

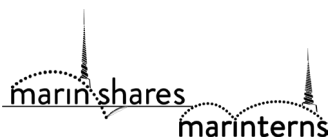
VOLUNTEER NOTES

Attitude of Gratitude

Youth volunteer **Sahiti Namburu** recently shared her thoughts about service with her supervisor, Community Library Specialist **Hector Garcia**. "My two years of volunteering at the South Novato Library have been filled with gratitude!" she wrote. "I have learned about community service library systems and organization and deepened my passion for literature. My experiences have greatly impacted me, from academics to personal growth. I have also improved my organizational skills by learning to create order and keep things tidy...I am thankful for this wonderful opportunity." Sahiti received a certificate signed by Board of Supervisors President **Dennis Rodoni** on her second anniversary of service.

Volunteer Featured

While watching "California Live," MarinShares radio volunteer **Steve Sarhad** spotted fellow radio volunteer **Michael Fischer** [being interviewed](#). (Michael's interview starts at 2:20.) In Marin, Michael has three volunteer roles: emergency radio operator and fire lookout, both with the Marin County Fire Department; and patrol volunteer with Marin County Parks.



STAFF

Anne Starr, Coordinator of Volunteers
415-473-7167 • anne.starr@marincounty.gov
Joy Fossett, Student Internships Coordinator
415-473-7447 • joy.fossett@marincounty.gov

VOLUNTEERS

Writers: **Natalie Dybeck**, **Max Gehm**, **Ellie Gilbert**, **Marjorie Grannan**, **Scott Harrop**, **Calla McBride**, **Tiyona Pariani** | Photographers: **Bob Dell**, **Bill Johnston Jr.**, **Doug Kaye**, **Gregg Turner**, **Brian Wilk** | Copy Editor: **Pamela Ross** | Copy Editor Intern: **David Balderama** | Graphic Design: **Eleanor Lau** | Intern Writing Coach: **Ed Remitz** | Administrative Aides: **Deborah Fox**, **Deborah Gregor** | Cartoonist: **John Donaghue**

Aviation Expert Assists at County Airport

By Scott Harrop

Flying fascinated MarinShares volunteer **David Dietz** from an early age, when he devoured books about Alaskan bush pilots. Years later, after earning his bachelor's degree at UC Davis, he saved money from his job as a county planner for a pilot's license.

However, he was lured away from flying by a poster in a backpacking store advertising a month-long trek in Nepal for only \$600 (in 1976 dollars). Too cool to resist, David went on the trek. He reached an elevation of over 16,000 feet with a clear view of Mount Everest. The most memorable event of the adventure was his 30-second ride on a very reluctant yak.

After a couple of years as a county planner, David headed east to obtain a master's degree in city and regional planning from Harvard's Graduate School of Design. He spent the next five years in



PHOTO BY DOUG KAYE

David Dietz

Nevada working as a planner in both the governor's office and Douglas County.

David moved back to northern California in 1984 and has remained here since. He worked many years with

Continued on page 4

Marin Search Hero Continues to Protect and Save Hikers

By Max Gehm



PHOTO COURTESY OF KOBE POLE

Kobe Pole

MarinShares volunteer **Kobe Pole** has participated with the Marin County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue (SAR) team since he was 14. Now 24 and a licensed paramedic, Kobe works in emergency services across the western United States and continues to volunteer with Marin SAR.

Kobe—then a youth member of the team—was featured in *MarinfoNOW* following his heroic rescue of a missing 69-year-old woman with several broken bones who, in 2015, was lost for nine days after backpacking into the Sierra National Forest.

Continued on page 2

Marin Search Hero Continues to Protect and Save Hikers

Continued from page 1

“Kobe is the epitome of why we allow youth to be members on our team,” said Lt. **Pierre Ahuncain**, Kobe’s staff supervisor and coordinator for Marin SAR. “It didn’t take long for adult members to realize Kobe was not only a hard worker but also a brilliant individual with no fear.”

High school students as young as 14 can apply to Marin SAR. After qualifying, they serve as full members, filling management and leadership roles as well as searching. Youth members have made life-saving finds and are an important asset to the team, which is strongly supported by the Sheriff’s Office. Like Kobe, youth who continue to volunteer after turning 18 become adult members.

After graduating from Redwood High School in 2018, Kobe attended college in Colorado. He took a semester off to become EMT certified. He cited his affinity for helping others, fascination with medicine, and experience with Marin SAR as the inspiration to become a paramedic.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KOBE POLE

MarinShares volunteer Kobe Pole worked at Yosemite this past summer.

Kobe then found EMT work in the Grand Teton and Grand Canyon national parks, fulfilling his “childhood dream” of becoming a park ranger.

In 2021, he became a licensed paramedic with Denver Health Paramedics. Since then he has alternated summers between paramedic work on an ambulance in the Reno-Tahoe area and work on a Marin County Fire ambulance stationed in Stinson Beach.

Kobe’s involvement in paramedicine intersects with his volunteer efforts in search and rescue and as an instructor for Cal OES, the governor’s office of emergency services. Cal OES is a coalition of search management experts who share techniques to bolster search

and rescue efficiencies nationwide.

Kobe considers teaching emergency medicine to SAR members on the job and through Cal OES among his greatest achievements.

This past summer, Kobe worked as a paramedic in Yosemite Valley. In addition to ambulance and search and rescue work, he joined the mounted horse patrol to rescue stranded hikers.

Kobe continues to volunteer with Marin SAR as a search manager. In this leadership role, he bears responsibility for representing Marin in intrastate communications with other SAR agencies.

Meanwhile Kobe uses his own story to advocate for youth leadership opportunities within Marin SAR.

Volunteering with Marin SAR “has shaped me into the individual I am today,” Kobe said. “The opportunity to work alongside professionals in the emergency service fields has allowed me to explore different career options and led me to work (in emergency medicine).” ■

History Buff Helps Make Historic Materials Available to All

By Tiyona Pariani

PHOTO BY DOUG KAYE



Nick Melniczek

MarinShares volunteer **Nicholas ‘Nick’ Melniczek** dedicates two days a week to the Anne T. Kent California Room archives for those studying local history. He began volunteering last December.

The California Room is located within the Marin County Free Library’s Civic Center branch, just past the children’s section.

“As you enter the California Room, there is a wall full of shelves on your

left packed tight with boxes filled with folders of California history ephemera, which are written or printed items originally meant for short-term use,” Nick said. “These ephemera are primarily on or about Marin County, and my role is to catalog and input these reports and documents into a spreadsheet for future patron use.”

Nick is thrilled to contribute at the California Room. “I have always considered myself a history buff,” he said.

Continued on page 3

History Buff Helps Make Historic Materials Available to All

Continued from page 2

One reason Nick volunteers at the library is to explore potential career paths; he may apply for an entry-level position. (MarinShares volunteers interested in county jobs compete alongside all applicants for paid work.)

Nick was particularly fascinated by one item his supervisor, Librarian **Charmaine Bonner**, showed him. It was an official Panama souvenir sold at the San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in 1915—a rock excavated from the Panama Canal in a brass eagle claw mounted on a wood block.

“What draws me to this object of the past is that it provides something tangible of a bygone era,” he said. “For example, if I get an old coin from the ‘40s in my change, I’ll think about how

that coin may have passed through the hands of Elvis or JFK.”

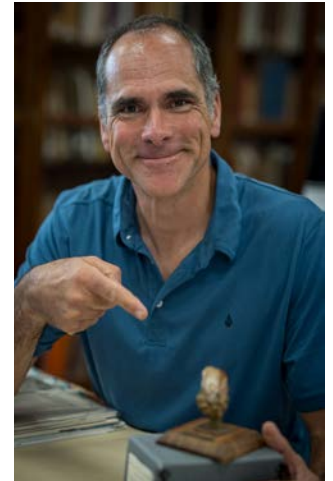
Asked about his favorite aspect of volunteering, Nick said, “The biggest takeaway has been discovering much more about the origins of my surroundings here in marvelous Marin and then being able to share the information with others.”

Originally from New York, Nick resides in Terra Linda. He initially moved to San Francisco then to Terra Linda after getting married.

Nick enjoys exercising, playing guitar, reading biographies and books on American history, watching films produced during Hollywood’s golden age, and, above all, spending time with family and friends. He and his wife, who works for the Miller Creek School District, have two sons, ages 18 and 16.

“Nick has been a wonderful addition to the California Room volunteer roster,” Charmaine said. “From the beginning to the present, he has continuously displayed

great enthusiasm for history and the organization of historical records. Nick is detail-oriented and concise and approaches his role with pride.” ■



Nick Melniczek points out historic souvenir.

PHOTO BY DOUG KAYE

Elections Ambassadors Step Behind the Scenes



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH IWAMIYA

Members of the Student Elections Ambassador team had the rare opportunity this summer to tour the Marin County Elections office. Guided by Registrar of Voters **Lynda Roberts**, students enjoyed an educational behind-the-scenes look at how elections are conducted. Elections Technician **Danny Straub** gave a detailed demonstration of “Betsy Ross,” the ballot-sorting machine at the core of the vote-by-mail process. In addition to sorting, the machine scans an image of the signed envelope for signature verification. For the high school and college ambassadors who volunteer with the county’s Elections Department, the tour was an eye-opening experience into the intricacies of election operations. As nonpartisan ambassadors, the team’s 40 members encourage youth under 18 to pre-register and young adults to register to vote.

Aviation Expert Assists at County Airport

Continued from page 1

a small aviation-consulting firm based in Santa Rosa. During his tenure there, he earned his pilot's license and went on to gain an instrument rating.

An opportunity arose for him to serve as the environmental planning manager at San Francisco International Airport. His work centered on obtaining the necessary permits to support construction of the international terminal and its supporting infrastructure. "The politics was the hardest part," he said of that time with a laugh—and without disclosing details.

David returned to aviation consulting and spent the balance of his career as an airport planner. He is most proud of his work facilitating an extension of the runway at Charles M. Schulz–Sonoma



PHOTO BY DOUG KATE

MarinShares volunteer David Dietz, left, and Marin County Airport Manager Dan Jensen.

County Airport. The additional 600 feet of runway was crucial to supporting direct flights to Denver and Salt Lake City.

About a year ago, David retired. "I really wasn't ready to retire," he said. "I didn't

have any major hobbies or pastimes." He knew Department of Public Works staff member **Dan Jensen**, who manages the county airport, Gnoson Field. David asked Dan if he could use a volunteer to assist with administrative and planning tasks. Dan was delighted. "It's a real pleasure to have Dave help us out here at the airport!" he said.

In addition to volunteering on admin projects, David also has supported Dan in reviewing draft documents for the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan update,

led by the county's Community Development Agency.

David volunteers every other Wednesday. He is happy to lend his expertise and continue contributing to airport planning in Marin County. ■

Who's New & Welcome!

William Anton (San Rafael), Steward, Marin County Parks

Audra Ballard (San Jose), Predoctoral Psychology Intern, Health & Human Services (HHS)

J.R. Begg (Kentfield), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

Marie Begg (Kentfield), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

Cassandra Blevins (Elk Grove), California Room Intern, Civic Center Library

Annie Carmona (San Rafael), District 1 Intern, Board of Supervisors

Mirna Champ (San Francisco), Immigration Unit Intern, Public Defender's Office

Madeline Coke (San Francisco), Immigration Unit Intern, Public Defender's Office

Benjamin Davila (San Francisco), Nursing Student in Communicable Disease, HHS

Fernanda Davila (San Rafael), Juvenile Probation Intern, Probation Department

Gina Dudley (San Rafael), Probation Intern, Probation Department

Molly Fagan (Oakland), Predoctoral Psychology Intern, HHS

Elizabeth Grabowski (Tiburon), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

Kathleen Hawkins (San Francisco), Predoctoral Psychology Intern, HHS

Gurinder Jassar (San Francisco), Post-Bar Law Clerk, Public Defender's Office

Ashley Johnson (Pleasanton), Post-Bar Law Clerk, Public Defender's Office

Francesca Isabelle Lazaro (Fremont), Adult Protective Services Nursing Student, HHS

Priscilla Ledezma (San Francisco), Immigration Unit Intern, Public Defender's Office

Evan Lichtblau (Mill Valley), Financial Abuse Specialist Team Intern, HHS

Priscilla Martin (San Pablo), Predoctoral Psychology Intern, HHS

Max Meislahn (Mill Valley), Nursing Student in Communicable Disease, HHS

Kyara Mendez Serrano (San Francisco), Predoctoral Psychology Intern, HHS

Robert Shaw (Novato), Post-College Intern, Public Defender's Office

Bhavandeep Singh (Fremont), Nursing Student, HHS

Ivan Villegas (San Francisco), Immigration Unit Intern, Public Defender's Office

Kathleen Warner (San Francisco), Predoctoral Psychology Intern, HHS

Robert Zieber (Sebastopol), Nursing Student in Communicable Disease, HHS

Happy Anniversary

We congratulate these volunteers who celebrate their anniversaries this month and thank them for their ongoing involvement.

35 YEARS

Marilyn Bagshaw (San Rafael), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Fire

17 YEARS

Rich Riechel (Mill Valley), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)

12 YEARS

Linda Witong (San Rafael), Cold Case Investigator, MCSO

7 YEARS

Martin Bogetz (Kentfield), Marin Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer, Health & Human Services (HHS)

Carlene McCart (San Rafael), **Kim Ruchamkin** (San Rafael), **Alison Steiger** (Novato), Marin Center Ushers, Cultural Services

William Timpson (Greenbrae), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

6 YEARS

Maureen Carlin (San Rafael), **Mary Lou Dibbern** (Mill Valley), **Deborah Fox** (Corte Madera), **Stan Green** (Greenbrae), **Barbara Parkman** (Novato), **Patricia Prorok** (Novato), **Everil Robertson** (San Rafael), **Robert 'Bob' Robertson** (San Rafael), Marin Center Ushers, Cultural Services

Sal Munoz (San Rafael), **John Van Hooser** (Tiburon), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO

Mark Spongberg (Santa Rosa), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

5 YEARS

Belle Guelden (Tiburon), **Jill Knowlton** (Novato), **Walter Lemmermann** (Sausalito), Patrol Volunteers, Marin County Parks

Amanda Nagle (San Rafael), Marin Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer, HHS

4 YEARS

Anthony Fedanzo (Corte Madera), **Milton Hyams** (San Rafael), **Robert Ireson** (Greenbrae), **Tom Jordan** (Corte Madera), **Adriana Rabkin** (Corte Madera), Radio Communications Volunteer Planning Team Members, Department of Public Works (Public Works)

3 YEARS

Kelly Andromeda (Mill Valley), **Michael Cann** (Mill Valley), **Ciara Cox** (Point Reyes), **Zadie Foskett** (Mill Valley), **Oliver Goldman** (Mill Valley), **David Grover** (Petaluma), **Jackson Harrison** (San Rafael), **Dennis Hughes** (San Francisco), **Mac Kayser** (Mill Valley), **Desmond Kim** (Mill Valley), **Nicole McConneloug** (Fairfax), **Amanda Mueller** (Larkspur), **Nick Slanec** (San Rafael), **Zoe Stephens** (San Anselmo), **Kelly Weidner** (San Rafael), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO

Erving Emerson (Mill Valley), **Shea Sorcher** (Mill Valley), Marin Search & Rescue Youth Volunteers, MCSO

Miranda Kolbe (San Rafael), Volunteer Attorney, Public Defender's Office

2 YEARS

Brianna Barnett (San Luis Obispo), **Gustavo Rea** (Santa Rosa), FIRE Foundry Interns, Marin County Fire

Luca Cuffe (San Rafael), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

Daniel Greely (Novato), **Andrew Musselman** (Corte Madera), Radio Communications Volunteers, Public Works

Shannon Scutt (Mill Valley), **Leslie Weber** (Novato), Friends of the Family Volunteers, HHS

1 YEAR

Denise Bashline (Novato), Office Aide, Marin County Law Library

Karen Ferris (Novato), Event Aide, Human Resources

Ellie Gilbert (San Rafael), Newsletter Writer Intern, Human Resources

Robert Halenbeck (San Rafael), Meals on Wheels In-Home Assessor, HHS

Brooks Hueser (Mill Valley), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

Kathy Norwood (Fairfax), Meals on Wheels Client Assessor, HHS

Annie Silverberg (San Rafael), Office Aide, HHS

Parinaz Sotoudeh (Novato), **Eshal Zubair** (Novato), Homework Helpers, Novato Library

Steve Waskow (Fairfax), Meals on Wheels In-Home Assessor, HHS

