**We Remember**

Marin County Parks Patrol Volunteer **Connie Berto**, who served more than 40 years, died on August 8. As an advocate for trail access and safety, Connie also was the equestrian representative to the Parks Commission Trails Committee for 27 years.

Equipped with maps and basic first aid supplies, she greeted Open Space visitors, shared facts about trails, and assessed conditions.

“Connie was one of the first volunteers to join the Open Space volunteer program back in 1976,” said Parks Volunteer Coordinator **Greg Reza**. “She was actually volunteering before the program was official. She got things done and was always a straight shooter with no time for nonsense. She was an amazing person.”

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**Intern Supports ‘Democracy’ Outreach**

By Xitlalli Lechuga

Intern **Julia Reinhard** says, “Participation in democracy keeps it going.” Through the pandemic and elections, this college student has participated to support communities by reviving and managing the county’s Instagram account. She was also a social media outreach liaison for the 2020 U.S. Census.

Julia began her Marinterns program internship on June 1 for Marin County Supervisor **Katie Rice** of District 2. In her role with the Board of Supervisors team, she provides updates on the county’s Instagram account, @marincountygov.

She began volunteering to inform the community about important information, such as health and safety guidelines. As project coordinator of @marincountygov, she posts about Covid-19, mental health, the census, and voting resources, partnering with other county departments such as Health and Human Services to amplify messages.

The site started on August 10 with 448 followers and has quickly grown. “We hope you’ll check out @marincountygov and spread the word,” she said. “We’re posting in both English and Spanish, collaborating with other youth efforts, and including links with more information for each post.”

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Bilingual Volunteer Helps Spanish Club**

By Scott Harrop

More than four years ago, **Audrey Van Hoven** and her teen daughter were visiting the Novato branch of the Marin County Free Library, as they had done a couple times a week since her daughter was a baby. They noticed a flyer about a Spanish Conversation Club that met weekly for 90 minutes. It continues to this day, although during the pandemic meetings have shifted to online. The club consists mostly of retired Marin residents. It’s very low pressure: meetings are not mandatory, and different skill levels are represented.

This was a perfect opportunity for Audrey. “I was intrigued from a very young age to be able to communicate in another language,” she says. Her parents moved to the U.S. from their native Holland in the 1950s but had not taught Audrey to speak Dutch. It was her ninth grade Spanish teacher, **Nancy Holland**, who inspired Audrey when she was a Terra Linda High student.

She continued her Spanish studies throughout high school and on into adult life, attaining proficiency.

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Intern Supports ‘Democracy’ Outreach  
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In addition to her continuing Instagram effort, Julia also communicated with more than 150 census partners weekly, keeping them up to date with the latest news and counts and sending them relevant social media to share. Julia is a San Domenico High School alumna. She expects to receive her bachelor’s degree in political science from Dominican University of California in 2022.

Her internship supervisor, District 2 Board Aide Nancy Vernon, said Julia shines with “true interest and commitment to the subjects and areas she is working on: census, elections, Covid safety, and mental health. Julia is an excellent listener, observer, and researcher. She is incredibly responsible and has the ability to make wise judgments and reach out when she needs any help.” Nancy added, “On a personal note, Julia is a delight, and working with her is always a bright spot in my day!”

Reflecting on her internship, Julia said, “The census is one of the most inclusive things in our democracy, and as a political science student, that was really exciting to work on. The decennial census is inclusive, regardless of one’s immigration status.”

She added, “Everyone who works at the county is providing a service for residents of Marin. Getting an in-depth look in public service has been very valuable and exciting.”

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To explore county internships, contact Marinterns Coordinator Joy Fossett, JFossett@marincounty.org.

Bilingual Volunteer Helps Spanish Club  
(Continued from page 1)

Audrey joined the library’s Spanish club, eventually taking on a volunteer leadership role. There were times when the group needed some focus, or a topic to center their discussions. “The club benefits from some structure and activities, so I stepped up.” She has developed some helpful tools, such as a word list. Often the whiteboard shows 30 or 40 words by the end of a session. At that point, Audrey leads the group in reading back from the list, emphasizing correct pronunciation.

They also read from Muy Interesante magazine, in the junior edition, which is just about the right proficiency level for the club.

Members may also give 15-minute presentations in Spanish. A popular topic before the pandemic was recent travels. Audrey’s own presentations have included one on snakes and another on lizards; until the virus hit, she worked as a handler/educator, taking reptiles to kids’ birthday parties, schools, and scout troops. She keeps a corn snake at home who goes by the name William Snakespeare. Another time, she described her work with the Guide Dogs for the Blind breeder program. Her own dog was an active breeder who gave birth to two litters.

Audrey works closely with her staff liaison, Library Assistant Maria Lee Goodrich, who appreciates Audrey’s skills and notes that her “enthusiasm and creativeness is an added delight to our community.”

The Novato branch manager, Janet Doerge, speaks highly of the Spanish Conversation Club: “The library is extremely proud of this program and our ability to provide the community with such an exemplary educational opportunity, thanks to Maria Lee and her volunteers and participants.” Janet added, “Our library volunteers are awesome to the core, and Audrey is no exception; she is clearly committed to making a difference in the lives of others.”

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Interested in volunteering after it’s safe to gather again? Contact MarinShares Coordinator of Volunteers Anne Starr, AStarr@marincounty.org.
Born and raised in Novato, Evan Colenbrander was inspired to do his Eagle Scout Service Project at Novato’s Gnoss Field Airport, where he could pursue his lifelong interest in aviation.

As both a Scout and a County of Marin intern, Evan spent many hours throughout the year planning and building an informational sign for the airport’s outdoor public viewing area where many people sit to watch planes take off. This sign has information about our county airport, its history, a diagram of the airport, pictures, and fun facts.

Department of Public Works Airport Manager Dan Jensen, Evan’s Marinterns supervisor, commended his hard work and perseverance through the difficulties of the pandemic shutdown. Dan said, “Evan came in with all the information, so we worked together on how we wanted the sign laid out and what information to include.” Dan credits Evan with doing “all of it.”

While working on the sign project, Evan balanced school along with his chess club, playing trumpet for his school’s jazz band, participating on the speech and debate team, and playing on an ultimate Frisbee team. “I have a brother, and he helped me throughout this project,” Evan said. “Due to Covid-19, I couldn’t really get a team together, but luckily I had the help of my family.”

Along with all his team-related extracurriculars, Evan’s participation in San Marin High School’s STEM program equipped him with basic knowledge and hands-on skills needed to complete the sign. “I saw this project as a great opportunity to develop my leadership and preparation skills,” Evan said. “The entire process taught me the steps required for planning a successful project.”

Evan’s dad is a pilot, so Evan grew up around planes. “Because of this early exposure to aviation, I have spent a lot of time at airshows, in airplanes, and hanging out around airports,” he said. Once he reached high school, he began volunteering with the Gnoss Field Community Association and joined the Aviation Explorers Post at Gnoss Field. Evan plans to major in aerospace engineering in college.
We congratulate these volunteers who celebrate their anniversaries this month and thank them for their ongoing involvement.

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<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Karen Berke</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Dina Johnson</td>
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Happy Anniversary!

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

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1 YEAR

Austin Shopbell (San Anselmo), Law School Fellow, DA
Haven Allard (Berkeley), Justin Buzón (Novato), Todd Law (San Rafael),
David Levine (San Rafael), Michael Pollack (San Rafael),
Christopher Wand (Tiburon), Erik Zech (Larkspur), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO
Mathew Baldwin (Nicasio), Sebastian Bellingham (San Anselmo), Alexandra Henzl
(San Anselmo), Mikaila Levine (San Rafael), Drake Miller (Mill Valley), Emma Nathanson (San Geronimo), Henry Pritchard (Greenbrae), Kai Tuffo (San Anselmo), Scott Van Hooser (Tiburon), Billy Zech (Larkspur), Freddy Zech (Larkspur), Marin Search & Rescue Youth Volunteers, MCSO
Yanni Caparis (Tiburon), Jessica Glennon (Tiburon), Sophie Taubman (Fairfax), Katie Parsons (Tiburon), School-to-Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Interns, HHS
Afsaneh Bohlouli (Mill Valley), Graphic Design Aide, Corte Madera Library
Davika Menon (San Rafael), Catherine Fahrner (San Rafael), Rory Daly (Larkspur), Marin Teen Girl Ambassadors, Human Resources
Spencer Michels (San Anselmo), Marin Civic Center Tour Docent, Cultural Services