



NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2020

President's message

The election, the loss of the notorious RBG, smoke-filled air, the pandemic --no wonder so many of us are stressed out, short tempered, and desperate for some calm and normalcy in our lives.

Personally, I find that practicing gratitude helps to deflect the stress and negativity and reveals some positive things -- personal, political, and organizational -- to embrace. On the political front, I am delighted that the issues of climate change and social justice are (at long last!) being viewed through the same lens. When it comes to EFM, I have a long list and want to share with you these highlights for which I am grateful:

- The EFM team that transformed the Master Class into Forum 2020
- The large, diverse audience that has attended Forum 2020 classes
- The many fabulous speakers who have made the classes come alive
- The technical support from within EFM to produce each class
- The generous donors who made scholarships available
- The team that created our first cohort for Forum 2020 in Marin City

At the end of this Newsletter you will see a list of all the people who comprise the Board and the staff of EFM. Every one of these people has gone above and beyond to make the first phase of Forum 2020 a big success. We are now moving on to the Advocacy part of Forum 2020 and look forward to smaller, more interactive classes focused on training people to take action on

environmental issues.

Soon we will be starting our annual membership drive. We are deeply grateful to our current members, whose support has helped us to rise to the many challenges of 2020. We hope that you will consider renewing your membership or joining for the first time to support EFM in its mission to provide education and training on environmental issues.

With gratitude for all that you do,

Susan Rusche, President

Susan Rusche



**Time to Renew your Membership
or Join Us for 2021**

Memberships make a Holiday Gift
that gives back all year!



**2020 (Virtual) HOLIDAY PARTY
for all members is on Sunday
December 13. Details below --
mark it on your calendars.**

You've been waiting! Like so many other events in the COVID era, this in-person presentation originally scheduled for last spring has gone virtual. But it is worth the wait: we have expert speakers and a hot topic, which is Healthy Soils: Growing Climate Resilience. The issue of agriculture is complicated: when it comes to climate change, agriculture is villain, victim, and potential savior. It produces 9% of California's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, but

could potentially draw down more carbon from the atmosphere than it emits. Come hear experts explain how building the health of our agricultural soil can reduce emissions, sequester carbon, and improve plant health.



**Same Land,
Different Management**

Forum 2020 presents
Healthy Soils:
Growing Climate Resilience

11/17/2020

www.MarinEFM.org

REGISTRATION

FORUM 2020

We have had an overwhelmingly positive response to our Forum 2020 Series and there is more to come! In October, we shifted gears from environmental education to advocacy training. First up was "Persuasive Environmental Strategies" taught by Trevor Stevenson (Master Class/MC 42). Next will be Kraemer Winslow (MC 30), whose suite of classes has been a signature feature of the EFM Master Class for years. In "View from the Podium" on October 27, Kraemer will bring in members of the Marin Board of Supervisors and a few of their aides to discuss how to effectively advocate to local government. On

November 10 she will discuss how to “Frame Your Message,” and January 19 and 26 she will teach a two-part class on “Presentation Skills.”

We are very excited to be offering these classes, which help attendees transition from knowing what needs to be done to learning how to do it skillfully and effectively.

Watch our website and your email for more information on additional classes in 2021. If you missed a class and would like to view it, contact kim@marinefm.org. Registration is still open for our remaining individual classes. Check our [Forum 2020 page](#) for additional information.

REGISTRATION

*Special thanks to **Drawdown: Marin, Organizing for Action Marin (OFA), and Sierra Club** for co-sponsoring Healthy Soils and Critical Thinking Forums, and providing funds for a Forum 2020 scholarship.*



The EFM Forum of 2020 and The Marin City Cohort



Shore Up Marin City community members checking out the pond and park site that will be revitalized.

[Shore Up Marin City \(SUMC\)](#) is an environmental justice program advocating for equitable inclusion, planning and emergency preparation. Areas of focus are climate change, sea level rise, water quality, resilience, habitat restoration, intergenerational leadership development, racial injustice and advocacy. Youth are encouraged to share their voice and vision as well.

Forum 2020 provides a rich context for SUMC interns to locate their place in Marin. SUMC appreciates the EFM donor scholarships that made it possible for

members to participate.

What are SUMC members and staff working toward?

A healthy and equitable community. One of our projects focuses on the restoration of a local wetland and retention pond. SUMC encourages intergenerational community participation.

What kind of mentoring are you providing?

Terrie Green, SUMC Director (MC 43) is a mentor, helping our interns better understand and integrate the material being offered by speakers in the EFM training.

What have been the challenges?

Not all SUMC community members are versed on the complexities of climate change. We have found that study sessions, led by SUMC's Americorps member, Amber Ceja, provide a foundation in concepts, and is important for the interns. Covid-19 restrictions have limited group interactions, and it can be difficult to offer support virtually due to lack of resources and accessibility.

Submitted by Sandy Wallenstein (MC 28)

Comments from anonymous EFM donors on why they provided scholarships:

"What inspired me to fund the project is my belief that Black Lives Matter, and it's time for environmental justice."

"My experience as part of MC 41 was so rewarding I wanted to enable others to participate. When I heard that Terrie Green was organizing a group from Marin City, that sealed the deal. What better way to empower Marin City residents than thru EFM?"

Breaking News: Now on the website

Spanish Forum 2020

EFM's website now includes a page in Spanish describing the [Forum 2020 webinars](#). We have for a long time wanted to offer our program to Marin's Spanish-speaking

Foro en Español 2020

El sitio web del EFM ahora incluye una página en español que describe los seminarios en línea del foro 2020. Nos hemos dado cuenta de que Marín tiene una población de

community and recently Catchafire — an organization that connects pro bono professionals with nonprofits — began helping us with translation services.

Because we want to make environmental knowledge available to as many people as possible, we will soon begin translating/subtitling a webinar on climate change. If there is enough interest we plan to have more webinars available in Spanish.

Thank you to [Marin Community Foundation](#) for funding our access to Catchafire.



habla hispana grande y queremos que nuestros ofrecimientos estén disponibles para todos. Nos contactamos con Catchafire, una organización que conecta a profesionales voluntarios con organizaciones sin fines de lucro, y trabajamos con ellos para impulsar nuestra aspiración de diversificar nuestros ofrecimientos.

Pronto comenzaremos a traducir y subtitular el seminario en línea sobre el cambio climático. Este es tiempo de experimentación y esto, para nosotros, es un experimento. Si recibimos suficiente interés podríamos hacer todos los seminarios en línea disponibles en español. Queremos que el conocimiento sobre el medio ambiente esté al alcance de todas las personas que sea posible.

Gracias a Marin Community Foundation por financiar nuestro acceso a Catchafire.



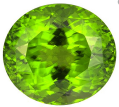
Marin Conservation League honors EFM with MCL Green Award for Environmental Achievement

MCL recognized EFM for its almost 50-year tradition of innovation and leadership in environmental education and advocacy. EFM has trained more than a thousand leaders over the years, thanks to help from volunteers, members, and board members starting with our Founder Marty Griffin and Founding Teachers Kathy Cuneo, Nona Dennis, Remmy Kinsley, and Phyllis

Faber and continuing through to its current President Susan Rusche and Executive Director Kim Rago.

MCL describes EFM as a "treasured Marin County gem well-deserving this Green Award." And EFM isn't resting on its past achievements: it has recently shifted the focus of its signature Master Class — which has produced so many leaders in government, business, and non-profits — to prioritize climate change and its intersection with social justice and community resilience in Marin County. In addition, in response to the pandemic, the organization has made many innovative changes to the format of the master class, which will make it more accessible than it has been before.

[Here is the announcement in MCL's current newsletter](#)



Master Class Graduate Continues Education and Advocacy

Cynthia Abbott (MC 39) is founder/co-producer of Everysecondbreathproject.org, a series of short films that highlight extraordinary people who have been touched by the ocean and take actions to heal it. The goal of the project's shorts is to educate people on the harm we are doing to the ocean and inspire actions for a healthier ocean and environment.



For her Master Class project she joined forces with fellow MC 39 members Stewart Moody, Sarah Kelly, and Diane Nicolson and organized a one-day conference, and film night titled *Plastics 360: Impacts and Possibilities*.

Her latest short, [Dick Ogg: Fisherman](#) has won awards in several film festivals and screened at the Mill Valley DocLands Film Festival. Two of her shorts are part of a virtual education program offered to middle and high school science teachers and their students throughout the State of California.



EFM Notebook

EFM Notebook author Susan Holloway has written posts focusing on [textiles](#). In her most recent installation, she shares information about a local entrepreneur dedicated to a sustainable approach to creating garments. To read her EFM Notebook posts, visit our [website](#).

Rebecca Burgess and Fibershed: Transforming How We Produce and Consume Clothing

Pollution from textile production tends to lurk outside the spotlight compared to other environmental problems. The process is resource intensive and contributes significantly to the degradation of our environment. Moreover, the harmful effects to human health cannot be underestimated. For instance, producing garments depends on the use of thousands of synthetic compounds -- many with well-established links to cancer and other diseases -- to soften, manipulate, and dye plant fibers prior to creating garments from them.

A brilliant ray of light in this gloomy scenario comes in the form of Rebecca Burgess, activist, entrepreneur, and textile artist. Based in Point Reyes, Burgess and her organization, [Fibershed](#) have pulled together an extensive local network linking the creators of garments -- farmers who raise the necessary plants and animals, artisans who process and dye the raw materials, and those who sew and weave the garments — to each other and to the consumer. The organization is committed to connecting, supporting, and educating all these actors in order to create garments in ways that build up rather than deplete and pollute the environment.

For me, it was very inspiring to learn about this local heroine who offers creative, practical, and sustainable solutions to the production of clothing that is healthy for our bodies and the planet.



Welcome to the Board

**Communications
Director**

**Anne-Christine
Strugnell**



I came to EFM for the Master Class and stayed on as Communications Director. I'm passionate about doing my utmost to avert the worst impacts of climate change, but it took me a while to see the threat of it. I think all I heard was, "the earth will get a few degrees warmer," and I thought, well, so what, I'll just take off a sweater!

This illustrates the problem that I'm working to solve. With complex information — like an explanation of climate change or environmental issues — too often people get a few facts but not information about what that means in their lives. I'm here to help ensure that EFM's communications convey not just environmental science but human experience, so that you can understand how a particular issue might manifest in your own life and why you should care about it.

My work at EFM is a natural extension of the work I've done throughout my career. As a freelance writer working for a wide variety of high-tech companies, I've explained complex products and services so that readers get what we call the WIFM: an acronym for "what's in it for me." I'm looking forward to helping people understand more about environmental issues and how they can take action, because at this critical juncture in the history of humanity, we all need to be really clear on the problems we're facing — and even clearer on the importance of doing something about them.



Did someone say **PARTY?**
Count us in!



Holiday Party **Fun and Inspiration!**

On Sunday, December 13th from 4:00 - 5:00 pm we will be hosting our virtual holiday party. Although we will be physically distanced this year, we'll stay socially connected. There will be breakout rooms, artisan cocktails, and music for our fun and inspirational 2020 holiday party.

We hope to see you there. Bring your favorite inspirational quote, whether it be from Bill Gates, Al Gore, Buckminster Fuller or anyone else who inspires you in our ongoing climate change work.

Just like an in-person event, there will be a door prize drawing based upon preregistration. You will have a chance to win a beautiful photograph by Sue Mace.

We will keep you updated on when registration opens.

Optimism

More and more I have come to admire resilience.
Not the simple resilience of a pillow, whose foam
returns over and over to the same shape, but the sinuous
tenacity of a tree: finding the light newly blocked on one side,
it turns to another. A blind intelligence, true.
But out of such persistence arose turtles, rivers,
mitochondria, figs — all this resinous, unretractable earth.

- Jane Hirschfield

contributed by Carolyn Losee

EFM board and staff

Kim Rago, *Executive Director*

Susan Rusche, *President*

Karen Mendelow Nelson, *Vice President of Education*

Carolyn Losee, *Secretary*

Barbara Ball, *Treasurer*

Norma Fragoso, *Master Class Director*

Kirsten Nolan, *Communications*

Tamela Fish, *Social Media Director*

Maggie Fillmore, *Newsletter Editor*

Gayle Marsh, *Graphic Design and Website*

Leslie Gerstenfeld, *Program Director*

Susan Holloway, *Internal Communications and Content*

Anne-Christine Strugnell, *Director of Communications*

Marty Blum, *Development Director*

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