



a view from the  
**WEST POINT INN**

The Newsletter for the West Point Inn Association and Friends

September 2020 • Issue 43

**Mission Statement:**  
*The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1-2
WPI Re-opening	3
Personnel Report	3
In Memory: Michael Satris	4
Pancake Breakfasts	4
Going Back to 1994	5
Fire Safety Report	6
Ratatouille	7
WPI 2020 Calendar	7
WPI Officers & Chairpersons	8

The newsletter is published with funds provided in memory of Lifetime Member, Ernest E. Emig, and Honorary Member, Harold Allen Atkinson.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Chris Marcuse**

\* Note: This article was written before Marin County announced short-term rentals (i.e. hotel stays) could resume as of August 24, 2020. While we are not ready to reopen immediately, we are making great strides towards that welcome day. Please see the article from the Reopening Committee and look for email announcements regarding when we'll be able to open our doors again. CM

Dear West Point Inn Community,

It is approaching the six-month mark since we had to close the Inn in compliance with local health orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is an extraordinary response to an extraordinary problem. I hope you are all staying safe and healthy while our society tries to find a way out of this challenge.

More locally, we are doing our best to protect the Inn. While Mount Tamalpais attracts hundreds, if not thousands, of people daily, our Innkeepers are doing a great job of preventing any damage to the Inn by negligence or vandalism. Part of being closed is locking the doors on our restroom facilities. While this is a great inconvenience to the multitudes of visitors to the watershed, it is necessary for their protection and ours. However, in cooperation with our partners at the Marin Municipal Water District, they have agreed to position a portable toilet near the Inn. This should greatly reduce the pressure of people trying to find any possible way to "take care of nature" near the Inn. We thank the MMWD for their help.

Besides preventing possible human-caused damage, our Innkeepers are also up there in case of any nature-caused events. If you, like me, were woken up early a couple of days in mid-August by the awesome blasts of thunders, then you know how powerful nature can be. Lightening has caused wildland fires in at least Marin and Napa counties recently. Our Innkeepers are stationed at the Inn to do their best to protect and preserve the structures if a strike were to happen near the buildings.

However, having the building staffed does come with a cost. While we are doing everything possible to minimize expenditures, there are still fixed expenses that need to be paid. The Board and MMWD are discussing ways to reduce those costs. Some of the possible solutions, unfortunately, could lead to actions the Association has never had to take before and hopefully will never have to consider in the future. But, in this "new normal," we may have to take the unprecedented action of personnel reductions. It is definitely not something the Board wants to do, but circumstances may dictate otherwise.

Continued on p2.

Continued from p1.

We are trying to take a proactive stance by starting a fundraising campaign. We are in the early stages, but we will be contacting the Membership to ask for assistance. I know some people are in uncomfortable positions due to not being able to work but, if you can contribute, the Association would greatly appreciate it. More information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

While we are minimizing expenditures, we are still taking care of some maintenance issues. Innkeeper Jim Barry and Buildings & Grounds Co-Chair Ross Asselstine did a great job of painting the kitchen along with some modifications to the room. Please take a look at the photos to see the results of their efforts. I also want to thank Ross and member Evo Gregorian for finishing raising the railings around the porch along with other improvements to the Inn. We should all appreciate their efforts in maintaining the Inn.

On a smaller, but still important, note, the Board has decided to retire the “wampum” name for our work party incentive. We are winnowing down some suggestions to three alternatives. The Membership will be able to vote for the final choice along with their Board of Director ballots in October. We are keeping the incentive, just with a new name. Previously, the Board extended the expiration date on them by a year or until a year after the Board declares the Inn back to “normal operations.” Also on the ballot will be a Bylaw change to clarify the intent of a section related to eligibility of Board of Director candidates.

If you would like to join the Board and have a direct impact on our policies and operations, please contact the Nominating Committee of Johanna Sistik. Every year we are looking for at least three candidates to run and join us in deciding the best way to provide for the Inn’s fiscal and physical health. Please consider stepping up to take an active role.

For the Spring Members meeting, we tried to keep you informed by posting the reports you would normally receive in person. For the Fall Members meeting, currently scheduled for October 18, 2020, we are trying to organize a mass Zoom meeting. We thank Mark Northcross for hosting our monthly Board meetings this way. You will receive more information closer to October 18 about how you may attend the event.

Finally, as always, I am here to listen to our members. If you have any comments, questions or concerns about the Inn, please do not hesitate to contact me at [president@westpointinn.com](mailto:president@westpointinn.com).

Until the next time we can all enjoy the view from the porch, please stay safe and stay healthy!



## WPI RE-OPENING

Nancy Fox, Alyssa Jorgensen,  
and Don Keeley

---

The West Point Inn has been closed since March 16, 2020 due to Health Orders related to Covid-19. During this time, the Board of Directors has formed a reopening committee, tasked with proposing plans and protocols for opening the Inn to overnight guests. As one might imagine, the reopening plans have been revised numerous times as Marin County, State and Federal guidelines have changed.

The Marin County Health Officer has issued Health Orders that allow the West Point Inn to reopen for overnight guests effective August 24, 2020. The reopening committee is reviewing and revising the plans and protocols a final time, and these plans will be shared with the membership in the near future.

The Board of Directors is taking a conservative approach to reopen the Inn. The health and safety of our members and the general public is driving all of our decisions. While a measured and thoughtful approach is crucial, the Inn may begin to suffer financially due to the loss of income from the Inn's closure and the cancellation of fundraising events such as the pancake breakfasts. The plans to reopen will likely be in phases and will have limited use and temporarily higher rates. While this plan will be necessary for the immediate situation that we find ourselves in, it is the Board's goal to keep these phases as short-lived as possible, always being in compliance with local, State and Federal guidelines.



## PERSONNEL REPORT

Fran Rondeau & Lin Johanson

---

Hello! We wanted to give a great big thanks to our wonderful Innkeepers. They are continuing the lonely job of looking after the Inn while it is closed. We appreciate their efforts and welcome their dedication to the Inn. Sometimes, the Innkeepers have to find amusement wherever they can. Like when the Marin Horse Council had a safety event in August. Take a look at Pat Williams living out his childhood fantasy of being a cowboy. However, run if you see him pull out a lasso to try his hand at steer wrestling!

We also want to welcome a new Innkeeper, Rosanna Petralia. Rosanna has extensive experience with the outdoors and with Mount Tamalpais. She worked for the California State Park system for twenty years, the last eight at Mt. Tam, Ano Nueva and Butano state parks. Rosanna has degrees in Natural Sciences and Geography as well as being multi-lingual. We think she'll be an excellent addition to the team. When you are finally able to visit the Inn, be sure to welcome Rosanna to the West Point Inn family!





## IN REMEMBRANCE MICHAEL SATRIS

Chris Marcuse

---

It is with great sadness that I announce the sudden passing of member Michael Satris on July 29, 2020. Michael and his wife, Bonnie Jones, became members in 2010. While Bonnie has been the more active West Point participant (serving as secretary, Board member, vice president, housekeeping co-chair, water/sanitation expert), Michael was always right there with her volunteering for special events. Michael jumped right in to help with pancake cleanups and putting on the New Year's Eve parties.

What Michael is best known for is his legal work on social justice issues. Michael spent most of his more than four decades as an attorney working on appellate issues, especially those relating to capital punishment. Michael and a University of California-Davis law school classmate, Paul Comiskey, cofounded the Prison Law Office in 1976. Their work led to the filing of many lawsuits against California's prison system, leading to improvements for conditions at San Quentin's Death Row. Michael's passionate belief was that everyone, no matter what they allegedly did, deserved legal representation and humane treatment.

Michael's legacy left such an impact that the Marin County Board of Supervisors adjourned their August 25, 2020, meeting in his honor. Michael is survived by his wife, Bonnie Jones, their two daughters, Marthine and Gigi Satris, and two grandchildren. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Prison Law Office or other nonprofits for inmates, the Humane Prison Hospice Project, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children or the Prison University Project at San Quentin.

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST REPORT

Gordy MacDermott & Lin Marcuse

---

While we couldn't have our pancake season this year, we do want to thank our volunteers and team leaders for their willingness to donate their time and efforts to the Inn. Thank you to Scott & Lisa Halsted, Mark & Antoinetta Northcross, Fran Rondeau, Alyssa Jorgensen, Jan Gauthier & Wade Hufford, Bob Newcomer, Donald DeLave and Pat Kavanaugh for offering to step up. We also appreciate all the smiling volunteers that were willing to work a Sunday morning on a breakfast crew or a Sunday afternoon on the cleanup team. Our fundraising events wouldn't be possible without your efforts and dedication to the Inn. Thanks to everyone and we hope to see you next year. If the world returns to "normal," our anticipated 2021 dates will be May 9, June 20, July 11, August 8, September 12 and October 10. Mark your calendars and cross your fingers!

One unfortunate note, it appears that our [pancakes@westpointinn.com](mailto:pancakes@westpointinn.com) email address was compromised in mid-August. Please be aware that we have no reason to send "secure" attachments for anything regarding pancakes. We have taken steps to hopefully prevent any future occurrences. We apologize for any inconvenience.

## ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG, LONG AGO...

### Olene Sparks-Toby

Recently, while cleaning out old files relating to the West Point Inn, I came across a 1994 document that was developed with the idea of it being used for possible fund raising efforts. I may have had a possible source in mind but remember for sure that it could also be aimed at visitors to the Inn in general. I remember well the excellent help from the Innkeeper at the time. Daniel Meyerowitz was the only IK from 1986-1996. At that time the IK lived full-time in upstairs room #1. The MMWD was helpful with the gathering of statistics. Ranger, Casey May, was especially helpful to the Inn.

That year Charlie Evans was President, I must have been VP as I became President in 1995. IK Daniel met a woman from Denmark that he liked and quit his job in late '95 to marry her and move to Denmark. At that time membership was less than half what it is now. Almost all members knew each other very well. And, we had wonderful times together.

---

#### SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AT THE WEST POINT INN DURING THE YEAR, 1994

The West Point Inn is the only destination on the South side of the mountain offering services. It is estimated that, on almost any weekend day, several thousand people visit our side of the mountain.

We calculate that, in 1994:

- Forty two thousand (42,000) people used the Inn in some way.
- Over 16,000 refreshment purchases were made.
- Over 2,357 overnight guests were welcomed (2,003 coming from the general public and 354 being West Point Inn Assn. members. This translates to 15% member usage overnight and 85% general public usage overnight).
- At least 300 individuals used the Inn EACH weekend day.
- At least 40 used the Inn EACH week day.
- Between 3 and 4 thousand meals are served annually during 6 fund-raising pancake breakfasts. Especially popular are the ones held on Mother' Day, Father's Day, and during the Mountain play.

The Inn has offered overnight accomodations to outdoor enthusiasts for almost 92 years. Additionally we provide the following services:

- Picnic tables
- Bathrooms
- Water fountains
- Water for animals
- Trash deposit
- Twenty four hour emergency telephone
- Refreshments at a nominal cost
- First aid supplies and assistance
- Maps (posted and for sale)
- Historical and natural history displays
- Shelter from the weather extremes
- General information
- A dining porch with amazing views

We are used by many youth groups (scouts, schools, etc.):

Increasingly, we are called upon to assist with accidents or other problems due to increased numbers using the mountain.

Maintenance, repair, upkeep of the buildings and grounds, weekend hosting, fund raising events, etc. all take placd through the volunteer effort of the membership of the West Point Inn Association.

## WILDLAND FIRE SURVIVAL AT WEST POINT INN

Pete Martin

We are all ware of the devastating wildland fires in past years and this year seems to be getting off to another frightening start. We at West Point are no less vulnerable. With our island of all-wood buildings, nestled in the middle of a sea of tinder-dry brush, we need to take every precaution we can. It is not likely that firefighters will be here to help protect us. Therefore, every stand-alone measure we can take that “might” ensure survival cannot be overlooked. We have a few fire prevention options available to us. Fire hardening our buildings, Sustainable space, Dependable fire fighting water supply, good housekeeping inside and out.

Members & Guests Mandatory evacuation at first notice of fire in the area.

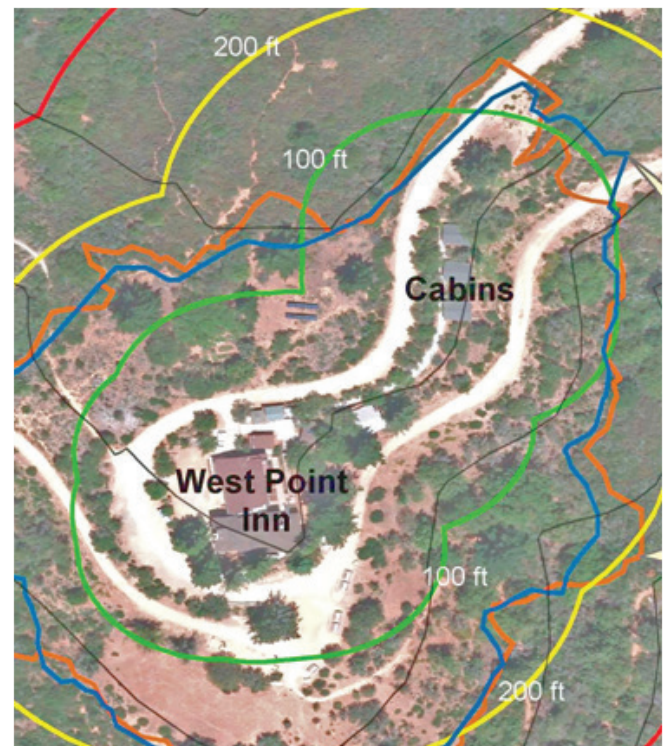
Survivable Space? The definition of survivable space is that space between a structure(s) and the wildland area where grass, brush and other flammable vegetation has been reduced or removed, so that it creates a sufficient buffer to slow or halt the spread of a wildland fire to a structure. Survivable space can protect the structure from igniting due to direct flame or radiant heat. It also creates an area from which firefighters can work to extinguish the fire.

The ultimate goal is to create a 200-foot radius of Survivable Space protecting the Inn. WPI Volunteers with assistance from the Marin Municipal Water District Watershed Management team have completed 100-feet of survivable space. It will be maintained annually every spring. The WPI Fire & Safety Committee is drafting a plan to complete the fire fuel reduction in the 200-foot Survivable Space Zone. The area to be treated within this zone amounts to a sizable 2.16 acres! Far beyond any volunteer effort!

This satellite view clearly shows the 30-foot Defensible Space Zone around the West Point Inn complex sandwiched between the two legs of the Old Railroad Grade. The fire road is counted as part of the 30-foot zone.

Embers Research around home destruction vs. home survival in wildfires points to embers and small flames as the main way that the majority of homes ignite in wildfires. Embers are burning pieces of airborne wood and/or vegetation that can be carried more than a mile on the wind and cause spot can fires and ignite homes, debris objects. There are methods for preparing (fire hardening) buildings to withstand ember attacks and minimize the likelihood of flames or surface fire touching the home or any attachments. Experiments, models and post-fire studies have shown homes ignite due to the condition of the home and everything around it, up to 200’ from the foundation. This is called the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ).

The WPI Building & Grounds Committee has developed a comprehensive plan for “Fire Hardening” the buildings within the compound. Work can begin as soon as a funding source is found.







## RATATOUILLE

By Fran Rondeau

Supporting local farmers by reserving a farm box is the best way to not only avoid crowds but also to reap the bounty of summer vegetables. My box this week contained almost everything necessary for the perfect summer stew so here it is.... and thank you Julia Child.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup olive oil ( or a bit more as needed to sauter veggies)
- 1/2 pound zucchini and 1/2 pound eggplant: sliced in 1/4 inch wide pieces
- 1 large onion-sliced thin
- 1/2 pound bell peppers-any kind sliced
- 1 1/2 pounds tomatoes sliced
- 4 cloves garlic smashed or sliced

- 1) Cut equal size pieces of zucchini and eggplant. Sautez in 4 T of olive oil. Set aside.
- 2) Simmer slowly in oil bell peppers and onions for 10 minutes. Add 3-4 garlic cloves.
- 3) Mix in zucchini and eggplant. Lay tomato slices on top, add some salt and pepper and simmer for 5 -10 minutes with the lid on.
- 4) Add chopped parsley and chopped basil, cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
- 5) Uncover, spoon the juices over and cook for a few more minutes till everything is tender and some of the water has evaporated.

Enjoy hot or cold, as a side dish to roast chicken, or all by itself with a nice hunk of French bread.

Bon appétit!

## 2020 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Our 2020 calendar is provided below, but each activity is dependent on the health orders and other information in effect at the time of the event. Please check the website for the latest status.

[www.westpointinn.com/wpi-calendar](http://www.westpointinn.com/wpi-calendar)

### September

- 13 Pancake Breakfast (TBD)
- 14 Board Meeting
- 19 Work Party (TBD)

### October

- 11 Pancake Breakfast (TBD)
- 12 Board Meeting
- 17 Work Party (TBD)
- 17 Fall Members Meeting (TBD)

### November

- 9 Board Meeting
- 21 Work Party (TBD)

### December

- 5 Cookie Party (TBD)
- 5 Members Holiday Party (TBD)
- 31 New Years Eve Party (TBD)  
*Host: Olene Sparks-Toby*

\* Location at MMWD Boardroom  
220 Nellen Drive, Corte Madera  
MEETINGS START AT 7PM

++ Walk-out nights

# WEST POINT INN OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

## PRESIDENT

Chris Marcuse  
415.516.4253, president@westpointinn.com

## VICE PRESIDENT

Don Keeley  
510.388.0765, don\_keeley@att.net

## TREASURER

Mark Northcross  
415.380.9746, mark@nhainc.net

## PARLIAMENTARIAN

Johanna Sistek  
510.237.9882, johanna.sistek@gmail.com

## SECRETARY

Wing Pepper  
415.260.1507, wingpepper@gmail.com

## POLICY & PROCEDURES

Wayne Koide  
415.847.2865, yuzuru3632@gmail.com

## BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Urban Carmel  
415.548.3111, urbancarmel@gmail.com  
Ross Asselstine  
415.730.4530, ross.asselstine@comcast.net

## DEVELOPMENT

Olene Sparks-Toby, Suzie Koide  
and Patricia Schmidt  
development@westpointinn.com

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Lin Marcuse & Gordy MacDermott  
415.516.4253  
pancakes@westpointinn.com

## MT. TAM LIAISON

Olene Sparks-Toby  
510.236.8293, olenes@aol.com

## COMMUNICATION

Jan Gauthier  
415-328-2083, jangauthier08@gmail.com

## GARDEN

Kathleen Kopp  
707.328.9009, katkopp@gmail.com

## FIRE SAFETY COMMITTEE

Pete Martin  
415.499.8028, petemartin@comcast.net

## HERITAGE

Fred Runner  
415.302.7677, onesoundfred@mac.com  
Linda Hulley  
415.233.0123, linhulley@gmail.com

## HOUSEKEEPING

Fran Rondeau  
415.924.9132, franrondeau@gmail.com  
Bonnie Jones  
415.868.0974, bmjones4123@sbcglobal.net

## INN HISTORIAN

Fred Runner  
415.302.7677, onesoundfred@mac.com

## MEMBERSHIP

Gordy & Lynn Mac Dermott  
415.785.4223, membership@westpointinn.com

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Alison Bricker  
415.596.3922, editor@westpointinn.com

## EVENTS

Gail Shahan  
415.250.9223, events@westpointinn.com

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Lin Marcuse  
415.516.4253, tover@aol.com  
Fran Rondeau  
415.924.9132, franrondeau@gmail.com

## ELECTION

Chris & Lin Marcuse  
elections@westpointinn.com

## WAYS AND MEANS

Robert Newcomer  
415.847.2572  
rjnewcomer@comcast.net

## WORK PARTY

Don Keeley  
510.388.0765  
workparty@westpointinn.com

## BOOKKEEPER

Marta Gomez  
bookkeeper@westpointinn.com

## OLD TIMERS LIAISON

Marilyn Skaff  
415.713.5259  
marilynskaff@gmail.com

## TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Nate Lee  
natetlee@gmail.com

## ARCHIVIST

Nancy Skinner  
415.457.9491  
nancyskinner@comcast.net

## INN RESERVATIONS

Jennifer Greene  
reservations@westpointinn.com

## WEST POINT INN PHONE/

## INNKEEPERS

David Durr  
Pat Williams  
Jennifer Greene  
Karl Jurgenson  
John Slater  
Jim Barry  
Bob Thomson  
Rosanna Petralia  
415.388.9955  
innkeepers@westpointinn.com

## HOUSEKEEPER

Jennifer Barclay  
510.759.4669,  
jbarclay1@aol.com

## BOARD MEMBERS

Nancy Fox  
Bonnie Jones  
Alyssa Jorgensen  
Don Keeley  
Chris Marcuse  
Pete Martin  
Jim Parton  
Johanna Sistek  
Clare Wellnitz



**WEST POINT INN ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. Box 796**  
**San Anselmo, CA 94979**

*The West Point Inn Association exists to preserve, maintain, operate and educate the public about the significance of the historic West Point Inn.*



**CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR EMAIL?**

**PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO**

**BY SENDING AN EMAIL TO:**

**[MEMBERUPDATE@WESTPOINTINN.COM](mailto:MEMBERUPDATE@WESTPOINTINN.COM)**

**WANT TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE?**

**PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS**

**AND PHOTOS TO**

**[EDITOR@WESTPOINTINN.COM](mailto:EDITOR@WESTPOINTINN.COM)**