



# TAMALPAIS GUARDIAN

*Guardian of the Mountain since 1912*

## **President's Message: Autumn 2017**

Overcrowding: increased population, social media. Those, perhaps combined with a sometime Bay Area arrogance to assume that laws are merest suggestions, and mostly for other people, have created unwanted changes to the Watershed and State Park lands of Mount Tamalpais.

A couple years ago, the most recent survey done for the MMWD lands, showed that there are an estimated three million visitors a year. There are, to handle that, six rangers and two contract Marin Sheriff's deputies to patrol the district's 22,000 acres, of which 18,950 are on Mount Tamalpais.

In June of 1917, there were also six rangers (then called Patrolmen of the District) working for MMWD to handle the visitors to the then 10,700 acres. I know of no estimate of the annual number of visitors, but the massive increase is clear.

To quote from MMWD's board policy: "Protection of water quality is the overriding goal.....Protecting the integrity of the watershed's quality and reservoir capacity is best achieved by maintaining natural conditions on watershed lands to the greatest extent possible. ...it is the District's policy that control over land uses focuses on retaining the lands in their natural condition, allowing them to return to a natural condition, or actively restoring them. No activities will be allowed that jeopardize this resource."

Their stated policies on the conservation of species richness and habitats are just what any conservationist would hope for.

Achieving those goals has been made vastly more difficult, however, not just for the Watershed and State Parks, but all land management agencies have been caught flat-footed by the enormous increases in use of these public lands, due primarily to social media and increased human numbers in the area. Meet-ups, Twitter and other

bits of social media bring unexpected crowds to places which were once just part of the whole. Many apps misidentify State Park trails as MMWD trails...and rules can be different on the two domains. Many apps show illegal or social trails as approved trails.

The key to trying to manage the new crowds, many feel, is having adequate ranger staff to patrol the mountain to control and supervise activities. Both Mt. Tamalpais State Park and MMWD are severely understaffed and seem reluctant to hire any new rangers, cutting expenses to improve the bottom line. It seems obvious that this is a dangerous policy, tempting luck against potential disasters, while experiences and trail conditions deteriorate.

AND....the user conflicts continue. We don't hear much from people who love to be outdoors in nature in Marin who use more than one way of moving through space, though there are some: mountain bikers who hike and hikers who sometimes bike. The conflicts are between those who utilize one means of transportation.

We have learned that a narrow footpath does not work as a passageway for both activities, really.

The louder the arguments, the more taxpayer's money is spent on appeasing both sides, as politicians try to keep it all together.

Public agencies add to the problems, it seems, by developing plans which result in wide area publicity about trails which were once used by small numbers. Now, Bay Area-wide and more users come to try out the formerly little-used areas, increasing the opportunities for conflicts and more discontent.

Perhaps less is more.

**Janice Barry, MD**



Photo by Kathy Hyde Sennello

## Phoenix Lake's Log Cabin

*By Kathy Hyde Sennello*

The iconic log cabin at Phoenix Lake desperately needs restoration work before age and insect damage render it unsalvageable. It was constructed circa 1887 with the cupola added in the early 1890's. While redwood construction is unfriendly to insects, the log cabin is unique in that the bark was left on the redwood logs thus giving various insects shelter. The accompanying picture clearly shows the damage the pileated woodpeckers have inflicted on the structure. Mike Swezy (MMWD) and Monica Stafford (One Tam) graciously guided a group of us in June to view the cabin and informed us of its history. Foundation work was completed in the 1990's but much remains to be done to salvage this architectural treasure we all love.

### Attention TCC members:

If you are 62 years or older and do not have an **"America the Beautiful" National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Senior Pass**, now is the time to purchase one! The current price for this lifetime pass is \$10.00 for seniors but as of 8-28-17 the price will skyrocket to \$80.00 and the annual senior pass will rise to \$20.00! This pass admits you and your party of up to 3 other adults into more than 2,000 recreational sites managed by six federal agencies including National Parks and Monuments, BLM lands, Forest Service, and US Fish and Wildlife.

The surest way to obtain your pass is to go to the Muir Woods kiosk and purchase it onsite. You will receive your card on the spot. You can also go online to [www.nps.gov/muwo](http://www.nps.gov/muwo) and click on "fees and passes", but the system is currently overloaded and may take 9-12 weeks for delivery of your card. You will also be charged an additional \$10.00 processing fee. Best to go to Muir woods, but whatever way you choose, make sure you sign up before 8-28-17!

**Tamalpais Conservation Club**

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The Tamalpais Guardian is published three times a year by the:

Tamalpais Conservation Club  
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 Marin Art & Garden Center

**OFFICERS:**

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**DIRECTORS:**

Basia Crane, Chris Barry, Steven Schoonover

**MEETINGS:**

**Monthly:** Board of Directors meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Tamalpais Conservation Club office at 7p.m. Members are welcome.

**MEMBERSHIP FOR INDIVIDUALS:**

Regular \$ 25.00/yr  
 Life \$250.00/one time only

**Send Change of Address and Membership to:**

Tamalpais Conservation Club  
 P.O. Box 532  
 Ross, CA 94957  
 OR  
 PAYPAL [tccmarin.org](http://tccmarin.org)

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 Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Gift: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Tamalpais Conservation Club Finance Statement**

FY May 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017  
 Submitted by Perry Cole, Treasurer

**OPERATION RECEIPTS - 2017**

Dividends & Interest	\$17,284
Donations - all types	\$595
Dues - all types	\$1,507
Reimbursement	\$1,151
Book Sales	\$67

**Total Receipts** **\$20,604**

**OPERATION EXPENSES - 2017**

Licenses & Taxes	\$302
Computer: Internet/Web	\$448
Funding TCC's Goals	\$4,100
Dues & Subscriptions	\$770
Insurance	\$2,859
Office Supplies	\$26
Postage	\$1,111
Printing	\$2,192
Professional Fees	\$240
Travel & Meetings	\$846
Rent - MAGC & USPS	\$3,766
Utilities	\$100

**Total Expenses** **\$16,760**

**Operating Net Gain/Loss** **\$3,844**

**TOTAL ASSETS AS OF APRIL 30, 2017**

Endowment Fund (May 1, 2016)	\$620,978
Money Market Fund	\$14,084
Union Bank Checking	\$2,417
Plus Income (see above)	\$20,604
Less Expenses (see above)	-\$16,760
FY Change in Market Value	\$17,762

**TOTAL ASSETS AS OF APRIL 30, 2017** **\$659,085**

*Financial Statement continues on last page*

## **Financial Statement—continued**

There was a notable change for the reported fiscal year '16-17. TCC lost the lease with Marin Art & Garden Center and did not find another office space. Consequently, the office contents are in storage. This has resulted in a seven fold savings in rent and has effected the bottom line in that TCC had a net gain of \$3,844. The gain continues to increase, so that we can fund our goals more easily. For instance, TCC donated \$4,100 to Friends of Mt. Tamalpais; this funding fulfilled our final obligation to Mt. Tam State Park which was \$25,000. Market value of securities have increased about 2.5% for the FY.

Janice Barry has been added as a second signatory to the Morgan/Stanley and Union Bank accounts.

### **Attention!**

We will not be holding our semi-annual September picnic meeting. We look forward to seeing you next May.