

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Julie McMillan
Mayor

Although we continue to be challenged by so many things, most recently horrific wildfires in the Wine Country, we still have much to be thankful for:

The Marin Art and Garden Center Board honored **Diane Doodha** at its recent 75th Anniversary celebration. Joining the Board in 2008 and serving as President since 2010, Diane was recognized as “the most important person to MAGC since founder Caroline Livermore in 1945” with her extraordinary work and vision. Thank you, Diane!

Dedicated Ross Property Owners' Association members **Anne Hickey**, **Iris Winey** and **John Kieckhefer** recently

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Modernizing the Civic Center



Our Town's public safety building, which currently includes police, fire, and paramedics services, was originally constructed in 1927. It has served our community well over those 93 years, but now it is physically and functionally obsolete, with extensive structural deficiencies, and is not compliant with Essential Service Act (ESA) requirements for public safety buildings. A construction management company found it would be cost prohibitive to correct the numerous deficiencies and non-compliance issues.

In 2019 the Town and Fire Department hired a consultant, Citygate, to help us with fire protection planning. Citygate concluded that alternative approaches to fire protection in Ross are possible, based on the relatively low number of working fires over two-year period studied. In that same time period, the Ross station responded to 627 calls for service with 292 of the dispatches requiring lights and sirens. Of the 292 emergency calls, only 3 were for actual fires; 89% were for medical issues; and 10% were for other call types such as service calls and public assistance. Citygate also analyzed the impact on our current level of services if we received a response from a neighboring fire station, either San Anselmo (1.1 miles away) or Kentfield (0.65 miles away).

Relocating the fire station would increase response times for fires and non-medical calls for service by approximately 2 minutes. Maintaining an ambulance at the Ross Station would maintain the same response times for 85% of medical calls and would increase response times for the other 15% of calls by approximately 2 minutes when the ambulance is committed on other incidents. Average response times are currently 7:55 minutes. The increase to 9:55 would be similar to outer suburban averages. Currently, dispatch is already coordinated between San Anselmo,

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retired from the RPOA Board. Collectively they served our Town for nearly *half a century*: Anne - 32 years; Iris - 12 years; John - 5 years. Each worked tirelessly, and we thank them.

Parents and the community are excited that children are finally able to return to **Ross School**, with distance learning outside. Soon students will also be back at **Branson**, which is similarly using outdoor areas as classrooms. Both schools have worked diligently for months to navigate a complex environment for safe reopenings.

Next weekend, on Friday, October 16 (4-9 pm) and Saturday, October 17 (10 am-8:30 pm), the Town will close Redwood Avenue (at the Common) and set up tables and chairs for outdoor dining. Thanks to our charming restaurants (**Crown & Crumpet; Marche aux Fleurs; Tony Tutto; Trattoria Fresco; Village Corner**), we can enjoy a delicious meal outside with our neighbors.

Finally, thanks to **RossReady**, we have another opportunity to get better prepared for emergencies with another walkie talkie training on October 11. While this will target our new Winship Park Fire-Wise Block Captains, all residents are welcome to join the Zoom call. If you'd like to join, email rossready94957@gmail.com. We thank **Gil Fleitas** and **Roger Dickerson** for spearheading these community-based volunteer programs.



We continue to hold all fire victims and fire fighters in our thoughts and prayers. Please stay safe! ■

November 3, 2020 Election

Vote by Mail

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 all active, registered voters will automatically receive a vote by mail ballot for the November 3, 2020 election. Ballots were mailed to voters starting October 5th. Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked on or before November 3rd, and received by the Elections Department by November 20th. If you would like to track your ballot, register at <https://california.ballottrax.net/voter/>. If you are not registered to vote, October 19 is the deadline. Go to registertovote.ca.gov to register.

Polling Place Change for Ross

Polling places in Marin County have been significantly reduced and consolidated with other nearby precincts due to COVID-19. There will **not** be a polling place this year in Ross. The County Elections Department has designated Ross voters to use the First Presbyterian Church in San Anselmo, located at 72 Kensington Road (near the Seminary). Polling places will open for 4 days starting October 31 through November 3. Ballots may be dropped off at a polling place or at any **Drop Box location**.

Modernizing the Civic Center

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Ross and Kentfield. Assuming the community wants to keep paramedics, police and administrative facilities in Town, we have two options to address our fire services:

For about **\$28.4 million**, we can **rebuild the fire station**, along with police, paramedic quarters, and administrative space; or

For about **\$14.6 million**, we can **relocate our fire staff to a neighboring station**, and rebuild police, paramedic quarters, and administrative space.

We want to hear from you!



Online Community Workshop

Thursday, October 29

6 to 8 pm

In order to hear from the Ross community on these important issues, we will be holding an online community workshop on October 29, from 6 to 8 pm via Zoom.

Please check the Town website to register for the workshop.

PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the October Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the Town's website [October 8th meeting page](#). The minutes for this meeting will be posted after adoption by the Council at the November 12, 2020 Council meeting.

Address: 5 Allen Lane
Owner: Chris & Nadine Berry
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Kuhl recused)

DOWNTOWN ROSS OUTDOOR DINING

New Date

Friday, October 16 – 4:00 to 9:00 pm
Saturday, October 17 – 10:00 am to 8:30 pm



In keeping with the spirit of supporting our local businesses during these challenging times, we hope you will consider enjoying a meal outdoors provided by one of Ross's downtown food purveyors (Crown & Crumpet, Marche Aux Fleurs, Tony Tutto, Trattoria Fresco,

Village Corner).

Redwood Drive (at Ross Common) will be closed to allow for tables with chairs in the street for dining spaced appropriately to comply with COVID-19 health guidelines. Other seating options include new picnic tables being installed on the Common near Redwood Drive or spreading out a picnic blanket on the grass on the Common. You can also use the outdoor and indoor seating provided by each restaurant to enjoy your meal.

Hand sanitizer will be provided at the tables but feel free to bring your own sanitizing products if you wish. We ask that everyone continue to follow the County's guidelines on social distancing and wearing your masks.

We hope you will join us to support our local businesses.

Update on Public Works Projects



The **Bolinas Avenue** pavement restoration project was completed last month. The project was constructed under a joint funding agreement with the Town of San Anselmo and features several traffic calming devices developed from discussions between the Ross and San Anselmo Town staff and the Bolinas Avenue Neighborhood Committee. The project retained the existing median islands and added new speed humps at locations between Richmond Road and Kensington Road.

Thomas Court also received a full-width asphalt grind and overlay restoration completing the Town's 2020 Pavement Restoration program.

The **Allen Park Tennis Court** restoration project is underway with a complete reconstruction of the court surfaces and the installation of some new netting and screening. The Courts are scheduled to be reopened by the end of October, weather permitting.



Downtown outdoor dining amenities project

The Town installed some outdoor dining amenities on Ross Common near Redwood Avenue. The new picnic tables represent an initial phase of various outdoor dining improvements planned for the downtown area, funded in part by a grant from the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM).



Picnic Tables Installed at Ross Common & Redwood

With the increased use of the Ross Common for outdoor dining on the weekend comes a significant increase in trash, especially pizza boxes, on the Common. Town staff urges residents to properly dispose of pizza boxes and other compostable items in the green compost receptacles located nearby.



New Compost Bins



Halloween & COVID-19

COVID-19 has cast a pall over Halloween as the County Health Department released recommendations for this year's Halloween. Based on the recommendations, Shady Lane will not be closed this year to discourage people from congregating on the street.



As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause illness, hospitalizations, and deaths in Marin County, the Marin County Department of Health and Human

Services (HHS) is offering families safe and responsible options for celebrating Halloween while preventing the disease's spread. HHS is urging residents to seek at-home and virtual festivities and strongly discouraging customary activities like door-to-door trick-or-treating or large multi-household parties, which can be high risk for COVID-19 transmission.

Some safer alternatives for celebrating Halloween are:

- Online parties such as costume contests, pumpkin carvings or other virtual family celebrations.
- Car-based events (where individuals stay in their vehicles) such as: Drive-by events or contests where individuals dress up or decorate their vehicles; or
- Drive-in events where individuals can receive a treat bag (limited to commercially packaged non-perishable treats) or take away item(s) from an organizer while remaining in their vehicle.

See full guidelines at <https://coronavirus.marinhhs.org/>.

Town LED Streetlight Program Brings Money Savings and Greenhouse Gas Reduction

In September 2018, the Town of Ross entered into an agreement with PG&E to have all of the Town's standard incandescent streetlights replaced with new, energy-saving LED fixtures. At no cost to the Town, over 200 street lights were converted and the project was completed in early 2019. Town staff recently compared actual electricity costs since 2018 for streetlights and found that approximately \$8,000 is saved annually, which equates to a reduction of almost 450 pounds of CO2 emissions every year.

RECREATION NEWS

Happy fall to everyone! We are entering our third session of Fall classes/programs and registration is currently OPEN with limited spaces. A note on the guidelines for registering for classes with schools re-opening; the CDC guidelines specify that children may participate in TWO cohorts. This means that if your child is returning to in-person school, that is considered one cohort and they are able to sign up for one class outside of school. If you are NOT having your child return to in-person school, then they may sign up for two programs. Also, keep in mind that guidelines are changing/evolving often and we



Hip Hop Class with Chelsea Hill

are making every effort to keep the Ross Recreation community updated as changes occur.



Finding balance with Holly at Phoenix Lake

We currently have a range of programs with openings for Session 3 including Hip Hop, Soccer (Kinder & 1-2nd grade), Halloween Fashion Design for 3rd-7th graders, Holly's Enrichment Program at Phoenix Lake & Sandrick's Sports. In addition, we are running virtual LEGO & Chess. The classes all remain 14 kids or less with no more than 2 supervising adults.

All classes are being held either outside or partially outside. We will continue to do this as the weather allows and are working on ideas for when the rain begins. The CDC guidelines do not allow any sports to be played indoors so we are finding creative solutions!



Making slime is Science! (Holly's Enrichment Program)

Halloween will look a bit different this year in Ross but there are still fun activities you can do with your family! Try a spooky movie night at home, a family pumpkin carving contest or a Halloween scavenger hunt around your house. Kids are amazing at finding fun in everything that they do. "Everything is ceremony in the wild garden of childhood." ~ Pablo Neruda

Stay well and stay safe! –Gretchen, Jeneane & Maya (Ross Recreation Team)

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 2020

Oct 8	6:00 pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Oct 16	4-9:00 pm	Ross Downtown Outdoor Dining (<i>see Page 3 for details</i>)
Oct 17	10-8:30 pm	Ross Downtown Outdoor Dining
Oct 20	7:00 pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Oct 29	6:00 pm	Community Workshop on Ross Civic Center (<i>virtual meeting</i>)

NOVEMBER 2020

Nov 9	7:00 pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>for Zoom invite, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
Nov 11	-- --	Town Hall offices closed for Veterans Day
Nov 12	6:00 pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Nov 17	7:00 pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Nov 26-27	-- --	Town Hall offices closed for Thanksgiving holiday

DECEMBER 2020

Dec 7	7:00 pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>for Zoom invite, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
Dec 10	6:00 pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Dec 15	7:00 pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Dec 23-31	-- --	Town Hall offices closed for the holidays

CONTACT US

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Building - breher@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x106	Public Works Director - rsimonitch@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x115
Bldg Inspection Hotline - erobbe@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x170	Recreation - rossrec@rossrecreation.org	415-453-6020
Planning/Building Director - pstreeter@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire Dept	415-258-4686
Planner - mweintraub@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x116	Town Manager - jchinn@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x107

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Visit us at www.townofross.org



We welcome suggestions for future issues. Email llopez@townofross.org

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