



NEWSLETTER

Education for Environmental Action

Summer 2020

President's Message

It's exhausting to keep up, yet impossible to ignore the events of the past few weeks. During a Vietnam War protest in 1967 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. said "there can be no justice without peace and there can be no peace without justice". Lately it seems as though we are reliving the 60's, but something about this time seems different. We can only hope that the seeds of real change are being sown now and will bring us to a better, more just, and peaceful world.

The current crises of the pandemic, economic collapse, systemic racism, and climate change challenge us as never before. The impacts of institutional prejudice, poverty, and environmental injustice disproportionately affect underserved communities. It is now more important than ever that we address the issues surrounding environmental justice and equity. At EFM we are committed to examining the ways in which our programs should be made available to more diverse communities.

Within the challenges of the pandemic the opportunity has emerged for us to make our programs more accessible. We have decided we will not be offering the Master Class in the usual format this fall. Instead we are creating a series of online sessions available to members and the public. Each session will feature one or more presentations by local experts, and will also include suggested related reading and resources. We are excited by the possibility that presenting our programs in a virtual setting may remove some barriers to participation. We are committed to helping people from underserved communities develop their advocacy skills so that they may be effective change agents for their communities.

For almost 50 years EFM has trained advocates for the environment to make a difference in their communities, in Marin and beyond. So much has changed in a short period of time, but we still remain focused on our mission to educate for a sustainable world. Going forward, we will continue to deliver on our mission with the understanding that the challenges before us will make us stronger, more flexible, and more compassionate as an organization.

This past week EFM held its first ever online Annual Meeting using Zoom. It was very successful, with added breakout rooms for more intimate discussion. At the meeting we said goodbye with many thanks to four retiring board members: Nancy Benjamin, Sarah Loughran, Helene Marsh, and Bruce Richard. EFM cannot function without the care and support of our members and the generous

function without the care and support of our members and the generous individuals who have volunteered their time and money to keep the organization running. A special thanks goes to Kim Rago, Executive Director, who gives so much to EFM, and without whom we could not manage. A new Board of Directors was voted in at the Annual Meeting and they are listed below. It's safe to say that the year ahead will be like no other!



Susan Rusche, *President*



Next EFM Event

[Impacts of Bay Area Sea-level Rise: How can Nature Help?](#)

June 18, 6:30 pm via Zoom



Due to physical distancing and evolving guidelines, we will hold this event online. Please [register](#) and we will provide you a link to participate prior to June 18.

Speakers

Kristina Hill, *Associate Professor, UC Berkeley*

Katharyn Boyer, *Professor, San Francisco State University, Estuary and Ocean Science Center*

Stuart Siegel, *Coastal Resilience Specialist, San Francisco Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve*

What are the issues?

- Impacts of sea level rise
- Affect of sea level rise on groundwater levels
- Hardscape versus nature-based adaptation
- What are the solutions?

Thanks to our event partners:





Forum 2020

A Special Program for a Unique Time

This year, in light of the unique situation of physical distancing, we will not be offering the Master Class in the usual format. To keep you informed on issues of climate change while respecting the need for physical distancing, the Environmental Forum of Marin has created a series of independent online sessions available to members and the public for a small fee. Each class will include recommended preparatory readings and multimedia review of the subject followed by an online meeting with local experts in environmental science and advocacy.

STAY TUNED for more information as this special opportunity emerges.

We will continue offering the EFM Master Class in 2021-22.

Upcoming EFM Events - Save the date

Divesting: Make Your Money Talk (in 2 parts) November 17, 2020 via ZOOM

Anne-Christine Strugnell, EFM Communications Director, will be organizing two community events linked by the theme of "Making our Money Talk." The first, **Invest and Divest for Climate Change** will be followed by **Consumption**, in spring 2021. Registration details will follow.





Recap: EFM Annual Meeting

June 3, 2020 via ZOOM

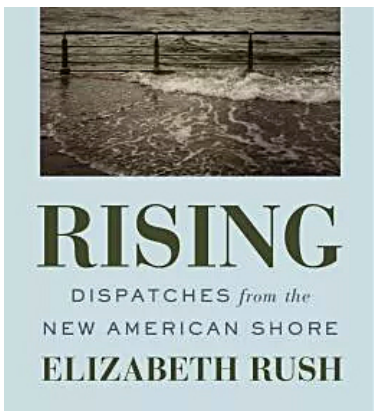
EFM members gathered virtually Wednesday, June 3 for the Annual Meeting, in compliance with the COVID-19 guidelines. Following [business updates](#) and a vote of approval for oncoming Board members, members went into Zoom breakout rooms. Our Director of Education Karen Mendelson-Nelson, wanted to provide members the opportunity to interact with one another, similar to an in-person meeting. Breakrooms had 6-8 members, some with a moderator. A question was presented to guide discussion: what environmental solutions for resilience and sustainability highlight the interrelatedness between the COVID-19 Pandemic and Climate Change? Ideas that were shared when the whole group came together:

- incentivizing tele-commuting, electrifying transportation: our recent clear skies with less traffic were mentioned frequently and the relationship between health and reduction in asthma was noted
- supporting youth involvement as a motivator for optimism
- Recognizing that now is a time for real action, even though we are sheltered-in-place
- the need for food security, eating more plant-based healthy foods, and community-centered microgrids for health centers when there are emergencies, including heat waves, flooding, and fires

Vicki Rupp, former EFM President, now living in Minneapolis, was able to join because of the virtual setting. *"Overall a virtual annual meeting worked well and has real potential. It was nice to see so many familiar faces"* (note for future planning: introductions using name and MC # were done in some rooms, but not all). Breakroom discussions? *"The breakout room was a good idea but the transition was confusing. Our group seemed a little flummoxed by the question, potentially this could have been an opportunity for more social interaction."* The EFM Board is on a steep learning curve, and welcomes any feedback.

Going forward, **FORUM 2020** will replace this year's Master Class, taking advantage of the virtual environment for learning. Time-crunched? You will be able to sign up for individual sessions and do pre-class work on your time-frame. "In-Person" sessions will still be virtual because of COVID-19, but regardless of where you live, your demographics, you will be able to participate. We would like to encourage students, working parents, individuals involved with other environmental agencies (government, non-profits, education) take this opportunity to learn. The Annual Meeting was our first step of more to come in the virtual environment.





Read a Good Book Lately?

Combining excellent storytelling with science and data, Elizabeth Rush describes the human side of rising seas and disappearing wetlands already well underway along the coasts of the USA. She introduces us to the people along our shores who are among America's most disenfranchised communities. This book is guaranteed to hold your attention in a way that other climate change books haven't managed.

Thanks for EFM member Heather Furmidge for reviewing this book.

Do you have a book to share with other members of EFM? We'd love to have your recommendation, and better yet, write a review. Contact membership@efm.org with your suggestions.



Introducing the [EFM Notebook](#)

A Biweekly Commentary on What's New and Newsworthy

The EFM Notebook is a resource for you to learn the latest on climate change and environmental protection. In each post, [Susan Holloway](#), EFM Board Member and graduate of MC 46, will explore the facts on a particular issue, bring you interviews with experts, activists and policy makers, and give you ideas about how to get involved in finding solutions.

[Click here](#) to check it out!





One of our founders celebrates a century on July 23, 2020

L. Martin (Marty) Griffin, M.D. is a pioneering environmentalist and conservationist in California who will be 100 in July. He helped to preserve significant sanctuaries along the coast of Marin County, including Richardson Bay, Bolinas Lagoon and Tomales Bay.

He has been recognized by the National Park Service. [Read the story here.](#)

For additional history about the preservation of Marin, [read his interview here.](#)

EFM sends gratitude and birthday congratulations to Marty for a life well-lived.

MC 41 Graduate Gives Back During Pandemic



Susan Bierzychudek, MC41/former EFM board member/principal of Green Ideals Marketing and husband **Tom McKeag**, Executive Director of Berkeley Center for Green Chemistry manufacturing medical face shields in their home.

During deeply troubling times, it's an inability to do anything to help that weighs us down most. My husband Tom and I started talking about how we could make a difference.

Tom began online research about whether we could construct medical face shields

Tom began online research about whether we could construct medical face shields to preserve those masks and keep our medics safer.

We found websites with full instructions and tips about materials suppliers. Tom started ordering and 3 weeks later obtained enough plastic, foam and elastic to begin prototyping and our kitchen-table production was in full swing.

As of the end of May, we've delivered 250 face shields, to the brave front-line medical workers who are risking their safety for the rest of us.

Full article from the Marin IJ:

<https://www.marinij.com/2020/05/09/fairfax-couple-makes-donates-handmade-face-shields/>



Why is MCE (Marin Clean Energy) a business partner?

"EFM's commitment to educating and engaging the community on environmental issues has been invaluable as a partnership with MCE. We are especially grateful to the EFM Master Class which has provided numerous graduates who have supported MCE's mission over the past several years.

We hope MCE's membership with EFM will continue to provide opportunities for Marin advocates to think globally and act locally to fight climate change."

On May 7, 2010, Marin communities, with a bold vision to fight climate change and expand clean energy options, united to launch MCE – California's first community choice energy agency. Congratulations to [MCE for a decade](#) of achievement.

Addendum

EFM reported in our spring newsletter "that fiber (paper) is no longer being recycled at all. Paper is sitting in the collection areas because it is usually shipped to China, and the coronavirus is not allowing shipping." While there was a brief halting of anything shipped to Asia (China no longer handles the vast majority of our recyclables), it has resumed.

Justin Wilcock from Marin Sanitary confirmed shipping resumed after a few weeks, and the ports have remained operational.

Chrise de Tournay, a Zero Waste specialist and educator, EFM graduate and former board member, reminds everyone that fiber and mixed paper are absolutely being recycled and to keep doing it!

As best practices, we need to both reduce our consumption, and also reuse any

As best practices, we need to both reduce our consumption, and also reuse any item whenever possible.

[For tips on the safety of reuse during the Covid-19 pandemic](#)

Carolyn Lund has started a petition which asks Amazon to offer a pilot Pickup Program in Marin County, CA, in which delivery trucks pick up Amazon boxes and plastic mailers on subsequent deliveries and return them to Amazon warehouses for reuse. [Click here for more information on this petition.](#)

A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they know they shall never sit.

- Greek Proverb



Environmental Partner Organizations in Our Community

Check updates on-line for cancellations and postponements!

[One Tam](#)

One Tam transcends boundaries to inspire deep connections to Mt. Tam and to mobilize the skills and resources of its five partners and the community to care for the long-term health of Mt. Tam.

[Marin Conservation League](#)

MCL hosts monthly issue committees focusing on preserving, protecting and enhancing Marin's natural assets. Refer to [MCL's website calendar](#) for additional upcoming events.

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*

EFM Welcomes new Board Members:

Leslie Gerstenfeld, *Program Director*

Susan Holloway, *Internal Communications and Content*

Anne-Christine Strugnell, *Director of Communications*

Marty Blum, *Development Director*

www.MarinEFM.org

