

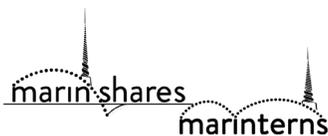
VOLUNTEER NOTES

Where Are They Now?

Former MarinsShares volunteer **Courtney Pittman**, who contributed her design skills to our newsletter for nine months during the pandemic, is now a Coldwell Banker real estate agent. Her father-in-law works at the office and is teaching her the tools of the trade. She said the change from working in a veterinary office is perfect; it allows her more time with 15-month-old daughter Poppy.

Scholarship Awarded

Marinfo NOW writer **Tiyona Pariani** won a Soroptimists scholarship to be used as she pursues a bachelor's degree in business administration at Oregon State University. She was honored at an online ceremony hosted by Soroptimists International of Novato on March 2. Originally a Marin County Career Explorer with the Human Resources Department, Tiyona is now a regular intern with HR's Volunteer/Intern division. Serving remotely, she has written straight through the pandemic—and through the arrival of her daughter Mi'Ari Leeyona Gauthier, now three months old.



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VOLUNTEERS

Writers: **Clariss Ajanel, Maddie Dabbah, Natalie Dybeck, Marjorie Grannan, Scott Harrop, Tiyona Pariani** | Photographer: **Gregg Turner** | Copy Editor: **Pamela Ross** | Copy Editor Intern: **David Balderama** | Graphic Design: **Eleanor Lau** | Graphic Design Aide: **Afsaneh Bohlouli** | Intern Writing Coach: **Ed Remitz** | Administrative Aides: **Deborah Gregor, Deborah Fox, Veronica Morino** | Cartoonist: **John Donaghue**

Radio Operator Ready to Assist Community Groups

By Marjorie Grannan

“When the power’s out, phone’s out, communication is down, when people are sitting in the dark...we can light a small candle somewhere.” That’s how **Skip Fedanzo** describes his mission to help during disasters when basic communication systems across Marin have failed

Skip acts as lead operator for a small team of people who utilize their amateur ham radios to help community-based organizations during emergencies. The Radio Communications Volunteer (RCV) effort is a pilot program under auspices of the Department of Public Works (DPW), formed to guide emergency contacts in disaster situations and respond in planned incidents like the PG&E power shutdown in October 2019.

“The pilot program has generated really good feedback, but we haven’t had any kind of formal recognition,” Skip said. “We need to recruit more ham radio volunteers. We want to help share ways in which it can be better. We have to

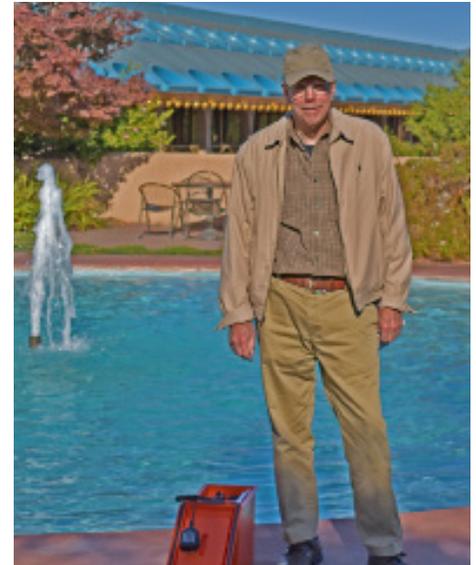


PHOTO BY GREGG TURNER

Skip Fedanzo

be cognizant of the needs of the most vulnerable population.”

After retiring in 2014, Skip began to devote much more of his time to his radio hobby, applying it to public service.

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Copy Editor Intern Supports Accuracy and Quality

By Maddie Dabbah

At just 14, Marinterns copy editor **David Balderama** has surely made his mark on Marinfo NOW. He began the internship last July with a remote editorial team led by Marinfo NOW editor **Anne Starr** of the Human Resources Department. “David ably tightens copy and checks facts, making articles fit in the available space and supporting accuracy,” said Anne. “There is an art to modifying copy while respecting a writer’s voice, and David is good at it.”

David, a freshman at San Rafael High School, has always involved himself in a wide variety of educational pursuits — whether it be enrolling in advanced courses or participating in spelling bees. The internship, however, is his first. When asked what prompted him to take on copy editing, David answered, “I consider myself good at finding mistakes in writing and it is something that I enjoy.” He also emphasized interest in gaining worthwhile, real-world experience at a

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Radio Operator Ready to Assist Community Groups

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With an extensive education and professional background including computer technology, research and development, and systems ecology, the Corte Madera resident applies his knowledge of communications technologies to support public safety.

Many ham radio operators act as Good Samaritans, stepping in when crises arise. Trained operators typically volunteer their time, equipment, and knowledge to support local communities during communication failures—and communication failures happen during the worst of disasters.

When disaster occurs, impacted communities can be cut off from contact with emergency providers. Ham radio bands used by trained radio operators can avoid much of the overloading that landlines, internet, and even cell phone reception experiences. The RCV acts as an emissary, radioing information between community-based organizations and the Marin County Emergency Operations Center when other forms of communication are down.

Ham radio operators also assist in events like the Dipsea Race and other hike,

bike, and run events. Their field stations ensure the safety of participants over long stretches of solitary space. This kind of experience enables them to work with other voluntary organizations that deliver aid and services to vulnerable populations or evacuees.

“So often we hear about people who have made significant impacts on the community, and Skip is one of those people,” said the RCV team’s staff supervisor, Supervising Communications Technician **Todd Williams** of DPW. “I feel privileged to be partnered on a team that he so passionately represents. His expertise as a Marin County ham radio volunteer should not be understated. Disasters and emergencies wait on no one, and the county can rest assured that if/when a crisis occurs Skip is just a heartbeat away. He and the RCV team can provide vital and stable voice radio links to first responders when all other means of communications, including public safety networks, are congested or degraded.”

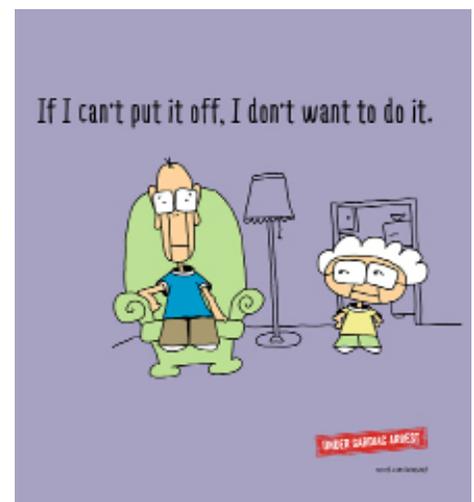
“Skip has been wonderful to work with,” said **Andrew LeBlanc**, who was the DPW communications manager when

Skip became a MarinShares volunteer in early 2021. (Andrew now works in the private sector and volunteers with the RCV team.) “Skip’s dedication and commitment to public service and to his community is inspiring,” Andrew said.

Skip’s advice when disaster strikes? “Don’t worry about the stuff you can’t do. Do the best with what you’ve got.”

Are you a ham radio operator interested in volunteering? Contact MarinShares Coordinator [Anne Starr](#), 415-473-7167.

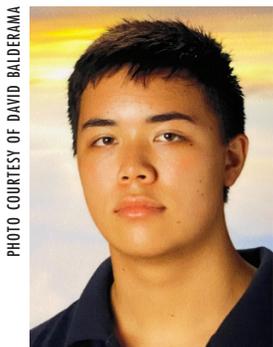
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CARTOON BY JOHN DONAGHUE

Copy Editor Intern Supports Accuracy and Quality

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David Balderama

young age. “I have learned valuable lessons,” said David.

The profiles in Marinfo NOW, a newsletter available to the public, highlight County of Marin volunteers and interns

and their impact on the community. The newsletter is produced by and for MarinShares and Marinterns participants. Copy Editor **Pam Ross** handles articles written by volunteers, and David

edits stories crafted by fellow interns. David’s efforts to downsize articles, catch grammatical errors, and apply precedent from the Associated Press Stylebook help make the publication possible.

As a student member of the Marinfo NOW team, David receives regular guidance from Intern Writing Coach **Ed Remitz**, a retired journalism professor and MarinShares volunteer.

“Kudos to David — yet another of our outstanding student interns making solid contributions,” said Ed. “He is unique in wanting to explore copy editing, which demands precision and

deadline adherence without a byline. We can always count on David to deliver and continue to grow.”

Aside from copy editing, David has much to look forward to. This spring, he plans to join his high school swim team and participate as a Mathlete for a second year. David has a keen interest in STEM, with hopes to pursue a physics degree at Stanford University. He also enjoys playing video games.

Editing excellence is a primary goal for David, who said he does his best to make sure that articles sent to him are “the highest quality possible before being released in the newsletter.”

Volunteer Finds Civic Center History—and New Career

By Natalie Dybeck

MarinShares volunteer **Claudia Heikhaus** spends lots of time in the historic Marin Civic Center, where she is an office assistant in the Department of Public Works' (DPW) third-floor office. Two afternoons a week, after her work shift ends, she can be found upstairs volunteering in the California Room of the Marin County Free Library's Civic Center branch.

As a volunteer, Claudia has helped with multiple projects for the California Room, which houses historical archives. Currently she is sorting through dozens of donated musical groups' promotional photos to determine band members' connections to Marin for the library's database. "Many of the bands are from the '80s, so just trying to get past the unwieldy hairdos is a tremendous challenge—but I soldier on for the sake of future generations of scholars," joked Claudia.

Her background as a native of Marin, fascination with history, and love for the library has furthered her dedication. For example, Claudia worked on a series of narrative summaries from oral history interviews conducted by Anne T. Kent—a founder of the county library system—and other Marin residents.

Claudia is most proud of a discovery she made with DPW coworker **Jessica Poli** in their department's storage

room. "We found an old oak flat file, and inside the drawers we were astonished to find original documents from the construction of the Civic Center, not signed by Frank Lloyd Wright, but by his protégé Aaron Greene." Claudia later took her volunteer supervisor, Librarian **Carol Acquaviva**, to look at the trove of historical documents, and she too was amazed at the discovery.

Later, Claudia learned that DPW executives wanted to clear out the storage unit. She quickly emailed an impassioned plea to her assistant director to donate the items to the library archives. "I didn't hear anything back for weeks, but then one day Jessica told me that we got a green light for the entire collection to go to our county archives for preservation! It is truly one of the best things I've done since I started working here—and it was just the inspiration I needed to find my path as a future archivist," said Claudia.

"Claudia is everything one would want in a volunteer: she has a keen interest in



Claudia Heikhaus

library and archival work, brings many talents to each task, and is a wonderful person to work alongside," said Carol.

Claudia and the Civic Center may have a symbiotic relationship. She works in the building and has discovered and helped save some of its early history. In return, she has been inspired to journey out of the Civic Center for additional education as she pursues a new goal: a master's degree in library and information science from San Jose State University. The degree will provide the educational platform she needs to launch a new career as a librarian and archivist.

PHOTO BY JOANNA LANGENHAN



Teens Lead Sock Drive

In partnership with the Ritter Center in San Rafael, the Teen Leadership Crew of the Fairfax Library hosted a Share the Warmth sock drive through the end of March. Student donors who gave a new pair or package of socks received in exchange an easy and fun no-sew DIY handwarmer kit. Socks collected at all Marin County Free Library branches went to Ritter Center to assist Marin residents experiencing homelessness.

Pictured right sits **Stella Vasquez**, an Archie Williams High School student and teen liaison for the initiative. Outreach Librarian **Rashida Skaar** (left), Teen Librarian **April Hayley** (middle left), and Fairfax Branch Manager **Margaret Miles** (middle right) supervised the project. Rashida says to "be on the lookout for more community programs from the Teen Leadership Crew!" All leadership crew members are county Marinerns.



Marin Medical Reserve Corps Names Top Volunteer



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAXINE GILBERT

For her tremendous contribution of skills and time as a Marin Medical Reserve Corps (MMRC) volunteer emergency medical technician, **Maxine Gilbert** is the 2021 MMRC Volunteer of the Year. Fellow volunteers and staff cheered her at a surprise announcement held on March 3 at the Northgate Vaccination Clinic. Maxine joined the corps in April 2020, a month into the pandemic when little was known about the virus and volunteering in person took extra courage. She has served more than 150 shifts for a total of 600 hours so far. Maxine's continuing involvement with the Covid-19 vaccination and testing teams demonstrates "an unwavering commitment to improving health outcomes in her community and supporting the Marin County Division of Public Health," said MMRC Coordinator **Anne Carta**. She added, "Through kindness, professionalism, dedication, and humility, Maxine lifts up her volunteer peers and county staff." Maxine also volunteers with the Stinson Beach Fire Department and runs the nearby Parkside Café.



PHOTO BY REBEKAH KLEIN

Who's New & Welcome!

Ellen Arbit (San Rafael), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

Michele Boyer (Mill Valley), Marin Center Usher, Cultural Services

Alexis Cartwright (Belvedere), Rx Safe Marin Intern, Health & Human Services (HHS)

Dana Cole (Larkspur), Friends of the Family Volunteer, HHS

Courtney DiCarlo (Mill Valley), Friends of the Family Volunteer, HHS

Roger Dickerson (Ross), Radio Communications Volunteer, Department of Public Works (Public Works)

Jenae DiGennaro (San Francisco), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

April Elder-Ernst (Albany), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Marie Estelle Estrella (Manteca), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Nicole Fagerhaug (Petaluma), Civic Center Tour Docent, Cultural Services

Elizabeth Fernbacher (Corte Madera), Financial Abuse Specialist Team Volunteer, HHS

Nadia Ferrari (San Rafael), Children & Family Services Online Resource Guide Assistant, HHS

Michael Fischer (Mill Valley), Radio Communications Volunteer, Public Works

Amanda Harris (San Rafael), Bridge Team Program Assistant Intern, HHS

Madison 'Ari' Huckabay (Rocklin), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

Megan Kinsman (Martinez), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Marc-Philippe Lambert (San Jose), Pre-Law Intern, Public Defender's Office

Emma Leamon (Modesto), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Joshua Long (San Francisco), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Gerome Macaspac (Daly City), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Sarah Maldonado (Redwood City), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Bayani Angelo Malicse (San Francisco), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Hailey Malone (Sacramento), Nursing Student, HHS

Jorrane Martins Moreno (Daly City), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Bibi Mazariegos Rodas (Novato), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Mona Mirzaie (El Sobrante), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Geo Monley (Mill Valley), Makerspace Volunteer, Marin City Library

Juliana Morales-Preza (South San Francisco), Nursing Student, HHS

Melanie Moran (Novato), Packet Assembly for Public Assistance Volunteer, HHS

Augustus Muse (San Rafael), Employment and Training Intern, HHS

Joanne Nguyen (San Jose), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

Rachel Raskin (Castro Valley), Graphic Design Intern, Information Services & Technology Department

Madeline Remedios (South San Francisco), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Robert Rowlands (Mill Valley), Radio Communications Volunteer, Public Works

Jesse Ruiz (San Jose), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Hooriya Shaghasi (Clayton), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, South Novato Library

Keirsten Shepatin (Mill Valley), Social Work Intern with the Access Team, HHS

Zoie Smith (Los Altos), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Ted Yang (La Crescenta), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Patty Zevallos (Sausalito), Spanish Language Interpreter Intern, Public Defender's Office

Denny Zhang (San Francisco), Telehealth Nursing Student, HHS

Happy Anniversary

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

25 YEARS

Dan Healy (Woodacre), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)

22 YEARS

Bill Mittendorf (San Francisco), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

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

19 YEARS

Richard Courier (Petaluma), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

17 YEARS

David Mitchell (San Rafael), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

Tom Zarraonandia (Novato), Steward, Marin County Parks (Parks)

16 YEARS

Emily Cushman (San Rafael), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteer, MCSO

14 YEARS

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

12 YEARS

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

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

11 YEARS

Robert Gehlen (San Rafael), **Rich Shelton** (Tiburon), Marin Search & Rescue Volunteers, MCSO

Richard McGrath (San Rafael), Flag Raiser at Avenue of the Flags, Cultural Services

10 YEARS

Deborah Gregor (Novato), Event Aide, Human Resources

Terry Norton (San Anselmo), **Kathryn Thyret** (Mill Valley), Ombudsman, HHS

9 YEARS

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

John Garcia (Dixon), Air Patrol Volunteer, MCSO

7 YEARS

Christine Camilleri (Novato), Mounted Patrol, Parks

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

6 YEARS

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

Mark Stoering (Tomas), Volunteer Tomas Firefighter, Marin County Fire Department (Fire)

4 YEARS

Brian Beidelman (San Francisco), **Gideon Bernstein** (Mill Valley), **Calvin Schrader** (San Anselmo), **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, Fire

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

3 YEARS

Jennifer Doores (Fairfax), Shelver, Fairfax Library

2 YEARS

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

1 YEAR

Karen Dozer (Mill Valley), Friends of the Family Volunteer, HHS

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