

THE SEA RANCH Soundings



A QUARTERLY NEWSPAPER FOR THE SEA RANCH ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

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IN THIS ISSUE:

NEW WEBSITE

NEW OWNERS

HEDGEROW PROGRAM

JER SKIBBINS

RCMS Faces Challenges, Examines Solutions

by Alex Long, Co-Chair RCMS Board of Directors

RCMS – WHAT IS IT?

The Redwood Coast Medical Service, RCMS, provides medical and dental services to many of us on the North Coast. It seems as though it has been here forever; many of us depend upon it to stay here; and yet how much do we really know about it? We hope you will find the following discussion useful and at the end you will come to appreciate the significant challenges this organization, like so many other rural clinics, faces.

BACKGROUND

RCMS is a not-for-profit rural health clinic that was initially opened at Stewart's Point in 1977. Today it has medical clinics in Gualala and Point Arena and a dental clinic in Point Arena.

From the map, you can see that it serves a geographic area of 450 square miles stretching from a little south of Timber Cove to a little north of Manchester. This area has



→ PAGE 2

SEA RANCH STARTS TO FEEL PINCH OF ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

by Martha "Dibby" Tyler

It's no secret that the national economy is in a nosedive with no pullout in sight. The October 31 Business Section of *The Press Democrat* headlined:

- “New condos selling at loss”
- “1 in 5 homeowners owes more than their house is worth”
- “Consumers cut spending”
- “800 laid off at Long's Drugs offices”
- “Mortgage rates up sharply”
- “Motorola to cut jobs”

The only good news was “Exxon shatters profit record.” And for those of us who drive, that would not be considered “good” news.

This recession began with a meltdown in the housing market as higher rates on adjustable mortgages kicked in and defaults multiplied. It spread to the financial markets and from there is invading nearly every niche of the economy as evidenced by *The Press Democrat* headlines. What does all this mean for The Sea Ranch? No one knows, but the following sections summarize some facts and opinions.

THE SEA RANCH ASSOCIATION

According to Finance Director Ellen Buechner, the Association's finances are sound. As of the end of October 2008, six Sea Ranch houses had gone into foreclosure, but there is not yet any significant increase in delinquent dues. Fortunately, the Association budget contains a contingency for dues lost because of foreclosure or delinquency so that the rest of the budget is not impacted.

The Association now subscribes to an on-line service for information



on potential foreclosures and assistance in filing liens to recover lost dues when needed. The Association's responsibility is to “get in the line” for payment as soon as possible when foreclosure is threatening. Otherwise, the chances for recovery are negligible.

About one-third of the budget for the Department of Design, Compliance and Environmental Management (DCEM) comes from design review fees. A slowdown in construction reduces these fees. The earliest indication of a slowdown is in “preliminary site visit” meetings—the first step in the multi-stage design review process. As shown in Table 1, DCEM participated in 54 preliminary site visits in 2004; by 2008, the number may be only 15—a drop of over 70 percent in 4 years.

Table 1
PRELIMINARY SITE VISITS (PSV)
The Sea Ranch 2004-2008*

	Number of PSV
2004	54
2005	42
2006	38
2007	20
2008*	15

*Data from Department of Design, Compliance and Environmental Management (DCEM). Data for January 1- September 30, 2008, extrapolated by the author to December 31, 2008 assuming the same monthly level of activity for the last 3 months of the year as for the first 9 months.

Table 2 shows new housing starts have dropped from 36 in 2004 to a projected 15 in 2008—a 58% drop in 4 years. With fewer new home projects in the design review pipeline, any significant increase in the number of housing starts is at least a year or two away. Much of the region's construction activity is at The Sea Ranch and a slowdown here means fewer jobs in building design, construction, building supplies and related businesses.

Table 2
CONSTRUCTION STARTS OF NEW HOMES AND ADDITIONS
The Sea Ranch 2004-2008*

	Homes	Additions
2004	36	18
2005	18	16
2006	24	5
2007	19	2
2008*	15	7



It must be assumed that all owners of property within The Sea Ranch by virtue of their purchase of such property are motivated by the character of the natural environment in which their property is located, and accept, for and among themselves, the principle that the development and use of The Sea Ranch must preserve that character for its present and future enjoyment by other owners.

From The Sea Ranch Declaration of Restrictions, Covenants and Conditions

→ page 2



ECONOMY from page 1

*Data from Department of Design, Compliance and Environmental Management (DCEM). Data for January 1- September 30, 2008, extrapolated by the author to December 31, 2008 assuming the same monthly level of activity for the last 3 months of the year as for the first 9 months.

Additions and remodels are faring better than new houses with the level of activity remaining quite constant for the last 5 years, but the numbers of additions are not sufficient to maintain construction-related employment at the level of a few years ago.

The reduction in building reduces the Association's income from design review fees. This decline was foreseen and is incorporated in the current Association budget. The loss is partly compensated by the fees for design review of the Lodge expansion plans. DCEM staff is more than busy with other tasks including reviewing the many landscape plans generated by fire safety inspections the last two years.

REAL ESTATE MARKET

Sales of both houses and lots are down at The Sea Ranch. Table 3 shows that the number of houses sold at The Sea Ranch dropped from 97 in 2004 to about 40 in 2008—a decline of almost 60 percent. Lot sales have seen an even steeper decline. In 2008, about 8 lots will be sold—about an 89 percent decrease from 64 lots sold at a high point in 2004.

Table 3
**HOUSE AND LOT SALES
The Sea Ranch 2003-2008***

	Houses	Lots
2004	97	64
2005	62	57
2006	64	24
2007	61	24
2008*	38	7

*All Data from Kennedy & Associates. Data for 2008 is through October 31, 2008. The analysis assumes no further sales in 2008 of houses or lots.

The good news is that prices haven't dropped as steeply as sales. In fact,

real estate prices at The Sea Ranch are holding better than in the rest of Mendocino and Sonoma counties or the coastal region. Real estate broker Cindy Kennedy of Kennedy & Associates says that The Sea Ranch is in a "bubble" protecting it from some of the vagaries of the real estate market. Few new buyers are in need of "creative" financing to buy a house here and some can afford to pay cash for a Sea Ranch home. In general, Sea Ranchers have the personal financial strength to weather drops in the values of their homes and other assets. However, it is taking longer to sell a house on The Sea Ranch than during the real estate boom years of 2004 and 2005.

Table 4 lists the median sales price and average number of days on the market (DOM) for each year from 2005 to 2008. During this time the median sales price fell 8.7 percent from \$850,625 to \$777,000. Average days on the market (DOM) has remained reasonably constant after a big increase in 2006. According to Kennedy, houses in the mid-price range—\$700,000s and \$800,000s—are selling quite well. It is taking longer to sell houses at or over \$1 million and at the low end of the market—\$400,000-\$600,000.

Table 4
**MEDIAN SALES PRICE AND
DAYS ON MARKET
The Sea Ranch, 2005-2008***

	# House Sales	Median Sales Price	Average DOM
2005	62	\$850,625	83
2006	64	\$792,305	138
2007	61	\$847,000	144
2008*	38	\$777,000	136

*All Data from Kennedy & Associates. Data for 2008 is through October 31, 2008. The analysis assumes no further sales in 2008 of houses or lots.

Apparently the lower priced houses are not moving well because most of the potential buyers either need to sell other property or obtain financing—both a problem these days. Kennedy reports that inquiries are increasing and she expects this

spring will bring improvement to the real estate business.

VACATION RENTALS

The financial well being of many Sea Ranch owners and most of the area's businesses is tied to the stream of visitors to The Sea Ranch. The Sea Ranch has somewhere between 350 and 400 rental houses. Barry Weiss, owner of Rams Head Realty—one of the largest Sea Ranch rental agencies—says that after a slow start in early 2008, business was good this summer and seems to be holding into the fall. All the houses are rented for Thanksgiving and New Years, two of the biggest holidays for the rental business. Weiss commented that people are not making plans as far ahead as usual leading to an increase in last minute reservations. He thinks the jump in gasoline prices actually helped rental markets like Sea Ranch that are only a tank of gas away from a large metropolitan area. More renters are coming from within California and fewer from Nevada and Oregon.

CONCLUSION

The national economic "crisis" started in the mortgage market and has since spread to the entire economy. Stock market volatility is a symptom of problems in the economy that are only beginning to be felt here. It's way too early to predict how and when things will turn around, but for the moment, it is clear that all of us—even at The Sea Ranch—are facing leaner times. Building is down, real estate sales are down and we all have neighbors who are hurting.

But downtimes have their uses. They give us time to rethink basic values, review what services we really need as a community and remember that charity and shopping begin at home—especially during this holiday season.

RCMS from page 1

about 12,000 residents, and of these about 5,800 are patients at RCMS, with the majority living in Gualala, Point Arena and Sea Ranch.

SERVICES PROVIDED

RCMS has a staff of approximately 40 employees, including: 2 doctors, 1 dentist, 2 nurse practitioners, and 1 physician's assistant. Collectively, they handle about 24,000 patient visits a year providing services that include:


- routine physical exams (including exams for school sports)
- well-baby exams and vaccinations
- blood-pressure screening and hypertension treatment collaborative
- diabetes screening and treatment collaborative
- prostate cancer screening
- PAP smears
- flu shot clinics
- digital x-rays
- routine lab work (blood tests)
- urgent care during clinic hours (sutures, x-rays, lab tests, diagnosis of chest pains, diagnosis of possible stroke, diagnosis and treatment of viral infections, bacterial infections, rashes, tick bites, etc.)
- Living Well: comprehensive disease prevention and treatment for people 60 and older, including physical fitness training, nutrition counseling, Hospice and Respite programs
- medical specialists are also available on regular basis by appointment including: cardiologist, podiatrist, ophthalmologist, orthopedist.
- dental services
- counseling services

CHALLENGES FACED

RCMS faces three major challenges that are not very different from any other rural clinic in the U.S.

Patient Engagement – RCMS' goal is to provide the highest quality health care consistent with available resources, and to engage the community to achieve the healthiest population possible. And, in our community 30% of the population is over 60 years old (which is significantly higher than in the California average). Given our distribution in age and socio-economic conditions,

→ Page 3



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RCMS from page 2

RCMS should be seeing many of our patients more frequently (we estimate that for the elderly we have only 50% of the visits recommended for quality health care). Early detection and active treatment can significantly reduce health problems and the need to visit the emergency room or the hospital.

Attraction & Retention of Professional Staff – staffing a rural clinic is very challenging. It takes a special type of professional who wants to move their family to a remote location such as ours where there are very few or none of the professional medical support services that one would find in a metropolitan area. And, if you find such an individual who is comfortable to be pretty much on their own practicing “frontier medicine”, you need to be able to offer a competitive employment package. As you might imagine this is a real challenge and we are blessed to have the great providers that we now have.

Beyond that, we were asking most of our providers to work night and weekend shifts as part of the After Hour Urgent Care (AHUC) program in lieu of one day of work. After much discussion, the RCMS BOD has decided that these requirements are too demanding for the current reimbursement packages that we are able to offer. This was one of the prime reasons we have given the Coast Life Support District, CLSD, notification of our plans to terminate AHUC in early February of 2009.

The AHUC program has been provided under contract to CLSD which provides funding for a portion of the costs from taxes collected from the community. With a historic annual loss that has grown to nearly \$200,000 per year, and with a projected need for much greater funding to adequately compensate the providers, the BOD realized that we needed to ask CLSD and the community to help us reevaluate the cost of this service versus the benefit provided and to determine whether there might be a more cost-efficient solution that would meet the community’s needs -- and at a price the community would be willing to pay. Currently, RCMS BOD and staff

members are working with CLSD to help them implement an interim solution, to track the implications of this solution on our community, and to find an outside consultant(s) with relevant experience from other communities who can help us evaluate additional options. It is expected that early in January an information campaign will be mounted by CLSD and RCMS to educate the community on the interim AHUC program.

Finances – RCMS is very lucky to have three major sources of funding: 1) patient visits, which generated 56% of our revenue last year, 2) grants mostly from the Federal government, which generated 29% of our revenue, and 3) fund raising, which generated 15% of our revenue. It should be noted that the Federal grants enable us to serve the uninsured patients in our region.

You might be surprised to learn that RCMS receives the following reimbursement rate for each visit from the following groups of patients:

- 95% of costs from uninsured and MediCal patients,
- 65% of costs from Medicare patients,
- and only 45% of costs from the privately insured. Thus, we are being paid far less by the privately insured than by any other group.

In the past six years, the cost of: a) providing AHUC services, b) establishing the dental practice, c) opening a medical clinic in Point Arena, and d) initiating the Living Well program have consumed all our fund raising dollars. We hope that this year with the growing maturity of some of these programs and the reduced losses in AHUC we will be able to start devoting fund raising dollars to much needed maintenance and improvements of our infrastructure.

Without the generous support of the Community none of the progress we have made would have been possible. We hope that in these challenging times we can continue to provide medical and dental services in programs that improve the well-being of the community. To do this we will continue to request your active participation and support.



Photo by Laurie Mueller

New Bench at The Sea Ranch Chapel

Visitors to the Sea Ranch Chapel now may use the beautiful carved redwood bench installed on the hillside outside the Chapel for a quiet moment of contemplation as they wait to enter the chapel or as a place to enjoy the peaceful setting.

Members of The Sea Ranch Chapel Foundation decided to provide the bench when they noticed that during busy times people wishing to visit the chapel often had to wait to enter.

Chapel Foundation President Doug Blum approached David Moessinger and Fred Owings, who had built the bench dedicated to Gary Chilton at the Gualala

Arts Center, to undertake the volunteer project. The two master woodworkers spent over 650 hours in the intricate design, woodcarving and unique construction of the Chapel’s clear heart redwood bench, which required more than 200 hidden stainless steel screws and wooden pegs to assemble.

Chapel volunteers have also planted flowers in the two permanent beds around the chapel to provide additional color and have coordinated with Association F&R crews who have removed dangerous branches and fallen trees from the chapel grounds.



Photo by Laurie Mueller

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Jer Skibbins

Photo by George Rathmell

SEA RANCH PIONEER TURNS 90

by George Rathmell

Jer Skibbins presided over a double celebration at the Knipp-Stengel Barn last August 30. It was his birthday, his ninetieth one, and it also marked the debut of his autobiographical reflection, *Antica*, a 58-page book of ramblings on how to achieve happiness. Seventy-five family members, friends, and admirers gathered in the barn to extend their best wishes, obtain a copy of the book, eat birthday cake, and enjoy Jer's humor (undimmed by age).

Jer's book uses Homer's *Odyssey* as a framework. On it, he hangs his adventures as a Boy Scout, a civilian sailor, and a World War II fighter pilot. *Antica* is filled with puns, word play, and wild anachronisms, but it does have a purpose. The purpose of Skibbins' little book is to oblige the reader to contemplate the nature of happiness and perhaps, through that contemplation, to achieve more of it.

By virtue of having moved here forty years ago, Skibbins is a Sea Ranch founding father, not just from having been among the original members of the Association, but also from having taken a major part

in making the Association what it is today. Back in the days when there were only about twenty full-time residents on the Ranch, the Board of Directors was hand-picked by the developer, Oceanic California, Inc. Then, as now, each lot owner had the right to one ballot. Since Oceanic owned all of the unsold lots, Oceanic's manager controlled all elections. As the interests of the residents and those of the developer began to diverge, Skibbins, his wife Sally, and a few other residents formed "COCO," the Committee of Concerned Owners, and began holding meetings of Association members. The COCO people were aware that a community was forming at The Sea Ranch, but the governance of the community was not in the hands of its members. John Peterson, another COCO founder determined that something had to be done. Oceanic California, Inc. was a subsidiary of a Hawaiian corporation, Castle & Cooke. Peterson flew to Honolulu to complain to Castle & Cooke's management about the lack of democratic control at The Sea Ranch. As a result of that meeting, the manager of Oceanic was transferred to another location, and only one seat on the Sea Ranch Board of Directors could be selected by Oceanic.

HEDGEROW REPLANTING TAKES ANOTHER STEP

by members of the Planning Committee

Following the guidelines of the "Signature Hedgerow Rehabilitation Program," the Planning Committee and Association staff began work this year on the Whaler's Reach Hedgerow in Unit 7. The process began with a walk through the hedgerow with staff members Bill Wiemeyer and John Prescott, and several members of the Planning Committee and its Hedgerow Rehabilitation Subcommittee. During the walk, it was determined that the original hedgerow was in dire need of restoration. Many of the original hedgerow trees had died and plantings done 15 years ago, which did not follow the original layout and spacing, were struggling to survive because they were overshadowed by a row of mature Monterey Pines. It was also noted that the pines now caused a hazard from falling limbs during winter storms and spring winds.

In September, the Planning Committee hosted a neighborhood meeting by inviting property owners in the

vicinity of the hedgerow to meet and discuss the process, gather concerns and share coffee and treats. During that meeting, some neighbors expressed concerns about losing the pine trees along the north side of Whalers Reach. Bill and John explained that the pines had reached maturity and would prevent sunlight from reaching the new plantings. In addition many of the pines now suffer from fungus and rot, causing branches and/or whole trees to fall.

The new cypress trees will be planted in two rows between the original trees and the street, in Commons. In the future, as the new trees take root and grow, the original trees will be removed, allowing the new trees to become a signature hedgerow. At the end of the meeting, the neighbors, staff and the Planning Committee were invited to join the re-planting party scheduled for late Fall. Staff will dig the holes and deliver the trees and everyone will participate in planting the trees and sharing some more coffee. Next year, a new hedgerow will be selected for rehabilitation and the process will start all over.

THE SIGNATURE HEDGEROW REHABILITATION PROGRAM

In 1998 The Sea Ranch Association recognized the need for a hedgerow rehabilitation program. The Board of Directors requested that the Planning Committee develop priorities and guidance in the replacement of the hedgerows. The Rehabilitation Subcommittee, chaired by Jim Platt, included Bruce Burdick, Ray Jackman, Janann Strand and Dibby Tyler. The subcommittee produced a comprehensive document identifying the 20 signature hedgerows, which were broken into 35 segments. The trees in each segment were evaluated as to condition (live and dead trees) and priorities were set for their rehabilitation. The plan identified 17 segments that needed replacement.

→ PAGE 5

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Cypress Grove West by Paul Kozal

HEDGEROWS from page 4

In August 2001, the Sea Ranch Association Board of Directors approved the *Signature Hedgerows for the 21st Century* plan and referred it to staff for implementation. Each year, one or two segments are replaced. The program will continue until all the hedgerows have been restored. To date, parts of the Galleons, Broad Reach, Helm, Fish Rock, Pelican, Wild Iris and Mariners hedgerows have been replanted. (Copies of the Signature Hedgerow Rehabilitation Program are available at the Association office).

WHAT IS HEDGEROW REHABILITATION & WHY IS IT NEEDED?

Sea Ranch's signature hedgerows are victims of old age and, over time, are losing their identity, majesty and windbreak effectiveness. Many of the original trees are missing or dead and many more are dying. The original hedgerows are being replaced by inconsistent, poorly spaced secondary growth that often invades meadows and spills onto private lots. In some places this secondary growth is entirely eliminating the defining characteristics of the hedgerow.

The goal of the rehabilitation is to retain two-row Monterey cypress hedgerows on the Sea Ranch meadows, as windbreaks and organizing elements of the built environment. To accomplish this ultimately means removing the original hedgerow trees that still stand and replacing them with new cypress hedgerows. However, the wholesale removal of original hedgerow trees

would leave gaping holes in the Sea Ranch landscape while new trees become established. In some cases, less drastic, incremental approaches are possible. The plan lists three general approaches for hedgerow rehabilitation:

1. Maintain rows of substantial secondary growth on both sides of the original hedgerow as a windbreak and visual screen, remove the original trees, and replant between the two rows of secondary trees.
2. Clear some or all of the secondary growth, remove dead and dying trees and branches in the original hedgerow, and plant a new hedgerow parallel to the original one. Provide clearance from the original hedgerow and other surrounding trees to provide sufficient sun for the new trees, while at the same time screening them from wind.
3. Remove the existing cypress and secondary growth creating a cleared swath for the planting of a new hedgerow. This is the most efficient method, but also the one with greatest short-term visual impacts.

In many cases, some combination of these methods will be appropriate. The Association is still experimenting with rehabilitation methods, and is constantly trying to find ways to reduce costs and visual impacts while providing the best set of conditions to ensure rapid, strong growth of the new trees. Each hedgerow will be evaluated individually and the rehabilitation methods chosen with help from neighboring Sea Ranchers.

HISTORY OF THE HEDGEROWS

The original Monterey Cypress hedgerows were planted by ranchers around 1910 – 1920. Their purpose was to provide wind protection for the pastures and boundary markers. By the 1960's when The Sea Ranch development began, the hedgerows dominated the landscape and divided the meadows into smaller pastures.

The Sea Ranch development team planned the community around these majestic hedgerows. The principal design concept was to build houses along each side of the hedgerows for wind protection and views across the meadows to the ocean. Although not perfectly adhered to, this is the Sea Ranch development pattern—hence the importance of the hedgerows to the community.

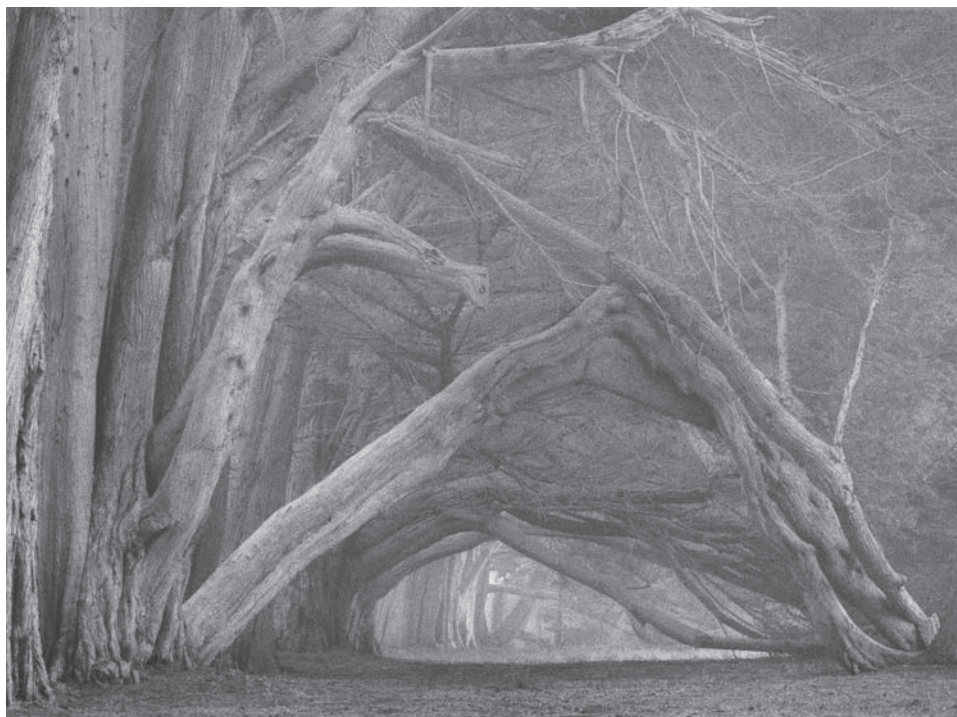
WHERE DO WE GET THE TREES?

During the Fish Rock hedgerow restoration meeting in 2003, the neighbors met at the Sea Ranch home of Gary and Mary Ann Blomgren. Gary's background in agriculture and farming (along with encouragement from Janann Strand) prompted him to look at ways to use naturalized seedlings for the hedgerow trees.

He and volunteer work parties gathered seedlings that sprouted from Monterey cypress chips and seeds in various locations on The Sea Ranch. Gary carefully transferred them into flats and then into cells, nurturing them along the way. When the seedlings were big enough he put them into 1 gallon containers and finally 5 gallon cans provided by numerous donors in the area. The inventory of trees available due to Gary's efforts now exceeds well over 100 trees and is sufficient to provide the more robust, naturalized young trees for the rehabilitation project for years to come, saving about \$40,000 in cost if the trees were purchased from nurseries.

HEDGEROW PHOTOGRAPHS

The hedgerow photographs featured in this article were provided courtesy of Paul Kozal. Paul is an award-winning photographer of the natural environment. During the past years, Paul has focused on documenting The Sea Ranch hedgerows and hopes to photograph each hedgerow before replanting. Additional hedgerow photographs also hang in the Association office lobby till January 2009 as part of the new "Art in the Office Program" at The Sea Ranch. Paul and his wife Carol are residents of The Sea Ranch.



Hedgeway by Paul Kozal

I've been photographing the hedgerows in Sea Ranch for over 10 years. When I first encountered them I was immediately drawn to them. Over time I noticed that the hedgerows would change from season to season. I later discovered that the Sea Ranch appointed a Hedgerow Committee to preserve and protect the historic hedgerows. It was about this time that I decided to preserve the cypress trees through my photography. I continue to be inspired by the Sea Ranch landscape and the beauty of the Sonoma Coast. --- Paul Kozal

There will be an exhibition featuring his Sea Ranch photographs at the Sea Ranch Lodge in January 2009.

"I was so relaxed I almost fell asleep."
Patient Bobbi Henderson

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New Owners Meet Neighbors & Staff

By Claire McCarthy

The mood was upbeat and convivial as about thirty new and nearly-new Sea Ranch property owners gathered at DelMar Center on Saturday morning October 4th for coffee and TwoFish pastries. The New Owners' Meeting, an annual event since 1996, is organized and hosted by the Communications Committee to give newcomers the opportunity to meet one another, to hear from TSRA staff, member committees and interest groups, and to ask questions about issues of concern.

Communications Committee Chair Nancy Carter welcomed everyone, saying that she hoped the meeting would assist new members in exploring ways to make the most of their time on the coast, and in understanding how a true sense of community is the driving force



Suzanne and Craig Alexander

behind life at The Sea Ranch. New members then introduced themselves, shared a bit about their backgrounds and how they found The Sea Ranch, and talked about their plans for living and



Andy Lang and Linda Kennedy

building here. Most of this year's new members are part-timers with plans to move here permanently in the future; they are divided pretty evenly between lot owners and homeowners.

Many committees and interest groups were represented, and the new owners heard about everything from the VIP (Vision Interpretive Program), Website, Native Plant, Trails and Finance Committees; to the Posh Squash Garden, Thespians, Seal Docent, Humane Society, and Redwood Coast Land Conservancy interest groups. Redwood Coast Medical Services board co-president Alex Long spoke about our Gualala and Point Arena clinics and shared some important information about the state of medical care on the coast.

VIP Committee member Dibby Tyler then presented the long-anticipated DVD, "A Virtual Tour of The Sea Ranch." The 30-minute video presentation is a visual supplement to the informational pamphlet "The Sea Ranch: Concept and Covenant." It was produced by the committee with the assistance of award-winning documentary film producer and Association member Thayer Walker. Two lucky new owners received free copies of the DVD, based on having travelled the farthest to attend the meeting.

In his welcome remarks, Community Manager John Fox emphasized the importance of volunteerism at The Sea Ranch and noted that many new

people mentioned career skills in their introductions that "... fit quite well with the activities of the Association. We hope you volunteer, or we may approach you!" He said that the Association is committed to providing "five-star service," and he introduced those department heads and staff in attendance.

Lisa Scott, Executive Director of Design Compliance and Environmental Management, asked those who are in the planning or renovation stages to really think about what their needs will be for the simpler, more casual life they will be living on the coast. She encouraged them to familiarize themselves with the design philosophy and rules, using inspirational tools such as the self-guided architectural tour, the Virtual Tour DVD, or books like The Sea Ranch, by Jim Alinder and Donlyn Lyndon. She advised her audience that if they keep an open mind, remain flexible and dedicate themselves to the design process, the result will be a "spiritually enriching" space.

"Embrace the concept of site-specific design," she said. "Your site offers unique vegetation, views, sun patterns, neighbors—look around and think about how you can use those things to your advantage." She reminded everyone that nearly all work on the outside of their homes requires Design Committee approval;



Kent and Pat Busley



Jane and Dennis Evans

members should contact the committee before beginning a project.

The Q&A period elicited questions on a wide variety of topics:

Q: What is the availability of emergency helicopter service?

A: There are two helicopter ambulances: CalStar and Reach

Q: How do I find out about the hours for the recreation facilities?

A: Contact the Association Office for hours at each center.

Q: When will the preliminary design review on the Lodge expansion be complete?

A: The third week in October

Q: Is the Lodge expansion generally seen as a positive in the community?


A: (Lisa Scott): The community wants to see the Lodge thrive, but we need to be cautious and see that it is done properly.

(Carol Emory): The Lodge has always been a wonderful and important part of the community.

Q: What is the Listserv?

→ PAGE 7

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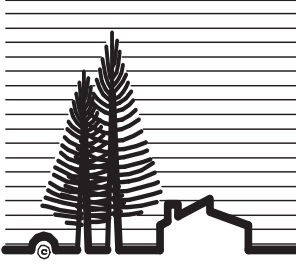
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NEW OWNERS from page 6



Phil and Barbara Johannes

A: The Listserv is an unofficial, unmoderated "back fence-style" email forum for Association members.

Q: Are there any internet "hot spots" nearby?

A: In Gualala, there are hot spots at Trink's coffee shop and Sundstrom Mall.

Q: Is there any chance of having a recyclable materials pickup?

A: Call Coast Disposal to find out. There are recycling centers on Annapolis Road at The Sea Ranch, and in Gualala.

Communications Committee secretary Bob Pounds closed the meeting by reading from a talk by Sea Ranch pioneer and attorney Reverdy Johnson, originally delivered at the Annual Meeting last May when Reverdy received a Special Recognition Award for crafting the Covenant, Conditions and Restrictions back in 1965. His talk set the CC&R's in their historical context, and in it he praised the members' 43 years of successful stewardship.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30, as attendees lingered for more refreshments and conversation. Several new members commented that the meeting had been valuable, and that they were grateful to the Committee for organizing it.



Fish and Game Commission Considering MLPA Proposals *By Laurie Mueller*



Taking of any marine life off Stewart's Point south of The Sea Ranch would be prohibited under the IPA proposal. Proposal 2-XA would create a Marine Preserve Area at the south end of The Sea Ranch instead.

Photos: Copyright © 2002-2006 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, California Coastal Records Project, www.californiacoastline.org

At the California Fish & Game Commission meeting held in Santa Rosa on October 2, the North Central Coast Blue Ribbon Task Force presented four alternative proposals designed to provide additional marine life protection along our coast.

Three of the proposals (Proposals 1-3, 2XA, and 4) were developed by the North Central Coast Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) stakeholder group formed under the act to provide community representation from a variety of interest groups. The Task Force also presented its own Integrated Preferred Alternative (IPA) proposal, which combined what were regarded as the best features of each of the three stakeholder alternatives.

The October 2 meeting was held to hear public input on the recommended proposals. The audience seemed about evenly divided in their support for the IPA and for Proposal 2XA, which is favored by many local fishermen and landowners.

The Sea Ranch Association went on record earlier as generally sup-

porting Proposal 2XA but had expressed concern that The Sea Ranch Del Mar Point Reserve area had been removed from protection. The IPA proposal includes, and would slightly expand, the reserve at Del Mar Point. The other main difference between the two proposals for The Sea Ranch is that under Proposal 2XA,

the south end of The Sea Ranch coast would be protected from any taking of marine life. Under the IPA, the only area protected at The Sea Ranch is Del Mar Point, but no fishing or diving would be permitted for several miles directly south of The Sea Ranch from Stewart's Point to Stillwater Cove.

One concern about the IPA proposal is that its prohibitions against taking any marine life south of The Sea Ranch might direct more fishing and diving activity north toward The Sea Ranch and create potential enforcement concerns.

At the October meeting, Community Manager John Fox urged the Commission to make certain that an enforcement plan was included as part of any final approval and offered Sea Ranch cooperation with Fish&Game in coordinating enforcement plans and managing enforcement issues.

The Fish & Game Commission will hold additional public hearings in November and December prior to adopting its final MLPA plan for the north central coast in February. For further information about the North Central Coast MLPA process, see <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/north-centralhome.asp> and earlier articles in *Soundings*.



The Hearn Gulch Headlands, north of Iverson Point, overlook Saunders Reef, an area of rich marine biodiversity which has been proposed for protection..

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TSRA LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

By Ann Long

The Winter 2000 Soundings carried an article titled "What Good Is a TSRA Web Site?" The author made a fine case for the usefulness and efficiency of the site's wealth of information specifically targeted at The Sea Ranch. Nevertheless, the author noted, the site at that time was not much used. After eight years, the original website has grown ever richer in content, Sea Ranchers have become more web savvy, and the need for timely communication is as great as ever. In early December, the Association plans to launch a completely renovated and updated website at the same address: www.tsra.org. Will owners use this new site more than the original site? Why would you want to visit the new site and return to it regularly? Let's try to make the case anew.

THAT WEALTH OF INFORMATION


It's still there and more accessible than ever. We've sorted through it all, made sure it is up-to-date, and re-organized it. For example, the archives of *Soundings* and the *Bulletin* are now presented in tables with descriptions of the contents of each issue. Click the link and read the issue online or print it. Our impressive collection of Association documents are similarly listed, individually described, and accessible. Board resolutions are listed individually with descriptions and arranged with the most recent resolutions first. Emergency information from our Emergency Management Director is featured. But that's all history, what about what's happening now? The Community Manager and staff expect to use the site as a major communication tool. They'll be updating the Owners Page regularly with timely information about what's going on at the Ranch. Unlimited by space considerations, they will be able to share with owners correspondence and news about issues and Association priorities.

NEW FEATURES TO ATTRACT RETURN VISITS


Information is important, but let's get personal and involved. We've added features that will allow owners to participate in the website. The website can help us build our sense of community.

- **Photo albums.** Our excellent local photographers have already seeded the albums, but you can add your own photos and even start a new album.


Birds
At least 221 bird species have been confirmed on The Sea Ranch. Add your photos with names so we can learn to identify them.
17 Images / created on Sunday, April 13, 2008 at 5:09 pm



Events
Add your photos of Sea Ranchers at events such as the annual meeting, picnics, open houses, parties. Please include names if you can and your own name as the photographer.
7 Images / created on Sunday, May 25, 2008 at 5:08 pm




Hidden Treasures
Each of our ecosystems has its own beauty and character. Let's share the small, often unnoticed treasures of our landscapes.
3 Images / created on Friday, February 1, 2008 at 8:30 pm




- **A member directory** where owners and staff may choose to provide information and photos of themselves. We hope this directory will become a useful reference to help us get to know each other. As you view the entries already up, notice that you can add as little information as you like. The photo is optional as are all the fields. But we hope people will add their email addresses, as those are a great convenience to your neighbors.

Janice Bonora (Edit)
jbbonora@tsra.org




When I do get a chance to get out of the office...
[Full Profile](#)

CE Brown (Edit)
cebrown@mcn.org
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Spouse/Partner
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Alice and Robert (Rob) Diefenbach (Edit)
rcd@mcn.org
(H) 2015



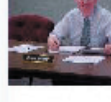
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Thankful daily that we found the Sea Ranch!
[Full Profile](#)

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Spouse/Partner: [Name obscured]

→ page 9

Fiona E. O'Neill
architect



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NEW WEBSITE from page 8

- **Activity groups and committees** have their own pages, which we expect to grow over time.
- A **calendar** that initially will list Association events. Eventually, we hope to list all activities.
- **Your Property:** A section with advice on design, plantings, maintaining your home, fire safety, septic fields, and security.

1. On our launch date, you will receive a welcome email from the new site. This email will contain your username, password, and a link to the new site. Click the link. This will take you to the Public "Welcome" Page of the new site.
2. On this Public Page, click the **Login** link in the small menu under the word **Enter** (upper left-hand side of the page). This will take you to the Login Page.



3. On the Login Page:
 - o Enter your username and password as provided in your welcome email.
 - o Scroll down the page and be sure that the box is checked next to **Keep me logged in on this computer until I log out.**
 - o Check the box next to **I have read and agreed to the Terms of Use** (you will need to scroll down the page to read it).
 - o Click the **Login** button. You are now logged in and will be able to access the private areas of our new website.

SUGGESTIONS:

- **Activities and Amenities:** These sections briefly describe our wonderful life here so that newcomers won't have to wait several years before they discover our secrets.
- **Awards:** We list all the recipients of our several awards and attempt to explain why the awards were won. My favorite section!
- **Committees:** Each committee has its own page where it can describe its activities. These pages can also list tools for a committee's members, such as documents or website links.
- **Departments:** Each department has its own page where you can learn about its mission and current activities.
- **For New Web Users:** There's an online tutorial to help newcomers learn how to navigate the site, read Acrobat documents, and find information. You can also contact the webmaster (webmaster@tsra.org) or committee members for help anytime.

- After logging in for your first time, go immediately to the Owners Page and bookmark it or make it a favorite in your browser. (From the Home drop-down menu on this page, choose Owners Page.) The Community Manager and staff will use the Owners Page regularly for new messages and updates, so we hope you will always start your visit to the website at this page.
- Do NOT log out when you leave the site if you are using your own computer. There is no reason to log out, and you won't have to keep navigating through the login page every time you access the private areas. If you are using a public computer (for example, at the public library) or a computer belonging to someone else, you should log out to prevent unauthorized persons from accessing the private areas of the site.
- If you need any help, call the Association office or email webmaster@tsra.org. Members of the Website Committee will also be happy to assist you as you get started on the site.
- See the November and December issues of the Bulletin for more information about the website.

YOUR FIRST VISIT TO THE NEW WEBSITE

If you have given the Association your email address to subscribe to the Association's Email Alert (infoalerts) service, we have automatically registered you as a member of the new website.

If the Association has your email address, here's how to access the new site for the first time:

→ Page 10

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NEW WEBSITE from page 9

WEBSITE FOUNDERS AND PIONEERS

The concept of an Association website was first proposed to the Board of Directors in 1995 by Bill McCarthy, Communications Committee Chair, and George Bush. At that time, few Board members had access to the Web. George recalls that many of them had difficulty conceiving of the very idea of a website, let alone why it might be valuable to have one.

George and Bill had tried bringing in a computer, but no one wanted to touch it. "They needed something concrete, so I put together a 'dummy' webpage, which we printed and handed out," George says. "They just seemed bewildered and wondered why some of the text was printed in blue." But eventually Board members were convinced, a website committee was formed and got the go-ahead to develop the site. The process took a couple of years, and thanks to the creativity and persistence of website pioneers Craig Schwan, Reva Basch and Iris Borg, the original Association site was launched in 1997.



SWIM LESSONS SPONSORED BY ASSOCIATION



Kat Gleason, Moya Mitchell and Stacey Aitchison instruct young swimmers.

by Darla Buechner

The Sea Ranch Association has been a sponsor of the Mendocino County Youth Project (MCYP) Swim Lesson Program for 30 years. This program was created to teach young children to swim and to be safe and comfortable in the water. The program has always been a summer event that lasts for two weeks, five days a week, and has historically

been held at the Ohlson Pool.

This year, after having to send children away during the Summer Program because the classes filled so quickly, the MCYP requested use of the Moonraker Pool for an after-school swim program in the fall. This request was taken to the Board of Directors at their August 23, 2008 Board meeting; it was unanimously approved. The new program was scheduled for two days a week from 4:00-6:00 p.m. and ran for five weeks. The classes were broken down into half-hour sessions and targeted non-swimmers and children needing to strengthen their ability.

Vanessa Ignacio, Senior Youth Worker for the Mendocino County Youth Project and swimming instructor, managed the entire program, which included instructors Kat Gleason, Stacey Aitchison and Moya Mitchell, and numerous volunteers. Delores "Schus" Schumacher, Supervisor of Facilities and Pools, coordinated the opening and

closing of the pools with the MCYP staff and volunteers. Schus donated her time, after hours, for this worthwhile program.

Children came from Point Arena, Gualala, The Sea Ranch and Stewarts Point; the Kashia reservation brought a van down with kids from the reservation. What an experience, sitting back and watching from the sidelines! The instructors were so good at making the kids confident and comfortable in the water.

At the beginning of the program there were 37 students, 27 of whom were non-swimmers. By the end of the five-week program there were only six non-swimmers, all of whom were under the age of three. Vanessa Ignacio said that she "...did not have an expectation of these students becoming swimmers. Most of them were in the parent and tots class."

I guess you could say it was very successful, and it's nice to think that we may have saved a child from harm by providing them this opportunity. What a great community service—The Sea Ranch Association can be proud of their participation.



Vanessa Ignacio and "Schus"



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DOCUMENTARY SHOWCASES LEGACY AT THE SEA RANCH



Al Boeke and Zara Muren

By Claire McCarthy

This fall, Sea Ranchers had the opportunity to reconnect with their roots—two Vision Interpretive Program (VIP) Committee-sponsored events featured documentaries that articulate the vision of the early planners, and remind us of the unique legacy we share in this special place. The good news is that if you missed those events, copies of the DVD's are available in the Association office (see below for details).

In a lyrical montage of photographs and video footage, original maps, drawings and sketches, and candid interviews with members of the seminal Oceanic Properties creative team, documentary film producer and landscape architect Zara Muren has beautifully rendered the poetry of the coastal landscape and its influence on the early visionaries in

“The Dream of The Sea Ranch.”

The award-winning, hour-long documentary (originally produced for the design community in 1994 with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, and recently transferred to DVD) had its first public showing to over 200 Sea Ranchers at the Knipp-Stengel barn on October 19. Attendees had the opportunity to enjoy refreshments, meet Zara Muren and see the film, which gives viewers a broad and deep sense of the remarkable beginnings of The Sea Ranch, as well as some of the challenges and disappointments that followed.

In her introduction to the film, Ms. Muren said that Sea Ranchers are “...custodians of a grand vision... what I hoped to communicate was how the structure and beauty of the land could suggest the form that the development would take.... (team

leader) Al Boeke eschewed conventions in favor of a fresh response to this place.” She expressed her belief that given current environmental concerns, the message of the dream is more relevant than ever.

Although unforeseen economic and legal factors have resulted in a present-day Sea Ranch very different from the one the early team envisioned, it is “...still a wonderful place,” according to pioneer landscape architect Larry Halprin. “Just not as wonderful as it could have been.”

On November 8th The VIP Committee, in conjunction with The Sea Ranch Forum, presented the official premiere of “A Virtual Tour of The Sea Ranch” to about 75 Association members at the Del Mar Center. This volunteer-produced, twenty-minute slide show is the result of a project that began back in 2002 as a way to educate visitors—and especially potential buyers—about The Sea Ranch, its history and basic design concepts. Originally, the committee planned to organize ongoing docent-led tours of appropriate Sea Ranch architecture for this purpose; they shifted gears in 2004 as a result of input by new Community Manager John Fox, who suggested that a video presentation might be a less complicated and more effective way to get out their message.

Project coordinator Dibby Tyler introduced the show, saying that according to Lisa Scott, director of Design Compliance and Environmental Management, “... about 90% of our problems (with getting Design Committee approval for house plans) happen because people

don't have a clue about what The Sea Ranch is all about.” Dibby added that the committee agreed that “...disputes cost money, and if we can educate a few people it will be worth it.” She gave special credit to Ann Harriman for writing the script, to Jane Raymond for her photography, and to Thayer Walker for doing the voice-over and putting everything together. The committee plans to put copies of the DVD in all rental homes on The Sea Ranch, and to incorporate it into the website.

The show outlines some historic background about the developer and early creative team; the actual tour begins at Condo I and moves north to the golf course area. The homes featured are those that fit particularly well into the environment and/or complement their surroundings. Issues such as house and lot size, exterior finishes, interiors and landscaping are also addressed along the way. Basic Sea Ranch values such as simplicity, predominance of nature, a rural aesthetic, native landscaping, and an overall concern for neighbors and a sense of community are emphasized. With respect to the built



Jane Raymond and Martha "Dibby" Tyler

→ Page 12

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SEA RANCH FILMS from page 11

environment, the show concludes, "it's all about fitting in."

During the question and answer period, attendees were generally positive and enthusiastic about the production. In answer to a question about "...what types of houses did you leave out?" Dibby said that such groupings as the walk-in cabins and cluster houses were not included because it was unlikely that similar homes would be built in the future and their emphasis was on the kind of thing that would be appropriate for the remaining lots.

Original design team leader Al

Boeke commented that he thought the show was "very well done." He expressed some regrets about that group "not coming on stronger" about the necessity of screening cars, and also shared his observation that the concept of "less is more" has changed radically over the years. In that regard, he said, "...we are not doing better, we are doing worse."

"A Virtual Tour of The Sea Ranch" is available for \$3.00 at the Association office. Several copies of "The Dream of The Sea Ranch" are available there for members to borrow free of charge.



LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS SEEK DIRECTORS

By Rae Radtkey

Point Arena Lighthouse Keepers, Inc. (PALKI) is seeking qualified candidates as it expands its volunteer Board of Directors. PALKI is a non-profit dedicated to maintaining, in perpetuity, the Point Arena Light Station including its 23 coastal acres, 100 year old Lighthouse Tower, and 1890's Fog Signal Building.

Of particular interest are volunteers willing to share their expertise in these areas: Fundraising, Growing our Membership, Grant Writing, Event Planning, Marketing, Media communications, Public & Government Relations; Operations, Administration, Staff Management, Project Management; Public Health & Safety; Finance, Investment, Audit & Accounting.

Background: PALKI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation with an operating budget of approximately \$350,000. Located just north of

the City of Point Arena, the Station consists of the lighthouse tower, museum, gift shop and five vacation rental cottages. The complex hosts 30,000 - 35,000 visitors annually.

Membership in the Point Arena Lighthouse Keepers Inc. is a prerequisite for serving on the Board of Directors. Interested parties, should contact Rae Radtkey, Executive Director at 707-882-2777, raelynne@mcn.org or Jim Platt, President, at jlplattTSR@yahoo.com. For full details on Membership Levels/Benefits and the Board of Director positions visit: www.PointArenaLighthouse.com.

Filing Deadline: January 9, 2009, 5:00 p.m. Applicants will be interviewed by representatives of the Board and shall have their position on the Board of Directors confirmed by a vote of the membership. Election results will be announced Saturday, March 7, 2009, at the PALKI Annual Membership Meeting.



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FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 5 P.M.
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The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols will be held once again at the Gualala Arts Center, 46501 Gualala Road, Gualala at 5 p.m. Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24.

Nine readers from the coastal community will read the lessons, each followed with a carol by the congregation, or with music by instrumentalists or vocalists.

The Festival follows the form in which it is offered each year on Christmas Eve in King's College Chapel at Cambridge University, England, where it originated in 1919.

The Festival is sponsored by area churches and interested members of the community.

All are warmly welcome!
For more information, call
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EFREN CARILLO WINS RACE FOR SUPERVISOR

Efred Carrillo will be the new Sonoma County Supervisor for the 5th District. A Santa Rosa native, Mr. Carrillo graduated from U.C. Berkeley with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Economics and Policy.

A young (27) financial counselor for Redwood Credit Union, Mr. Carrillo ran on the issues of water quality and quantity, wastewater disposal in the West County, access to local health care and addressing

the problem of gang-related crime and violence. The 5th District encompasses western Sonoma County including The Sea Ranch.

The race was extremely close. After a final count of about 3400 provisional and absentee ballots, Mr. Carrillo was declared the winner over Planning Commissioner Rue Furch by a margin of just 605 votes. He will replace Supervisor Mike Reilly who is retiring after representing the 5th District since 1996.

Mr. Carrillo said in his campaign literature "...I believe that as Supervisor it will be my responsibility to see that we preserve the natural beauty we all enjoy while making smart decisions concerning residents such as reducing crime, improving transportation, managing growth & protecting agriculture. Our future generations deserve the right to enjoy the same Sonoma County I enjoyed growing up."



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We welcome letters to "Sounding Off" on any matters germane to Sea Ranch. Please sign your name and observe a 300-word limit. All letters must be typewritten (or e-mailed to the editor). Soundings policy does not allow publication of unsigned letters, pseudonyms, or the withholding of writers' names. Soundings will not publish any letter that is denigrating or libelous in nature and reserves the right to add an Editor's Note to correct inaccurate statements. Soundings will not accept letters which have previously appeared in other publications. Letters are limited to two per member per year and should be submitted to "Sounding Off" P.O. Box 16, The Sea Ranch, CA 95497 prior to February 4, 2009.

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS, COMMUNITY MANAGER AND FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIR

In a few weeks you will begin discussing the budget for Fiscal 2009-2010. Comments made in the October *Bulletin*, and at a recent public meeting, cause some concern about the process. The *Bulletin* comment was that every attempt will be made to keep the percent of increase in assessments below 6.5% (compounded annually quickly results in an expensive exercise). The second was an announcement during the New Owners meeting that the Association's goal is to provide five-star service to the membership.

Both of these are admirable goals. However, in the current economic climate, both seem financially irresponsible. Federal, State and local governments, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and ordinary households are all tightening their budgets, and projects are being delayed because there just isn't enough money to implement them at this time.

Businesses everywhere are freezing headcounts, wages, and benefits, or laying off employees until the economy improves. Services at the State and local levels are being curtailed or eliminated. Perhaps the Sea Ranch should consider doing the same. Some members may not be willing or able to pay for five-star service, and project budgets may have to be rethought or limited in scope.

Many of our members are retired on fixed incomes and are watching investment returns dwindle. They are making necessary sacrifices, and so should the Association. All funds belong to the members, and any increases over current expenses may cause undue hardship to our most valuable resource—the community of caring individuals who have made The Sea Ranch what it is today. It was done on less, and less was expected from the bureaucracy of our Association.

Hopefully the decision-makers will respect members enough to defer to them any decisions on increases over 2008-2009 levels. We might all be surprised at their reactions.

Nancy Carter,
Chair, Communication Committee

got a comment?

Send articles, questions and story ideas to:

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BUDGET WORKSHOP LOOKS AT COST-SAVING OPTIONS

By Kathi Gordon

A 4.6% increase in dues (\$187/month) was the initial proposal at the 2009/2010 Budget Workshop. That is a reduction from last year's projected increase of 8.8% (\$196/month), less than last year's actual 10.6% increase and under the 40-year average assessment growth of 6.5 percent.

2009/2010 GOALS

The Board of Directors approved the Community Manager's Goals for 2009/2010 at their October meeting. They are: ● Reduce 40-year average assessment growth of 6.5%; ● Wildfire prevention and vegetation management; ● Continue to grow volunteer involvement; ● Continue improvement in communications, including TSRA website; and ● Improve TSRA Information Technology (IT) capability.

POSSIBLE SAVINGS

Personnel and benefits constituted 64% of the 2008/2009 Operating Expenses. The proposed budget would cut staff by 1.5 full-time employees by reallocating existing staff and balancing their workload, canceling the IT staff addition and filling by internal reassignment (for a savings of \$85K). Each department would be asked to reduce operating expenditures (for a savings of \$44K). Two projects would be deferred: the signature hedgerow replacement project could wait for new seedlings to grow (for a savings of \$75K), and emergency supplies could wait (for a savings of \$5K). The grand total of deferred or deleted projects came to \$209,932, for an assessment savings of \$7.53.

The constrained 2009/2010 budget would reduce assessment impact but maintain three-year forward progress. Further cuts will force major changes and cause serious operational and program impacts, major staff reductions and turnover and member service and safety exposures. Possible additional reductions include encouraging an "opt-out" from receiving paper copies of TSRA publi-

cations; allowing advertising in the *Bulletin* or decreasing *Bulletin* frequency; mothballing a recreational facility, and requiring dues payment by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

FINANCE COMMITTEE RESPONSE

Members of the Finance Committee were reluctant to make additional cuts beyond the figures in the draft budget. Regarding the further challenge of getting monthly dues to \$180, Richard Gary questioned, "What kind of a community do we want to have?" Elaine Reed was concerned about diminishing property values and observed, "Our dues are a bargain compared to other condominium developments... The people in Sea Ranch are not poor; they can afford another \$10 a month... The idea to reduce our assessments is more theoretical than practical."

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS

Director Martha "Dibby" Tyler was gratified by the restraint of the draft budget but would like to look at further suggestions. "I am mindful of the need to roll the dues back." She would be willing to accept an electronic *Bulletin* but would not like to have advertising in it. On fire safety expenses, "Is the continuing need as great as the set-up need in the emergency management process?" Director Rose Hocker asked for consistency with the principles and values adopted in the Halprin workshops. She emphasized two of the principles: "non-elitist" and "simplicity not flamboyance."

Director Chris Beach named as "bad ideas" mothballing a pool, deferring maintenance, and cutting salaries. He read a detailed list of proposed savings, including returning the Department of Compliance and Environmental Management to staffing levels of the 1990's and making its Executive Director a member of the Design Committee. In communications, Director Beach suggested the *Bulletin* could

→ Page 16

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SOUNDINGS welcomes all submissions of articles by TSRA members. The articles should be 500 to 750 words or less, signed by the author, and submitted electronically, preferably as a Word document or may be typewritten, double spaced.

The SOUNDINGS Editor will determine whether the articles are suitable and relevant to Sea Ranch membership, and whether there is space for their publication. Because of space limitations and when necessary, articles will be subject to editing.

ALL ARTICLES ARE WELCOME, subject to the above conditions. If you have questions, please call SOUNDINGS Editor Claire McCarthy. (She is delighted when people volunteer!)

THE SEA RANCH SOUNDINGS

A quarterly publication for TSRA members

Published in
Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter

Editor: **Claire McCarthy**

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Display advertising space is also available on a first come basis, limited to camera-ready ads in PDFs in seven sizes, starting with business card size ad 3 3/8" x 2". Costs begin at \$33.00 for the business card size. If you are interested, please send for a space request sheet.

Advertising deadline February 4, 2009 for the SPRING issue targeted for mailing early March.

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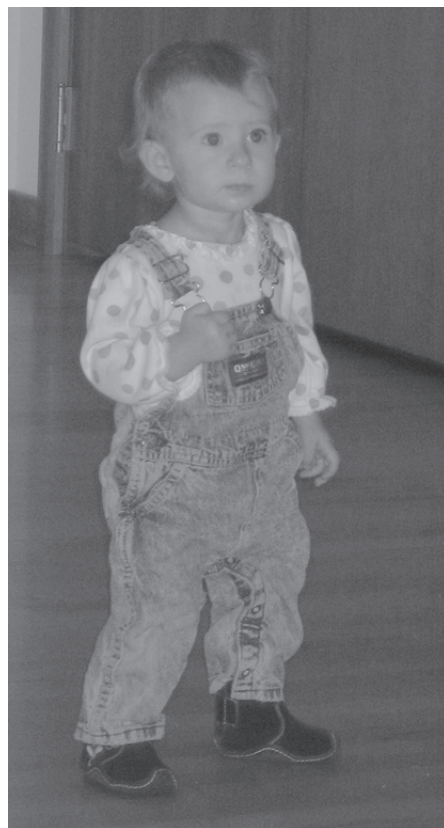
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The Light of the Coast Science of Mind Center meets on Sunday at 11:00 a.m. at 33801 So. Hwy. 1, Gualala (half way between Gualala and Point Arena.) Spiritual counseling, weddings, memorials and classes are available in the Science of Mind teaching. Call Rev. Alyce Soden for information 884-3631

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SEA RANCH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

by Lee Kosso

Once again it's time to invite all interested birders to join in The Sea Ranch Christmas Bird Count on January 10-11, 2009. This will be our twelfth year, but the Audubon Christmas Bird Count has taken place among nationwide Audubon chapters for over one hundred years. Our count is patterned after the Audubon count but we do it informally, to learn about our birds on The Sea Ranch, and because we enjoy it.

The count will begin on Saturday morning, January 10, 2009. Experienced birders will lead groups in ten designated areas on The Sea Ranch to count and record all birds seen or heard that day. The areas to be covered are: Sea Ranch NORTH COAST, SOUTH COAST, MID-COAST, OCEAN MEADOW NORTH, OCEAN MEADOW SOUTH, EAST MEADOW NORTH, EAST MEADOW SOUTH, FOREST RIDGE -HOT SPOT, GOLF COURSE, and MID-RANCH TRANSECT. The count may continue on Sunday, January 11th in case of inclement weather.

On Sunday, January 11, 2009, birders will meet at the Del Mar Center from 1 to 3 p.m. to tally the count

and share interesting stories and sightings. Bring lunch or light snacks to share.

An important part of the Bird Count is the Organizational Meeting which will be at the Del Mar Center on Monday, December 29, 2008, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Participants will sign up for their choice of birding area, meet the leaders, and learn starting place and time. Connie Schimbor and Diane Hichwa will also lead a practice bird walk on Saturday, December 6, 2008. Meet at the Del Mar center at 9 a.m. Sea Ranchers not participating in the count on January 10th are asked to stock their bird feeders and alert Diane Hichwa at dhichwa@earthlink.net so the birds at your house can be counted.

We welcome all birders, novices and experienced, to join us. Be sure to bring your binoculars, a field guide if you have one, lunch and water. Dress for all kinds of weather; we usually get a variety. Last January, the weather was pretty bad but we counted 6,037 individual birds, 95 species. Birding is becoming popular at The Sea Ranch and, in fact, everywhere, so come and bird with us on January 10-11, 2009. See you there.

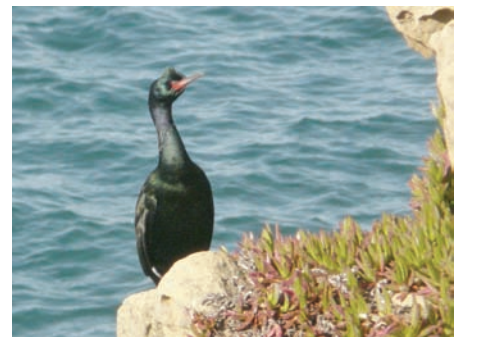


Osprey

PHOTOS BY JIM TACKETT



Acorn Woodpecker



Pelagic Cormorant



Kestrel



White Crowned Sparrow

BUDGET MEETING from page 14

be published on-line (or every other month) and reduced to four pages, putting all the community relations material in *Soundings*. Or combine the *Bulletin* and *Soundings* and take advantage of *Soundings* advertising revenue. He suggested combining the heads of Security and Emergency Preparedness; eliminating pool monitors, installing a card-key system and instituting user fees for the pools and the stable; returning office administrative services staffing to 2006 levels; having Board

elections every two years instead of every year, and reducing needed time for legal counsel perhaps by using conference calls for counsel to participate in Board meetings. Director Beach also suggested a focused "top-down" budget process rather than goals-based budgeting. He asked, "What do we really want for the future? We're here because we can take care of ourselves."

MEMBER COMMENTS
Seven members spoke to various

aspects of budget cuts with all but one in favor of reducing the dues. Bob Davis was pleased to see John Fox's efforts to limit the dues increase but his preference would be no increase at all. Gary Blomgren asked Board members to look at Chris Beach's suggestions with an open mind. David Windsor was in favor of "getting rid of as much paper as we can," but "really good, reliable Internet access is not available on The Sea Ranch." Ann Burton asked, "If we needed new administrative staff last year,

why can we do without 1.5 full-time staff this year? The budget increases could price people right out of here." The members in attendance were willing to accept EFT for dues payments.

John Fox concluded that, while the input was helpful to eliminate some possibilities, it would not be possible to convert all the suggestions into budget proposals in the three weeks before the next Budget workshop on January 10.



OUR SEA RANCH REPORT CARD*



Dan Kalinoski

Steve Carnes

Hanne Liisberg

*As of November 4, 2008

 226 Pilot's Reach \$1,575,000 List August 2008 Representing buyer	 40476 Tide Pool \$1,350,000 List June 2008 Representing seller	 40295 Foremast \$1,350,000 List September 2008 Representing seller	 40470 Tide Pool \$1,299,000 List November 2007 Representing seller
 150 Cabrillo Close \$1,199,000 List September 2007 Representing buyer	 39651 Leeward \$1,050,000 List November 2007 Representing seller	 106 Anchorage \$995,000 List October 2008 Representing seller	 272 Whalebone \$979,000 List March 2008 Representing seller
 41931 Mizzzen Mast \$895,000 List June 2008 Rep.seller + buyer	 195 Klamath \$895,000 List June 2008 Representing seller	 42102 Rock Cod \$799,000 List August 2008 Representing seller	 24 Bosun's Reach \$795,000 List August 2008 Representing seller
 36511 Sculpture Pt. \$749,000 List June 2008 Representing buyer	 38832 Breaker Rch. \$719,000 List July 2008 Representing seller	 38375 Fly Cloud \$699,000 List July 2008 Representing buyer	 36540 E. Ridge Rd \$140,000 List December 2007 Representing seller+buyer

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