

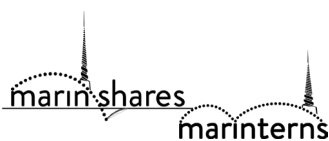
VOLUNTEER NOTES

Volunteer Wins Honors

A MarinShares volunteer has been inducted into the [Podcast Hall of Fame](#) for his seminal influence on podcasting. According to Wikipedia, in 2003 **Doug Kaye** published an RSS feed with his MP3 files using the new “enclosure tag,” creating the world’s first podcast, *IT Conversations*. The show focused on technology and business. It evolved into a knowledge hub that helped then-fledgling podcasters such as NPR and UC Berkeley. Doug also is an ardent photographer who volunteers to take portraits for *MarinfoNOW*.

We Remember

MarinShares volunteer **Larry Lewis**, who served with the Sheriff’s Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) since 2007, died in January. He was 84. Fellow volunteer **Steve Wilson** said Larry generously shared knowledge, and during emergencies supported communications among stranded residents. Larry also was a station keeper—the ham operator responsible for ensuring a 24/7 community-based radio is working.



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: **Natalie Dybeck**, **Max Gehm**, **Ellie Gilbert**, **Marjorie Grannan**, **Scott Harrop**, **Calla McBride**, **Tiyona Pariani**, **Alice Wolf** | Photographers: **Bob Dell**, **Bill Johnston Jr.**, **Doug Kaye**, **Gregg Turner**, **Brian Wilk** | Copy Editor: **Pamela Ross** | Copy Editor Intern: **David Balderama** | Graphic Design: **Eleanor Lau** | Intern Writing Coach: **Ed Remitz** | Administrative Aides: **Deborah Fox**, **Deborah Gregor** | Cartoonist: **John Donaghue**

Docent Shares Delights of Wildflower Season

By Scott Harrop

“Instead of fences we should have a docent program!” When MarinShares volunteer **Alison Pence** overheard an employee’s remark about protecting fragile plants, it fired her enthusiasm for the Marin County Parks wildflower docent program at Ring Mountain Open Space Preserve.

Alison brings experience to the role. As far back as 2005, Alison, an old hand at parks restoration, rediscovered an overgrown nature trail through Reed Elementary School’s meadow. The trail had been created in the 1970s. She arranged the clearing of two acres of broom, stump removal, and installation of new signs, returning the site to a healthier habitat for wildlife.

A long-time member of the California Native Plant Society, Alison also is keen on nature education. Inspired by Marin County’s legendary **Elizabeth Terwilliger**, she has taught science-based nature courses for children at both Reed and Tam Valley schools.

She met **Greg Reza**, a Marin County Parks volunteer program coordinator,



PHOTO BY BOB DELL

Docent Alison Pence prepares for wildflower season at Ring Mountain Open Space Preserve.

while volunteering at a broom pull. The county parks department is part of the One Tam program in which federal, state, and local agencies collaborate to maintain and improve the Mount Tamalpais watershed. For example, One Tam is currently setting up new

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Internet Access Increases Across Marin with Intern’s Help

By Alice Wolf

Motivated by love for computer science and his community, Marintern **Andrew Popov** works with the Marin County Information Services and Technology Department (IST). As part of the Digital Marin team, he develops and adds data to the [program website](#).

The goal is to increase accessibility to the internet in a safe, reliable, and affordable way throughout the county.

The Digital Marin site contains many resources, such as links to find affordable computers, classes for technology support, and a glossary of internet terms. It offers easy ways to connect to devices and online networks. In some cases, people can use digital resources for free with a Marin County Free Library card.

According to Andrew—a junior at Terra Linda High School—one of the website’s goals is expanding broadband in Marin.

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Internet Access Increases Across Marin with Intern's Help

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"My motivation is to help support everyone in Marin to be able to access the internet," he said. "There are a lot of people in West Marin who don't have access to fiber optic cable." He also noted that many retirement homes lack modern technology, which he considers vital for everyone.

IST Chief Information Officer **Liza Massey**, Andrew's internship supervisor, said he stood out when he began with IST as a participant in the Career Explorers summer program. "His work for us was so outstanding that we hired him," she said. As a part-time paid intern, "Andrew is creative, quickly understands what we need, and has exceeded our expectations."

Andrew, whose mother and sister work in tech, has always been intrigued by technology. "I got really interested during a Scratch programming course

at my elementary school," he said.

When not interning with the IST department, Andrew loves to hike, stating that he enjoys "nature and the outdoors." Other pastimes include cooking and baking. He plays tennis—mostly doubles—on his school team. He also volunteers at the Maria B. Freitas Senior Community in San Rafael, helping individuals with technology tasks such as resetting passwords and creating online accounts.

After high school, he sees himself pursuing his technology interests in college.



Marintern Andrew Popov updates the Digital Marin website.

PHOTO BY BOB DEELL

"I would love to major in computer science at a good California college," he said.

Meanwhile, Marin residents can look forward to seeing Digital Marin expand even more, with updates in the works. "I'm working right now to add a bunch of new stuff, and as the project's picking up steam there's going to be a lot more additions to the website," Andrew said. ■

Pre-Law Student Gets Insider View of Public Defense

By Calla McBride



Gina Dudley

Marintern **Gina Dudley** has been passionate about law from a young age. As she got older, she sought opportunities in that field and in January 2023 began a pre-law internship with

the Marin County Public Defender's Office.

Gina serves alongside four to six fellow interns two mornings a week. She began with small tasks, learning to review body-cam footage, draft emails to clients, and meet with clients to obtain equity documents. Later she shifted to post-conviction activity such as reading juror profiles, reviewing medical documents, drafting correspondence, and visiting jail and prison.

Discovering the intricacies of the process is her favorite part. "I love learning

about public defense from the inside and seeing how complex the system is," Gina said. "Every attorney in the office always explains the laws, rules, or procedures, which is extremely helpful. It is inspiring to be a part of an office that holds social justice so highly as one of its core values."

Gina said the experience and knowledge she gained has helped her grow personally.

"I love learning about public defense from the inside and seeing how complex the system is."

"Being an intern is all about learning and being willing to do new things," she noted. "I am constantly being pushed outside of my comfort zone and am lucky to be in a place where questions are encouraged."

Gina attributes her drive and passion for helping her do her best, in and out of the office. This is something Gina's

internship supervisor, **Tamara York**, a deputy public defender, noticed quickly.

"Gina has an extremely positive attitude," Tamara said. "She is very eager to learn and clear in her dedication to the causes of our office, and to our clients. She is a great team player. She is flexible, adapts to situations, and knows where she wants to gain experience."

When not interning on a case, the Boise, Idaho, native spends her time studying at Dominican University. She is majoring in psychology and social justice with a minor in pre-law—and plays on the women's tennis team. She listens to Taylor Swift, hikes, travels, and plays her Nintendo Switch.

Gina is scheduled to intern through 2024 and has big plans. "My goal is to apply to Berkeley Law to continue my education after undergrad," she said. "This internship will help me gain the necessary experience and connections to help me reach it," she added hopefully. ■

Docent Shares Delights of Wildflower Season

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PHOTO BY BOB DELL



Alison Pence

programs to study bees and other pollinators in the area, about which almost nothing is known.

Alison is one of about 20 MarinShares volunteer docents serving with Marin County Parks on the

Ring Mountain trail on weekends from April to June, during spring wildflower season. She says of the team, “We are all cheerful and fascinated by what we see.” There are photos and resources on the spot to support visitors in respecting the preserve and leaving no trace of their passing.

“I feel incredibly fortunate that Alison joined us as a docent,” said Marin County Parks stewardship coordinator **Amanda Magallanes**. “Her passion is matched by her dedication, creativity, and sense of humor.” Not to mention her willingness to lend her time: “Last year she had a record number of shifts—10—on the preserve, braving sun, fog, and wind to point out amazing flowers to visitors and encourage leave-no-trace wildflower viewing.”

Growing up on a Pennsylvania farm, Alison was put to work weeding. “My legs were too short to drive the tractor,” she says with a smile. At 17, she moved to Marin and attended The Branson School. Next, at UC Santa Cruz she focused on environmental studies.

The docent program gives Alison an opportunity to be outside and stay positive while working with an enthusiastic and dedicated group of fellow volunteers. She also serves on the planning team to support wildflower season preparation and program improvements. Her philosophy is straightforward: “We experience nature as consumers. We should give back and make it better.” ■

Visitors Welcome to Explore Rare Serpentine Habitat

Docent Alison Pence admits to being something of a “serpentine specialist,” and speaks enthusiastically about the Bay Area. One of the world’s biodiversity hot spots, it is an endless source of fascination, replete with redwoods, pygmy forests, mudflats, and serpentine. Serpentine habitats are rare in California. Despite serpentine being the state rock, only 1% of our state has the right geology to host these habitats. In turn, they are home to 12% of California’s rarest species.

The Nature Conservancy, with the help of Marin residents, purchased Ring Mountain, a former cattle ranch and missile station, in the 1980s. This protected it from development. In 1995 the land was donated to the county. This Marin County Open Space preserve’s rare geology is formed by the clashing of tectonic plates, which act like a cheese grater, pushing metamorphic serpentinite rock up into a ridge from Tiburon to Mount Tam. As Alison says, “Plate tectonics, man!” The action creates serpentine seeps, grasslands, and outcrops. The rocky “soil” features heavy metals such as nickel, cadmium, and lead along with unusual ratios of calcium and magnesium.



Ring Mountain Preserve rock with serpentine (blue)

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIN COUNTY PARKS

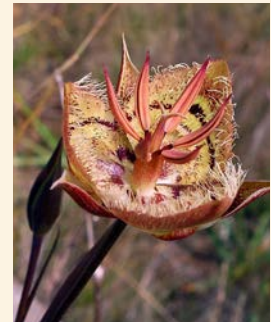
PHOTO BY GREG REZA



Oakland star tulip

Visit the
Ring Mountain
Preserve on
weekends from
April to June.

PHOTO BY CRAIG SOLIN



Tiburon mariposa lily

Together with inhospitable soils, stark sun, and strong winds, serpentine habitats host many rare species. These include the early-blooming Oakland star tulip. Some plants can only grow in this specific location, such as the Tiburon mariposa lily, which blooms late in the season.

Alison says to experience this rare habitat with a knowledgeable guide, visit the Ring Mountain Preserve on weekends from April to June and look for a docent wearing a Marin County Parks cap embroidered with the word volunteer. Docents are present from approximately 9:00 to 4:00 during wildflower season. For more info, see the [Marin County Parks Ring Mountain webpage](#).

Veterans Services Volunteer Helps Reunite Family Remains



PHOTOS BY PAIGE WALLACE

MarinShares volunteer **Jim Cook** helped the recent reunification of a baby girl's cremains with her deceased father, WWI veteran **Norman Lorene Chinn**. The ceremony was part of the Missing In America Project (MIAP) that unites veterans buried in a national cemetery and their deceased families. Oakland native Mr. Chinn, Sgt. 1st Class, 4th Engineers, died in 1955 and was buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery in San Bruno. In January, the Washington State MIAP notified Jim—Marin's volunteer veterans remains officer—about the discovery of Mr. Chinn's daughter's cremains in Seattle. **Norma Chinn** was born February 26, 1920, in Seattle and died four days later.

Through the reunification program, her remains were united with her father's on the 104th anniversary of her birth following an escort of eight American Legion motorcycle riders from Jim's home in Sonoma County through Marin. The ceremony (above left) included seven officers, a bugler, and a six-person gunfire salute. "For five weeks, I had a little girl in my house," Jim said of holding Norma's cremains for the February 26 honors. "It got to me. It's like I experienced being an uncle."

MIAP officials attending the event included, shown (above right, L-R), **Edwina 'Eddie' Sauer**, Jim Cook, and **Ron Collier**. Many facilities, including San Rafael's Mount Tamalpais Cemetery, store unclaimed cremains "just in case." Since starting his volunteer role in 2019, Jim has reunited the remains of 13 people from Mount Tamalpais Cemetery. There are 700 more to research. MIAP's motto is, "You are never forgotten."

Who's New & Welcome!

Jocelyn Alcocer (Santa Rosa), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Whitney Brodersen (Santa Rosa), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Kyrie Bryan (Sausalito), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Alexander Castaneda (Cotati), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Denzel Chang Castillo (San Rafael), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Jonathan Chase (San Rafael), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Sibao 'Sylvia' Chen (Novato), Homework Helper Intern, Civic Center Library

Sammy Chew (San Rafael), Student Elections Ambassador Intern, Registrar of Voters

Ruth Deleon Reyes (Novato), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Michael Garcia (Santa Rosa), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

James Gravelle (San Rafael), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Owen Hubbard (Mill Valley), Student Elections Ambassador Intern, Registrar of Voters

Maddy Kearney (San Anselmo), Student Service Intern, Fairfax Library

Jacob Kennedy (Novato), Nursing Student in Communicable Disease, Health & Human Services (HHS)

Ivan Kondrashov (San Rafael), Website & Language Collection Volunteer Aide, Marin City Library

Samuel Lee (Belvedere Tiburon), Marin 9-25 Program Youth Chair, Board of Supervisors

Mandy Madrigal (Lagunitas), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Cecilia Martin (San Rafael), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Christine Martin (Corte Madera), Volunteer Meals on Wheels In-Home Assessor, HHS

London Martinez (San Rafael), Student Elections Ambassador Intern, Registrar of Voters

Oscar Mata Gonzalez (Richmond), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Ron Paul (Peoria, AZ), Volunteer Arts & Crafts Coordinator, HHS

Miguel Samayoa (Benicia), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Jennifer Vega (Santa Rosa), FIRE Foundry Intern, Marin County Fire

Happy Anniversary

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

31 YEARS

Art Marthinsen (San Rafael), Health Consultant, Community Development Agency

27 YEARS

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

24 YEARS

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

John Pope (Novato), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

21 YEARS

Richard Courier (Petaluma), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

16 YEARS

Larry Atkinson (San Carlos), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

14 YEARS

Genny Duffin (Sonoma), **Erica Schafer** (San Anselmo), Senior Peer Counselors, Health & Human Services (HHS)

Mitchell Golbus (San Rafael), Marin Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer, HHS

Scott McDaniel (San Rafael), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

13 YEARS

Douglas Long (San Rafael), Marin Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer, HHS

Rich Shelton (Tiburon), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

12 YEARS

John Garcia (Dixon), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

Deborah Gregor (Novato), Event Aide, Human Resources

11 YEARS

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

9 YEARS

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

Valerie Lels (Kentfield), Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST) Volunteer, HHS

8 YEARS

David Gannon (Corte Madera), **Timothy Mahoney** (Fairfax), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO

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

6 YEARS

Chrisula Asimos (San Rafael), FAST Volunteer, HHS

Brian Beidelman (San Francisco), **Gideon Bernstein** (Mill Valley), **Tate Thompson** (Kentfield), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO

Nancy Carlisle (Novato), **Michael Fischer** (Mill Valley), **William Hitt** (St. Helena), **Drew Levy** (Sonoma), **Sean O'Leary** (San Rafael), **Steven Virshup** (Novato), Fire Lookouts, Marin County Fire

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

4 YEARS

Kelly Alpert (San Anselmo), **Karen Bond** (Corte Madera), **Marika Burrell Wright** (San Rafael), **Mary Connolly** (Novato), **Edward DeMayo**

(San Rafael), **Maxine Gilbert** (Stinson Beach), **Carla Greenblatt** (Marin City), **Laura Kandell** (San Anselmo), **Martina Murphy** (San Francisco), **Diane Vogelei** (Novato), **Allison Wall** (Novato), Marin Medical Reserve Corps Volunteers, HHS

Kristine Ball (Mill Valley), **Rick Duncan** (Mill Valley), Volunteer Stewards, Marin County Parks

3 YEARS

Kevin Johnston (Novato), **Warren Leiden** (Mill Valley), Radio Communications Volunteers, Department of Public Works (Public Works)

Paula Loeffler (San Rafael), Marin Medical Reserve Corps Volunteer, HHS

2 YEARS

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

Emerson Swift (Mill Valley), Teen Leadership Crew, Novato Library

1 YEAR

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

Annette Anzalone (Novato), **Judith Armstrong** (Tiburon), **Belle Guelden** (Tiburon), **Brenna Healy** (Novato), **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

Rose Feeney (San Rafael), **Elizabeth Champagne** (Novato), **JoAnne Lesley** (Novato), **Marie Waters** (Fairfax), Marin Center Ushers, Cultural Services

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

