

VOLUNTEER NOTES

We Remember

Roy Fidler, a volunteer in two departments, died July 19.

A tour docent for the Cultural Services Department since 2017, "Roy was instrumental in developing our Frank Lloyd Wright education programs," said tour coordinator **Libby Garrison**. "I deeply miss his dedication and determination to keep our beloved docent tour program thriving."

Roy also volunteered as a consumer mediator for the District Attorney from 2009 to 2017.

Former mediation coordinator **David Ball** said Roy skillfully guided resolutions in disputes involving neighbors, businesses, landlords, tenants, and agencies and was "always ready to help when and wherever he was needed."



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Marin Search and Rescue Team Names Honorees of the Year

By Scott Harrop

The Marin Search and Rescue (SAR) Team has chosen one youth and one adult as Members of the Year: **Emma Lauter**, who joined SAR at 14 years old and is now in college in Kentucky; and **Wendy Dalia**, the team's training manager and a five-year SAR veteran. They share a love for the outdoors--

and remarkable dedication to their volunteer service: members are essentially on call 24/7/365. Emma has been on 108 missions during her high school SAR career. The team trains once a month and runs two "boot camps" each year. During boot camp, 16-20 people undergo 60 hours of intensive field

and classroom instruction in basic search and rescue techniques, including an overnight with only a 24-hour backpack--no tent or sleeping bag. "It's a great empathy builder for what people are going through" when they need a rescue, says Wendy. The two honorees did their mandated trainings together. "I love working with Wendy," said Emma. "The team is very close knit."

PHOTO BY MICHAEL ST. JOHN



Search and Rescue volunteers **Wendy Dahlia**, left, and **Emma Lauter**, right, smile after receiving awards from Sheriff's Lt. **Pierre Ahuncain** at a celebration held in January.

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A Volunteer for and of the Books

By Natalie Dybeck & Shirley Trimble

Tim McDonald is a volunteer you can count on. For 11 years, Tim has shelved books and patrolled the library aisles to ensure every book is in the right place and ready for its next eager reader. In 2009, Tim began his volunteer journey in the Novato library branch, then in 2018 he added the Civic Center branch.

Tim's wife Susan, an employee in the Marin County Assessor's Office, showed him a volunteer opportunity listing at the library. "I started out as a book shelper and over the years gravitated to 'shelf reading'--making sure that books were in the right place with the right call numbers," he explained.

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Marin Search and Rescue Team Names Honorees of the Year

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Emma joined the team after learning about it from **Michael St. John**, the volunteer leader of Marin Sheriff's Office SAR Unit. "Emma is among our most dedicated members, contributing over 2,400 hours in her four years," he said. "She is among the few youth members to reach the rank of Team Leader." As Marin native Emma puts it, "If I could do SAR for the rest of my life I would. My life would be incomplete if I couldn't."

Calls outside Marin County are typically in wilderness areas such as Siskiyou and Yosemite. She recalls flying into a mission in a Pave Hawk helicopter, in Trinity. On another mission, their vehicle broke down. After returning to their personal vehicle, they located two missing girls, 7 and 4 years old, who had wandered from home. "In Humboldt," says Emma, "the backyard is the forest." Two years ago, she wrote plans for a 200-person "textbook rescue mission" in Alpine County. She also helped build the K-9 first aid program, attending specialized training out of state, and then offered the training to team members.

Wendy was drawn to SAR both to give back to the community and from her lifelong love of the outdoors. Educated as a marine biologist, she worked for Richardson Bay Audubon Center as conservation and education director.

Last year she was Deputy Incident Commander for the SAREX (Search and Rescue Exercise) held at Walker Creek Ranch in West Marin, "coordinating all the moving pieces" for over 400 Sheriff's SAR Volunteers, National Guard, and law enforcement members from around California.

Leader Michael says that, like Emma, Wendy strives to expand her abilities. "Wendy recently completed Search Management School and served in key roles, building evacuation maps during recent incidents where the team provided GIS support for fires in Santa Cruz and the Woodward Fire in West Marin."



Wendy says the team response is not only statewide "mutual aid" missions. Often they're searching for lost children or elderly adults much closer to home. "There are missing hikers on Mt. Tam all the time."

Wendy and Emma emphasize the deep satisfaction they get, not only from the thrill of adventure and the deep camaraderie, but also from the warm feeling of giving time to help others. "There's no me in SAR," says Wendy.

Sheriff's Lt. **Pierre Ahuncain** is the staff supervisor for the SAR volunteer team. For program highlights, information about when applications will re-open, and more, visit marinsar.org.

A Volunteer for and of the Books

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PHOTO BY NATALIA AGHAZADEH



Tim McDonald

"Tim is the kind of volunteer you want on your team: committed, dependable, resourceful. His keen attention to detail makes him ideally suited for the job, making it that much easier for patrons and staff looking for particular items," said recent retiree **Teressa Snyder**, who was Tim's staff supervisor at the Civic Center Branch. "He has his eye on the big picture and asks incisive questions, prompting us to rethink about the way we've always done things." One of his talents is locating misplaced books and returning each one to its rightful shelf. "Every quarter we'd follow up on our missing items report," explained Teressa. "Tim enthusiastically combed the shelves, report in hand, in search of those elusive missing items.

He was extremely successful, and our missing items steadily declined." Tim approaches tasks with care and attention. He volunteers two hours a week, shelving books, CDs, and DVDs. "My library work is a great form of exercise," jokes Tim, "with a lot of motion, including bending, reaching, and lifting." "Tim is a reliable and dedicated volunteer whose easy manner and diligence have been great assets to the Novato team," said his current supervisor, Librarian **Laura Kennett**.

Tim's decision to volunteer in the library connects with his love of reading and fond memories of working at the Library of Congress years ago. Tim grew up in Pennsylvania and graduated from Villanova University, then moved to Washington, D.C.

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A Volunteer for and of the Books

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After some graduate work, travel, and a variety of jobs including two summers at NASA, he began working full time at the Library of Congress in the Inquiry Unit of the Congressional Research Service (CRS). Some of his tasks included responding to congressional staffers and committee requests. He explained, “The Congressional staff and committee requests, when I worked for the Congressional Research Service, were for that section of the Library of Congress’s various informational

products, and for research when no CRS publication was available. My role was limited to helping with that process.”

He and Susan met on an outing with the Washington area Center Hiking Club to Gettysburg, PA. They later moved to California where Tim worked in the Public Assistance Branch of the Disaster Assistance Division for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for 30 years. He retired from FEMA in 2018.

He is a patron of both the library and the Friends of the Marin County Free Library’s secondhand bookstore, The Book Place, in Novato. He has a keen interest in fiction, classic novels, and history. He also enjoys classic films, musicals at the Mountain Play Theater on Mt. Tamalpais (having previously volunteered with Mountain Play), hiking with his wife, and visiting their daughter in Southern California.

Student Explores Passion for Photography

By Pilar Goodman

Firas Khan is exploring his passion for photography through a County of Marin internship. He started by volunteering for the Marinterns program to fulfill his school’s community service hours, then segued to an ongoing internship.

Firas attends Marin School of the Arts at Novato High School and has lived in Novato since he was 3 years old. In his school’s digital arts program, Firas is required to take two art-focused classes. Since his main motivation was photography, he declared it as his focus.

As an intern, he has learned how to interact with new people and has become comfortable taking their photos. “I used to be more closed off and shy and this new experience made me more interactive and social,” he says. “It has helped me make connections with people so if I want to do something else in the future and I meet new people I can talk with them.”

His photography teacher, **Howard Gersh**, taught him how to use a camera and edit photos using Photoshop.

His internship supervisor, **Joy Fossett** of the Human Resources Department, gave him an opportunity to apply his photographic skills. “Firas was our go-to photographer in the summer of 2019,” said Joy.

Firas loves working in digital arts. He also loves wrestling. He has a younger sister and is English-Urdu bilingual. He is excited to continue learning about photographic technique and equipment and meet new people while on assignment.



PHOTO BY NATALIA AGHAZADEH

Firas Khan

“My parents inspire me a lot,” Firas says. “My family is from India. They push me to pursue a good education and they encourage me to meet new people and seek better opportunities. So I thought this would be a good way to meet people as well as pursue a potential career! This community service opportunity has a special impact on me because I get to volunteer in a way that I especially enjoy.”

Joy said, “He was our behind-the-scenes guy quietly capturing candid shots at Board of Supervisor meetings and Marinterns events including the annual summer mixer for interns from all departments. He also documented the Marinterns Career Day and graduation for Career Explorer program interns. Now, when his school schedule allows, he returns for various projects.”

Operating within public health guidelines during the pandemic, Firas now takes photos from a distance while wearing a mask.

Who's New & Welcome!

Antara Agarwal (Cupertino), Pre-Law Intern, Public Defender's Office

Natalie Ambriz (Long Beach), Covid-19 Contact Investigation Intern, Health & Human Services (HHS)

Markel Archie (Petaluma), Graduate Clinical Training Intern, HHS

Celine Bennett (Inverness), Field & Mobile Evaluation/Testing Team Intern, HHS

Evan Colenbrander (Novato), Airport Information Sign Project Intern, Department of Public Works

Rekina Daniels (Vallejo), Covid-19 Contact Tracing Intern, HHS

Lizbeth Enriquez (San Rafael), Covid-19 Contact Tracing Intern, HHS

Kate Lane (Kentfield), Teen Leadership Crew, Fairfax Library

Esperanza Pimentel (Mill Valley), Covid-19 Contact Tracing Intern, HHS

Courtney Pittman (Novato), Marinfo NOW Newsletter Graphic Design Aide, Human Resources

Happy Anniversary!

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

19 YEARS

Frank Klebanoff (Novato), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)

Dennis Sarantopoulos (Tomas), Tomales Station Volunteer Firefighter, Marin County Fire Department (MCFD)

17 YEARS

Gary Thomas (San Rafael), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

16 YEARS

John Sergeant (Fairfax), Library Beyond Walls (LBW) Liaison, Marin County Free Library

15 YEARS

Kalen Ackerman (Stinson Beach), LBW Liaison, Marin County Free Library

13 YEARS

Lee Spiegel (Corte Madera), LBW Liaison, Marin County Free Library

12 YEARS

Donald Jennings (San Rafael), Fire Lookout, MCFD

10 YEARS

Kathryn Mitchell-Ball (San Rafael), Attorney, District Attorney's Office

Leo Coppeta (Mill Valley), **Tom Boss** (Forest Knolls), Patrol Volunteers, Marin County Parks (Parks)

8 YEARS

Betty Obata (Mill Valley), Administrative Assistant, Health & Human Services (HHS)

7 YEARS

Salamah Locks (San Rafael), Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST) Volunteer, HHS

Virginia Simpson-Magruder (Novato), Patrol Volunteer, Parks

6 YEARS

Carrie Moulton (San Francisco), FAST Volunteer, HHS

Clint Mason (Petaluma), **Jeff Davidson** (Novato), Fire Lookouts, MCFD

Charles Higgins (San Francisco), Open Space Steward, Parks

Eleanor Lau (San Rafael), Frankly Speaking Newsletter Proofreader and Typography Consultant, Human Resources

5 YEARS

Phil Sotter (Woodacre), **William 'Bill' Teufel** (San Geronimo), **Alan Lubow** (Lagunitas), **Mel Wright** (Woodacre), **Carl Miller** (Lagunitas), **Sarah Brewster** (Woodacre), **Jane Gould** (Tiburon), Open Space Stewards, Parks

Carl Miller (Lagunitas), **Sally Hutchinson** (Inverness), Senior Peer Counselors, HHS

Michael Koonce (Berkeley), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

4 YEARS

Shay Cook (Concord), **Wendy Dalia** (Mill Valley), **April Kelly** (Mill Valley), **Kevin Lundquist** (Dublin), **Paul Tewhill** (Corte Madera),

Michelle Tripp (Mill Valley), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO

Emma Lauter (Fairfax), **Roan Burns** (San Rafael), Marin Search & Rescue Youth Volunteers, MCSO

Paula Kirkbride (San Rafael), Outreach Assistant, HHS

3 YEARS

Phil Danskin (Sonoma), California Room Map Archive Docent, Researcher, and Cataloger, Civic Center Library

Jacqueline 'Jackie' Whelan (Corte Madera), Consumer Mediator, District Attorney's Office

2 YEARS

Scott Harrop (San Rafael), Marinfo NOW Newsletter Writer, Human Resources

Jessica Taylor (Point Reyes Station), Adopt-A-Spot Point Reyes Volunteer, Department of Public Works

1 YEAR

Dayle Reilly (Novato), California Room Archive Assistant, Civic Center Library

Susan Kim (Novato), Rx Safe Marin, AmeriCorps VISTA, HHS

Natalia Aghazadeh (Novato), Photographer/Videographer Intern, Human Resources

Larnell France (Hayward), Law School Intern, District Attorney's Office

Michael Danne (Mill Valley), School-to-Career Tobacco Prevention & Education Intern, HHS