

THE ROSS REVIEW

Volume 1 | Issue 5 | October 2025

Mayor's Report



Mayor Julie McMillan

It's wonderful to see so many Ross residents preparing for emergencies.

On Saturday, September 27 on the Ross Common, ten dedicated Larkspur and Mill Valley first aid volunteers trained nearly 75 Ross residents in basic first aid skills, including stop the bleed, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and Narcan administration. Trainees were provided with stop-the-bleed bags, boxes of Naloxone, Fentanyl test strips and one-way emergency breaths face masks. Volunteers also checked the status of their Alert Marin sign-ups to activate the ringtone "Emergency Bypass ON". Thanks to the Ross Property Owners' Association for organizing and sponsoring this event.

On Monday, September 29, many residents attended the Zone 0 presentation "Science, Resources and Inspiration" at the Marin Art & Garden Center. Creating five feet of non-flammable defensible space, called Zone 0, around our homes and structures greatly improves their chances of surviving a wildfire, and new landscaping designs make it possible to create this protective barrier attractively.

Mark Brown, Executive Officer of the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority, cited a recent UC Berkeley study demonstrating Zone 0's effectiveness. Data from recent wildfires show that homes with defensible space had a much greater chance of surviving than those left unprotected. You can read about the study [here](#).

April Owens, Principal of April Owens Designs, showed several examples of inspiring Zone 0 landscapes featuring plantings mixed with accents of inflammable surfaces including stone slabs, pavers, and gravel in a wide variety of colors and sizes, used to break up a fire's path. Owens said metal is also helpful for fencing and gates to separate wooden fencing from structures, and also for planters. You can learn more about fire-smart landscaping with California native plants [here](#), and at the UC Marin Master Gardeners site, [here](#).

Nicole Marcucci, Ross Valley Fire Department's newly hired Wildfire Preparedness Coordinator, described ongoing efforts to clear vegetation for evacuation routes. She stressed that property owners need to maintain vegetation along roadways to allow residents easy evacuation and firefighters and their equipment good access to our homes and properties.

Thanks to the Barber-Winship Firewise Neighborhood Group for organizing the event, and the Town of Ross and Age Friendly Ross for sponsoring it.

Chat with the Council every month on the day of the Council Meeting from 11am-1pm at the Ross Post Office.

(Council Meetings are held the Second Thursday of the Month unless otherwise noted).



October 9, 2025 Council Meeting Highlights

Ross School 5th Grade Students Water Testing Presentation

On October 9, sixth-grade Ross School students Luke Farrow, Nick McGonigle, Cal Ramos, Anders Vilhauer, and Max Salter presented a video they created last year as fifth graders, showcasing their analysis of water quality data from the Corte Madera Creek. They collected the water samples in Spring 2025 as part of their Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) class.



Groups of students tested for turbidity, nitrates, phosphates, temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and coliform bacteria. All results were within a desirable range except for the presence of coliform bacteria, which is found in mammal fecal matter.

The students hope to encourage Ross Valley residents—including those in Ross, San Anselmo, and Fairfax—to continue to protect the creek by keeping chemicals like car wash soap out of the water and by cleaning up after pets along the creek trail.

The current fifth graders at Ross School will continue the water quality testing in their STEM class during the 2025–26 school year, helping track changes in the health of Corte Madera Creek and continuing the school's and town's commitment to environmental stewardship.



Bolinas Storm Drain Phase 2 Construction Contract

The Town of Ross has proposed improvements to the existing public storm drain system to alleviate flooding issues at the Bolinas Avenue and Richmond Road intersection.

The existing storm drain system carries stormwater runoff from the Richmond Road and Bolinas Avenue intersection to the outfall under the Winship Avenue Bridge at San Anselmo Creek. The Town intends to increase stormwater accommodation by adding approximately 630 feet of a new 42-inch-diameter, High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) double wall (Type S) pipe from Bolinas Avenue to a new outfall on San Anselmo Creek immediately downstream of the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard Bridge. The new creek outfall would have a rock rip-rap apron. Sidewalks and other affected structures (existing bus stop, benches, and curbs) would be removed and rebuilt or replaced by the Project.

Town Council awarded the contract for this project to W.R. Forde Associates, Inc.

One Year Time Extension at 2 Crest Road

The time extension would allow the applicant to secure a building permit no later than November 9, 2026, to construct the previously approved project.

The applicant requests a one-year time extension of Design Review, a Hillside Lot Permit, and a Variance to construct new landscape structures, a new pool/spa, pool equipment and storage enclosure, wood deck, an outdoor BBQ, concrete retaining walls, new fencing and gates over 48" in height, deck structure with metal screen over 6-feet in height, a vegetable garden, and new site plantings.



Municipal Code Updates

Every three years the California Building Standards Commission publishes model codes such as the California Fire Code, Building Code and Wildland Urban Interface Code, etc. Once published by the Commission, local agencies have 180 days to make additions or amendments to their Municipal Code based on local conditions. If no changes are made during this 180-day window, the model codes become effective. Based on the 180-day cycle, the Town has until January 1, 2026, to make local changes.

For the last nine code adoption cycles, the Marin County Fire Prevention Officers have met and cooperatively reviewed the model codes.

Climate Action Plan

A Climate Action Plan (CAP) is a strategic framework that guides local efforts to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and prepare for climate-related impacts. The Town's CAP adopted in 2010 is now outdated as it does not reflect updated state targets for 2030 nor recent funding opportunities. The Council asked staff to move forward with updates to the Town's CAP.



PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the October 9 , 2025 Council meeting. Staff reports and video for the meeting can be found on the Town's October 9 website page. The minutes for the meeting will be posted on that page after adoption by the Council.

Address: 2 Crest Road

Applicant: Benjamin & Laura Dewar

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Kircher absent)

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 2025

October 17 6:00pm Ross Father/Daughter Dance (Ross School)

October 21 6:00pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom) - CANCELLED

October 31 4:30 pm Halloween on Shady Lane

November 2025

November 4 Statewide Special Election

November 11 Veteran's Day Holiday - Town offices closed

November 13 6:00pm Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)

November 18 6:00pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)

November 27 & 28 Thanksgiving Holiday - Town offices closed

Heart of Ross: Downtown Business Spotlight



Featuring What Makes Ross Unique

Tony Tutto Pizza

Tony Tutto Pizza is an organic, local, seasonal vegetarian pizza restaurant that is more than just pizza. They serve seasonal farmers market salads, lasagne, calzones, 2 daily soups, chocolate cake and more.

They are open Tuesday-Sunday 11:30am - 8pm. Originally opened in Mill Valley by Greg "Tony" Digiovine, it's proved to be a popular and delicious destination for all.

Tony's was lovingly acquired by Chef Lacey Sher 2 years ago. Lacey shares Tony's vision and is carrying forward the restaurant with her own flair.

Tony's was recently renovated and Lacey has taken on a new business partner, Chef Massimo Covello, one of Tony's best friends. Stop by soon to see the new changes and enjoy the delicious food.

They have many exciting new plans in the works.

Autumn

SEASONAL SHOWCASE

November 15th
3:00 - 5:00 PM | FOOD | LIVE MUSIC

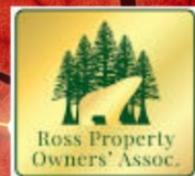
‘Tis the Season to shop
in Downtown Ross
Your Holiday starts here!

SUPPORT LOCAL ARTISANS

Brought to you by
Ross Property Owners' Association
Become a member here:



RPOA





Halloween on Shady Lane

Friday, October 31, 2025

Each year, to ensure the safety of the Town's little goblins and princesses, the Ross PD evaluates foot traffic safety on Shady Lane. This year, Shady Lane will be inaccessible to traffic on Halloween, Friday, October 31. Traffic will be regulated from Lagunitas Road to Fernhill Avenue from 4:30pm-10:00pm. E-Bike safety will also be enforced for equipment and speed violations. Ross PD will provide traffic cones to mark regulated areas.

The street will be open for emergency services and to let local traffic in and out. It is strongly suggested that cars not drive on Shady Lane during this time.

If you are not able to leave your home and require a delivery of food or medicine, Ross PD can assist. Please contact the Police Department and leave a message at 415-453-6124 or call the non-emergency number on Halloween night at 415-453-2727. The Ross Police Officer's Association will hand out glow necklaces to help illuminate people.

The Town Police will be present to help keep Halloween safe for our residents and visitors.

If you have any questions, please contact Ross Police at: 415-453-6124.

Raffaello Pata
Chief of Police
Town of Ross
P.O.Box 320
Ross, California 94957
415-453-1453 x 101



HOLIDAYS ARE FAST APPROACHING HELPFUL HINTS FROM THE ROSS POST OFFICE

Staff at Ross Post Office know how important it is to get your special parcels delivered on time and in one piece! They offer the following helpful ideas:

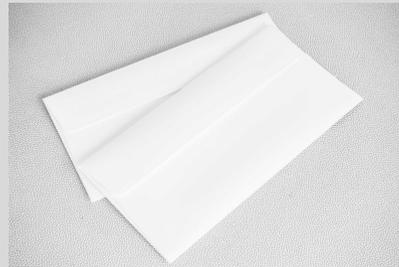
- >Tis the season when packages are in over abundance, so mail your packages and holiday cards **early**.
- >Do not put gift cards or candy in your mailing card. If a card has ridges or is not bendable, it is considered a parcel.
- >Always put your return address on all of your cards and bills. The return address should be on the top left corner.
- >For **parcels only** being mailed to you, please have the sender use the

format: physical street address, #box number (123 Main #9999) **DO NOT** use this format for mailing envelopes or magazines.

- > Always have your wedding or other invitation cards weighed for accurate postage.
- >Do not use **RED** ink to address any cards or parcels for mailing. The computer cannot distinguish the address for accuracy.
- >Going Away? Put a vacation hold on your box. This will keep your mailbox from overflowing and keep your parcels from being returned. Please note, that parcels are held for only 15 days at all postal stations.
- >If you have a large amount of outgoing letters or small parcels, please do not drop them in the blue or wall mailbox. It clogs up the boxes and other customers cannot deposit their outgoing mail. Just bring them to the counter.
- >If you have holiday or birthday cards that are square, don't forget extra postage is required.



EXTRA POSTAGE ENVELOPE



REGULAR POSTAGE ENVELOPE

The Post Office will be fully stocked with Holiday stamps by mid-October. Don't forget, last-minute gift cards or greeting cards are available at the Post Office and there is no sales tax on these items.



ROSS RECREATION

New & returning favorites!
Winter programs
January 5th - March 20th

Youth Classes:

- Youth Basketball League
- Kids Club
- HRT High Performance Tennis
- Chess Club
- Theatre Performances w/ 23 Elephants Theatre Company
- Coding w/ CodeAdvantage
- ArKIDtecture
- Electronic Music Production
- Gardening
- French
- Art
- Indoor Soccer

Adult Classes:

- Tennis
- Pickleball
- Bridge
- Tai Chi
- Mah Jongg

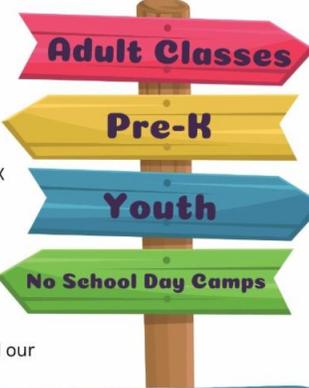
Upcoming:

- Blind Wine Tasting w/ CAM X Wines (Oct. 28th)

Tot & Pre-K Classes:

- Wilderness Cubs w/ RCNS
- Tot Saturday Soccer

Check out our website for complete list of programs!



AND MORE!

Be on the lookout as we expand our tot class offerings!

Contact:
(415) 453-6020 \ www.rossrecreation.org \ rossrec@townofrosseca.gov

AGE FRIENDLY ROSS

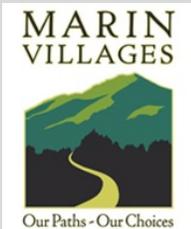
Reimagining Aging & Community - Marin Villages



Marin Villages is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to empower older adults to stay active, connected and independent in the place they already call home.

They are redefining aging and community for older adults. Their members and volunteers cherish living in their beloved homes, gathering for events and celebrations, forging new friendships, and supporting each other throughout their aging journey.

Marin Villages provides volunteers to lend a hand with rides, technology, visits and more. You can join and/or volunteer! Visit marinvillages.org or call 415.457.4633



Generational Estate Planning for Ages 18 to 118

A Breakfast Gathering
Sponsored by Age Friendly Ross, Marin Art & Garden Center, and Ross Property Owners' Association

Saturday, November 1st from 9:30am-11:30am
at Marin Art & Garden Center
Livermore Room

Guest Speaker: Sandra Price, Esq. from Sideman & Bancroft LLP
Light breakfast will be provided.

Please [Click Here](#) to RSVP



November 4, 2025 Statewide Special Election



Ballots are out - 10/6/2025

Already know how you're going to vote? Why wait? Mail your voter ballot back and visit [WheresMyBallot.com](https://wheresmyballot.com) to take advantage of Ballottrax, a free program from the California Secretary of State's office.

<https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/>



Drop boxes are open - 10/7/2025

Use these secure boxes to deliver your ballot directly to the Elections Department. Ballots are collected from Official Drop Boxes regularly, sometimes multiple times a day! For a list of Drop Boxes, [click here](#).

October is National Pedestrian Safety Month

Drivers Are Urged to Protect Pedestrians

October is National Pedestrian Safety Month and the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is urging drivers to slow down and be alert for pedestrians.

On average, a pedestrian dies every 72 minutes and one is injured every 8 minutes in traffic crashes. There were an estimated 68,244 pedestrians injured in 2023 and 7,314 pedestrians were killed — a 4% decrease from 2022. But pedestrian fatalities still remain high in the United States — they accounted for 18% of all traffic fatalities in 2023. This highlights a critical safety issue that impacts everyone.

At some point during the day, everyone is a pedestrian. NHTSA offers these driving tips to keep everyone safe:

- Use extra caution when driving in hard-to-see conditions — 77% of pedestrian fatalities in 2023 occurred in the dark.
- Follow the speed limit, especially around people on the street, around schools, and in neighborhoods where children are present.
- Drive sober — alcohol use was reported in 46% of all fatal pedestrian crashes in 2023.
- Always stop for pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Look out for pedestrians everywhere and minimize blind spots.
- Never pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk. There may be people crossing where drivers can't see.

October is especially timely as more pedestrians will be out towards the end of the month for Halloween. Drivers should be aware that on Halloween evening, there will likely be more pedestrians on the roads and in unexpected places. Families will be trick-or-treating with children who may be unaware of surrounding traffic and quick to dart into the street.

For more information about pedestrian safety, please visit NHTSA.gov/Pedestrian.



Defensible Space Re-inspections are happening through October!



Dear Neighbors,

Homes in your neighborhood have already received an initial defensible space inspection from Marin County Fire Department inspectors. During these visits, wildfire hazards that pose a risk to your home were identified.

Some properties only received a **partial evaluation** because inspectors could not access the entire property without the resident present. This means your [Wildfire Risk Report](#), while still useful, may be incomplete.

Over the next few months, inspectors will be re-evaluating properties in your neighborhood including properties that only received *partial inspections*. To receive a **full wildfire risk evaluation even if you are not home, you may sign a Right of Entry (ROE) form, which grants inspectors permission to access the exterior of your property.**

Why this matters:

- A complete evaluation is required if you plan to apply for a Resident Risk Reduction Grant.
- Without a signed ROE, you will not be eligible for a grant this year, and the next opportunity for evaluation in your area will likely not occur until 2027.

What is a Right of Entry (ROE) and Why Do We Need It? The ROE form gives our inspectors permission to complete a full wildfire risk evaluation of your property's exterior even if you are not home.

By signing the ROE:

- Our trained Defensible Space Inspectors can perform a complete exterior inspection.
- We can document hazards and provide you with a full, personalized Wildfire Risk Report.
- You maintain eligibility for wildfire mitigation grants.

Important:

- Inspectors will only evaluate outdoor areas — they will not enter your home or any other structures.
- Any photographs taken are used exclusively to document wildfire risks in your private report.
- You may revoke your permission at any time.
- Without a signed ROE, we can only inspect if you are present during the visit.
- You can review details about the grant program and our pri

Defensible Space – Order of Importance

1. Plant Placement & Maintenance

- Follow Zone 0, 1, & 2 guidelines
- Proper vertical & horizontal space
- Consider site specific conditions (ex. sloped yards)
- Keep plants properly watered
- Prune & clear dead and/or dry plant debris

2. Plant Attributes

- High/low waxes, oils, resins?
- High/low leaf moisture?
- Open or dense structure?
- Slow or fast growing?
- Sheds bark, leaves/needles?
- Adapted to climate?

3. Specific Plant Species

- Plant name/ variety



MARIN MASTER GARDENERS

October Fire-Wise Tips from the UC Marin Master Gardeners Fire-Smart Landscaping: Creating a Safer, Earth-Friendly Garden

Since all plants burn, there's no universal fire-safe plant list. What matters most are placement, spacing, maintenance, and plant characteristics.

Placement Matters—know your [defensible space zones](#)

The best wildfire defense starts with location. Keep *Zone Zero*—the first five feet around your home, decks, and sheds—clear of plants and combustibles.

In *Zone One* (5–30 feet out, aim for “lean, green, and clean.” [Space](#) plants well, water and prune them regularly, and use shorter plants closer to the house maintaining horizontal spacing, with taller ones farther out. Maintain vertical [clearance](#) by pruning tree branches up 6–10 feet (or one-third the tree's height, and avoid ladder fuels by planting only low-growing vegetation beneath trees.

Group plants in islands separated by stone or other non-combustible materials to slow fire spread and ease maintenance. On [slopes](#), increase spacing—the steeper the slope, the more distance required.

Choosing the Right Plants

Favor plants with high moisture and open branching over resinous, dense, or thatchy ones. [Choose](#) species you can maintain, since bark, leaves, and needles ignite easily. California natives are excellent—drought-tolerant and ecologically valuable—but clear away their summer leaf drop.

[Maintenance](#) is Key

No matter what you plant, upkeep is essential. Regularly remove debris, hydrate plants, and thin or replace vegetation as it matures. A well-cared-for garden looks beautiful and strengthens your home's wildfire defense.

With thoughtful design and maintenance, your landscape can thrive while protecting your home. Learn more about maintaining a fire-smart landscape at <https://marinmg.ucanr.edu/BASICS/FIRESMARTLANDSCAPING/Maintain/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FIRE-SMART LANDSCAPING, VISIT <https://ucanr.edu/site/uc-marin-master-gardeners>

North Bay Zero Waste Week

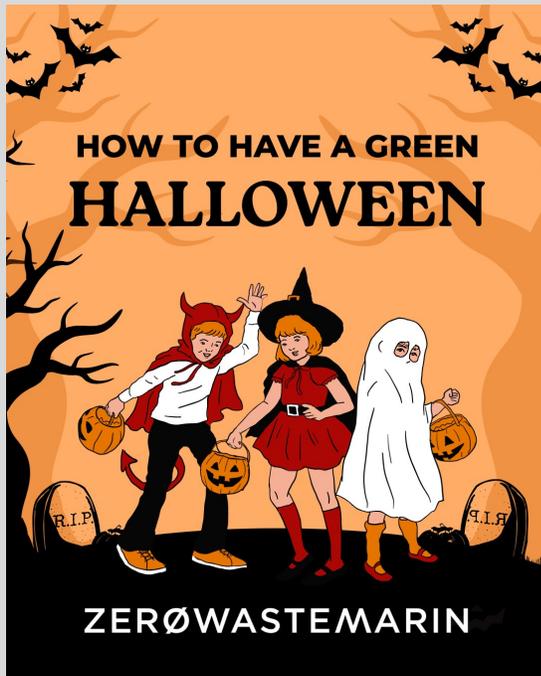


October 11-18, 2025

[Zero Waste Week](#) is a grass-roots approach to raise awareness about the environmental impacts of waste and ways to live a more zero waste lifestyle. Throughout the week, groups around the North Bay Area demonstrate how they are part of the solution through public education events and activities that focus on reducing, reusing, recycling, repurposing and composting. Zero Waste can also apply to resource use like water and energy conservation. This is about mindful use and consumption. Anyone can be part of the solution!

ZERØWASTEMARIN

Halloween is a fun and festive time of year, but it often comes with a frightening amount of waste, from plastic-wrapped candy and store-bought costumes to disposable decorations and food waste. This October, we invite you to celebrate a Zero Waste Halloween by making simple, sustainable choices that are better for your household and the planet.



- 1** Each year, thousands of pumpkins end up in the landfill. Instead of tossing them, compost your carved or uncarved pumpkins!
- 2** Host a costume swap with your friends and family. Thrift stores can also be treasure troves for unique costume pieces!
- 3** Instead of buying single-use plastic décor, try making your own from recycled materials or items found in nature.

ZERØWASTEMARIN



CASH FOR GRASS



As cooler weather returns and light rains begin, fall provides an ideal window to replace your lawn with a more sustainable landscape. The soil remains warm enough for root growth, and early rainfall helps new plants establish with less irrigation. It's also when many customers begin their lawn transformation projects with support from Marin Water's Cash for Grass program, which provides a cash incentive of nearly \$5 per square foot of lawn replaced.

But why let go of your lawn?

Lawns are a landscape feature borrowed from regions with far more rainfall. Here in Marin, our Mediterranean climate brings long stretches of hot, dry weather, which means lawns require significantly more water to stay green outside the rainy season. If you barely used your lawn this summer but your irrigation system was running full tilt, it might be time to consider a more sustainable landscape – for your benefit and for the long-term health of our local water supply. More than 730 customers have participated in Marin Water's Cash for Grass program, on average, transforming around 875 square feet of lawn from their landscapes. While actual water savings vary by site, we know that lawns typically require up to four times more water than climate-appropriate shrubs and perennials. These projects are helping the community make steady, long-term gains in outdoor water efficiency, which is something that will matter even more as we face future droughts.

Click [Here](#) for more information about the Cash for Grass Program.



Introducing the *PG&E Report It* app

It's a great way to report **non-emergency** issues of concern; submit photos to the PG&E safety team; find submissions made by others; get notified when your submission is in review; and see PG&E's findings. Please view this helpful 5-minute video. <https://lnkd.in/gXiVxu6D>

The app can be downloaded at the [Google Play](#) or [Apple](#) stores.

PG&E Report It app is NOT for emergencies. If you suspect an emergency that may threaten property and physical safety, such as the smell of natural gas, leave the area and call 9-1-1. If you see downed power lines, stay away. Don't exit your car or home. Call 9-1-1. Then call PG&E at 1-800-743-5000.

You can also visit the PG&E Report It mobile app **webpage** for all the information you, family, friends, and neighbors need to help PG&E identify and resolve concerns about PG&E equipment in your area. <https://lnkd.in/g4ZZ88vg>

CONTACT US

Administration Office 415-453-1453 x105

- cmartel@townofrossca.gov

Building Department 415-453-1453 x106

- breher@townofrossca.gov

Bldg Inspection Hotline 415-453-1453
x170

- breher@townofrossca.gov

Planning/Bldg Director 415-453-1453 x121

- rfeliciano@townofrossca.gov

Planner 415-453-1453 x116

- alopez-vega@townofrossca.gov

Police Department 415-453-1453, Opt. 2

- rpata@townofrossca.gov

Public Works Director 415-453-1453
x115

- rsimonitch@townofrossca.gov

Recreation Department 415-453-6020

- rossrec@rossrecreationca.gov

- mborthwick@rossrecreationca.gov

Town Manager 415-453-1453 x107

- cjohnson@townofrossca.gov

- Ross Valley Fire Dept 415-258-4686

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 320, Ross, CA 94957

Street Address: 31 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, Ross, CA 94957

Visit us at www.townofrossca.gov