

# Marin Independent Journal

570



## 2010 SKI PREVIEW

TRAVEL B4



## MARIN ACADEMY WINS SOCCER CROWN

SPORTS C1

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**MARIN NEWS**

**SPECIAL CHANCE TO VIEW SALMON**

Some \$300,000 of improvements have been made to the Leo T. Cronin Fish Viewing Area along Lagunitas Creek. The viewing area reopened this weekend, offering residents a chance to see native coho salmon as the annual spawning season begins. **A3**

**PEARL HARBOR SURVIVOR DIES**

Frank Larsen, one of Marin's last survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor, died at 92. **A4**

**MARIN SPORTS C1 MARIN CATHOLIC MAKES PLAYOFFS**

The Marin Catholic High School football team completed a perfect regular season with a 60-6 drubbing of Redwood, while Novato and San Marin secured victories and buffed their playoff resumes.

**MARIN LIFE B1 KEEPING COUGARS OFF OUR STREETS**

Columnist Barry Tompkins ponders a disturbing trend: cougars — the big, furry, four-legged kind — are showing up increasingly on San Anselmo streets.

**MARIN OBITUARIES A25**

Giuseppe Jose Alicastro, Warren Pope Cavanaugh, Jack R. Cook, Dolores Mae Dawson, Dennis Michael Foster, Albert Frasier, Jr., Rosemary Kopmeier Bradford Hewlett, Frank Larsen, Karen Gail Lee, Joanne Cluen Lennon, R.N., Lena R. Massucco, Kathleen Boyle Rake, Alfred N Sims

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**WEATHER D16**

Today: Mostly sunny and warm.

74/52



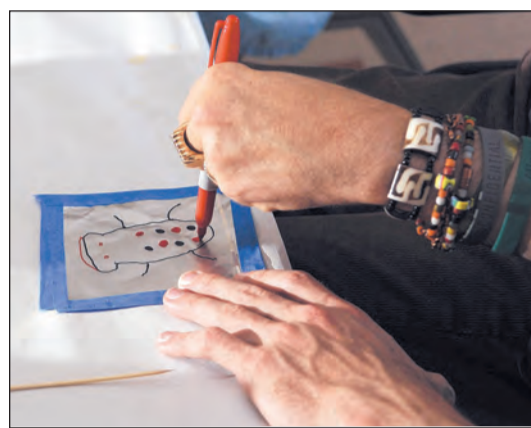
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MediaNews Group NEWSPAPER

**LARKSPUR NONPROFIT TURNS 25**

## Treating mind, body and spirit

Marin Brain Injury Network provides rehabilitative and educational services to victims and families



Lise Schurig works on an art project at the Marin Brain Injury Network on Thursday in Larkspur. Her mother, Karen, founded the organization in 1985 after Lise was critically injured in an auto accident. At top, Paul Diliberto works on a painting with the help of his caregiver Garret Brosky.

By Richard Halstead  
Marin Independent Journal

**W**HEN Lisa Mayock of San Anselmo regained consciousness in September 2009, she was blind and had lost her ability to speak.

"I touched my eyes to see if they were open," Mayock said. What Mayock, 49, didn't know at that moment was that it had been nearly a month since one of her arteries had burst, stopping her heart and shutting off the flow of oxygen-bearing blood to her brain.

When Mayock's husband found her collapsed in their home, she had no pulse. Paramedics used a defibrillator to restart her heart; however, it stopped twice more on the ambulance ride to Marin General Hospital, and required adrenaline injections to keep it going.

Mayock spent 10 days in Marin General's intensive care unit, during which time doctors could detect no brain activity. But her husband refused to give up hope, and 15 days after Mayock was moved to the Kentfield Rehabilitation Hospital, she awoke and began the long road back.

This past spring Mayock, who has regained her sight and ability to speak, began attending survivor support group meetings of the Marin Brain



Patricia Gill, executive director of the Marin Brain Injury Network in Larkspur, talks to Director of Development Keith Rosenthal on Thursday. The loss of funding from the Marin Community Foundation has stretched the network, forcing the organization to rely more on donations from individuals and small family foundations.

**BRAIN INJURY NETWORK AT A GLANCE**

- ▶ Served 140 adults with brain injuries last year.
- ▶ Served 70 caregivers last year.
- ▶ \$320,000 annual budget; \$20,000 in funding from county of Marin.
- ▶ One full-time, four part-time employees; 25 regular volunteers.

Injury Network in Larkspur. She is among 140 adults with brain injuries that the nonprofit, which celebrated its 25th anniversary Saturday, served in the past year.

The network provides a range of rehabilitative and educational services to individuals and families affected by a brain

injury, whether that injury is due to blunt force trauma to the brain, as in a car accident, or some medical condition, such as a stroke or aneurysm. Brain injuries can cause a wide range of functional changes affecting thinking, language, learning,

See **BRAIN INJURY**, page 2

**TOP STORY: BUDGET OUTLOOK**

## County expects cuts in services, salaries

Rising pensions, health care costs for retirees cited

By Nels Johnson  
Marin Independent Journal

Marin County's budget gap will prompt service cutbacks while capping employee pay, and may require more layoffs at the Civic Center next year.

That analysis was issued by County Administrator Matthew Hymel as he outlined the continuing budget crunch facing county government.

The county faces a \$5 million wave of red ink next year in light of soaring pension and retiree health care costs, requiring a variety of service cuts to make ends meet.

The county allocated \$58.4 million to pay for pension and retiree health this year, \$11 million more than last year, and faces increasing costs next year in light of an unfunded pension and retiree health liability that ranges from \$700 million to \$1.8 billion, depending on assumptions used to calculate debt that taxpayers are obligated to pay. A conservative "no risk" assumption puts liability at the high end.

But until department officials check in with their proposals on how to cut their spending by 5 percent, Hymel is remaining mum on what county services may face the budget ax.

"We're waiting for the department heads," Hymel said, adding options will be sorted out over the next two months in preparation for a presentation to county supervisors early next year.

No county service is immune from scrutiny, he said, when asked if cuts could include such politically sensitive budgets as the supervisors' unusual "discretionary" account. The unique fund this year enables Marin supervisors to distribute \$355,000 without public debate to pet projects as they wish. Funding for the account was cut 27 percent last spring.

"We're open to look at everything," Hymel said with a

See **BUDGET**, page 2

**NATION**

### Obama's long road to another term

President Barack Obama faces major work repairing his standing among independents in states crucial to his re-election chances. **A15**

▶ **MADOFF:** Thousands of belongings from the New York City penthouse of fallen financier Bernard Madoff went on the auction block. **A18**



**WORLD**

### Pro-democracy hero released

Pro-democracy hero Aung San Suu Kyi walked free after more than seven years under house arrest. She was welcomed by thousands of supporters. **A21**

▶ **IRAQ:** Iraqi lawmakers approved an agreement on Saturday that aims to bring all of Iraq's feuding political blocs into a new government. **A20**

**CALIFORNIA**

### Cities see cash in pot

Californians rejected legalizing recreational marijuana, but voters are more than ready to reap revenue from the cash crop. **A5**

# From the Web Visit us online at marinij.com

## Yesterday's most viewed IJ stories

- 1: In San Rafael, 'exploding' escargot ignite saucy lawsuit
- 2: Abundant collisions bog down Marin commute
- 3: Thirteen cited in contractor sting in San Rafael
- 4: Former Tam High coach's sex trial goes to jury
- 5: Prep football: San Rafael hangs on to top Justin-Siena

## Today's question

Will you read former President George W. Bush's new book?

**How to vote or comment:**  
Visit marinij.com

The IJ online poll is a small, non-scientific sampling and does not necessarily reflect the views of Marin.

## Yesterday's question

Have you ever eaten escargot?

**64%** Yes (267 votes)  
**36%** No (148)

## Lotteries FROM SATURDAY

Daily 3 Midday: **9-9-3** Daily 4: **0-1-0-8**  
Daily 3 Evening: **8-0-3** Fantasy 5: **4-11-26-29-34**  
SuperLottoPlus: **4-10-30-31-41** Mega: **21**

## Corrections & Clarifications

The Marin Independent Journal corrects and clarifies factual errors in articles that have appeared in the IJ. Bring errors

to our attention by contacting Robert Sterling via e-mail at rsterling@marinij.com or by calling 382-7294.

## Today in History

Today is Sunday, Nov. 14, the 318th day of 2010. There are 47 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 14, 1970, a chartered Southern Airways DC-9 crashed while trying to land in Huntington, W.Va., killing all 75 people on board, including the Marshall University football team and its coaching staff.

In 1851, Herman Melville's novel "Moby-Dick; Or, The Whale" was first published in

the United States.

In 1881, Charles J. Guiteau went on trial for assassinating President James A. Garfield. (Guiteau was convicted and hanged the following year.)

In 1940, during World War II, German planes destroyed most of the English town of Coventry.

In 1973, Britain's Princess Anne married Capt. Mark Phillips in Westminster Abbey. (They divorced in 1992; Anne has remarried.)

# Marin Independent Journal

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### NEWS AND OPINION

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<b>Brad Breithaupt</b>	Opinion Page Editor	<b>382-7291</b>

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IJ photos/Frankie Frost

Jay Monroe (left) and Paul Diliberto with the help of Diliberto's caregiver Garret Brosky (right) work on art projects at the Marin Brain Injury Network on Thursday. The organization is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

## BRAIN INJURY: Organization providing care for 25 years

From page 1

emotions, behavior and sensation.

The network's day treatment program teaches brain injury survivors coping strategies and helps develop life skills. The program includes art therapy, creative writing, yoga, mindfulness training and singing. Its education class covers such topics as handling emotions, impulse control, improving memory and focus, managing stress, increasing problem-solving ability, accessing resources, and learning about the brain. There is also a support group for family members.

"Their programs really address mind, body and spirit," said Dr. Deborah Doherty, who heads the brain injury program at Kentfield Rehabilitation Hospital. Doherty, a member of the network's board, said the nonprofit also has computers loaded with software designed to help brain injury survivors improve their attention, concentration, memory and visual spatial skills.

"When someone suffers a severe brain injury they are left with some degree of persistent cognitive and usually physical impairment that will be life-long," Doherty said. "More often than not these individuals have no way to pay for continuing rehabilitation. That's where a place like the Brain Injury Network comes in. No one is turned away because of an inability to pay."

Peter Fecskes of Sausalito, who has been attending network classes since his motorcycle accident in 1989, becomes emotional quickly when speaking about his crash.

"My parents and family were by my side," Fecskes said haltingly. After the accident, he was in a coma for two and a half months.

Fecskes, 46, comes to the network's center in Larkspur four days a week. He takes art and music



Caregiver Jeganga Guguni sits on the deck at the Marin Brain Injury Network in Larkspur.

classes there, and counselors help him work on his impulse control.

"I try to control the amount I talk, which isn't always easy," Fecskes said.

In addition to the classes, Fecskes enjoys his social interaction with other attendees.

"They know more of me here, and therefore it's less demanding of me to say my whole background," he said.

Jeganga Guguni of Fairfax, a caregiver for Arthur Welch, 49, of Larkspur, a stroke survivor, said the social interaction Welch gets at the center is key to improving his memory.

"We could not just do one-on-one with him," Guguni said. "He needed a group situation where he would get input from other people."

The Marin Brain Injury Network was founded in 1985 by Karen Schurig after her 14-year-old daughter, Lise, was critically injured in a car accident in 1975.

"Karen had to quit working and go on welfare to take care of her daughter," said Patricia Gill, the network's executive director. "At the time Lise was injured over 75 percent of people with brain injury died. Now over 75 percent of people survive."

Schurig died in 2009 but her daughter continues to attend programs at the network's center.

"Her injury was very severe," Gill said. "She lives in an apartment with a roommate and has 24-hour care. She's disabled so she needs to use a walker and has speech difficulties."

The Marin Brain Injury Network has an annual budget of just \$320,000. The nonprofit has one full-time employee, Gill, and four part-time employees. It gets about 20 percent of its revenue from the sliding scale fee it charges for services.

Last year, the Marin Community Foundation, which had been donating \$35,000 to \$45,000 a year to the organization, cut off funding. The move was part of the foundation's decision to drastically reduce the amount of money it supplies to Marin nonprofits for on-going operations.

This year, however, the network received \$20,000 in general fund money from the county of Marin. Both Marin County Supervisors Hal Brown and Judy Arnold made grants of \$10,000 from their discretionary accounts. The \$10,000 grant from Arnold is earmarked for a new program to prepare brain injury survivors for employment or work as volunteers.

"We are hanging in there," Gill said. "But we do need community support."

With the loss of the

Marin Community Foundation support, Gill said the organization has become increasingly reliant on donations from individuals and small family foundations. Due to the continuing economic slump, many larger foundations are unwilling to fund organizations they haven't given to in the past, she said.

While other programs exist for people with developmental disabilities, Gill said there is really nowhere else for brain injury survivors to go in Marin.

"There is nothing like it," Doherty said.

Mayock was a runner and dancer in peak shape when her artery burst. Today, she tires easily and speaks with a slight lisp. She has some paralysis in her tongue, right hand and right foot.

"Waking up disabled without any warning is big, big trauma," Mayock said.

She said the network's support group has helped her adjust to her new reality.

"I'm different now," Mayock said. "I've always been mellow but now it's like a whole new kind of mellow. It's a spiritual calm, just a feeling of well-being even though I have all of this going on. I feel accepting of it."

Contact Richard Halstead via e-mail at rhalstead@marinij.com

## BUDGET: County expects cutbacks in services, salaries

From page 1

smile.

An analysis by Hymel's staff, including budget manager Dan Eilerman, indicates the county will be confronted with a \$14.2 million budget gap over the next three years, roughly \$5 million a year. The forecast does not include any funding for employee cost-of-living raises, which would cost an additional \$2 million for every 1 percent boost.

"It's not clear to us that we are going to be in a position to offer a cost-of-living increase," Hymel said. "The gap over three years is \$14.2 million without that." Most top officials haven't had a raise for two years, and labor pacts with several employee groups provide no raises this year.

As it is, 598 employees, or more than a quarter of the

county workforce, earned more than \$100,000 last fiscal year, up 50 percent from about 400 employees three years ago. The \$191 million payroll indicates that 1,043 employees, or about half the workforce, made \$80,000 or more last fiscal year, with the overall average salary at about \$82,900, or \$20,000 more than the median annual salary for the region.

Eilerman noted that the budget forecast is based on expectations of no increase in tax revenues next year, an increase of 2 percent the following year, and perhaps 3 percent in 2013-14. The scenario also "assumes no state budget impact," he added. Any services cut by the state that are picked up by the county would deepen the flow of red ink.

The county has a one-

time \$3 million reserve fund to ease the impact of state cuts, but officials say the county cannot step in to pick up services the state drops.

"Given the slow economic growth we've projected for the foreseeable future, the county's required contributions toward pension costs and additional investments to fund retiree health are largely causing a projected \$5 million operating deficit," Eilerman said. "Our projections assume no cost of living adjustments for the staff over the next three years and do not include additional cuts from the state."

State cuts are likely, though, because state analysts last week projected a \$25 billion deficit over the next 18 months, and added the state budget approved

just last month is already \$6 billion in the red.

A county policy under which vacant positions are often phased out rather than filled will continue as officials seek to minimize layoffs through attrition, but layoffs may be on the horizon if all else fails, officials said.

For the first time in years, 15 employees lost jobs through layoffs last fiscal year under a \$457.7 million budget for 2010-11, a program that was up \$5 million or about 1 percent from the year before.

This fiscal year's county budget tucks away \$97 million for various contingencies, including \$30 million for a new public safety building.

Contact Nels Johnson via e-mail at nj.civiccenter@gmail.com