

# THE MORNING AFTER

## TOWN OF ROSS NEWSLETTER

Volume 17 | Issue 11 | November 2023

### Mayor's Corner



Mayor Elizabeth Brekhus

Did you know there is a jail located below Town Hall? I have been on the Council for 11 years and I didn't know there was a jail at Town Hall until a few months ago when someone mentioned that Town

staff was cleaning out old boxes "in the jail". Immediately I requested to see the historical Ross jail.

A few weeks ago, I needed to tour other Town facilities as we continue to discuss upgrading the civic center buildings and it had been a number of years since I last entered some of them. I took a tour of part of the fire facilities which have been shut down because they are not habitable. The portion of the firehouse that has been shut down is in terrible shape. Mayor Pro Tem Bill Kirchner, Chief Pata and Town Manager Johnson did the tour with me. For any of you who think that the facilities do not need to be replaced, or who hold to the view that they can be repaired, I can assure you,

*Continued on Page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE

2. Welcome to Roberta Feliciano
2. Marin Life Saving Skills Training
3. Planning Results
3. Open Seat on Ross School Governing Board
3. Tips from Ross PD
3. Ross School Foundation Annual Report
4. Eyes Up Marin
4. Recreation News
4. Age Friendly Winter Gardening at MAGC
5. Calendar

### Fire-Smart Tips from the UC Master Gardeners

#### NOVEMBER: Plant Spacing in Fire-smart Landscapes

##### Horizontal spacing:

- It is ideal to remove all plants within 5 feet of structures.
- Plant density can increase the further away from structures you get.
- Separate groups of plants with hardscaping to help slow down or prevent the spread of fire.
- On a **mild slope** (0-20% slope), space trees at least 10 feet apart from their dripline and space shrubs 2x their height from each other.
- On a **medium slope** (20-40%), space trees at least 20 feet apart and shrubs 4x their height.
- On a **steep slope** (over 40%), space trees at least 30 feet apart and shrubs 6x their height.
- Avoid planting trees in rows or hedges.

##### Vertical spacing:

- Remove tree branches that are within 6 feet from the ground on trees that are 18 feet or taller.
- If shrubs are under a tree, maintain a vertical clearance of 3x the shrub's height between the top of the shrub to the lowest branch of the tree.
- When creating vertical space under trees, prioritize the tree's health by ensuring that the upper two-thirds of the tree has branches.

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



that is incorrect. The fire, and for that matter, the police facilities, are in dire need of repair and the closed down portion of the fire facilities smells dank and is not safe. Under any definition of habitability, the closed down portion of the fire house is not habitable.

After we finished the tour of the fire house, we went over to Town Hall to surprise Town Manager Christa Johnson for her birthday, which Councilmembers Julie McMillan and Elizabeth Robbins kindly organized. After coffee and cupcakes, we all agreed to tour the jail together. Below is a photograph of the Council with Chief Pata and Christa Johnson in the jail. (Council Member Beach Kuhl wanted the photo to be titled "In Jail ... where they belong" but I did not think that was very funny or appropriate.)

If the size of the jail is any indication, we had very few criminal offenders in Ross because the jail is quite small. Being in the jail made me feel a little anxious – if the door shut on you, I am not sure anyone could hear you in there. Also, the wifi did not work.

I think when we do rebuild the civic center facilities, we must keep the Town jail. Like the walk-in safe that exists in the Town Clerk's office, also pictured, the Town jail is part of our past and we should maintain it for the future.

Happy Thanksgiving everyone.

~~Mayor Elizabeth Brekhus



## Welcome to Roberta Feliciano New Building & Planning Director



Roberta Feliciano is an experienced expert in city planning, with comprehensive experience in advanced and current planning. She received a Master of Architecture from UC Berkeley, and BA in Economics from UCLA.

Roberta has over eleven years of experience with reviewing development applications, writing staff reports and making presentations, providing zoning administration, and assisting the public. She has served as a Senior Planner for the City of Richmond.

Recently, Roberta led the adoption of the Richmond Livable Corridors Form Based Code, while managing the progress of the Hilltop Horizon Specific Plan. Roberta has worked on planning entitlements for various residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial projects, such as the Richmond Country Club Residential, Cherry Blossom Row Townhomes, Latitude Residential Subdivision, PowerPlant Park, WETA Ferry Terminal and Lifelong Medical Clinic. She sits on the San Pablo Planning Commission and BAAQMD Path to Clean Air Steering Committee.

Roberta lives in the East Bay with her husband and enjoys painting, walks, and bike rides in nature.



**PRESENTED BY**

**MARIN HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**  
Health, Well-being & Safety

**medical reserve corps**  
Marin County

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**

**ROSS VALLEY FIRE DEPT.**  
EST. 1922

**READY marin**

# MARIN LIFESAVING SKILLS TRAINING

**SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 2ND, 2023  
9:30 AM - 11 AM**

**FAIRFAX**

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED**  
TICKETS RELEASED ON 10/21 AT 7AM  
<https://marinMRC.eventbrite.com>

**LEARN**

- ✓ **HANDS-ONLY CPR**
- ✓ **AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR**
- ✓ **STOP THE BLEED**
- ✓ **NARGAN**



## PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the November 9, 2023 Council meeting. Staff reports and video for the meeting can be found on the Town's November 9 website page. The minutes for the meeting will be posted on this page after adoption by the Council.

**Address: 205 Lagunitas Road**  
**Applicant: Lagunitas Country Club**  
**Council Action: Approved**  
**Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Kuhl recused)**

**Address: 2 Crest Road**  
**Applicant: Benjamin & Laura Dewar**  
**Council Action: Approved**  
**Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0**

### ***Open Seat on Ross School District Governing Board***

David Rice, Superintendent of the Ross School District, announced that applications for the open seat on the Governing Board will be available through November 30th at the Ross School District office.

Interested persons who live within the boundaries of the Ross School District and who are registered voters are welcome to apply for the one existing vacancy. All applications will become public records upon receipt by the District.

Qualified candidates will be interviewed in open session by the four current Governing Board members at a meeting scheduled for that purpose. Persons wanting to submit questions for the existing Board members to consider during the interview should do so by November 22nd.

Inquiries from qualified citizens can be made by calling the Ross School District office.

Thank you for considering,



David Rice  
Superintendent  
415-457-2705 ex. 211  
[drice@rossbears.org](mailto:drice@rossbears.org)

## Tips from Ross PD

### **Trending This Month: November is the start of Holiday Season!**

With the Holidays on the horizon, some of us will travel to see family and friends. Excitement for holiday travel is tempered with the thought of leaving your home and valuables for more than a couple of days. There are a few things you can do to help keep your home safe and you more secure about going on your holiday adventures.



**Chief Pata**

Photo:

- **Hold.** Place a hold on mail and newspapers during your trip. Mail delivery is not really a problem in Ross, but if you have any packages or newspapers that stack up, those are clues that you're not home. Ask a neighbor to pick those up for you while you're gone.
- **Noise.** Leave a talk radio station on at home. The sound of people talking might scare a would-be burglar. Most burglars do not want to come face to face with residents, so hearing voices in the house might be helpful.
- **Lights.** Leaving lights on at the front porch or rear of the home can be a deterrent. Some burglars will unscrew the light so they can't be seen forcing entry. If you have a light that is out of reach, they are less likely (or able) to disable it. An advanced maneuver is to have lights come on automatically in your home. You can buy an inexpensive timer at the hardware store, or you can get an app for "smart lights".
- **Cameras.** Install cameras at the front and rear of your home. Be careful not to place them up too high. A camera that looks down will give law enforcement a good view of the top of the suspect's head and not their face. Lower your camera to a level that will capture the bad guy's face.
- **Check.** If you will be gone for more than a weekend, fill out the Ross PD on-line form for a Vacation House Check. You can find it on our website at: <https://www.townofross.org/police/webform/vacation-check-form>.

**Happy Holidays!**

**\*\*\*Ross School Foundation is a non-profit that raises funds to fill the gap between government sources and what it actually costs to run Ross School. \*\*\***

**\*\*\*Find out more here. See their latest Annual Report.\*\*\***





## EYES UP, MARIN

**Let's Make our Streets Safer  
for Everyone!**

Street Smarts is a traffic safety program that educates drivers, pedestrians and cyclists about safety issues, including distracted driving. The goal is to encourage people to adopt new attitudes and behaviors that will reduce the number of traffic-related accidents and make streets safer for everyone.

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.



**Safe Routes to School**



## EYES UP, PHONE DOWN



**80% of crashes are  
related to driver  
distraction.**



**Eyes Up, Marin**  
[www.streetssmartsmarin.org](http://www.streetssmartsmarin.org)



Street Smarts Marin is a program of



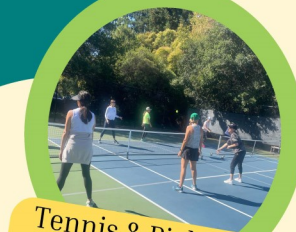
# WINTER REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

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](http://www.rossrecreation.org)

Join **Age Friendly Ross** for a gathering on **Monday, December 4th from 9:30-11:30am** at  
Marin Art & Garden Center, Livermore Room

**30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd in Ross**

Michael Bogart, Garden Manager for MAGC will speak about **Winter Gardening**.

A light breakfast will be provided.

Space is limited so please **RSVP by Nov 27th** at [agefriendly@townofross.org](mailto:agefriendly@townofross.org) or (415) 453-6020.

If you are not able to attend this Breakfast Gathering, a livestream is available on  
**www.Zoom.us Meeting ID: 820 5642 1622 Passcode: Gardening**

The recording will be available on the Age Friendly Ross website:

**[www.townofross.org/community/page/age-friendly-ross](http://www.townofross.org/community/page/age-friendly-ross)**

The Age Friendly Ross Taskforce is committed to working with residents of all ages, but with a particular focus on older adults, to listen, advocate and act in support of healthy and active aging.

Artwork by Cedars Artist Debbie Wann



# ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## NOVEMBER 2023

Nov 14 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)  
Nov 23 & 24 All Day Thanksgiving Holiday (Town offices closed)

## DECEMBER 2023

Dec 2 3:00 pm Winterfest (MAGC)  
Dec 4 9:30 am Winter Gardening presented by Age Friendly Ross (MAGC)  
Dec 11 7:00 pm Ross Property Owners Association, Town Hall  
Dec 14 6:00 pm Town Council Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)  
Dec 19 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (Town Hall & Zoom)  
Dec 25-Jan 1 All Week Winter Holiday (Town offices closed)

## 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)

## CONTACT US

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

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



We welcome  
suggestions for future  
issues. Email  
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