



ALICE FREDERICKS, MAYOR - MILES BERGER, VICE MAYOR - COUNCILMEMBER TOM GRAM
COUNCILMEMBER RICHARD COLLINS - COUNCILMEMBER JEFF SLAVITZ

September 25, 2009

A WORD FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

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Tragedy Hits Home

Bad news travels fast, as they say, so I'm sure most of you know that a long-time resident was found murdered earlier this week. The body of Mrs. Joan Rosenthal, 75, was discovered by a friend Tuesday morning at the home on Hilary Drive where she and her late husband lived for many decades.

Needless to say, this is a shocking episode for Tiburon. Homicides, indeed any violent crimes, are very rare here on our normally serene peninsula. There have been only four homicides in the past four decades. Its rarity makes this horrific crime all the more difficult to fathom.

I'd like to offer commentary on this incident from two important sources: information on how we handle a crime of this magnitude from Chief of Police Michael Cronin, and a personal message for the community from Tiburon Mayor and friend of the deceased, Alice Fredericks.

Sincerely,

Peggy Curran

#

Chief of Police Michael Cronin:

The murder of Tiburon resident Joan Rosenthal occurred sometime between 6 p.m. Monday and early Tuesday morning, when her body was discovered by a friend. She had been shot in the head at close range a few steps outside the front door of her house.

I will not go into the details of this case here, as I am sure you have read news accounts and copies of press releases are on our website. I would like to give you



Annual Statewide Earthquake Drill in October

Get Ready to ShakeOut!

At 10:15 am on October 15, 2009, millions of Californians will "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" in The Great California ShakeOut, the largest earthquake drill ever! Everyone is encouraged to participate in the drill wherever you are at 10:15 am on 10/15.

Major earthquakes may happen anywhere you work, live, or travel in California. The ShakeOut is a chance to practice how to protect ourselves, and for everyone to become prepared. The goal is to prevent disasters from becoming catastrophes.

Everyone can

some general information about how the Police Department handles major cases and address some commonly asked questions.

Initial Response

We are a small department, so the investigative requirements of a crime like this immediately overwhelm our capacity. Fortunately, we are able to rely upon mutual aid agreements for assistance. Upon our discovery of the crime, we immediately requested the assistance of the Sheriff's Department, which flew into action to supplement our local resources.

Investigators began arriving within minutes. Within hours the Sheriff had committed all of his investigators and crime scene technicians. By mid afternoon over thirty detectives, officers and technicians were at the scene, many remaining until Wednesday evening. Mill Valley Police Department handled our calls for service while we summoned off duty officers. San Rafael Police Public Information Officer arrived to help us deal with the news media. Several other local departments immediately offered their assistance.

Risk Analysis

One of the first things we do in any investigation of a violent crime is to assess if there is an immediate risk to the rest of our community. In this case, we concluded that no immediate threat existed. To date, we have learned nothing to change that belief. It is always a balance between alerting people to meaningful steps they can take to protect themselves from a threat, and simply causing alarm. Nothing about this case pointed to the likelihood of risk to others.

Release of Information

We are often asked why we don't give out much detail in press releases when a crime occurs. This is a source of frustration for many people, but there are good reasons for withholding even seemingly innocuous details.

The first is that we do not want to give the perpetrator any inkling of what we may know or think about how the crime was committed or who committed it. We cannot guess how the smallest piece of information may influence their thinking or the steps they may be provoked to take to evade arrest or further conceal evidence.

Another is the possibility that some piece of information we release may influence potential witnesses that we have not yet identified or interviewed. Something as

participate!
Individuals,
families,
businesses, schools,
government
agencies and other
organizations are
invited to register
at
www.ShakeOut.org.

For additional
information on
disaster
preparedness,
contact Laurie
Gordon, Emergency
Services
Coordinator for
Belvedere and
Tiburon at
435-7386.

simple as a statement that a brown car was seen in the neighborhood may influence someone who saw a green one to dismiss their suspicion or doubt their recollection and not call us.

Next Steps

The first task, crime scene investigation and the identification of potential witnesses, has been concluded. Police are now identifying and interviewing those who had any association with Mrs. Rosenthal. We know that Mrs. Rosenthal had a large circle of friends and acquaintances. Those whom the Police believe may have helpful information are being contacted.

The media attention will die down now but the Sheriff's Department and our own officers will continue the investigation. We will update our website as the case progresses.

Are We Safe?

Tiburon remains one of the safest communities in California. We know from experience that three quarters of all murders are committed by persons known to the victim. Less than one in five is a random event. I wish to repeat that we have no reason to believe that anyone else in Tiburon is at any greater risk now than they were before this tragedy occurred. If that changes, we will take immediate steps to advise the public.

The murder of Joan Rosenthal is a tragedy for her family and for our community. I wish to assure you that every resource available to us is being focused on this case.

Michael Cronin
Chief of Police

#

Mayor Alice Fredericks:

I sat in a big armchair with my cat on my lap for a while after I was told my friend Joan Rosenthal had been murdered. My cat has thick fur, intended to keep his ancestors warm as they roamed the forests of Eastern Europe. He stares at me unflinchingly and purrs. I am sure he knew that I was struggling with something or another, maybe not identified as horror, pain, grief, but something. Anyway, his ability to care is limited to sprawling on my torso with his nose planted on my chin, keeping us both warm.

My friend Joan would have loved this big square chair.

She loved special places to read. She liked to compare where each of us took cozy comfort when we read books for the book group we co-lead. She liked to ask me, when I became too enraptured by convoluted story telling in a book... "But Alice, is this really a book that stands the test of time?" Electronic readers, with their possibilities of instant library, were not enticing to her. Mine morphed into a paperweight under her appraisal. She was a lover of books, of the feel of paper and the pressure against fingers holding a paperback open. She was a lover of reading. She didn't like to take notes when she read fiction. She read moving text to us, from pages with post-its feathering their edges. She relished a good story that struck a chord, either of shared experience, or of the discovery of the level at which an experience that seemed so different revealed the kindredships formed by simply living. She abhorred stories that gratuitously included laborious descriptions of violence. She loved the order of doing things the right way, and the discovery that there was another way to do things the right way. She volunteered at the library, tutored folks in computer use and basic internet research, helped recruit folks to give programs or submit art. She would have been appalled by the public nature of her death and the hum of speculation. Her death wrenched us all, living here where the kind of life she cherished is shared by so many, and the horror of the end of her life is so rare.

We cannot care enough about those who live in communities where similar occurrences are not rare. In our own way, many of us are like my cat, limited by circumstance or biology in our ability to provide enough comfort when the unspeakable happens. Maybe for now, it is enough that we cherish the community we have here in Tiburon, care about each other and try to be as kind as Joan was, knowing that we are fortunate and really, very safe.

Alice Fredericks
Mayor

Security Camera Update

The homicide this week has brought renewed interest in the proposed camera project under consideration by the Town. Entirely separate from the incidents of this week, staff has been working on this project with the intention of returning to Council in November for review and consideration. Here's an update:

Staff brought the camera proposal forward earlier this year for Council feedback and direction. The system would photograph rear license plate numbers, not occupants, of vehicles entering and departing the peninsula on Tiburon Boulevard or Paradise Drive (a detailed camera fact sheet is available on our website). Council directed staff to move forward with investigating a system, which is what we have been doing in recent months. There are many technical questions of product, location, installation (on existing PG&E poles, which are not perfectly located, or new ones) electrical supply, Caltrans approval, system cost, etc.). We have been working our way through this process so that we can present the Council, and the community, with complete information for decision-making, including realistic cost estimates. The camera proposal has been warmly greeted by some and heavily criticized by others, so having full information, and a full public process, has been an important part of our planning. All of this should come to a head in the next few months.

Would the cameras have been helpful in this recent incident? We can't answer that yet, but we do know if we had them we would be combing through license plate numbers of cars coming and going proximate to the crime and cross-checking them with criminal records. If the perpetrator is not from the peninsula, there is an excellent chance we would have their license plate number in our system. As we have and continue to say: the cameras would simply be a tool, but a potentially very valuable one, for post-crime investigation to help develop leads. We look forward to discussing this project with the Council and the public soon.

Peggy Curran
Town Manager

NEWS BRIEFS

November 3, 2009 Election: Come Hear the Candidates

Come hear a discussion of the issues at a **Candidates' Forum**, sponsored by The Ark newspaper and the League of Women Voters, for two important local races on November 3rd:

Tiburon Town Council

Tuesday, October 6
7 pm at Town Hall

There are five candidates (listed alphabetically) for three seats: Jim Fraser, Alice Fredericks, John Kunzweiler, Brian McCullough, and Emmett O'Donnell.

Sanitary District No. 5 Board of Directors

Tuesday, October 20
7 pm at Town Hall

There are four candidates (listed alphabetically) for two seats: Cynthia Batt, Catharine Benediktsson, Roy Fedotoff, and Fred Hannahs.

Voter registration for both races closes on Monday, October 19. If you have moved since the last election, you must re-register.

Visit www.marinvotes.org ,or call the Marin County Registrar of Voters at 499-6456, for more information.

Sincerely,

Diane Crane Iacopi
Tiburon Town Clerk

"Street Smarts" Program wants to hear from you



Street Smarts Marin, a public education campaign sponsored by the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), is designed to make Marin's streets safer and friendlier for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Town of Tiburon is participating in this program which kicked off in time for back-to-school and runs through early October.

This program uses strategically placed banners, signs and posters to address traffic problems at their source--in the minds of drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. It tackles behaviors such as speeding, running red lights and stop signs, failing to stop at crosswalks, jay-walking, "distracted" driving, bicyclist violations and bicyclist safety.

Look for the colorful signs and banners around town, many of which will be posted at or near our schools.

Please provide feedback about the program through a

brief Street Smarts Marin Community Questionnaire on the TAM website, www.tam.ca.gov (click on "Programs and Projects/Street Smarts Marin).

Matthew Swalberg
Public Works Department Engineering Technician

COMMUNITY EVENTS

OKTOBERFEST - OOMPAH!

Friday, September 25 - 5 to 9 pm
Downtown Tiburon



This is our final *Fridays Nights on Main* for the year.

Come enjoy German music, beer (of course), and food on Main Street. Shops and restaurants will be open.

Thanks to the Chamber and local businesses for another great season of *Friday Nights on Main*.

BLACKIE'S HAY DAY

Saturday, September 26 - 10 am - 3 pm
Blackie's Pasture - (Parking is limited so consider walking or biking to this event)

Families can once again look forward to a fun-filled day that benefits the Children's Programs at the Belvedere-Tiburon Library.

Admission is \$10, and children under the age of two are free. Activity tickets are \$1 each. Food and beverages will also be available for purchase.

Go to www.blackieshayday.com for more information, or visit www.beltibbookmarks.org.

DISCOVERY DAY OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, October 4 - 11 am - 4 pm
Tiburon Romberg Center for Environmental Studies
3150 Paradise Drive

Fun for the whole family! The theme of this year's open house is "Discovering Connections." There will be science exhibits, art activities, touch tanks and more!

Visit www.rtc.sfsu.edu/discovery_day for more information.

"LUCKY 50" SPEAKEASY

Friday, October 9 - Password Required

Sam's Anchor Cafe

A Landmarks Society 50th Anniversary Event

Dine, Dance and Disappear in the "Back Room" for some Speakeasy "Gambling".

Visit www.landmarks-society.org, or call 435-1853, for more information.

SOUTH KNOLL PLAYGROUND RIBBON CUTTING

Friday, October 16 - 4:30 pm

South Knoll Playground



Come to a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the renovation of the Edward and Laleh Zelinsky playground for school-aged kids 5-12 years.

The Playground Committee will serve light refreshments for the kids. See you there!

ARTIST LAUREATE WORKSHOP

Saturday, October 17 - 10:30 am - 1 pm

Town Hall Community Room (2nd Floor)

Guest Artist Eloise Rauscher will teach "Keep it Simple Painting Continued"

Bring your own painting supplies and equipment - any medium (watercolor, oil, pencil, charcoal, acrylic, etc.)

Contact Artist Laureate Mary Musalo, 435-2775, for more information, or e-mail her at BigBet@aol.com

OUR TOWN -- 30 YEARS OF ARK IMAGES

Wednesday, October 7 - 6 pm - 8 pm

Tiburon Town Hall (2nd Floor)



The Tiburon Heritage & Arts Commission presents "Our Town -- 30 Years of Ark Images" by Diane T. Smith, with an artist's reception on Wednesday, October 7, from 6 to 8 pm. Call 435-7373 for information.

Gallery hours: On view September 28 to November 27, Monday through Thursday, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, closed Fridays. Call ahead to be sure the room is not in use.

BEL-TIB LIBRARY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

For the scoop on events and meetings sponsored by local not-for-profit community and government organizations on the Tiburon Peninsula, visit the Belvedere-Tiburon Library's excellent [community calendar](#).



COUNCIL AND COMMISSION MEETINGS



Town Council: Wednesday, October 7 and 21, at 7:30 p.m.

Design Review Board: Thursday, October 1 and 15, at 7 p.m.

Planning Commission: Wednesday, October 14 and 28, at 7:30 p.m.

All meetings listed are in the Council Chambers at Tiburon Town Hall, 1505 Tiburon Boulevard.

Sincerely,

Town Staff
Town of Tiburon
435-7373

Editor: Diane Crane Iacopi

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