



*New Ross Tradition (pg 2)*

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**MISSION**  
 The Ross Property Owners Association (RPOA) has represented Ross Residents since 1961. Our mission is "to provide funds and services for

the benefit of the general community of the Town of Ross." Through the financial support of its members, the RPOA has worked to inform residents of important issues and to contribute to the continual improvement of the community.

The Association holds monthly meetings at 7:15 pm at the Town Hall on the Monday immediately preceding the Town Council meeting. RPOA members are encouraged to participate in our monthly meetings. Issues pertaining to Town matters are discussed, particularly those currently before the Council.



## CAN WE CLONE HIM?

Tom Vallee, Fire Chief

"It's been a great (fire truck) ride," exuberantly exclaimed our Fire Chief, Tom Vallee. Fifty-one years of town knowledge, extraordinary perspicacity, wit, wisdom, spirit of collegiality, and earning the residents' perpetual confidence that our town is safe are some of Tom's skills.

How fortunate are we to have had Tom in the department for all of these years?

Growing up in Ross, Tom has incantatory memories of spirited community events. One old tradition was the jovial, highly-attended post-Christmas bonfire built from residents' Christmas trees. The volunteer fire department that existed until 1986 also brought propitious connection, trust and exhilaration amongst residents. "We definitely had an appreciation for living the simple "good life" that this beautiful area in nature afforded us."

While attending Cal, Tom joined the Ross Fire Department in 1975 as a volunteer. In 1981 he became a salaried fireman. When the department was given its own chief in 2008, separate from the police department, Tom was the logical and best choice for Fire Chief.

Besides feeling a satisfaction that his department has provided excellence service to our community, Tom also feels an appreciative awareness that the group has been like a second family. "As a fireman one lives with his partners for days on end. The

degree of dependability and trust one must feel in his partners is palpable." That solid bonding is pervasive in the Fire House as well: support, humor, spirit, concern, expertise.

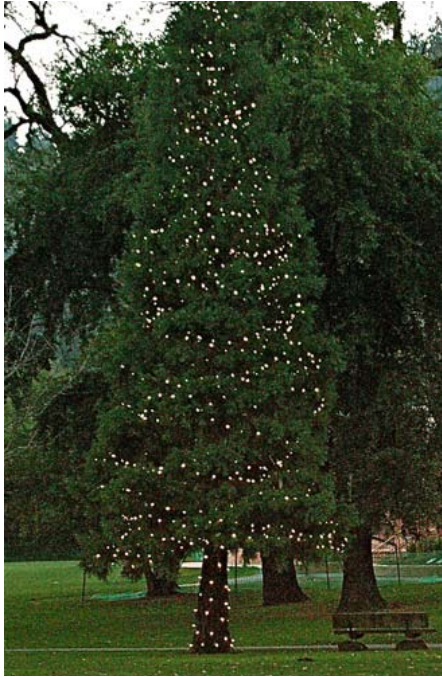
Should the fire department consolidate with the three other towns in Ross Valley in the next few months, Tom feels totally assured that it will be a positive change for our town. "Our staff remains, our equipment stays, but we gain the assets of the other three towns."

With his wife of twenty-seven years, Tammy, Tom has two children, Amanda, 25 years old, the communications director for a transport company, and Matt, 23, a medic in the San Antonio National Guard. Since Tom plans on retiring if the Fire Department consolidation is approved, his family will have more time with him; their gain, our loss. Travelling with Tammy and volunteer work will also feature in Tom's retirement.

Message to residents: Prepare your home for a flood or earthquake. Fill the sandbags and have them ready before the flood arrives.

## THROW YOUR HAT IN THE RING

The terms of Council Members Scot Hunter, Chris Martin, and Rick Strauss will end this year. If you are interested in running for a 4-year council seat, you must be a registered voter and a resident of Ross. The filing period ends March 9, 2012 and extends to March 14, if any of the incumbents choose not to file for reelection. Contact Linda Lopez at [llopez@townofross.org](mailto:llopez@townofross.org) for any questions regarding the filing process.



## A NEW ROSS TRADITION

Ross, for the first time, celebrated the holiday season with the lighting of an evergreen tree on the Common thanks to the efforts of Eileen Sheldon and the Ross Recreation Auxiliary. Prior to the lighting, visitors and residents were serenaded by the Ross School Choir and the Branson Chorus and many of the downtown merchants joined in the festivities with delicious treats of cookies and beverages. With sirens blaring, Santa Claus arrived on Ross Fire Engine 18 to the delight of children and adults alike. Mayor Carla Small did the honors of the official lighting to the "oohs and ahs" of the crowd at this beautiful sight. Thank you Ross Recreation Auxiliary for this merry and memorable occasion and for enhancing our town with this wonderful new tradition!

## GRAND OPENING OF THE ROSS SCHOOL MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM

On December 5, 2011, Ross school students celebrated the opening of the seven million dollar, 12,500 sq. ft multi-purpose room at their first all school assembly. After opening remarks by Board of Trustee members, the architectural firm of Quattrochi Kwok Architects and Don Roberts of Wright Contracting described the process from vision to reality. Mayor Carla Small and Todd Blake with assistance from Student Council members Hall Darden, Bobby Hobart, and John Kern cut the ribbon.

Highlighting the program was the contribution of items (ranging from books, photos, and poems) to THE TIME CAPSULE by many town organizations, as well as students and teachers from Grades 8 through Kindergarten. Determined by a vote of the student body, THE TIME CAPSULE will be opened in 25 years!! The ceremony closed with a rousing rendition of "Grand Old Flag" by the Ross School chorus led by music teacher David Howitt. Parents and guests were invited to stay for coffee to meet the new Interim Superintendent, Chris Carter and marvel at this state of the art new addition to the Ross School.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

ROSS VALLEY PLAYERS  
*Thursdays - Sundays*

***Twentieth Century*** March 22<sup>ND</sup> - April 22<sup>ND</sup>  
***Night of the Iguana*** May 17<sup>TH</sup> - June 17<sup>TH</sup>

ROSS SCHOOL

### GARDEN TOUR

Saturday, May 12<sup>TH</sup>, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM  
Tickets may be purchased online in February

ST. JOHN'S

### RUMMAGE SALE

THURSDAY, MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>, **Pre-Sale Party** 5:30 - 8:00 PM  
(items can be purchased at this time)  
FRIDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
SATURDAY, MAY 19<sup>TH</sup>, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

## MOYA LIBRARY / ROSS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### 2012 FIRST FRIDAY FORENOON PROGRAMS AND ANNUAL EVENTS

The First Friday Forenoon lectures are held in the Livermore Pavilion at the Marin Art and Garden Center. The programs begin at 11:00 AM and last about an hour. Following each presentation is an informal "meet the speaker" wine and nibbles reception. A donation of \$5.00 per person is requested. For information, visit [www.moya-rhs.org](http://www.moya-rhs.org).

- MAR 2<sup>ND</sup>** Laurel Collins, Geomorphologist, presents a program about the history and evolution of the Corte Madera Creek
- APR 6<sup>TH</sup>** John Martini, Retired National Park Service Ranger, speaks on the Civil War military in the San Francisco Bay Area
- MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>** Mary Currie, Golden Gate Bridge District Spokesperson, highlights the 75th anniversary events and history of the Bridge
- JUN 1<sup>ST</sup>** (fundraiser) David Keihn, Film Historian
- SEPT 21<sup>ST</sup>** Annual meeting
- OCT 5<sup>TH</sup>** Matt Cerkel, Marin Municipal Water District Ranger, Centennial Events and history
- NOV 2<sup>ND</sup>** TBA

## TOWN CODE: WORKING ON YOUR HOME ON THE WEEKENDS

9.20.035 (a) It is unlawful for any person or construction firm within the town limits to perform any construction operation before the hours of 8:00 AM or after 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday of each week and not at any time on Saturday, Sunday or the other holidays listed in Section 9.20.060; except that:

*Continued on PAGE 3...*

## MERCHANTS' HIGHLIGHTS



### ANTIQUe FURNITURE RESTORATION

26 Ross Common

Zoltan Szegedi, owner of Antique Furniture Restoration, emigrated to the United States from Hungary in 1978, and established his business in Ross in 1984.

At 14 years of age, he was accepted at a four year technical school in his home city of Budapest where he pursued a highly rigorous curriculum in furniture restoration. It included not only courses in basic carving, marquetry, and refinishing, but also classes in biology, design, drawing and other electives.

Likening it to fine art, his passion and what makes him most happy is restoring fancy European 18th century antiques. As a highly skilled craftsman, he also restores furniture which might require refinishing, replacing missing parts or repairing a piece which might be broken or damaged.

He regrets that there are few schools where one can learn this highly specialized art, and wonders what its future is.

We are fortunate that he established his unique shop in Ross!! His hours are 8 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Saturday. Telephone # 461-6659.

*TOWN CODE Continued from PAGE 2...*

- 1) Work done solely in the INTERIOR of a building or structure, the performance of WHICH DOES NOT CREATE ANY NOISE THAT IS AUDIBLE FROM THE EXTERIOR of the building or structure; or
- 2) Work actually physically performed SOLELY BY THE OWNER of the property on SATURDAY BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 10:00 AM AND 4:00 PM AND NOT AT ANY TIME ON SUNDAYS OR HOLIDAYS listed in Section 9.20.060 herein.



### ANN COGNATO

RESPECTED ROSS RESIDENT

For many parents who raised their children here in Ross, life was the American Dream. Ann and her husband, Frank, raised two children here; Ann's family also includes now four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Sadly, Frank passed away one year ago.

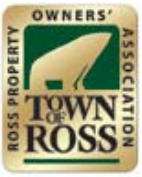
Although she grew up in San Francisco, Ann's aunt lived in Lansdale, a section of San Anselmo that had its own train station. Imagine being a child, riding the ferry from San Francisco, transferring in Sausalito to the train, and an hour later hearing the conductor sing in that melodious tenor endemic to all train conductors, "LANS-dale, LANS-dale". From these paradisaical visits, Ann knew that she wanted to live in Ross as an adult. Fortuitously, Ann's parents built a house on Berry Lane in Ross.

In 1945 Ann married Frank Cognato. Spotting Mrs. Mordecai's large lot on Redwood Drive, Frank asked if they could purchase a piece of her property. Ta-da! The Cognato home was built; it remains Ann's home since 1954.

Filled with vivid memories of her blessed life, Ann highlights three: Ross Fourth of July Parades in which she and Frank rode in their Model-A accompanied by their daughter Donna on horseback; their 50th wedding anniversary party at The Event Center in San Rafael with 200 friends and a 12-piece band; and their trip to Canada in one of their Model-A's.

But Ann's most exemplary memory of her happy life in Ross is their backyard. With their home so close to Ross School, the two colonies of her children's friends spent most afternoons in this "meeting place". Vigorous cannonballs into the pool, spirited games, and whoops of innocent laughter wafted into her home. With little traffic and few cars on Redwood Drive, the sorority and fraternity safely sauntered between the Cognatos' backyard and Ross Common for their adventures.

Like others, Ann hopes that the tranquility and nature-filled activities of our small town remain: MAGC, Phoenix Lake and its picnic area, and, most importantly, that our Common is preserved for spontaneous play.



ROSS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 747

ROSS, CA 94957

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## ROSS PROPERTY OWNER'S ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to ALL RESIDENTS of the Ross community, including those living in Kentfield within the Ross School border. We encourage all to attend the once-a-month meeting to voice your opinion on town matters.

We hope you will support the Association this year and help to insure that the RPOA continues its great tradition of service to the community.

General Membership Dues: \$25.00; Friends of the Ross Bear: \$100.00 or more (any amount over \$25.00 is tax deductible). Please make your check payable to: Ross Property Owners' Association and mail to: RPOA, P.O. Box 747, Ross, CA 94957.

### REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Held the 2<sup>ND</sup> Thursday of the month in the Town Hall

### RPOA MEETINGS

Held at 7:15 PM on the Monday preceding the Town Council Meeting in the Town Hall

### TOWN'S E-MAIL

To join the Town's email list and receive Town notices, contact Linda Lopez: [llopez@townofross.org](mailto:llopez@townofross.org)



Please visit RPOA's website to view this newsletter and for more information about our organization:  
[www.RPOAross.org](http://www.RPOAross.org)

## RPOA NEWS Briefs

- The Membership Request Letter was mailed in January. Please renew your membership using the enclosed envelope included in the letter. We look forward to the same wide community support that we have had in the past.
- We are seeking an additional member to serve as Member-at-Large. Please contact any Board member if you might be interested.
- Do you have an idea for a project for the town that the Association could take on? Please let us hear from you. In the past we have tackled projects of all sizes, so think big if you wish.



## ROSS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSN. BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2012

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*President*  
Box 179

ANNE HICKEY  
*Vice-President*  
Box 216

IRIS WINEY  
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Box 1472

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Box 1409

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*Member-at-Large*  
Box 631

CATE BABCOCK  
*Member-at-Large*  
Box 492

[www.RPOAross.org](http://www.RPOAross.org)