



a view from the  
**WEST POINT INN**

The Newsletter for the West Point Inn Association and Friends

December 2020 • Issue 44

**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.*

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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**

Hello West Point Inn Family,

As of the writing of this article, just before Thanksgiving, the COVID pandemic is still widespread throughout the Bay Area. However, there is light at the end of the tunnel. Vaccines are being formulated and are expected to be distributed next year. As that happens, we should be able to resume "normal" Inn operations soon after. Each step forward helps the Inn. Keep your fingers crossed and support our scientists!

Speaking of support, I want to thank everyone who has stepped up to donate to the Inn in our time of need. The pandemic was a wake-up call for us. When the Inn had to close in mid-March, we soon realized that our financial model hadn't prepared us for the challenges we faced. We discovered that we didn't have a steady source of income, since we previously relied on overnight use fees and pancake breakfasts, yet we still had ongoing expenses. Our treasurer, Mark Northcross, warned us that without finding another way to raise money we would probably become insolvent by mid-2021.

That's where the membership responded in a BIG way. We set a goal of \$75,000 to help support our operations through 2021. Thanks to donations from members, friends of the Inn, Facebook requests to friends of members and a GoFundMe campaign started by Innkeeper David Durr, we have reached just over 67% of our goal! We appreciate every cent that has been donated, from a few dollars via PayPal to large bequests members have left in their wills. Please see the list of donors elsewhere in this newsletter. If you have donated and don't see your name, please understand that your gift may have missed the publication deadline. Still, your contribution is very important and we are extremely grateful! You will be thanked in a future issue.

A lot of people have helped with our fundraising efforts. Vice President Don Keeley and Board Member Jim Parton are leading the charge, along with Development Committee chair Suzie Koide. The group did a great job of getting the word out for our short-term goal. They are now gathering a cadre of advisors to help us with our middle-term goal of replenishing our reserves so that we may resume our capital improvement projects. These include repairing the roof, improving our water supply, and continuing the fire-safety plan.

Beyond that, we are looking at launching a long-term campaign. This effort will allow us to have sources of income that aren't dependent on the Inn being open to crowds. This will be critical if we are ever faced with another extraordinary set of circumstances like

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another pandemic or a long-term closure due to a wildfire in West Marin. Our ultimate goal is to create an endowment fund to ensure that the Inn is never short of cash again. Suzie Koide has spent many years as our Development chair. Unfortunately, she is looking to step down because of other commitments. We are looking for any member who has an interest in fundraising and is willing to step up to lead the committee. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated and it is a great way to learn about the inner workings of the Inn. If this sounds like a job for you, please contact me or Suzie. Our contact info is at the end of the newsletter.

Further help with our finances has come from our ability to partially reopen. Since November 5, we have allowed two separate groups to stay for two nights at a time. These stays are COVID-compliant per Marin County's and California's health orders, so are limited to immediate household members only. Also, to make financial sense, we've had to temporarily increase the overnight fees and suspend the acceptance of work party incentives. We plan to rescind those measures as soon as we're able to fully reopen. However, with the limited number of guests, a stay at the Inn now feels like your own whole Inn booking (well, at least half the Inn!) with your immediate family.

Our reopening couldn't have happened without the extensive work of the Reopening Committee. Vice President Don Keeley and Board Members Nancy Fox and Alyssa Jorgensen spent untold hours researching the rules and guidance provided by Federal, state and county governments. This took a lot of effort, since the Inn is such a unique place and few regulations clearly cover our situation. However, the Reopening Committee persevered and put together a Site-Specific Protection Plan (SPP) intended to protect guests and employees of the Inn.

The team also developed the financial model that we will be following until we can resume normal operations. While we understand these fees may be out-of-reach of some households, they will allow us to stay open. We hope you understand and bear with us until things get back to normal. Part of the model includes auctioning off the two nights around the remaining major holidays (Christmas and New Year's Eve). So, check out the website if you are interested in a short getaway or a special holiday with your family.

I also want to thank our Innkeepers for bearing with the Board while we developed these plans. The SPP has been crafted to provide for maximum enjoyment of the Inn by our guests while protecting both them and our employees. The ultimate goal is to make sure everyone is safe and happy while experiencing the Inn. This wouldn't be possible without the hard work and dedication of our professional staff. Our team protected the Inn while the Mountain was closed and is now serving us while we reopen. Thank you!

A lot of gratitude goes out to Alison Bricker, our newsletter editor. She spends a lot of time preparing and distributing this beautiful way of communicating with our members. She is also the one who shoots out the email blasts that we used extensively this year to keep you updated with the constantly changing circumstances surrounding the pandemic and the Inn. Alison is an important cog in the machinery that keeps the Inn running.

I want to express appreciation for our Membership chairs, Gordy and Lynn MacDermott. They have spent years sending out renewal letters, collecting dues and maintaining the roster. However, after this next round, they are looking to move on to other things. So, if you would like to help with these duties starting with the 2022 renewal period, please contact me or the MacDermotts. Again, contact info is at the end of the newsletter. A reminder about renewals, we only accept checks or work party incentives. No credit cards will be accepted. A note about the work party incentive, now known as West Point Inn Bucks. Per our policies, we are still accepting Bucks or the previous iteration to cover membership (but not locker) renewals. However, if you are able, we ask that you hold on to your incentives for another time and pay your renewal fees with a check this year. The Board previously extended the expiration on the work party incentives for one year or until a year after the Board declares this emergency over, whichever comes later. Thank you for your understanding and support.

I also need to thank our Buildings and Grounds co-chair, Ross Asselstine. He has spent a lot of hours this year on both routine maintenance and preparing the Inn for reopening. As mentioned last issue, Ross took advantage of the extended closure to work with the Innkeepers to repaint the kitchen and conduct other repairs that would have been difficult with guests present. He has also come up with some innovative solutions for problems that cropped up during our reopening plans. Also, gratitude to our Fire & Safety committee, Scott Halsted, Pete Martin, and Pat Williams, for all the time and effort they put in to keeping the Inn safe. Their guidance and direction were invaluable in assisting with our partial reopening.

I want to welcome our three newest Board members, Dan Ciccarone, Robyn Fisher and Michael Jefferies. They hit the ground running as they are already attending Board meetings and providing input on ways to make the Inn more financially stable. Their experience and backgrounds are great assets to the West Point Inn team. I also want to thank our outgoing members, Bonnie Jones and Johanna Sistik. They provided years of service to the Inn during some of our darkest times. We appreciate their contributions and know they will continue to be a presence once the Inn can safely fully reopen.

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Finally, I want to again acknowledge the winners of this year's Rusty Spikes and Wall of Fame. The Rusty Spike goes to those members that provide invaluable assistance to the President. This year, that honor goes to Don Keeley and Jim Parton. I don't think the Inn would be in the financially confident position it finds itself without their advice and hard work. The Wall of Fame, on the other hand, goes to those members who have provided years of service to the Inn. This year, that honor goes to Olene Sparks-Toby. She has spent decades in a variety of positions with the Inn, including President, Vice President, Secretary, Fundraising committee and as liaison to other Mt. Tamalpais organizations. Olene's dedication has been an incredible benefit to the Inn.

So, as you enjoy the holidays, please keep the Inn in your heart. Keep looking for the good in life and we will soon be able to meet again at the place we all love. As one of my esteemed predecessors says, "See you on the porch!"

## INN REOPENS FOR OVERNIGHT GUESTS

**Nancy Fox, Alyssa Jorgensen, and Don Keeley**

The Inn reopened for overnight guests during the first week of November.

The Board has developed and implemented COVID-19 policies and procedures with the goal of keeping overnight guests and the Innkeepers safe during these unprecedented times. During this initial reopening period, there are only two groups at the Inn at any given time. Each group has a dedicated lounge, kitchen, bathroom, deck area and rooms/cabin. This is a unique time we are living in, and the Board has tried to create a special way for overnight guests to experience the Inn.

As a reminder, the Inn is currently open only for overnight guests. Only overnight guests are allowed in the Inn or on the decks.

To view the COVID-19 Policies and Procedures, and to make a reservation, please visit the Inn's website ([www.westpointinn.com](http://www.westpointinn.com)). Each reservation is for two nights, and reservations can be made approximately 8 weeks in advance.

## INNKEEPERS REPORT

**Fran Rondeau & Lin Johanson**

We want to thank our great crew of Innkeepers! Our team, led by David Durr and including Jim Barry, Jennifer Greene, Karl Jurgenson, Rosanna Petralia, John Slater, Bob Thomson, and Pat Williams, have been invaluable during this extraordinary year. The Innkeepers protected the Inn during our extended closure and now, with the partial reopening, they are again the face of the Inn. Once again, they are interacting with guests and keeping the place well maintained and ready for the next guests. The Inn wouldn't have survived without their hard work and dedication. We also wouldn't be able to reopen without their help and service. We hugely appreciate all the tender loving care and attention done for the Inn. Thank you!

## MEMBERSHIP NOTES

**Gordy & Lynn MacDermott**

Membership committee will be sending out your renewal letter the last week of Dec. As always we need it to get to us by Jan.31st. so we would not have to send out a reminder letter in Feb.

Please remember that the W.P.I. is run by volunteers so it can take us awhile to process all the renewal envelopes. After we have received your check and entered it in the roster they are then sent to our treasurer. He then has to make out a deposit slip for each check and then deposit them at our bank. Thus, it may take a little time for your check to clear your bank account. Rest assured, if we haven't received your dues, we will certainly let you know.

## WPI FUNDRAISING REPORT

**Jim Parton**

Our membership, as well as many generous nonmembers, have gotten us off to an excellent start towards our June 30, 2021 goal of \$75,000! As of November 19, the West Point Inn Association has received a total of \$50,444! That is 67% of our goal!

### What This Means

These donations have significantly extended the West Point Inn Association's financial solvency. They will help restore the critical financial reserves that have been so important to managing this difficult year and which will provide the basis for a brighter future for the Inn. That brighter future will eventually include repair of the Member's Lounge roof; much needed additional water supplies; improvements to the deck; and many other projects, large and small, needed for the Inn to thrive in the long term.

### Statistics

48% of the donations (\$24,145) have been from members and Inn-Keepers (48 total donations); 52% (\$26,299) from nonmembers (177 donations!). Individual donation amounts have ranged from \$5,000 (3: \$15,000), \$1,000-\$4,999 (11: \$12,500), \$500 – \$999 (12: \$6,600), \$100 – \$499 (98; \$13,100), and under \$100 (101: \$3,844).

As impressive and heartening as this start is, we still have a long way to go. Only 8% of our members have made a donation to date. As the data recited above indicates, even small donations can make a big difference!

We know that the pandemic has caused financial hardship for many members. For those members, even a small donation of \$25 helps show membership support – important for securing grants and other outside support. For those who have the means to do so, please include a generous gift to the West Point Inn Association as part of your annual charitable giving. Every dollar donated goes to the preservation and future of our treasured West Point Inn. There are no "administration" costs – our fund raising is 100% volunteer!

### Many Ways To Donate

There are many ways to donate beside writing a check (or using PayPal). Here is a list to consider:

- Employer charitable gift matching programs;
- "Subscribe" with small monthly recurring donations;
- A donation made from your IRA or 401k (if you are over 70-1/2);
- Donate stocks, bonds or mutual funds owned for more than a year;
- Include the West Point Inn Association in your estate plan;
- Spread the word to your friends who may hike or bike on Mt. Tam.

We can provide details. Just email [president@westpointinn.com](mailto:president@westpointinn.com).

### How To Donate

For those making a cash donation, a check mailed to The West Point Inn Association, Post Office Box 796, San Anselmo, California 94979 is always the best. For convenience, it is also to donate through the website using PayPal or your credit card. Note that a small percentage of your donation is taken as a commission by those entities (which is why checks are better!). Here is the link: <https://www.westpointinn.com/support-the-inn>.

Remember: charitable donations are tax deductible (check with your tax advisor for details – the CARES Act has loosened the rules for 2020).

### Please Don't "Donate" With A Lifetime Membership

A number of members have raised the idea of buying a lifetime membership as a way of getting cash to the WPIA now. While this would provide an immediate cash injection, the Board discourages members from thinking of this as a good solution. Roughly 11% of our pre-pandemic annual income was membership fees. Buying a lifetime membership is, in effect, robbing Peter to pay Paul. It would ultimately put the WPIA in a weaker financial position as membership dues in 2022 (and beyond) would drop. Note also that this may not be a deductible charitable donation.

For those members seriously considering buying a lifetime membership to help WPIA finances, the Board asks that you maintain your current membership and make an additional donation of some or all of that lifetime membership fee. That helps both now and in the future!

### Why We Are Fundraising

We have short-, mid-, and long-term goals for fundraising. First, of course, is to ensure the solvency of the Inn through the true end of the pandemic. Second, we need to restore the financial reserves diminished by the long closure of the Inn. Third, we seek to build a more secure and stable financial future for the Inn. We need to be less dependent on "sales" (overnight fees, Pancake Breakfasts, Hikers' Lounge Commissary, etc.). Even pre-pandemic these were increasingly impacted by, for example, red flag days. Finally, there are many capital projects (Members Lounge roof repair and increasing our water supply being two prominent examples) that will be necessary sooner or later.

We all are members of the West Point Inn Association because of our love for this special place and the friendships made and camaraderie enjoyed at the Inn. The pandemic has been hard for us in part because we have had to set that aside for now. This will pass and we will once again be able to gather and enjoy this jewel on the mountain! Until we can meet there again, please express your love for the West Point Inn by making as generous a donation as you are able to make.

Thank you!

## MANY THANKS FOR THE DONORS FOR THE 2020 WILDFIRE AND WATER CAMPAIGN

### Suzie Koide, Development Chair

After another year of wildfires, it is a reminder of how precious and fragile our Inn is. We need to insure that everything can be done to fire-harden the Inn to mitigate the impact that a wildfire can have on the Inn and surrounding structures.

The sourcing and quality of the Inn's WATER is another major concern given the continuing dry weather that we have been experiencing. Water is the single most important resource for the West Point Inn and its guests. With this additional water source, we would also benefit by having more water for firefighting should the need arise.

Here are the folks that generously supported the Inn in this campaign:

Alan & Ruby Unger	Harry Reppert & Sheri Stock	Michael Stephens
Alison Bricker	Iain & Sarah McNeil	Mitch & Sarah Brown
Allen Shirley	James Morshead	Name
Alyssa Jorgensen	Jayne McDonagh	Nancy Puckett
Amy Hanley	Jean Stromberg	Ole Prahm
Andrew Winkler	Jed Smith	Patti Schmidt
Anna Voisient	Jim Nikas	Paul Kratzer
Baker Lyon & Fiona Cundy	Johanna Sistek	Penny Nokes
Barbara & Bill Rich	Josh Groves	Peter & Katie Martin
Barbara Dean Voisin	Julie Howell	Pierre Terrier
Bethanie Maples	Kathleen Kopp	Richard & Marilyn Skaff
Betty & Larry Henry	Kay Emerson	Robert & Rosemarie Thomson
Blaise Cullen & Gail Rossiter	Kevin Jensen	Robert Daniel & Cynthia Ulman
Bonnie Jones & Michael Satris	Laird Townsend	Robert Michaud
Chris Paul	Laura Wittman & Joshua Marker	Rocky & Connie Merron
Cindy Shaw	Lena D'Giulia	Rose Sullivan
David & Margie Guggenhime	Leslie Barker	Sally Jourdin
Debra Schwartz & William Migely	Lily Chen	Sandy Ross
Diane Whitney	Logan Hennessy	Shirley Menasco
Donald Keeley	Lois Tukman	Steve & Carrie Rosenberg
Eric & Lisa Magnuson	Lulu Gordon	Steven Bolton
Eric Bindelglass & Gabrielle Tierney	Marc & Kim Press	Terence & Tammie Grant
Frances Sullivan	Marcy Pattinson	Terry & Kathleen Edeli
Gary Wren and Nancy Urban	Margaret Urban & Nigel Robinson	Thomas Cassidy
George & Susan Reid	Mark Schwartz	Tobey Martin
Grace Rubenstein	Megan Cast	Tom Bahning & Vicki Duggan
Greta Nash	Mia & Robert Morrill	Wayne & Suzie Koide
Gretchen Tyler	Michael Boorstein	Zepporah Glass
Hannah Rahill & Robert DeVries		

With your support and love for the Inn, hopefully, many future generations will get to enjoy this special place called, "West Point Inn."

## SAVE THE INN DONOR LIST

### West Point Inn Board of Directors

We want to express our deep gratitude to everyone who has stepped up to help save the Inn in our time of need. Thanks to the donors listed below, we have reached 67% of our goal for our short-term needs! This will allow us to keep the Inn operating during the COVID pandemic until a vaccine becomes widely available. But, we have longer term needs. Due to the pandemic, we have had to delay capital projects that are important for the Inn's continued good health and well-being.

If you haven't had a chance to donate, please review the fundraising article elsewhere in this newsletter. Every donation, from \$5 online to \$25,000 bequests, is GREATLY appreciated.

Thank you all for saving the Inn!

Abright, Bill	DeBruin, Linda & George	Graham, Jay	Longinotti, Cheryl	Osborne, Annie	Spotswood, Richard
Akin, Kyle	Degliantoni, Kathryn	Green, Julie	Lowry, Andrew & Karen	Page, Garril in memory of Charles Page	Stephens, Michael
And, Dominic	DeGraff, Edie	Gribler, Nancy	Parko	Parker, Nancy	Stephenson, James
Anderson, Mary	Dehnert, Vicky	Grimes, Janice	Lubinski, Nikko	Parton, James & Maureen	Stone, Mary
Badger, Rob	Denebeim, Keith	Guillory, Marjorie	Mahoney, Timothy	Parton, Jane	Sullivan, Eileen
Baker, Cheri	DiMarco, Stephanie & James Harleen	Hammer, Jenny	Marcuse, Chris & Lin	Peake, Gwen	Sullivan, Frances
Bardwick, Whitney	Dolton, Gail & Doug	Hanley, Jennifer	Johanson	Pepper, George	Sullivan, Rose
Barry, John	Donovan, Ann	Harper, Lauri	Marshall, Shawn	Perfect Fit Personal Training	Suzuki, Elizabeth
Baum, Justine	Down, Cathryn & Douglas Minkler	Helvestine, William	Martin, George & Barbara	Perry, Lynn	Svetcov, Carol Ann
Betzner, Karen	Durr, David	Hogg, Peter	Martinez, David	Petren, Suzanne	Svetcov, Danielle
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Boesch, John	Edeli, Terry & Kathie	Hoopingartner, Margaret	McCaulley, Cindy	Posner, Lawrence	Teklinski, Kara
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Brabo, George	Erving, Ryan & Kristine	Intemann, AJ	McDonagh, Jayne	Randall, Nathan	Thurman, Maura
Bricker, Alison	Everett, Davis	Jackson, Tami	McVeigh, Barbara	Reynolds, Paula	Timossi, Chris
Brown, Kathleen	Faber, Cecilia	Jansen, Suzanne	Meissner, Michael	Ritter, Patrick	Tolman, Derek
Buffum, John	Fewster, Anne	Jenson, Kevan	Meleis, Sherief	Roller, Aaron	Tracy, Bryan
Butler, Michael	Fielder, Thomas	Jernstedt, Karen	Merron, Rocky	Rondeau, Fran	Trader, Cynthia
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Christie, Bradley	Gammell, Jessica	Kelly, Tracy	Murphy, Peter	Secor, William & Karen	Webster, Kimberley & Barry Stone
Clapp, Edward	Geary, Peggy	Kermath, Joan & David	Nay, Marcia	Sell, Collette	While Hiking Marin
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Cutler, Betsey		Lister, John			
Davy, Donn		Litwack, Peter			
Dawainis, Judith					



## SEMOLINA FLORETTA

By Fran Rondeau

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Refrigerate this luscious holiday pudding in a nice dish from which you can serve a portion topped with a generous scoop of pureed strawberries or raspberries.

1. Cook together in a good saucepan:

1/4 cup semolina flour  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 inches of a vanilla bean (or you can add 1 teaspoon of vanilla after it is cooked)  
2 cups of milk  
a pinch of salt

Cook this till it is thick-5-10 minutes, stirring pretty much non stop.

2. Dissolve 1 package of Knox unflavored gelatin in 1/4 cup cold water-it only takes a minute.

Stir this into the pudding

Let it cool for about 30 minutes but not in the fridge-stir once in a while so it remains soft-you just don't want it to be hot when you fold in the whipped cream

3. Whip one cup of whipping or heavy cream-watch it carefully till it should its shape and is simply thick. If you do it too long it will separate and turn into butter-then you have to start over.

Fold the cream into the pudding and refrigerate for at least an hour.

Sauce/Topping

Puree 1 or 2 quarts of strawberries mixed with 1/4 cup sugar  
or use 2 cups of frozen strawberries or raspberries

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Johanna Sistek

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**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)**