

## VOLUNTEER NOTES

### A Fond Farewell

After nearly 17 years at the heart of the county's volunteer program, **Joanne Elder** of San Rafael has retired from volunteering. Over the years she distributed thousands of paper newsletters, managed files, documented service hours, and supported events for volunteers and interns.

Organized yet flexible as office routines changed, Joanne kept things on track. Her weekly efforts supported volunteers, interns, and their staff supervisors in all county departments. She never missed a day or a detail. "I knew the minute I interviewed Joanne that I wanted her on our team," said **Joan Brown**, retired manager of the then-Civic Center Volunteers program. "She brought excellent skills and experience and an amazing dry sense of humor, lifting staff spirits in the office every Thursday."

Marinterns Coordinator **Joy Fossett** and MarinShares Coordinator **Anne Starr** said they dearly miss Joanne and deeply appreciate her contributions, which will be recognized by the Board of Supervisors with a resolution of commendation.



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## Radio Expert Ready for Emergencies

By Scott Harrop

Communications are a crucial element of emergency response, and one of the most challenging. During emergencies the infrastructure for electricity and land lines often is affected, and many events happen in areas where cell service is spotty or nonexistent. In these situations, some of Marin County's 2,000 ham radio operators ("hams") step in, volunteering as members of a Marin County Sheriff's Office team to provide vital services.

Radio volunteer **Steve Wilson** has packed his "go-kit" with radio, batteries, and a fold-up antenna. He has stationed himself on a ridge above a raging wildfire to guide firefighting planes to their water-drop locations. He has worked to aid lost hikers, for example, in the Marin Headlands.

Steve's interest in ham radio began in junior high school in Denver, CO. The resourceful do-it-yourselfer ordered parts



PHOTO BY STEVE SARHAD

Steve Wilson in the Emergency Operations Center radio room during a Public Safety Power Shutoff.

from Heathkit and spent more than 40 hours soldering and assembling units.

He also taught himself Morse code, the system of dots and dashes used by telegraph operators, and by hams, before amateur voice radio became common. He loved chatting with fellow enthusiasts: friends who would chat regularly and people he met on the airwaves.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Local History, Local People Intrigue Intern

By Tiyona Pariani

An interest in the backgrounds of diverse people inspires **Owen Clapp** to serve nine hours weekly in the Marin County Library's California Room as an oral history intern. His responsibilities include finding and interviewing people of many backgrounds who have local connections. Their recollections are added to California Room archives.

Owen, a San Jose State University library science student, conducts interviews with individuals who trace their family history to West Marin,

including people of Native American, African American, and Latino ancestry.

His most fascinating project so far has been interviewing people with Coast Miwok ancestry. "Once I started learning more about Coast Miwok history and all the injustices they have faced, I started to feel that it was important for their contemporary voices to be heard so people know they are very much still here—and actively working to preserve

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Radio Operator Ready for Emergencies

(Continued from page 1)

Volunteering came naturally: “I like helping people, doing something for them that they can’t do themselves.” When a fire broke out at Point Reyes in 1982, he helped the Red Cross get all the radios to work together.

His volunteer supervisor, Emergency Services Coordinator **Tom Jordan**, points out that “Steve is known for his extensive knowledge of radio theory and electronics, and calm on-air demeanor.”

He discusses the effect of weather and sunspot activity as radio signals, both VHF and UHF, bounce off the ionosphere. The signals work mainly by line of sight, so to cover a broad region the Bay Area is dotted with “repeater” stations, which amplify and rebroadcast signals from commanding heights,

including Bahia Ridge and Mounts Tamalpais, Diablo, and Barnabe. Some are equipped with generators or batteries to maintain functionality.

As Tom describes it, “Steve’s most recent accomplishment has been to design and oversee installation of a Marin Sheriff’s Auxiliary Communication Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service operating position at MarinHealth Medical Center in Greenbrae.” With the onset of Covid-19, Steve was temporarily unable to enlist the help of fellow ham operators, so carried out the project practically on his own. Despite his 82 years, he hauled in equipment from the nearest parking space, four blocks away.

The facility not only provides communications between the hospital and the

county Emergency Operations Center but also allows the hospital to participate in Bay Area Hospitals Net, a communications network connecting dozens of clinics, public health departments, emergency operations centers, and the state Department of Public Health.

Tom added, “Steve’s cheerful readiness to take on such complex projects as the new MarinHealth hospital installation is an example of why he is such a valuable member of our volunteer program.”

“I have a low tolerance for boredom,” says Steve cheerfully. He adds of his ham radio experience, “I’ve never been bored in 50 years.”

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Thinking about volunteering your skills? Email MarinShares Coordinator **Anne Starr**, [ASTarr@marincounty.org](mailto:ASTarr@marincounty.org).

## Local History, Local People Intrigue Intern

(Continued from page 1)

their culture and reclaim their rights,” said Owen. “As a local historian I try to think about what I can do to support their causes.”

Owen chose the internship to satisfy the requirements of his master’s degree, and also out of love for the people and history of Marin.

“By reaching out to a diverse range of interviewees with different backgrounds and life experiences, Owen has added great depth to our understanding of West Marin’s history and culture,” claimed **Laurie Thompson**, head librarian at the Anne T. Kent California Room in the Civic Center Library branch. “We are extremely grateful to Owen for his invaluable contributions to our local history archive, which will be inspirational to the community now and for generations to come.”

“Laurie and Digital Archivist **Carol Acquaviva** are very supportive of the project and I am grateful for their expertise and guidance,” said Owen.

Owen graduated from Sir Francis Drake High School in 2009. He earned his bachelor’s degree in ethnomusicology



PHOTO BY DANIEL LEVINE

*In addition to interning, Owen Clapp enjoys music. He’s pictured pre-pandemic, playing bass at the Blue Whale in L.A.*

at the University of California, Los Angeles in 2013 and expects to graduate from San Jose State University with a master’s degree in library and information science in May. He grew up

in Woodacre, lived in Los Angeles for almost 10 years, and then returned to Woodacre. He works at the Lagunitas School District and for two Bay Area nonprofits.

Beside school and work, Owen enjoys exploring Marin trails and gardening. Also, he has authored a book, “San Geronimo Valley,” available at local bookstores and online.

And he has a second role with the county: During fire season he volunteers with the Marin County Fire Department lookout team, coordinated by Fire Engineer **Henry Bustamante**.

Owen hopes that his library internship will be the first of many oral history projects and looks forward to using these skills throughout his career.

“The Marin County Free Library system is staffed by caring people who work hard to uplift all communities, particularly those who are often marginalized elsewhere,” said Owen.

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To explore internship opportunities, contact Marininterns Coordinator **Joy Fossett** at [JFossett@marincounty.org](mailto:JFossett@marincounty.org).



# Law School Graduate's Focus is Public Service

By Clariss Ajanel

Driven by an interest in public service, **Austin Shopbell** is serving with the Marin County District Attorney's Office as a fellow as part of Lawyers for America. The program places those dedicated to public service at an agency for two years, matching their interest and course work with a role in a professional setting.

Chief Deputy DA **Dori Ahana**, one of Austin's internship supervisors, praised his efforts. He began in the fall of 2019, and "it did not take long for Austin to become an invaluable member of our office, exercising the good judgment and professionalism of a seasoned practitioner," she said.

Austin spends most days researching legal arguments and felony victim interviews, and studying case files. He said he was pleasantly surprised with how kind and patient everyone has been despite the many questions he asks every



PHOTO BY KIRCHE RAY

*Austin Shopbell*

day. "I feel very accepted by everybody and I think I really fit in," he said.

Assistant DA **Otis Bruce Jr.**, a longtime Marinerns intern supervisor and coordinator of DA's Office internships, also worked with Austin. "Over the years, our office has been honored to have

several talented and certified law school student interns," Otis said. "Austin has been one of the best. I have been really impressed with his understanding that it's important to be a good listener first, in order to learn, contribute, and grow. Austin is extremely professional, smart, and industrious. He has been a good asset to our office."

Austin moved to Marin in 2019 from Berkeley. He graduated from UC Hasting College of the Law with his Juris Doctor degree.

He plans to continue to grow in the legal studies field in hopes of making a change in his community. "I want to find a way to bridge the divide between the values our country professes to be based on, like all men are created equal, and what we actually are when we have never lived up to those values," he said. "How do we start living up to them?"

# Top Supervisor of Volunteers Retires

By Xitlalli Lechuga

Marin County Fair Manager **Charlie Barboni**, who coordinated thousands of volunteers, has retired after a decades-long association with the Fair.

For his contributions as an exemplary staff coordinator of volunteers, Charlie was honored by the Board of Supervisors in 2013 as the Outstanding Supervisor of Volunteers of the Year.

He transformed the volunteer experience for the county's largest seasonal event team. Creative, appreciative, and organized, he welcomed participants of all ages, skills, and abilities.

Fair volunteers have such a good time that 85% of them return each year. The team now numbers 600-plus, although activity is on hold during the pandemic.

"Charlie immersed himself in the Fair industry as a teacher, mentor, beloved manager, brilliant designer, and visionary for over 45 years," said Cultural Services Director **Gabriella Calicchio**. "His



MARIN COUNTY FAIR FILE PHOTO

*Fair Manager Charlie Barboni presents a certificate of appreciation to volunteer Dot Miller during the 2014 Fair as then-Cultural Services Assistant Director Marion Boyd looks on.*

engagement, oversight, and genuine love of our volunteers is unmeasured. The Fair is truly the success it is each year because

of the dedication, hard work, and loyalty of our volunteer team, and this is 100% due to Charlie's leadership."

## Who's New & Welcome!

**Tanaya Alford-McEwen** (San Rafael), Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, Health & Human Services Department (HHS)

**Angelica Almanza** (San Rafael), Nutrition Wellness Program Intern, HHS

**Miriam Ambriz Quintana** (Calistoga), Nursing Student, HHS

**Camille Aquino** (La Mirada), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Point Reyes Library

**Abigail Aranda** (Sylmar), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Claire Austin** (San Rafael), Teen Leadership Crew Intern, Fairfax Library

**Jhazmyr Ball** (Rohnert Park), Youth Working for Change Intern, Probation Department

**Angelina Jolie Banas** (Vallejo), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Kelsey Bas** (San Rafael), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Antonio Castaneda** (Roseville), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Point Reyes Library

**Connie Cheng** (San Francisco), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Janelle Marie Choy** (Fairfield), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Chelsey Dela Cruz** (San Jose), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Erika Eide** (Novato), Nursing Student, HHS

**Reanna Felix** (Hayward), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Point Reyes Library

**Isa Ferris** (San Anselmo), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Point Reyes Library

**Emily Gallegos** (Corte Madera), School to Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS

**Fernanda Galo Reyes** (Napa), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Alicia Gonzalez** (Petaluma), Nursing Student, HHS

**Benjamin Gould** (Carlsbad), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Lester Gutierrez** (Daly City), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Britney Gutierrez** (San Rafael), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Michael Hansen** (Rohnert Park), Nursing Student, HHS

**Chelsea Hare** (Daly City), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Samantha Hernandez** (San Bruno), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Julianne Ho** (San Rafael), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Juliette Ingram** (Alameda), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Point Reyes Library

**Jasmyn Jansen** (San Anselmo), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Nicole Johnson** (Belvedere), School to Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS

**Adam Lichtblau** (Mill Valley), Digital Solutions Intern, Information Services and Technology Department

**Ian Marshman** (Chula Vista), Telehealth Intern, HHS

**Charlotte McAdam** (Mill Valley), High School Intern, Public Defender's Office

**Malena McReynolds** (Sonoma), Nursing Student, HHS

**Kailani Medina** (San Jose), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Gisselle Mejia** (Richmond), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Point Reyes Library

**Emmanuelle Miranda** (San Rafael), Nursing Student, HHS

**Jack Moffett** (Novato), School to Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS

**Bryan Myers** (Woodacre), Nursing Student, HHS

**April Ng** (Daly City), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Adele Partington** (Elk Grove), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Brenly Pereira** (Richmond), Law School Intern, Public Defender's Office

**Sophia Pillitteri** (Fairfax), School to Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS

**Isabel Rafanan** (Stockton), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Maydeli Reyes** (San Rafael), School to Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS

**Emma Rice** (Novato), School to Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS

**Danielle Santiago** (Elk Grove), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Morgan Semana** (Elk Grove), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Romisa Shakeriniasar** (San Rafael), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Melanie Sheaves** (Novato), Nursing Student, HHS

**Brooke Sinton** (Burbank), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Point Reyes Library

**Lisa Snickars** (Sonoma), Nursing Student, HHS

**Naomi Sturgis** (Novato), Nursing Student, HHS

**Julia Tolentino** (Santa Clara), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Jessica Watson** (Novato), Preventative Medicine Resident, HHS

**Emma Wuelfing** (Rocklin), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

**Crystal Yi** (Fairfield), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Gizell Zamora** (Napa), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

# Happy Anniversary!

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

## 31 YEARS

**Marilyn Bagshaw** (San Rafael), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)

## 28 YEARS

**Elisabeth Sommer** (San Rafael), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

## 26 YEARS

**James Allen** (Kentfield), Marin Civic Center Tour Docent, Cultural Services

## 22 YEARS

**Jane Slack** (Stinson Beach), Aide, Stinson Beach Library

## 20 YEARS

**Jon Pittman** (Novato), Patrol Volunteer, Marin County Parks (Parks)

## 14 YEARS

**Bobbie Kettler** (Novato), Juvenile Hall Tutor, Probation Department

## 13 YEARS

**Rich Riechel** (Mill Valley), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

## 12 YEARS

**Rochelle Newman** (San Anselmo), Consumer Mediator, District Attorney's Office

## 11 YEARS

**Kay Gross** (Novato), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

## 9 YEARS

**Adam Gavzer** (Belvedere), Steward, Parks

## 8 YEARS

**Jane Thomason** (Larkspur), Patrol Volunteer, Parks

**Ellen Kruger** (San Rafael), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

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

## 7 YEARS

**Brent Carlson** (Kentfield), Steward, Parks

**Joan Brown** (Kentfield), Marin Civic Center Tour Docent, Cultural Services

## 4 YEARS

**Jennifer Isaac** (Tiburon), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

## 3 YEARS

**Anya Cutter** (San Anselmo), **Kalyn Dawes** (Corte Madera), **Sabrina Tripp** (Mill Valley), **Quincy Webster** (Corte Madera), Marin Search & Rescue Youth Volunteers, MCSO

**Mia Tokarski** (Mill Valley), **Pilar Goodman** (Ross), Marin Teen Girl Ambassadors, Human Resources

**Amy Palmer** (Mill Valley), California Room Archivist & Preservation Associate, Civic Center Library

**Victoria Chin** (Greenbrae), **Carlene McCart** (San Rafael), **Carol Palmer-Collins** (San Anselmo), **Kim Ruchamkin** (San Rafael), **Alison Steiger** (Novato), Marin Center Ushers, Cultural Services

**Abi Fitzgerald** (San Rafael), **William Timpson** (Greenbrae), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO

## 2 YEARS

**Joyce Derr** (Novato), English Tutor, Novato Library

**Luca Cuffe** (San Rafael), **Ella Foskett** (Mill Valley), **Cassiopeia Kelly** (Mill Valley), **Aya Shadan** (Corte Madera), **Samuel St. John** (Mill Valley), **Pearl Thompson** (Larkspur), **Lucas Tress** (Larkspur), Marin Search & Rescue Youth Volunteers, MCSO

**Maureen Carlin** (San Rafael), **Mary Lou Dibbern** (Mill Valley), **Deborah Fox** (Corte Madera), **MayBritt Goldblum** (Novato), **Stan Green** (Greenbrae), **Katharine McLaughlin** (Novato), **Barbara Parkman** (Novato), **James Pennington** (Novato), **Vicki Pennington** (Novato), **Patricia Prorok** (Novato), **Everil Robertson** (San Rafael), **Bob Robertson** (San Rafael), **Toni Tang** (Novato), **Ingrid Vitols** (Benicia), Marin Center Ushers, Cultural Services

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

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

## 1 YEAR

**Abbie Gould** (San Rafael), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

**Mark DeMenno** (Corte Madera), **Robert Lutz** (Fairfax), Patrol Volunteer, Parks

**Afsaneh Bohlouli** (Mill Valley), Marinfo NOW Newsletter Graphic Design Aide, Human Resources

**Jessica Onick** (Novato), Library Beyond Walls Liaison, Marin County Free Library

**Theo Jones** (Novato) English Tutor, Novato Library

**Walter Lemmermann** (Sausalito), Patrol Volunteer, Parks