



## Inverness is Now a Firewise Community! Volunteers Needed.

It is no news that Inverness is in an extremely high fire risk zone. However, we don't want our "paradise" to be the next Paradise.

The Inverness Foundation (IF) application for Firewise Community status to the National Fire Protection Association is approved at the county and national level. We are now one of more than 70 Firewise Communities in Marin County, which has more approved Firewise Communities than any other county in the United States!

Marin County Firewise efforts are coordinated by Fire Safe Marin ([firesafemarin.org](http://firesafemarin.org)), a nonprofit offering education, events, publications, television programs, and other educational materials on how to reduce fire danger. IF Director Jerry Meral is on the Board of Fire Safe Marin and coordinated the effort to get Inverness recognized as a Firewise Community.

What does our Firewise Community designation mean? The program in Inverness is entirely run by volunteers. It is not a government program, but the IF is working closely with the Inverness Public Utility District (IPUD) to help our residents and property owners make their properties more fire safe.

We need neighborhood volunteers to make this program work. As a Firewise volunteer your duties will be modest, but very important. Working with the IF, you will pick several homes in your neighborhood where you will work with the owners to reduce fire risk. There is nothing coercive here; this is strictly a voluntary program.

### Here are some examples of what a Firewise volunteer could do:

- Encourage homeowners to install reflective, easy to read street numbers, so firefighters and EMTs can quickly find a house when they receive a call asking for help. A surprising number of houses in Inverness lack easy to read street numbers!
- Quarterly provide homeowners with a single page on a fire related subject. Some examples would be: home "hardening"; which plants are more fire safe to grow; and how to trim plants near the home for beauty and fire safety. You don't have to be an expert yourself; our materials will be self-explanatory. The goal is to get people thinking about fire safety.
- Distribute reminder cards for Chipper Days, so people can sign up and put materials out.



That's it! A few hours of your time each year will be making your neighborhood more fire safe. **If you'd like to be a Firewise volunteer**, please email Jerry at [jerrymeral@gmail.com](mailto:jerrymeral@gmail.com), or call 415-717-8412.

— Jerry Meral

**Firesafemarin.org:** has tips, videos, and fact sheets on home hardening and much more for your personal use and for helping your neighbors. Check out their page on Alerts and Warning Systems for an explanation of Nixle, Alert Marin, Social Media sites to find time sensitive information, TV and Radio Stations, and PulsePoint. This new PulsePoint app will give you the information you might crave when you hear sirens and fear that fire might be near: you'll learn from the app what the emergency call is about. With this information you will be able to make personal decisions about your own safety.

**Chipper Days:** [firesafemarin.org/programs/chipper-day](http://firesafemarin.org/programs/chipper-day) Preregister for chipper days where you get to line up loose material for **free** chipping out in front of your home. The chips are taken away. Follow the guidelines or risk having your pile left behind.



**Invernesspud.org:** The website gives you a wealth of information on what you need to know about water status, staffing, board meetings, etc. as well as all of the essential registration links for alerts about fire and other dangers.

## Plans for Bishop Pine Forests at Tomales Bay State Park

Armando Quintero, Director, California State Parks, recently toured the forest mortality and woody fuels buildup along the southern boundary of Tomales Bay State Park with Seahaven residents Felix Chamberlain and Carlos Porrata and Inverness Association (IA) Board Member Tom Gaman. We also toured the recent Seahaven Shaded Fuel Break on adjoining private lands.

A few weeks later State Parks Senior Environmental Scientist Cyndy Shafer informed us that the park had received “Wildfire and Forest Resilience Program” funding for forest health work. Qualified contractors have been hired to develop “Vegetation Treatment Guidelines” and CEQA (CA Environmental Quality Act) documents for Bishop pine forest health improvements in the 2434-acre park.

The long term “Treatment Prescriptions” in the draft document include mechanical and hand treatments, prescribed fire, planting of seedlings, methods to encourage natural forest regeneration, and grazing using sheep, goats, and cattle. Some protection areas will be set aside for no treatment (areas with big healthy trees or steep slopes and riparian areas).

The planning process will include public outreach and community engagement. Funding for implementation of much-needed forest restoration work in the park was also included and will hopefully start soon, once planning and permitting are complete. Updates on this process should be forthcoming from State Parks this year.

State Parks is also welcoming community shaded fuel break work and will issue permits for fuels treatments on State Park lands for creating defensible space near houses and neighborhoods. Substantial fuel breaks were established along the State Park’s Boundary in 2021. State Park Environmental Scientists Cyndy Shafer and Bree Hardcastle are available to help with designing and permitting new defensible space projects, so we can finish this work and take on the next step: maintenance.

— Tom Gaman



## Chicken Ranch Decontamination and Wetland Improvement



Photos: Tom Gaman

Water quality monitoring at Chicken Ranch Beach and in Channel B, which drains toward the beach, shows that fecal coliform, total coliform, and E-coli bacteria counts routinely exceed state limits for recreational water contact. Beach visitors, often including young children, are exposed to health risks via contact with the water flowing from Channel B across the beach.

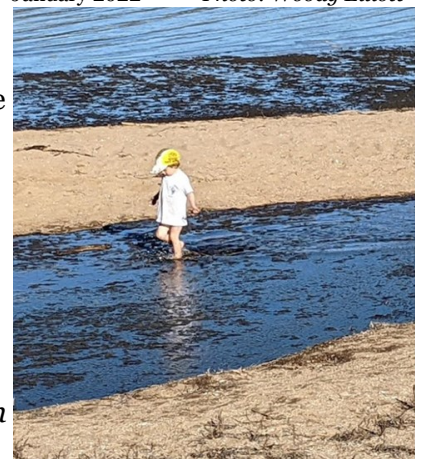
The Tomales Bay Watershed Foundation Chicken Ranch Committee (Tom Gaman, Ed Nute & Rebecca Smith-Bindman) continues to coordinate with the Inverness Association, County Parks, Coastal Conservancy, Prunuske-Chatham engineering consultants, Kamman Hydrology, neighbors, and regulatory agencies to formulate design documents, permits, and funding. Detailed design documents are now in hand. While there is plenty more paperwork involved, a new program “Cutting the

Green Tape” may help to expedite the CEQA and ongoing planning process.

The proposed project will involve drainage improvements and wetland enhancements to minimize bacterial contamination reaching the beach. Flows that currently cross the beach with high bacterial loads would be retained within the wetland long enough for natural processes to reduce bacterial counts and associated human health risks. Channel B will be filled in and wetlands will be created between the upstream end of Channel B and Third Valley Creek where water will discharge near the pedestrian bridge. Invasive acacia will be replaced with native wetland species. Wildlife habitat enhancements for Red-Legged Frogs and Tidewater Goby are also part of the plans.

— Tom Gaman

A Child at Play in Contaminated Channel B  
January 2022 Photo: Woody Elliott





## A New, Smiling Face at the Inverness Library

Alex Porrata, who grew up in Inverness, is now its librarian. During our interview, we discussed what drew her to become a librarian, what inspires her, and how she hopes **you** benefit by walking through the doors of the Inverness Library.

### **When did you first decide you wanted to be a librarian?**

*When my son finished his cancer treatment in 2015 and was cleared to start kindergarten, I wanted him to enroll with his older sister Lu at Loma Vista Immersion Academy, a public Spanish immersion school in Petaluma. I put the word out to the school community on how I could become involved and was quickly recruited by the school's librarian who knew I had a background in bilingual education. The experience working in a Spanish immersion school was incredibly inspiring to me. To be a part of the movement for preserving native language and culture while learning English and Spanish simultaneously was a dream come true. Building a bilingual library practically from scratch was an education in itself.*

### **What does it mean to be the librarian in the town where you grew up? Do you think having been raised here and raising your children here allows you to bring something special to the job?**

*It's so funny that you ask that. To be honest, when I applied to be a librarian with the Marin County Free Library, I would have gone to any library. My motivation was, and still is, to address the unique needs of whatever community I serve. I do that by creating a welcoming space that invites all people into it and by designing programming that meets the information needs and interests of the patron base. In Inverness, that is yet to be determined. I am just getting to know my patrons and what they would like to see happen here at the Inverness Library. I am thrilled that the Papermill and Inverness School students have started to visit for scheduled story times and have asked for story time in Spanish and English.*

### **What has surprised you about the job?**

*There really is so much to learn about how the county library system works. My experience was in a school library which had a very specific focus and fewer online resources; I got to know the collection well. Now I am working with many more adults, so I am having to get comfortable with all the services that*



Photo: Carolos Porrata

*our county system provides. Today, the library offers so much more than physical books. We offer online classes (you can get your G.E.D.), computer and design courses, language learning programs, audiobooks, films, etc. And of course, the best is the inter library loaning program called Link+, which connects to hundreds of other libraries in the state, giving patrons more access to information. That is what libraries are really about -- access to information. For FREE.*

### **Why should people visit the Inverness Library?**

*Libraries belong to YOU. They are one of the last completely free institutions that are upholding the human right to learn; libraries are spaces for ALL people. Come borrow your books and plug in. Library resources belong to you.*

— Angela Whitney

## **Important Resources**

**Inverness Library:** 415-669-1288

**Pt Reyes Station Library:** 415-663-8375

**KWMR:** 90.5 FM Point Reyes and 89.9 FM Bolinas. KWMR is *there* when we need it to provide notifications of road closures, evacuations, and much, much more.

**Marin Sheriff:** 415-479-2311 Non-emergency number for any substation

**911:** for medical, fire, or life-threatening emergencies, or crimes in progress

**Point Reyes Nat. Seashore:** 415-663-1200

**Tomales Bay State Park:** 415-669-1140

## Join or Renew Your Membership Now; It won't expire until December, 2023

The Inverness Foundation seeks to grow our membership to:

- Broaden community awareness of the important roles we play (see p. 6).
- Provide the financial support for those activities.
- Involve more active members to assist with Firewise Inverness, the Inverness Fair, and maintenance of town trails and spaces and *The Gables* Garden.

Renew your membership or join now to get a bonus 18 months of membership (through December, 2023), as we transition to a calendar-based membership year. Return the envelope enclosed in this newsletter or scan the QR code here and pay online through PayPal. Your dues and other contributions are tax deductible.



Please join the Board, volunteers, and other Foundation Members in serving Inverness.

— Dinelle Abram

## The President's Report

**Firewise:** You'll see Jerry Meral's report on page 1. Please ask yourself: do I have two to three hours over this next year to help improve fire safety in my neighborhood? I know, the answer is YES. You'll see how simple and effective your outreach can be. Contact Jerry to help.

**Fire Insurance:** It's on everyone's mind. My heart goes out to those who have lost it this past year, but for the Inverness Foundation, the good news is that we got our renewal again. The bad news is that it is a very large chunk of our annual expenditures.

**Trail and Park Maintenance:** Tom Gaman, John Longstreth, and their buddies continue to be the core of the crew that looks out for and tends to trail maintenance. But we know that many of you also do this work without any expression of gratitude. So, we do say "thank you" to all of you who see a limb in the path, a step gone wonky, and tend to it rather than phone us. This is the community at work and at its best!

A Big thank you to the Linders, Barry and Linda, and their recruits, who are out again on the median by the Post Office. No longer putting their lives in constant risk with the big road construction trucks that were barreling through last year, they are weeding, planting, and giving the strip TLC.

**Gables TLC:** See the stories on page 6 and 7.

**Annual Meeting:** Join us on July 9<sup>th</sup> 7:30 – 9:15 pm (no earlier, please, we must put away the gear from the prior event) at the IYC. Supervisor Dennis Rodoni will lead off the meeting with a report on what is happening in West Marin. Q & A will follow, as will a short meeting with a few reports and the Board election. **Please Park Outside the Gate** – if you need to drop off someone with limited mobility, do so, but unless you have a placard, your car cannot be inside the gate. The meeting will be available by ZOOM; contact me ahead of time to get the zoom link.

**Termed Out on the Board:** Seana Quinn has reached her term limits. We thank her for preparing minutes and working on the website, as we try to enter the modern age. We hope to see Seana at *The Gables* even if it's not for a meeting!

Alex Porrata is also termed out, but we are invoking a section of the Bylaws that allows us to nominate someone for a longer term when their services are key to activities we do. And that activity is the FAIR!!!

**The Inverness Fair:** See you on August 13<sup>th</sup>. It's going to be a delight, but we will try to keep it local, too, with less social media drawing the crowds that were at times overwhelming to local streets. You know how to reach Alex to give the heads up that you want to participate.

## Inverness Association/ Inverness Foundation Board

**Kathy Hartzell, President**  
415-302-0852  
khartzell@sbcglobal.net

**Bill Barrett, Vice President**  
415-669-1983

**Seana Quinn, Secretary**  
415-669-7788

**John Longstreth, Treasurer**  
415-669-7514

**Alex Porrata, Fair**  
415-300-6401

**Dinelle Abram, Membership**  
415-663-9632

**Tom Gaman, Trails and Bridges**  
415-629-9697  
tgaman@forestdata.com

**Jerry Meral, Firewise**  
jerrymeral@gmail.com  
415-717-8412

**Angela Whitney, Comm. Rep., Website**  
415-350-9742

**Andrew Buckingham, Jack Mason Museum**  
415-744-4118

**Andrea Gardner Apatow, Design Review Committee**  
310-890-2005

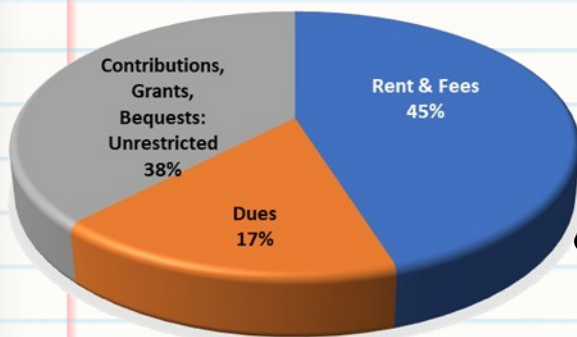
# Inverness Association and Foundation Annual Report Fiscal Year 2020-2021

During the past fiscal year, which ended on June 30, 2021, the Inverness Foundation (IF) experienced a healthy gain in net income over the previous year. This is largely attributed to increased dues from renewals and donations along with a reduction in maintenance expenses on the Jack Mason Building. Also, the rental income from the County Library for the space in *The Gables* continues to increase by a small amount every year.

The Inverness Association (IA) had very little financial activity again due to the cancellation of the Inverness Fair for a second year due to COVID 19. The IF and IA maintain day-to-day savings and checking accounts at Wells Fargo, while the majority of IF financial assets, primarily from bequests, are invested at Vanguard. The Board considers these reserves very important for needs that cannot be met with annual income and gifts. Our balance statement is available upon request. Please note that the Jack Mason Museum (JMM) income and expenses are not included in this report. While we include them in our tax returns, their assets and income are independent of those of the IF. JMM can provide you with their reports upon request.

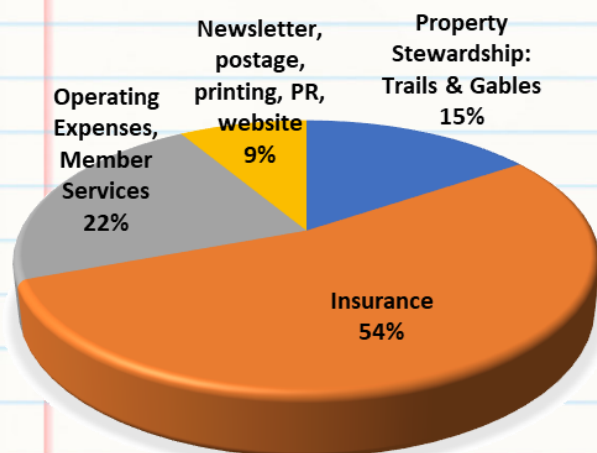
Thus far, three-quarters through the current fiscal year, the IF's financial affairs are stable. Operating income is on budget while expenses are up a little largely due to ever-increasing insurance costs.

— John Longstreth



## Income

Rent & Fees	20,061
Dues	7,565
Contributions, Grants, Bequests: Unrestricted	16,790
<b>Total Ordinary Income</b>	<b>44,416</b>
Dividends, Interest & Realized Cap Gains	3,991
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$48,407</b>



## Expenses

Property Stewardship: Trails & Gables	3,947
Insurance	13,648
Operating Expenses, Member Services	5,635
Newsletter, postage, printing, PR, website	2,174
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$25,404</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$23,003</b>



## Jack Mason Museum: Lighthouse 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Historical Photos from Fourth of July Races are the Themes of the Current and July Exhibits



The Jack Mason Museum has a new exhibit featuring the Point Reyes Lighthouse. The 1870 light station celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in December 2020, but due to COVID the exhibit to honor the lighthouse did not go up until late 2021. Loretta Farley curated the exhibit showing the complex of structures involved in keeping the lighthouse operational and the lighthouse keepers safe. The exhibit will remain through June 2022 and may be viewed whenever the Inverness Library is open.

The next exhibit will feature the annual Fourth of July races held since 1904 and will remain up during July only. The Museum will be open from 9 am to noon on July 4th, so people can drop by before or after the races. Another exhibit is scheduled for August through the end of 2022.

Dewey Livingston reports that he and his editor are making very good progress on his book of the history of the area and it should be published later this year.

— Meg Linden, JMM Board member

## New Clippers (and Gardener) for *The Gables* Garden

Join us in saying THANK YOU to Vivian Mazur for years of nurturing *The Gables* Garden on behalf of the Inverness Garden Club and WELCOME to Stacy Hassen for stepping up to be the volunteer community gardener.

Vivian is retiring from *The Gables* post to devote more time to her lovely garden in First Valley. We are grateful for her devotion to our gem on Park Avenue and will miss her tall, well hatted, presence in the garden every Wednesday morning!

Stacy is Vivian's neighbor, so you know who recruited her! She and her husband Richard moved to Inverness from PRS in 2021. She immediately found *The Gables* and Inverness Library a welcome spot for contemplation and relaxation. So, the arm twisting for her to adopt our garden was modest!

— Kathy Hartzell

## Inverness Association and Foundation - Why Both?

Inverness Association/Inverness Foundation Board members are often asked why our organization has two names. Here is a clarification of the roles of the Association and the roles of the Foundation.

### Inverness Association

- Provides a forum for local issues
- Works with Marin County to review new developments
- Collaborates with other local agencies to maintain the health of the Tomales Bay Watershed
- Hosts the Inverness Fair (August 13, 2022)
- A 501(c)4; donations not deductible

### Inverness Foundation (Non-Profit)

- Tends Martinelli Park, Plant Park, Johnsonville Beach, Aberdeen Stairs, various pedestrian bridges and trails and Martinelli Park, which serves as a helipad for medivacs
- Serves as the fiscal agent for Youth Sailing Scholarships
- Owns and maintains *The Gables*, home of the Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History and the Inverness Branch of the Marin County Library
- A 501(c)3; donations tax deductible

IA/IF Board meetings are held at the Jack Mason Museum on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm. All are welcome. Meeting agendas are posted on our website [www.invernessassociation.org](http://www.invernessassociation.org) and at the Inverness Post Office.

We may hold some Board meetings via Zoom. If you wish to join a Zoom meeting or speak to the board contact [president@invernessassociation.org](mailto:president@invernessassociation.org).

## ***A Few Words on the Board***

Interested in learning a bit about the Inverness Association Board members? Thought so...

**Kathy Hartzell** once worked as the Environmental Planner for Marin County, mostly in West Marin. A member of the Inverness Garden Club invited Kathy to housesit for her. The very next week Kathy and her husband Chris were looking for a West Marin home! And Kathy became the next president of the IGC!

**Tom Gaman** and his wife, Barbara have called Inverness home for 36 years. Tom is our bridge and trail repair mentor and bay whisperer. He can be found most mornings at Chicken Ranch Beach. See you there, Tom!

**Jerry Meral** joined the IA Board to help improve the fire safety of Inverness. Part-timers in 1986, Jerry and his wife Barbara have lived in Inverness full time since 2003. Every once in a while Jerry loves ordering Fish and Chips at the Station House.

**Angela Whitney** is an Inverness-er tried and true. She excels at finding treasures at the Point Reyes Thrift Shop and is a recovering 'Birder.' Angela loves hiking and has a list of secret hikes, but will only reveal that she adores the Coast Laguna Trail Loop.

**Dinelle Abram** also loves hiking. She can walk out the door and take the path down to Shell Beach 1,

then Shell 2, and take a dip in the Bay before heading home. Dinelle's guilty pleasure is Wednesday sushi night at the IP Market Deli with her son. But Dinelle also admits to going crazy for Velvet cupcakes with vanilla cherry ice cream at the Palace Market.

**Andrea Apatow** and her husband Doug moved to Inverness from LA 6 years ago. They no longer miss the 405 Freeway on a Friday afternoon. Andrea loves animals and volunteers at Rancho Compassion a few mornings a week to feed hungry pigs, goats, sheep, cows, turkeys, chickens, and some very loud honking ducks.

**William Barrett** has talked most of us into joining the IA Board. But did you know that he has a weak spot for donut holes from the Palace Market? William and Gary are some of the 23 million people in the USA who got a COVID dog. Winnie, also known as "Jaws," is an ankle-biting West Highland Terrier. When asked, William reports he found West Marin in 1980. His truck broke down in Olema, and he decided to stay.

**John Longstreth** knows his birds; 40 years of serious birding brings his count up to 200 varieties here in West Marin. John has been a full-timer for 16 years. Dogs or cats? Definitely dogs. Zoe, his Chesapeake Bay Retriever joins John hiking the Inverness Ridge several times a week.

— Angela Apatow

## ***The Gables Gets Some New Adornment!***

*The Gables* will be getting some gussying up this summer and fall. We have hired Jonathan Barajas' ECO-Gardening LLC to help out when our volunteers need heavy tools and a truck. Jonathan will also be replacing the fence with one that looks exactly like the old one. No messing with history at our *Gables*!

Likewise, the new paint on the *Gables*' doors and some windows and railings will make them look fresh and clean but just the same as before. Rigo of Rigo's Quality Painting has committed to taking care of the front and back doors; they take a beating being a dark color and getting a lot of sun.

— Kathy Hartzell

## ***Nominations from the Board for Member Approval July 9, 2022***

Alex Porrata: While Alex has technically termed out, a provision in the Bylaws allows the Board to nominate an existing member for another year, and the Board has voted to do just this.

The role Alex plays in creating and implementing the Inverness Fair makes it very important to the Inverness Association/Foundation Board to retain her membership. We ask the members of the organization to confirm her status through 2023.

At the time this goes to "press", we are still seeking a

new Board member to replace termed out Seana Quinn. We need someone with an interest in serving the community, working at the annual fair, helping with issues we face, and serving as our treasurer. This is a job outgoing treasurer John says is very efficient and simple, as we have a professional bookkeeper.

If we find someone in time to put them on the ballot and give the members 30 days notification, we will send updated nominations by email.

— Kathy Hartzell

**The 2022 election of board members will be held at the Annual Meeting on July 9, 2022 @ 7:30 pm at the Inverness Yacht Club and will be available by ZOOM.**

If you wish to join the Zoom meeting or speak to the board contact [president@invernessassociation.org](mailto:president@invernessassociation.org).

**Inverness Association & Foundation**  
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94937  
PERMIT NO. 5

## **The Inverness Fair Returns Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup>**

We are pleased to announce that after a two-year hiatus the Inverness Fair will be back this August 13, 2022. Bring your sun hat, dancing shoes, and an empty tummy out to the Inverness Green by the fire station. You'll enjoy treats, hear music, discover more about our amazing local organizations, and find treasures from vendors' personal and phenomenally-creative booths.

Planning is underway, so reach out if:

- You would like to volunteer to help organize the Fair or help on Fair day.
- Your organization wants to share your purpose with an information table.
- You are an artist, craft person, or entrepreneur who would like a booth at the Fair to sell your wares.
- Your organization wants to sell the traditional hot dogs. We will help you get it up and running.

It may be a smaller fair this year, but the HEART of INVERNESS will be there, full size!!!!!!

Contact Alex Porrata, Angela Whitney,  
or write [president@invernessassociation.org](mailto:president@invernessassociation.org).

## *The Bagpiper*

Summer 2022

**Editing:** Kathy Hartzell & Ann Elliott

