



The Volunteer View

The Monthly Newsletter for Marin County Civic Center Volunteers and Student Interns

VOL 41 ISSUE 11

NOVEMBER 2018

Volunteer Devotes Her Skills To Those Who Served

By Scott Harrop

Civic Center Volunteer **Nancy Oswald's** family members have devoted years of service to their country, and she feels a strong sense of commitment to the armed services. One son retired after 23 years in the military, and another continues to serve in the Marines, which he has done for the past 19 years.

Nancy herself is a member of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 179 of San Anselmo. She regularly participates in events such as the Veterans Day ceremony at the Marin Civic Center every November 11. Another favorite is the Memorial Day ceremony.

Originally from Ireland, Nancy arrived in Marin County in 1971. She worked as a travel agent for 25 years. Upon retiring, she knew she wanted to make some kind of volunteer contribution.

About three years ago, she heard Marin County Veterans Service Officer **Sean Stephens** speak at an event. Sean (himself a former Civic Center



PHOTO BY TARA CLARK

Nancy Oswald

Volunteer) represented the Marin County Veterans Services office, which helps veterans, their spouses, and children obtain all types of veterans' benefits. His office at 10 North San Pedro Road in San Rafael is part of the Health and Human Services Department. Each county has its own Veterans Service Office, and after hearing Sean speak, Nancy was moved

to offer her services as a volunteer administrative aide in Marin. She has been doing it for three years, putting in about three and a half hours a week.

Nancy speaks self-deprecatingly of her contribution: "I scan applications that are filled out and put them into the computer. The information is stored in the office's VetPro database." Asked about assessing who is qualified for benefits, she said simply, "I don't know all that. I just slog away at (the clerical) stuff." But her staff supervisor, Support Service Worker **Brijette Overby**, tells a different tale, one which shows how deeply her service is appreciated. "Nancy volunteers her excellent skills in our office once a week, and contributes much more than scanning claims. She lifts our spirit with her participation in helping our veterans."

On that point the two agree. As Nancy put it, "I really like the people that I work with; Sean Stephens and the rest of the staff are amazing. I have fun there!"

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VOLUNTEER NOTES

Pop-Up Arts & Crafts: Thursday, November 29

Shop for unique gifts and tasty treats at the Marin County Employee Arts & Crafts Fair, 1:30-4:30 p.m., on Thursday, November 29, at the Marin Civic Center Cafe, Room 237, San Rafael. The public is welcome! Volunteer participants are artists **Victoria Gonzalez**, **Noel Ryan**, and **Annet Katan**, and fair coordinator **Heather Liencres**. Note: For double the fair fun, also visit Cultural Services' Holiday Boutique at the Marin Center Exhibit Hall gallery; the boutique opens November 29 and features the work of regional artists.



DESIGN BY ANNET KATAN

All-Electronic Newsletter Coming Soon

Starting in January, the *Volunteer View* will be emailed to volunteers, interns, their staff supervisors, and county leaders. Paper copies won't be printed. Anyone living with a disability who needs an alternate format may make a request by calling 415-473-7404.

Holidays

County offices are closed in observance of Veterans Day on November 12, and for the Thanksgiving holiday on November 22 and 23. We're thankful for your involvement in the Civic Center Volunteers program all year round!

Impact Report!

DESIGN BY ELEANOR LAU



Volunteers and interns served more than a quarter-million hours in 2017-2018, according to the latest Civic Center Volunteers annual impact report, which was accepted by the Marin County Board of Supervisors recently. In the past fiscal year, 8,256 volunteers and interns served 250,789 hours in county departments. Marin County Parks had the most participants: nearly 4,900 people helped in parks and on open space lands. Sheriff's Office volunteers and interns led the time count with 50,500 total hours, closely followed by Health and Human Services with over 43,300 hours served.

Former CCV on Staff

Some new members of the Marin County Probation Department staff connected with the county as interns and volunteers. The most recent example is former volunteer Lauren Fernandes, pictured at right.

There's no guarantee that an internship or volunteer stint will lead to paid work, but students planning their careers and volunteers considering career changes can observe department teams before deciding whether to apply and compete for posted positions. To find Marin's current job openings online, visit governmentjobs.com/careers/marincounty.



PHOTO BY GINA MUZIO

Former Civic Center Volunteer Lauren Fernandes and Probation Chief Mike Daly at her recent swearing in as a deputy probation officer

Marin City Adopt-A-Spot Team Leader: Felecia Gaston

By Shirley Trimble

In her years of “making things better,” **Felecia Gaston** has contributed her formidable talent to her Marin City community to improve the lives of its youth and adult residents. And as a Civic Center Volunteer, she is the passionate and committed team leader for the local “Adopt-A-Spot” beautification program, Marin City Beautiful. The team’s first project was a mammoth two-day clean-up in July at Golden Gate Village involving 86 adults and 52 youth volunteers.

Felecia understands how to organize, motivate, and celebrate others. She recruited kids through the local rec center and went door-to-door to engage them in conversation. “The clean-up was a huge success,” said Felecia. “Our neighboring residents came out in full force from Mill Valley Clean and Sausalito Beautiful. County Department of Public Works personnel and Conservation Corps Northbay also helped.” Trash yield: three large dumpsters of debris, a collection of tires, plus computer towers, laptops, and other e-waste to be recycled.

Her second Adopt-A-Spot project will be the creation at the same location of

a butterfly garden in conjunction with a donation from Sausalito Beautiful.

“Felecia is a force of boundless energy and enthusiasm to motivate her neighbors and local partners to improve their local community. What she and the volunteers accomplished in two short days of clean-up is truly inspiring,” said her volunteer supervisor, **Rob Carson**, the Department of Public Works’ Stormwater Program administrator. “It gives me hope that more people like her will work to reduce litter and pollution on our streets and in our creeks, bays, and ocean.”

For 28 years Felecia has been the executive director of Performing Stars of Marin, providing all types of opportunities for kids. “We give them professional training in the arts. They learn to sail and go to the mountains and summer camp through YWCA programs. My work is project-based,” she explained. She also supports voter registration efforts.

“It has been amazing to see how the Performing Stars programs have blossomed from years ago with zero budget to now hundreds of kids

involved in learning and experiencing opportunities I did not have growing up in the segregated South,” said Felecia. She and her team are busy planning a 2020 community-wide event celebrating 30 years of providing opportunities to Marin City youth -- including Adopt-A-Spot days.

Readers interested in adopting a spot in their own neighborhoods may contact Rob at 415-473-2745.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FELECIA GASTON

Felecia Gaston and young Performing Stars participants

Who's New & Welcome!

Karen Arnold (San Rafael), Usher, Cultural Services

Tracy Ayres (San Anselmo), Usher, Cultural Services

Emma Barenbaum (Mill Valley), 2019 Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, Human Resources

Joel Bovey (El Cerrito), Mental Health Intern, Health & Human Services

Mary Boyles (Tiburon), Usher, Cultural Services

Victoria Chin (Greenbrae), Usher, Cultural Services

Jaime Faurot (Novato), Mental Health Services Administrative Support, Health & Human Services

Jennifer Flores (Rohnert Park), Victim/Witness Intern, District Attorney's Office

Deborah Fox (Corte Madera), Usher, Cultural Services

Elaine Gliner (San Rafael), Usher, Cultural Services

Stan Green (Greenbrae), Usher, Cultural Services

Stefani Iojica (San Anselmo), Legal Support Intern, District Attorney's Office

Barbara Jackson (Novato), Usher, Cultural Services

Dina Johnson (San Rafael), 2019 Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, Human Resources

Philip Klahr (Mill Valley), Usher, Cultural Services

Camille Krejdovsky (Novato), 2019 Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, Human Resources

Lisa Marie Likely (Corte Madera), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

Irene Maxey (Novato), Usher, Cultural Services

Katharine McLaughlin (Novato), Usher, Cultural Services

Joanne Schwartz (San Rafael), Usher, Cultural Services

Sharon Seifert (San Rafael), Usher, Cultural Services

Alexandra Souza (San Rafael), Marin Teen Girl Ambassador, Human Resources

Alison Steiger (Novato), Usher, Cultural Services

Shirley Sugawara (San Rafael), Usher, Cultural Services

Toni Tang (Novato), Usher, Cultural Services

Sue Torres (Fairfax), Usher, Cultural Services

Ingrid Vitols (Benicia), Usher, Cultural Services

Karin Westphal (Novato), Usher, Cultural Services

Shirley Young (San Rafael), Communicable Disease Team Investigator, Health & Human Services

Happy Anniversary!

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

22 YEARS

Drusilla Miller (Novato), Senior Access Reader, Novato Library

19 YEARS

Janice Langdon (Pt. Reyes Station), Senior Peer Counselor, Health & Human Services

Phyllis Fitzpatrick (Stinson Beach), Aide, Stinson Beach Library

13 YEARS

Edna Hickok (Novato), Library Beyond Walls Liaison, Library

Susanna Molinari (San Rafael), Library Beyond Walls Liaison, Library

11 YEARS

Sue Mayerchak (Novato), Senior Peer Counselor, Health & Human Services

9 YEARS

Jay Hubert (San Rafael), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Sheriff's Office

James Campbell (Belvedere), Steward, Marin County Parks

8 YEARS

Susan Hewlett (Bolinas), Senior Peer Counselor, Health & Human Services

Charles Campbell (Corte Madera), Chaplain, Sheriff's Office

Jerry Riessen (Tiburon), Steward, Marin County Parks

Montserrat Sthymmel (San Rafael), Aide, Civic Center Library

7 YEARS

Lucio Gonzalez (San Rafael), Steward, Marin County Parks

Katharine Darlington (San Anselmo), Steward, Marin County Parks

6 YEARS

Dennis Conway (San Rafael), Tour Docent, Cultural Services

5 YEARS

David Jeffries (Rohnert Park), Incident Management Team Volunteer, Fire Department

4 YEARS

James Irving (Fairfax), Incident Management Team Volunteer, Fire Department

3 YEARS

Brian Crawford (San Anselmo), Researcher and Writer, Anne T. Kent California Room, Civic Center Library

Daniel White Sr. (Larkspur), Chaplain, Sheriff's Office

Lindsey Going (San Rafael), Environmental Steward, Marin County Parks

2 YEARS

Stefanie Iojica (San Anselmo), Law Library Student Intern, Law Library

Lawrence Enos (Inverness), ESL Tutor, Point Reyes Library

Sally Hutchinson (Inverness), ESL Tutor, Point Reyes Library

Michael Simon (Tomaes), Volunteer Firefighter, Fire Department

1 YEAR

Whitney Hoyt (San Rafael), Education Consultant, Public Defender's Office

Mandy Behbehani (Novato), *Volunteer View* Writer, Human Resources

Coral Vargas (Richmond), Behavioral Health Recovery Services Ethnic Services Program Assistant, Health & Human Services



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