

## VOLUNTEER NOTES

### We Remember

Volunteer **Art Marthinsen**, who worked and then volunteered for the Community Development Agency (CDA) for 70 consecutive years, died on March 20.

"It was only a few weeks ago that we were celebrating Art's 99th birthday," said his staff supervisor, Administrative Services Associate **Joanne O'Grady**. "He passed away peacefully at home taking a nap in the afternoon sun. True to his character, he was here volunteering just two days earlier. When I said, 'Goodbye, Art, see you next Wednesday,' I had no way of knowing it would be our final farewell." Joanne added, "Art often told me what a great life he had, surrounded by the love of his family and all the friends he made by working and volunteering in our office."

**Joan Brown**, the retired founding manager of the county's volunteer program, said, "I clearly remember the day Art came up to my office to say he was retiring from CDA but wanted to volunteer. I checked with his office, and they were thrilled he wanted to come back."

Among Art's survivors are two county staff members: son **Steve Marthinsen** of Information Services and Technology, and grandson **Michael Marthinsen** of CDA.



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### VOLUNTEERS

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## Volunteer Focuses on Fire Training, Shares Photos in Social Media

By Natalie Dybeck

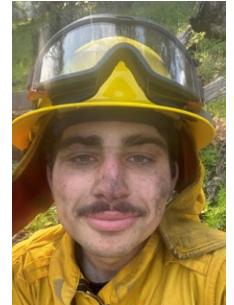
MarinShares volunteer **Asher Goldblatt** graduated from the Marin County Fire Department's Foundry program in December and now serves the department as a volunteer photographer while attending college.

The FIRE Foundry program is a one-year, entry-level internship combining class instruction and fieldwork on a full-time schedule. Coursework ranges from fire science fundamentals to EMT training and includes fieldwork and wildland fuel reduction.

"Every day was super dynamic," said Asher. "We started at 7 a.m., got our assignments, and headed to our sites. The most challenging part was the hiking. It was initially tough and humbling, but we all bonded through it. The camaraderie was really meaningful."

A highlight was the wildfire academy at the St. Vincent's School for Boys property in San Rafael, where Asher and his fellow recruits applied their training alongside seasonal firefighters. They cut, piled, and chipped vegetation to reduce hazardous fuels in open space, wildlands, and along roads, ultimately lowering wildfire risk.

"Projects sometimes started off feeling overwhelming," said Asher, "but by the end, the most rewarding part was seeing how far we'd come. Getting to say, 'I helped remove all these hazardous



Asher Goldblatt

PHOTO BY ASHER GOLDBLATT

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## Marintern Helps Lead Homework Helpers Tutors at the Fairfax Library

By Diana Jones



Amelia Lucey

Marintern **Amelia Lucey** is the lead Homework Helper at the Fairfax Library, an opportunity the high school senior discovered through a flyer.

The Fairfax

Homework Helpers program has run on Monday evenings throughout Amelia's three years of service. She developed leadership qualities that led her to serve as a site lead, keeping track of staffing and hours served by her fellow tutors.

"I enjoy being a part of providing students free access and a place to go," she said.

The program allows local youth and high school tutors to unite in learning. Amelia often relies on her classmates at Archie Williams High School to staff sessions, along with a few from her participation in the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program.

Amelia spends her free time in Woodacre riding horses. She has strong support from her parents and younger brother and hopes to major in history at an East Coast college or one of the University of California campuses.

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PHOTO BY BOB DELL

# Marintern Helps Lead Homework Helpers Tutors at the Fairfax Library

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Her recent enrollment in an art history course inspired her to teach history or work in museums or art exhibits. “Because my mom is an artist, I have been lucky enough to always be surrounded by art and creativity,” Emily said. “She has taken me to many museums, where my love of history started. I love learning about other cultures and their histories through their art.”

Librarian **Emily Strempek** is Amelia’s staff supervisor and manager of the Homework Helpers program at the Marin County Free Library’s Fairfax branch. She described Amelia as “important to this program by allowing this to be a truly teen-run program. Amelia is wonderful with the kids who come in to get help. She is always ready and



PHOTO BY BOB DELL

Amelia Lucey and friends discuss Homework Helpers tutoring.

willing to listen to what they need and pivot to fit their needs.”

“The program has been helpful for me as it allows me to form a deeper connection with the community, and not just with the kids we tutor, but also with the other tutors,” Emily said. “We have tutors who

go to Archie, Redwood, and San Domenico, and without Homework Helpers sometimes it’s hard to make friends and have a community outside your own school. ...”

She explained that tutors assist kids in “third grade through middle school and help with any subject, although it’s mostly math. They are all learning different things. Sometimes when I’m helping them with their work, I relearn it myself, and this helps me

deepen my own understanding of the subject. Career-wise I know I want to do something related to history,” Amelia added. “Doing Homework Helpers has made me consider going into teaching as I enjoy working with kids.” ■

## Who's New & Welcome!

**Rylie Canfield** (Watsonville), Nursing Student, Health & Human Services (HHS)

**Mark Carlson** (San Francisco), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Mia Chiu** (San Rafael), Teen Volunteer, Civic Center Library

**Indigo Cramb** (San Anselmo), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Calixte de Belloy de Saint Lienard** (Belvedere Tiburon), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Dirk DiGiorgio-Haag** (San Rafael), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Juliana Douglas** (San Francisco), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Kathleen Eagle** (San Anselmo), Senior Peer Counselor, HHS

**Zoe Fain** (Fairfax), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Kavi Francis** (San Rafael), Venetia Valley School Homework Helpers Intern, Civic Center Library

**Marshall Gross** (San Rafael), Volunteer Photographer, Human Resources

**Alexis Hinsdale** (San Anselmo), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Shannon G Husband** (Berkeley), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Parker Kellman** (Mill Valley), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Maya Kocaman** (Mill Valley), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Isabella Lakatos** (Petaluma), California Department of Public Health Pathways Intern, HHS

**Yanis Louahdi** (Mill Valley), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Ching Yi Low** (San Francisco), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Julian Mack** (San Rafael), Civic Center Tour Docent, Cultural Services

**Juriz Diecho Manuel** (Stockton), Nursing Student, HHS

**Malisa Ng** (San Rafael), Student Elections Ambassador, Elections Department

**Lou Notti** (San Rafael), Marin Center Volunteer, Cultural Services

**Ana Petrie** (Sausalito), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Kirstie Rosano** (San Rafael), English Conversation Club Facilitator, South Novato Library

**Ronald Theisen** (Novato), Marin Wildlife Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Travis Tran** (San Rafael), Media Volunteer, Cultural Services

**Eric Watterud** (San Anselmo), One Tam Bee Watch Volunteer, Marin County Parks

## Volunteer Focuses on Fire Training, Shares Photos in Social Media

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fuels with my team' was a great feeling. The other rewarding part was the sense of belonging. Everyone was working together and it was great to see our hard work pay off."

"Throughout Asher's term, he showed enthusiasm in learning new things and asking clarifying questions to grow and better himself and his cohort," said Fire Department Program Coordinator **Mimi Choudhury**. "His passion for film and videography paired with his mentorship from Fire Department Media Manager **Mari Ochoa** allowed him to not only gain certifications in fire and power tools but also grow his skills as a photographer."

Separate from his foundry experience, Asher now photographs Fire Department trainings, Marin Urban Search and Rescue team outings, and community events to publish on the county's website and social media pages.

"It's really rewarding seeing the photos posted to social media and seeing comments like, 'How do I sign up to be a firefighter?'" said Asher. "I'm also enjoying getting to make a name for myself...in this capacity."

"Asher's time with us as a volunteer photographer is having a meaningful impact on our department," said Mari, his staff supervisor. "With his exceptional photography, we're able to keep our community informed and engaged with clear, compelling visuals of our trainings, events, and incidents. His positive attitude and dedication make him a valued part of our team."



PHOTO BY ASHER GOLDBLATT

*This image taken by volunteer photographer Asher Goldblatt during a seasonal training exercise shows a firefighter monitoring a grass fire on a hill near St. Vincent's School for Boys in Marinwood.*

Asher is a graduate of Tam High School and currently studies public safety at College of Marin. He plans to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in fire protection administration and technology. In his spare time, he enjoys photography, hiking, and spending time with friends. ■

## Master Gardeners Celebrate 40 Years of Service and Growth

By Julie McMillan

In 1986, eight Marin residents became the first graduates of the Marin Master Gardeners (MMG) program. Over the past 40 years, the program has flourished and grown to 350-plus volunteers who are University of California trained and certified, providing research-based information on sustainable landscape practices, pest management, and home horticulture to Marin gardeners.

Today, MMG members collectively volunteer more than 33,500 hours and engage in nearly 6,000 hours of continuing education. Using an estimated value of \$40 an hour (the 2024 value in California calculated by Independent Sector), the group contributes the equivalent of



PHOTO BY BECCA RYAN

*Marin Master Gardeners volunteers enjoy a visit while sorting seeds that will be shared across the county—including at some library branches.*

nearly \$1.6 million in value per year.

Since its inception, the group has developed and supported projects that help Marin home gardeners, delivering education and outreach at many county events, including the Marin County Fair, farmers markets, and Marin County Farm Day.

Master gardeners share practical gardening tips with residents on numerous projects, such as Falkirk, the Help Desk, Harvey's Garden, Exploring Habitats, numerous community and school gardens, Garden Walks, the Edible Demonstration Garden, several guilds, Fire Smart Landscaping, Grow an Extra Row, Earth Friendly Gardening, and Seed Saving.

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# Master Gardeners Celebrate 40 Years of Service and Growth

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To support its programs, MMG offers fabulous plants for sale to Marin gardeners at events including the Pollinator Sale, the Tomato Market, and the Succulent Sale.

Members also developed and regularly use multiple communications channels to share educational content, including its [website](#), a Saturday column in the *Marin IJ*, a quarterly newsletter called *The Leaflet*, hundreds of speaker events, more than 50 videos, and countless social media posts.

The local program is managed by the University of California



PHOTO BY REBECCA RYAN

Master Gardener volunteer Emily Daane tends the bug hotel table at the March Pollinator Plant sale at the Falkirk Cultural Center in San Rafael. The bug hotels, built by volunteer Tom Warrington, support wildlife and enhance home garden ecosystems.

Cooperative Extension (UCCE) in partnership with the County of Marin.

“The Marin Master Gardeners program is a powerful example of what’s possible when local investment and community passion come together,” said UCCE Area Director **Lauren Cartwright**, whose area includes Marin, Sonoma, and Napa counties. “I’m continually inspired by the dedication of our volunteers who share their knowledge, cultivate community, and care for our environment.” ■

Writer Julie McMillan is a member of Marin Master Gardeners.



# Happy Anniversary

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

## 29 YEARS

**Dan Healy** (Woodacre), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Fire

## 26 YEARS

**Bill Mittendorf** (San Francisco), Air Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

**John Pope** (Novato), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

## 23 YEARS

**Richard Courier** (Petaluma), Air Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

## 18 YEARS

**Larry Atkinson** (San Carlos), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

## 16 YEARS

**Scott McDaniel** (San Rafael), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

**Erica Schafer** (San Anselmo), Senior Peer Counselor, Health & Human Services (HHS)

## 15 YEARS

**Rich Shelton** (Tiburon), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

## 14 YEARS

**John Garcia** (Dixon), Air Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

**Deborah Gregor** (Novato), Event Aide, Human Resources

## 13 YEARS

**Larken Bradley** (San Rafael), Senior Peer Counselor, HHS

## 11 YEARS

**Christine Camilleri** (Novato), Mounted Patrol, Marin County Parks

## 10 YEARS

**David Gannon** (Corte Madera), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office

**Mark Stoering** (Tomales), Volunteer Firefighter, Marin County Fire

## 8 YEARS

**Gideon Bernstein** (Mill Valley), **Tate Thompson** (Kentfield), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, Marin County Sheriff's Office

**Nancy Carlisle** (Novato), **Michael Fischer** (Mill Valley), **Ann Ivan** (Greenbrae), **Steven Virshup** (Novato), Fire Lookouts, Marin County Fire

**Gary Robards** (San Rafael), Volunteer, Survey Archivist for California Room, Civic Center Library

## 5 YEARS

**Warren Leiden** (Mill Valley), Radio Communications Volunteer, Department of Public Works (Public Works)

## 4 YEARS

**Linda Bound** (Novato), English Conversation Club Volunteer, Novato Library

## 3 YEARS

**Eric Adema** (Larkspur), Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Parks

**Annette Anzalone** (Novato), **Judith Armstrong** (Tiburon), **Belle Guelden** (Tiburon), **Harold Hirsch** (San Anselmo), **Constance Jaramillo Kent** (Larkspur), **Eliza Jewett-Hall** (Mill Valley), **Nancy Laurenson** (Corte Madera), **Anne Libbin** (Tiburon), **Carolyn Losee** (Belvedere), **Karen Madsen** (Montara), **Lisa Mantua** (Larkspur), **Jody Newman** (Tiburon), **Alison Pence** (Corte Madera), **Douglas Stimpson** (Berkeley), Wildflower Docents, Marin County Parks

**Elizabeth Champagne** (Novato), **Rose Feeney** (San Rafael), **Joanne Lesley** (Novato), **Jahine**

**Spaulding** (Novato), **Marie Waters** (Fairfax), Marin Center Ushers, Cultural Services

**Robert 'Bob' Dell** (Tiburon), **Doug Kaye** (Kentfield), Newsletter Photographers, Human Resources

## 2 YEARS

**Nicole Collman** (Mill Valley), **Kristy Connolly** (Mill Valley), **Richard Drechsler** (San Francisco), **Naomi Feger** (Piedmont), **Juliet Hickey** (Mill Valley), **Martha Jarocki** (Greenbrae), **Carrie Machleder** (Mill Valley), **Rachel Post** (Larkspur), **Evan Sedlock** (San Rafael), Wildflower Docents, Marin County Parks

**Noemi Suarez** (Novato), Volunteer Graphic Designer, South Novato Library

## 1 YEAR

**Sheila Adams-Sapper** (Novato), Radio Communications Volunteer, Public Works

**Roderick Berry** (Fairfax), **Adam Black** (Petaluma), **Jasen Hall** (Oakland), **Renee Hamilton** (Novato), **Debra Hurst** (Santa Rosa), **Scott Kreinberg** (Fairfax), **Call Nichols** (Mill Valley), **John Perry** (Mill Valley), **Rich Riechel** (Mill Valley), **Terry Sones** (Mill Valley), Fire Lookouts, Marin County Fire

**Janeen Castner** (Novato), Conversation Club Volunteer, Novato Library

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

**Henry Pratt** (San Anselmo), Pre-Law Intern, District Attorney's Office

**Cammie Rolle** (Novato), Friends of the Family Volunteer, HHS

**Vlad Tymchyshyn** (San Anselmo), Records Management Intern, Community Development Agency

