

Happy Anniversary

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

- 13 years** Ruth Fleshman, Liaison, Library Beyond Walls
12 years Dolly Dohn, Receptionist, Cultural Services
9 years Lee Spiegel, Assistant, Corte Madera Library
7 years Betty Ann Breeze, Peggy Fuchs, Shelves, Novato Library; Sheret Goddard, Mary Louise Simon, Book Menders, Corte Madera Library; Julia Yost, Aide, So. Novato Library
6 years Libby Byers, Beverly Jagow, Barbara Levin, Nora Martinis, Sr. Peer Counselors, CMHS, H&HS
5 years Bruce Richard, Sandra Rowett, Liaisons, Library Beyond Walls
3 years Maureen Laughlin, Reader, Corte Madera Library; Jean Terribilini, Administrative Assist., Community Development; Cara Wasden, Sr. Access Reader, Novato Library
2 years Diane Heath, Nurse, H&HS; Susan Levine, Administrative Assist., Human Resources; Jessica Thompson, Shelver, Marin City Library
1 year Monica Arroliga, Kaitlynn Baptista, Elizabeth Castellanos, Sruthi Damadar, Elicia Fernandez, Stephanie Malone, Lizeth Martinez, Krystalyna Montano, Kristyn Perry, Yesenia Sandoval, See Yang, Intergenerational Project Interns, H&HS; Iris Berets, Nancy Blum, Lillian M (Lillie) Kocher, Kathryn Mitchell-Ball, Sr. Peer Counselors, CMHS, H&HS; Barbara Boucke, Carol Cebe, Sandy Cross, Shelves, Stinson Beach Library; Owen Cao, Shelver, Novato Library; Diane Campbell, Homevisit Parent Partner, H&HS; Arthur Comings, Proofreader, Human Resources; Jerry Johannessen, Publishing Consultant, Human Resources; James Council, Listen-In Reader, Corte Madera Library; Robert E. Flynn, Counselor, Probation; Si Si Semple, Front Office Assist., Cultural Services; Mardi Wood, Page, Bolinas Library



Volunteer Notes

CCV Contact Update

Next time you call or email the CCV office, you have two contact options. For student intern matters, see **Joy Fossett**. For volunteer issues, see **Anne Starr**. Contact information is at the bottom of this column. **Susan White**, CCV's administrative coordinator since 2010, is now working as a senior secretary at the Board of Supervisors. We thank Susan for her many contributions and wish her the best!

Hours, Hours, Hours!

Your contribution of time is valuable; we want to be sure it is counted! The CCV team is compiling data on volunteer service for the annual Financial Impact Analysis. Please send us your hours through February today. Thank you!

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The Volunteer View

The Monthly Newsletter for Marin County Civic Center Volunteers

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Ann Brebner volunteers to aid her peers



Serving her contemporaries gives Ann Brebner great satisfaction.

Two chance readings of tiny newspaper articles, separated by almost 60 years, propelled New Zealand-born **Ann Brebner** into exciting new directions. At 26, she saw in a days-old paper an opportunity for acting training at Old Vic Theater School in London, training which led to her celebrated professional life of play writing, acting, and directing in London, New York, and the Bay Area. Five years ago, a small Marin Independent Journal notice prompted Ann to become a Senior Peer Counselor in the Community Mental Health program of the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services.

Senior Peer Counselors meet with their elderly clients weekly to talk and listen and help them adjust to phase-of-life problems of transition, illness, and isolation. "I joined the program because I felt I needed to find out something about growing old," explained Ann, dynamic at 88. "I function as the eyes and ears and report what transpired with my clients at our weekly confidential supervision group of senior peer counselors (led by **Nan Heflin**, LMFT). It is without doubt the most wonderful

group I've ever been part of. They are loving, kind, concerned, and absolutely dedicated to what they are doing."

One of Ann's current clients is 95, lives alone, and is interested in the world outside of herself. Her other client, 84, has physical difficulties and medical problems that sometimes overwhelm her reality. "With her, it's a constant dance and challenge to get her to think beyond and to make me better at what I am doing," she says.

Nan describes Ann as "absolutely tenacious in her approach, yet empathetic and deeply committed to what is in her client's best interest. Her amazing professional life experience informs everything she does, bringing a fresh perspective to how she looks at her client's issues. We are all moved by her humility. She is one class act."

Ann's professional life includes: a founder of the Marin Shakespeare Festival; president of the Brebner Talent (actors and screenwriters) Agency for 20 years; and founder of California Women in Film. She headed the drive and was project manager to restore Rafael Film Center as home for the California Film Institute, and was instrumental in the development of the College of Marin drama department and theater. She is currently acting, writing two plays, and directing productions for two intimate ensemble acting companies, Porchlight Theater (Marin Art and Garden) and AlterTheater (San Rafael storefront).

By Shirley Trimble

Who's New & Welcome

Francesca Bittan, Teen Ambassador, HR
Alberta Born-Weiss, Teen Ambassador, HR
Caroline Cirby, Teen Ambassador, HR
Gina Marie Fornario, Attorney, DA
Tegan Fossett, Investigation Asst., H&HS
Allyson(Allie)Hoch, Teen Ambassador, HR
Kaitlyn Jensen, Teen Ambassador, HR
Sophi LePorte, Teen Ambassador, HR
Stephanie Lundi, Shelver, Nov. Library
Hannah Messner, Teen Ambassador, HR
Lea Mixon, Teen Ambassador, HR
Cooper Nelson, Teen Ambassador, HR
Janet Oliver, Electronic Services Intern, Library
David Mandel, Grant Writer, HR

Tim Peters, Interpreter, Courts
Claire Polson, Teen Ambassador, HR
Robertta Robinson, DUI Trial Coord., Co.Counsel
Thomas A. Robinson, DUI Trial Coord., Co. Counsel
Melissa Rule, Teen Ambassador, HR
Deborah Salisbury, Docent, CS
Joel Schwartz, Docent, CS
Keira Vicente, Art Teacher, Probation
Julia Wilson, Teen Ambassador, HR
Ayana Woodard-Morgan, Teen Ambassador, HR
Norm Worth, Shelver, Nov. Library
Christopher Wragg, Clerical Aide, H&HS
Tess Zebrowski, Teen Ambassador, HR

Volunteers support annual MLK Awards Dinner



CCV Volunteers **Cindy Brown, Harrison White, Susan White, Hannah Powder, Kris Cirby, and Beverly Ng** welcomed guests at the MLK Awards Dinner.

The Marin County Human Rights Commission, established in 1966 by the Marin County Board of Supervisors, seeks to eliminate prejudice, intolerance, and discrimination due to race, religion, national origin, sex, age, cultural background, sexual orientation, or disability. The Commission is composed of nine volunteer members who serve four-year terms.

In 1982, a small group of individuals gathered for a potluck dinner

to honor some special people for their extraordinary advocacy for human and civil rights. Today that event, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner, has become an annual celebration attended by over 200 people. In 1999 a youth award was added to celebrate high school seniors who work for the betterment of others in their communities.

Individuals who live or work in Marin County may be nominated for the award by any member of

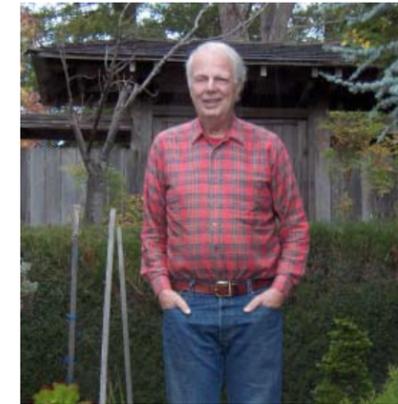
the community. Recipients are selected by vote of the commission. In addition to the award, the Marin Community Foundation provides a monetary stipend, which is divided among the adult recipients and donated, in their names, to non-profit agencies of their choice. A scholarship for post secondary education is given to the youth recipients.

The 2012 MLK Awards Dinner was attended by 275 people, including CCV volunteers **Hannah Powder, Kris Cirby, Susan White, Beverly Ng, Harrison White, and Cindy Brown**, who welcomed guests and staffed the registration table. "We set an attendance record - again," according to Human Resources Senior Secretary **Jaime Powell**, who staffs the Human Rights Commission. "We appreciate our sponsors and volunteers, and welcome support for future scholarships, which are much needed." The Human Rights Commission is working on an endowment fund for scholarships. Readers interested in participating may check the commission's web site at www.marinhumanrights.org or contact Jaime at (415) 473-6189 or jpowell@marincounty.org.

by Bernard Geiger

Bill Dittmann achieves dream as Marin Master Gardner

Retired teacher and San Rafael businessman **Bill Dittmann** came by his interest in gardens as a youngster in Piedmont where his parents were organic gardeners in the '40s and '50s when no one else was. "It was compost, compost," he joked, recalling that his real hook on ecological concerns came when his grandmother gave him Rachel Carson's landmark books. A year ago, Bill achieved his first retirement goal – to become a Marin Master Gardner.



Bill Dittmann combines a life of teaching and gardening.

"My last 10 years I taught in the East Bay. Their two school gardens prompted me to integrate the garden into my teaching and to get the whole school involved into an 'edible school yard' so the kids could set up a salad bar," Bill said.

He is a resident garden consultant at San Rafael's Sun Valley School where participants are planting an

orchard on a 300-foot slope behind the school. Last month, students dug holes and are planting apples, citrus, and figs so that in the fall they can celebrate with a harvest festival. "We have requirements to make sure that there are projects for these K-5 kids that use science, math, and language arts, and involve teach-

ers and parent volunteers," he explained.

David Lewis, director of the UC Master Gardening Program, calls Bill "a perfect example of the high quality volunteers entering the program and taking its rigorous training. His dedication to school gardens and willingness and commitment to share grow-how with Marin youth is why Marin Master Gardeners are able to serve more than 21 schools and more than 5,800 students."

Bill's career was as a fifth and sixth grade teacher. He and his wife, Barbara, owned Marin Teachers Store in San Rafael for 26 years, where he enjoyed working with teachers. "Our independent store was very successful and a cultural institution before the chains came in and changed it all," he lamented.

By Shirley Trimble

Staff Changes at Civic Center Volunteers

Following the retirement of Civic Center Volunteers Manager **Joan Brown** after a 32.5-year career, the Human Resources Department hired a consultant to study the county's volunteer program and provide recommendations to senior management on sustaining the program, which makes an impressive contribution to the community.

HR Director **Joanne Peterson** carefully reviewed the results of the in-depth study and decided to create two new positions. **Anne Starr**, a CCV staff member since 2008, is now the Volunteer Coordinator and Editor-in-Chief of the Marin County employee newsletter *Frankly Speaking*. **Joy Fossett** now serves as the Intern Coordinator and works with the Staffing and Equal Employment Opportunity divisions on talent acquisition. "I'm excited about CCV's ability to

continue to provide meaningful opportunities for volunteer service in county government," commented Anne. "The reorganization will allow for management focus on both the volunteer and intern programs." Joy, who joined HR in 2002 and previously served as the county's intern coordinator for four years, said she was "delighted to be collaborating again with county departments to support internships for students of all ages."

In other staff changes affecting the CCV office, HR Deputy Director **Liz Paris**, manager of the program since Joan's retirement, is now on loan for one year to the Marin County Free Library as a change-management consultant. In her absence, **Diane Ooms** has been appointed to supervise the Volunteer Division.

Diane, an HR staff member since 2002, brings deep experience in training and will advise CCV on training updates for supervisors of volunteers and interns. "It's an honor to be associated with a nationally recognized program and to have the opportunity to work with the volunteers and staff who provide so much value to the Marin community," said Diane.

Along with reorganization of staff, CCV also is scheduled to review new volunteer management software later this year that will allow volunteers and interns to enter their own hours electronically, and add other efficiencies. In response to a request for proposals, the HR Department has received bids from four software providers and is moving forward on the evaluation and testing phases of acquisition.

By Bernard Geiger