

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Mayor Elizabeth Brekhus

As we approach the festive season, I am filled with gratitude and joy to extend warm holiday greetings to each and every member of our wonderful community. The spirit of the holidays is not only about celebration but also about reflection, gratitude, and the warmth that comes from being part of a caring and vibrant community like ours.

I am delighted to share with you some heartwarming stories about the incredible efforts and dedication of our town's staff and volunteers who have gone above and beyond to make this holiday season special for all.

1. Community Outreach and Support: The collaboration between the school and the Town, including Ross Recreation, has been to the benefit of the entire community. This manifests itself in the school using the Ross Town Commons for school use, the school keeping its facilities including the blacktop open over the weekend for the community, the Town Recreation Department offering discounts to school employees, and the Town's use of the school stage as needed. Another collaboration I heard about at a recent Ross Leadership Cabinet meeting is Cedars use of the Branson School to host their school prom. As many of you know, a significant amount of volunteer activity occurs by individuals associated with the school and community groups, from or-

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Fire-Smart Tips from the UC Master Gardeners

DECEMBER: Planning Your 3 Defensible Zones for Fire Safety

When planning your fire-smart landscape, start from the home and work your way out. The first 5 feet from your home is the most critical area.

Zone 0 – 0 to 5 feet from the house

Objective: create a fire-resistant barrier around any buildings by minimizing combustible materials.

- Use non-combustible mulch and hardscaping such as concrete, brick, rocks, decomposed granite, and gravel
- Avoid planting near windows

Zone 1 – 5 to 30 feet from the house

Objective: Reduce heat and movement of flame by creating a "lean and clean" environment.

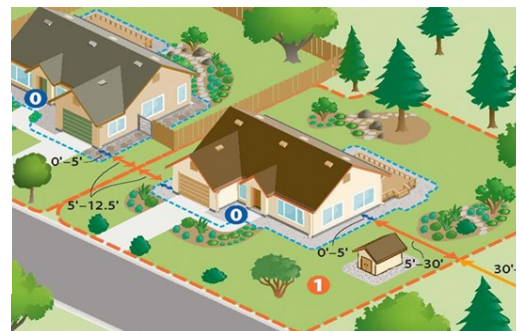
- Allow for ample plant spacing to slow the spread of flames
- Plant low-growing and well-irrigated plants closer to the home and larger shrubs and trees further away
- Break up mulched areas with hardscaping

Zone 2 – 30 to 100 feet from the house

Objective: Decrease the energy and speed of a fire by eliminating plant density.

- Allow ample plant spacing both vertically and horizontally to slow down the spread of fire
- You may need to collaborate with your neighbors to plan out this defensible zone

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT UC MARIN MASTER GARDENERS WEBSITE. <https://ucanr.edu/ucmarinmg-firesmart>



ganizing food drives to distributing essential supplies and gift giving, individual parents, students and community groups' commitment to helping fellow residents showcase the true spirit of unity and compassion.

2. Festive Decorations: Our town has transformed into a winter wonderland thanks to the hard work and creativity of our dedicated public works staff and the Ross Property Owner's Association. The beautiful decorations lining our streets, parks, and public spaces are a testament to their artistic talents and commitment to creating a magical atmosphere for all to enjoy.

3. Special Events and Activities: In collaboration with our enthusiastic volunteers, community groups including MAGC, Pixie Park, the Ross Property Owner's Association has organized a series of special events and activities including an ice skate rink, holiday lighting and a bake sale to bring joy to residents of all ages. In doing so, they provide numerous opportunities for our community to come together and celebrate the season.

4. Safety and Well-being: Our police and fire department staff remains vigilant in ensuring the safety and well-being of our residents during the holidays. Whether it's monitoring our school, working toward safe bike and scooter use, enhancing security measures for public events, or providing timely updates on weather conditions, their dedication to your safety is unwavering.

5. Thank You to Volunteers: I also want to express my deepest gratitude to all the volunteers who have generously contributed their time, energy, and skills to make our Town a better place. But in particular, I want to thank and highlight Joey Buckingham, Stephen Sutro, Mark Fritts, Laura Dewar, and Mark Kruttschnitt, for their time and dedication serving on the Advisory Design Review Group also called the ADR. This group of individuals does much of the heavy lifting for the Council as we review home renovations and projects to make this community a beautiful place to live and ensure architectural excellence in design. Your selfless efforts have not gone unnoticed, and your commitment to our community is truly commendable.

As we celebrate this festive season, let us remember the importance of kindness, generosity, and community spirit. May the holidays bring you joy, warmth, and the company of loved ones. Wishing you and your families a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and a joyful New Year!

~~Mayor Elizabeth Brekhuis

Recognition of Eric Robbe for 5 years of Service



Eric has been with the Town of Ross for five years as the Senior Building Inspector. He previously worked for the Town of San Anselmo, where he was the building inspector for 13 years. Eric earned a degree in Economics from Chico State.

While at Ross, he assisted the Town transition from a paper permitting process to a computer based Trakit system. He was instrumental in making the transition from large paper property files and plans, that took up a lot of room, to a computer-based system called Softfile.

Eric performs inspections and plan examinations throughout the day, answering building, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical code questions. Eric estimates he has visited about 50 percent of the properties in Ross. He ensures that project plans approved at council meetings are what is constructed on-site. This is no easy feat, as owners and contractors often want to change construction from the Council approved plans.

Eric is a resident of Marin County and enjoys the outdoors, hiking, and finding new hidden gems to explore. The Town of Ross recognizes Eric Robbe for his dedication to the residents of Ross and for all that he does to ensure the safety, integrity and compliance of buildings and structures with the building codes.

Three Open Seats on the Ross Town Council

The Ross Town Council is the governing body of the Town of Ross and its five members are elected by the residents. To become a Town Council candidate, you must be over 18 years of age and a resident and registered voter in the Town of Ross.

Council members are residents of the Town who volunteer their time to serve the community. They do not receive any compensation or benefits for serving on the Council (see [Public Pay for Elected Officials](#)). Members are elected to a four-year term and elections follow the same schedule as the Statewide elections and are therefore, either held in March or June of even-numbered years. The next [Council election](#) will be held on March 5, 2024.

Council members rotate positions on the Community Protection, Finance, General Government, and Public Works Committees. Committee members are responsible for working with Town staff and the public, and making recommendations to the Town Council for final action in each of these areas. For a list of Council Committee assignments click [here](#).

Four candidates filed to run in the March 5, 2024 Council election: Shadi Aboukhater, Teri Dowling, Bill Kircher (incumbent), and Mathew Salter.

For more election information visit the [County of Marin Elections Department](#).

PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the December 14, 2023 Council meeting. Staff reports and video for the meeting can be found on the Town's December 14 website page. The minutes for the meeting will be posted on this page after adoption by the Council.

Address: 210 Lagunitas Road

Applicant: David Samuel

Council Action: Approved on Consent

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 45 Poplar Avenue

Applicant: Brandt Dubz

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: Right-of-Way in front of 77 Laurel Grove

Applicant: Town of Ross

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 20 Allen Avenue

Applicant: Matthew Kennedy

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 23 Ross Common

Applicant: Mathew Salter

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Emergency Preparedness Resources

Over the past several months, Town staff has been working with Marin County Office of Emergency Services (OES) and other partnering agencies to update the "Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan" (MJLHMP). A FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan allows agencies to apply for pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation grant funding. It can also increase community ratings used for the National Flood Insurance Program, which can result in lower flood insurance premiums through the program. Staff will be bringing the draft updated MJLHMP to a Council meeting in early 2024 for public comment. The 2018 plan and other related documents can be found on the Town's "Community Preparedness" webpage: <https://www.townofross.org/emergencyservices/page/community-preparedness>. For information on the MJLHMP process and other Emergency Preparedness Resources, please visit <https://emergency.marincounty.org/>.

The Public is Invited to Review Hazard Mitigation Plan

Every few years, the County of Marin, 11 local cities and towns, and some special districts, update the Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). FEMA requires local jurisdictions outline

mitigation strategies to reduce the impacts of natural hazards, including, sea level rise, earthquakes, wildfires, floods and more. A plan update can also increase community ratings used for the National Flood Insurance Program, which can result in lower flood insurance premiums for property owners.

Marin County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023

We need your feedback! The purpose is to assess the risk of natural hazards and propose projects to reduce impacts in *your* neighborhood.

Public input is critical to help direct the work that would most benefit the communities lived experiences. Scan the QR code to learn more.



(MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL)





EYES UP, MARIN

Let's Make our Streets Safer for Everyone!

Watch out for pedestrians and watch your speed. A pedestrian hit by a car traveling at 20 mph, has a 90% chance of surviving. But the chances of surviving is only 50% if hit by a car traveling 30 mph. Increased speed of just 10 miles per hour can make a difference between life and death. Eyes up and slow down!

The Eyes Up, Marin Campaign is part of the Street Smarts Program and Safe Routes to Schools, locally funded programs of the Transportation Authority of Marin.



WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS



**Pedestrians are over
12 times more likely
to die in a collision
than drivers.**



Eyes Up, Marin
www.streetssmartsmarin.org

Street Smarts Marin is a program of TAM



WINTER REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Ross Recreation offers programs for all ages, tots to seniors. From Kids Club Afterschool and STEM with Lego's to Pickleball and Fitness for Seniors, Ross Rec has something for everyone.

Sign up for a class today!



Kids Club
Afterschool!



Tennis & Pickleball
Classes



Tots (ages 0-4)
Classes



Adult & Senior
Classes

CONTACT US

(415) 453-6020

www.rossrecreation.org

Age Friendly Ross!

ENRICHMENT

The Emeritus Students College of Marin (ESCOM) was founded at the College of Marin (COM) in 1973. A pioneer in the innovative use of community colleges for adults, the organization enhances the lives of its greater community with a diverse selection of clubs, events and classes offered online or at COM's Kentfield and Indian Valley campuses.

For more information, check out escom.marin.edu or call the campuses:

Kentfield 415.485.9658 Indian Valley 415.457.8811 ext 8322

See what adult classes Ross Rec is offering too (click [here](#))!!!



Pixie Park Open House First Sunday of Every Month at 10am

For more information and
to register please go to
their [website](#).



ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2023

Dec 25-Jan 1 All Week

Winter Holiday (Town offices closed)
Building Inspections offered on December 27 & 28.

JANUARY 2024

Jan 8	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Association, Town Hall
Jan 11	6:00	pm	Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)
Jan 15	All Day		Martin Luther King Holiday (Town offices closed)
Jan 16	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)

FEBRUARY 2024

Feb 12	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Association, Town Hall
Feb 15	6:00	pm	Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)
Feb 20	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)

MARCH 2024

Mar 11	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Association, Town Hall
Mar 14	6:00	pm	Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)
Mar 19	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)

CONTACT US

Administration Office	415-453-1453 x105	Police Department	415-453-1453, Opt. 2
- cmartel@townofross.org		- rpata@townofross.org	
Building Department	415-453-1453 x106	Public Works Director	415-453-1453 x115
- breher@townofross.org		- rsimonitch@townofross.org	
Bldg Inspection Hotline	415-453-1453 x170	Recreation Department	415-453-6020
- erobbe@townofross.org		- rossrec@rossrecreation.org	
Planning/Bldg Director	415-453-1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire Dept	415-258-4686
- rfeliciano@townofross.org		Town Manager	415-453-1453 x107
Planner	415-453-1453 x116	- cjohnson@townofross.org	
- alopez-vega@townofross.org			

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We welcome
suggestions for future
issues. Email
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