



a view from the
WEST POINT INN

The Newsletter for the West Point Inn Association and Friends

June 2020 • Issue 42

Mission Statement:
The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.

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The newsletter is published with funds provided in memory of Lifetime Member, Ernest E. Emig, and Honorary Member, Harold Allen Atkinson.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Chris Marcuse

Dear West Point Inn Community,

I hope you are all doing well during this extraordinary time in our history. I wish I could be reporting on how we held an incredibly successful Mother's Day pancake breakfast and we're looking forward to Father's Day. I also wish I could be inviting you to our Old Timer's Party. Sadly, none of that is possible right now. Not being able to visit the Inn is creating a huge hole in my soul. I trust many of you feel the same way.

Yes, the Inn is currently closed for what may be the longest time in its history (there's another article for Historian Fred Runner!). However, we are taking steps to protect it at the current time while also planning for what the future may look like. Our brave and trusty Innkeepers are manning the parapets of the Inn. They are keeping the hikers and bikers at bay who have been trying to break into our closed facility.

Additionally, Ross Asselstine, Buildings & Grounds Committee Co-Chair, and Wayne Koide, Policy & Procedures Committee Chair, have been finalizing a COVID policy for employees and construction workers. This will formalize our protocols for having authorized personnel at the Inn. It will also allow us to resume having any needed maintenance or construction crews visit the Inn to prepare for when we are finally able to fully reopen.

In anticipation of that day, we formed a committee to decide how people will be able to stay overnight once again. Vice President Don Keeley and Board Members Nancy Fox & Alyssa Jorgensen have been working hard to determine the actual mechanics of how people will be able to enjoy the Inn while staying safe from COVID. Reopening will, of course, also depend on changes in the state and local health orders. But we want to be ready when places like ours are again allowed to conduct full operations.

Board Members Bonnie Jones and Jim Parton are also working to facilitate our reopening. They crafted a statement for us to submit to the public comment section of Marin County's website, Marin Recovers. This site is the central coordinating location for the county's plans and information regarding returning to normal economic activity. We are eagerly waiting to hear what Marin's Industry Advisors recommend for hospitality businesses.

Continued on p2.

Continued from p1.

Another proactive step we took was to apply for, and receive, a Paycheck Protection Program loan. Treasurer Mark Northcross was instrumental in securing these funds that will allow us to keep our Innkeepers on duty and protecting the Inn. This money does give us some breathing space, but we are still looking for additional sources of income. Please check out our “Virtual Pancake Breakfast” page on the website to see ways you can donate to the Inn. I know some people are in uncomfortable positions due to not being able to work but, if you can contribute, we would greatly appreciate it.

I want to welcome Alyssa Jorgensen to the Board. She will be fulfilling the rest of Wayne Koide’s term. Wayne, who has spent over four years on the Board, will still be involved as the Policy & Procedures chair. I also want to welcome new member Wing Pepper, who is stepping up to take over the Secretary of the Board position. He is replacing Jean Jefferies, who did an incredible job. Jean plans on becoming more involved at the committee level and possibly someday joining the Board.

If you would like to join the Board and have a direct impact on our policies and operations, please contact the Nominating Committee of Bonnie Jones and Johanna Sistik. Every year we are looking for at least three candidates to run and join us in deciding the best way to provide for the Inn’s fiscal and physical health. Please consider stepping up to take an active role.

Finally, as always, I am here to listen to our members. If you have any comments, questions or concerns about the Inn, please do not hesitate to contact me at president@westpointinn.com.

Until the next time we can all enjoy the view from the porch, please stay safe and stay healthy!

PERSONNEL REPORT

Lin Marcuse & Fran Rondeau

Hello! We wanted to give a great big thanks to our wonderful Innkeepers. They have spent the last few months guarding the Inn from the numerous hikers and bikers who constantly try to use our restrooms. These facilities are locked and clearly marked as closed, but people still try to break into the facilities. We don’t have the resources to clean them after each use, so we made the decision to block them off out of an abundance of caution. Unfortunately, many people do not appear to heed the message and try to enter anyway. We are extremely appreciative of our Innkeepers who display tact and diplomacy to get the point across to those mountain visitors. Thank you!

PANCAKE BREAKFAST REPORT

Gordy MacDermott & Lin Marcuse

First off and most important, we miss all of you! Unfortunately, we were not able to hold our amazing Mother’s Day Pancake Breakfast. However, we are extremely grateful to Scott & Lisa Halsted for still planning to host the event amid all the uncertainty. Sadly, we also had to cancel our beloved Father’s Day event as well. We appreciate that Mark & Antoinetta Northcross were preparing to host the event for another stellar year. The decision hasn’t been made yet on whether to cancel July and beyond, but we are thankful that Fran Rondeau & Alyssa Jorgensen, Jan Gauthier & Wade Hufford, Bob Newcomer & Donald DeLave and Pat Kavanaugh were going to host. We also appreciate all the smiling volunteers that were willing to work a Sunday morning on a breakfast crew or a Sunday afternoon on the cleanup team. Our fundraising events wouldn’t be possible without everyone’s efforts and dedication to the Inn. We thank all of you!

Each year our breakfasts not only bring the community together, they also raise funds to support the Inn.

To fill the gap of no “on the mountain” breakfasts, we have been working with Nancy Fox on creating a “Virtual Pancake Breakfast.” We are so pleased the virtual breakfast offers a new way to bring our members and community together while maintaining necessary social distancing. Please check it out at <https://www.westpointinn.com/vitual-pancake-breakfasts>. If you can, please take a moment to donate to the Inn so that we can continue being there in the future.

We invite you to join in on the fun of our virtual pancake breakfast by sharing your photographs. We posted the photos received from people enjoying pancakes at home for Mother’s Day. Through the power of the internet, we’ll bring you pictures of some of the aspects of our breakfasts that we’re all missing. On Father’s Day, make some pancakes, coat them with mounds of butter and syrup, add in any extras you want and have yourself a terrific pancake meal. We also have coloring pages for the younger set, with more coming soon. Take a few snapshots, or let out your inner Picasso, and we can all make some memories together.

We will be back serving pancake breakfasts on the mountain while enjoying friends as soon as we can!

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Gordy & Lyn MacDermott

Hello Members,

We had some members decide not to renew their membership in the W.P.I. so we were able to take some applicants off our wait list.

Here are our latest new members:

Peter Karlen of Mill Valley
 Nicolle Austin of San Francisco
 Laura Rogers of San Francisco
 Kathy & Hugh Kuhn of Mill Valley
 Laura Viggiano of Mill Valley
 Wing Pepper of Mill Valley
 Antonia Siryer of Mill Valley
 Kelly Henderson of San Francisco
 Liz Spilsbury of San Rafael
 Patricia Sweeney of San Francisco
 Stacy & Nancy Bloom of Mill Valley
 Andrew Kallet of Mill Valley
 Dennis Guikema of Oakland
 Sally Kallet of San Francisco

The following new members shared some information about themselves

Hi my name is Kelly Henderson and I am very excited to become a West Point Inn member! I am originally from Washington, DC and moved to the Bay Area 10 years ago to go to graduate school at UC Berkeley. I have a background in health psychology and public health and have combined my training in these fields to serve as a design researcher leading research projects aimed at better understanding the lives and experiences of patients and healthcare providers in order to help inform the development of healthcare services and products. I love exploring and going on adventures in nature, hiking, camping and spending quality time with friends and family in the outdoors. I enjoy going to film festivals and local art and comedy events. I'm a big sports fan—soccer, basketball, tennis and also enjoy playing these sports as well. I'm looking forward to joining the WPI community!

Katy and Hugh Kuhn are 20+ year residents of Mill Valley, having moved to town from San Francisco to raise their two daughters now 21 and 24. Katy is an artist who paints large format abstract landscapes in her studio at the ICB in Sausalito. Hugh has recently wound down his renewable energy consulting business after years of helping clients oversee the construction and operations of large-scale solar and wind projects across the country. Both are avid hikers and love to drink wine

with friends new and old on the WPI deck. Hugh and Katy met at the MV Depot in the late 80's on a blind mountain biking "date" up to the WPI, so yes, the place has a special place in their hearts.

The Blooms wrote:

Nancy: likes to travel (90 countries and still counting) hike, cook, read, and doing the Jumble.

Stacy: likes to travel, hike, read, play tennis/golf, eat Nancy's cooking.

We have lived in many places and raised our children in Mill Valley, love the mountain.

Met in college, had long productive careers, stopped working over ten years ago.

My name is Liz Spilsbury and I'm from England originally, from the London suburbs in the county of Kent. My English accent persists, in spite of 40 years in the US. My husband and I have lived in San Rafael since 1983, in the same house in the Dominican area, which we chose because it reminded us of England. I am now retired after a career in economic forecasting, consulting and some programming. My favorite hobby is hiking, particularly on Mt Tam, but I also enjoy knitting, vegetable gardening, travel, movies, reading and trivia (we are on a trivia team at the Mayflower pub). We have 2 grown children and our daughter, Emma, has been coming to work parties and is also hoping to become a West Point Inn member soon. For the last 3 years, I have been a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters and I brought my Little Sister, Casey, for an overnight at the inn last year, something that she loved. I'm really looking forward to the day when the inn is open and we can all get together again.

Sally Kallet wrote:

I grew up in Mill Valley (my parents still live in Strawberry, I joined with my Dad). I have been running since the 6th grade so am very familiar with Mt. Tam and it's one of my favorite places in the world. I actually ran back to San Francisco from one of the work parties! I love to run, hike, camp, and travel. My fiance is a pilot so we travel a lot. I work in advertising in the Presidio. I'm looking forward to being part of the new generation of WPI members! Will Sink was the one who convinced me to join.

I'm Wing Pepper. I was born in Ohio and grew up in Washington DC. When i was a teenager i worked in a wooden boat yard in Cape Cod for 6 summers where I learned how to build things. I went to Middlebury College in Vermont then lived in NYC, Boston, Hong Kong, London, Geneva and New Zealand until finally setting in Mill Valley. I have two grown daughters named Lucy and Ella who both live in NYC. I help run a healthcare start up in San Francisco which keeps me busy. When I am not doing that I am hiking, camping, mountain bike riding or cooking. I am also a baseball fanatic, gardener, handyman and hot sauce maker. I'd like to help the WPI sustain well into the future so we leave our kids and grandkids the gift of the outdoors, community and nature in such a unique setting.

Membership Notes Continued.

Antonia Sivyer wrote:

I am thrilled to be a member of the West Point Inn, and a part of this community! I am an environmental planner, having primarily worked on water projects. In recent months, I have become a full-time teacher to my three girls, Willa (10), Carolina (8), and Skye (5), and mama to a puppy named Winslow, an Italian Spinone. In my free time, I mostly like to get outside, and enjoy trail running, road biking, and hiking with my husband, Zander, who is a structural engineer and a Kiwi. I also love making art with my kiddos, scheming which room in my house to paint next, and hosting friends for dinner. When we are able, it is great fun to travel to Sweden, where my family lives, and New Zealand to visit Zander's family. However, northern California has my heart... I am a San Francisco native, and have lived in Tam Valley for the last 8 years, where I have never felt more at home.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION: CALL FOR CANDIDATES

Chris and Lin Marcuse

The WPIA Board of Directors and Election Committee welcome inquiries from qualified members who might be interested in serving on the board. Here is some information:

- There are nine WPIA members on the Board of Directors.
- The term for a Director is three years.
- By-Laws require that a candidate be a member in good standing for no less than one year and who has not served on the Board for 12 months prior to taking office.
- By-laws state that the Nominating Committee consists of outgoing Board members and the President.
- By-laws state that any qualified member, other than those selected by the Nominating Committee, may run for the board by delivering a petition signed by at least 10% of voting members by September 1 (in this case, by 09/01/2020).

The election process is by mail. Candidates submit a short bio. An alphabetical list of candidates and their bios is printed in the Fall newsletter. Ballots and bios are mailed to the voting membership at least 30 days prior to the Annual Fall Meeting in October (10/18/2020) along with an addressed return envelope. Voting officially ends when the annual meeting is called to order. Votes are then tallied with results announced toward the end of the meeting. Results are kept confidential. Winners' names are announced alphabetically. IF THE INN IS STILL CLOSED IN OCTOBER, VOTING WILL END AT 5 PM ON 10/17/2020 AND THE WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED VIA EMAIL.

Serving on the Board of Directors is an excellent way to help the West Point Inn. Please consider sharing some of your time and talent to ensure that the Inn continues to operate for the benefit of the members and guests who appreciate the opportunity to experience our unique establishment.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Bonnie Jones
Johanna Sistek

ELECTION PROCESS COMMITTEE:

Lin & Chris Marcuse

NOTE: We welcome help from members in conducting the election. If interested, please contact us.

QUESTIONS IN GENERAL: Contact Chris or Lin
PHONE: (415) 516-4253
E-MAIL: elections@westpointinn.com

PLEASE CONTACT SOMEONE ON THE BOARD OR ELECTION COMMITTEE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN BECOMING A CANDIDATE FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

FUEL REDUCTION & “SURVIVABLE” SPACE ACHIEVEMENT

Pete Martin

This 2015 satellite view depicts the West Point Inn complex sandwiched in by the Old Railroad Grade on nearly every side. The Marin County Fire Department requires a 200-foot defensible space radius, hereafter referred to as “Survivable Space” around the entire WPI complex

“Horseshoe.” WPI Volunteers completed fire fuel reduction within the horseshoe in late March.

Note: The 100’ Defensible / Survivable Space Zone defined by the green line is 95% +/- completed by WPI Volunteers. WPI volunteers will begin work to complete it as soon as the Coronavirus quarantine is lifted.

Only the 100’ to 200’ Zone remains to be completed. That will be addressed separately.

FIRE DANGER: The practice is sometimes called firescaping.

Defensible Space

The definition of defensible space is: the required space between a structure (home, detached garage, outbuildings, etc.) and the wildland area that, under normal conditions, creates a sufficient buffer to slow or halt the spread of a wildland fire to a structure. Defensible space protects the structure from igniting due to direct flame or radiant heat.

NFPA - Preparing homes for wildfire

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Preparing-homes-for-wildfire>

Embers are burning pieces of airborne wood and/or vegetation that can be carried more than a mile through the wind can cause spot fires and ignite homes, debris and other objects. There are methods for homeowners to prepare their homes to withstand ember attacks and minimize the likelihood of flames or surface fire.

Defensible Space - FIREsafe MARIN

<https://firesafemarin.org/defensible-space>

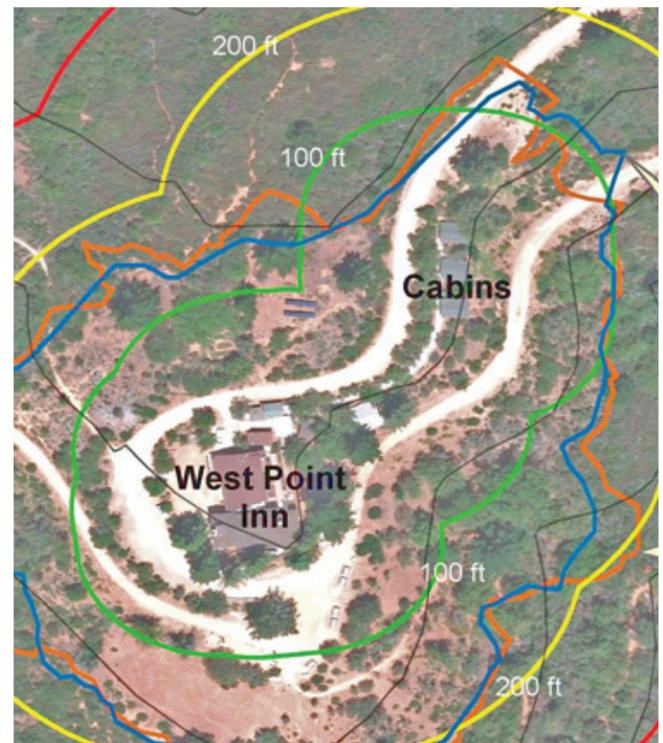
Defensible space will help slow or stop the spread of wildfire and protect your home from catching fire either from direct flame contact or radiant heat. Defensible space is also important to help protect firefighters when they are defending your home. Defensible space means a healthy, well maintained landscape.

Hardening Your Home - FIREsafe MARIN

www.firesafemarin.org/home-hardening

Download the IBHS Wildfire Home Hardening Retrofit Guide for California and Marin. Homes ignite from contact with flames or embers. Flying embers can destroy homes up to a mile ahead of a wildfire. Homeowners should “harden” their homes long before a fire starts. A wildfire-safe home must be resistant to ignition from wind-blown

What are the primary threats to homes during a wildfire? Research around home destruction vs. home survival in wildfires point to embers and small flames as the main way that the majority of homes ignite in wildfires. Embers are burning pieces of airborne wood and/or vegetation that can be carried more than a mile through the wind can cause spot fires and ignite homes, debris and other objects. There are methods for homeowners to prepare their homes to withstand ember attacks and minimize the likelihood of flames or surface fire touching the home or any attachments. Experiments, models and post-fire studies have shown homes ignite due to the condition of the home and everything around it, up to 200’ from the foundation. This is called the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ).





1918: To prevent crowding indoors, judges held outdoor court sessions such as this open-air police court being held in Portsmouth Square, San Francisco. (Image courtesy: influenzaarchive.org)

1918 PANDEMIC RETREAT AT THE INN

Fred Runner



Like our current coronavirus outbreak, the 1918 Flu Epidemic was a frightening thing. There were no antidotes. So it may be for that reason that Titanic survivor, Dr. Washington Dodge, built the Honeymoon Cabin at West Point in 1918, to get away from the incurable epidemic in San Francisco.

Dodge went to school to become a doctor but soon became more attracted to politics. He became a

San Francisco supervisor for one term then ran for tax assessor. He was transitioning from tax assessor to bank management when he, his wife Ruth and son Washington, Jr., took a trip to Europe and came back on the RMS Titanic. (They sailed over on the Titanic's sister ship Olympic.)

Dodge's training as a doctor would have told him the last place he wanted to be in an epidemic was in the city. The Inn had a phone from its earliest days so he could manage business from the mountain. He was also "one of its most publicly

spirited members" of the Tamalpais Conservation Club (TCC), the hiking club that reopened the Inn after stagecoach service ended in 1915. A 1919 TCC newsletter noted his frequent visits to the Inn.

In his day it was easy to get to the Inn by rail (under 2 hours from San Francisco) and yet removed from the immediate epidemic threat. There is no actual proof that he felt this way but it seems likely epidemic thinking for a trained physician. During the 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic indoor events were being moved outside. Mill Valley's Catholic Church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, moved its services outdoors. According to the Mill Valley Historical Society, Mill Valley "counted 84 cases (of the Spanish Flu) or about 3% of the population."

The epidemic brought nearly 45,000 cases of influenza to San Francisco and killed over 3,000 of its residents in the fall of 1918 and the winter of 1919. By mid-February 1919, however, when the United States Public Health Service released figures on the nation's epidemic: San Francisco was reported as having suffered the most of all major American cities, with a death rate approaching 30 deaths per 1,000 people. (San Francisco Examiner, Feb. 13, 1919, page 11.) With more complete and accurate data today, we now know that San Francisco fared slightly better. Still, the city's total excess death rate due to influenza and pneumonia during the epidemic was a whopping 673 per 100,000 people.

(San Francisco info: Influenzaarchive.org, curated by the University of Michigan Center for the History of Medicine and Michigan Publishing, University of Michigan.)

IN REMEMBRANCE:

GAGE SCHUBERT

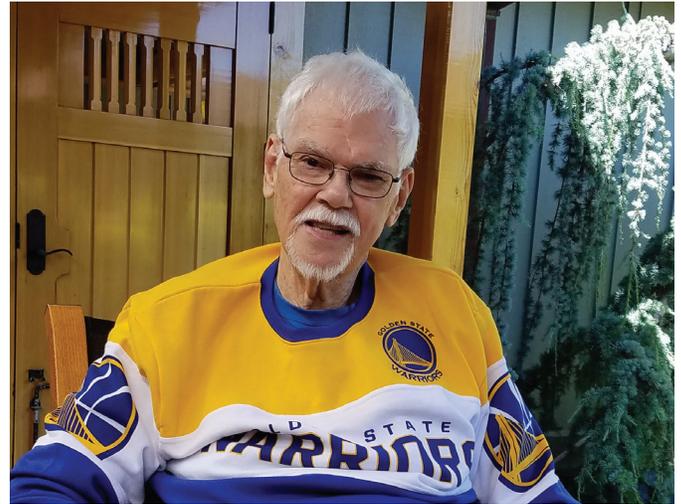
Submitted by Olene Sparks-Toby

WPIA Lifetime Member Gage Schubert passed away peacefully at his home in Mill Valley at age 84 on March 9, 2020. Over the years he expressed his fondness and appreciation of the West Point Inn by being both a hands-on member and financial supporter.

Gage was born in Ohio but lived in many places during his early years due to his father's service in the Navy and career as a college professor. He moved to Southern California in the late 1950's then discovered San Francisco and moved as quickly as he could to the Bay Area. He found work at the "Happy Things Portrait Shop" on Grant Avenue, owned by locally famous artist Wolo. It was here that he met his future wife, Lettie Connell, a well-known puppeteer. Together they opened "The Schlock Shop" on Grant Avenue and later "Schubert's Toy Square" on Union Street. They married in early 1961 and had two children in the next couple of years. The family moved to Mill Valley in 1968. "Schubert's Toy Square" was closed in 1973.

Gage was very active in the community, over the years volunteering and supporting the West Point Inn, Mill Valley Fall Arts Festival, the Mountain Play, the Marin Theatre Company, the Milley Awards, Slide Ranch, Scott Valley Swim & Tennis Club, the Dipsea Race, other groups, events and activities. He received numerous awards of appreciation for his involvements. In the late 1980's he began spending a lot of time on Maui where he bought property. He continued his support of local organizations there. Gage traveled frequently throughout the U.S. and world wide, generously inviting friends to join him.

When Gage became involved with the West Point Inn he whole-heartedly volunteered time towards the welfare of the rustic inn. When I contemplated writing this article I knew he had accumulated awards of WPIA appreciation over the decades but couldn't recall details so I phoned the Inn and ask Innkeeper Pat Williams to check the plaques on the walls in the members' lounge that have recipient names and dates. He reported the following with Gage's name:



PLAQUES

- 1985 President of the West Point Inn Assn.
- 1986 Rusty Spike Award*
- 2016 Wall of Fame Award**

Undated Benefactor Plaque (substantial monetary donations). Part of the Inn's foundation needed rebuilding. A fund raising campaign proved successful.

* In 1985-86, Gage was a key player in the building of the Inn-keepers Quarters both monetarily and hands-on construction. WPIA Board of Directors chose him for the Rusty Spike Award.

**The Wall of Fame award is presented to someone who has been actively dedicated to the health of the Inn over a period of many years. Old Timers' Chair, Marilyn Skaff, honored Gage with this award.

I would describe Gage was a multi-curious, multi-talented, multi-intelligent, multi-generous, multi-energetic guy. And, more.

With admiration and fond memories,
- Olene Sparks-Toby



SHELTER IN PLACE OMELET

By Fran Rondeau

Serves 4

Ingredients

6-7 eggs
3 egg whites
1 T vegetable oil
1T butter or olive oil
1t salt, pepper
1 T crushed thyme and oregano and or basil fresh or dried
1/4 cup of milk or sour cream or cream or yogurt
1/2 cup chopped vegetables of any kind in your fridge
(asparagus, zucchini, spinach, anything green, 8 halved cherry tomatoes)
1/3 cup of grated cheddar or Parmesan or fresh goat cheese

Using a hand or electric mixer whip up the egg whites till nice and frothy or stiff if you prefer- set aside
Into the rest of the lightly beaten eggs add the milk product and all the herbs
Set aside

Heat oil in fairly large frying pan. Add all of your chopped vegetables, sautez gently until they are soft-(crunchier vegetables like broccoli will need pre cooking)
Add the other tablespoon of butter or oil to the vegetables.

Carefully fold the egg whites into the beaten eggs and pour all into the hot pan

Let cook on a medium flame just until set and then put your choice of cheese on top.
cover the pan for a few minutes till puffy and cooked.

Slide on to a large plate. Cut into 4 pieces.

Serve with those hash browns in the freezer or day old sliced baguette toasted or a little pile of sliced strawberries splashed with maple syrup

Bon appétit!

2020 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Our 2020 calendar is provided below, but each activity is dependent on the health orders and other information in effect at the time of the event. Please check the website for the latest status.

www.westpointinn.com/wpi-calendar

June

- 8 Board Meeting
- 21 ~~Pancake Breakfast~~ - Canceled
- ** No Work Party in June

July

- 12 Pancake Breakfast (TBD)
- 13 Board Meeting
- 18 Work Party (TBD)

August

- 9 Pancake Breakfast (TBD)
- 10 Board Meeting
- 15 Work Party (TBD)

September

- 13 Pancake Breakfast (TBD)
- 14 Board Meeting
- 19 Work Party (TBD)

October

- 11 Pancake Breakfast (TBD)
- 12 Board Meeting
- 17 Work Party (TBD)
- 17 Fall Members Meeting (TBD)

November

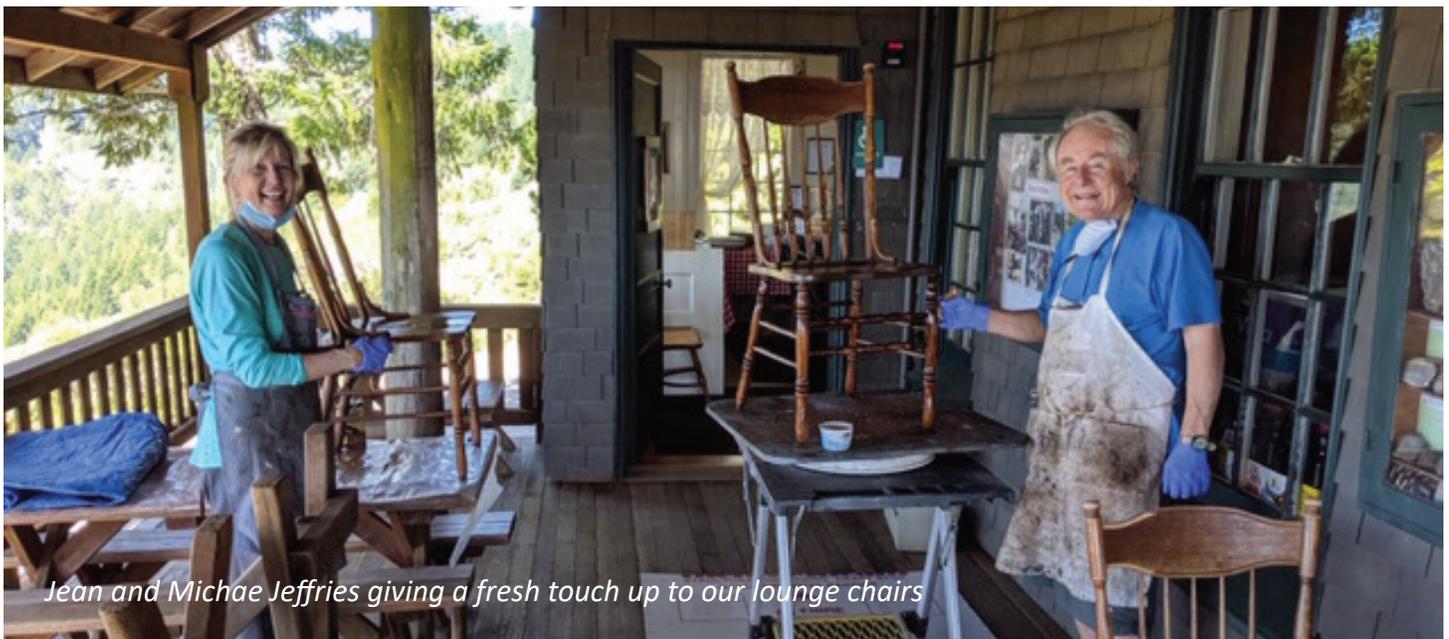
- 9 Board Meeting
- 21 Work Party (TBD)

December

- 5 Cookie Party (TBD)
 - 5 Members Holiday Party (TBD)
 - 31 New Years Eve Party (TBD)
- Host: Olene Sparks-Toby*

* Location at MMWD Boardroom
220 Nellen Drive, Corte Madera
MEETINGS START AT 7PM

++ Walk-out nights



Jean and Michael Jeffries giving a fresh touch up to our lounge chairs

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Clare Wellnitz

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The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR EMAIL?

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO

BY SENDING AN EMAIL TO:

MEMBERUPDATE@WESTPOINTINN.COM

WANT TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE?

PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS

AND PHOTOS TO

EDITOR@WESTPOINTINN.COM