



a view from the WEST POINT INN

The Newsletter for the West Point Inn Association and Friends

December 2018 • Issue 36

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.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1-2
Pancake Breakfasts	2
Membership Notes	2
Election Report	2
Let It Flow Fundraising Campaign	3
Fire & Safety Report	3
Rusty Spike Awards	4
Personnel Report	4
2018 Wall of Fame - Marge Goody	5
New Year's Eve Party	6
WPI 2019 Calendar	8
WPI Officers & Chairpersons	8

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Wayne Koide

As I write this, we have just completed our last board meeting for the year. I have nothing but gratitude for the fine people who comprised our board this year without whose wisdom, tenacity, integrity and help would have made my job much more challenging than it was. My hat's off to **Bonnie Jones, Chris Marcuse, Bob Newcomer, Mark Northcross, Fran Rondeau, Patti Schmidt, Johanna Sistek and Olene Sparks.** You are an awesome team!

This year has not been without its challenges. Near the top of the list has been "climate change." How else can I put it? Hot, dry and windy conditions have permeated California's weather patterns for the last few years – this has spawned conditions that are highly conducive to wildfires and man-made fires – the causes may be unknown, but the results are the same. Red Flag alerts are becoming the norm in the late summer/ early fall and we lost our October pancake breakfast, for the second year in a row, to one such event. There were several more Red Flag alerts that followed.

Another challenge has been growth – that is, growth in popularity of our beloved Inn. 2018 represented, arguably, the biggest year for reservations –we are on-track to exceed our previous record for Inn revenues from overnight fees and we may easily exceed the \$200,000 mark for the calendar year – that's the good news. The not-so-good news is, we are dealing with an ever larger demographic of visitors who don't know or appreciate the ethos of the Inn – excessive cellphone usage in public areas, loud raucous parties, although rare, have reared their ugly head from time to time. Growing pains, yes, but this also behooves us, as members, to remind the "uninformed" of behavior that is not in keeping with the spirit of the Inn.

The Emig cabin - "Build it and they will come," or so the saying goes, but we can certainly improve in our efforts to reach out to the ADA community in a more impactful way and let them know that we are open for business. Stay tuned for some policy changes that will be coming next year to address this very important issue.

The final challenge is one that seems ever present – it is the challenge of VOLUNTEERISM. We are, for the most part, a volunteer organization – it has been my experience that nearly all volunteer organizations suffer from the 90/10 rule, wherein 90% of the work is accomplished by 10% of the group. I am happy to report that we have bettered this ratio here at the West Point Inn. Work parties are well attended and many new faces have appeared in our committees and at our events - but there is still room to improve. Have you volunteered some of your time for the Inn lately? Hopefully you will make 2019 the year that you do.

Despite these challenges and many others, we have succeeded – the Inn has never looked better, we are popular as ever and we still know how to have a great time, as evidenced by events like our Crab Feed and Titanic (Heritage) nights. Even the pancake breakfast cleanups were a blast!

We raised \$9500 in 2018 for the Defensible (fire) Space project. We conducted five very successful Pancake Breakfasts this year, completed a major improvement to the Emig cabin, installed a new off-grid electrical system and completed a number of maintenance items. We purchased a bunch of new furniture and other necessities for the Inn including new refrigerators and a freezer.

We have money in the bank - last told about \$162,500 as of November 12. This represents a cash balance decline of only \$18,000 despite spending roughly \$92,000 this year on capital projects – we should all be reasonably happy about this financial picture.

None of this could have been accomplished without the hard work of volunteers – you know who you are and I can't thank you enough for your efforts!

To me, the year has gone by quickly. It has truly been a privilege and honor to serve as your president. Thank you for your confidence and support. I ask that you give the same to our next president.

ELECTION REPORT

Lin Johanson

The Election Committee wants to congratulate our three new Board members. Welcome to **Don Keeley** and **Jim Parton**, who will be serving their first terms on the Board. Also, kudos to **Chris Marcuse**, who is serving his fourth tour. Thank you to the three for running and thank you to all the members who voted.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Gordy and Lynn MacDermott

It is coming up to that time of the year to renew your membership in the West Point Inn. As a reminder, Renewal letters will go out last week of December. If you have a change of address please let Membership know.

We had one member drop out so we were able to take one person off our wait list.

Our newest member is: **Tim Sarter of Santa Rosa**

PANCAKE BREAKFASTS

Lin Marcuse & Gordy MacDermott

The Association had another successful pancake season, even though the weather cut us short by one breakfast. Since the October breakfast has been cancelled due to Red Flags a couple of times over the last few years, the Board is considering moving the final breakfast to the second Sunday in April. They will be discussing this at the January meeting. If you have an opinion about this, please let one of the Board members know your thoughts.

The Pancake Breakfast Committee wants to thank all the breakfast and cleanup hosts that put so much time and effort into leading these important fundraisers for our beloved Inn. Many thanks to **Scott & Lisa Halsted, Patti Schmidt, Nancy Fox, Caroline McDowell, Creedence Perkins, Mark & Antoinetta Northcross, Fran Rondeau, Marilyn Skaff, Jan Gauthier, Wade Hufford, Suzie & Wayne Koide, Cindy & Keith Kawamura, Bob Newcomer, Gail Shahan, Pat Kavanaugh and Bonnie Jones**. We appreciate all they do and hope they will join us again next year. Also, if anyone would like to be a host in the future, please let us know at pancakes@westpointinn.com and we will arrange for you to shadow the experienced host(s) during an event.

Finally, we want to thank those members who worked behind the scenes. Thanks to **Patti Schmidt** for being our media liaison, **Molly Casey** for keeping track of inventory and **Bette Tarr** for designing this year's poster. Our gratitude for all your help! And if anyone has an idea for next year's poster, we're always happy to take a look.

LET IT FLOW - 2019 WPIA Fundraising Campaign Suzie Koide, Development Chair

Water is the single most important resource for the West Point Inn and its guests. With continuing dry weather being more of the norm, the spring that has been the source of water for the Inn for over 114 years, has slowed to a trickle - "turbidity" or cloudiness of our source water has also been a recurring problem in recent years.

A major project for 2019 will be the installation of an enhanced spring box to improve the reliability and quality of the water delivered to the Inn. A preliminary cost estimate to make these improvements is \$15,000. We are working in close partnership with the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) to enhance how our water is sourced - won't you help us in this effort?

Your tax-deductible donation to WPIA's "Let It Flow" campaign will help us fund this much needed project. **Gordy and Lynn McDermott** have included a flyer in the annual membership renewal to make it easy for you to contribute.

Thank you for including the West Point Inn in your year-end charitable contributions.

FIRE & SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT Pete Martin

Hooray! The 2018 fire season, the worst ever recorded in California History is OVER! We can, at last, enjoy sitting in front of a toasty fire on a cold winter night at the Inn. Marin avoided fires during the 2018 fire season. However, in Marin, there is a crescent of homes in the Wildland Urban Interface built around the base of Mt. Tamalpais, from Fairfax, around the mountain to Tamalpais Valley. Marin fire agencies are supporting Firewise efforts in every neighborhood. Marin County Fire and FireSafe Marin have written a Strategic Fire Plan & Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/cwpp>

The New Normal:

October 20, 2017 Tubbs Fire, 36,807 acres burned, 4,658 homes, 94 commercial buildings and 897 secondary buildings destroyed. 18 people died. The fire now ranks as the state's most destructive, and damage from the have made it the costliest in U.S. history.

November 8, 2018, Camp Fire, the 153,336 acres burned, 13,972 residences, 528 commercial and 4,293 other buildings incinerated and at least 90 deaths to date. The fire now ranks as the state's most destructive, and damage from the have made it the costliest in U.S. history.

July 2019 West Point Inn. What does all of this mean for West Point Inn? Our Board of Directors has consistently has made fire safety a top priority. Crews of our volunteer brush cutters at the monthly work parties, have. Created a 200-foot radius of defensible Space around the Inn complex, Marin Municipal Water District has partnered with West Point to bring in a professional tree service for one week in each of the past three-years. With power saws and a chipper, they have made tremendous strides in helping us improve our Defensible Space. The Building & Grounds Committee is working to "Fire Harden" the buildings to protect from "Ember Storms." Embers are probably the greatest cause of structure ignitions, particularly when they are driven by the hot and dry winds (foen winds), which are prevalent in late summer and early fall.

Congratulations to Mike Swezy who is retiring from his job with Marin Municipal Water District, as Watershed Manager, effective at the end of December. Mike was a friend of West Point Inn. He provided guidance to us in many areas of wildland fire safety around the Inn. We will miss Mike, as he begins his next adventure and wish him all of the best.

2018 RUSTY SPIKE AWARDEES

Jan Gauthier and Gail Shahan

The Rusty Spike Award is given to members who have served the West Point Inn Association in an exemplary manner and is awarded by the president each year at the October Member's meeting. This year, there were two people recognized for their outstanding contributions to our organization.

Thank you Jan and Gail, for all that you do for the Inn. The Rusty Spike Awards were well earned.



JAN GAUTHIER

Jan Gauthier has been hiking and biking to the West Point Inn since she moved to Marin County in 1996. She joined the WPIA in 2011 and served as Secretary for the board when the meetings were held at the log cabin in Mill Valley. Jan has volunteered for a multitude of activities to include several pancake breakfasts and numerous other special events. She has served on our board, most recently as Vice President in 2017, and is chairperson of the Communications Committee. Jan, along with her fiancé Wade Hufford, did an outstanding job in organizing our first annual WPIA crab feed in February of this year. This was an extremely successful event, not only for the money it raised but the fact that the crab feed was attended mostly by non-members, which served as great public relations for the Inn.

As chairperson of the Communications committee, Jan has worked diligently to keep our website up-to-date to reflect our most current policies, which is no small task. She is always willing to pitch-in to make the Inn a more enjoyable place for all.

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Jan works in Corte Madera and now lives in Oakland - she will be married next year at the historic Brazilian Room in Tilden Park. Her enthusiasm for the Inn has spread to her family, as her brother and son have recently become members.



GAIL SHAHAN

Gail Shahan started coming to the West Point Inn in the mid 90's where her family made frequent hiking visits. She became a member in 2012 after participating in a Pancake breakfast. Gail soon realized that doing the dishes after lunch at work parties was the best way to meet people - the rest, as they say, is history.

Chances are, if you attend a WPIA sponsored event (and there are a lot of them) you will see Gail there! She is a tireless worker who plays a major role in executing (that's the nuts and bolts) the detailed tasks for major events with great results: Chili Cook-Off, Spring Members meeting, Emig Cabin celebration, numerous pancake breakfasts, board Holiday Party, just to name a few.

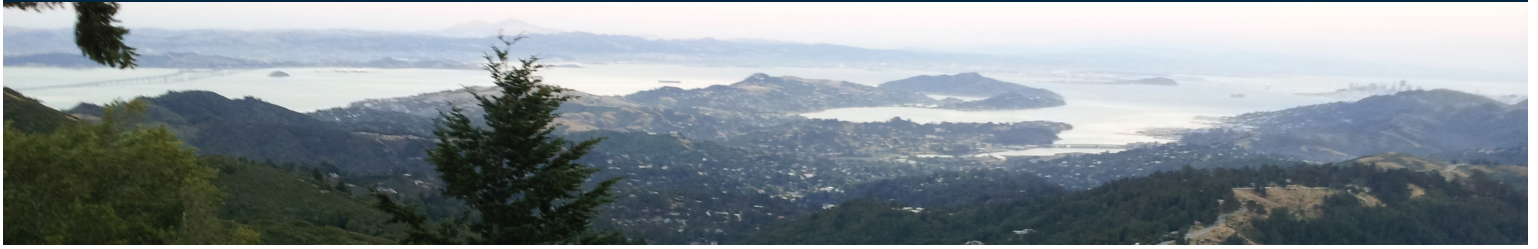
Gail serves as Chairperson of the Events committee. In her words, "...I've never been clear on what my duties are. I put together the events calendar and volunteer for everything..." - the West Point Inn ethos in a nutshell. "...Best of all there's something magical up at the West Point Inn that just makes me feel good."

On her days away from the Inn, Gail can be found arranging and rearranging people's furniture, hanging art, spending time with her 94 year-old mother, hiking with friends, and enjoying all the wonderful things San Francisco and California have to offer.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Lin Johanson & Fran Rondeau

The Personnel Committee wants to welcome our newest innkeeper, **Jim Barry**, to the family. Jim comes to us from a maintenance background. He spent several years as a professional painter before joining Shriner's Hospital as a maintenance engineer. During his career there he handled plumbing and electrical repairs as well as some carpentry, painting and mechanical work. All these skills will come in handy as Jim joins the team that keeps our Inn looking so incredibly pristine. Welcome, Jim, and thanks to you and all the other Innkeepers for all your efforts in maintaining our Jewel of the Mountain.



VIEW FROM THE PORCH: MARGE GOODY

Marilyn Skaff



For this issue, the View from the Porch column recognizes this year's recipient of the 2018 Wall of Fame Award which was given to **Marge Goody** at the Fall Meeting. This award recognizes long-time members who have given so much of their time and energy to the West Point Inn

over the years and who exemplify the spirit of the Inn. To help recognize Marge, we are reprinting the article about her that appeared in the Newsletter in 2013. Congratulations, Marge!

You might say Marge Goody was born to be a member of the West Point Inn. Her parents met while hiking with the Sierra Club on Mount Tamalpais. Her mother, Wanda Goody, joined the Sierra Club at their booth at the 1915 Pan-Pacific Exposition on the Marina and was very active until 1929 on the Local Walks Committee and on the Bay Chapter's First Executive Committee. The Sierra Club did an Oral History of her memories of both the Sierra Club and the West Point Club which can be found in the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley. A copy of it can also be found on the book shelf at the West Point Inn.

Marge often accompanied her parents on hikes on the mountain and reports first meeting the Toby brothers (among the founders of the West Point Club) when she was a small child. Marge and Wanda joined the West Point Club in 1957 at the invitation of Frank and Portia Bradley, the Founders of the West Point Club. Wanda went to the inn every weekend, rain or shine. She was a long-time secretary for the Club and for twenty years she handled the schedule of weekend hosts.

Marge describes the Central Commissary weekends at the inn as the source of some of her best memories. These were weekends that were hosted by a member who was responsible for buying the food and taking the reservations. The members who attended shared in the cost of the meals and helped with their preparation. Marge remembers evenings where they would enjoy playing Scrabble and Spite and Malice. She recalls parties when Ann Cole would bring her ukulele, Marge's mom would play piano, and they would sing songs from "My Fair Lady." She misses those weekends of great camaraderie, but still finds the same spirit at the Old Timer's Party and Heritage Night.

Marge grew up in San Francisco and, after getting her teaching credential at San Jose State, went to work in the San Francisco School District as an elementary school teacher. During her long career in the SF schools she continued her education, including 9 credentials, a Master's degree and a Doctorate in Educational Psychology and Counseling. Other positions in the school district included being a reading specialist, school psychologist, staff development trainer, and assistant principal. Her last position before retiring was Assistant Principal at George Washington High School, the high school from which she herself had graduated.

Marge's passion for travel has kept her busy and moving about throughout her life. She taught in Germany for a year (1956-57), traveled "around the world in 80 days" in 1958, and has served as a volunteer in Russia, China, Costa Rica, Mexico, and India. She has worked in remote villages teaching English, assisted at orphanages, helped preserve local folk songs in Russia, and helped with a program to improve the lives of "untouchables" in India. She continues to travel and has just returned from a trip to Turkey. She is planning the next adventure in Burma and Laos. She also stays busy as an elder on the Board of Directors for her church and in pursuing her interest in nutrition and alternative medicine.

Marge has many fond memories of the West Point Inn, usually involving her mom and the wonderful times they shared, including the West Point's testimonial dinner for her mothers' 90th birthday. Marge feels that the inn is part of her own history; at the same time she has the feeling of being part of the history of the inn. She expressed how important she feels it is for newer members to get the feeling for the history of the West Point Inn and the people who built it, and shared her story in that spirit.

Join Us For The NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

Welcome the New Year from the deck of the West Point Inn.

Be safe and snug when 2019 rolls in!



Enjoy a wonderful evening of:

6pm: Drinks & hors d'oeuvres around the fireplace
Hors d'oeuvres by Bonnie Jones & Michael Satris

9pm: Supper by lamplight. *Chefs: Fran Rondeau & Marilyn Skaff,*
featuring handmade breads by David & Leah Durr

12 midnight: Fireworks & City lights on the deck

Morning after 9am: New Year's Day Breakfast. *Malcolm & Mary Ann Dunlap*

COST: \$75-members. \$100-guest of member.
(Includes:lodging, food, drink, party favors, decor)
ATTIRE: Festive casual.

RESERVATIONS & LODGING:
Will be handled by host:Olene Sparks
(510) 236-8293 or olenes@aol.com

NOTE: Do NOT call the reservation line. Payment by check only. No credit card pmt. First come, first choice, based on confirmation and receipt of check, payable to West Point Inn Assn.

UPON CONFIRMATION SEND CHECK TO:

Olene Sparks
441 Western Drive
Point Richmond, CA 94801
INCLUDE:(please print): Names, phone #, email address

QUESTIONS or TO VOLUNTEER: Olene Sparks (510) 236-8293, olenes@aol.com

2018 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

December

- 8 Cookie Party
- 8 Member's Holiday Party++
- 10 Board & Committee Chairs Christmas party
- 31 New Year's Eve Party
Host: Olene Sparks-Toby

2019 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Our 2019 calendar is currently being finalized. Below are a few noteworthy dates that have been finalized. Stay tuned for a full calendar of events to come in the next newsletter. In the meantime, you can always check the calendar online at:

www.westpointinn.com/wpi-calendar

February

- 10 Crab Feed Fundraiser

April

- 14 Spring Meeting & Members barbecue

May

- 12 Mother's Day Pancake Breakfast

* 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