

## VOLUNTEER NOTES

### Volunteer's Photos on Display

Fine art portraits of Marin residents who are, or have been, homeless are on display in a dramatic exhibit at the Marin Civic Center.

The images are by MarinShares photographer **Lea Del Pomo**. She volunteers with the Health and Human Services Department's Whole Person Care program, which serves homeless people. Lea's goal is to "draw attention to what otherwise might be dismissed. My intent is to find the core—the core within us that represents our universal connection in humanity."

The "I Will Not be Forgotten: The Dignity in Homelessness" exhibit runs weekdays through January 31 at the first- and third-floor galleries of the Marin Civic Center.

The exhibit includes personal stories from several of the 50-plus subjects.

For exhibit details, see the October 30 [Marin IJ](#). For more about Lea's volunteering, see the May [MarinfoNOW](#).

### Holidays

County offices will be closed Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25, and New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1.



### STAFF

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### VOLUNTEERS

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## Intern Works on Legislative Policy Projects

By Natalie Dybeck

PHOTO BY DOUG KAYE



Evan Thompson

Marintern **Evan Thompson** was seeking to apply his research and writing skills when he found the perfect opportunity: a legislative policy internship with the County of Marin.

A recent UC Davis graduate, Evan started the paid internship in July. A typical day involves meeting with his staff supervisor, **Talia Smith**, director of legislative and intergovernmental affairs in the Office of the County Executive.

"This usually includes updates about bills in the state assembly, urgent issues brought to us by our state and federal lobbyists, and confirming what I'll be working on for the day," said Evan.

Evan's recent projects have included research on artificial intelligence (AI) regulation for Marin County Supervisor **Eric Lucan**, on curbing deepfake videos in schools, an e-bike safety initiative, and research on agriculture, zoning laws, and land regulations in West Marin.

Evan currently focuses on drafting support or opposition letters for bills in the state assembly heading to the governor's desk. After review, letters are sent on behalf of the Marin County Board of Supervisors.

In August, Evan and some of his coworkers visited the state capitol during the final week of the legislative session. They met with Assembly Member—and former Marin Supervisor—**Damon Connolly**, whose district covers Marin and half of Sonoma County.

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## Search Team Volunteer Shares Experience and Energy

By Scott Harrop

When MarinShares volunteer **Ciara Cox** moved to the U.S. to attend UC Berkeley on a field hockey scholarship, she fully expected to return to County Dublin upon graduation. Instead, she settled in Point Reyes, which reminds her of her native Ireland.

She has medical background as an occupational therapist and an EMT—and a lifetime love of the outdoors and helping others.

When Ciara heard of the chance to volunteer for Marin Search and Rescue (SAR) with the Marin County Sheriff's Office, she knew it would be a great fit: "Most of my career has been of service."

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PHOTO BY CIARA COX

Ciara Cox

## Search Team Volunteer Shares Experience and Energy

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Ciara is inspired by her teammates and the culture and rigor of the team under fellow volunteer **Michael St. John**, unit leader for the SAR group.

It's not a light commitment—the team is on call 24/7, sometimes getting paged at 2 a.m. Members are expected to respond to at least 30 percent of in-county and 20 percent of out-of-county requests. They also attend trainings—at least two Mondays plus one weekend each month.

Lt. **Pierre Ahuncaïn** of the Marin County Sheriff's Office Field Services Bureau coordinates the SAR and is Ciara's staff supervisor. He notes that "since joining the team in 2021, Ciara has amassed 2,985 volunteer hours and has responded to 81 incidents, 74 exercises, and 218 events."

Fellow volunteer **Rich Shelton**, who serves as SAR search manager and finance director, adds more: "Ciara took on the role of boot camp manager less than six months after joining the team. The Marin SAR Boot Camp is an intensive, two-month long, 80-hour training program for 30 new members each year. It is extremely complex to organize and requires careful coordination between the boot campers and the dozens of team members needed to



Ciara Cox, left, and fellow volunteers collaborate at a Search and Rescue command post.

provide the training. She did a fantastic job running this for over two years."

She currently is the SAR accounting manager and a team lead on the SAR "ladder," which begins with the role of cadet on probation and progresses to regular cadet, team lead, advanced team lead, and search manager.

Ciara said she "loves being a ground pounder" and serving in the command post during searches, which can last multiple days and involve multiple agencies. Along with having teams out in

the field searching, there are team members running the search from a command post.

The team's primary responsibility is to Marin County, though they also respond to mutual aid missions throughout California, especially in counties with smaller populations that don't have Marin's 140-member crew.

Ciara's involvement also offers growth opportunities. "As a prior Boot Camp manager, Ciara was extremely successful in mentoring and developing our new members," Pierre said. "Ciara's thoughtful character and approachable nature bring a welcoming calmness to those around her."

The experience builds a deep sense of teamwork, fostering friendships with good-hearted, fun people. Particularly inspiring for Ciara is the large youth contingent: 30 percent of volunteers are under 18, with a minimum age of 14.

"It feeds all my values," said Ciara. "My motto is to show up."

A Marin resident since 2000, Ciara lives "with my wife, Margaret Wu, who teaches at Berkeley Law. And we have a very sweet and cool dog who has a heart marking on his side. His name is Croí, which is the Irish word for heart." ■

## Intern Works on Legislative Policy Projects

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"It was awesome to get to talk to Assembly Member Connolly about the day's events..." Evan said. "I learned a lot about the mechanisms of our state government and the interactions between state and county governments."

"Evan has been a delightful addition," said Talia. "Having graduated with a major in international relations and history, Evan brings a strong interest in civics at every level. He has excelled in grasping California local and state policy, especially in understanding the role of county government.

"Having Evan as an intern has reminded me how much we all stand to benefit from intergenerational workplaces that foster genuine, two-way learning opportunities between experienced county staff and the next generation of civic leaders," added Talia, who is a former county intern herself.

In his free time, Evan enjoys tracking global events, reading political theory, traveling, and watching Sharks and Bruins hockey games. From August 2022 to September 2023, Evan had

a formative experience when he studied abroad in Germany and explored Europe.

Evan finds some of his most challenging duties appear when "something is so broad and research-heavy that it sometimes becomes overwhelming." Even so, he finds the internship extremely rewarding. "I think the fact that the work is meaningful and will impact the community is the most rewarding part of my role," he said. ■

# Volunteers Deliver Lifesaving Skills Training at San Quentin

By Anne Carta

The all-volunteer Marin Medical Reserve Corps (MMRC) recently expanded its Lifesaving Skills Training series to incarcerated residents at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center (formerly San Quentin State Prison).

MMRC operates under the aegis of the Marin County Health and Human Services Department's Public Health division. The corps includes registered nurses, physicians, and others with experience in the medical field.

The skills series launched last summer at San Quentin received strong interest, with nearly 250 participants trained. Sessions covered essential lifesaving techniques, including hands-only CPR, automated external defibrillator (AED) use, Stop the Bleed, and administration of naloxone (NARCAN®).

Residents of the rehabilitation center requested the program, which was tailored to meet their unique needs.

Training was designed with trauma-informed approaches. (A trauma-informed approach recognizes that some people come to health-related interactions with a history of trauma that may interfere with learning. Before presenting, instructors find ways to ask for cooperation or otherwise support participants.)

Sessions also align with emergency protocols and include literacy support and peer mentoring. To support inclusion, volunteers offer sessions in Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL).

After the successful summer session, MMRC volunteers and county public health staff returned to San Quentin in October to deliver hands-only CPR and AED training at a health fair—the first health fair held at the facility since before the pandemic. Hundreds of incarcerated residents attended, showing high engagement and enthusiasm for learning lifesaving techniques.

The lively event was well received. Participants practiced skills, connected

PHOTO BY GABRIEL LOEDERMAN



Marin Medical Reserve Corps (MMRC) volunteers and county Public Health staff members gather outside the gates of San Quentin Rehabilitation Center on a training day. Front row, L-R: county Senior Public Health Nurse Lindsey Termini, volunteer nurses Marie Water and Martina Murphy, MMRC Senior Program Coordinator Anne Carta, county Media Specialist Lucia Ramirez, county Public Health Nurse Supervisor Marisol Medina. Back row: volunteer Emergency Medical Technician Maxine Gilbert, Sonoma State nursing student Lee Zieber, county Public Health Investigator Al Wood, volunteer nurse Laura Kandell.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIN MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS



MMRC volunteer nurse Marie Water, left, teaches San Quentin residents how to stop the bleed.

with trainers, and received vital health and safety information. The event marked a new chapter in health-focused community gatherings at San Quentin and underscored the ongoing collaboration between Marin County Public Health and the rehabilitation center.

This initiative highlights MMRC's commitment to equity, resilience, and



A resident, left, practices how to stop a bleed while listening to MMRC volunteer nurse Judith Harkins, right, and an ASL interpreter.

community service, underscoring its dedication to supporting the under-resourced communities of Marin County. The partnership with San Quentin Rehabilitation Center is set to continue, with additional training sessions planned to further strengthen health and safety. ■

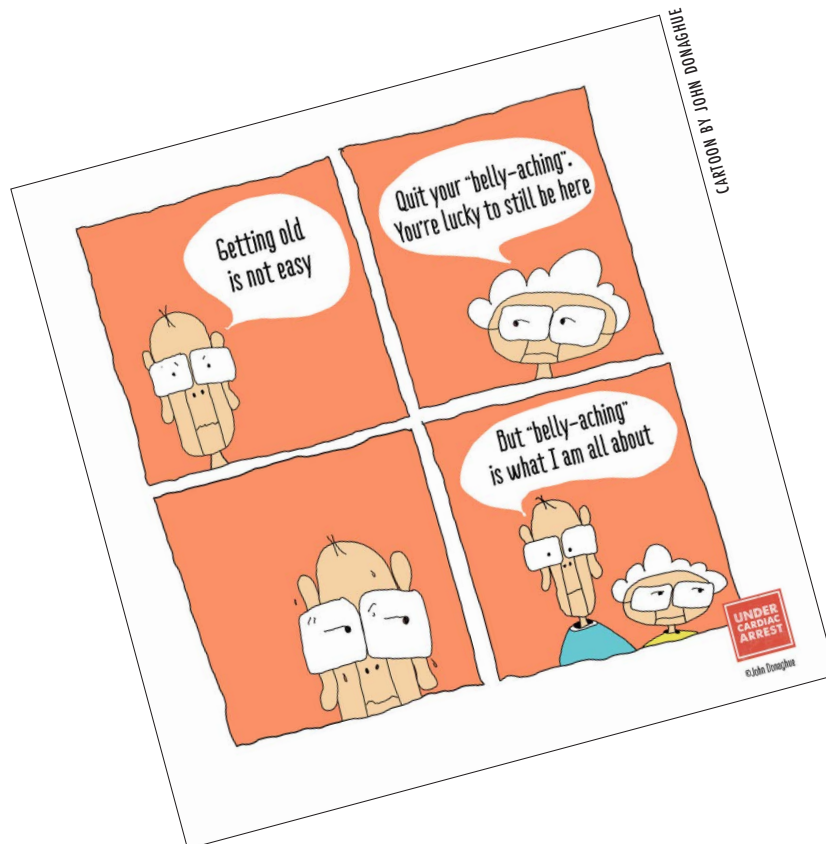
For more information, visit the [Marin Medical Reserve Corps](#) webpage or email MMRC Coordinator [Anne Carta](#).

## Volunteers Boost Arts & Crafts Fair



PHOTO BY BOB DELL

Stormy weather didn't dampen the spirit of fun at the 2024 Marin County Employee Arts & Crafts Fair on November 20 and 21 at the Marin Civic Center. MarinShares volunteers from the Human Resources Department were a big part of the event's success. Event aides **Deborah Fox**, **Ruth-Louise Moran**, and **Veronica Morino**, photographers **Bob Dell** and **Doug Kaye**, designer **Annet Katan**, consultant **Lynda Pearson**, and coordinator **Maureen Caslavka** provided day-of support, photography, design, marketing advice, and planning. HR Marintern **Jeovany Monzon** helped with admin tasks and distributed posters. The fair featured live music, original art, a woodworking demonstration, a bake sale benefitting local charities, and items handcrafted by talented staff from across the county organization. The public event was founded by county workers in 2000, and employees participate on their own time. For highlights, visit the County of Marin Instagram account.



CARTOON BY JOHN DONAGHY

## Who's New & Welcome!

**Alexandria Adams** (Oakland), West Marin Nursing Student, Health & Human Services (HHS)

**Benjamin Au** (San Bruno), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Nate Blumin** (San Rafael), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Angelique Calimlim** (Pacifica), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Lauren Cole** (San Rafael), Storytime Aide, Civic Center Library

**Hanna Cortright** (San Anselmo), Suicide Prevention Action Team Intern, Board of Supervisors

**Catherine De La Torre** (Sunol), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Jocelyn Esquivias** (San Francisco), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Martha Frankel** (Point Reyes Station), Volunteer Shelves, Inverness Library

**Tara Fullerton** (Mill Valley), Homework Helpers Intern, Corte Madera Library

**Marisa Gauna** (San Francisco), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Elyas Gul** (Danville), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Stephen Hoefler** (San Jose), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Sharon Jones** (Point Reyes Station), English as a Second Language Tutor, Point Reyes Library

**Jasmeen Kaur** (San Jose), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Evan Lichtblau** (Mill Valley), Public Guardian Intern, HHS

**Cathline Ma** (San Francisco), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Alana McCracken** (San Rafael), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Andrea Munoz Vera** (Pinole), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Czijay Robyn Oliveros** (Martinez), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Elliot Perelmuter** (Mill Valley), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Robert Shaw** (Novato), Contract Policy Intern, HHS

**Jahnine Spaulding** (Novato), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

**Guodong Tian** (San Francisco), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Jennyline Rose L. Tiangco** (Citrus Heights), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

**Will Zhu** (Millbrae), West Marin Nursing Student, HHS

## Happy Anniversary

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

### 30 YEARS

**Ray Peterson** (Petaluma), Air Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)

### 22 YEARS

**Gregory Felton** (Stateline, NV), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

### 12 YEARS

**Tim Graves** (Tombles), Volunteer Firefighter, Marin County Fire

### 11 YEARS

**Louise Berto** (San Anselmo), Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Park

### 9 YEARS

**John Pierremont** (Santa Rosa), Event Aide, Human Resources

### 8 YEARS

**Michael Warner** (Redwood City), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

### 3 YEARS

**Adam Almedilla** (San Anselmo), Packet Assembly Student Service Intern, HHS

**Elizabeth Fernbacher** (Corte Madera), Financial Abuse Specialist Team Volunteer, HHS

### 2 YEARS

**Daisy Kessler** (Fairfax), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

**Nancy Mackle** (San Anselmo), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

**Sean Peisert** (San Rafael), Radio Communications Volunteer, Department of Public Works

**Ryan Robinett** (Marshall), Volunteer Firefighter, Marin County Fire

### 1 YEAR

**Maddy Kearney** (San Anselmo), Student Service Intern, Fairfax Library

**Christine Martin** (Corte Madera), Meals on Wheels In-Home Assessor, HHS

**Nick Melniczek** (San Rafael), California Room Volunteer, Civic Center Library

**Julia Owens** (Novato), OD Free Marin and Suicide Prevention Collaboration Intern, Board of Supervisors

## Happy Holidays



from the  
MarinfoNOW staff