

# THE MORNING AFTER

## TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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### Mayor's Corner



*Katie Hoertkorn*

Two of the key issues facing Ross this month are crime and the risk of flooding. In the past month we have experienced a rash of auto thefts, as well as some burglaries. According to our Police Chief, Erik Masterson, these thefts are not only confined to Ross, but, as can be expected, also in neighboring communities. A significant amount of last night's meeting was devoted to this issue including discussing additional options, all of which are being summarized in a separate email to residents. We have stepped up patrols, but your vigilance is a key factor in keeping our town safe. Do not hesitate to call the police and report any anomaly. Also, we need to make sure that we keep our cars and doors locked.

As El Nino bears down on the Bay Area,

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### Employee Appreciation Program

The Town recognized four employees with an appreciation gift for their years of dedicated service to the Town: Linda Lopez (10 years), Kevin McKendry (10 years), Danny Moy (10 years), and Joshua Schulman (5 years).

Linda Lopez began in 2005 and serves as the Town Clerk and Administrative Manager. Her past work experience in the private sector, non-profit and academia has prepared her well for her duties in Ross. Aside from her Town Clerk duties, she oversees payroll, accounts payables/receivables, the website, Town communications, and The Morning After newsletter, just to name a few.



*Linda Lopez*



*Kevin McKendry*

Kevin McKendry has been with the Ross Police Department for 10 years. He and his wife Jenny, have 5 children: Madison 11, Ryan 9, Brooklyn 4, Carolyne 2 and the newborn Jaclynn. Kevin is involved as a coach for several of his children's sports teams, so he stays very active. He is assigned to nightshift patrol and is in charge of our vehicle equipment. He is in the Army reserves attached to a CID (Criminal Investigations Division) unit.

Danny Moy has been with the Ross Police Department for 10 years. His and his wife Gina, have two children: Mia 12 and Maggie 8. Danny handles the travel arrangements for his daughter Mia's gymnastics competitions. Danny is a firearms instructor and department rangemaster, and has recently trained our department in active shooter scenarios.



*Danny Moy*



*Joshua Schulman*

Joshua Schulman has been with the Ross Police Department for 5 years. He has two children: Andrew 13 and Bella age 7. Josh is learning the "new math" so he can help his kids with their homework. He is the office "techie" and assists in computer troubleshooting, records management system version updates, and any other technical issues that arise. Josh is in charge of vehicle maintenance as well. He has been the case officer on two complex financial elder abuse cases. ■



it reminds us of our need to focus on the potential flood issues that our region faces. The solution is complex, regional, and involves difficult choices. We have excellent representation through former Council member and Mayor Chris Martin and Supervisor Katie Rice, but it behooves all of us to understand the problem, potential solutions, and trade-offs. The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and County Flood Control are having a meeting to discuss flood prevention measures at Marin Art and Garden on January 28th at 6 p.m. The focus area of this project includes Ross and Kentfield. The goal of the project is to reduce the likelihood and consequences of flooding while balancing the creek's natural state with greater flow capacity in containing and conveying water to the Bay.

As part of our plan to address the issue of aging bridges and water flow capacity, Ross is having a special meeting to discuss the replacement of Winship Bridge on February 9th at 7 p.m. Finally, during the previous storms, we have had a number of trees fall, some damaging property, some causing electrical wires to go down, etc. Please address trees you have that should be trimmed now, and keep debris out of drainageways and culverts as well.

We expect to have the study of fees for building, planning, and other Town departments completed by March. It has taken longer than first anticipated because of the complexity of the analysis and the input needed from many resources. We want to make sure the fees are fair and justified, and based on the best information available.

Town Hall will be closed for Martin Luther King Day on January 18th. I will be in front of the Ross Post Office, February 10th from 1:15-2:40 p.m., just before next month's Council meeting. I look forward to hearing any of your concerns or questions, or simply having the opportunity to meet you. ■

### Storm Preparation & Safety Update

The anticipated "El Nino" weather and rain has started. With the recent rains, we have seen a number of trees fall, a couple of downed powerlines, some hill erosion, and minimal rising water levels.



We ask property owners to continue to maintain all watercourses that pass over, under, and in many cases around their property. Whether it is an open ditch or a culvert adjacent to your property, they are to be kept clean and free of debris that can obstruct the natural flow of water. If you live on a hillside, keep the water flowing on the inside/hillside edge of the roadway so the water does not cross the roadway and down a hill slope, as it can cause a slide. Check your property for possible tree hazards and hillside erosion. If you have a dead or dying tree, please come to Town Hall and get a tree removal permit as soon as possible.

Please stay far away from downed powerlines and report them immediately by calling 911. Keep yourself well prepared for the winter storms. The Town website ([www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org)) and Ross Valley Fire Department website ([www.rossvalleyfire.org](http://www.rossvalleyfire.org)), have useful information resources available related to storms and emergencies. ■

### Council Election June 2016

Are you interested in running for Town Council? Do you have an interest in civic issues? The next election to fill three 4-year Council seats will be held on Tuesday, June 7, 2016. The terms of Council members Elizabeth Brekhus, Katie Hoertkorn, and Beach Kuhl will expire at that time.



To qualify to run for Council, you must be a Ross resident and a registered voter. The filing period for Council candidates begins on **February 15, 2016 and extends through March 11, 2016**. If any of the incumbents *do not* file for re-election by March 11th, the filing date is extended to Wednesday, March 16th.

If you are interested in running for a Council seat or have any questions regarding the process, please contact Town Clerk Linda Lopez at (415) 453-1453 ext. 105 or via email at [llopez@townofross.org](mailto:llopez@townofross.org). An appointment with the Town Clerk is necessary in order to obtain the required nomination papers that must be completed as part of the nomination process.

## PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the January Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the [January 14th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be available on this page after adoption by the Council at the February Council meeting.

**Address: 198 Lagunitas Road\***  
**Applicant: Jamie O'Hara & Cynthia Weldon**  
**\*Continued to February 11th Council meeting**

## Marin Sanitary Service 2016 Rates



The Town participates in a franchisor's group comprised of San Rafael, Larkspur, portions of Marin

County and the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District. This group in turn retains an independent consulting firm to review the rate package submitted annually by Marin Sanitary Service (MSS). This year, HF&H Consultants, LLC has determined a 5.61% rate increase is appropriate for the Town to compensate MSS for its costs to provide refuse and related services.

### Rate Adjustment Components 2016 Component Percentages

Wages	1.64%
Benefits (including workers comp)	3.71%
Depreciation and interest	0.84%
Maintenance	1.42%
Other operating costs (*)	2.51%
Fuel and oil	(2.99%)
Disposal	(0.88%)
Revenue shortfall net of franchise fees	(0.64%)

<b>Total rate adjustment</b>	<b>5.61%</b>
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(\* Includes profit, general and administrative costs (e.g., public education, customer service etc.)

The full staff report can be viewed on the website on the [January 14th Council Meeting page](#).

## PUBLIC SAFETY



Since late November Ross has experienced an increase in crimes related to residential burglaries, thefts from cars and stolen cars. The Police Department has stepped up patrols in Town and has disseminated information about the crime activity to residents, asking for increased vigilance in securing property and reporting suspicious activity. The Department has responded to several reports of suspicious individuals and cars and has investigated each incident. The Police have attempted to gather any evidence and process it for leads, track property that was taken, and coordinate with neighboring agencies for potential suspects and trends. The information gathered by the Police Department is that we are not alone in experiencing crime increases. Our neighboring agencies are working several series of similar crimes, as is San Francisco, Sonoma County and the East Bay. It should be noted that the top two cities in the nation for auto theft are Richmond and Oakland with three other cities in the Bay Area in the top 10.

The Police Department has been looking into various programs and tools to prevent incidence of crime, or to assist in investigation of these types of crimes. These include; neighborhood watch programs, ALPR (automated license plate reader) systems, video surveillance systems, crime sting type operations. With this type of crime occurring in Town, the police department asks that residents continue to exercise care in securing their property and in reporting suspicious activity. One of the best ways to reduce crime is to reduce the opportunity for the criminal. Let's help make our town a low priority target by making it tough of the criminal by working together through vigilance. ■

## Up in Smoke



In preparation of a trio of new state laws regulating medical marijuana that took effect on Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, the Council adopted an Urgency Ordinance to prohibit the dispensing of, cultivation, and delivery of medical marijuana in all zoning districts within Town.

With a unanimous vote by the Council last night, the urgency ordinance became effective immediately. The Council also conducted a public hearing regarding the introduction and first reading of an Ordinance to permanently amend the Ross Municipal Code to prohibit cultivation of medical marijuana, including cultivation by qualified patients, primary caregivers, and persons with identification

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## Up in Smoke



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cards, to prohibit commercial medical marijuana activity, and to prohibit the delivery of medical marijuana and mobile marijuana dispensaries in all zones in the Town. Although the ordinances ban “deliveries”, primary caregivers would still be able to deliver medical marijuana to their qualified patients because of the noncommercial nature of the primary caregiver deliveries.

Since the State passing of the Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act, cities and towns across the state have been scrambling to prepare for three new laws that created a statewide licensing system for the commercial cultivation, manufacture, retail sale, transport, distribution, delivery and testing of medical cannabis. The new legislation states that if California municipalities do not have local laws in place to regulate or prohibit cultivation by March 1, 2016, then the California State Department of Food and Agriculture would be the licensing to authorize cultivation of medical marijuana with the Town. The passage of Urgency Ordinance 663 and Ordinance 664 puts the Town’s regulations in place prior to the March 1, 2016 deadline so that the Town will be able to maintain control regarding all land uses related to medical marijuana. ■

## Time Limits for Completion of Construction Ordinance Updated

The Council amended the Time Limits for Completion of Construction Ordinance to add time extensions for the following: 1) “At time of project design approval or prior to issuance of a building permit, the Council may extend the established timeline for completion of construction by up to 90 days if the Council finds there are extraordinary circumstances involved with the construction of the project such as exceptional off-site street or other infrastructure requirements, unusual site topography...”; and 2) “For any development project requiring CalGreen compliance for construction waste disposal and recycling..., the Town Building Official may grant up to 60 days additional time to complete construction depending upon the difficulty and amount of demolition...”



The Ordinance also reduces the maximum penalty fine for incomplete projects to the following: “For the one hundred twenty-first day, and any additional days thereafter that the project remains incomplete, the Town shall impose a penalty of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per day.”

The Ordinance goes into effect in 30 days.

## RECREATION NEWS



Audrey Hildebrand

Ross Recreation welcomes Audrey Hildebrand in her new position as Recreation Specialist. Audrey has previously served as a Recreation Instructor for the Department during the past three years. She created the very popular Kids Club after school program at Ross School. Audrey also served as lead instructor for the Kinder Camp summer program. As Recreation Specialist, Audrey will oversee our special interest classes and camps. Audrey brings a high degree of professionalism and enthusiasm to the Department. We look forward to working with her in providing the Ross Community with quality programs.

The play area at the Ross Recreation preschool has been reconfigured to include natural elements for play, which encourages children to use their imagination in collaborative discovery of environmental elements.



Winter/Spring brochure has been distributed. To register for programs, please visit our website at [www.rossrecreation.org](http://www.rossrecreation.org).

Happy New Year!

# ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## JANUARY 2016

Jan 1	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for New Year's Day
Jan 12	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 14	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 18	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Jan 21	9:30	am	Finance Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 25	8:00	am	Community Protection Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 26	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 28	6:00	pm	Marin County Flood Control/Army Corps of Engineers Meeting, MAGC

## FEBRUARY 2016

Feb 9	7:00	pm	Special Council Meeting - Winship Bridge Discussion, Town Hall
Feb 11	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 12	9:00	am	Special Council Meeting Annual Strategic Workshop, MAGC
Feb 15	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Presidents Day
Feb 15-Mar 11	--	--	Filing period for Candidates for Town Council
Feb 23	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## MARCH 2016

Mar 8	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town hall
Mar 10	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 22	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## CONTACT US

Administration	415.453.1453 x105	Public Works	415.453.1453 x106
Building	415.453.1453 x106	Recreation	415.453.6020
Planning	415.453.1453 x121, 122	Ross Valley Fire	415.258.4686
Police	415.453.1453, Option 2	Town Manager	415.453.1453 x107

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Visit us at [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org)



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