



# The Bagpiper

A publication of the Inverness Association and Foundation

Spring-Summer 2018

## The Inverness Disaster Council is Here to Help

In 1982, after catastrophic floods destroyed many homes and businesses in Inverness, a small group of Inverness residents, lead by Marj Stone and directed by the Inverness Volunteer Fire Department, formed the Inverness Disaster Council (IDC). This network of volunteers is organized to respond in a disaster by checking on neighbors, radioing status updates, staffing our local shelter, and providing on-the-ground information to our first responders. The IDC is led by a coordinator who works under the direction of the fire department and IPUD. I am the current IDC Coordinator.

The eyes and ears, the shoes on the ground, the essential volunteers, are called Neighborhood Liaisons. They go door-to-door in their neighborhoods, gathering basic and confidential information about their neighbors and holding neighborhood meetings to talk about fire safety and disaster preparedness. The IDC's Jairemarie Pomo and Jim Fox, Inverness Volunteer Fire Department chief, are available to attend the neighborhood meetings and provide support to the liaisons and community members. Inverness has 35 distinct neighborhood, but only 19 currently have Neighborhood Liaisons. We need volunteers in the other 16 neighborhoods. If you're interested in this very important volunteer position with a minimal time commitment, please contact me.

The IDC uses a network of radios to communicate with each other and the fire department, as well as with its own radio headquarters in Point Reyes. This radio network is vital to our communication efforts since a disaster could result in the loss of telephone, mobile, or internet services.

Once a month, the Neighborhood Liasons have radio drills to keep everyone sharp and on their toes. IDC also works closely with the Point Reyes Disaster Council so that communications to volunteers and the communities of Inverness and Point Reyes get consistent information. This summer, the two disaster councils will have a shared booth at the Point Reyes Farmers Market to educate the community about disaster preparedness and volunteering. Please contact me if you would like to help out at the booth.

Being prepared with supplies following a disaster is just as important as knowing your neighbors. Supply lists and other preparedness information are found at [readymarin.org](http://readymarin.org). If all you can manage now is a "grab-and-go" bag, then make that a priority while you plan for longer-term food and water supplies. The Ready Marin site also has information about CERT training (Community Emergency Response Team). CERT training includes fire suppression, light urban search and rescue, basic first aid, and other post-disaster skills. The course is taught throughout Marin over two consecutive Saturdays. The cost is \$50 with scholarships available. Sign up online or call Maggie Lang, Marin County CERT Coordinator at (415) 961-0907.

Being prepared eases the worry of an impending disaster. Thankfully, the Inverness Disaster Council and our network of volunteers is here to help you get ready and stay connected. Want to volunteer or find out who your Neighborhood Liaison is? Contact me at: (415) 215-9992 or [jairemarie@gmail.com](mailto:jairemarie@gmail.com).

- Jairemarie Pomo, Coordinator, Inverness Disaster Council



## Message from the President

Dear Members,

It's been a busy winter for the IF: supporting affordable housing and "fighting fires." As I wrote to you last month, we decided, after a great deal of research, to ask you for permission to transfer to CLAM the title to the 255 Aberdeen property Leah Crane left us in her will. Your vote was unanimous in support of the transfer. We feel that this was a wise decision for all, and we are proud to have played a part in increasing the affordable housing supply in Inverness. CLAM will provide responsible stewardship of not only of the residential units, but also the adjacent natural area, in keeping with the terms of the bequest. No IF general funds have been spent on this endeavor. All the costs we have incurred with respect to this property, including utilities, maintenance, legal services and estate property taxes, have been reimbursed by CLAM or covered by the rent received from the occupied unit.

This winter, we also hosted the Fire Symposium for West Marin on the 11th of March. It was a great success, with a full house at the Dance Palace and speakers who enthralled (and slightly terrified) the audience. The Symposium was co-sponsored by KWMR (which broadcast an edited version), the Tomales Bay Watershed Council Foundation, the Rotary Club of West Marin, the Pt. Reyes Station Village Association, and the Marin County Fire Department, which provided the lion's share of the funding. The important message from the conference is that every one of us needs to take steps to prepare for disasters of all types, chief among them creating defensible space around our homes, making our homes more fire-resistant, and being ready to evacuate.

There are many online resources to help you take steps to protect your family and property in a disaster. Some people have recently been spurred to action by the threatened or actual cancellation of their fire insurance. Whether or not this has happened to you, please get started...now!

The IF is partnering with the Inverness Disaster Council (IDC) to help our community prepare for disaster. In addition to this issue's illuminating article by Jairemarie Pomo, the Inverness Disaster Council Coordinator, you will find information about the IDC on our website, along with links to the websites mentioned below. If you missed the Wildfire Symposium in March, our website has a link to the KWMR recording of it.

I'll end my letter with a reminder of three websites where you will find all the info you need to understand the law on defensible space, get yourself registered for notifications, and download templates for your grab and go bags. You will also find a very useful list of fire-resistant plants to plant near your home and fire-prone ones to avoid. You might be surprised, as I was, to discover that your beloved water-saving plants could be fuel for fire. I am already tackling the job of what to move further from our house or eliminate from our property and of course, the fun part, what to plant next.

**AlertMarin.org** - register phone number(s) to receive emergency notifications.

**ReadyMarin.org** - click "plan and prepare" for templates

**FireSafeMarin.org** - information on defensible space, plant lists, making homes fire-resistant & much more.

Respectfully,  
Kathy Hartzell, President

## Putting a New Roof Over Our Heads Is An Important Goal



The Friends of the Gables shout out "Bravo!" to those who responded to our December 2017 request for donations for re-roofing and doing necessary repairs to this historic building which belongs to all of us and houses resources important to young and old, from the County Library to the Jack Mason Museum. We raised \$3000 of the needed \$27,000. In our ongoing fundraising efforts, you will be able to "buy" shingles for The Gables at the Inverness Fair. Pt. Reyes Station artist Shirley Salzman, well-known for the beautiful coloring books based on her line drawings of San Francisco Victorian houses, has generously offered to create a line drawing of the Gables for the Fair. You will be able to purchase individual shingles to color in and add to the drawing. By "buying" one or more shingles and coloring them in, you will contribute to keeping The Gables warm and dry for another 30 years. The colored drawing will be on view at The Gables itself after the Fair. If you want to include a contribution to Friends of the Gables for our roof fund in addition to your membership this year, please tuck it in with your dues! Just note FOG on the check so we know that you are responding to our request. We plan to have the job done by late summer, so the need for funds is urgent.



# Wetland Restoration at Chicken Ranch Beach

Chicken Ranch Beach is a special place to those of us who live in Inverness. Unfortunately, in recent years the beach has been beset with problems – erosion issues in Third Valley, incomprehensible legal mandates and threats, habitat destruction, ever-increasing recreational pressure, and contamination from E. coli and fecal coliform in Channel B. For years the Inverness Association, the Tomales Bay Watershed Council (TBWC), the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin, the Coastal Conservancy, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife have studied Chicken Ranch Beach and attempted to create a comprehensive restoration plan.

Until recently, it seemed that the problems are just so large and expensive to fix that nothing could be done. Now, however, with the support of Marin County Supervisor Dennis Rodoni, things are moving. The comprehensive 2012 study completed by hydrologist Greg Kamman, biologist Jules Evens, and others provides sufficient environmental context to demonstrate that the problems can be resolved one step at a time.



*Kids at play (in contaminated zone)  
Photo: Francine Allen*

Most urgent is the need to eliminate the contamination affecting Channel B. To start, the Inverness Foundation is working with the Tomales Bay Watershed Council, Marin County Parks, and the immediate neighbors, the Butler-Weltmans and the Whitneys, to restore the wetland west of the beach which is owned by the State Lands Commission and was filled some years ago. This requires agreement from neighbors, legal agreements with Marin County, participation of the State Lands Commission, and permits from state, federal and local agencies.

The IF, TBWC and Marin County Parks have combined to fund the restoration permitting process, with the IF donating \$5000 it received as a bequest from the Estate of Jack and Mary Kent last year. Kamman Hydrology has been hired to prepare the requisite preliminary design documents, establish test wells on site and create the initial site restoration plan for the State Lands wetland. This will enable the CEQA documentation to be prepared.

The Coastal Conservancy and Marin County Parks have generously offered to complete additional required studies. The Watershed Council's Chicken Ranch Beach committee (which includes IF Board members Francine Allen and Tom Gaman) has been working with agency experts to assure that the necessary studies are complete and that the process and methods are acceptable to all. Permits may take years, but expect to see work begin at Chicken Ranch to restore the health of that special place.

- Tom Gaman, IF Board Member

## Inverness Fair Book Sale!

The beloved Used Book Sale will once again take place at the August 11th Inverness Fair. The donation period will begin Wednesday, July 18 and end Wednesday, August 8th, 2018.

Collection cans will be located at both the Inverness and Pt. Reyes libraries. If you have questions concerning what can be donated, please call Tom Branam at (415) 669-1921 or email him at: tbranam62@gmail.com.

# Save The Date!

The Inverness Fair • August 11th, 2018

Poet and performance artist silvi alcivar and her red typewriter will be at this year's Inverness Fair, writing spontaneous poems while you wait. silvi has been writing on-the-spot poems for the past ten years at art events, parties and through her website, [thepoetrystore.net](http://thepoetrystore.net). She wrote the poem to the right after a long hike on Tomales Point.

All your old favorites will also be at the Fair! The Pancake Breakfast, hot dog and tostada lunches; stunning locally baked and decorated cakes for the cake raffle; the Inverness Garden Club Plant Sale and Flea Market; the popular book sale; booths showcasing local non-profits; and local residents selling fabulous ephemera. Did we mention MUSIC? Home-made jam? Baked goods? Not to mention, a chance to re-roof The Gables with your crayons. Don't miss it!

Helpers needed, of course! You cannot put on such a great event without a lot of community support. Call Alex at 415-669-9739 if you have muscle or creative energy to put to use, can't wait to draw with chalk on the street, or simply want to decorate the dining tables.

If you want a booth, send your request to: [alexporrata@mac.com](mailto:alexporrata@mac.com).



silvi alcivar  
Photo: scott r. kline

## how to attend to the unaddressed business of filling up your soul

go to the coast and hike  
in the opposite direction of every person  
racing the approach of the dark.  
tell them you are not afraid  
of long shadows and coyotes hidden by fog.  
tell them you have come to replace urban conversation  
with the voice of cormorants and gulls,  
pacific waves breaking against sharp rock,  
turkeys sleeping in eucalyptus trees,  
owls calling out each other's names.  
tell them you were summoned by the grazing tulle elk  
raising young buck horns against the setting sun.  
tell them the seal in the surf told you to come,  
to watch how a body trusts the waters it's in  
making a perfect arc as it leaps, and you wonder,  
laughing, laughing, laughing, if it's for play or for need.  
tell them you're not sure the answer but you're  
convinced the light that meets you as you walk  
is the light of your wildness,  
even in the eerie solitude of night  
as it steals day's breath,  
maybe especially because. tell them,  
as you watch stars shoot gratitude across your eyes,  
that your eyes are not yours but the earth's,  
the ocean's, the wind's the star's. tell them  
you are not hiking away from anything  
or anyone but toward the edge of a world  
edged in perfect darkness,  
a world you know as poetry,  
as home.

-silvi



Photo: Carlos Porrata

Alex with happy helpers at last year's Inverness Fair



# Annual Meeting July 21st

This year, we will have our meeting at the Inverness Yacht Club on Saturday, the 21st of July, at 7:00 pm. We will have beverages and some treats to get the meeting off to a good start.

Supervisor Dennis Rodoni will be there to give us a brief update on issues he has been working on, as well as on a project that we are enthusiastic to see get underway: an update to the housing size component of the Inverness Ridge Communities Plan.

In addition, we will have some displays and handouts on Defensible Space, Preparing for Wildfire, and a short program on preparing yourself and your neighborhood for any disaster. Jairemarie Pomo, Coordinator of the Inverness Disaster Council, will speak about being prepared for evacuation, assisting with notifying and helping neighbors with evacuation, and hardening our homes against fire. See Jairemarie's article of page 1 of this issue to learn about the Inverness Disaster Council and the importance of the neighborhood liaison program.

We will also provide a brief summary of the year's activities and our fiscal health, and ask for you to confirm our nominee for the Board, William Barrett.

We look forward to your attendance. Remember, it's not after the IYC Open House this year, it's the following Saturday evening! July 21st, 7:00 pm. Please save parking inside the fence for those who have difficulty walking the distance to available adjacent parking.



## William Barrett, Nominee for Board of Directors

I first discovered West Marin in 1974 as a fresh-from-the-mid-west college student. After several years as a frequent visitor (aka tourist) I moved to Point Reyes Station in 1980. Doing whatever I could to manage to stay in West Marin, I enjoyed a variety of positions from waiter to housekeeper to carpenter. In the mid-80s, I was elected to the Board of Directors of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin where I served as board member, interim executive director and then full time executive director, leaving EAC in 1990. I opened a graphic design business in 1991, achieving moderate success in the local market and then transitioned to real estate in 2004 at Seadrift Realty in Stinson Beach. Also in 2004, I moved from one side of the bay to the other, becoming a resident of Second Valley. I love living in Inverness!

I have been aware of the Inverness Association from my earliest days here. I was lucky to have struck up a close friendship with Kay Holbrook, the voice of the IA for many years, and she was a constant source of local news and opinions on nearly everything that happened on the west side of Tomales Bay. My interest in serving on the IA board comes from a desire to give back to the community in which I live and also from a fascination with how local issues are discussed, decisions made, and a course of action taken on the variety of local matters occurring in our area. I would like to be part of the process and I believe that I have sufficient knowledge of the area and the community to be an asset in the discussions. I am also currently a member of the Coastal Health Alliance board of directors and the West Marin Chamber of Commerce board of directors.

I share my house and my life with my partner Gary Martin, also in the real estate biz.

- William Barrett

# Jack Mason Museum Update

The Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History (JMM) has been concentrating on two particular projects. One is the publication of a new, 16-page “Under the Gables” newsletter. The other is the completion of a new exhibit now hanging in the reading room of the Inverness public library. Both of these efforts are meant to draw attention to the roles of social organizations and their buildings in West Marin which, in part, played the role of modern day community centers and social programs.

The exhibit looks primarily at the towns of Point Reyes Station, Inverness, Nicasio, Olema and Bolinas. The social groups include the local churches, Boy Scouts, the Foresters, the Druids and the Portuguese IDES organization. The exhibit and newsletter also explore efforts to establish actual community centers in West Marin’s towns, look at the now-vanished Boy Scouts’ Camp Inverness, as well as the mark left on Marin by the activities of the Sir Francis Drake Association. The Open House for this new exhibit was held on Sunday, April 15, at the Inverness Library. The exhibit will run through August 15. And finally, local historian, Dewey Livingston, continues hard at work on his upcoming book on the history of West Marin County. As the content and length of the book has grown, Dewey has decided to publish it in two volumes, the first of which will appear this summer. If you would like to contribute towards Dewey’s work, please send a check to the Jack Mason Museum with the notation “book”, P.O. Box 94, Inverness, CA 94937. Your contributions to the JMM are tax deductible.

- Tom Branan, JMM Rep/Board Member



Photo: Kathy Hartzell



Photo: Oleg Alexandrov

## Town Hall on Tourism Coming Soon

Tourism is a hot topic in West Marin. Its impacts on the local economy, the challenges it poses to the community fabric, and the adjustments needed to reduce those challenges, are all issues that will be the focus of an upcoming Town Hall Meeting. Following a County-sponsored consultant study of tourism, the Point Reyes Station Village Association held an initial Tourism Town Hall in 2016. State Senator Mike McGuire ran the workshop, with support from County Supervisor Dennis Rodoni. The large turnout and many issues that were raised led Senator McGuire to set up a Tourism Working Group, which has been meeting since then. The Working Group was composed of representatives from each Coastal Marin village association, along with State and County agency staff people. After the Working Group was set up, several of the village representatives decided to form a sub-group, the Alliance of Coastal Marin Villages, so the village representatives could meet separately to develop coordinated policies on key issues. The Alliance has a member from most Coastal Marin villages.

Over ten Alliance meetings and six Working Group meetings, the Alliance developed brief policies on Parking, Traffic and Speeding, Garbage, Bicycles, and Long-Range Planning. A great effort was made to make the policies both workable and legally compatible with the existing Countywide Plan and Local Coastal Program. They were provisionally adopted by the Tourism Working Group at its last meeting and will be presented for public approval at a final Town Hall, probably in July at the Dance Palace. Once the policies have final approval from the Working Group, we will post them on the IA website in advance of the Town Hall meeting.

- Bob Johnston, Inverness Association Board Representative  
Alliance of Coastal Marin Villages



# Time For Renewal!

The Inverness Association & Foundation membership year goes from July 1 to June 30. Please rejoin now for the 2018-19 membership year!

It's easy to renew your \$30 individual membership or \$45 family membership. Just put a check in the enclosed envelope or donate through PayPal on to our website [www.invernessassociation.org](http://www.invernessassociation.org). If you want to give an extra donation to the IF, please let us know if you'd like to earmark it for something specific, such as Friends of the Gables (FOG) to support our re-roofing. Please make all checks out to the Inverness Foundation. The Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization, so your donation is tax-deductible to the full extent permitted by law. Your membership in the Inverness Foundation includes membership in the Inverness Association.

When you renew, please include an up-to-date email address for each household member. We will only use

your email to send IA & IF communications and to let you know of important developments in a timely manner. And we will never share your email with anyone else, even other members. We understand that some members do not have email, but to the extent possible, we would like to be able to send renewal reminders and other important announcements via email.

Your support enables the IF and IA to continue its work on behalf the Inverness community: maintaining our cherished Inverness trail system and local parks; supporting The Gables, our HQ and home to the Inverness Library and the Jack Mason Museum; putting on the annual Inverness Fair; and providing support to local children's swimming, sailing, and tennis programs. Without the Inverness Association and Foundation, there would be no local forum to address issues of importance to our community.

Thank you for continuing to support the Inverness Association and Foundation, your community organizations.

Catherine Caufield, Membership Secretary  
[membership@invernessassociation.org](mailto:membership@invernessassociation.org)



*Our beautiful Tule elk*



## Elizabeth Steps Off the Board

Long-time local figure and IA Board Member, Elizabeth Whitney, announced recently that she was going to step down from the Board. She writes that she has been living in the East Bay and enjoying her time there, but hopes to find her way back to her roots here in Inverness on a full or part time basis very soon.

Elizabeth has been, in many ways, our own IF historian—her personal recollections of the IA and Chicken Ranch Beach, in particular, have always been educational and useful as we made decisions about our work and role in the community. She wove her talents as a writer into *The Bagpiper* and many periodicals in the community. Elizabeth also skillfully sifted through our old records to get them in order. To our surprise, she once presented the Board with a collection of 50-year-old letters pertaining to the same issues we have today.

We are sure we'll see Elizabeth back for the Inverness Fair in August. She's been a key player in this event for too many years to stay away!

**Inverness Foundation**  
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*The Bagpiper*

INVERNESS ASSOCIATION  
INVERNESS FOUNDATION

The Inverness Association / Foundation meets on the 4th Wednesday of most months at 7 p.m. at the Jack Mason Museum. The agenda is posted in advance on our website: [www.invernessassociation.org](http://www.invernessassociation.org)