are other ways to increase voter participation.

19 million registered voters did not vote in the 2016 election and 33 million did not even register to vote in that election. Often times non voters of one type or another outnumbered those who did manage to register and vote.

**But most of all making voting day a national holiday so working people have ample time to understand the issues; and to vote without having to stand in long lines after working all day is the most significant way to increase voter participation.**



# Home Again

By Anne Jeschke

As Paul and I drove past the Pelican and started up the hill toward Three Corners, I looked in the rearview mirror and marveled at the lovely beach and reminisced about the sweet community of friends we had lived among for 24 wonderful years. Friends asked how we could ever pack up and leave such a beautiful place. Our grandchildren were sure we wouldn't carry through with this disastrous plan. Our four middle-aged children were honestly relieved. So were we to leave behind house repairs, management and increasingly difficult landscaping chores.

We change with time and so do our abilities and needs. We were clear that the time had arrived for us to move to a place where we could age safely, easily, and joyfully. Our destination, Enso Village in the Sonoma County town of Healdsburg, appeared perfect for our needs. A newly developed project of San Francisco Zen Center, Enso Village is founded on Buddhist and Quaker principles. Many of its residents, age 60-plus, were long time residents of Green Gulch. The large Enso complex has 221 apartment/residences for independent living, 30 assisted living and 24 memory care units. It sprawls across 15 acres in Sonoma wine country and like Muir Beach, has a strong sense of community.

As a new community – not all construction is complete – residents are eager to meet new people, start new interest groups, and take part in exercise, art, music, and meditation, among many choices. Not an “old folks’ home,” Enso is full of active



*Intro to Enso*

people wanting to work and play together as they handle the new needs of their later years.

Residents are expected to initiate and lead new interest groups, such as hiking, kayaking, trips to art museums, lectures and discussions, bridge club, book club— literally anything you can find others who want to join with you to take part.

Of course, we have a lovely dining room with a very talented chef. Meals are veggie forward, according to what is seasonably available, but carnivores can enjoy a really good burger or a fresh fish taco. Adjacent to the main dining room is a bistro that is totally vegetarian, and should be open by spring. A gorgeous new zendo sits in the central courtyard. There is a yoga room, an exercise room, a large salt water swimming pool, and a still developing kitchen garden.

Pets are welcome and dog walkers amble a network of walking paths that circle the community, wind through oak woodlands and meander through a neighboring vineyard. For those who worry about fire danger in Sonoma, they are building a fire station just across the road from us.



*Our living room*

Paul and I met in Cambridge, Mass, and, as young adults, were excited by the energy, atmosphere and possibilities of a dense urban area. We loved our first California home in San Anselmo, and then raised our family in Larkspur. Retiring to Muir Beach was like the frosting on the cake – beautiful surroundings and a community of friends. Now we feel very lucky to be at Enso Village making new friends, learning new skills, and exploring new interests. How lucky can you get to have lived in such beautiful places, surrounded by dear friends? We're at home again!

Addendum: We hear that Healdsburg gets downright hot in August, when Muir Beach gets downright foggy. We love the fog. So, if you're looking for free dog or house sitting (and you don't mind our bringing our dog Milo along), just give us a call and we'll see if we can work something out. We'd love to spend time in the old 'hood!

*Continued on next page*

Continued from previous page



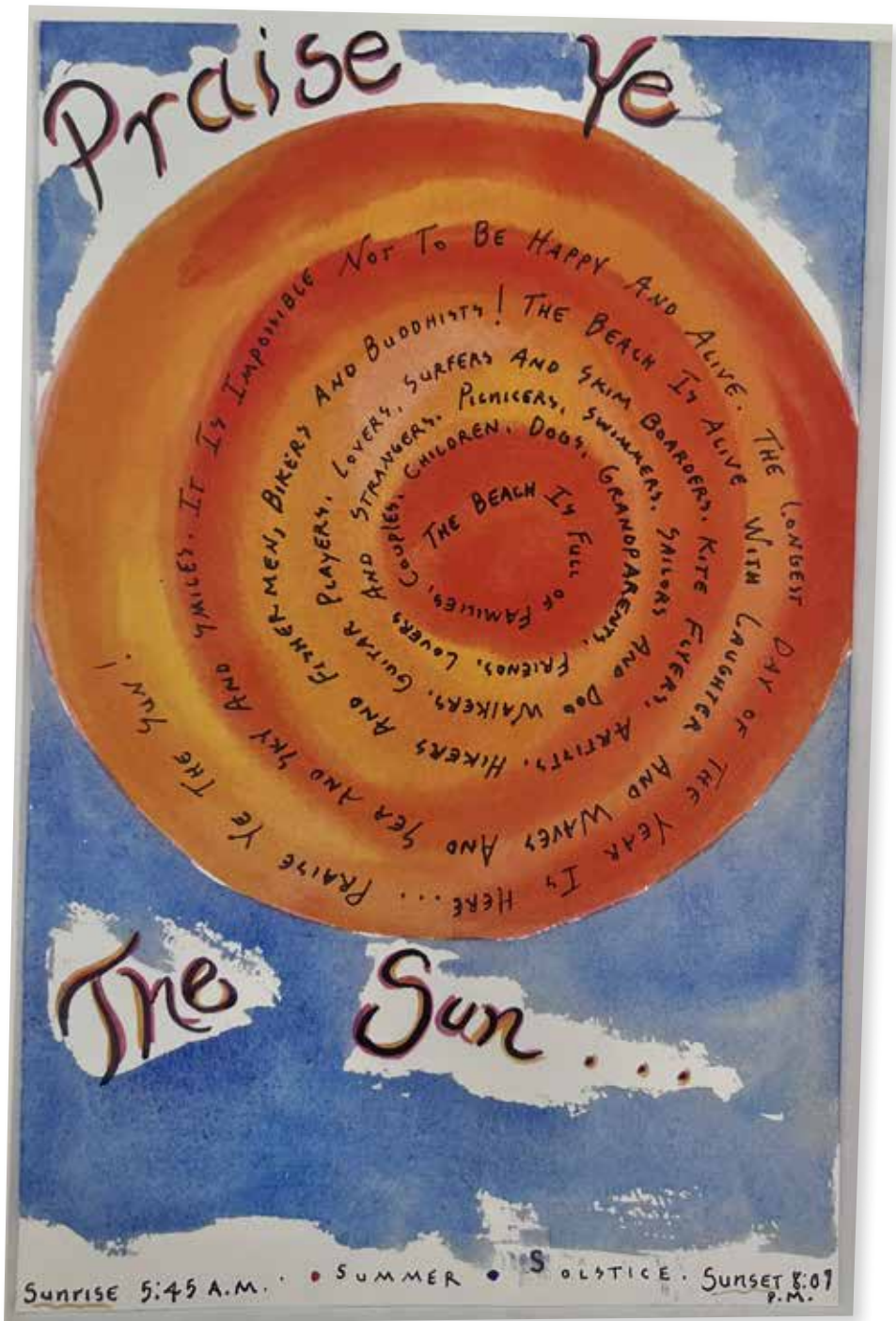
Paul and Anne and Milo, photo by Suzanne Jeschke, additional photos by Anne Jeschke



In the back the as yet unfinished salt water pool with wall that can be open or closed. And in front, the kitchen garden that will supplement local produce.



The zendo and garden with residences in the background.



**Praise Ye the Sun**, Solstice 2009, Muir Beach, painted at Gerry Pearlman's house. Beth Nelson



# SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 50th Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's Barbecue Sunday, May 26, Memorial Weekend!

*By Denise Lamott*

Enjoy killer live music, delicious food, tasty craft beers, premium wine, and, most importantly, community bonding. The Firemen's Barbecue is a fun, day-long benefit concert for our Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department and a favorite Memorial Weekend tradition in Marin. Keeping the 50-year groove going, Andre Pessis and his All-Stars will return with their singalong classic rock and R&B tunes. Marin County's beloved funkmasters Vinyl will kick off the afternoon and start the party.

The 50th MB BBQ coincides with the groundbreaking of the new firehouse near the Overlook. This year will be not only extra special but crucial in hitting our fundraising goals, and we'd love the whole community to get involved to help make this the best barbecue yet! It takes a village to put this on!



Preparations are underway, and we welcome all to join in and find a volunteer job that suits your style.

Please contact [denise@deniselamottpr.com](mailto:denise@deniselamottpr.com) to find out how you can help. Stay tuned for further details on this year's event. Thank you!



*Photos from the 2023 Muir Beach  
Volunteer Firemen's BBQ*