

N O R T H C O A S T E R



Writing — Photography — Marin and Sonoma Coast Travel Directory

N O R T H C O A S T E R



*Fun reading for travelers on
the Marin and Sonoma coast*

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I see her now

By Lisa Witz

In the summers I knew as a girl I'd pick blackberries along the ravine above the stream that flowed into the creek which flowed into the Pacific Ocean. My brother and I would build dams to try and block the flow of water in that stream, we'd hop across the rocks to get to the other side, we'd catch tiny frogs and sequester them in the mini ponds we created that would be washed out the next day when we returned. On the days my mother was home from work, or if she had the early shift and was back in the afternoon, she'd hand me a rinsed-out half-gallon milk carton to take down to the ravine and hunt for blackberries. I'd look for the ripest ones, ready to fall off the vine but not yet touched by the crows that flocked to our farm. I'd toss any berries with even one red druplet into the mess of vines and keep searching for the plumpest, avoiding the prickly thorns of the vines surrounding my search. One on my tongue, three in the carton, the pattern would go, and I'd push back branches, lean down into crevices, and hold my breath hoping a snake wouldn't pop out and scare me. Milk carton filled, fingers crimson with berry juice and tiny cuts from the vines, I'd hop across the stream careful to not lose any of my bounty, walk across the field, climb over the wire

fence to the bridge to cross the creek and up the crest to our white house with its red tile roof. My mother would take the carton in silence, wash the berries and put them into the bowl to make her cobbler.

That my mother would be in the kitchen and that I knew she'd make the cobbler was as certain as the cows needing to be fed and the sheep sheared, and the lambs vaccinated, and the bulls kept from the young heifers during breeding season. Every spring my family would walk out to different pastures on our 1,000 acres to round up the animals, and the men would shear the sheep while my brother and I would sack the wool. We'd take turns, one of us climbing up the large apparatus that held a 12-foot gunny sack, the other tossing the wool into the sack while the person inside stomped it with their feet. Sacking wool, we called it, my father hollering at us to get it as compressed as possible, to fit as much into each sack as it could withstand without its seams tearing apart. Late in the afternoon, when the work started to wind down, us kids would play on the taut sacks lying horizontal in our barnyard, hopping from one to another, sometimes they would toggle or roll like a log in a river, sometimes we'd fall, always we'd carry the scent of lanolin in our fingernails and in our hair, the sheep now cleanly frocked released back out into the pasture. Sometimes the blade of the clippers would nick the ewe and a drop of bright red

blood would seep from the freshly cut wool, and I would try to sprinkle talcum power on the wounds.

These chores happened every spring. In winter we'd help birth the new crop of lambs, in autumn we'd stock the haybarn with bales of alfalfa to feed out flocks, and in summer the butchering would take place. Every day the animals needed to be fed, bales of hay on the blue pickup truck, one of us driving, one of us in back sprinkling slices of alfalfa in a meandering line throughout the field. The certainty of these rituals created the cadence of my childhood; year after year I could depend on being needed, on animals yearning to be fed, on fences to be repaired and on my mother's dinner on the kitchen table each evening.

One year, storms wiped out the culvert running across what is normally the small stream near the blackberry bushes, and my father laid out two-by-fours above the rushing water below. I approached the barns with two bottles of warm milk I had made in the kitchen for the bummer lambs, but when I arrived at the driveway I realized we couldn't get all the way into the yard.

"It's fine, come across," said my father, six-foot-two, tall black boots, gazing at me from the other side of the stream. Commanding me. I put one foot on the board, one steady on the ground and I teetered the two bottles in my hand, almost dropping the warm containers into the gushing water below. Starting over, I tucked the bottles into the pockets of my coat and kneeled, held the board with both hands and crawled my way across a river that in the warmth of summer was the place my brother and I played. I made it to the other side and walked into the damp haybarn where my heart thundered while the two bummer lambs—ones whose mother had been lost in the storm—sucked on the nipples of the bottles.

I see her now, that girl, sitting in the haybarn, rain thundering outside, the men trying to fix the gaping hole in our barn driveway and rescue the animals stranded by the storm. I see her sitting in the silence of that barn in solitude, except the animals, and I wonder if that is when the certainty started to slip out from under her. Not long after the big floods, a darkness descended and while the farm chores continued and the seasons changed and the animals were born and fattened up and sent off to slaughter, there were less milk cartons and less afternoons picking blackberries and certainly less cobblers. The crimson red that once pierced her fingers after a long afternoon in the vines now appeared elsewhere, like in the white kleenex her mother lifted to her mouth after a coughing spasm while they were sitting in the parking lot of the grocery store. The assuredness she once had that her mother would take the carton of berries and make cobbler was stripped away.

I don't pick berries anymore, there are no ravines near where I live now and no abundant vines in walking distance. I buy square plastic containers of organic berries and rinse them in the kitchen sink each morning for my oldest son, the only berry lover in my brood of three children and I still check them for red drupelets, and I toss those aside, giving him only the best in the pack. It is in these moments at the kitchen counter that I wonder what it was like for my mother to get the milk carton of blackberries, if she enjoyed making the cobbler or if it was another of many chores, if she saw the cuts on my fingers from the vines, if she panicked when she saw the red blood in her kleenex.

Poems by Denis Bold

In the dark

In the dark
inside

night rain
is the only sound

drums
murmurs

soft snares
on glass skins

deep in sleep
in my pulse

I hear
or think I hear

my heart,
my heart

she says
its echo.

Four chambers

The heart
moves blood

one room
to another

blood needs
to breathe

like old red
wine or fire

or the beetle
crawling, his

pair of pairs
of wings

all four folded
at his sides,

I've lived
here now

a long
time now

this little
house

two up
two down

windows open,
windows closed.

Sojourner chicken

By Barbara Heenan

On rare occasions, an ordinary miracle occurs. Right before our eyes. This happened one morning in mid-March, when a pure white chicken appeared in the yard. She had all the normal chicken behaviors. She pecked and scratched in the gravel walk. She cocked her head, her yellow flat eye flush with the ground. She walked stiff legged, adjusting her pace to whatever she spied ahead. But her sudden entrance into our world was a miracle. She was neither dirty nor disheveled, but rather a luminous, almost pulsating white. With her bright red comb and strong orange legs, she had simply arrived. Where had she come from? Why had she chosen us? What might it mean?

The women in our First Valley neighborhood banded together in awe and amusement at her presence. We spoke of her strange magical arrival and roaming, we noted her behaviors and shared a distant affection for her. None of us wished to capture her or pet her or hamper her free wanderings. We felt an affinity with her.

Nancy bought chicken feed and placed water and crumbles in bowls in her small garden behind her wooden fence. The hen often walked along the pickets, plopping down with an awkward wing flap and a heavy thud to eat and drink. Lisa announced her comings and goings to us. And I tolerated, even welcomed, her foraging in my vegetable garden. Often, when I was pulling weeds, the white hen joined me, plucking at little lettuces or beet greens at my side.

She disappeared sometimes for hours. Where she went, we didn't know. But we worried about coyotes and cars and mean people. Wondrously, time after time, she returned, taking up her familiar habits. We learned that at night she roosted in the huge Cecile Bruner rose Julie had planted, the one that grew up the utility pole across the street. Nancy spied her late one evening, a great white ghostly smudge in the heights of the climbing rose. We were happy to hear that she had found her own way to safety at night. Still, we knew that her time with us was a mystery, brief and wonderful.

Of course, the inevitable happened. One early morning, we found a thick swath of white feathers, both soft and downy from her breast and straight and sharp from her wings, scattered in the grass. Bright white on bright green. No chicken, just the feathers. We found a few tiny bits of flesh and bone, but mostly, just feathers. No trace of our living chicken. It was probably a raccoon, we said. She must have been caught off guard. It must have been horrible.

I don't remember if we cleaned up the feathers—there were so many of them. And I no longer recall exactly when, but Lisa found a nest behind the broad glossy leaves of an acanthus plant. Twenty or 30 eggs, an enormous number and a living testimony to weeks of quiet egg-laying and silent nest-sitting.

The sight of the nest, and the thought of her vigilance and devotion, pulled us toward the spirit of our white hen. What had made her strike out on her own, so singular, so independent, so un-chicken-like? Was it wanderlust, or a walkabout? What was she thinking?



The last home

By Jeanie Kortum

Who's to say what pulls you back to a piece of land? For 20 years, my husband and I have returned to a small meadow we call Dream Farm overlooking the bay in Inverness.

Dream Farm. The name almost a poem.

We first saw the land on a windy day when we were just beginning our love affair. We liked it because it reminded him of Ireland, I liked it because it was introspective.

Everywhere motion. A great wind stirred the upper branches of the trees. White chevrons of waves crossed the bay, a cacophony of falling leaves.

I sat down on a log, hugged my knees. Though noisy with the chatter of leaves and pine needles, an immense stillness existed here, something beyond anything human. I reach for his hand. If only for a few seconds I belonged to the world, nameless, blazing, pure.

I didn't know then what I know now, that nature, both tender and brutal, was already marching toward us. Behind his beautiful green eyes, invading his bones, virulent cancer cells were already multiplying.

We made an offer for the land. Some kind of tangle between the partners and it was rejected: we were almost relieved. Between us we had four kids. They had to finish high school. We would soon adopt another boy.

One after the other, the years fell away, but pulled by some mysterious force, we returned to Dream Farm over and over again. Just to sit, to be.

And then a savage year. He had a backache that would not end and finally he got an MRI. A phone call that night; multiple myeloma, his bones eaten by cancer, a blood disease that never leaves your body. We had to show up for emergency surgery the very next morning.

A year of dark, still days. Needing to belong to a world of color and wind, I dragged my fear and sorrow to Dream Farm. It felt like my own private church, the only place where I could be fully here. Just as I had many years ago, I would sit on a log in the middle of the meadow, watch leaves in the

tall trees shake hallelujahs against the sky, lose myself in the movement of long grass. Whitecaps like knuckles curled inside of white gloves moved rapidly across the surface of the bay, smashed the far shore.

Gradually—a good doctor, the right medicine—he became one of the lucky ones. With his cancer under control, the years moved rapidly on. Now we were in our 60s. Financially fit, children grown up and moved out, our last about to leave for college. Our house, like a tangerine in a baggie skin, was suddenly too large.

And once again Dream Farm is up for sale.

Trying to decide whether to buy it, we visit on a warm summer evening. I walk the familiar sweet blurred land through shadows as soft as feelings. It was so hot the air was a brandy of heat-steeped berries.

A woman in a straw hat approached and told us she lived down the road. We said we were thinking of buying the land. “Let me tell you about this place,” she said and then, as though she were a hostess at a party, she introduced us to every single plant, every tree, by their Latin names. Childlike, I followed her as she interpreted this complicated ecosystem.

I loved the idea of living next to someone who knew the plants as well as her human neighbors. We made an offer and it was accepted.

Soon we were working with an architect who composes songs on his mandolin from Yeats poems. “Do you think Dream Farm is a Rilke poem or a Yeats poem?” I asked him one day. He smiled, studied a giant oak that stands like a stooped curator at the edge of the property. A moment of silence, then he began to sing in a sweet, rough voice. “I went down to the Hazelwood, because a fire was in my head.”

Yeats.

And now story poles are going up, gleaming in the late-afternoon sun.

I have never lived so dizzyingly close to the edge of the continent. No barrier, no soft arm defining safety between home and horizon, this land is so close to water it is as if the bay is another room. I will taste salt on my lips the first thing in the morning. My sleep will be spoken to by waves, I will come to know water's many complexities.

Sometimes building this house is more vivid,

more audacious, than writing a novel, one's choices on display. The closest thing I can compare it to is the autobiography of a face, the way we wear our years.

I have always inherited the places where I have lived, and I've never nurtured something or someone from the ground up. Even my two adopted children were made elsewhere. I have never started with something not there before.

This home will be the final summation of what I've learned, what I love, the underlining of all the parts: these rooms will enclose family, solitude, my long marriage. What bulbs will I plant here? Where will I build shelves to hold my books, my collections of antiques inherited from my parents and their parents?

As I watch the story poles going up, sketching the outlines of rooms, I feel almost as if the pieces of wood are defining the inhabitation of self. These rooms will hold both my belonging and my aloneness. It is here that I will negotiate the chafe between.

There is no longer a galloping-free quality to our happiness; each day is more precious than the last. Bodies aging, Mike with bone cancer, we are simply biology. It is here I will become an old woman: Dream Farm's tall trees will sweep the years beyond me.

Living here, will I become I be less afraid?

M.F.K. Fisher designed a house at the end of her life that she called “Last House.” This too will be our last house. In this small meadow, past, present and the future will mix. My grandchildren will carry into the years beyond me the sound of this wind sloughing through the trees. The waves at Shell Beach will fill tiny bowls left by their feet. They will come to know nights here, sleep under the same ancient constellations as the Miwoks who lived here before. At Heart's Desire they will pick blackberries larger than their thumbs.

And it is here, caressed by time's ceaseless movement, where they will learn about impermanence, learn that what they love is perishable. On the shores of Limantour Beach they will unravel the calligraphy of kelp, look up to see whales migrating far out at sea. “Look,” they will say, pointing with small fingers, but a moment later the whales will be gone, the space where they were terrifying in its absence.

And one day they will point, and I too will be gone.



Mourning a loved one in Coast Miwok tradition

By Owen Clapp

How people process death and mourning interweaves elements of material culture, symbolic culture and mysticism. We can learn about traditional Coast Miwok practices from today's Coast Miwok descendants and from interviews of elders collected in the 20th century. In the 1930s, two Coast Miwok elders reflected on traditions surrounding death and mourning with University of California, Berkeley, anthropologist Isabel T. Kelly.

In Coast Miwok, Marin County's original spoken language, the word for "to die" is *tulau*. A "dead person" is *tulauwa-mitca*. Depending on how a person died, there were two ways of handling a body. Maria Copa, who was born in the area we now call Nicasio not long after the Civil War, told Kelly that those who died naturally on a

rancheria—or village—were cremated, while those who were murdered outside the village were buried. In the case of those who were cremated, bones were then taken and buried. Copa and Tom Smith, a Coast Miwok elder born in Bodega Bay in 1838, agreed that two black birds flying together (maybe crows, maybe not) were harbingers of imminent death, traveling to share bad news.

It was taboo for children and young adults to be present at cremations. Smith was not allowed to view cremations well into his teens, by which time the practice seems to have ceased. He said suicide was something that in traditional Coast Miwok culture would only be done a man whose wife had died or who otherwise had had only bad luck. Sometimes, a man would use iris root as a poison.

Perhaps more than 100 Coast Miwok people were buried in a cemetery along Highway 1 on the east side of Tomales Bay. These individuals were buried in the manner of a Catholic cemetery, with crosses and headstones. Efforts to maintain and restore the site have been undertaken by the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. In the 1990s, Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin co-founder Sylvia Thalman worked with Father Robert White, pastor of the Church of the Assumption of Mary in Tomales, to identify some of those buried there.

Nativity scene

By Jim Pellegrin

As I see them
they are young,
very young: Mary 15 or 16
just a girl, really,
with even more
than the usual
aura of mystery surrounding
her pregnancy
(if that is
possible)
the neighbors
counting the months, gossiping
the girl wondering how
how could this happen
to me?
her hips widening, unhinging somehow,
her small breasts
filling, drop by drop,
with milk and more milk
'til they bulge
like goats' udders!
And deeper still,
deep in her bones
a vague feeling of
resentment and betrayal welling up,
clear and cold,
to fill the very
center of her
and why not?
Her body snatched from her
used with no asking
when all she wanted
was to look at herself
in the mirror,
to comb her hair, quietly
in her room, the love songs, the kind words,
the quick glances
of young men
in the marketplace,
it was all just a trick
so God could trap her
and use her
like a favored cow! Why,
why should God want to be born? It was all
so ugly and awful
the whole predicament
more than enough
to make a very young girl
cry until she vomited
and so she did
every morning
for weeks and weeks and weeks.
And poor Joseph!
His country occupied
by a pagan Caesar

who orders his wife,
her time coming
at any moment,
to travel miles and miles to another city
so that he can register to pay more taxes!
Surely this, on the heels
of the early conception, was enough
to send any man
into a rage!
But my God, she is beautiful. For her, I will swallow
any indignity, I will bear any scorn.
And now nightfall
and no room
in the inn!
To sleep in the barn
like beasts! The thought repels us,
but, like all people
of their time,
they lived, day and night, side by side
with animals,
they were intimate
with the sweet smell
of manure, familiar
with the sound
of urine splashing
from the height
of a donkey
or a cow
onto the dirt floor,
and, after all,
there was no warmth
like the warmth of
animal's breath, and no bed so soft as clean straw
to lay in, no sound so soothing as the stamping
of hooves behind
closed eyes.
Suddenly, her nails digging into his arm
beads of sweat gathering on her upper lip,
he is helpless and afraid as any man
before his wife's
pain. Why must it be
so hard? Why does it have to hurt her so?
At last a perfect
melon roundness bulging,
bigger and bigger, between
her spindly girl's legs,
his eyes, too, bulging
at the size of it,
big as the moon!
big as the sun
rising! Surely she will
burst but she is swept along now
she is bearing down hard pushing with all her might
He's coming, coming
Oh! The head is out
facing down, then to one side, now the shoulder and
the wide chest and my God!
He is holding their baby
so wet and slippery
He's crying, he's a loud one

a boy, it's a boy
He's peeing on me! Look!
He's peeing on me! Handing the baby
up to her the cord
a glistening spiral
she takes in
every inch of him
with a smile puts him
to the breast, Oh!
He can suck, too,
He can suck hard!
the afterbirth sliding out
of her vagina
with a gush
to lay, unnoticed,
in the red straw,
her body shaken
by a great shivering
so that he, not knowing what else to do,
lays down next to her
and embraces her,
holds her, tightly, so tightly, until they are all three
still.
They weren't sure, either of them, what to do
with the cord. Finally they looked into the faces
of the animals
the ass and the cow
watching them through it all
and Mary cut the cord already half dry
with her teeth
and he was
free of her.
Who knows, he thinks, gazing at his new son,
perhaps, just perhaps, he will be the one
to save us
from ourselves.
All this coming to pass
in the usual, private way
until the whole world, or
what must have seemed like
the whole world, found them
in the barn.
Rank-smelling, sleepy,
dumbly wondering
at the sight of
a baby in a manger —
the shepherds at least
seemed to fit in
with the animals,
though they insisted,
gravely, that an angel
had led them
to the child.
But these three dark ones
in their bright robes
and twisted turbans,
what are they doing here
all of a sudden
how is this any of their business?
And their gifts,

The party animal

By Richard Vacha

so wildly extravagant,
gold and frankincense and myrrh,
surely they mock
a poor carpenter.
The star, the star!
they keep exclaiming,
though I can't understand
another word
of their gibberish;
they seem so lost,
so out of place,
and their guards
give me a shudder
with their lances
and their swords.
I want them
out of here, now!
for God's sake
they are pulling me
outside, pointing upwards
toward a bright star
all right, all right
it's a gorgeous star
there are lots of gorgeous stars
on this beautiful clear night
the air so crisp
you can see your breath but
please, please, we need time
to ourselves, come back again tomorrow
if you must and thank you,
thank you for the gifts
oh God, shaking his head,
what the hell
is going on here?
And that look
in his wife's face —
accepting, serene,
not at all dismayed
or even mildly surprised
by any of it —
the squalor of the barn,
the ridiculous pomp
of the kings,
the gawking shepherds —
it was all happening
as it was mean to happen
There was no stopping
any of it, not the urine splashing
to the ground not the kings'
wild ravings not the simple
curiosity of the cows and the shepherds
she seems to know it all
before it happens to her.
Who is this woman?
What, in God's name,
have we done?
'As for Mary,
she treasured
all these things
and pondered them in her heart.'

One day last summer, a young tracker friend and I explored the hills and fields in the ranchlands of the outer Point. We traveled across cultivated fields, up and down chaparral slopes, along ridgelines and down through canyons and creeks. Everywhere we wandered, we found coyote scats prominently located and widely spread. We examined the contents of each one and grew more and more amazed at the variety of the food items we found in them. Coyote scat is often easy to identify with its hairy content, commonly tan-colored from jackrabbit fur. It has a dry, spongy texture and is usually formed in twisty ropes, but it can vary as widely as a coyote's diet.

Coyotes, like foxes, are fruit lovers and always seem to know where the ripest fruits are. Like birds, they are constantly testing each patch to find the perfect moment for harvest—usually a day or two before maximum sweetness—in an effort to beat out competitors. We found remnants of five types of berries in the scat: huckleberries, salmon berries, blackberries, coffee berries and wax myrtle berries. These berries are distributed over a wide range of habitats, hinting at the extent of a coyote's foraging territory and its sharp attention to changing seasonal conditions.

In other scats, we found fur from at least five different small mammals: voles, mice, gophers, brush rabbits and jack rabbits, all abundant in these wild parklands and widely distributed across highly varied locations. We also found deer hair, distinctive in its stiffness and the way it crimps when bent because it is hollow. In the spring, coyotes regularly prey upon fawns, but in the late summer the deer hair is more likely to have been scavenged from a carcass, often a roadkill. The fur of each of these animals is distinct in its length, feel and coloring at the tips. For example, cottontail fur has a soft and silky feel that is immediately apparent upon rubbing between fingertips: "That's a bunny!" you will exclaim.

Coyotes employ different hunting methods for each of these animals, revealing a vast repertoire of skills. Jackrabbits usually are chased down on open ground at speeds up to 40 miles an hour. The coyote probably has the advantage in both speed and endurance, the rabbit in agility and acceleration. Gophers are either dug out of their nests or stalked and pounced on at their tunnel entrances in fields. Brush rabbits are also stalk-and-pounced but at thicket edges rather than in their brushy tunnels. Mice and voles are often surprised while the coyote is on its relentless trot through its territory, then snatched as they run away.

Coyotes are also happy to hunt birds when they can, and they are good at it. My friend and I found feathers in their scat from sparrows and quail, and from ocean-diving duck carcasses that are scavenged along beaches on coyotes' regular runs right after high tide. I have no doubt they hunt many other birds. Occasionally they will even leap and bat down birds in low-flying flocks, the way bobcats do, picking a perfect hilltop where the flock flies close to the ground. A little later in the year, a favorite item on coyotes' menu is the coot, which migrates southward in nighttime flights and

suddenly shows up in large, closely grouped flocks in the backwaters a little earlier than the ducks and just as rodent populations are declining with the oncoming fall weather.

Coyotes are also willing to wade into shallow water to hunt or steal their prey. We've seen them spying on otters hunting ducks and cormorants, taking the extras that the otters cache along the shoreline. Recently, the coyotes near the park's lagoons have become adept at stealing pelican carcasses from the river otters, but on our hike, we did not identify pelican remnants in scat.

And let's not forget reptiles and insects. Coyotes will certainly eat the occasional snake or lizard when the opportunity presents. In scats near open fields, we found insect parts, including legs and carapaces from large beetles, Jerusalem crickets and grasshoppers. Sometimes there were a lot of them in an individual scat, as if the coyote worked a field over rather than just snagging a random bug or two.

No wonder coyotes won the century-long war of extermination waged against them by the American government from 1850 to 1950. Unlike many of our larger wild mammals who had been driven nearly extinct by the early 1900s, coyotes were not even close to being eliminated by 100 years of widespread poisoning, trapping and shooting. Not only did they survive the onslaught, but they thrived and expanded their territory from a relatively confined area in the Southwest to the whole North American continent. They are still expanding their ranges and habitats.

Part of coyotes' success is due to their instinct to increase their birthrate when they sense a loss of population. At these times, more females give birth to more litters and litter sizes increase. In addition, coyotes' ability to hunt both singly and in groups gives them tremendous flexibility. Add their amazingly diverse diet and their success is understandable.

Coyotes also possess incredibly deep intelligence and awareness. During the pioneers' western expansion, strychnine was the preferred poison, distributed and used widely to devastating effect on all wildlife—except coyotes, who quickly learned to avoid it. Fortunately, with better science and legislation, much of the wanton killing has slowed and wildlife has responded, though ranchers in some parts persist in holding old-style, ignorant killing derbies.

Ranchers in the Point Reyes National Seashore and other parts of the coast have slowly and often reluctantly learned that there are better ways to protect their livestock. Meanwhile, they benefit from the huge part coyotes play in rodent control.

Our simple walk through the ranchlands revealed what an admirable and capable animal the coyote truly is, so wild and free and possessed of an extensive portfolio of survival strategies. As we continued out to the remote shorelines of the lower lagoon, where low water levels left wide, sandy beaches, we noticed shells and several throw-mounds at dug-up spots. Checking more closely, we found coyote tracks at each six- to eight-inch-deep hole. They had been digging for clams! The clam shells had been broken by tooth crunches. Apparently, the coyotes topped their party day off with a clam-feed. I'm hoping for an invitation next time!



Black Mountain of many names

By Dewey Livingston

Looming over the southern end of Tomales Bay is a landmark hill, or rather something between a mountain and a hill, at 1,276 feet above sea level. The grass-covered profile as seen from Point Reyes Station or Inverness Park asks for comparison to animalistic features. The mountain's five peaks, which march along in a northwest-southeast line and vary in height, have been compared to a fist or, to some imaginative souls, an elephant. The official name is Black Mountain, but others have come up with colloquial names.

According to Sky Road Webb, who has been studying and reinvigorating the Coast Miwok language, the old name for the mountain was Oyen-mütchis, meaning "Coyote's hand-game bones," for its resemblance to the knuckle of a hand holding the bones of a coyote in a traditional guessing game wherein players hide a bone in their hand. But as with most place names used by Native peoples, it was replaced with the Anglo name of an immigrant settler.

James Black, who owned the land beginning in 1850, built his home and ranch in its eastern shadow. The first known appearance of the mountain on an official map came in 1873, on a map of Marin County that labels it Black's Mountain. Eventually, the possessive was dropped, and Black Mountain has been its official name ever since, according to the United

States Geological Survey. The mountain's east face looms over the northern end of Nicasio Valley, James Black's original home ranch, and the west side forms the backdrop of Point Reyes Station.

Over the years, Black Mountain took on other names. Some Inverness summer kids called it "Knuckle Mountain," members of Tomales Bay's Felix family used "Indian Head," and still others called it "The Fist." In 1969, The Youngbloods, a rock band whose members had taken up residence in Inverness, named their second album "Elephant Mountain," with a painting of the iconic hill on the cover. Thus was born Black Mountain's most popular moniker. Rumor had it that Youngbloods drummer Joe Bauer's sister-in-law, Hannah Bauer, named the mountain. Lowell Levinger, known as "Banana" in the band, remembered that Hannah had introduced the group to the name, but he didn't know its origins. "We loved our new home and realized that it was being watched over by Elephant Mountain, and Larry Heald painted the cover and that's what we named the album," he wrote in an email.

In fact, the name Elephant Mountain dates back to the 1920s, when members of the Wilcox and Corbett families of Inverness called it that. And in 1951, a news item referred to "Old Elephant" mountain. In 1958, Marin County plein air artist George Demont Otis referred to it as a "sleeping elephant" in a description of his 1950 painting of Point Reyes Station. There are other Elephant Mountains in California:

one near Daggett in the Mojave Desert, and one in Yosemite through which the mile-long Wawona Tunnel passes. There is also a notorious Elephant Mountain in Cambodia that figured in the violence of the Vietnam War.

After Black's large land holdings were broken up in the 1870s, two ranches occupied Black Mountain, one on either side. Black's daughter Mary Burdell and her descendants owned them both. The easterly ranch was leased for many years by Bud Farley, and Nicasio residents sometimes called it Bud's Mountain; it was subdivided into large residential parcels in the 1960s. The westerly ranch—with the iconic profile, and now known as Black Mountain Ranch—was owned for almost half a century by the Nobmann-Osborne family. Today the owner is Marcel Houtzager, who is encouraging and supporting Indigenous people, local artists and his farming and ranch tenants to make good use of the land.

It could be that now is the time to honor the original people of Marin County who saw their spiritual guide Coyote in the mountain. Oyen-mütchis—probably pronounced oy-yen mooch-iss—is not that hard to say. Black Mountain, or whatever you want to call it, has changed little in 150 years. The western side has been owned by only three families between 1850 and 2023. The mountain will watch over Point Reyes Station and Tomales Bay for centuries to come, with its protective fist as a guard and its elephant's gentleness as a welcome.

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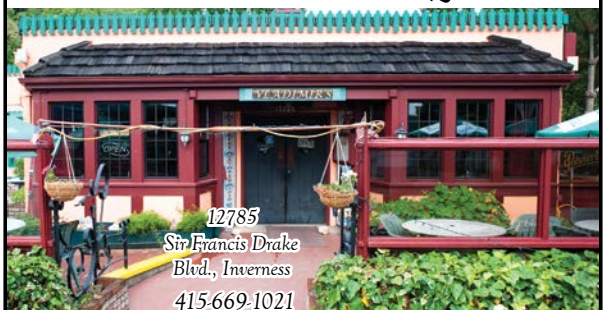
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The Point Reyes Roadhouse is a restaurant offering traditional American and Mexican fare. 10905 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Café Reyes serves pizza, salad, soup and oysters, beer, wine and organic coffees by the pound. (415) 663.9493 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Whale of a Deli serves sandwiches, pizza and Mexican food, and sells other grocery items. (415) 663.8464 997 Mesa Road, Point Reyes Station, California 94956

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The Station House Café serves locally sourced and organic American cuisine. (415) 663.1515 stationhousecafe.com 11285 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

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The Tides Wharf Restaurant and Bar is open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner. (707) 875.2751 innatthetides.com 800 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

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Eleven Wine Bar & Bistro also features vacation rooms in a chic, renovated 1890s farmhouse nestled in downtown Bolinas. Also open for private events. For information and reservations, email elevenbolinas@gmail.com. (415) 868.1133 11 Wharf Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

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Point Reyes Station

Point Reyes Lodging is an association of properties offering a diversity of lodging options, including traditional bed and breakfast inns, cottages, lodges and luxury suites. ptreyes.com P.O. Box 878, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Point Reyes Vacation Rentals offers a variety of homes, large and small, for family gatherings, company retreats and romantic getaways, all well-appointed and clean, with care and attention to detail. pointreyesvacationrentals.com (415) 663.6113

The Point Reyes Country Inn and Stables offers a bed-and-breakfast inn and Groom's Quarters. (415) 663.9696 ptreyescountryinn.com 12050 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Ferrando's Hideaway offers spacious one-bedroom cottages with private hot tubs and woodstoves,

surrounded by organic vegetable and flower gardens, within walking distance of Point Reyes Station. (415) 663.1966 ferrando.com 31 Cypress Road, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The Point Reyes Country Inn and Stables is your headquarters for a weekend of relaxation, outdoor activities, and fine dining. Offering a bed and breakfast inn, waterfront cottages on Tomales Bay, and groom’s quarters. (415) 663.9696 ptreyescountryinn.com 12050 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The Point Reyes Vineyard Inn is a Mediterranean-style bed and breakfast with views of the Inverness Ridge and West Marin’s rolling hills. (415) 663.1552 ptreyesvineyardinn.com 12700 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Marshall

The newly renovated Lodge at Marconi is a historic coastal retreat featuring elevated guest accommodations and versatile event spaces nestled amid thousands of acres of protected grasslands overlooking Tomales Bay. (415) 663.9020 18500 Highway One, Marshall, CA 94940

Nick’s Cove Restaurant & Cottages is a waterfront destination featuring 12 luxuriously rustic and romantic cottages overlooking Tomales Bay. Full restaurant and bar open for lunch and dinner daily, plus weekend brunch. (415) 663.1033 nickscove.com 23240 Highway One, Marshall, CA 94940

Bayglow Cottage offers each day of the year aglow with a new reflection from the sun, the moon and the tides of Tomales Bay. bayglow.com

Inn on Tomales Bay offers a romantic weekend or week’s vacation at the finest bed and breakfast on Tomales Bay. tomalesbay.com (415) 663.9002

Tomales, Dillon Beach and Valley Ford

The Tomales Hotel is a rare grande dame of an 1800s hotel, with newly refurbished, spacious rooms. (707) 878.2936 thecontinentalinn.com 26985 Highway One, Tomales, CA 94971

Dillon Beach Property Management specializes in vacation rentals. (707) 878.2204 dillonbeach.com 3985 Tomales-Petaluma Road, Tomales, CA 94971

Dillon Beach Resort offers rooms and cabins, a café, a store, a surf shop and gated beach access. (707) 878.2505 or (707) 935.4310 dillonbeachresort.com 1 Beach Avenue, Dillon Beach, CA 94929

Lawson’s Landing is a resort and campground situated at the mouth of Tomales Bay, with camping, fishing, clamming, a boat launch and rentals and an outboard shop. (707) 878.2443 lawsonslanding.com 137 Marine View Drive, Dillon Beach, CA 94929

Valley Ford Hotel has six charming guest rooms with private baths, located in a garden setting with old-growth Cypress trees. (707) 876.1983 vfordhotel.com 14415 Highway One, Valley Ford, CA 94972

Bodega Bay & Jenner

Bodega Coast Inn has 44 rooms overlooking the water. Pet-friendly rooms available. (707) 875.2217 bodegacoastinn.com 521 Highway One, Bodega, CA 94923

Inn at the Tides offers upscale dining at the Tides Wharf restaurant and rooms overlooking the water. (707) 875.2751 innatthetides.com 800 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Sonoma Coast Villa offers elegant accommodations, organic wine country cuisine, a lavish courtyard spa and horseback riding. (707) 876.9818 scvilla.com 16702 Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450

Visit

Stinson Beach

Stinson Beach Surf and Kayak offers any equipment necessary for an outing in the surf or at sea. (415) 868.2739 3605 stinsonbeachsurfandkayak.com Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Fritz Bikes offers bicycle rentals, sales, repairs and swag. (415) 306.8864 fritzbikes.com 3415 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA

Live Water Surf Shop provides rentals and sales of all surf and beach gear. (415) 868.0333 livewatersurfshop.com 3448 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

The Stinson Beach Library is open Mondays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesdays from noon to 8 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (415) 868.0252 521 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Wellspring Center for Healing is a holistic healing clinic specializing in chiropractic medicine, acupuncture and massage. (415) 868.1370 wellspringcenterforhealing.com 3425 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Stinson Beach Community Presbyterian Church has a Sunday worship service at 9:30 a.m. (415) 868.2603 32 Belvedere Avenue, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

The Stinson Beach Community Center offers classes, conferences, concerts, weddings and other events since 1953. (415) 868.1444 stinsonbeachcommunitycenter.org 32 Belvedere Avenue, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Bolinas

The Bolinas Library is a full-service public library with books, reference materials, research materials, magazines and public computers. Open Mondays and Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursdays noon to 8 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (415) 868.1171 14 Wharf Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

The Bolinas Museum hosts exhibitions of various art mediums and local history in five different galleries and offers cultural events. Open Fridays 1 to 5 p.m. and weekends noon to 5 p.m. (415) 868.0330 bolinasmuseum.org 48 Wharf Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

The Bolinas Community Center offers classes, concerts, a food bank, fundraisers and other events in the heart of town. (415) 868.2128 bocenter.org 14 Wharf Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

Bolinas Surf Shop, established in 1962, offers wetsuits, booties, rash guards, screen-printed clothing and more. Cash only. Open weekends. Best to call to find out exact hours. (415) 868.1935 bolinassurfshop.com 52 Wharf Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

Calvary Presbyterian Church has a Sunday worship service at 11:15 a.m. (415) 868.2180 3 Brighton Avenue, Bolinas, CA 94924

St. Aidan’s Episcopal Church has a 10 a.m. Sunday service. (415) 868.1852 30 Brighton Avenue, Bolinas, CA 94924

St. Mary Magdalene Church has a Sunday mass at 10:45 a.m. (415) 663.1139 16 Horseshoe Hill Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

Olema

The Bear Valley Visitor Center is the Point Reyes National Seashore’s primary visitor hub, with materials and guidance on the park’s roads, trails, and human and natural history. Books, cards and posters are for sale in the bookstore, rangers lead regular programs starting here and beach fire permit applications are here. Open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Five Brooks Ranch offers full-service Western horseback riding in the Point Reyes National Seashore for the whole family, daily and year-round. (415) 663.0415 fivebrooks.com Highway One, three miles south of Olema, CA 94950

Sacred Heart Catholic Church has a Saturday mass at 5:30 p.m., and at 7:30 p.m. in Spanish, and a Sunday mass at 8:30 a.m. (415) 663.1139 10189 Highway One, Olema, CA 94950

Tama One is a curated shop, art space and gallery featuring original local and regional artworks, Kiss the Flower honey, old and contemporary jewelry, ceramics, soap, cards, candles, textiles and healing treasures. 9960 Highway 1, Olema, CA 94950

Nicasio and the San Geronimo Valley

Thomas Wood Fine Art features California landscape paintings. Open by appointment. (415) 497.0348 twoodart.com 4301 Nicasio Valley Road, Nicasio, CA 94946

Saint Mary’s Catholic Church has a Sunday mass at 11:15 a.m. stcecilia-lagunitas.org On the town square in Nicasio, CA 94946

The San Geronimo Valley Community Center serves the valley community with arts and cultural programs, events, and senior and youth services. (415) 488.8888 sgvcc.org 6350 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, San Geronimo, CA 94963

Gan HaLev, the Jewish Congregation of San Geronimo Valley, holds regular services at San Geronimo Valley Community Center at 6350 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, San Geronimo, CA 949634 (415) 488.4524 ganhalev.org or email shalom@ganhalev.org

San Geronimo Valley Community Presbyterian Church has a Sunday worship service at 11 a.m. (415) 488.9318. 6001 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., San Geronimo, CA 94963

St. Cecilia’s Catholic Church has a Sunday mass at 9:30 a.m. (415) 488.9799 stcecilia-lagunitas.org 450 West Cintura Avenue, Lagunitas, CA 94938

3generations Chiropractic Studios is open by appointment. (415) 488.4300 7282 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Lagunitas, CA 94938

Inverness

The Inverness Library is open Mondays and Fridays from 3 to 6 p.m., Tuesdays from 2 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Fridays from 3 to 6 p.m. (415) 669.1288 15 Park Avenue, Inverness, CA, 94937

The Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History features rotating exhibits in the Inverness Library. Open during library hours. (415) 669.1288 15 Park Avenue, Inverness CA, 94937

St. Columba’s Episcopal Church offers classes, workshops, a Wednesday service at noon and a 10 a.m. Sunday service. (415) 669.1039 stcolumbasinverness.org 12835 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Inverness, CA 94937 Point Reyes Station

The Tom Biagini Gallery features the contemporary oil paintings and screen-prints. (310) 923.4101 tombiagini.com 5 Inverness Way South, Inverness, CA 94937

Artiquity Gallery Art & Antiques features the collections of Kim Ford Kitz and Heather Mickley, and rotating exhibitions by coastal Marin artists. (415) 669.4229 artiquitygallery.com 2 Inverness Way North, Inverness, CA 94937

Point Reyes Station

West Marin Fitness is a full-service gym with weightlifting and cardiovascular equipment, a shower and personal training. (415) 663.1762 65 Third Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

West Marin Chamber of Commerce offers a Marin County visitor’s recreational guide. (415) 663.9232 pointreyes.org P.O. Box 1035 Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Blue Waters Kayaking offers guided hiking and boating tours in Tomales Bay and beyond. For information on rentals, tours, classes and more, call (415) 669.2600 bluwaterskayaking.com 11401 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Gallery Route One, an artist-member-supported gallery, hosts programs involving art and the environment and shows exhibits year-round. Open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day but Tuesday. (415) 663.1347 galleryrouteone.org 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The Dance Palace Community and Cultural Center is a multi-purpose nonprofit providing a wide variety of cultural, educational, recreational and community events, programs, services and classes. (415) 663.1075 dancepalace.org 503 B Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Building Supply is a general hardware store offering home and garden maintenance and repair supplies. Fishing licenses and equipment. Open weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (415) 663.1737 11280 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The Point Reyes Library is open Mondays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2 to 6 p.m., and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (415) 663.8375 11431 Highway One, Suite 7, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Point Reyes Animal Hospital offers general and emergency pet care services. (415) 663.1533 11030 pointreyesvet.com Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

West Marin Medical Center is a private general practice open by appointment. Open weekdays 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. (415) 663.1082 westmarinmedical.org 11150 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Martin Borge offers gentle chiropractic treatment at 221 B Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956 mborgedc.com (415) 663.9333

Main Street Hair Salon offers full-service hair care to men and women. Manicures available. (415) 663.1520 11203 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin is a nonprofit environmental advocacy organization with headquarters open weekdays. (415) 663.9312 eacmarin.org 65 Third Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The West Marin Community Resource Center, a project of West Marin Community Services, houses a food pantry and helps citizens in crisis or with special needs. Open weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (415) 663.8361 westmarincommunityservices.org 11431 Highway One, Suite 20, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

KWMR community radio serves the West Marin community with music, talk radio and emergency broadcasts at 90.5 FM in Point Reyes Station, 89.9 FM in Bolinas and 92.3 FM in the San Geronimo Valley. (415) 663.8068 kwmr.org 11431 Highway One, Suite 1, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

West Marin Physical Therapy is open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. every weekday but Wednesday. (415) 663.9216 11431 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Point Reyes Community Presbyterian Church has a Sunday worship service at 9 a.m. (415) 663.1349 1445 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Heidrun Meadery produces naturally sparkling varietal meads using the traditional French Méthode Champenoise. Tours and tastings every day but Tuesdays. Flights, picnics and patio leisure available. (415) 663.9122 heidrunmeadery.com 11925 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Point Reyes Vineyard offers tastings of sparkling wine, chardonnay, sauvignon blanc and viognier from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursdays through Mondays. (415) 663.1552 ptreyesvineyardinn.com 12700 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The Fork at Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company offers farm tours, cooking demonstration classes, seasonal farm dinners, events and more. (800) 591.6878 pointreyescheese.com 14700 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Marshall

St. Helen’s Catholic Church has a Sunday service at 8:45 a.m. at the intersection of Highway One and Marshall-Petaluma Road, Marshall, CA 94940

Tomales Bay Oyster Company specializes in fresh oysters, mussels and clams from the cool, clean waters of Tomales Bay. No picnicking at this time. (415) 663.1242 tomalesbayoysters.com 15479 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Hog Island Oyster Company sells live shellfish to go, offers picnic tables by reservation and sells oysters, cheese, charcuterie, wine and beer at an oyster bar. Farm open daily, oyster bar open by reservation only. (415) 663.9218 hogislandoysters.com 20215 Highway One, Marshall, CA 94940

Tomales & Dillon Beach

The Tomales Regional History Center is home to archives of the Tomales area, including yearbooks and manuscripts from local historians. Open weekends 1 to 4 p.m. (707) 878.9443 tomaleshistory.com 26701 Highway One, Tomales, CA 94971

Church of the Assumption has a Sunday mass at 10:15 a.m. (707) 878.2208 26825 Highway One, Tomales, CA 94971

Tomales Presbyterian Church has a Sunday worship service at 9:30 a.m. (707) 762.4924 11 Church Street, Tomales, CA 94971

Lawson’s Landing is a resort and campground situated at the mouth of Tomales Bay, with camping, fishing, clamming, a boat launch, rentals and an outboard shop. (707) 878.2443 lawsonslanding.com 137 Marine View Drive, Dillon Beach, CA 94929

Bodega Bay & Jenner

Bodega Bay Visitor Center has tourist and local information, maps and schedules of events. Open daily 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (707) 875.3866 850 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Bodega Bay Surf Shack has surf gear, clothing and surf gear rentals. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (707) 875.3944 bodegabaysurf.com 1400 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Second Wind sells beach and kite flying supplies. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day but Wednesday. (707) 875.9463 secondwindfun.com 1805 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Bodega Bay Kayak offers customized kayak tours for groups though the Bodega Bay and Sonoma coasts. (707) 875.8899 bodegabaykayak.com 1850 East Shore Drive, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

The Links at Bodega Harbour is a Scottish-style golf course with rolling fairways and views of the Pacific Ocean from all 18 holes. (707) 875.3538 bodegabayharbourgolf.com. 21301 Heron Drive, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Bodega Harbour Yacht Club, a mile from the Links golf course on a quiet waterside locale, is a historic two-story cedar building perfect for weddings, receptions, award banquets, anniversary parties and other special group gatherings. (707) 875.3519 bodegabayharbourgolf.com 21301 Heron Drive,

Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Jenner Visitor Center offers tourist information, including maps and schedules of events. (707) 865.9757 10439 Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450

Shop

Stinson Beach

Live Water Surf Shop provides rentals and sales of all surf and beach gear. Open Mondays through Thursdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fridays through Sundays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (415) 868.0333 livewatersurfshop.com 3448 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Fritz Bikes offers bicycle rentals, sales, repairs and swag. Open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekends from 9 am. to 6 p.m. (415) 306.8864 fritzbikes.com 3415 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA

Oceanic Realty specializes in vacation and long-term rentals, as well as sales in Stinson Beach and the surrounding areas. (415) 868.0717 oceanicrealty.com 3470 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Seadrift Realty specializes in high-end coastal home sales and rentals. (415) 868.1791 seadriftrealty.com 2 Dipsea Road, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Claudia Chapline Gallery is a multimedia art gallery and sculpture garden. Open by appointment. (415) 868.2308 or email info@cchapline.com 3445 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Stinson Beach Books is a seaside bookstore selling local literature and history books as well as national best sellers and magazines. (415) 868.0700 3455 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Highway One Properties serves the communities of Stinson Beach, Seadrift and Bolinas with home sales and vacation rentals. (415) 868.0288 hwyoneprop.com 3605 Highway One, Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Bolinas

Las Baulines Nursery offers a large selection of succulents, drought-tolerant grasses, Mediterranean-type plants, fruit trees, organic vegetables, citrus and bedding plants for pots. Certified greywater consultant on staff. (415) 868.0808 150 Olema-Bolinas Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

Bolinas Hardware is a full-service hardware store offering lumber, quality tools for the home and garden, gifts, toys, landscaping materials and more. (415) 868.2900. bolinashardware.com 1 Olema-Bolinas Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

Kaleidoscope is a women's artisan clothing and international crafts store. (415) 868.9231 48 Wharf Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

Seashore Realty has served West Marin real estate needs since 1949. (415) 868.1234 seashore-realty.com 22 Brighton Avenue, Bolinas, CA 94924

Bolinas Real Estate serves West Marin with vacation and long-term rentals and permanent residence sales. (415) 868.1942 bolinasrealty.com 3 Wharf Road, Bolinas, CA 94924

Realtor BG Bates makes your West Marin dreams come true. (415) 868.1026 bgbates.com P.O. Box 282 Bolinas, CA 94924

Olema & Nicasio

Tama One is a curated shop, art space and gallery featuring original local and regional artworks, Kiss the Flower honey, old and contemporary jewelry, ceramics, soap, cards, candles, textiles and healing treasures. Open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays. 9960 Highway 1, Olema, CA 94950

The Nicasio Valley Cheese Company offers a selection of artisan cheeses made and sold in their own facility and cheese tastings until 4:30 p.m. Open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. (415) 662.6200 5300 Nicasio Valley Road, Nicasio, CA 94946

Thomas Wood Fine Art features California landscape paintings. Open by appointment. (415) 497.0348 twoodart.com 4301 Nicasio Valley Road, Nicasio, CA 94946

Nicasio Land Company serves your regional real estate needs. (415) 662.2004 4499 Nicasio Valley Road, Nicasio, CA 94946

Evgenia sells fine silk and French lace lingerie for the modern heartbreaker handmade in the Bay Area. (415) 508.8808 iamevegenia.com 4503 Nicasio Valley Road, Nicasio, CA 94946

Spirit Matters sells wildly delightful oddities and deities, gifts, books, music, jewelry, scarves, cards and garden art. (415) 663.8699 12307 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Inverness Park, CA 94956

Still Point Studio features the photography of Todd Pickering. (707) 548.6231 12315 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Inverness Park, CA 94956

The Point Reyes Light is a Pulitzer Prize-winning weekly newspaper serving West Marin. (415) 669.1200 ptreyeslight.com 12781 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, Inverness, CA 94937

The Tom Biagini Gallery features the contemporary oil paintings and screen-prints in the historic Shaker Shop West. Open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays. (310) 923.4101 tombiagini.com 5 Inverness Way South, Inverness, CA 94937

Artiquity Gallery Art & Antiques features the collections of Kim Ford Kitz and Heather Mickley, and rotating exhibitions by coastal Marin artists. (415) 669.4229 artiquitygallery.com 2 Inverness Way North, Inverness, CA 94937

Point Reyes Station

Mostly Natives Nursery sells a wide assortment of California native and other plants. (415) 663.8835 mostlynatives.com 54 B Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Inverness Park & Inverness

TOBY'S

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Mon.-Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-5
Downtown Point Reyes Station
415-663-1223

Toby's Coffee Bar All organic products. Daily 6:30 am to 4 pm

Captain Oko sells home décor, art and artifacts, utilitarian goods and clothing sourced from around the world. Schedule private appointments by calling (415) 672.1482 captainoko.com 11101 Highway 1, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

The Epicenter sells designer Dana Davidson’s artisan clothing and T-shirts, and more. (415) 663.1239 Mesa Road and Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Gallery Route One is an artist-member supported gallery hosting programs involving art and the environment and exhibits year-round, with openings, parties and periodic Sunday salons with exhibiting artists. (415) 663.1347 galleryrouteone.org 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Susan Hayes Handwovens sells local and American-made artisan clothing. (415) 663.8057 susanhayespointreyes.com 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Monk Estate sells antique jewelry, purses, scarves, home décor, pottery and skin care products, and shares a space with the Blunk Space, featuring the work of J.B. Blunk. (415) 420.7302 monkestate.com 11101 Highway 1, Suite 105, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Point Reyes Jeweler offers custom earrings, bracelets, necklaces, watches, and wedding and engagement rings. (415) 663.1936 pointreyes.com 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Coyuchi is a retail store, outlet and warehouse supplying organic fair trade cotton bedding, woolen blankets, towels and other home supplies, as well as robes, sleepwear and baby clothes and accessories. (415) 663.8077 coyuchi.com 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Point Reyes Surf Shop retails and wholesales beach clothing, footwear and surf gear. (415) 795.8686 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Black Mountain Cycles is a full-service bicycle repair and retail shop. Walk-ins and appointments are both welcome. (415) 663.8125 blackmtncycles.com 11101 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Marty Knapp Photo Gallery displays photographs of American West landscapes. (415) 663.8670 martyknapp.com 11245 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Zuma retails locally produced and globally sourced ethnic art, scarves, jewelry, instruments, crafts and more. (415) 663.1748 11265 Highway One, Point Reyes, CA 94956

Vita sells a collection of fine artisan crafts, clothing, home accessories, jewelry and plants. (415) 663.1160 vitacollage.com 11275 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Toby’s Feed Barn offers local and organic produce as well as grains, hay, pet food and garden supplies, gifts and music. Toby’s Gallery exhibits art year-round and an outdoor coffee bar sells espresso drinks and homemade pastries. (415) 663.1223 tobysfeedbarn.com 11250 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Building Supply is a general hardware store offering home and garden maintenance and repair supplies. Fishing licenses and equipment. (415) 663.1737

11280 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Palace Market offers local and organic produce, grocery items, wines, beer and liquor, natural supplements, camping and vacation needs, a meat counter, soft-serve ice cream and deli items. (415) 663.1016 11300 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Cabaline Country Emporium & Saddlery is a purveyor of fine, casual and contemporary clothing, a wide selection of saddlery, equipment and riding apparel, shoes and home furnishings. (415) 663.8303 cabaline.com 11313 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Leona’s Gallery and Gifts features local art, jewelry, clothes, decorations and gifts. (415) 535.3124 leonaspointryes.com 11315 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 4956

Point Reyes Books sells new and used books, makes special orders and sponsors author events. (415) 663.1542 ptreyesbooks.com 11315 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA

West Marin Pharmacy is a full-service pharmacy offering prescription refills, compounding and holistic health classes. (415) 663.1121 wm-rx.com 60 Fourth Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Sea to See celebrates cool design and independent makers in a modern general store. Shop-sea-to-see.com (415) 578.8573 60 Fourth Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Flowerbed Florals features seasonal local bouquets and fresh-cut flowers inside the Culture Shop, an indoor marketplace. (415) 609.0181 80 Fourth Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Abalone Apothecary and Chinese Medicine Clinic supporting your reconnection to nature and your deepest health. (415) 663.1747 abalonemedicine.org 65 Third Street, Suite 16, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Visions connects people and provides provisions for a cosmic and grounded life: hand-dyed clothing and masks, plants, art supplies, jewelry, books, vinyl and kids items. shop-visions.com 65 Third Street Unit 14, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Coastal Marin Real Estate has served West Marin buyers and sellers for 30 years, with an office in downtown Point Reyes. (415) 663.1104 coastalmarin.com 11100 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Cheda’s Garage is a AAA-certified garage, family owned since 1923, offering general maintenance, repair and towing. (415) 663.1227 11225 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Point Reyes Station is a full-service gas station open daily from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (415) 663.0633 11401 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

West Marin Community Thrift Store sells used clothing, shoes, accessories, home and garden items, children’s clothes and toys, and antiques, with proceeds benefiting West Marin Community Services. (415) 663.9227 11431 Highway One, Suite 20, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Village Snipper offers haircuts and more. (415)

663.9121 11431 Highway One, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Art Rogers Photography Studio and Gallery is open to visitors by appointment on the Point Reyes Mesa. artrogers.com (415) 663.8345

West Marin Real Estate and Vacation Rental has served the real estate needs of West Marin since 1964. (415) 663.8281 west-marin.com 355 B Street, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Tomales and Valley Ford

Two Silos Mercantile sells antiques and selected seconds in the top floor of a historic downtown building at 27005 Highway One, Tomales, CA 94971 (707) 878.2888

Realtor Karen Karlow promises integrity and experience when either buying or selling Marin and Sonoma properties. (707) 283.2814 or (707) 486.6728

Valley Ford Cheese and Creamery sells cheese, espresso, baked goods, beer and wine, soft-serve and gifts with seasonal days and hours. (707) 875.7073 valleyfordcheese.com 14390 Valley Ford Road, Valley Ford, CA 94972

Bodega and Bodega Bay

Seagull Antiques sells older pop culture items, from records and vintage magazines, to stained glass and toys. (707) 876.3229 17190 Bodega Highway, Bodega, CA 94922

Northern Light Surf Shop sells and rents all necessary gear for surfing, including boards, wetsuits, body boards, gloves and fins. (707) 876.3110 northernlightsurf.com 17191 Bodega Highway, Bodega, CA 94922

Bodega Bay Surf Shack has surf gear, clothing and surf gear rentals. (707) 875.3944 bodegabaysurf.com 1400 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Bodega Bay Pro Dive rents and sells diving and scuba equipment and hosts diving trips in and around the Bodega Bay area. (707) 875.3054 bbprodiver.com. 1275 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Second Wind sells beach and kite flying supplies in a large shop near Bodega Bay beaches. (707) 875.9463 secondwindfun.com 1805 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Bodega Bay Kayak offers customized kayak tours for groups though the Bodega Bay and Sonoma coasts. (707) 875.8899 bodegabaykayak.com 1850 Eastshore Drive, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Smith and Kirk is a fine art gallery featuring glass art, pottery and jewelry. (707) 875.2976 1785 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

The Ren Brown Collection has rotating exhibits, specializing in East Asian and Japanese American prints, and East Asian antiques. (707) 875.2922 renbrown.com 1781 Highway One, Bodega Bay, CA 94923

Bodega Bay Heritage Gallery features rotating exhibits of art from the American West and California coasts and deserts. (707) 875.2911 1580 Eastshore Road, Bodega Bay, CA 94923



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