

a view from the

WEST POINT INN

The Newsletter for the West Point Inn Association and Friends

March 2016 • Issue 25

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

Fran Rondeau

How many times have you asked yourself this question: What does a board member do? After all, your board answers to and makes every important decision that goes into preserving the West Point Inn. Do you enjoy brainstorming and sharing your ideas about how to protect the Inn for the future? Serving on the board is an honor and an opportunity. We meet the second Monday of the month from 7-9 pm in Corte Madera. The range of topics we discuss, debate, and decide at the monthly meeting is vast: upcoming events, reservation questions, interpretation of the bylaws, policies, safety issues, new construction projects, pancake breakfasts, fund raising, finance, website and newsletter ideas. Think about it. Speak with any board member to learn more.

NEWSLETTER BYLAWS

Fran Rondeau

One of our main topics for discussion at the April 17 Spring meeting is a bylaw change regarding our board member terms limits. In 2012 we voted to allow board members to serve three consecutive 2-year terms. This was a change from our long standing practice of limiting board members to a single three year term with the requirement that there be at least one year off of the board before running for reelection. The current process, while assuring more continuity on the board, and also solves the number of complications. Because of this the board is considering amending the current process to allow two consecutive 3 year terms. This assures the potential for continuity on the board, but solves the complications that have arisen in the annual election process. The details of how we transition from our current structure to an amended one are still being worked out. Our intention at the meeting is to present you with the pros and cons of this proposal and the transition options and answer any questions about this. In May, following this discussion, we will mail all members a formal proposal and ballot and ask for your vote. This way any change in these practices can go into effect before the Fall meeting when we elect our new board members.

Another lesson learned from these past few years is the importance of beginning to recruit candidates for the board earlier in the year. One way we will be doing this is by seeking suggestions for our various committee chairs, such as the work parties, housing keeping, communications; and the pancake breakfast hosts. We are seeking individuals with a breadth of experience in inn events and operations. Please let us know if you are interested in joining our board, or if you want more information about this.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPREAD YOUR WINGS ON THE MOUNTAIN?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN?**

Consider volunteering on one of our many committees. Your time commitment is up to you. Below is a list and a brief summary of purpose for each committee. If you would like to help or contribute in any way let us know. Each chair's email is on the last page of this newsletter. You may also contact franrondeau@gmail.com.

- **Building & Grounds: Brenda Roberts**
 - Construction projects large and small
- **Communications Committee: Jan Gauthier**
 - Coordinate the website, newsletter, and emails.
- **Development Committee: Ward Flad**
 - Fund raising
- **Election Committee: Chris Marcuse**
 - Supervise elections following the bylaws of the WPIA
- **Fire & Safety: Pete Martin**
 - Monitor general safety of the Inn
- **Garden Committee: Kathleen Kopp**
 - Maintain and beautify the garden
- **Housekeeping: Fran Rondeau**
 - Purchase supplies, sew, repair, replace Inn items as needed
- **Membership: Gordy MacDermott**
 - Maintain roster, process applications, send notices, collect dues
- **Newsletter: Alison Bricker**
 - Work with newsletter editor as needed, some clerical duties
- **Pancake Breakfast: Gordy MacDermott and Lin Marcuse**
 - Manage PCB calendar, supplies, organize primary and cleanup hosts
- **Personnel: Lin Marcuse**
 - Supervise innkeepers
- **Policy & Procedures: Wayne Koide**
 - Maintain Policy manuals. Bylaws and Reservation policies
- **Reservations: Rose Sullivan**
 - Reservations and billing
- **Work Parties: Jennifer Barclay**
 - Organize and manage WP third Saturday of every month

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Committee: _____

PANCAKE BREAKFASTS

Lin Johanson & Gordy MacDermott

It's spring and there's a special aroma in the air. Is it rain? Flowers? Evergreens? No . . . it's PANCAKES! That's right, the season is about to begin for one of the Association's largest fundraising events. Some breakfast and clean-up hosts have an experienced crew all ready to go, but others are always looking for some new recruits. So, if you are interested in helping out the Inn and spending a free night either before a breakfast or after a clean-up, please contact the host directly (listed below). And, if you would like to consider hosting one of these dates in the future, please contact us to help you arrange to shadow the current host(s) to learn the ropes.

We are also looking for some people to help get the word out for the breakfasts. This involves going to bike shops, outdoor stores (R.E.I., etc.) and other places with public bulletin boards and asking them to display our posters. The publicity push will start in late March or early April. If you are interested, please contact us at westpointinnpancakes@gmail.com.

And, if you can't commit to an overnight but still want to enjoy a great breakfast with wonderful scenery, come join us at the Inn! 2016 dates are: May 8 (Mother's Day), June 19 (Father's Day), July 10, August 14, September 11 and October 9. Our breakfast and clean-up hosts this year are:

May 8 Mother's Day

Breakfast Hosts: Fran Rondeau, Brenda Roberts & Rose Sullivan
Clean up Hosts: Suzie Adams Koide & Wayne Koide

June 19 Father's Day

Breakfast Hosts: Mark and Antoinetta Northcross
Clean up Host: Fran Rondeau

July 10

Breakfast Hosts: Fran Rondeau and Marilyn Skaff
Clean up Hosts: Serge Stepanov & Anna Wang

August 14

Breakfast Hosts: Jan Gauthier and Wade Hufford
Clean up Host: Olene Sparks-Toby

September 11

Breakfast Hosts: Bob Newcomer & Gordy MacDermott
Clean up Host: Rose Sullivan

October 9

Breakfast Host: Pat Kavanaugh
Clean up Host: Bonnie Jones

See you at the Inn!

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Gordy and Lynn MacDermott

Lynn and I would like to thank all our members who paid their annual dues on time. This meant that we did not have to send out as many late notice letters as we have done in previous years.

Here are our latest new members:

Naya Oberg of San Rafael

Judy Jonas of Nipomo

Hannah Rahill of San Anselmo

Teresa Petrilla of Martinez

The following new members have shared some information about themselves:

Judy Jones wrote: I am just re-joining the WPI after having been gone for over 20 years. My husband, Wayne, and I were members of the WPIA in the early 1990's when we lived in Novato. We used to bring our three toddlers for overnight adventures at the Inn. We now live near San Luis Obispo and keep an apartment in San Francisco and hope to be able to visit the WPI often. I am a retired attorney who is a regular hiker with the Sierra Club on the Central Coast.

Hannah Rahill wrote: Hi, I'm Hannah Rahill, a Mt. Tam-loving mother of two daughters (Clara, 13, and Rose, 10) living in San Anselmo. I've been hiking up to the West Point Inn since I moved to the Bay Area from Maine in 1991. During the week, I'm publishing director for Ten Speed Press, creating illustrated books focused on food + drink, design + craft + photography, pop culture, and gardening. I grew up in the kitchen of my mother's restaurant in Taos, NM, have a culinary certificate from Tante's Marie's Cooking School in SF, and love most to cook, so if there's room at the stove, that's where you'll find me on work days.

Teresa Petrilla wrote: I was introduced to the West Point Inn by Barbara Rhoades a few years ago and instantly fell in love. I enjoy connecting with people and find that I can "recharge" without having to travel far from home. I love all outdoor activities. I consider myself a foodie and enjoy wine and sharing those experiences with people. I enjoy traveling both locally and internationally and photography. I work as a Diabetes Case Manager at Kaiser and have been doing so for 15 years. I have my doctorate in pharmacy from UCSF. I look forward to working more pancake breakfasts and work parties as well as being an ambassador for the Inn for people who come to the Inn for the first time. WPI is a magical place for me and look forward to many great experiences in the years to come.

WORK PARTY REPORT

Jennifer Barclay

January RAIN!

OMG, you would not have believed it! The suspense mounted as the morning got closer to 10:00. Melanie, one of my new assistance's, her friend Jenny and a couple of members, Irene, Rob and me, were all waiting and wondering how many people would show up since it had been raining continuously since 9:00 PM the night before. There was a large pot of soup made the night before sitting on the stove. We were thinking we'd have leftovers but, one-by-one people hiked and biked in and came through the front door wet to the bones, with big smiles on their faces, a huge dose of enthusiasm and eager to get to work! We were delighted! 30 people volunteers and about 48 people showed up! Amazing.

Pat the Inn Keeper had 3 cords of wood delivered the week before and it was sitting in the parking lot with a tarp on it waiting to be packed in the woodshed. And, packed it was, it just fit in. I was afraid to ask people to go out into the rain but, they took on the task without hesitation. It took 3 hours, with a line of about 10 people. The Inn Keeper on duty, Geoff, lead the team and Rob articulately packing the wood to squeeze it all in. We even had one person chop and fill the large tin trash can with kindling. He did this in the storage shed.

We got everything done that needed to get done throughout the inn, had FUN and ate lunch early. We ate inside, didn't have an empty chair, with some standing and the volume of chatters was joyful. We even ran out of soup.

I can guarantee you that everyone went home tired, wet, happy, with a feeling of accomplishment and cramps in their cheeks dues to the continuous smile on their faces.

I loved it! I was a happy and very grateful girl indeed.

THANK YOU FOR SHOWING UP!

Work Party Assistants have been Established:

Nine brave soles have volunteered to help me with two 2016 Work Parties each. With a promise of grilled cheese sandwiches and tomato soup, they hiked to WPI on a rainy day in January to be briefed on the details. I am very grateful!

Sandy Stadfeld and Deborah Franklin: March/August

Nita Winters and Rob Badger: February/?

Melanie Cantarutti and Ellen McGlynn: June/?

Megan Agosto: May/July

Don Keeley: April/September

Melanie Mocium: January/April

Melanie and a friend of hers, Jenny, took care of January. We learned what worked and didn't and plan to apply this learning/sharing experience with other team members too.

Remember to email: workparty@westpointinn.com if you plan to join in. Our limit is 60. That's all we can manage, after that it gets to be too much. We can get everything that needs to get done with 50-60 people.

Thank you!

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Lin Marcuse

Once again it's my privilege to thank our professional crew of Innkeepers for all they do up at the Inn! Everything looks great and everyone has a wonderful time while enjoying the view and the tranquility. Our enjoyment would be severely diminished if it weren't for all their amazing efforts on behalf of the Inn.

We invite you to come on up to enjoy the warm hospitality and relax and rejuvenate from everyday life. Plop down in the lounge or discover a new spot to observe the absolutely amazing scenery from the porch.

Make sure to say "hello!"

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Lin Marcuse

Just a quick note to let you all know that Gail Shahan will be taking over as Events Coordinator. I told her it's a really easy job so, shhhhhh, no one let on how much fun she'll have. So, if you have an idea for a new event, put together a proposal and let her know. And for all the Inn's current activities, be sure to take a look at the calendar in the newsletter or online at www.westpointinn.com. And be sure to welcome Gail to her new role! Thanks!

GARDEN OF EATIN'

Kathy Kopp

Garden of Eatin'

This past year was our finest ever for producing beautiful flowers and edibles up in our garden on the mountain. The tomato crop was insanely abundant. There were more Sungolds than seeds in the sunflowers.

The herb gardens down between the sheds are thriving. Please remember there are fresh herbs for you to use when cooking at the inn.

The erosion control area below the hitching post has really filled in with several shrubs of native ceanothus and lupine. We recently removed the fencing so the area is more natural and prettier to gaze upon.

We have started a native plant area outside and below the garden gate. There is a variety of salvia, blue, white, and purple sage, and some other deer and drought tolerant plants.

Our plan is to do our 1st spring planting on the vernal equinox, 1st day of spring, at the March 19 work party. Please catch the spring fever and join in.

I hope your new year is full of beauty and growth!



Planted erosion control area



CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Fran Rondeau

Even though Valentine's Day is past I am still thinking about chocolate. Did you know that chocolate only became popular in Europe in the 17th century? It was served frequently at Versailles at the court of Louis XIVth. Napoleon even preferred his morning chocolate to coffee. The 18th century philosopher, Voltaire, consumed as much as twelve cups a day of hot chocolate. There was actually so much concern as to the health hazards of chocolate that two very clever Parisians (a chocolate maker and a pharmacist) teamed up to sell it as medicine. So called "chocolate treatments" made both men very wealthy. In France and elsewhere coffee restaurants serve a small cup of espresso at the end of a meal with one or two tiny morsels of chocolate perched on the side of the cup. One of our own Board President's began each of her meetings by passing around a box of chocolates. Those meetings ran like a silky chocolate praline.

Ingredients:

- 8 ounces bittersweet or semi sweet chocolate
- 4T salted butter
- 3T espresso coffee (1 teaspoon of instant powdered coffee)
- ¼ cup water
- ¾ cup of heavy cream

Directions:

1. In a bowl of barely simmering water melt together the water, chocolate, butter, and espresso
2. In a separate bowl whip the cream till thickened
3. Fold 1/3 of the cream in to the chocolate mixture to lighten it up. Then, fold in the rest.
4. Cover and Chill for about 3 hours.

Note: Information comes from Patricia Wells' "Food Lovers' Guide to Paris"

Recipe: David Lebovitz, "The Sweet Life in Paris"

FIRE AND SAFETY AT WPI

Pete Martin

As with ancient Tibetan Monasteries, West Point Inn is constructed of wood, inside and out. Because of that and other factors, Fire & Life Safety is a paramount consideration throughout our historic buildings. We have a number of systems in place to detect and protect against fire and toxic fumes. We prohibit the use of candles and other open flames in all the private areas within the complex. Beyond that we have a number of fire protection measures available outside & throughout the interior of the buildings that include:

- Ongoing brush thinning (fire fuel reduction) for a minimum distance of 300-feet from all buildings to “dampen” an approaching wildland fire by reducing radiant heat and direct flame impingement smoke, heat, carbon monoxide (CO) detectors & water flow alarm indicating that one or more fire sprinkler heads have been activated that are monitored 24/7. Should anyone of them detect fire, smoke or toxic gas, a signal is sent to an internal panel in the Innkeeper’s Quarters and alarm horns are set off throughout the building to alert members and guests to evacuate the building. The alarm signal is also be transmitted to the Redwood Alarm Monitoring Company in Mill Valley and they will in turn call the Marin County Fire Department.
- The Innkeeper will immediately investigate the source of the alarm and take appropriate action. That might be using a portable fire extinguisher to extinguish if it is a small fire. If not, the automatic fire sprinkler system will be activated and begin to spray water on the fire.
- The innkeeper will advise the fire department regarding the size and location of the fire and whether it is or is not under control. In any event, the fire department will continue to respond. The first engine will respond from the Throckmorton Ridge fire station and will take about 15 to 20 minutes to arrive at the Inn. We will be on our own until then.

MORE NOTES:

WPI Supports extreme fire safety knowing that we are on our own for the first 15 or 20-minute until the first fire engine arrives from Throckmorton Fire Station. WPI has a substantial investment in protecting the Inn from fire.

- We have an approved fire sprinkler system throughout the building with sprinkler head coverage for every 100 square feet.
- We have installed a state-of-the-art smoke/fire/CO. detection system monitored 24/7.
 - Ongoing annual cost for monitoring \$900
 - Ongoing annual cost for dedicated phone line \$300
 - Annual recertification of range hood extinguishing system \$500
 - Annual fire extinguisher servicing \$600
 - Minimum Annual Fire Prevention Budget. \$2,300
- Full time 24/7 trained innkeeper..... Invaluable!
- An Annual Fire Inspection is conducted by officials from the Marin County Fire Department.
- In addition there are three fire hose cabinets with enough hose to reach around every building. Each hose is equipped with a combination nozzle capable of being adjusted from a straight stream to a fog stream.
- There are also three “pressure water” fire extinguishers on the main deck as well and it’s a couple of garden hoses.
- Red Flag Warnings
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ridge2/fire/briefing.php>
 are issued by the Marin County Fire Department. When a red flag warning is issued, the Inn is closed and reservations are canceled. Every attempt is made to contact everyone holding a reservation during that period.



VIEW FROM THE PORCH: DON TIMMER

Marilyn Skaff

Don Timmer has been a runner since 1990 and one of his favorite places to run has always been Mount Tamalpais. He is a veteran in the Dispea Race and that is how he met Charlie Evans. They became regular running partners and on one of their regular runs in 2003, Charlie “accidentally” led Don past the West Point Inn. Don had lived in Marin for many years, but had never been to the Inn. At Charlie’s suggestion, Don and his wife, Jackie, became members. Not surprisingly, they ended up as volunteers on Charlie and Marji’s Mother’s Day pancake breakfast crew.

Don was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In the winter of 1957, when Don was in second grade, he and his family drove from cold and snowy Grand Rapids to Brownsville, Texas, where it was warm and sunny. When they returned to Michigan (where it was still cold and snowy), the family decided they needed to move to a warmer place and ended up in San Rafael. Don went all the way through elementary, middle, and high school in San Rafael. He attended UCSB, where he graduated with honors with a degree in linguistics and anthropology. He happened to see an ad on the university bulletin board for someone to do painting and decided to give that a try. Forty-two years later, he is still painting houses. He has painted parts of the Inn, as well as the homes of a number of our members.

Don’s volunteer work with the Inn began almost immediately. Within two months of becoming a member, he became host of the August PCB, a role he had for 15 years. He and Jackie designed t-shirts with a beautiful photo of the Inn and WPI hats that they sold out under the porch during the PCBs. Don has been on the board and was board president in 1998. He and Jackie also hosted the annual members’ Christmas party at the Inn for 5 years. Although he describes himself a “non-techie,” he was in charge of the members email list for a number of years. He continued to attend board meetings for many years, even when he was not on the board – a sign of real devotion!

When asked about his favorite memories of the Inn, Don said that the nights before the pancake breakfasts were among his favorite times. He loved the camaraderie and the working together with a group of friends to get everything ready for the next day. He remembers one night in particular when he received a call from a man who said his son had a disability so could not hike in, but so wanted to attend the PCB. The father asked if there was a way for him to attend. This was long before there was access at the Inn, but Don told the father to drive his son in and a group of the volunteers helped carry the son into the hikers lounge. He was thrilled. Another favorite memory of Don’s was a jazz night at the Inn when he and Jackie hiked out afterwards, thrilled by the beauty of the mountain at night. Also, among Don’s favorite events at the Inn are the Heritage Nights that are hosted by Fred Runner, especially when Carl Nolte is dressed up as one of the historical characters. Back in the days when a member was “host” on Sunday nights, Don loved to bring a group of friends to the Inn, to watch the sense of wonder on their faces. Don says he misses some of the “old spirit” of the Inn, but still feels that it is a very special place.

THE
WEST POINT INN
ANNUAL
HERITAGE NIGHT DINNERS
APRIL 8 & 9

A Close Call at West Point

One hundred years ago the West Point Inn was cold, dark and abandoned.

The Inn had been a glowing place of hospitality in the middle of nowhere, built as an amenity for those who transferred from steam train to horse-drawn stagecoach, a place of refuge in bad weather or to grab a cup of coffee if the stage was late.

In the summer of 1915, the stagecoach service was abandoned. The railroad no longer had use for the West Point Inn and it was closed.

Why is the Inn still here?

April 8, 1916, was the turning point. Exactly 100 years later, Heritage Night celebrates the reopening of the abandoned Inn with a warm dinner, a glass of wine and a look at the people who reopened the Inn and their world.

Reservations are essential. Space is limited.

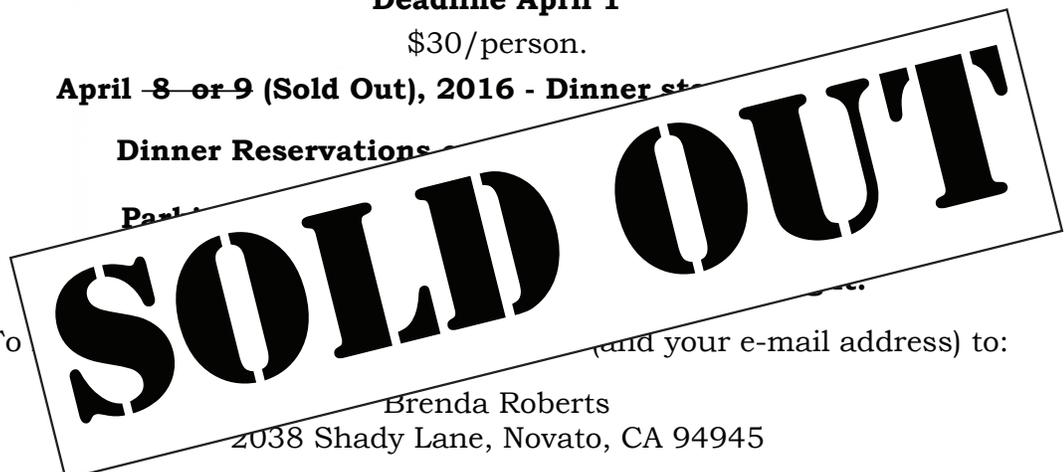
Deadline April 1

\$30/person.

April 8 or 9 (Sold Out), 2016 - Dinner st

Dinner Reservations

Part



To _____ (and your e-mail address) to:

Brenda Roberts
2038 Shady Lane, Novato, CA 94945

Additional Info: please e-mail OneSoundFred@mac.com



WEST POINT INN ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

Sunday, April 17th, 2016
at the West Point Inn

Raffles and Prizes

- ❖ 10 AM Kaffeeklatsch
- ❖ 11 AM Meeting
- ❖ 12:30 PM Lunch

Saturday Night Host:
Megan Agosto
Lunch Chef:
Michael Stephens

For More Information
contact: Fran Rondeau,
franrondeau@gmail.com



2016 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

January

- 11 Board Meeting
16 Work Party

February

- 8 Board Meeting
20 Work Party

March

- 14 Board Meeting
19 Work Party

April

- 8 / 9 Heritage Night
Hosts: Brenda Roberts and Fred Runner
11 Board meeting
16 Work Party
17 Spring Meeting and Barbecue
Hosts: Meagan Agosto and Fran Rondeau

May

- 8 Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Brenda Roberts (Fran Rondeau and Rose Sullivan)
Clean Up Hosts: Suzie and Wayne Koide
9 Board Meeting*
21 Work Party

June

- 13 Board Meeting*
18 Work Party
19 Father's Day Pancake Breakfast
Host: Mark and Antoinetta Northcross
Clean Up Host: Fran Rondeau

July

- 17 Pancake Breakfast
Host: Fran Rondeau and Marilyn Skaff
Co host: Gary, Clean Up Host: Serge & Anna
11 Board Meeting
16 Work Party

August

- 8 Board Meeting*
14 Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Jan Gauthier and Wade
Clean Up Host: Joel Blackwell
20 Work Party

September

- 11 Pancake Breakfast
Hosts: Bob Newcomer and Gordy MacDermott
Clean Up Host: Rose Sullivan
12 Board Meeting*
17 Work Party
24 Old Timers Appreciation Party++
Host: Marilyn Skaff

October

- 9 Final Pancake Breakfast
Host: Pat Kavanaugh
Clean up Host:
10 Board Meeting*
22 Tango Night
Host: Mark Northcross
15 Work Party
16 Fall Meeting
Hosts: Fran Rondeau
Member's appreciation barbecue
Chef: Michael Stephens

November

- 14 Board Meeting*
19 Work Party

December

- 4 or 11 Cookie Party/ Member's Holiday Party++
Hosts: Alison Bricker, Brenda Roberts
Chef: Fran Rondeau
12 Board and Committee Chairs Christmas party
31 New Year's Eve Party
Host: Olene Sparks-Toby

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

++ Walk-out nights

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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