

VOLUNTEER NOTES

Ambassadors Wanted

The Student Elections Ambassador Program (SEAP) empowers high school and college students to lead voter outreach and civic engagement—and this year’s program kicks off at 5:00 p.m. Monday, Sept. 8, at the Marin Civic Center. (There will be pizza!) For details and to apply, students may visit [SEAP](#). The Elections Department hosts the program.

Volunteer Wins Fair Award

In its inaugural year, the Barbara Perolini Award for Outstanding Service at the Marin County Fair has been awarded to MarinShares volunteer **Alex Buffington**, who helped with exhibits, put up signs, decorated the fairgrounds, and provided outstanding customer service, said **Todd McQuade** of the Cultural Services Department.

The new award is named after the late **Barbara Perolini**, who volunteered for 11 years and then was hired by Cultural Services. She was known for her quick wit, attention to detail, and warm, guest-centered manner. Barbara died in 2024. The award goes to a volunteer who exemplifies her spirit of service.

Volunteer Team of the Year Uproots Invaders

By Marjorie Grannan



PHOTO BY STEVE ZIMAN

Terra Linda Broom Club members smile after receiving resolutions of commendation from Board President Mary Sackett, in red. At left is Marin County Parks Volunteer Program Coordinator Greg Reza, staff liaison to the team. Marin County Parks Director Chris Chamberlain is on the right.

As the county’s Volunteer Team of the Year, the Terra Linda Broom Club (TLBC) has earned a few whereas-es that are worth the whereas-ing:

“WHEREAS, the County of Marin recognizes the importance of the role volunteer teams play in supporting the

quality of life in our community and the success of the MarinShares: Marin County Volunteers program, and the Terra Linda Broom Club coordinated by Marin County Parks has merited the high distinction of being selected

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Top Intern Team Connects Youth with Local Resources

By Ed Remitz

Four young women operating as a vibrant group of dedicated interns have been named for Marin County honors as the Intern Team of the Year.

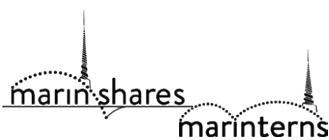
Find Your Way (FYW) is a youth-led program founded in 2022 that connects young people with resources. It helps provide internships, volunteer roles, scholarships, mental health resources, LGBTQAI support, and drug awareness training.

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PHOTO BY STEVE ZIMAN

Intern Team of the Year members pose with their resolutions of commendation. Pictured from left, Dhanya Subramanian, Sophia Rubel, Board of Supervisors President Mary Sackett, Adriana Martinez, Jasmine Wood.



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: **Livia Danku, Natalie Dybeck, Julia Figueroa, Marjorie Grannan, Scott Harrop, Calla McBride** | Photographers: **Bob Dell, Steven Disenhof, Bill Johnston Jr., Doug Kaye, Gregg Turner, Steve Ziman** | Copy Editor: **Pamela Ross** | Copy Editor Intern: **David Balderama** | Graphic Design: **Eleanor Lau** | Graphic Design Aide: **Noemi Suárez** | Intern Writing Coach: **Ed Remitz** | Administrative Aides: **Deborah Fox, Deborah Gregor** | Cartoonist: **John Donaghue**

Top Intern Team Connects Youth with Local Resources

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The four unpaid interns on the Find Your Way Lead Team are **Adriana Martinez**, **Sophia Rubel**, **Dhanya Subramanian**, and **Jasmine Wood**. Each is a Find Your Way co-lead.

The Marin County Board Supervisors honored the team during ceremonies on May 27.

Find Your Way's mission statement includes: "In Marin, youth—especially youth of color, newcomers, and those from low-income communities—face real barriers to mental health support... Many simply don't know when or how to ask for help, or whom to turn to."

Find Your Way's work includes updating a comprehensive resource guide annually in English and Spanish, and support for the Mental Health Art and Film Showcase, the One-Stride 5K, the Marin County Youth Commission Wellness Festival, and year-round programs including Caring Cards, Homework Helpers, and OD Free Marin.

"The Find Your Way intern team shows the power of what youth leadership can achieve," said Marin County District 1 Supervisor **Mary Sackett**. "With compassion, creativity, and determination, the Find Your Way Lead Team has

created spaces where young people feel seen, supported, and empowered to lead."

The program emerged from Marin 9 to 25, an umbrella organization serving outreach programs, said **Nancy Vernon**, former Board of Supervisors aide and FYW co-founder.

"Working with these young people provides me and others with such hope," said Nancy, who now is a senior manager for BluePath Health, a consulting organization. "They are filled with so much hope and creative thinking that makes my day every day."

"Find Your Way gave me more than a platform—it gave me purpose," said honoree Dhanya, a soon-to-be UC San Diego college student majoring in human developmental sciences with a specialization in healthy aging. "It's where I learned that youth voices can drive real change. Through FYW, I've found community, courage, and the tools to lead with empathy and impact."

Reflecting on her unpaid intern role, Danya added, "I truly believe that volunteering is one of the most fulfilling experiences one can have. It's where passion meets purpose and where youth voices can shape a more inclusive future."

Adriana Martinez is another co-lead with a background of helping others.

"My parents keep themselves busy during the weekends by volunteering at schools, church, and community organizations, like Canal Alliance. They have inspired me to do the same, which is why I love being involved in Marin," said Adriana, who just graduated from Terra Linda High School and will attend Dominican University this fall as a psychology major.

"I plan to use the skills I have learned in my internship throughout my career to make a difference in people's lives," Adriana said. "Anyone can make a difference through volunteering as long as it's done with heart and purpose."

The intern team's host is the Board of Supervisors office, and team collaborations involve the Health and Human Services Department (HHS) and the Marin County Free Library (MCFL). At the recognition ceremony in May, Board President Sackett presided, and HHS Director **Lisa Warhuus** and MCFL Director **Lana Adlawan** were among the staff, friends, and family who congratulated the four team members. ■

Who's New & Welcome!

Sasha Acevedo (Novato), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

Nathan Boudreau (Auburn), Pre-Law Intern, County Counsel's Office

Dawson Brown (San Rafael), Pre-Law Intern, County Counsel's Office

Erika Flores (San Rafael), Pre-Law Intern, District Attorney's Office

Gemma Gullo (San Francisco), High School Intern, District Attorney's Office

Calvin Gundee (San Anselmo), District 2 Intern, Board of Supervisors

Jasen Hall (Oakland), Volunteer Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

Sydney Lee (Grass Valley), Summer Intern, District Attorney's Office

Nico Less (San Anselmo), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

Marlo Lile (San Francisco), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Sophia Lopez (San Anselmo), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

Jessica Mendieta Alvarado (Novato), District 2 Intern, Board of Supervisors

Brian Sanford (San Anselmo), Volunteer Environmental Steward, Marin County Parks

Dunara Senadheera (San Anselmo), Pre-Law Intern, District Attorney's Office

Yseult Serre Banke (San Rafael), District 3 Intern, Board of Supervisors

Biana Toussaint (Novato), Student Service Learning Intern, South Novato Library

John Woodworth (Livermore), Volunteer Photographer, Human Resources

Volunteer Team of the Year Uproots Invaders

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Before: Volunteer Team of the Year members pause for a moment to smile as they begin removing broom plants from county open space. Pictured from left: volunteers Michelle Fouts (looking up), Bruno Marconi (in cap), and Cindy Marshall (center near tree trunk) with staff member Greg Reza.



After: The cleared patch of hillside almost glows after volunteers pulled broom for two and a half hours. (After photo taken in same area as before photo but from a different angle.)

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARIN COUNTY PARKS

as the County of Marin's outstanding Volunteer Team of the Year ...

"Now, therefore be it resolved, this Board of Supervisors hereby expresses its sincere appreciation and heartfelt congratulations to the Terra Linda Broom Club for exemplifying the high honor and true meaning of being named the Volunteer Team of the Year for 2024–2025."

The 14 core members of the TLBC are: **Jason Chan, Anoosheh Elmi, Michelle Fouts, Dan Fost, Lindsey Going, Bruno Marconi, Cindy Marshall, Kay Noguchi, Ramon Reza, John Scott, Evan Sedlock, Kathy Sedlock, Phil Sotter, and Ron Theisen.**

Volunteer Kay Noguchi got involved in 2021. She was helping with a separate project, the restoration of Kent Island, which she calls "a magical place in Bolinas Lagoon," doing tidal wetlands restoration. There she met fellow parks volunteer John Scott, who convinced her to expand her efforts by joining the Terra Linda Broom Club. The club is dedicated to removing invasive French broom plants from the vulnerable open space between Sleepy Hollow and Terra Linda.

Now Kay, a retired librarian in her 70s said, "I've been doing this for four years. The core group meets every Tuesday morning from 9:00 to 11:30.

It's primarily a good job for retirees, but we do have people who are working and come as their schedules permit. It's strenuous, and we have to carry in our weed wrenches." This tool, she explained, is a clamp and lever that takes a very strong person to operate during the dry season, when the ground is hard. During wet weather it's easy.

Marin County Parks Volunteer Program Coordinator **Greg Reza** is the team's staff supervisor. "I cannot say enough good things about them," he remarked. "The Terra Linda Broom Club is a great example of community coming together to solve a community need. Invasive French broom is incredibly persistent. It grows out of control, creates a fire hazard, and reduces native plant habitat. Team members have become knowledgeable enough to avoid the many hazards inherent in the wildlands of county open space.

"They are so persistent, coming out every week for two hours, that they have successfully controlled French broom on Terra Linda/Sleepy Hollow Preserve for nearly seven years," he added. "The team cares for one another and have become friends. Like family, they meet up outside of volunteering and help each other out."

"We take before-and-after photos as well as group photos each week," Kay

said. "The goal is to remove broom plants before they go to seed. There might be a couple of months in one spot: Terra Linda, Sleepy Hollow, San Pedro, Ridgewood Fire Road—it varies a lot."

Reflecting on the award, she said, "Recognition is nice, and we're appreciative that it brought John Scott's work into the spotlight. [John, a member since the team's first year, is the lead volunteer.] We like to give back. We work for cookies and lemonade," she added, referring to snacks provided by Parks staff.

The Board of Supervisors recognized the team's above-and-beyond contributions at a ceremony on May 27. Supervisor **Mary Sackett** presided, Human Resources Director **Christina Cramer** emceed, Marin County Parks Director **Chris Chamberlain** offered praise, and team member John Scott spoke about the group's strengths.

The team welcomes new volunteers. Greg said a new member, **Jane Spetoskey**, has already signed up since the award was bestowed on the team. For details and to apply, contact [Greg Reza](#).

And for an example of the difference broom removal makes, see this Marin County Parks [timelapse](#). ■

It's a Record: 69 Years of Public Service at the Civic Center

MarinShares volunteer **Art Marthinsen** has extended his length-of-service record to 69 years of continuous involvement at the Marin Civic Center in San Rafael. Art had a 37-year career with the Marin County Community Development Agency (CDA), and then immediately after retiring returned as a volunteer consultant with CDA. He has volunteered for 32 years. Staff, friends,



and family gathered this month to celebrate the milestone and present a certificate of appreciation signed by Board of Supervisors President **Mary Sackett**. The photo above shows Art near the center of the group. Among the well-wishers were CDA staff member **Joanne O'Grady**, in white, who helped organize the reception, Art's son **Steve Marthinsen**, in red, and grandson **Michael Marthinsen**, next to Art, in dark gray. County Executive **Derek Johnson**, with the bow tie, was among the speakers who praised Art's contributions. "I want to be Art when I grow up," he quipped, adding, "This is a life well lived. He's done a tremendous job serving, in a life of service."

PHOTO COURTESY OF OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Happy Anniversary

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

24 YEARS

Frank Klebanoff (Novato), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Fire

Dennis Sarantopoulos (Tomasales), Volunteer Firefighter, Marin County Fire

17 YEARS

Donald Jennings (San Rafael), Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

15 YEARS

Kathryn Mitchell-Ball (San Rafael), Volunteer Attorney, District Attorney's Office

Leo Coppeta (Mill Valley), Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Parks

12 YEARS

Salamah Locks (San Rafael), Financial Abuse Specialist Team Volunteer, Health & Human Services (HHS)

11 YEARS

Jeff Davidson (Novato), **Clint Mason** (Petaluma), Fire Lookouts, Marin County Fire

Eleanor Lau (Petaluma), Graphic Design/Production Artist, Human Resources

10 YEARS

Sarah Brewster (Woodacre), **Carl Miller** (Lagunitas), **Mel Wright** (Woodacre), Stewards, Marin County Parks

Alan Lubow (Lagunitas), **Phil Sotter** (Woodacre), **William 'Bill' Teufel** (San Geronimo), Open Space Stewards, Marin County Parks

Sally Hutchison (Inverness), Senior Peer Counselor, HHS

Michael Koonce (Berkeley), Air Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

9 YEARS

Shay Cook (Concord), **Wendy Dalia** (Mill Valley), **April Kelly** (Mill Valley), **Michelle Tripp** (Mill Valley), Search & Rescue Volunteers, Marin County Sheriff's Office

7 YEARS

Scott Harrop (Napa), Newsletter Writer, Human Resources

4 YEARS

Pegan Brooke (Bolinas), Shelver, Stinson Beach Library

Daniel Christian (Novato), Sheriff's Chaplain, Marin County Sheriff's Office

Roger Dickerson (Ross), Radio Communications Volunteer, Department of Public Works

Marjorie Grannan (Petaluma), Newsletter Writer, Human Resources

3 YEARS

Eric Aguirre (San Anselmo), Student Service Intern, Fairfax Library

Mark Gainer (San Rafael), Ombudsman Volunteer, HHS

Sahiti Namburu (San Rafael), Student Service Intern, South Novato Library

Cameron Kamalpour (San Anselmo), **Riley McClure** (San Anselmo), **Vlad Tymchyshyn** (San Anselmo), Packet Assembly Student Service Interns, HHS

Christina Righetti (Petaluma), Volunteer Firefighter, Marin County Fire

2 YEARS

Laurie Ozone (Novato), Restrictive Covenant Assistant, Assessor-Recorder-County Clerk

1 YEAR

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

Naomi Patel (Larkspur), **Janice Sargiotto** (San Rafael), Marin Center Volunteers, Cultural Services

Kelly Pieczonka (Novato), **Katherine Ransom** (San Rafael), Friends of the Family Volunteers, HHS

Samuel Sung (San Rafael), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

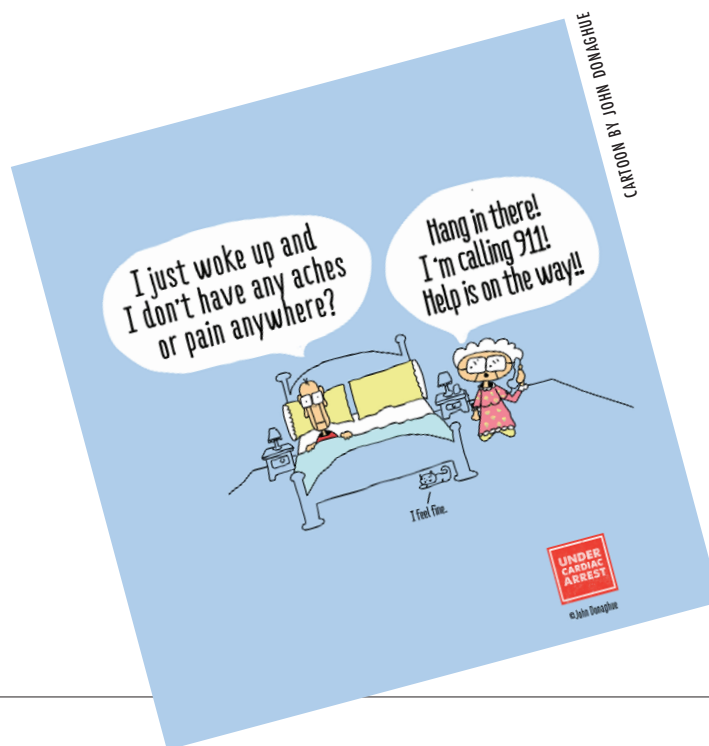
Stephen Ziman (San Rafael), Volunteer Photographer, Human Resources

Tomales Fire Team Seeks New Members



PHOTOS BY ERIC CUTLER

The Tomales Volunteer Fire Company, which plays a vital role in emergency response in the rural northwest corner of Marin, is open to new members. Volunteers help with community safety, supplementing the Marin County Fire Department's regular staff. They perform weekly checks on a water tender, as pictured at right. (The tender transports water to fire scenes, especially in areas without hydrants.) Volunteers train regularly, as shown in the photo above, respond to emergency calls, and serve alongside full-time personnel. They also assist with community outreach and disaster preparedness. The ideal applicant is 18 or older, lives or works in the Tomales response area, and can serve about 15 hours a month. No firefighting experience is required. Volunteers must be physically able to participate, pass a background check, and complete orientation. "Many past volunteers have gone on to pursue professional firefighting careers, while others continue to volunteer out of a deep commitment to our community," said volunteer **Eric Cutler**, the company's chief. For details, contact [Eric](#). The company, which began in 1976, will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year.



CARTOON BY JOHN DONAGHY