



The MARA News

Spring 2013 Edition

Montecito Area Resident's Association

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www.montecitoresidents.com

In the event of an emergency or noise issues, call the SRPD at 485-3000

Now is the time to join MARA. To become a MARA Member or renew your annual membership, please send your name, address, telephone number, and email address along with a \$10 check per person (\$5 for seniors) payable to "Montecito Area Residents Association", to MARA P.O. Box 150266, San Rafael, CA 94915-0366.

In addition to residents, MARA extends a welcome to our neighborhood retail, commercial and other organizations, and invites them to become members.

MARA: 17th Annual General Meeting

Sat., May 4, 2013 – Aldersley, 326 Mission St.

Met your neighbors in the Aldersley meeting hall at 9:00 to 11:30 am. After meet and greet and refreshments, the key note speaker this year will be Kate Colin, our newest member of the San Rafael City Council, filling the seat recently vacated by newly elected Assemblyman Marc Levine. Kate was approved on a unanimous vote and was chosen from 14 applicants, who all made presentations to the City Council. Her appointed term lasts through December. Kate has been a city planning commissioner for seven years and has lived in San Rafael for 16 years with her family. During her presentation to the council, she said she plans to run for the City Council seat in November. If elected, she'd serve a four-year term starting January 2014.



Kate Colin, City Council member

Also on the Agenda:

Three board member's terms are expiring - nominations and election will be held .

A continuous loop of images of homes in the neighborhood along with some historic photos will be played in the background on Aldersley's large screen T.V., to be enjoyed by all.

Neighborhood History Walk

Wed., May 22nd, 6 pm

The Marin History Museum will be holding a walking tour of our neighborhood. Contact the Museum for further details:

www.marinhistory.org ph: (415) 454-8538,
info@marinhistory.org

Neighborhood Garage Sale

Sat. & Sun., May 18 and 19

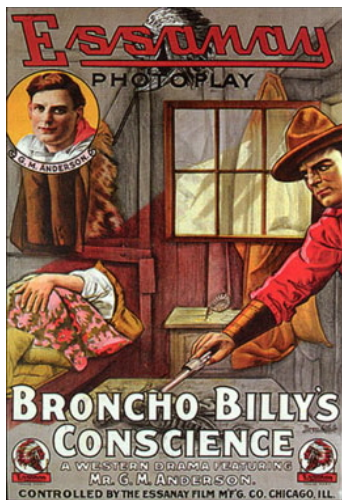
A neighborhood-wide garage sale has been planned. Notices will be placed in the Marin IJ, Craig's list, and flyers will be posted around. To take advantage of this opportunity just set up a table in front of your house and offer all your excess treasure.

Broncho Billy and The Essanay Film Company in Happy Valley

By Contanza Perry

There was a [happy] valley with farmland and cattle ranches. The little nearby towns gave the area a decided western flavor. A stagecoach still ran over the “mountains” on a dusty road from San Rafael to Fairfax to Bolinas. And the mountains, Tamalpais to the southwest, Loma Alto to the north, and Pine Mountain to the west, protected the area from ocean fog and rain, spreading out the cloud cover and letting in the sunshine. San Rafael, population 5,000 had a lot going for it when Essanay Film Company arrived on May 31st, 1911.

In 1907, Gilbert Anderson and George Spoor founded Essanay Studios (“S and A” for Spoor and Anderson), one of the predominant early movie



studios headquartered in Chicago. Gilbert Anderson acted in and directed over 400 short films for the studio. Although he played a wide variety of characters in these, he gained enormous popularity in a series of 148 silent western shorts, becoming the first cowboy star of the movies, "Broncho Billy." [1] Originally spelled “Broncho Billy.”

Spoor stayed in Chicago running the company like a factory, while Anderson traveled the western United States to California by train with a film crew shooting movies. Many of these were shot in small towns with trains running through them. These were: San Rafael, Fairfax, Niles and Santa Barbara. Essanay Film Company rented four houses near the Eastside Ballpark in San Rafael. Today’s addresses would be: 168 Palm Ave, 130 Palm Ave, 448 Grand Ave. and 1301 Second Street. [2] The film lot was on the Ball Park. The “Ball Park” where Essanay filmed in 1911 was located on Irwin Street at 3rd and 4th street across from the French Quarter Victorians where there are medical and dental offices today. It took up the whole block. The portable stage was sitting outside of right field on

the ball park. No one told the San Rafael Colts baseball team. Their star player, Roland Tothoroth, remembered, “One day we went to practice and Lo and Behold! There was a bunch of Cowboys and Indians and Horses all over the field.” [3] Roland Tothoroh joined Essanay the next year (1912) in Niles, CA and became a camera operator. In 1916 he went to Hollywood and became cameraman for Charlie Chaplin.

Essanay’s first film in San Rafael was called “The Outlaw Samaritan.” It opened with ‘Jack Mason the Outlaw’ (Anderson) robbing an express train singlehandedly. It was filmed along the train route between San Rafael and Fairfax. In 1911 Fairfax looked like a ready-made western set, the surrounding hills adding to the terrific backgrounds.

Over 2000 films were produced in the 10 years that Essanay made films. “The Great Train Robbery,” (in which Anderson played two roles - a robber and a passenger – for 50 cents an hour), was the longest feature film ever made at that time. [1903] [5] In 1912 they moved from Happy Valley (San Rafael) to Niles, CA a small town in Alameda County near Fremont, CA., where the nearby Western Pacific railroad route was a perfect location for the filming of Westerns. Eventually they moved to Los Angeles as it was becoming the film capital of the world.

Many Broncho Billy westerns were shot in Niles, California, along with “The Tramp” featuring Charlie Chaplin. In Niles they made a picture a week. He recalled in 1968 that he made early westerns “like popcorn”. [4]

Anderson’s legacy:

Gilbert Anderson was honored in 1998 with his image on a US postage stamp called “Broncho Billy.” In 2002, he was inducted into the Western Performers Hall of Fame at National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma



City, OK. Anderson has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame! [6] A Chicago park near the Chicago Essanay Studio lot was named Broncho Billy Park in his honor. [7]

Broncho Billy Anderson lived his last senior years at the Motion Picture & Television Country House and Hospital on Mulholland Drive in Woodland Hills. Niles, part of Fremont, which was the site of the Western Essanay Studios, holds an annual Bronco Billy Silent Film Festival.

Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum is located at 37417 Niles Boulevard, Fremont, CA open noon to 4:00 PM Saturday and Sunday. They show rare silent films with piano music every Saturday night. Every week. Year round.

<http://www.nilesfilmmuseum.org/>

- (1) Arnie Bernstein, *Hollywood on Lake Michigan: 100 Years of Chicago & the Movies*, Lake Claremont Press, 1998, p. 37.
- (2) Kiehn, David. (2003). *Broncho Billy and the Essanay Film Company*. Berkeley, Calif: Farwell Books. p. 162.
- (3) Marin Journal June 1, 1911 page 4
- (4) "Bronco Billy Anderson is Dead at 88.". *New York Times* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_Times> . 1971-01-21.
- (5) Richard West in the Los Angeles Times. Jan. 21, 1971
- (6) Richard West in the Los Angeles Times. Jan. 21, 1971
- (7) "Bronco Billy Anderson is Dead at 88.". *New York Times* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_Times> . 1971-01-21.



A FINE WAY TO FIND A DOG

By Scott Kaplan

I've been fortunate enough to spend the better part of the last 35 years in the company of dogs. I'm partial to Labrador Retrievers, so I go to Adopt-A-Dog from Guide Dogs for the Blind. They have a constant turnover of "career-changed" dogs (the politically correct term for dogs that won't make it as service dogs. Don't call them "rejects.")

Dogs are taken out of service or training for a wide variety of reasons and at a wide range of ages. There are older retired guide dogs and breeders, as well as dogs weeded out of training at ages from 8 months to 24 months old that are deemed unfit for service because of slight physical defects that could shorten their effective service life, reasons of temperament- like being too timid or not assertive enough – or simply being difficult to train.

Some of these characteristics may seem like big challenges for an adoptive owner, but on balance they are certainly less of a challenge than buying a puppy and training it, or adopting a Pound dog without knowing its background.

My wife and I have adopted 3 career-changed dogs, each with a different "problem" and each with a different personality. However, they all came to us healthy, well-treated, schooled in basic obedience, house-broken and very ready to assume a place in a new home.

Adoption procedures are evolving at Guide Dogs. There is an interview process. Everyone and their cousin wants a "mature model dog" who is already prepared for behaving perfectly in a home with kids, in the owner's office, at a party and on vacation.

Unfortunately these dogs are in short supply and probably will go to a large active family after the family has been on a waiting list a couple of years.

If you are ready and able to take on a younger dog that hasn't made it very far into training, you'll have a bigger selection of dogs to choose from and may be matched with a dog in less than two weeks.

Guide Dogs breeds and trains Labradors and Golden Retrievers. For a tax deductible contribution and an investment of your time and patience you can share your home and life with a dog that is ready to be your best friend for years to come.



Most career change dogs are adopted, but others may go on to work in search and rescue, hearing or service dog training, agility, cancer detection, or pet therapy. To learn more about adopting a career-change dog from Guide Dogs for the Blind in San Rafael – their process and fees – please visit their website at www.guidedogs.com.



Electric Vehicle Charging Station at Montecito Plaza

Montecito Plaza Shopping Center has stepped into the new century by installing an electric car charging station near the Redwood Credit Union and Massage Envy. Parking is limited to “EVs while charging only,” but so far it has usually been “ICE’d” – i.e. occupied by a vehicle with an Internal Combustion Engine (ICE)!

Montecito Area’s Market Basket

By Kay Corlett

Our neighborhood enjoys an impressive variety of fresh and canned food for sale at markets large and small. If you are new to this locale or haven’t spent time strolling through it, you might be surprised at the wide selection of edibles from all over the world to be found right here.

For the past 20 years, **ASIAN MARKET** with “a complete selection of Asian food” has been located at 5 Mary Street, and is open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Mon-Sat. The phone is 415-459-7133



Unique to Marin, this exotic food source is operated by Hong Kong natives Alex and Winnie who are always ready to interpret labels of shelved items, or direct the shopper to ingredients for Asian dishes. Many staples can be found in the refrigerated cases: fresh meat, fruits, vegetables. Live crab and lobster are also on hand. I have seen fresh durian there -- you know, that fruit that looks like a hedgehog, has

a succulent, creamy filling and smells like stinky socks. And as you might expect, the fresh ginger root is at its best here at the best price.

It was hoped by some that Far Eastern cooking demonstrations might be offered, but the market lacks adequate space for that. However, Winnie and Alex are always ready to offer instruction and advice if asked.

Asian patrons come from all over the county -- Thai, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Burmese.... Other patrons are from Laos, Brunei, East Malaysia, East Timor, Indonesia or the Philippines, so you can imagine what an amazing variety of food this small market offers.

Also to be found are an astonishing array of bowls, sauce dishes, tea mugs and pots, cooking pots, woven baskets, etc., and at the New Year a glorious display of greeting cards are available for sale.

Across Mary Street from the **Asian Market** is **WHOLE FOODS MARKET**, which, with its parking lot, takes up the whole block between Mary and Union Streets. Part of a Texas-based chain, Whole Foods celebrated its 16th anniversary in San Rafael on April 9. Andrea, the market manager told me that a special anniversary event is planned for April 20: “an Earth Day Birthday.” When the first **Whole Foods Market** opened in Mill Valley it was such a success that the San Rafael location was soon opened and is highly favored by many residents for its healthful fresh fruits and vegetables and wide variety of bakery goods. Andrea explains that the market “offers high quality natural, organic foods

available to support the community. Its in-house **365** brand contains no artificial colors, sweeteners, flavors, no high-fructose, corn syrup or hydrogenated oils.” Several aisles at the front of the store resemble an apothecary shop, with vitamins, minerals, oils, unguents, and a wide variety of non-prescription medications. For those who suffer from calf and leg cramps, particularly those that disturb sleep at night, “Hyland’s Leg Cramps” can be very helpful.



For working people, especially, the vast delicatessen is full of delicious choices of casseroles, salads, soups, and cheeses. The bakery is brimming with mouth-watering cakes, cookies and pies. Independent bread companies’ baguettes and rolls are displayed also; I would mention Acme French bread, which has outstanding flavor and texture and freezes beautifully. The Acme owner/baker is a protégé of the famous chef Alice Watters.

Along with the fresh produce are displays of flowers and plants and a full selection of frozen foods and dairy products and bulk cereals, grains, etc., also a full meat, poultry and fish market. At the front of the store one can find a pumpkin-colored “Weekly Specials” bulletin which is helpful, and “The Whole Deal” bi-monthly newsletter of recipes and coupons.

Fatimah and Parviz Sohi opened **JASMINE MARKET** 9 years ago at 307 Third Street, in the Montecito Shopping Center; phone 415-459-4866. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. The shop is shiningly clean and well ordered.

Like the Asian Market mentioned above, it is *exotic* in that many of the items available there are unfamiliar to most Americans, or are prepared with unknown spices and seasonings. Many different kinds of rice are on hand; there are 10 varieties of Basmati rice (one is smoked) and many choices of olives, pickled cucumbers, fresh tomatoes, eggplant, artichokes, quince preserves, sour cherries, pomegranate syrup, halvah (which is made with sesame seed) and lots of cookies and sweets.

Several types of Persian sandwiches are freshly made here; call to find out what kind is available.

Primarily a sport fishermen’s supply store, **WESTERN BOAT AND TACKLE** at 101 Third Street, 454-4177, is a fine place to get your fresh crab. The crab boiler outside the door indicates that this is the place to find the divine crustacean in season which comes from Bolinas. Live crab is available too, of course. **Western B&T** also has a variety of fish and shellfish from California Shellfish Company of San Francisco. Good clam chowder can be purchased here also.



TRADER JOE’S, 337 Third Street, San Rafael, 415-454-9530

The busy captain of this market, Marco Leon, gave me his view of T. Joe’s goal, succinctly stated: “Trader Joe’s mission is to give customers the best food and beverage values to be found anywhere and to provide them with the information required for informed buying decisions. These are provided with a dedication to the highest quality of customer satisfaction delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, fun, individual pride and company spirit.” The employer/employee relationship is very good, each respecting and admiring the other; thus the aim is customer satisfaction, such a simple thing but so important.

From my own shopping experience I've found this to be true. Just ask any employee a question about any product and you will be personally guided to the item and provided any information you require or will be taken to the employee who can best answer your questions.



Prices at Trader Joe's are most reasonable, even though the cost of food in general continues to escalate. The \$2-a-bottle Charles Shaw wines, affectionately referred to by customers as "Two Buck Chuck," has recently been increased to \$2.45. Dairy prices have risen steadily too, although the store resisted charging more until recently.

Several times a year, shoppers can pick up a copy of the "Frequent Flyer" which showcases particular items that are new or deemed to be of special value, a handy guide. Although having no connection to Trader Joe, the "I Love Trader Joe's Vegetarian Cookbook" by Chris Kolchak Peters is full of easy and inventive recipes.

UNITED MARKET, 515 Third Street, 415-454-8912 (also on the Miracle Mile in San Anselmo). This food emporium was first opened in Marin by the Saccone family of San Francisco in the 1950s. It was purchased by

Bob Usante and Bill Daniels in the early 1980s.

The new partnership was full of energy, ideas and ambition as in the extensive remodeling, which took place early in their administration and the many additions to the inventory. Remodeling takes place about every 10 years.

This store carries an astonishing array of foodstuffs, wines, and liquors, special items such as Kosher



foods, Italian canned tomatoes and cookies, English and German specialties, etc. The bakery's pastries and cakes are top of the line and there is an extensive garden center at the side of the parking lot. The market attracts shoppers from northern and southern Marin because of its competitive prices and top quality fresh fruits and vegetables.

United Market's management has always been involved in the community. The market is supportive of many charities and never misses a chance to give space to community groups that are helping to improve our way of life.



San Rafael High School Facilities

SRHS Grounds - we have been informed that the grounds of the high school are open to the public for walking, etc. (NOT for organized sports - for that, call the School District) anytime school is **not in session**.

SRHS dramatic / musical presentations - our local high school puts on great presentations for the public! Get info on the high school's home page at: "www.sanrafael.srscs.org"