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Timber Cove Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit public benefit corporation founded in 2017. We support civic improvement including forest management, fire abatement, and water resources development. We promote the improvement, maintenance, and safety of Timber Cove easements, including private hiking trails through the forests and coastal areas of our community for the benefit of all residents, and promote social interaction, dialogue, and cohesion by supporting community events and publications. The Foundation can facilitate other board approved community improvements by accepting targeted donations for specific projects to address emerging needs in the community

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**P.O. Box 130, Jenner, CA 95450**

[DONATE](#)

OUR NEW PROJECTS AND DONORS!

### Cemetery Creek Trail

We received a \$750 donation from Caitlin Gerdts which is being applied to the Cemetery Creek Trail Fund. Thanks to Caitlin and her husband Joshua Gruber who are remodeling their house on Davis Way.

This brings us past the halfway mark of our fundraising goal, so please consider donating to what promises to be a very popular walking trail in the subdivision.

[See Map of Cemetery Creek Trail.](#)



### Restoring Timber Cove's Signs

We have good news about the restoration/replication of the original Timber Cove subdivision sign mounted on the Coast Highway near Pacific View Drive in 1961. This project has been taken on by property owners Mark and Krissy Van Divner. (See their interview on page 3). We are looking for an early photo of the sign, so if you have one, please share it with us. At right is the original Timber Cove Inn sign in 1961, which used the same font style.

We estimate the cost of replacing the letters for the rock sign at the end of Ruoff Drive at \$2,000. Please help us show home town pride by restoring these reflections of our community.

Your donation to any of our projects is tax deductible. Please consider doing your part to improve and protect Timber Cove.



Timber Cove Inn sign in 1961 and Subdivision Sign Now



Then (in 1919) and Now



While many of us spend our days in young redwood forests in Timber Cove, there are a lucky few who once wandered through the thick, swaying forests of bull kelp in our coastal waters. For countless years those towering forests of bulb-topped, whip-like seaweed, growing up to 100 feet tall, sheltered thriving populations of fish, abalone, starfish, and red urchin from San Diego to the Oregon border.

White abalone has been listed as endangered since 2001, but between 2013 and 2016 the population of a voracious urchin predator, the sunflower sea star, crashed. Other star fish followed in a cascading sequence of ecosystem collapse whose exact cause remains a mystery to scientists. All agree that climate change with warming waters, disease, and human activities have all played a part. According to the Greater Farallones Association's website, *These changing ocean conditions have led to a proliferation of purple urchins, which in part, have decimated bull kelp forests by over 96% in northern California.*

Where once divers and fishermen hunted in an undulating kelp labyrinth, they now find purple urchin "barrens" feeding on every scrap and shoot of bull kelp, preventing it from regrowing.

**Help Is on the Way**

Last summer The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recommended \$18 Million in funding under the Transformational Habitat Restoration & Coastal Resilience grant program. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) California would receive the funds over three years to launch and support the Pacific Coast Ocean Restoration Initiative (PCOR), a collaborative statewide effort aimed at restoring and recovering degraded marine ecosystems across California.

Along with a slew of eager conservation partners the Initiative is a model for collaborative efforts to save and restore marine ecosystems.

**Local Teams**

At last report (May 2024) a team headed by Gina Contolini, a kelp restoration specialist with the Greater Farallones Association (GFA), was purchasing purple urchins removed from chosen restoration sites by local commercial sea urchin divers, who have been greatly impacted by the closure of the commercial red urchin fishery. These efforts are focused on Timber Cove and Fort Ross Cove along the Sonoma Coast. According to GFA, *Divers removed roughly 24,000 pounds of urchin from these two sites last year (that's nearly*



Sunflower Sea Stars went first; then the forests of bull kelp.



*170,000 urchins!). Urchins removed from the restoration sites are offloaded and transported by the Dandy Fish Company and taken to West Marin Compost. By removing urchins from these coves, divers are helping to reduce grazing pressure on remaining kelp forests and creating ideal conditions for potential outplanted kelps.*

**Timber Cove Resident in Key Role**

Timber Cove resident Erik Owen is a key participant in the project. Erik has

been fishing and diving here since the 1970s and he explained why I was seeing fewer starfish in our coves starting in about 2010.

*I had a front row seat to the entire purple disaster. Erik writes, The starfish you were picking up on the beach were most likely pisaster starfish, they do eat urchin but more so snails. They were impacted by the wasting disease but not nearly as much as the pycnospodia, or sunflower sea star. These sea stars were a multi substrate voracious predator that was so prominent out to 300' there were entire sections of ocean we wouldn't set our crab gear in, as the sea stars would dominate the trap and not allow a crab in it. The pisasters made a pretty solid comeback but the sea stars are all but extinct around here, I haven't seen one since 2015, about the time the purples started to dominate the bottom.*

*That was also about the time I noticed all the starfish disintegrating, actually becoming a large part of the diet of the red urchin I was harvesting at the time....it all happened so quickly, a cycle started that will take decades to revert to any semblance of what we had become used to seeing in the past.*

Erik explained to a reporter for NOAA Fisheries, *When California banned salmon fishing for the 2023 season, I started picking up interest in the purples. From September 9 to November 3, I took 17,000 pounds of urchins from Timber Cove. The project gave me a job for the fall, and we made a big difference, getting 90 percent of the urchins out of that area.*

The success of this bold and promising initiative depends on money and science; skilled collaboration and coordination. But it could not succeed without the rare knowledge and skill that local fishermen and divers like Erik Owen have developed over a lifetime. We thank him and all the members of the teams that are working along our California Coast to restore our vibrant marine life.

[Find more information and how you can help!](#)

**Photo Credits:** (top) Sue Daly/Minden Pictures. (bottom) Steve-Lonhart-NOAA

Krissy and Mark Van Divner first saw the "Timber Cove" sign near Pacific View Drive in 1996 while enjoying a romantic getaway at the Timber Cove Inn (now Resort). They fell in love with the area while dating and often dreamed about someday finding a home here. Little did either of them know at the time that they would one day own that piece of property and become stewards of a piece of local history. In 2017 Krissy and Mark purchased the property and their lovely seaside home, known to some locals as the "Tinkerbell House". They knew that the home was "the one" at first sight.

The Van Divners have graciously taken on the task of restoring the landmark subdivision sign, and in fact had already planned the work before the Foundation newsletter noted it as a potential restoration project last fall. Although we have not located an early photo of the subdivision's northern sign, we believe Richard Clements installed it in 1961 about the same time as the original Timber Cove Inn sign.

Mark has made great progress in rounding up the needed materials, locating an outlet in Point Richmond, Peroba Reclaimed Wood and Live Edge Slabs, that works with arborists to reuse downed redwoods and other trees that might otherwise be wasted. The 4" x 25-30" x 154" live-edge slab is second growth redwood. In addition, the California Cottage Company in Rohnert Park donated 600 adobe bricks



Photo taken about 2017

(compressed earth), concrete, and steel rods to use as a base.

Mark served 22 years in the Navy as a cybersecurity expert, traveling the globe and then as an instructor at the Combat Systems Technical Schools Command on Mare Island. He enjoyed his time teaching and was proud when his students excelled in their own careers. Later he put his skills in to work in the private sector including healthcare, textile, and finance. Now that Mark is retired, he gets to spend time doing more of the things he likes including traveling, hiking, hunting, fishing, and projects around home.

Krissy recently retired from a career in textile, contracting to the government, and finance, where she drove corporate and government technology projects to completion. She enjoys spending her time traveling, hiking, and pursuing creative hobbies with multiple

awards from county and state fairs for baked goods, cake decorating, and crochet. Of note, Krissy was the reigning chili and cake bakeoff champion at her last employer.

They have two sons, who live in California, and recently became proud grandparents. We are glad that Mark and Krissy chose Timber Cove and are grateful for their civic-minded care of the landmark sign. They are expecting to complete the work over the next few months.

Why Donate Stock to Charity?

Donating stock to charity offers three benefits.

- 1. Avoid long-term capital gains tax.** When you donate appreciated stock that you've held for more than a year, you avoid paying long-term capital gains tax on the increased value of stock. Depending on your income, the capital gains tax rate can be as high as 20%. This tax savings allows your donation to go further.
- 2. Receive a tax deduction.** When you donate stock directly to a charity, you are eligible for a charitable deduction equal to the fair market value of the donated stock. This allows you to reduce your taxable income and save on taxes.
- 3. Make a bigger impact.** If you decide to donate stock instead of cash, the tax savings gives your donation an extra boost that furthers the mission and programs of the charities you care most about.

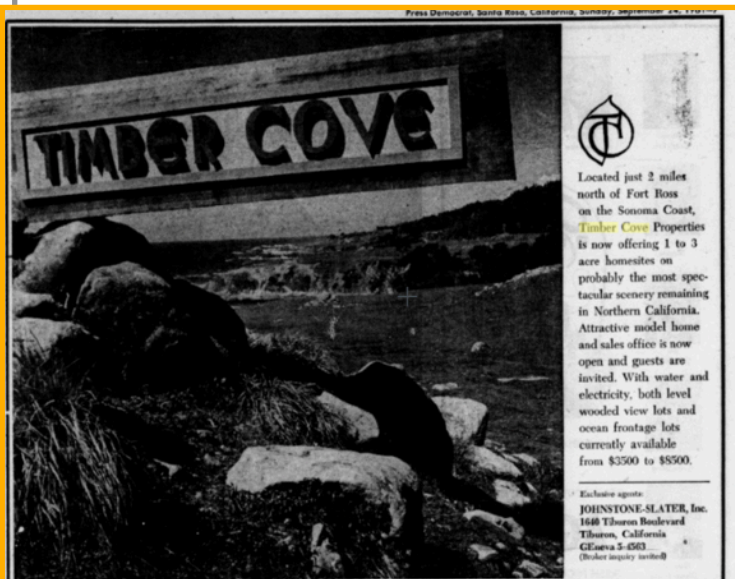
EMERGENCY RADIO NETWORK

When normal modes of communication fail due to storms, fires, earthquakes, or other emergencies, how do we call for a public safety response or check on our neighbors?

GMRS (General Mobile Radio Service) radios are now used throughout Sonoma County to assist residents as a back up when normal communications fail. They have proven to be effective. They can be used to report incidents and request assistance from public safety agencies, or be used as scanners to hear what is going on around you even before you get notifications from the county.

They are small, battery operated, and cost about \$75.00. They do require a license from the FCC (no test involved) for a fee of \$35. Using them is relatively easy and non-technical. After a short training/practice session by local experts you will be on the air better able to help yourselves and neighbors through emergency events.

If you are interested please contact [timbercovefoundation2017@gmail.com](mailto:timbercovefoundation2017@gmail.com).



Original Timber Cove Inn Sign, 1961

# The Fire Next Time



According to *Honolulu Civil Beat*, "The largest concentration of people who died in the 2023 Lahaina wildfire — nearly three dozen victims — were found in the Kuhua Camp neighborhood, where fallen trees and power lines blocked many as they tried to flee across narrow [dead end] roads. However, everyone there would have escaped that day if the neighborhood had had two key evacuation routes..."

Timber Cove shares many attributes with Kahua Camp, including cul de sacs that could be blocked by fire and fallen lines. Our pedestrian trails provide some fire breaks and alternate escape routes in some places, but our community is at risk for fatalities in a fast moving fire. Fire trucks will not, and in some cases cannot, drive down these dead end roads.

Like some parts of the landscape in Eaton Canyon near Pasadena, Timber Cove is carpeted in small trees and brush covering steep hillsides, and we are sometimes in the path of fearsome winds.

A licensed civil engineer once calculated that Timber Cove's storage water tanks could drain out in **27 minutes** in the event of a wildfire. We would then

be left with no water to fight the flames, as tragically occurred in the recent Pacific Palisades fire. Some of Timber Cove's water infrastructure does not even support the pressure needed for fire hoses if there is water.

No substantive improvements have been made to our water infrastructure or storage since 2018, and sadly, no large improvements are planned or scheduled. No one has analyzed the true danger that Timber Cove faces in this changing climate.

The neglected undeveloped lots scattered across our subdivision are packed with dead wood and dry fuel. Until 2018 headway was made to clean up these lots, but no progress has been made for seven long years as fuel multiplies. The focus of the local water company of late is the acquisition of a third office/clubhouse facility for staff.

Community members like Kris Kilgore and the Wildfire Resilient Community group did a great job creating a "Firewise Community", but this designation has no affect on our water resources or neglected lots in Timber Cove. It is time to move ahead and the Foundation will support and promote a well researched plan to make major improvements to our water infrastructure and storage and help protect our community from wild land fires.



## IMAGINATIVE TRAIL MARKING



Follow the yellow block road! We commend Stu and Susan Drake for finding an inviting and unobtrusive way to mark the pedestrian easement across their property on the upper loop of the Smith Ct.-Umland Trail.

Stu took his time to think the matter through, but in the end came up with an idea that others may want to emulate under some conditions.

We've received many requests for more trail head signs along our three developed trails: the John

Sperry Trail, the Smith Ct.-Umland Trail, and the Rust Creek Trail. They will be added soon.

Always look for the orange surveyors tape tied to strategic points along the trail to keep you on track, and please keep us informed of any downed trees or other obstructions.

The best way to maintain these trails is for each property owner to keep the portion through their property cleared, but we are always here to help with labor or materials. [TCHA TRAIL MAP 2008](#)

### Armed Rebellion at Timber Cove

The *Murder at Stewart's Point* described in our last issue marked the climax of local criminal drama caused by squatter land disputes. The stabbing death of Enos Park in Timber Cove in March 1861 after a card game gone bad was the last homicidal act recorded for some time. But as local conflict abated, the national crisis ignited into Civil War on April 12, 1861.

Later that same year Timber Cove had a bloodless "Armed Rebellion" of its own. This standoff played out at one of the hastily erected mills supplying countless thousands of feet of redwood lumber, posts, and railroad ties. Brothers John and Philipp Kalkmann used the mill to supply their lumber yard in East Petaluma, which they had purchased in September 1858.

Two Sonoma County Deputy Sheriffs arrived in Timber Cove on October 21, 1861, directed by the courts to impound and auction off property belonging to the Kalkmann brothers and their business partner, Cesar C. Schnabel, to satisfy a suit brought by a creditor who was allegedly owed \$11,030. That's \$395,553 in current dollars.

With none of the principals present, the property was auctioned off to a J. Ingram representing the plaintiff. But before he could seize his prize an earnest party of "forty or fifty" armed mill workers intervened, claiming that they were owed wages and so the property should not be removed until their own claims were liquidated. According to reports the "Rebels" were well equipped with knives and pistols, one of them informing the officer:

*Look here, you're a little man and an officer, and we don't want to hurt*

*you; so you'd better go back to Santa Rosa.*

Under the circumstances, both officers returned to Santa Rosa without engagement to consult with Sheriff Bowles.

### Good Reason for Absence

John Kalkmann had good reason for being elsewhere that day. He died four days later in the German Hospital in San Francisco of an unspecified *protracted and painful disease*. The brothers' Petaluma lumber yard, purchased so optimistically in September 1858,

**Great Excitement!**

**A**S Governor Downey has vetoed the Bulk-head Bill, and I have purchased

**ALL OF THE LUMBER**

That was intended to build the same, at an extremely low figure, I am enabled to sell

**ALL KINDS OF BUILDING LUMBER**

25 per cent. cheaper than ever before offered in this place, and would call the attention of every

**Builder, Carpenter and Retail Dealer,**

To my well assorted stock, and am confident that they will save a great deal of money. Before buying elsewhere call and examine the prices of

**J. KALKMANN,**  
East Petaluma.

The attention of Farmers is called to the

**500,000 FEET OF OREGON PINE,**

For fencing, which I offer at \$25 per 1000 feet, as the whole has to be disposed of this season.

39-1f **J. KALKMANN.**

was auctioned off for debts in September 1862. Philipp Kalkmann continued to run a shipping business out of San Francisco until he died himself in September 1863 at the age of 37. Natives of Bremen, Germany, the Kalkmanns might have been associates of the dominant landowners in our area at the time, the Ruoff, Kolmer, and Benitz families, all German immigrants themselves. The Kalkmanns' fate is a reminder of the fearful mortality rate on this Western Frontier.

### Romantic Rebels Elope

As the Civil War raged on, our little piece of the Coast appeared to settle into a peaceful monotony, with schooners coming and going laden with lumber and occasionally casting themselves unintentionally upon our pitilessly rocky shores. A few people married, and fewer still were born and died. But one last act of rebellion here was noted in newspapers all over Northern California months after General Lee surrendered.

*Married September 16th, 1865, on board the schooner "Isabella" Captain Williams, 22 miles South by West from Timber Cove, on the Pacific Ocean, by Elder Henry Robinson, Mr. Alma Phelps to Miss Mary Welling, all of Sonoma county. The parties are respectably connected, and in every way worthy of each other, save that they are o'er young to marry yet. The parents were opposed—the young folks were determined—eloped—chartered a schooner—invited a number of young friends—found a plucky parson—stocked their vessel with the good things of the market—were out of the jurisdiction of California, and their parents were tied up in legal form—had a good time—returned wiser and older—all hands as happy as clams at high tide, and doing as well as could be expected. That's all we know about it. — Petaluma Journal and Argus*

Alma S. Phelps, 22, and Mary C. Welling, 16, were almost spinsters as pioneer-era standards went. With men still far outnumbering women in the state, girls often got snapped up at age 13 to 15 with parents' consent. Records indicate the happy voyagers later moved to the groom's home state of Washington and remained there until his death in 1901, and hers in 1904. They had at least two surviving children.

Hannah Clayborn  
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