

# BEACHCOMBER

SINCE 1946





# JUST DO IT!

## The First Annual Muir Beach GoBAG EXTRAVAGANZA

by Sarah Nesbitt

*It was a bright Sunday morning when Kerry Wynn stood before us in her carefully considered cotton khakis and strong boots. She welcomed the Muir Beach community to the first Annual GoBag Extravaganza, knotted her bandana, tucked her “pet” pink rabbit into her GoBag, put on her protective shades and showed us how it’s done.*

*Kerry is our Muir Beach Disaster Council Lead. Together, she and the Disaster Liasons serve as the neighborhood branch of the Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department. On April 21st she and her team gave residents the opportunity to learn more about how to prepare for evacuation in an emergency. One sure way to accomplish this is to pack your GoBag.*

**When disaster hits, the time to prepare is over.**



*Kerry Wynn, MBDC Lead*



*MBDC Liaisons from left to right: Shawn, Shoshanna, Chris, Keith, Kerry, Nikola, Robin, Susannah, Sarah, Liz, Alexis, Danny, Denise*  
**Muir Beach Disaster Council (Not Pictured: Steve S, Skip R, Nicki C)**

*Photos taken by Sarah Nesbitt*  
*Continued on next page*

## **Just Do It!** *continued from page 2*

If you've checked your mailbox and inbox in recent months, you'll know we're working to educate our community about Disaster Preparedness. The GoBag Extravaganza was the ideal occasion to do just that. Thank you to community members who were able to attend the event. Those who couldn't, we trust you've (nonetheless) packed your GoBags.

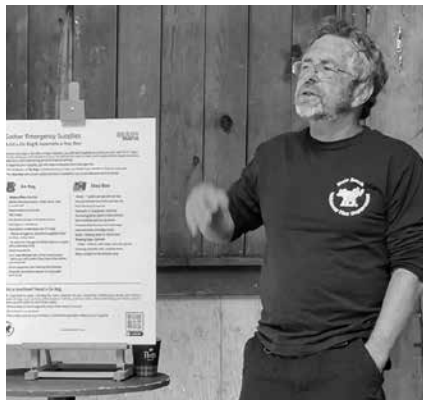
The morning proved productive as residents examined a range of GoBag examples, from home-spun DIY packs, to bags offered as gifts from KQED Public Radio and the more high-end two-day/two-people survival kits. The comprehensive CERT pack also attracted attention and we remind you to consider Community Emergency Response Team training at: **community.fema.gov**

In the Fall, we will gather again to plan for sheltering in place and making a Stay Box. Please keep checking for messages from your Disaster Council. We aim to disseminate missives from the Office of Emergency Services. But we cannot pack a GoBag for every single one of our residents. (And sharing isn't always an option.)

### **We appreciate all who recognize preparedness begins at home.**

All residents should ALWAYS have an evacuation bag prepared and stored safely in the home. And a shelter-in place box with food, water, pet food and supplies. That pink rabbit in Kerry's GoBag represented your pet and loved ones, too. As she pointed out, acting swiftly in an emergency according to a plan you've made in advance can save lives.

Being together at the Muir Beach Community Center was a helpful step towards making you, your family,



*Chris Gove, Chief MBVFD*

friends and neighbors stronger and safer. Don't wait until it is too late. Remember: **In an emergency call 911!** Don't call Chris. The active chain of emergency response professionals will be more efficiently set in motion and help will find you faster.

It's easy to sign up for more information at:

**www.ReadyMarin.org**

The AlertMarin Emergency Notification System is site specific, so it can relay important information to you that is relevant to your precise geographical area in the event of an emergency:

**emergency.marincounty.org**

If you don't know your immediate neighbors, why not make this year the one when you introduce yourself? Be proactive and check for information about the Stay Box gathering this Fall. Planning is everything and we're ready to help you. Yes, Chris is here too and reminds us again to call 911 in an Emergency, first. And that extra pink rabbit pack? Make a plan for pets, Kerry and her team can't corral all of our loved ones when the time comes. It's over to you and your household to step up, grab your GoBags and get going...

If you'd like to connect with your MBDC Liaison and you don't know who they are, please email: **kerrywynn2@gmail.com**

### **Whatever you decide, do it now!**

Here are 5 simple steps:

1. Sign up for alerts
2. Make a plan
3. Pack a GoBag
4. Make a Stay Box
5. Connect with Community

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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 180 (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

*Bistro Monday*

*April 29, 2024*

*Photo by Kate Somers*

## THE BISTRO RISES AGAIN

*by Nina Vincent*

As with so many things that were lost and disappeared during the Pandemic, the Muir Beach Wednesday morning Bistro sank beneath the sands of Covid and Caution unceremoniously buried with other community centered, in person events. Lucky for us there are a number of Muir Beachers who are dedicated to not letting community die and one sure fire way to keep community alive...perhaps one of the only ways to keep community alive...is to keep the people gathering together to create shared experience and meaningful connection.

The Wednesday Bistro was facilitated at one time by Persis Norton and Lonna Richmond, Kathy Sward (and others I may be forgetting) and offered the tastiest ginger scones on the west coast, made by our very own Nancy Knox. Those pre pandemic Bistros attended by a colorful cast of Muir Beach

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*Reprinted from Beachcomber Sept/Oct 1989, Illustration by Larry Yamamoto, created for the Bistro Grand Opening, when Bistro was advertised to be Thursday and Saturday morning 9:30 to 11 ish. Coffee or tea was \$1.00 first cup, Croissant \$1.00 each.*

*Bistro continued from previous page*

characters ranging from newborns and toddlers to the aged and aging, died with the Pandemic. And with the loss of Bistro were also the losses of our Bistro matrons and neighbors Kathy and Nancy.

My time at the Bistro began before Eli and lasted well beyond. So sacred to me in fact, I let his preschool teachers know that Eli would not be coming in on Wednesdays as that was a “community day” for our family. There were objections...he needs continuity, routine...I was having none of it. “He needs to know the value of community” I assured them. And as luck would have it, everyone survived and Harvey, Eli and I were Bistro regulars. Eli and I would stay well past the end of Bistro as the kitchen closed down, and the Quilters began setting up for lunch and quilting at the BIG table. In his younger years, Eli and I would stay until nap time...sometimes past 1pm. When Eli was old enough to go to school and I started my Acupuncture practice in Mill Valley, I let my office mate know that I would not be needing the office on Wednesdays. Wednesdays were my days off... I had Bistro with my community to attend and that was a priority. It remained as such through TJ’s early years as well.

My memories of Bistro span over thirty years (I believe). I smile when I think back on images of community children weaving in and out of their parents and community family’s legs circling around for bits of scone while dodging the hungry dogs who targeted the low dangling food that hung from their short shrubbed bodies and tender tiny fingers. Of course, the tinier tots would happily let canine teeth and tongues snatch their bits of scone and they could be heard giggling as they waddled off in search of more. As I recall Janice and Maury would buy an extra scone especially for their long haired Golden Buddy.

Over the years through new births, losses, triumphs, and juicy gossip Muir Beach residents have gathered to share, support, and commune together at the Bistro. It was so much more than a quick stop at the MBCC for so many of us. It was a time to be with our Muir Beach family. We grew together as community and friends over the years. My kids saw Kathy and Judith Yamamoto as community grandparents. Lonna, our lover of kids and dogs alike, holds such a special place in Eli’s heart. Bistro, for me, is

right up there with the MBVFDBBQ in terms of cementing generations of community together. I didn’t realize how much I missed it until Monday morning of April 29th at 10am when Harvey Pearlman and Laurie Piel graciously hosted the all-new POST PANDEMIC BISTRO brought back to life by the Friends and Neighbors of Muir Beach.

My heart skipped a beat when I entered the room Monday morning and saw my neighbors Roger, Charlene, Joey, Kate, Bryce, David, Laurie, Harvey and quite a few others chatting together over coffee, tea, scones, bagels with lox, and donuts!!! What a spread. I missed seeing the little ‘uns running about and hope that some of our newer residents can find a way to join in on this most amazing Monday morning Bistro bonanza.

As I so often say, Muir Beach is a unique and magical community and what has made it so for me are the steady traditions of gathering together in places like the Bistro. I hope to see those of you who can attend...especially those new residents with babies and toddlers... at the now resurrected Monday Morning 10am Bistro. Let’s continue to treasure and grow together as a strong and beloved community here in Muir Beach. Give your children and yourselves the sacred sense of community that lives here beside the ocean and amid the hills. Let’s bring the generations of community together again to celebrate this place and one another.

As Bryce Browning so beautifully wrote:

“Had a fine time at Muir Beach’s weekly coffee-klatch this morning-- long may it thrive. This is the much-deserved revival of an old institution, where we regularly come together, schlump on the furniture and freely talk with each other without conforming to some cluttered agenda. In my view this is exactly why we built the Community Center in the first place.”

COME TO BISTRO FOR THE FIRST EVER

**BISTRO jam tasting experience**

TO BE HELD AT REGULAR MONDAY BISTRO





*The current Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department Barn, photo by Denise Lamott.*

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## New fire station planned for Muir Beach volunteers

*by Sam Mondros*

*Reprinted with permission from the Point Reyes Light, April 24, 2024. Reporter Sam Mondros*

The Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department is moving one mile west from its historic headquarters in a century-old barn to a new prefabricated station two and a half times the size on a plot of land with a sweeping panorama of Mount Tamalpais. Last week, the Board of Supervisors approved \$100,000 toward the project, closing a funding gap and boosting an effort 15 years in the making.

At about 1,000 square feet—the average size of a classroom—the current station is too small to hold equipment and the department’s two trucks, said Chris Gove, the department’s chief.

“We’ve really enjoyed being down there, but the fact is that half of our

equipment is sitting outside and we have no real place to stay,” he told the Light. “This new station is going to be a huge benefit for us.”

This summer, the Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen’s Association will kick off a campaign to raise \$600,000 more in order to outfit the new station with lockers, tools, generators, solar panels and other hardware that will “make our fire station whole in a way we’ve never had before,” Mr. Gove said. “We’ve been working on a deficit for so many decades, it would be nice to have a real firehouse.”

Muir Beach is the smallest of West Marin’s volunteer fire departments, its dozen volunteers serving a town of roughly 300 residents and 160 homes. According to Mr. Gove, the station gets between 80 and 100 calls a year, most related to injuries that happen within Muir Woods National

Monument, which saw nearly 800,000 visitors in 2022.

The current station, built as a creamery by a Portuguese rancher in the late 1800s, sits across Highway 1 from the Pelican Inn and has housed the headquarters for the department since its founding in 1970. The department leases the barn from the National Park Service, which designated the building as a historic structure in 2007. That status has prevented needed renovations.

Because the barn is poorly ventilated and also home to coastal critters, trainings are conducted outside. The barn has no running water, so earlier this month, when toxic chemicals from treated wood had seeped into the fibers of the crews’ uniforms while fighting a structure fire, volunteers resorted to cleaning their uniforms in their homes.

*Continued on next page*



*Original photos by Julian Knox.  
Digitized photos by Malcolm Collier.  
(at left) The gas pump stands in front of the barn window. (above) View from the barn back shows the hole in the roof where Julian Knox fell through and broke two ribs. Atop the hill are two watertanks, and few trees and houses. Submitted by Michael Moore*

#### *Remodeling the Creamery into the Fire Barn, 1972*

The new headquarters will be located at 87 Seacape Drive, across from the parking lot that leads to the Muir Beach overlook. It will be fitted with central heating, running water, two bay doors with ample space for both trucks, an emergency shower, a washer and dryer and a place for training exercises.

For the last several years, the department has been stowing away excess funds to save up for the new headquarters. Plans for a station closer to the current one were thwarted in 2015, after environmental concerns prevented the department from receiving a coastal permit. The Seacape Drive site, where the department has a water tank, has belonged to the department for years. The project was awarded a coastal permit in 2021 and the department is hoping to have a building permit by the summer so its volunteers can be fully moved in by the end of the year.

The Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's Association has raised \$300,000 for

the project and the department has saved \$200,000 in funds from the Muir Beach Community Services District. Mr. Gove said the department wasn't eligible for grants for construction and design due to the village's high median annual income of \$198,000.

Except for Mr. Gove, who gets an annual stipend of \$30,000, Muir Beach's firefighters are all volunteers. The department evolved out of the Bello Beach Volunteer Fire Department, which charged a subscription to property owners who were members of the Bello Beach Club.

According to historical accounts, the Bello Beach department refused to respond to two home fires because the owners were not members of the club. "One outraged Muir Beach resident snatched the keys to the fire engine and raced to the scene of the second fire, but flames had already consumed the structure," reads an account on the fire department's website.

Locals were livid and eventually formed their own department headed by a young John Sward, who collected rag tag equipment left over from the defunct Hamilton Airfield in Novato and bought one of the fire trucks from the Bello Beach department after it disbanded.

Initially focused solely on training for structure fires, Muir Beach volunteers now undergo extensive training to handle a range of emergencies, from wildfires and medical crises to mudslides and search and rescue operations.

Mr. Sward, who worked as chief until 2012 and died in 2022, understood that the soul of the fire department rested in the whole community. In 1974, he founded a Memorial Day barbecue to raise funds for the department. This year marks the 50th anniversary, and Mr. Gove is hoping for a proper turnout on May 26. To learn more, go to <http://www.muirbeachfire.com/bbq.html>

# A Fading Fall Tradition

by Jeff Swarts

I decided to turn my bouncing headlights off since I'm now able to see down the dusty single track road and out into the forest a ways. With dawn breaking around me a thin line of ruby light begins to appear across the top of distant peaks. Sleepily rounding a twilight curve I'm jolted up out of my seat after squarely striking yet another lava rock in the road.

Road hunters made these roads by pushing further into the untracked forests over old logging roads. This portion of the high desert to the east of Mount Shasta is where our family has hunted deer for generations and is full of these winding "hunting" roads. We had names for all of them. Occasionally we would create a new spur or loop and it would be given a name like "Lon's shortcut" to "Charlie's road" where my cousin had pushed a road through to another that went by my Grandparent's old friend, Charlie and his camp. We knew every dirt road and where they ended up in that high desert country. Names like "Fence Line", "High Line", or the "Old Railroad Grade." These names stuck with us since our childhood, where stories matching antlers out in the shed were retold around holiday meals.

As golden morning light continues to filter through the dry scattered timber, highlighting the frost tipped sagebrush, I spot four does with ears pointed at me. They stand, fixated on the loud idle of my pickup disturbing their morning. Looking through the partially rolled down passenger window, I search all

around them with my binoculars for a bedded buck but to no avail. With the heater keeping my lower half warm, the cold air from the open windows bites at my exposed nose and hands as I ease off the brake and move forward.

I continue to creep through the rugged lava- scape. Cresting a small rise whilst scraping past some sage and mountain mahogany, I spot a nice buck in the distance. With his head held high he spins and glides effortlessly through the rough terrain away from me. Immediately I stop the truck, hop out, and run to the nearest opening for a clear shot. I throw my rifle against a burnt snag and wait for him to stop. Right on queue, about 200 yards out, he turns broadside and looks back.

These mule deer must have evolved from experiences that kept them safe from a Modoc archer since the time of these lava flows. But for a scoped rifle hunter it's completely a different matter. My grandfather would say "aim low on the chest of a running buck or you're likely to shoot over them," and "a mule deer will usually turn and look back once he feels he's at a safe distance if he's not spooked too bad." Sure enough, there he is, and here I am. With a shell in the chamber and my .270 held firmly, I ease out a breath, and gently squeeze the trigger delivering a deadly shot through the heart.

Still leaning against the charred snag, I wait.

After welling up with elation at the successful execution, I am quieted by a blanket of remorse. The feeling

creeps in and envelops me like the fine halo of dust floating above my slain buck. I grasp the soothing warmth of the rifle barrel and allow the vail of death to ease over me and my prey. I scan the forest around me and mark this moment.

As the ringing in my ears subsides, and the forest returns to a symphony of bird songs. I approach my trophy.

Reviewing this magnificent buck up close I feel his spiritual presence, thank and bless him for his ultimate sacrifice, remove my knife, and begin my field work.

Road hunting is not trophy hunting, it's meat hunting. Rarely, if ever will you kill a "Trophy" but for many old school western families it's a practical way to spend a vacation with family and a purpose: the purpose of putting venison in the freezer for winter.

After an hour of gutting, dragging and loading my buck into the back of the pickup I loop around to "Boot in the Tree" road and make a right on "Dying Dog" road and head back.

Nearing camp I slow down and pull over as another pickup with a cloud of dust following it is approaching. This hunter politely slows and pulls over to ease by me. Upon seeing the buck in my bed he asks me with a toothless grin, "Did ya catch him crossin?" I smile and reply, "Sure did!" With the fresh hunt replaying over in my mind and the sun getting higher, I roll into camp ready to retell the details and to start the skinning process.

*Continued on next page*



## More musings from *Mia Monroe:*

*Continued from previous page*

This family style hunting is experiencing its sunset days. My grown children always ask for venison steaks when visiting but don't really want, nor have time to hunt. They missed out on the annual fall indoctrination processes I grew up with. With a hunter success rate of only three percent and the odds of drawing a California mule deer tag happening only once every several years, hunting in California has fallen to an all time low.

So it's up to me, my brother and my cousins all in our 60's to help keep this tradition somewhat alive by making the trek up to our old hunting grounds when a tag is drawn. We eat well, reminisce, dig out the old natural spring for the deer, argue over politics, catch up with each other and keep an open invitation for the younger generation to "make the time" to join us while they can.

Our old hunting grounds are now a part of a new proposed park expansion that includes Medicine Lake and Lava Beds National Monument. Similar to the ancient native hunters before me who had their way of life taken from them, I'm sad to lose a way of life I grew up with. On the bright side, we will join our children by turning our rifles in for cameras, and will enjoy the bathrooms and other conveniences that come with an expanded national park.

Coastal visits the last few months have been seasonally dramatic: the beaches had lost much of their sand for awhile, the Farallon Islands often visible and storms had nudged mud slides. Furthermore, I "unearthed" the legendary geologist, Clyde Wahrhaftig's "Notes for Green Gulch-Muir Beach 1994 Field Trip," with its discussions of the Franciscan formation, the coastal processes and the seasonal patterns that move the rocks around not to mention what the creek brings off of Tam! To look at what's underfoot has been fascinating and with some great local examples! And I often note how unique the beach "sands" are at Kirby, Rodeo and TV (have you made a sand mandala?) as well as how different the sands are at Stinson.

This was also stimulated by the debate of when the Anthropocene started, is it really a new epoch and where would be the "golden spike" to decidedly note it in the geologic record...still under discussion! Thank you Mary Ellen Hannibal for bringing it to a general readership.

Maybe my next meanderings will take me from earth to fire, to water and air! But for now I'm going to dig in to PeakHealth 2.0, the latest eco-system assessment from One Tam:

[https://www.onetam.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Peak\\_Health\\_2023\\_FINAL\\_MAR2024.pdf](https://www.onetam.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Peak_Health_2023_FINAL_MAR2024.pdf)

**Note:** *Mia Monroe has retired!*  
Contact [Brian\\_Aviles@nps.gov](mailto:Brian_Aviles@nps.gov)  
for support, assistance.

## HELP WANTED

**Volunteers to assemble the Beachcomber** four times a year (Feb, May, Aug, Nov)  
Interested? Please reply to [editor@muirbeachcomber.com](mailto:editor@muirbeachcomber.com)

Stories and photos are submitted electronically so volunteers will need a computer with Word and Acrobat to view the files, any layout program will do.

Help to keep the Neighborhood News moving forward and shared with our community. Bring your creative vision to the team and help to produce the next issue in August.

Thank you for your consideration.

—Janet Tumpich

**TIDBITS from Beachcomber, Issue 84, February 1982, cover:**

*Save the Beachcomber at the first Champagne Party of the year*

*-- all you can drink for \$5.00.*

*Tuesday, March 2, at Big Beach -- at 10 a.m. All proceeds go to keep the Beachcomber afloat.*

**Page 2:** *Staff and friends of the Beachcomber met recently at the community center for a brainstorming session on the future of the Beachcomber... Those assembled, having by this time consumed severall glasses of wine, reacted enthusiastically to the suggestion of holding a 10 a.m. champagne party the first Tuesday of every month. An evening of gaming was also suggested and will be pursued. The Beachcomber will also produce a flyer to be sent to the whole commnity in the hope of eliciting more interest and more contributors.*

# Critter Report: Resident Pairs Relocate to New Territories

by John Paul

Animals often relocate where they live. Sometimes these movements are local, like to another nearby burrow or nest hole. Other times animals move great distances, as is the case for birds and mammals that migrate annually. Spring marks the return of many migratory birds to Muir Beach, like Wilson's Warblers, Western Flycatchers, and Black-headed Grosbeaks. However, this time also marks the end of winter residency for some of our bird species. For example, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, one of the most abundant songbirds to overwinter in Muir Beach, head to high elevation or high latitude to breed. Similarly, at this time of year, we experience the near-shore migration of mother-calf pairs of Gray whales to feeding grounds in the north Pacific.

Occasionally animals can be found outside the range of where we expect to find them. These 'vagrant' individuals can make quite a splash, like a lone Willow Warbler that showed up at Rodeo Lagoon in fall 2022, or a Dusky Warbler that graced Banducci Rd. for a few days in fall 2015. These small songbirds are native to Eurasia, and distantly related to our New World warbler species. In their native range, Willow and Dusky Warblers are abundant and widespread species. But when these individuals arrive here in coastal California, due to misguided migration, their rarity creates a frenzy in the birding world. Each migration season, especially in the fall, Muir Beach will have visits for a day or two from a number of vagrant 'east-coast' warbler species such as Blackpoll Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, and last

year even a Canada Warbler. While considerably less unusual than the Eurasian species, these individuals are not following the 'typical' migration routes of the majority of their species (often along the east coast or along the contours of the Appalachian or Rocky Mountains) and only a few individuals are seen in our area each year. They make a rest stop to refuel in places like Muir Beach for a day or two, and then continue on their migratory routes to their breeding or wintering grounds.

It is the rare vagrant bird, however, that chooses to make Muir Beach their home for the whole winter. For the last four winters, we have been lucky to have a resident Black-and-white Warbler, a beautiful and unique species that typically winters from southern Florida, Texas, and northern Mexico down to northern South America. Black-and-white Warblers, finely streaked in brilliant black and white as their name would suggest, creep along branches and trunks of trees in search of insects, rather than gleaning the foliage like most of their warbler cousins. Our resident bird of the last few years is an adult male that spends the majority of its winter time actively searching for insects in tangles of willows, dogwood, and alders between the beach parking lot and Redwood Creek. Migratory birds tend to return to very precise locations, so it's likely the same male is returning each year. This last winter we were surprised to find that in addition to our male over-wintering Black-and-white, we found a female as well. A mated pair? Hard to know, and perhaps unlikely, but fun to imagine nonetheless.

Regardless, these two individuals of their species decided to forge a new path, and spend the winter in our beach haven. Eventually I noticed that the female was a banded bird, meaning it had been caught in a mist net and banded by ornithologists. On seeing the report of the banded female, I received a note from Mark Dettling, an Avian Ecologist at Point Blue Conservation, the organization that has run a mist-netting station off of Banducci Rd on Redwood Creek for years. He informed me the team had banded a female Black-and-white Warbler on October 4th. Thus, it's likely our banded female spent October through at least early March in Muir Beach.

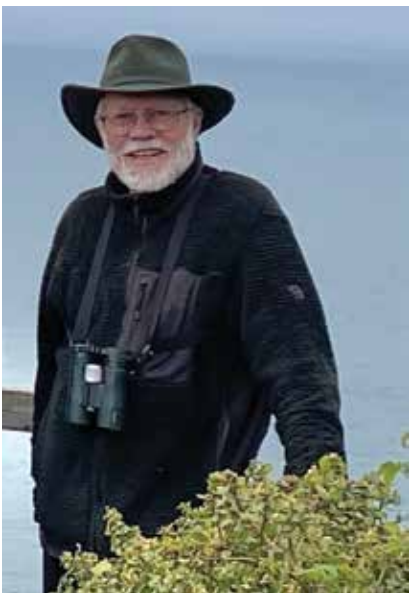
Now that Spring has arrived, our Black-and-white Warblers have likely headed out to their breeding grounds. The last known sighting was on March 11th. We will have to wait until next fall to see if these two return for another winter vacation in Muir Beach.

Looking back, I realized the first Black-and-white Warbler I saw at Muir Beach was on September 25, 2020. I was lucky enough to see it down on Banducci Rd, and I was accompanied by the Critter Report's long-time author and Muir Beach naturalist extraordinaire, Dave MacKenzie. Sadly, like our warbler friends, after almost three decades informing Beachcomber readers about the latest goings-on of Muir Beach's fauna, Dave McKenzie is relocating his territory. But unlike the warblers, their move will be permanent. He and Bonnie, another naturalist who captures the Muir

*Continued on next page*

*Critter Report continued*

Beach landscapes in her splendid watercolors, will be relocating to Berkeley, to be closer to children and grandchildren, and maybe catch a bit more sun. Since the mid-1990s Dave has been writing the Critter Report, we are grateful for all the insights over the years and for the friendship. We wish them well on their migration and relocation to their new territory!



*Critter Report author emeritus Dave MacKenzie. Photo by Phoebe LaMountain.*



*Black-and-white Warbler in Muir Beach, December 17th, 2022. Photo by John Paul.*

## The Sound of Music Sing-Along

*by Marilyn Laatsch*

CHEERS, THANKS, KUDOS...and MORE!!!! Special thanks to Tennessee Hildebrand for his loving, funny (looooved the phone call additions) and sensitive filming of Muir Beach and West Marin, "Mistrust Your Sense of Urgency." I'd love to see more of his work shared in this way.

And to EVERYONE engaged with Muir Beach Friends & Neighbors who brought this Sing-Along into a reality. It's definitely a winner!!!

And to our two winners of Best Costume: Carol Gross in authentic Austrian dress and Melissa Lasky who along with heading up our food committee managed to seem to step right out of the movie in Julie Andrew's outfit leaving the convent. Both so amazing & wonderful!

So grateful to all who keep our little hamlet engaged with the values that keep Muir Beach such a remarkable place to call home.



*Photo by Hilly Gross*



*Tenn's film, Submitted by Beth Nelson*



## 50 years in the making...



*Remodeling the Creamery, 1972  
Original photo by Julian Knox.  
Digitized photo by Malcolm Collier.*



*The current Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department Barn, photo by Denise Lamott.*

*We're pleased to announce that we are making great strides toward the goal of building a much-needed new firehouse.*

*— Chris Gove, Chief MBVFD*

As you may know, we have planned to build a new structure adjacent to the Muir Beach Overlook for some time. We have a deposit in on a prefab structure, submitted our application for a county permit, and have already acquired a coastal permit. As you may have read in the Point Reyes Light article included in this issue of the Beachcomber, we have secured the funds necessary to build the basic structure, and we hope to begin construction this summer, marking a significant milestone in our journey.

The firefighters and I are grateful for your generous donations and support of the department and our beloved BBQ over the years. I would also like to thank the VFA and the CSD for their unrelenting efforts to get us to where we are now. Shortly, we will apply for grants and hold additional fundraisers to make the structure a working firehouse. In the meantime, you can support our efforts by donating online at [muirbeachfire.com](http://muirbeachfire.com).



*The new planned Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department firehouse, rendering by Laura Van Amburgh - exterior view.*

This year's Muir Beach Volunteer Fireman's BBQ will be our 50th and takes place on Sunday, May 26th. Everyone is invited! There will be work parties every Saturday at 9 a.m. and a community potluck on Saturday, May 25th, to mark being ready for another fun-filled BBQ and to celebrate with all the volunteers. As always, we need help with cleanup on Monday, May 27th. If you've never been involved in the process, please get involved, as it is a great way to connect with this wonderful community, we have chosen to call home.

We invite you to stay informed by the CSD and occasional Beachcomber articles about our progress.

With gratitude,

Chris Gove, Chief MBVFD

*Support the MBVFD:*

*Donate online at  
[muirbeachfire.com](http://muirbeachfire.com)*

*Shop at AmazonSmile  
see [muirbeachfire.com](http://muirbeachfire.com)*





April 24, 2024 - We have run 14 calls so far this year. Five of these calls were medical calls in the community. These calls will not be described in any way in the Beachcomber given the small size of our community and our professional and legal obligations regarding confidentiality.

**02/04/24** 20:00 Chris Gove and Sefton Murray. Tree blocking Hwy 1 south of Green Gulch Farm

**02/10/24** 08:30 Rob Allen, Brad Eigsti, Chris Gove and Jon Rauh. 28 year old male bicyclist down -- shoulder injury transported to Marin Health via Southern Marin Fire Medic 4

**02/25/24** 14:14 Chris Gove, Jon Rauh, David Taylor. Tree down Frank Valley Rd

**03/05/24** 16:45 Chris Gove, Sefton Murray, David Taylor. Head on collision Hwy 1 just south of Pacific Way. One victim transported to Marin Health via Southern Marin Fire Medic 4

**03/09/24** 16:04 Rob Allen, Maurice Conti, Brad Eigsti, Chris Gove, Sefton Murray and David Taylor. Single rollover vehicle accident just south of Green Gulch Farm. Non injury. Dog OK too.

**03/12/24** 16:30 Chris Gove, David Taylor. Rock blocking Charlotte's Way

**03/29/24** 10:55 Jon Rauh. 20 year old with an eye laceration at Muir Woods

**03/30/24** 08:52 Rob Allen, Maurice Conti, Brad Eigsti, Chris Gove, David Taylor, Chris Vallee. Bakery fire at Green Gulch Farm

**03/31/24** 14:56 Maurice Conti, Chris Gove, Chris Vallee, Jon Rauh, David Taylor, Anna Rauh. Vehicle Fire at Overlook



*(above) 3/9/24 Rollover, photo by David Taylor*



*(right) 3/31/24 Vehicle fire, photo by Jon Rauh*



# MBCC Improvements

by Mary Halley

The only updates I have at the MBCC are that the first approximately 2/3 of the MBCC Parking project has just finally now been completed after the County of Marin Land Development and DPW (Department of Public Works) required the contractor to demo and redo the ADA Van Accessible Parking cement pad being that it had portions that were 2.5% grade and the maximum allowed was a 2% grade. Then additionally required the yellow bump pads to be added at the two locations where the handicapped ADA Van accessible pad and handicapped accessible walkway meet the edge of the street, along with the extension of the painted handicapped crosshatched zone from the van parking space to the handicapped path to better designate the protected route with additional handicap parking signage.

Additionally, we had the new wooden post and wire safety rail that was installed last November treated with a clear wood sealer to protect and extend its useful life after the winter rains allowed some of the “new” wooden look to weather out just a bit, and at the same time, treated the redwood lathing and ash screen under the Community Center main deck to better preserve it. The CSD also received the transfer of another similar Prop 68 Per Capita grant to be used to complete the other 1/3 of the parking project on the northwestern side along with being able to add a safety handrail to the first section of the handicap walkway. The grant completion period was extended out several years so we will start planning for the next construction phase when matching funds become available – which will likely come from Measure A again.

Then currently, we are working to replace over 15 deck roof glass panes over the Community Center main deck along with the aluminum metal sealing strips and sealer this coming week. Over the years, many of the deck panes had periodically become broken and the deck roof started leaking when it rained. We replaced many of the initial broken panes, only to find many more new cracks appear – especially close to the pane corners and edges, so it became evident that the seals had likely dried up and lost their flexibility, thus not allowing some ‘give’ to the panes between cold nights

and warmer days. This project will be paid for by Measure A funds and will hopefully solve the deck leaking issues that were becoming problematic during the winter Christmas Craft Fair. We will also need to begin looking into two new deck curtain replacements as the winter winds shredded two of the existing curtains. Depending on cost, there is some interest in replacing all the deck curtains with a different design/style that will be more manageable and easier to put up and down as needed.



**Muir Beach  
Garden Club**

## *Time to tend the gardens...*

Over the past two months, the Muir Beach Garden Club reconvened to begin work in the MBCC gardens.

The week of March 11, Michael Moore began planting euphorbias and adding new soil at the base of the new retaining wall, prepping for the next MBGC work party when we would be replanting plants from the yard of Tayeko and Michael Kaufman.

March 16, our first work party since the pandemic, Joey, Melissa, Outi, Janice, Charlene, Mike, Janet, and Aran Collier got into the tending. It happened to be a hot day, and there was a lot of beautification going on.

April 29, armed with clippers, and donuts and coffee from Bistro, a pop up Garden Club work party had Joey, Janice, and Janet in the MBCC gardens. It was a great two hours of yardwork and Bistro – good planning on our part!

Coming soon, plans for our next work party and meeting. Email [joeygroneman@gmail.com](mailto:joeygroneman@gmail.com) for MBGC information and upcoming activities.

– Janet Tumpich

# PAUL SMITH SOLO CONCERT

by Laurie Piel

Paul Smith started bringing Contemporary Opera of Marin and his solo performances to Muir Beach shortly after I moved here about 17 years ago. Mary Halley, who was not as yet our district manager, introduced us and the rest, as they say, is history.

Paul is a native of Fort Worth, Texas and received his education at the Royal College of Music in

London and the Vienna Hochschule fur Musik. He is the winner of national and international piano competitions and a participant in the US State Department's Artistic Ambassador program. He also served as music director for famed Russian choreographer Leonid Massine, and was music director of Marin County's Mt. Play for 27 years. Since 1976 he has devoted

himself to the cultural life of Marin through solo piano, concerto and chamber music performances, directing several new music ensembles, and is artistic director of Contemporary Opera Marin, which has received international acclaim for its production of contemporary works and rediscovered gems of past centuries. He is the director of classical music for radio station KWMR Point Reyes Station, and the founder and artistic director of the Music from Marin Chamber Players. Paul was recently awarded the Sali Lieberman Award for contributions to the cultural life of Marin County.

This latest solo performance was Beethoven's Diabelli Variations. Beethoven was one of 51 composers commissioned by Diabelli to compose a variation on his waltz as a celebration of the cultural accomplishments of Austria's most noted musicians. Instead of one variation, Beethoven became intrigued by the many possibilities of this simple, 16 measure melody, and over a period of four years composed 33 variations. In addition to the Beethoven variations, the program included a small sampling of the other variations composed on the theme, as well as new variations commissioned for this concert by composers with strong ties to Marin County- Mark Volkert, Tara Flandreau, Ron Fein, and Jules Langert.

*Continued on next page*



*Paul Smith*

*Continued from previous page*

It was very exciting because both Mark Volkert and Tara Flandreau were in attendance. Mark is the Assistant Concertmaster of the San Francisco Symphony and has been since 1980 and Tara is a Music Professor Emeritus at the College of Marin and string instructor & chamber music coach at the Marin Community Music School.

Paul started the evening talking about the Diabelli waltz and how

the variations were commissioned and then performed a majority of them. He is so knowledgeable and interesting. He invited us to try and find the connections between them because they were so diverse. They ranged from strident and heavy at the bottom of the scale, to light and airy scampering around the top end of the piano. At the end he played the original waltz which allowed us to find the through line. He introduced Mark & Tara and then

we all enjoyed the wine and treats supplied by the Quilters. Paul has two more concerts scheduled for us this summer. On Sunday, July 7th he and a colleague will be performing an all American four hand concert of Gershwin, Bernstein, Sondheim and others. Then, on Sunday, July 21st he is presenting a political satire opera...what could be more appropriate this year? His concerts are always a lot of fun and we hope to see some newcomers in July.



*Mark Volkert, Tara Flandreau, Paul Smith*



*Leigh & Ella*

*Photos by Laurie Piel*



## MBVFD MAY 2024 RAFFLE REMINDER

Hi Everyone: A raffle ticket booklet (of 25 tickets) was put in all of the local mail boxes on May 1. If you'll be buying them, please remember to return the small stubs and your payment to the firemen's mailbox, (right side of mailbox row, across from the Pelican Inn), before May 26th, or bring them to me at the Raffle Booth at the firemen's event on May 26th. Need not be present to win. Tickets are \$1.00 each. Happy to put more tickets in your box, if anyone wants. Please see the current prize list on [www.muirbeachfire.com](http://www.muirbeachfire.com)

— Debra Allen

415-279-3751, mail to: [deballen@deballen.com](mailto:deballen@deballen.com)

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## “Overheard at The Overlook” *Geography in action...*

*Submitted by Charlene Modena*

Young teenage boy having a sandwich lunch with his father at the Overlook...

“Hey Dad, is this the Ocean, or just a really big lake?”

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## Solar Panels

*by Barbara Schoenfeld*

This may be helpful for our neighbors.

We got our solar panels back in 2016.

And throughout the years I have hosed them down.

And this February I got a bill that looked like my old electric bill before solar panels.

I took a good look at the panels and saw that they were covered in lichen.

I got in touch with [www.prosolarclean.com](http://www.prosolarclean.com)

707-971-0017

Jan Klimes did a unbelievable job.

The solar panels were covered totally with little and big lichen. He took a picture of one that looked like a cabbage.

Now the panels are shiny and clear.

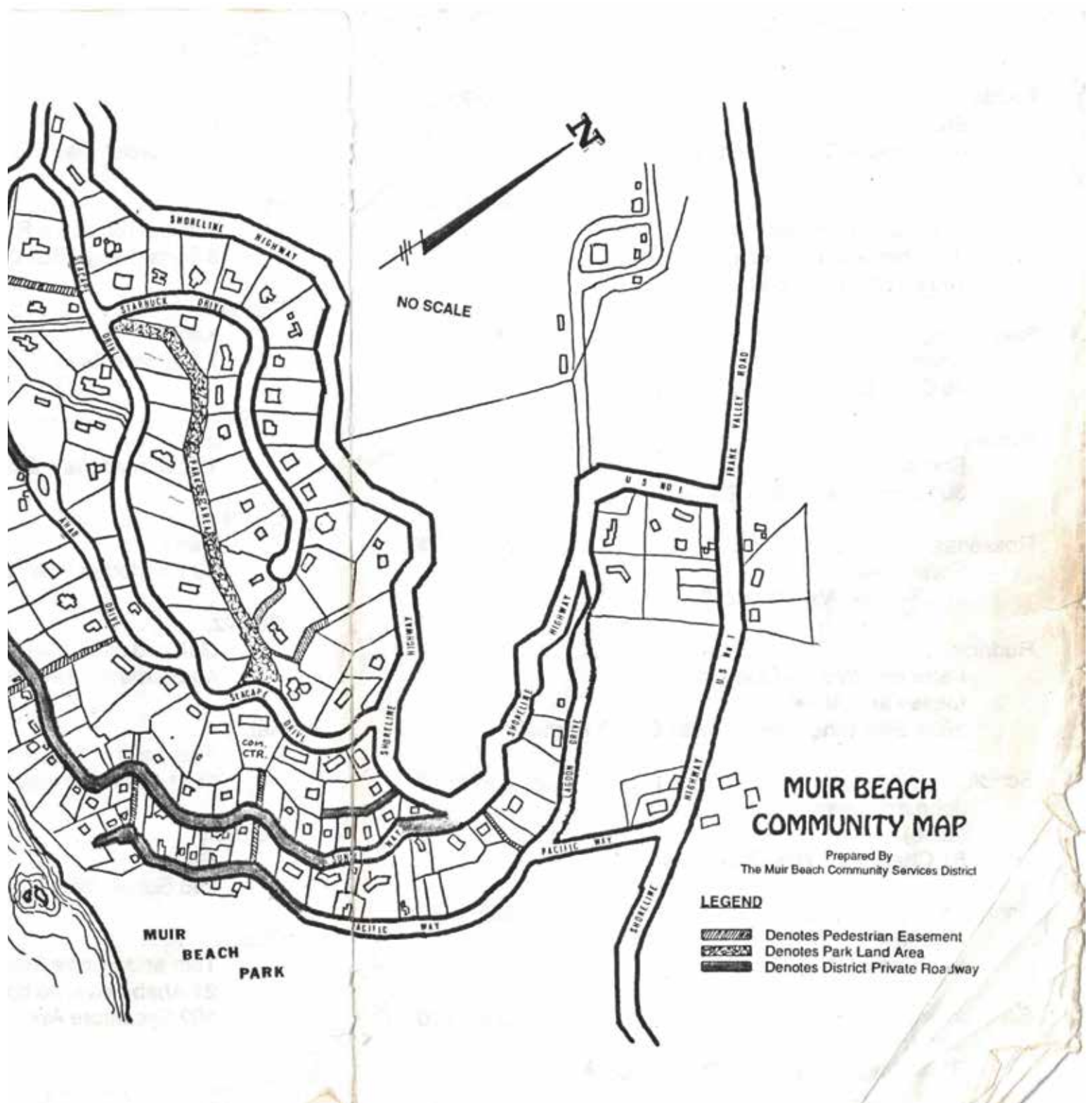
The lichen did not destroy the panels in any way.

They look new.

He was careful with the roof.



What is the date of this map?



*Muir Beach "Centerfold" map, from an early Muir Beach Community Directory. Submitted by Charlene Modena*

# ABOUT THIS TIME EVERY YEAR ...

by Beth Nelson

About this time every year the north wind would kick in, the sun would start having its first warmth, and we would begin to dream about Surf Camp...

Long before Surf Camp, there used to be Junior Lifeguards in Stinson Beach. Amanda whipped that program into shape and Live Water Surf Shop, (thanks to Petey Gubbins and Brenda), kept it funded in all sorts of creative ways including "The Bolinas to Stinson Beach Paddle Race."

Kids got their first taste of the sea, their first taste of running a mile on the beach, their first taste of learning CPR, how to deal with a rip tide and most importantly, how not to panic in the sea. The handsome, fit, Federal Lifeguards would stop for coffee at the Parkside Cafe every morning, strong and tan and full of confidence. The kids all looked up to them and so it followed that most of the kids in Junior Lifeguards also learned how to surf. Friendships were forged. The sea has a way of doing that.

The culmination of the summer was the North Coast Junior Lifeguard Competition usually held in Santa Cruz. A two day campout, our West Marin kids always did great. Underdogs, they knew cold water and were tough. They were like a metaphor for the rough and tumble beauty and terrain they grew up in.

If you were lucky and could afford a surfboard, you started surfing Stinson. We had lost our rental at Muir Beach and had moved to Stinson, which proved to be a



*Beth Nelson and Tenn, photo by Kathy Sullivan*

lifesaver of a community in an entirely unexpected way. Surfing.

I bought a totally water - logged second hand Rusty surfboard for Tenn's Christmas present that year called The Dwarf. It was all dinged up but the Dwarf had a place of honor by Tenn's bed. We drove to Santa Barbara and camped at El Refugio that year, stopping every 50 miles to tie that board down tighter on the roof of the Bug. Believe it or not the Dwarf is still being passed along amongst Tenn's friends all these years later.

Although we were a Waldorf family (no media) I started watching surf movies with Tenn. Andy Irons was our hero that first year, before his tragedy and "Chasing Mavericks" was the redemption film that mirrored our life...a single mom, raising a surfing boy. John John Florence was just a little kid then, also with a single mom, later to become a world champ.

The surfing never stopped. I used to jokingly say: "Other people take drugs, we go in the water."

At 13, Tenn began teaching surfing at Live Water Surf Shop with Glen, and at 25 is still teaching surfing every summer and into the school year. The boys who slept over with their boards and stinky booties and dripping wet suits are still best friends. Still surfing buddies, still loyal, still call me "Mama Beth," still remember our Dawn Patrol Wednesday mornings at Cron, still remember how I'd let them skip school when the first south swell came in or the "Crazy Wave" at Little Beach. Their love for surfing became my love for surfing. And that was the best gift of all.

So I would encourage you, if your child has even the most remote interest in surfing, hook yourself up with one of the many surf camps in West Marin. You won't regret it.

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Photo taken by Beth

As I always like to say:

“Have you ever seen an unhappy surfer come out of the water?”

WEST MARIN SURF CAMP  
CONNECTIONS:

Live Water Surf Shop  
415 868 0333

Proof Lab Surf Shop  
415 380 8900

Our own Nikki Clark who teaches  
groups, private lessons, corporate  
retreats, strength training and is  
terrific  
530 559 4253

High Noon Surf Camp erin@  
highnoonnaturecamps.com ( they  
have an all girls evening after  
school )

And my son, Tennessee:  
415 272 5132

### Remembering Bob Winkelmann



Our neighbor and resident race car builder and driver Bob, passed away on March 17, 2024, at his home in Muir Beach. He was 95, and is survived by his three children, Corbi, Rob, and Eden, grandchildren and a great-grandchild.

Born in North London on July 14, 1928, he came to California in the 50s, buying his Muir Beach house in 1963. As a child, because of the Blitz, he and his brother Roy were evacuated to a farm in the country for the duration of World War II. In later years, Bob was both a member of the Royal British Air Force and when he came to America he joined the United States Air Force.

He was an innovator in race car building and racing, and built the brand of Palliser-Winkelmann racing in the Formula Ford class, and will be remembered by all his racing fans.

— Michael Moore

## MUIR BEACH Emergency Numbers

in an emergency first  
» **CALL 911**

Poison Control 800-222-1222

PG&E Emergency 800-743-5000

Coast Guard (Emergency) 415-399-3300

Sheriff 415-479-2311

Marine Mammal Center 415-289-7325

Marin Humane Society 415-309-6339

10/23 Muir Beach Disaster Council and Muir Beach Volunteer Fire Department



# RED ROCK SPRING: Drainage borings turned local tourist destination

by Beth Begault

You've probably seen the throngs of people lined up to fill their containers with what they assume is fresh mountain spring water at the turnout four miles north of Muir Beach on Hwy 1, across from Steep Ravine. Maybe you've stopped there as well to fill your bottle with the water that flows freely 24 hours a day from multiple pipes right off the side of the mountain. While a spring is a **"natural exit point at which groundwater emerges out of the aquifer"** per Wikipedia, Red Rock Spring is the result of drainage borings that Caltrans drilled many years ago into the hillside above to relieve pressure and to help prevent a landslide on the mountain. The drainage from these industrial pipes was never intended for drinking. These drainage borings originate from a former agricultural ranch up

the mountainside that the US Army used briefly during WWII.

Red Rock Spring has evolved into a bonafide tourist destination, with hundreds of reviews and commentaries online, including on Trip Advisor and Google Reviews. The spot is particularly well-loved by aficionados of spring water due to its easy accessibility by car, since most fresh water springs require a long hike and some heavy lifting getting the water back to the car (a gallon of water weighs 8.35 pounds!). Regular users of natural spring water prefer unprocessed water that flows directly from the source, citing health benefits like increased hydrogen, healthy probiotics, negative ions, and a crystalline structure. Store-bought "spring water" is pasteurized for

shelf stability which reduces the benefits, according to those who prefer to access the water directly.

It is important to note that Red Rock Spring's waters have not been tested formally. There are known potential risks to drinking any untested/untreated water, including from waterborne organisms like E. coli and giardia or contaminants from chemical runoff. Groundwater that comes in contact with naturally occurring minerals in rock (arsenic or serpentine/asbestos, which are both common in our area), can lead to contamination, and at least one professional water engineer recommends against human consumption of the Red Rock Spring water.

*Continued on next page*

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## Announcing ... Muir Beach Dog of the Month

Scout Ferraro, our fabulous star of Starbuck Drive. Scout has a full-time job guarding Laurie Piel's driveway in exchange for snack treats.

Scout's mom is a pure bred Border Collie (Ms. Kitty in Bolinas) and his father is a Heinz 57 including Australian cattle dog, Terrior, Chow Chow, Boxer...

As Dog of the Month, Scout receives a bag of dog chews, some yummy homemade dog bones and a gift certificate to Bistro.

*Congratulations to Scout.*

— Nikola Tede and Janet Tumpich



*Photos by Nikola Tede*





*Red Rock Spring, photos by Durand Begault*

Red Rock Spring is located in Stinson Beach, but the Stinson Beach County Water District has no ties to the property. A Mt. Tamalpais State Park ranger clarified the oddity of jurisdiction of the “spring” which involves multiple agencies: Caltrans and the state park system share jurisdiction where the water flows from pipes at the turnout along highway 1, while the mountain above and the water flowing from it are part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). The state ranger had no information about the water quality nor any recommendations about its use. Mia Monroe was also helpful (thank you, Mia). She explained that the NPS does not test, maintain, provide signage, nor regulate the water.

Thanks to Leighton Hills, Mia Monroe, Ernst Karel, Kent Nelson, and Mary Halley for providing background information and pointers about Red Rock Spring. Any errors in this article are the author’s alone.



My Icelandic Mare, Skuggsja, is looking for a riding partner to take her through the trails around Muir Beach.



She has lived at the Dairy for three years, most of the time in the pasture off the dirt road across from the Pelican.

She requires a confident, attentive, experienced rider. She is extremely well trained, loves humans, mountain bikes, and is fearless.

I am looking for someone to ride her once or twice a week with a sponsor/lease agreement. Please contact me at

**[bonnifunkhouser@gmail.com](mailto:bonnifunkhouser@gmail.com)**

– *Bonnie Funkhouser*





## The 50th Annual Muir Beach Volunteer Firemen's Barbecue

returns on Sunday, May 26, from noon to 5 pm in Santos Meadows (2704 Muir Woods Road, Muir Beach).

Entry/Parking fee is \$30 per vehicle (carpooling is encouraged) and \$10 entry fee for walk-in and bike-in attendees.

Donations and purchases of merchandise, food, beverages, and raffle tickets are encouraged and appreciated. Visit [muirbeachfire.com/bbq](http://muirbeachfire.com/bbq).

### Want to volunteer?

Please email [denise@deniselaamottpr.com](mailto:denise@deniselaamottpr.com) to find out how you can help. Thank you!

– Denise Lamott

Poster artwork credit: Brad Eigsti and Dan Skurow

## BBQ Work Party May 5, 2024 by Janet Tumpich, photos by Jon Rauh

Mowing, power washing, clearing brush and trimming the trees, all necessary prep for the BBQ grounds and the upcoming 50th Annual Firemen's BBQ on May 26.

Come one, come all, work parties continue through the month of May, there is plenty of work to be done, so join in the fun.

Big thanks to Gabe for supplying lunch from Joe's Taco Lounge.

