



A Community Foundation Strengthening our Coastal Communities Summer Update 2015

The West Marin Fund (WMF) was created in 2011 to increase charitable giving in West Marin and to support the health and wellbeing of coastal West Marin as a whole (including the towns of *Muir Beach, Stinson Beach, Bolinas, Olema, Point Reyes Station, Inverness, Inverness Park, Marshall, Dillon Beach, Tomales and Nicasio*). We offer a well-informed perspective on the nonprofit organizations we serve and to donors who rely on our knowledge of the many unmet needs in our communities. **Here's what we've been up to lately.**

Grants:

Since we started awarding grants in 2013, the Fund has made more than 160 grants totaling over \$300,000 to local nonprofit organizations. These small grants often have a big impact, as we trust the non-profits to tell us what they need.

Our recent **Spring 2015 grants round** focused on helping West Marin's non-profit organizations to be "More Effective, More Efficient." Funded projects included strategic planning, board development, and fundraising capacity-building – all intended to increase our local non-profits' ability to raise funds and do their work better. We made 25 grants for a total of \$48,000 from a request pool of 33 grant applications totaling \$113,000. For a full list of grantees, see our website: www.westmarinfund.org/grants.

Reports from our **Fall 2014** round of grants are now coming in – we're seeing new and beautifully upgraded websites, physical upgrades to facilities and many expanded services.

"Thanks to a \$2,000 grant received in April 2014, Point Reyes National Seashore Association (PRNSA) was able to hire a grant researcher and writer to help us prospect for new granting agencies... Over this time we raised \$126,000 in grant funds and currently have \$295,204 in funding requests pending." Donna Faure, PRNSA



Grantee: Gallery Route One replaced their old ramp for safety and a more welcoming entrance.

Giving Through Youth:

The WMF sponsored a project in youth philanthropy this year, with the generous support of donors Richard Kirschman and Doris Ober. Each of two 8th-grade classes, one in Nicasio and one in Point Reyes Station, gave out \$2000 to local non-profits that they had selected through careful research. In all, they chose 9 organizations to receive grants, including a pre-school, an historical society, a food pantry and a library – all while improving math, writing and civics skills.



Student Esmeralda Gutierrez presents the Giving Through Youth check for new swings to Papermill Creek preschool Executive Director Lourdes Romo.



Nicasio school 8th graders receive \$2000 to award their grants to the local non-profits they selected, among them the local historical society and Halleck Creek Ranch.

Convenings:

While our 11 communities share many concerns, there is no regional government to bring them together to discuss common issues. The Fund holds convening as one of its most important services.

Advisory Council: Twice a year we bring together our advisory council, a group of community leaders who are our eyes and ears throughout West Marin. With over 500 years of residency among them, we feel well represented. At our May gathering, Advisors weighed in on how to increase public awareness of the Fund and the issues we address with our non-profits.



Some members of our Board & Advisory Council, from left: Carlos Porrata, Harriet Moss, Erica Borgwardt, Lexi Rome, Julie Cassel, Catherine Porter, Elaine Doss, Harriet Kossman, Burr Heneman, Beth Perry, Gary Ireland, Ann Shulman, Elizabeth Hill, Barbara Boucke, Steve Costa, Murray Suid, Ken Emanuels, Toni Rembe and Michael Mery. Thanks to Carlos Porrata for fine photography.

We are delighted to have added two new members to our Advisory Council, **Charlene Harvey** of Stinson Beach &

San Francisco and **Lexi Rome** of Point Reyes Station. Charlene is on the board of the Presidio Trust and knows well the issues of parks management and land conservancies. Lexi has hosted our Advisory Council meetings and will be a key convener for the Fund.

Executive Directors: Quarterly the WMF organizes a gathering of West Marin's nonprofit Executive Directors to share information and expertise. The last ED breakfast was on June 23. The action items that emerged from that meeting were 1) a shared need for media training and 2) a collectively organized donor event featuring the best of West Marin's food and farms, as well as a look at its unique needs. Our next ConFab will address the media need, and we'll continue to explore a West Marin event.

Latino Engagement: There's an ongoing collaborative effort among West Marin organizations to further integrate our Anglo and Latino communities. This summer we'll see another cross-cultural **La Mesa de las Abuelas dinner**, in which Mexican and Anglo participants share their grandmothers' dishes and stories; and a **second Latino Empowerment training**. Possible future projects include **a series of seminars on starting a small business**. We could not be more proud of this work, and the increasing closeness of our Anglo and Latino communities up and down West Marin.

"I remember when Mainstreet Moms were meeting at the Presbyterian Church and a couple of gals came to our meeting to tell us about this thing called the West Marin Fund and how it would help the 60+ non-profits that exist out here in West Marin. And here we are, roughly 5 years later and look what this fund has done! I love how they put on workshops to help non-profits become more effective, to train new leaders in our community, and so much more. Who would have thought this is what they would be doing?" Cathleen Dorinson, Mainstreet Mom

How You Can Help: **The West Marin Fund is a community foundation.** We raise money from the community to support services in the community. We are dependent on our donors to do our work. If you love West Marin as we do, please consider including us in your philanthropic giving. Call the West Marin Fund's Executive Director, **Catherine Porter**, at 415-663-9733, to discuss ways to join us, or go to our website at www.westmarinfund.org.