

# FLOATING TIMES

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The Floating Homes Association Newsletter

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## At Last! Waldo Point Harbor Permit a Done Deal!



FHAers board a bus to the BCDC meeting in Oakland, March 18, 2004.

PHOTO: RIC MILLER

### The benefits of FHA membership, or what have you done for me lately?

By Suki Sennett, FHA President Emerita

Recognizing that many of you are new or relatively new residents of the floating homes community, I am listing below some of the major accomplishments of the Floating Homes Association that directly benefit you as a floating home owner – benefits that many of you take for granted. Since 1985, and before that, FHA volunteers have been working effectively to protect our unique community and the rights of the homeowners and residents. Aside from the obvious benefits – the free annual party, a dock activity subsidy of \$10 per household, the Floating Times newsletter, website, fire drills, all for a bargain \$20 - here are some reasons why FHA membership is worthwhile and important to every floating home resident and owner:

**You can deduct your mortgage from your income tax.** FHA successfully helped convince state and local governments to designate our homes real property. Prior to 1986, our homes were “vessels” requiring an annual CF number. Result: we can deduct our mortgage payments.

**Proposition 13 applies to floating homes.** The FHA drafted and worked to pass through the California legislature a bill

amending Proposition 13 so that it would apply to floating homes. Accordingly, floating home owners have the same protection under Prop 13 as other California home owners.

**Simple, legal title can be obtained for your floating home.** Originally, floating homes were titled through the DMV, just like your car. Then an inadvertent change in California law eliminated this method. For a time floating home ownership could not be legally registered. This completely stopped sales of homes and new mortgages. The FHA sponsored legislation that today allows floating home ownership to be registered, transferred and mortgage liens applied against them.

**Richardson Bay is cleaner and peaceful.** FHA actively collaborated on the creation of the Richardson Bay Special Area Plan and the Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA). Result: a Richardson Bay free of floating debris and less polluted through the regulation of anchor outs and transient vessels and the imposition of environmental protections.

**The rights of residents and responsibilities of the marina operators are clear-**

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By Stan Barbarich

AT LAST! As of March 18, 2004, Waldo Point Harbor possesses a valid, in-effect, BCDC permit! But there are those of you who did not believe this would ever happen. I can tell you for sure that there are many current and former public officials who have said that they never believed it could. But it did, and it happened only because the community made it happen.

Back in ancient history (1993), a small group of WPH residents began to worry, because the harbor did not seem to be doing anything to renew its BCDC permit, which would expire in May, 1994. Starting then, by forming Harbor Equity Group to represent WPH residents, and over the next decade, by slowly but surely building a coalition of residents and by ultimately having to create our own version of a harbor configuration that would satisfy all the regulatory agencies, the harbor itself, and the county’s requirements for low-to-moderate housing in southern Marin, we ultimately arrived at the red-letter-day when BCDC commissioners voted 18 to 0, with 0 abstentions, to grant the new permit.

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# Water You Doing Here?

By *The Dinghy Dame*

Storm Lake in Iowa sent us a great guy named Murray Dailey. It took Murray many a year to reach Issaquah, but he finally made it in 1998. Murray is a zoologist with a penchant for marine mammals and their parasites. He was first here in 1961 when he ran the Wildlife Center in the Louise Boyd facility in San Rafael. In fact Murray built the first pond there for seal rescue and picked up his first seal near the statue in Sausalito. (I understand she was pretty cute!) Murray knew he wanted to live here. It just took him a while to get back for good.

Murray says he went straight from high school to the Air Force where he was a survival instructor for SAC crews and taught them to live off the land. Then he studied zoology at the University of Nevada and shortly after that arrived in San Rafael looking for graduate work and found that he liked the area a lot. He stayed a year before going to Graduate School in Beirut, Lebanon having earned a WHO scholarship. There he obtained his Masters Degree working on hydatid diseases from '64-'66. After that an NSF training grant took him to Colorado State University and he worked on fur seals in the Pribilofs.

Murray then wormed his way into Cal State Long Beach where he stayed for 30 years. He was director of the Ocean Study Institutes which included 6 state universities. It was no fluke that he was published a lot with his work mainly involving marine mammal parasites.

Murray finally took a "one time golden retirement package," sold everything, and took a job in the Caribbean where he was director of the School for Field Studies in Ecology.

He still had a home in Colorado, so from the Caribbean, he went back there for one year and was a professor at the University of New Mexico where he studied the Hanta Virus. (Rats!!...I wanted to do that!)

Now, 'twas about this time that Murray says he began to miss the ocean a little bit, and while attending a wildlife meeting in Fairbanks he met someone from the Marine Mammal Center where he is currently employed. When Murray was first invited to see the center, he and his wife were put up on a floating home at gate 6 1/2. "Boy this is great! We've gotta get



MURRAY DAILEY PHOTO: CARL LUNSFORD

one of these!" he said...and so they did.

Murray met his wife Malia 20 years ago when he was working on Monk Seals 1,000 miles north of Honolulu. She was working on a processing boat and when Murray first saw her in her bikini, he thought to himself.....Now there's a pair o' sites!! However, Murray (feeling rather like a monk himself) couldn't gather his courage to speak to her. Then one day when he had pulled in a shark and was dissecting it on deck to check for critters, he looked up, saw her, and simply said....."Here, hold this liver for me." She no doubt said, "I encyst." And the rest is history (and herstory)!

Murray is currently changing the Marine Mammal Center into "a research nucleus of mission and image instead of just rescue." When he first accepted the position he and Malia began to look in earnest for a floating home. (I guess he needed a change from nematodes in fish to humming toad fish.) They decided that Issaquah was where they wanted to be, specifically on the pond. They liked the idea of "dock alert at 5"....which means an impromptu party. They quickly learned dock etiquette (not looking into other people's windows for example) and were eager to move in. When Murray got the call in Colorado that a home was for sale, he flew out and bought it. He laughs when he tells the story of how Malia reacted when she first saw it..."You spent HOW much for THIS?" She no doubt wanted to call him Professor Leaky! Many tears and many more leaks later, their home is lovely and sound. Now she loves it, and they adore the people here and the cama-

raderie." Here it is really eclectic and everybody is so different," they chime. They feel that they fit in and have found the perfect spot for themselves. "After all," says Murray, "where else can you run, hike, dive, take trails through the headlands, and the city is right there...I've never lived in a place I've enjoyed so much that has everything."

Both Murray and Malia have become active in our community, volunteering for the Art Festival and the floating homes yearly bash among other things. We're glad they finally found us.

One parting thought..... Many of you probably know Murray Daily, but how many of you know Murray Nightly?

## Sausalito Houseboat Artists Announce 2nd Annual Art Exhibition

The "Artists of Issaquah" have announced that they will host their second Annual Art Exhibition and "Open Boat" event on Issaquah Dock on Saturday, April 24th from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. This exhibit will showcase over 200 recent works of art from 12 Issaquah-based artists including painters, sculptors, photographers, a fine art wood turner, and a jeweler. Six houseboats will be open for visitors as venues for the art. In addition, 10% of all art sales will be donated to The Imagine Bus Project.

Exhibiting artists include: Barbara Duncan, painting; Ted Eitelbuss, painting and sculpture; Krista Kielman, painting and collage; Thomas Ludlam, wood turning; Sandi MacLeod, painting; Richard Mickley, sculpture; Ric Miller, photography; Emily Riddell, photography; John Ryan, painting and ink-and-watercolor drawing; Jon Sibaila, jewelry; Annie Sutter, painting; and Jim Woessner, painting and mixed-media sculpture.

"Sausalito's tradition as an artists' colony will never return; however, this event allows visitors to rediscover Issaquah Dock artists and helps to create a new community on the docks with art as a focus," said Jim Woessner, founder of Artists of Issaquah. Last year's event drew over 500 visitors, so the anticipation is that there will be at least that many this year.

For more information, visit [www.floatinghome.com/artists](http://www.floatinghome.com/artists) or call Jim Woessner at 415-331-3452.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Congratulations to the dedicated, hard-working volunteers who did the heavy lifting. Indulge me for a second while I acknowledge some amazing people. First and foremost, I was privileged to work closely on a steering committee with Pam Bousquet, Suki Sennett and Ric Miller. I cannot begin to count the hours, days, nights and weeks of their lives these folks sacrificed for the good of the harbor residents. The group made such pests of themselves at the county and state level that the group was dubbed "The Gang of Four." If the residents of WPH had had to pay consultants to do the work these guys did, strictly for love of community, the bill would have been in the high six figures, for sure.

The work at the grass roots (piling?) level was done by the Harbor Equity/Floating Homes Residents' committee. To name all the folks that served on this committee over time (FHA dock reps, plus others) would take far more space than our new FT Editor (see below) could allow. They were responsible for holding dock meetings and endless individual discussions with their neighbors, bringing them information on the ongoing process, bringing back their neighbors' wants, needs and desires (and complaints) to the group for action and incorporation into the plan that became the Community Development Plan, which ultimately (with

minor modifications) became the harbor's application and which was approved by the county and BCDC. And then, the call to arms was answered by large numbers of WPH residents, who cheerfully turned out to fill the rooms at the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and BCDC, who are usually faced by about ten people on most issues. You all made it happen, and I sincerely thank you!

Now the fun part. Over the next 12 to 16 months, WPH will secure building permits from the county and other entities like PG&E (yes, it takes that long). Then the work of removing the submerged junk, raising the parking lots, building the new CoOp dock and creating the park will begin. Like everything else, this phase will take time, and patience. Because this will impact the area around Kappas and Yellow Ferry, too, my personal goal as FHA president will be to expand the coalition model to include representatives from these harbors as well, in an effort to minimize the negative impacts on everyone by having everyone work on the problem du jour (like where people will park when the WPH lots are torn up). And to help them with their permit processes, as much as we can.

So, in just a few short years, WPH will not only be permitted, but completed, as well. And it will only have taken about 40 years to achieve it. Please join me in extending sincere appreciation to the people who made it happen—your friends,

neighbors, and YOU!

Last, but certainly not least, join me in welcoming our new newsletter editor, Lynn Gigy, to whom we are all grateful for taking on this important task that is so beneficial to our community.

## Floating Home Loan Rates Drop

*By Larry Clinton*

As mortgage rates head back to record low levels, all three lenders on floating homes have also dropped their rates. Each of the three financial institutions will lend up to 80% of the value of homes in marinas under BCDC jurisdiction (Waldo Point, Kappas and Yellow Ferry Harbor). Here are the highlights of each lender's current programs for both home purchases and refinancing:

Circle Bank (formerly Novato Community Bank) offers a 3-year fixed rate of 7.875% that adjusts every 6 months after the initial three-year period. Monthly payments are based on a 30-year term, but a balloon payment is due after 15. Call Duke Barnes or Graciella Phelps at 415-493-3135.

Financial Benefits Credit Union (Alameda) offers a six-month adjustable loan with a 15-year term. The current start rate is 6.25%, and the monthly interest can never exceed 5 basis points over the start rate. The home must be owner occupied, but a concrete hull is not necessary. Call Gail Albin (510-433-9224).

Bank of Marin, which now has a Sausalito branch, makes a number of different kinds of loans on primary residences, including two fully amortized fixed rate loans. The 20-year fixed rate is 8.75%, and the 15-year fixed is 8.25%. Bank of Marin also offers a 5-year fixed rate of 8.00% that adjusts once, five years later, with a ceiling of 13%; a balloon payment is due after 10 years. In addition, they offer an adjustable home equity line of credit for \$25,000-\$75,000 with terms up to 10 years, starting at 6.00%. All interest rates can be reduced by 1/4% with automatic loan payments from a Bank of Marin account. Call Rich Ugarte (415-380-1257).

Besides these features, there are differences in fees, indexes for variable loans, Annual Percentage Rate calculations and other conditions that should be investigated before deciding which of these loans might work best for you.



Recreational boating in the parking lots will become a thing of the past when the Community Development Plan work is finished. Here we see Sally Campbell and Jim Woessner canoeing in the Issaquah Dock parking lot during one of the big December tides.

PHOTO: LARRY CLINTON

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# THE FLOATING HOME AND REAL ESTATE MARKET – 2003

By *Howard Myers*

The data used in this article are compiled and reported by the Bay Area Real Estate Information Services (BAREIS), the replacement of what used to be called the Multiple Listing Service (MLS).

Last year I reported that average Marin County home prices in 2002 went up 3.22% over Year 2001. Floating homes went up an adjusted 7.39% for the same period. The adjustment made was throwing out a high distorting sales price.

Floating homes in 2002 did better on appreciation than land homes. Not so in 2003. In 2003 floating home prices actually dropped 1.15% from the 2002 average. Reported sales were also down to 18 in 2003, compared to 22 in 2002. I have to repeat again that one year of data on our homes is too small for broad generalizations regarding the market. With such small numbers we have to look at more than one year of sales to see trends. We had a good jump in values in 2002, and in the years before we had substantial increases. The overall trend seems always to be up. I look upon 2003 as just flat.

Reported floating home sales prices for 2003 ranged from a low of \$160,000 to \$750,000. There were six sales over \$500,000; five sales in the \$300,000 to \$395,000 range; and the remaining sales were from \$160,000 to \$285,000. The average sale price was \$374,805.

Let's take a few years look back and see what the trend in floating home sale prices has been:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Average Sold Price</i>
1990	\$103,000
1995	\$153,000
2000	\$346,929
2003	\$374,805

The historical trend is obvious enough. Will it continue?

In 2003 Marin County-wide home prices jumped 13.9%. This was a significant increase considering the slowness of the jobless recovery, particularly in northern California. Most opinion (and mine) is that the market was driven by low interest rates. The number of reported unit sales also increased from 2,628 in 2002 to 3,862 in 2003 – a big 46% increase.

But in 2003 more floating homes were on the market longer than I've seen since the early '90s recession. There were

scores of Sunday open houseboats, scores of people walking through, but most didn't buy. Why? The most frequent explanation I hear from potential buyers for not choosing a floating home over a land home is the difference in interest rates added to berth fees. Compare 5% to 5.25% fixed rate for a land home loan to 8% to 8.5% interest rates on floating homes – a 3% difference. Add to that a berth fee of \$650 to \$1,000 a month. Those berth fees by themselves would debt service \$118,000 to \$181,000 of home equity per month on land. The approximate difference in interest rates will debt service another 30 or so thousand dollars. Buyers think about this and often conclude that buying a \$400,000 floating home is about like buying a \$600,000 land home with \$200,000 more in equity increasing in value each year. That's a tough argument to counter, especially when the economy is poking along and consumers are more conservative in their buying and investment habits. Conservative consumption is why lower priced land homes have been in greater demand the last few years. It's also why prices on these houses have increased proportionately more than high-end homes.

However, these negative factors don't make our homes any less desirable. We are a lifestyle choice that not everyone who would like can afford to buy. Those who can afford to buy, do so. Those are the people whose attention we need to get when selling. And with what seems to be happening with BCDC and the permit process, we are beginning to look even more desirable.

People have been asking me since the BCDC approval of the Community Development Plan, "Aren't our values going to get a significant boost?" I think for awhile our homes will just get easier to sell because a threat hanging over us will be less, and explaining the issues and what is going to happen will be easier. People thinking of buying have had to struggle through a lot of uncertainty and worry over the future security of their investment. Just getting the permit will ease these concerns. I think though that once work on the marina starts we are going to see attitudes grow more and more positive. This will begin to affect values, but the

greater influence will be on making the decision to buy easier. The real change will be when the work is finished. I get pushed to speculate on how much the benefit will be. I really don't know. But I do know that when this strip of waterfront we live on is finished, the way those plans look (great landscaping and all), we are going to look good to a lot of people, demand for our homes and lifestyle will increase, and what happens then is that prices will go up.

But keep this in mind: when you sell your home in Marin and you want to stay in Marin (or the Bay Area), you're going to pay a lot for another home.

2004?

Demand for housing in Marin County was, and still is, very high even with the jobless recovery. All categories of homes so far this year (condos, detached homes, duplexes, etc.) have taken another jump in both prices and number of sales when compared to the same period last year. The first two months of 2003 saw 340 home sales in Marin County, with an average sold price of \$709,350. This year total sales in January and February were 402 (an 18% increase), and the average sold price jumped 16% to \$822,895. I can't imagine this will keep up throughout the year. This is certain to influence our floating home prices. Even with the higher interest rates and berth fees, people will begin to give more thought to floating homes as a viable alternative.

If nothing drastic happens to the economy and we don't fall into another recession or perhaps a terrorist attack, I think 2004 will be better than 2003 in both sale numbers and sale prices. And if interest rates on land homes do go up, it can actually help us. Floating home rates move up and down more slowly, and the higher land home rates go, the more attractive we look – at least for awhile.

Regardless, people who like and fit our lifestyle and can afford to buy it will buy. It's a very compelling way of life to those people.

My congratulations to the community for the great accomplishment of getting the reconfiguration plan passed. I used to tell perspective buyers that I didn't know if I would live to see this happen. My goodness, I now have! Have a good year everyone.

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## BENEFITS OF FHA MEMBERSHIP

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**ly defined.** The 1991 Floating Homes Residency Law (California Civil Code Section 800), drafted and lobbied through the California legislature by the FHA ensures for the first time ever our rights as tenants. It is our own Bill of Rights. It's on the FHA Web Site [www.floating-homes.com](http://www.floating-homes.com).

**Waldo Point Harbor leases no longer contain the threat of rent increases being imposed retroactively.** In 1994, FHA successfully created and lobbied the legislature for a "berth control" bill, AB 2459 that passed the Assembly. The threat of passage by the Senate forced WPH owners to the table with the tenants. It motivated WPH owners to negotiate 10-year WPH leases without the retroactive increase provision. A similar threat of a rent control bill in 2003 was effective in motivating the Kappas Marina operators to the negotiation table.

**FHA monitors state & federal legislation that impacts our community.** Examples: FHA commented on AB 107, a bill giving increased power to local agencies to remove abandoned boats and debris in California harbors. (The bill failed in Committee). FHA convinced the feds to exclude the northern Sausalito houseboat area as a wetlands protected area, another layer of regulatory authority. In 2003, our comments successfully excluded houseboats in AB 2362, requiring marine sanitation devices for vessels.

**FHA monitors County Building Codes and regulations on an on-going basis.** FHA works with County planners on code revisions as well as enforcement issues. FHA was successful in getting the County to notice affected homeowners when a building permit is granted that is an architectural deviation or variance. We are currently working with County planners on much needed Title 22 code revisions relating to side setbacks.

**Floating Homeowners Insurance** – because of threats of cancellation from insurance companies FHA found insurers, including the FAIR Plan that provides relatively inexpensive basic property insurance.

**Mortgage and equity home lenders** – although federal law requires banks to provide financing in neighborhoods in which they have branches, banks have persisted in redlining Sausalito floating

homes out of their lending portfolios. FHA successfully found three lenders willing to lend to credit-worthy homeowners, lobbied them to reduce interest rates and improve eligibility parameters for first mortgages and home equity loans.

**Community emergency response** – FHA paid the fee for 39 floating homes residents to be trained to respond in a major emergency such as an earthquake, flood, fire or terrorist attack. Because our needs are so unique, specialized training was provided by the County Fire Department. There are at least two CERTs on every dock. Every dock has been provided with a two-way radio paid for by the FHA. The FHA paid for a heavy-duty pump for sinking houseboats located at the County Fire Department at the Marin City Substation.

**Permit applications** – while the state and County permit renewal process for WPH has gotten most of our attention, it is important to remember that Kappas Marina and Yellow Ferry Harbor must also renew their permits. I need not go into the major role FHA volunteers have played, and will continue to play, in the WPH permit application process both with the County and BCDC. The successful outcome will impact the Kappas and Yellow Ferry permits.

**The FHA maintains a cordial relationship with County and City of Sausalito public safety agencies.** Maintaining a working relationship with these folks is crucial to our health and safety.

**The FHA is a viable and effective voice for the floating homes community with local and state government elected officials and their staffs.** Maintaining and nurturing communication with our elected officials has been, is and will be crucial to the protection of our property values now and in the future.

**The FHA has generated national and international publicity (all positive) for our community** through our tour and by working with interested media professionals.

**The FHA has donated thousands of dollars to local non-profits**, including the Marin City Library, the Sausalito Schools Foundation, Marine Mammal Center and the Sausalito Historical Society.

**And let's not forget the WPH Community Development Plan. On March 18, 2004 BCDC voted to give WPH a 20-year permit, the successful culmination of 32 years of litigation and unrest on the waterfront. Peace in our time.**

## Memorial: Patricia Baldwin Brockschmidt

Patricia Baldwin Brockschmidt of Yellow Ferry Harbor passed away on February 27, 2004. Born in 1918 in Iowa City, Pat attended the University of Iowa. She met her husband Ernie when they both worked at the Chicago Consolidated Airline Ticket office in the 1940s. Fond of animals, Pat worked for a number of years at the Illinois Brookfield Zoo. Later, she authored two children's books: *Baby Bruce: a True Polar Bear Story* and *Inka, the Brown Bear: A Bear's Predicament* – works inspired by her experiences at the Zoo.

After Pat and Ernie settled in their Yellow Ferry houseboat in 1979, Pat continued her devotion to animals helping the Marine Mammal Center. An interesting and well rounded person, Pat enjoyed ballroom and square dancing, yoga and reading.

Pat is survived by her husband Ernie, daughter Kris, seven grand children – Paul, Robin, Rana, Tuy, Merrra, Kiran, Dan, a host of great grand children, and many nieces and nephews.

The restoration of the Baldwin Fountain in La Grange, Illinois is planned in her memory. She will be sadly missed.

## Memorial: Kevin Keating

Long time Gate 6-1/2 resident Kevin Keating died at his home in Sausalito on February 7, 2004, at age 74. Kevin was a freelance writer who helped to publicize the floating homes community in publications such as United Airlines' *Hemispheres* magazine.

Before moving to Kappas Marina, Kevin worked for several San Francisco radio stations including KSFO and KMPX. He then decided to try public relations and joined Pete Rozelle's firm. In 1979, he combined his writing background and traveling into a monthly column for International Travel News. Another column of his, "Globetrotter," appeared in the San Francisco Examiner from 1999 to 2003.

Kevin was also the author of four books, *Pacific Pathways*, with Stan Delaplaine; Rand McNally's *Guide to California*; also with Delaplaine: *How to Choose a Cruise*, and *Passport Korea*.

Kevin had moved off his floating home prior to being diagnosed with prostate cancer. In place of a ceremony, Kevin's family requested donations to the American Cancer Society.



## Gate 6 1/2:

On the morning of March 20, a bicyclist's VW van caught fire along Gate 6-1/2 Road just before our parking lot. The smoking fire was extinguished by Bill Roberts, (r.), captain of the Marin City Fire Station, and other firefighters.

— Larry Clinton, Gate 6 \_ Alternate Rep

## South 40 Dock:

Small changes to our profile: After three years of working with South 40 residents and the County, boats numbered 18 and 20, both owned by Paul Hawken have been switched.

Author Diana Cohn has just published her fourth children's book, entitled *Mr. Goethe's Garden*. Find it at Book Passage. Diana also has just returned from a trip to Malaysia where she met with her illustrator to discuss her next children's book. Congratulations Diana!

Jan Pehrson has just finished paddling 100 miles through the Everglades, the largest wilderness area east of the Mississippi. Way to go, Jan! Read a full account of her fascinating journey and see gorgeous photographs of the adventure at <http://www.janpehrson.com>.

Marlene Mallicoat and Ted Nelson have left South 40 for two years to spend time in England at the Oxford Internet Institute at Oxford University. Not only are a team of talented programmers going to be working on Ted's ideas, but this Dock Rep's unsubstantiated recollection is that Ted will be writing the Official Oxford Guide to the Internet. We will miss you Ted and Marlene. Now, about that guest room...

Christine Funk and roommate Hollis McCord and Hollis's sister Marty, also a

South 40 resident, are in Nepal as of this writing. The dynamic threesome are making a documentary about bluegrass legend Peter Rowan as he plays the "Jazzmandu" festival. Marty, currently completing her Masters Degree in Expressive Arts Therapy is also making a documentary for children on the sounds of Nepal. Anybody interested in helping to fund either of these worthy projects should talk to Christine or Hollis at 28 South 40.

Henry and Renee Baer find themselves in the media yet again, for living in a work of art. Their home the Train Wreck is featured in the Japanese publication *Memo - Rooms for Men* (published by World Photo Press).

— Katy Bridges, South Forty Dock Rep

## Issaquah:

Malia Dailey turned 50 on March 17 and there was a big blow-out on Issaquah Dock where several martinis were hoisted in her honor. She's reputed to be very fond of a well-chilled goose served up with two garlic soaked olives! (Grey Goose, that is....)

In keeping with good tradition but not making last year's deadline, we had our first dock alert. Last year we had it in January in a wind storm. Some of us were in shorts, but that's another story. The pictures of that party have been captured for all time by Ric Miller. I still find them on fireplace mantels when visiting homes on Issaquah. This year the first dock party was held on a beautiful March evening with a waning moon to keep things lit on the dock for residents to find their way back after...what else...much wine and food consumption.

Annie Sutter has returned from sunny Hawaii and this time she brought the sun. What beautiful summer weather we are having at the end of winter. Hopefully it will continue all season long...

Ric Miller and Jim Woessner have displayed their art in Sausalito venues over the last two months. Jim and others on the dock are planning the second annual Artists of Issaquah, which will be held on April 24 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. This event spotlights the artistic work done by Issaquah residents. Annie Sutter last year sold several pieces. Her nautical scenes are surprisingly similar to graphics used in *Finding Nemo*, which coincidentally, is her favorite movie this year. In fact, I'm

the proud owner of three of her water color paintings. They are some of my more prized possessions.

Please infer all is well on Issaquah.

— Mark Williams, Issaquah Dock Rep

## Et cetera:

Suki Sennett, a past President of the Marin League of Women Voters, passes on a compliment from the League's March newsletter, *The Voter*. The local league supported the Waldo Point Harbor master plan permit before BCDC. "One especially gratifying part of the process was that it was the result of an unprecedented collaborative effort among the neighborhood group. What a shame that such efforts are so rare."

Many of us were quite concerned about our Bay turning brown and smelly in mid-March. Skip Hunter, FHA's new Environmental Chair, has been in contact with various officials and experts regarding the situation. The current consensus seems to be that it was an unfortunate coincidence of an algae bloom, the unseasonably warm weather, and, perhaps, the release of treated sewage. Donna Lundsford reports:

"On the afternoon high tide of March tenth, the water surrounding Gate 6 1/2 was cloudy and brown unlike anything we have seen in the 30 years we have lived here. On the following days there was a curious absence of birds of all kinds. In past years we have complained to no avail about sewage waste overflow being dumped into the bay. We have had the Health Department out here and they have done coliform counts and we were told that the treated sewage is called mousse and it is safe. Safe for whom?"

"This time, not only is there a horrible smell of death remaining, but we cannot locate a single live crab or anything else for that matter in the tide pools.

"Does anyone have any suggestions as to what can be done about it? Does anyone know what occurred last Wednesday afternoon? Did anyone on the other docks notice it?"

"If the eco system is being destroyed by the chemicals being used to sanitize human waste, where is the sense in that? This is supposed to be a bird preserve. With nothing for them to eat, they are still absent today, the 15th.

"We, as a community, should be concerned if our observations are indeed correct, and I think they are."

# Waterfront Vigilance

Story and pictures by Dan Goodman

“Don’t pull out the hose! Tug Kent is here!”

Those were the orders of Marin County Fire chief John Griffin at a Gates CoOp fire a number of years ago. Griffin’s command to his men was in response to Greg Baker and his “Tug Kent” fireboat having arrived on scene.

For over 25 years Baker and his various fireboats have patrolled the Sausalito waterfront, fought fires, aided police, the Coast Guard, emergency medical and fire departments, and assisted stranded boaters. A Good Samaritan in every sense, Baker has never taken a dime for his services. Yet, many houseboat and waterfront residents know little about this vigilant man who keeps his eyes and ears constantly trained to assist in waterfront emergencies.

Born in Tomales Bay, Greg developed an interest in fire-fighting at age six when his father helped start the Inverness Volunteer Fire Department. Later, during a four-year stint in the Navy, Baker served at San Diego’s naval shore side fire services. He returned to the Bay Area in 1963 where he lived near the old Issaquah Ferry at the Gates CoOp. In 1978, Greg acquired a 24-foot cabin cruiser from the Sea Scouts. He converted the craft to a fireboat and named it “Salvage 24.” In 1973, Baker began providing security duties at Schoonmaker Point Marina, which he still performs today.

In 1984 Baker obtained the twenty-four foot Tugboat Kent which draws only three feet. After he rigged the vessel for fire-fighting duties, the stage was set for the next several years of fire fighting adventures, many of which took place in the Floating Home Community - and some in very shallow tidal waters. In one case, at the old ‘Annie’s Farm’ boat at Liberty Dock, Greg arrived in a shallow tide to aid the Fire Department stationed on the pier. While fire crews scrambled ashore, Baker worked quickly dousing the flames with a bucket.



Baker and main fire fighting “weapon.”



Veteran waterfront fire fighter Greg Baker and “Tug Kent”

“I don’t know how shallow it was, but I remember a lot of mud being involved!” Greg recalls.

In the cold winter of 1990, when water pipes burst from the sub freezing temperatures, Greg and Tug Kent arrived at a fire in Mays’ Harbor. Baker boarded fire personnel, and the crew successfully contained the blaze using equipment Greg had effectively adapted for the task. In the mid ‘90s, when the “Omphali” burned at A-Dock, Tug Kent responded swiftly, again aiding Marin County fire personnel helping to prevent the flames spreading to nearby piers and houseboats.

Referred to by the Coast Guard and emergency services as ‘Mutual Aid,’ Baker, Tug Kent, and his smaller one foot-draft vessel, have been called to aid in a wide array of urgent situations. Before Strawberry Point was developed, a grass fire, inconveniently located for access by land-based fire-fighting crews, started near the shore. Baker arrived successfully attacking the blaze from the water’s edge. A few years later, he served as back up to Marin fire personnel, combating flames and providing water protection during a Strawberry house fire.

Although Baker keeps in close contact with Coast Guard, fire and emergency services via VHF radio, phone and pager, he warns about the effectiveness of dialing 911 on cell phones.

“It can take a long time providing response when 911 cell calls go to an operator in Vallejo,” says, Greg. “If you’re in a local emergency situation and have only a cell phone, dial the emergency direct number, which in Marin is: 472-0911.”

In recognition for the years of unselfish, skillful, and brave service to the waterfront, the Floating Homes Association recently voted to gift one thousand dollars to Greg. The funds paid for his new high angle nozzle platform. The rig is being attached to an arm lift capable of lifting a thousand pounds, and will serve aboard Tug Kent very soon.

With his years of marine fire fighting experience, well-equipped fireboats, and dedicated around-the-clock vigilance, Greg Baker continues to provide an outstanding and important service to the Sausalito waterfront and the Floating Homes Community.

# Candidates Debate Highlights Annual Meeting

By Lewis Shireman

This year's Floating Homes Association Annual Meeting, held on February 7, 2004, at the usual location of the Bay Model, presented the five candidates for the Board of Supervisors, Third District, in a lively debate.

Suki Sennett opened the meeting with a "State of the FHA," covering several topics. She described the BCDC hearing at the Spinnaker on February 5, and thanked all the residents who attended, as there were over 200 people in attendance. She also described the limits BCDC has on conversations with Commissioners on this issue. She indicated that her goal for the year is to not be FHA President.

She listed some of the highlights of what the FHA has accomplished, including the Residency Leases. She then introduced the officers for 2004:

Stan Barbarich – President  
 Suki Sennett – Vice President  
 Richard Mickley – Secretary  
 Lewis Shireman – Treasurer.

At this point Stan Barbarich made some comments, including about the upcoming reconfiguration. He hopes the FHA will be able to play a mitigating role on the effects the reconfiguration will bring, which will be significant.

Suki Sennett was presented with a Lifetime Service Award.

She then introduced the candidates for Supervisor of District 3 of Marin County: Noah Griffin, John Leonard, Charles McGlashan, Andrew Thompson, and Clifford Waldeck. Each made an opening statement, and then answered submitted questions.

Noah Griffin spoke on several issues, including the reconfiguration, the sex offender release, the fire district consolidation and mercury in the bay.

John Leonard spoke about his years on the Mill Valley City Council and serving on the Richardson Bay Regional Agency when they hired Harbormaster Bill Price. He also spoke on the importance of community input in the decision making process.

Charles McGlashan described his work as Executive Director of the California Environmental Dialogue, where he works to get business, government and environmentalists to agree on policies affecting

the environment. He considers the Floating Homes community to be a gift to be preserved. He also commented on the recent selection process by the City of Sausalito for their fireboat, and how inclusion of our community could have produced a better choice.

Andrew Thompson spoke about his 11 years on the Tiburon City Council, and about accomplishing things that people say cannot be done. He cited the example of the building of the Tiburon Town Hall.

Clifford Waldeck described that his office supply firm was one of the first offices to do an energy efficiency plan. He talked about his preservation efforts on the Mill Valley City Council. He has also served as the Chair of the Regional Water Quality Board and on BCDC.

(Author's note – as no candidate received a majority in the primary election, the top two vote getters will face each other in the November election. They are Charles McGlashan and Andrew Thompson.)

Stan Barbarich made some additional comments about the BCDC hearing, indicating that the over 200 people who attended were the most he has ever seen at a hearing on the reconfiguration. There was a lot of good testimony presented. Stan also indicated that the BCDC Executive Director had told the two candidates (Leonard and Waldeck) that they should probably not attend this debate. He indicated that it was to their credit that they were both here.

Suki Sennett presented the Member of the Year Award to Marling Mast, for her work as the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.

## Raffle results:

Michelle Affronte donated a \$100 gift certificate to Forbe's Island - won by Joan Mickley.

Chuck Green donated a \$25 gift certificate to All Marin Painting – won by Eric Aintree.

Circle Bank (formerly Novato Community Bank) donated a \$40 gift certificate to Samurai – won by Chuck Green.

Rachelle Dorris donated a \$100 gift certificate to Valhalla – won by Elaine West.

Howard Myers donated a \$125 gift certificate to Caprice – won by Gail Hicks.

Ric Miller donated one of his photos – won by Cyra McFadden.

Bayside Café donated a \$25 gift certificate – won by Brent Wolf.

Dan Goodman / H2O Tour Company donated a free one hour tour for 6 people – won by Muriel Kifer.

Diane Chute donated a large gift basket – won by Bonnie MacGregor.

## 2003 FHA Financial Report

### INCOME

FT Ad Income	\$730.00
Interest Income	394.20
Member Dues	6,040.00
Merchandise Income	1,270.55
Misc. Income	601.75
Tour Income	29,426.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$38,462.50</b>

### EXPENSES

Uncategorized	\$0.13
Dock Activities	1,454.52
Donations	85.00
Dues	150.00
FHA Coordinator	3,600.00
Insurance	1,569.88
Legal & Prof. Fees	3,025.00
Meeting Room	225.00
Mem. Party	
-Meeting Expenses	5,766.20
Merchandise Costs	1,316.22
Misc. Expense	2,366.61
Newsletter	1,952.62
Office Expenses	1,804.14
Safety	448.04
Tour Expense	11,527.74
Web Site	277.50
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$35,568.60</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,893.90</b>

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Website: [www.floatinghomes.org](http://www.floatinghomes.org)

### FHA OFFICERS

President	Stan Barbarich	332-7225	stan@floatinghouse.net
Vice President	Suki Sennett	331-6375	sennett24@comcast.net
Secretary	Richard Mickley	332-4135	richmick@comcast.net
Treasurer	Lewis Shireman	331-3999	lewis@icca.org
Director at Large	Henry Baer	331-9220	baerdds@aol.com
Admin. Coordinator	Debbi Handler	331-3999	debbi@icca.org

### COMMITTEES

Emergency Services	Marling Mast	331-1953	marling@mastphotography.com
Environmental	Skip Hunter	331-2997	shunter@lpslaw.com
Legal	Pam Bousquet	331-3614	pamafloat@earthlink.net
Membership	Malia Dailey	332-1744	2maliad@comcast.net
Newsletter	Lynn Gigy	331-9432	barblynn@mcn.org
Tour Director	Katherine Boschetto	331-2881	kbbb@mindspring.com
Webmaster	David Lane	425-3934	fha@zenciti.com
Classified Ads	Debbi Handler	331-3999	debbi@icca.org

### SERVICES

RBRA Harbor Administrator	Bill Price	289-4143
		Pager: 458-0833
San Francisco Baykeeper	Hot Line	567-4401
Marin County Fire Dept.	Non-emergency	446-4463
Marin County Sheriff	Non-emergency	332-5422
Marin County Sheriff	Cellular Emergency Line	472-0911
Kappas Homeowners Assoc.	Ron Moreland	332-2429
Harbor Equity Group (HEG)	Pam Bousquet	331-3614
WPH Residents		
(HEG) Liaison	Ric Miller	331-6116

### DOCK REPS and ALTERNATES

A Dock	Davia Lehn	332-7573	dlehn@sbcglobal.net
- Alternate	Jo Ann Ponek	331-5702	jponek@webtv.net
Commodore	Terry Adams	332-5428	terry@nobhillensembles.com
- Alternate	Richard Kiiski	332-5428	kiiski@earthlink.net
East Kappas	Wilford Welch	332-3320	whwelch@attglobal.net
- Alternate	Ron Moreland	332-2429	ron@morelandonline.com
Gate 6 1/2	Roy Grekin	332-6861	grekinr@derm.ucsf.edu
- Alternate	Larry Clinton	332-6196	click@dipsymusic.com
Issaquah	Mark Williams	332-1436	downissaquahdock@aol.com
- Alternate	Sallyanne Campbell	331-7464	sallycampbell@mindspring.com
Liberty	Justin Barton	339-0285	jb@vikingproperties.com
- Alternate	VACANT		
Main	Tony Williams	332-6296	tony@wolfisland.net
- Alternate	Peter Huson	332-6240	peterhuson@cs.com
Mays Harbor	Gary Richardson	332-9030	Vardagary@yahoo.com
South Forty	Katy Bridges	331-9661	katy@vsuccess.com
- Alternate	Susan Neri	332-8482	
West Kappas	Gail Hicks	331-2271	gail_hicks@hotmail.com
- Alternate	Gail Forrest	331-7320	chestfield@hotmail.com
Yellow Ferry	Dan Goodman	332-0678	DanGoodman@comcast.net
- Alternate	Carey Chenoweth	332-2265	rowboat@well.com

### GOVERNMENT

District 3 Supervisor	Annette Rose	499-7331
Assemblymember	Joe Nation	479-4920
San Francisco BCDC		352-3600
FEMA		800-462-9029
Army Corps of Engineers		332-0334
Sausalito Post Office		332-0258

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