



MAYOR FRANK DOYLE - VICE MAYOR ERIN TOLLINI - COUNCILMEMBER JIM FRASER -
COUNCILMEMBER ALICE FREDERICKS - COUNCILMEMBER EMMETT O'DONNELL

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February 26, 2015

A WORD FROM THE TOWN MANAGER



The Yellow School Bus Challenge 2.0 Is Coming!

It's Official! Earlier this week, in a special joint session of the Belvedere and Tiburon Councils, our elected officials unanimously and enthusiastically approved the Yellow School Bus Challenge 2.0. The goal of the program is simple: reduce traffic on Tiburon Boulevard. Allow me to expound...

First, a bit of background. Last summer, Tiburon Councilmembers Jim Fraser and Emmett O'Donnell, along with their Belvedere counterparts Mayor Bob McCaskill and Councilmember Sandy Donnell, spearheaded an effort to reduce traffic by increasing ridership on school buses. These elected officials were joined by staff members and representatives of the Reed Union School District to formulate an approach, which ultimately became the half-price bus pass program dubbed the Yellow School Bus Challenge.



That effort launched fairly late in the school year cycle and, while there were more bus passes sold, the response was deemed insufficient to warrant implementation at that time. The group concluded that the concept had merit, but feedback indicated there are other constraints, in addition to price, deterring families from using the bus. The short time frame was also deemed an impediment to success, as it limited outreach to meet sign-up goals. The group determined to try again.

Shortly thereafter, in the fall, program advocates reconvened to once again tackle their objective. The first step was to expand the group's composition: five RUSD parents joined its

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ranks to form a new **Yellow School Bus Challenge 2.0 Committee**. Its first order of business was to rethink the entire bus experience to improve the chances of attracting significant numbers of new riders.

Toward this end, the Committee commissioned an in-depth survey of RUSD parents' attitudes and issues regarding school bus ridership for their children. The survey revealed a number of factors beyond price suppressing bus ridership. Of particular note is bus trip length; parents do not want their children to have bus trips to or from school that exceed 35 minutes. The convenience of bus stops is also a factor. Having a system that clusters together children headed for the same school (i.e., a "Reed Elementary School Bus" rather than a multi-school bus) has greater appeal to parents, as it segregates children by age - a particular plus for younger children. Of course, the high cost of passes, currently \$847 round-trip, remains a significant factor, and was unsurprisingly identified as the number one deterrent to greater bus ridership. This survey data informed the Committee's discussions, and led it to an examination of how the number and configuration of bus routes and bus stops could be increased to address parents' concerns.

The outcome: a route profile emerged which aims to optimize the use of six school buses morning and afternoon on a set of routes and schedules to address the service needs of people identified in the survey as likely school bus users. The new schedules reflect 11 morning routes (vs. the 3 current year routes) and 9 afternoon routes (vs. the 4 current year routes). As is the case now, all passes sold will be "one-way", that is, for a morning or afternoon bus route. This enables parents whose child may have a different destination in the afternoon, often to accommodate sports or other after school activities, to choose the routes that work best for them. Routes are also newly crafted to be primarily one-school only, making possible both greater efficiencies and clustering by age group.

What will all this cost, you wonder? We cannot know the precise answer to that until we see the level of bus pass purchases, but here are the parameters:

Each school bus costs approximately \$80,000 per year to operate. Six buses in the morning and afternoon are necessary to fulfill the routes that have been identified; some of the buses are able to be used twice thanks to the slightly increased staggering of start times for each campus offered by the School District. The total cost of these buses is approximately \$480,000. Bus pass sales, of course, will offset some of this expense. How much?

If all of those self-identified in the survey as likely to purchase a round-trip bus pass (at half-price) follow through on their assertion, the program will cost Tiburon around \$60,000 and Belvedere approximately \$15,000. If a significantly smaller subset of these purchases materializes, costs could rise to around \$200,000 and \$50,000 respectively. I believe the reality will be somewhere in the middle, but closer to the

lower, better numbers. The Committee's analysis suggests that meaningful traffic reduction will occur if two-thirds of those who said they were likely to purchase actually do so. In short, our odds are pretty good that the program will fall within our cost estimation and provide real traffic relief. But, we will only know for sure by trying this pilot program. It is also important to note that both Councils are entering into this program with a one-year funding commitment. If it succeeds in demonstrating that more school bus passes translate into real traffic improvements, a permanent source of funding will need to be identified.

Our hopes of success are particularly buoyed by the outreach program being actively planned by the remarkable cadre of RUSD parents participating in this process. They are developing plans to reach their peers, other parents, as well as the kids to effectively convey the Yellow School Bus Challenge message. Creatively, too, I might add; they have some very fun ideas about how to enlist the school kids and their parents to do the right thing and get on board. The Reed Union School District will also be getting the word out directly to parents.

Those wanting more information about the Yellow School Bus Challenge 2.0, or to take a peek at proposed routes, are encouraged to visit www.buschallenge.org. On **April 27 at 9:00 a.m.**, enrollment will be available, as in years past, on the RUSD [website](#).

Several individuals were truly critical to making this "Challenge" and its promise of meaningful traffic relief possible. Councilmember Jim Fraser provided tireless and indispensable leadership to the group, rallying and guiding it every week for months to be as productive and creative as it could be. Councilmember Emmett O'Donnell was the key catalyst for this entire endeavor from its inception last year. In Belvedere, Mayor Bob McCaskill put in endless hours of time analyzing data and options, and was joined in these efforts by his colleague, Councilmember Sandy Donnell. Our community representatives, the contingent of highly skilled RUSD parents, have and continue to provide critical insight into what matters to parents and how to reach them. These invaluable members are, alphabetically: Stacy Achuck, Jayni Allsep, Heather Johnson, Sara Klein, and Sally Wilkinson. Police Chief Michael Cronin was hugely instrumental in vetting bus routes through our tricky street system, and Robert Betts of Marin Transit provided expert guidance and was most generous with his time aiding our effort.

A final note: traffic is ALL of our problem. If you have school age children, please consider getting with this program and getting your kids on the bus (or have them walk or bike, also wonderful alternatives to personal vehicles). If you don't have school age kids, encourage those who do to hop on the bus! Help spread the word! We are all in this together, and together we can take this big step to reducing a real problem of life on this peninsula (don't forget: reducing traffic is not just about convenience; it is about enabling faster emergency response, too). Getting more kids on buses may not be the only way to reduce traffic, but it is one real, tangible and

effective step we can take right now in the right direction. Let's make this work, and then see what else we can do to reduce traffic. We have everything to gain in doing so.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peggy Curran". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a white rectangular box.

Peggy Curran

NEWS BRIEFS

Town Joins The Lead With New Solar Panel Ordinance

The Town Tiburon has been making news lately with its new solar panel ordinance! It all started last year when Councilmember Emmett O'Donnell urged the Town Council to consider requiring new homes to install solar panels, which have come down significantly in price and generally pay for themselves in savings within a few years. After giving direction to staff to develop a draft ordinance, on February 18 the Town Council adopted the new ordinance requiring all new single-family dwellings to install solar energy systems. This requirement affects only new homes built from the ground up and does not apply to major remodels or additions to existing residences. The size of the system required for new homes is based on the size of the dwelling and includes an exception process for properties where solar panels wouldn't be effective.

In taking this action, Tiburon has become only the second city in California (after Sebastopol) to require solar panels for new homes. We're happy for the attention that we've received for leading the way with this ordinance and are pleased to be doing our part to promote alternative energy system use.

Dan Watrous
Planning Manager

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Our First Irish Music Festival

Saturday, February 28 - 7 p.m.
Servino Ristorante

9 Main Street Tiburon

The first annual Chief Francis O'Neill Irish Music Festival takes place this Saturday at Servino Ristorante. Produced by Tom O'Neill and Eric Schoenberg, the festival features professional musicians performing traditional Irish Music on traditional Irish instruments.

Tickets are \$20. For more information, or to buy tickets, visit our [website](#). Tickets are also available at Hearts & Flower (in the Cove Shopping Center), the Belvedere-Tiburon Library and Library Bookstore (on the Boardwalk), and Schoenberg Guitars (on Ark Row).

We look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,
Tom O'Neill



Servino Ristorante | 9 Main Street | Tiburon, California

FEBRUARY 28, 2015 - 7 PM

\$20 Admission

Tickets are available at the following locations:
Hearts & Flowers (The Cove Center)
Tiburon Library, Tiburon Library Bookstore (on the Boardwalk)
Schoenberg Guitars (on Ark Row)
and online at O'NeillIrishMusicFestival.org

Music at Old St. Hilary's Landmark



Sunday, March 1, 4 p.m.
Old St. Hilary's
(Park and take shuttle from

Ian Carey and Ben Stolorow



Boardwalk Shopping Center)

Mainstays on the Bay Area jazz scene, trumpeter Ian Carey and Ben Stolorow are celebrating their new CD *Duocracy* in concert.

Unencumbered by involved arrangements, their performance will feature lovely, well-crafted selections from the Great American Songbook by Gershwin, Rogers and Hart, Jerome Kern, Henry Mancini and others.

The concert is presented by the Belvedere-Tiburon Landmarks Society and Tiburon's Heritage & Arts Commission, with generous support from Bank of Marin.

Tickets are \$15 and \$20; advance purchase available at the Landmarks Office, Tiburon Town Hall, and [Brown Paper Tickets](#).

If not sold out in advance, tickets will be available at the door, starting at 3:30 p.m.

Sincerely,

Dave Gotz
Belvedere-Tiburon Landmarks Society

Master Gardener Classes: Composting Basics

**Wednesday, March 4
10 - 11 a.m.
Art & Garden Center Cottage
841 Tiburon Boulevard**

Discover how to turn food and garden scraps into a nutrient-rich compost that your plants will love. In this free talk, Master Gardener Joan Irwin will discuss:

- Easy ways to compost
- What makes good compost so important in a sustainable garden
- How composting can make the most of your garden water budget



- What to do with table scraps
- How to get started with worm composting, including how to buy or build a worm bin and how to get young people involved.

For more information, you can contact me at 435-5320.
And please mark your calendars for the next gardening talk on
April 1, 2015.



Sincerely,

Faith Brown,
Marin Master Gardener

You're Invited: Commission on Aging Lecture on "Best Practices in Long-Term Care"

**Thursday, March 12, 2015
10 - 11 a.m.
Margaret Todd - Hill Community
Room
1560 Hill Road, Novato**



- Learn about ways to reduce social isolation and loneliness of residents in long-term care facilities by promoting friendships through volunteer visits and experiencing the power of connections.
- Examine the value, principles, and practices of the Cultural Change movement, including projects to improve dementia care in skilled-nursing facilities in California.
- Understand the goals, approach, services and support provided by Project Independence and the implication of care transitions for individuals being discharged from skilled-nursing facilities to home.

Our speakers are Richard Jensen, MBA, Executive Director LITA (Love is the Answer), Jennifer Mongosong-Shankle, MS, Program Director, California Cultural Change Coalition, Donna West, MPH, PHN, Senior Public Health Nurse, Marin County Aging and Adult Services.

Sincerely,

Fran Wilson,
Tiburon Representative to the
Marin County Commission on Aging

**Coming Soon: Tiburon International Film Festival
April 9 - 17, 2015**

The Tiburon International Film Festival (TIFF) returns for its 14th year on April 9. TIFF has supported independent films for over a decade. *Via* magazine says, "this festival is a true United Nations of cinema showcasing film from around the entire world.

For more information, visit our [website](#) or contact us via [email](#).

Community Calendar

For the scoop on events and meetings sponsored by local nonprofit community and government organizations on the Tiburon Peninsula, visit the Belvedere-Tiburon Library's excellent [community calendar](#).



Council and Commission Meetings

Town Council: First and third Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. - March 4 and March 18.

Design Review Board: First and third Thursdays at 7 p.m. - March 5 and March 19.

Planning Commission: Second and fourth Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. - March 11 and March 25.

Heritage & Arts Commission: Fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m. (Town Hall Conference Room) - March 24.

Parks, Open Space and Trails Commission: Third Tuesday every other month - Next meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. on March 17.

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are held in the Town Council Chambers located at 1505 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon CA 94920.

Tiburon Talk
c/o Town of Tiburon
1505 Tiburon Boulevard
Tiburon, CA 94920

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