

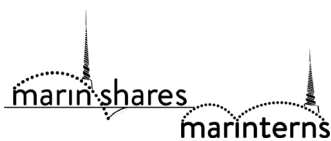
VOLUNTEER NOTES

Courtroom Success

Conducting his first trial, District Attorney's Law School Fellow **Austin Shopbell** recently secured a guilty verdict in the case of *People v. Martinez Reyes*. "Austin did an excellent job eliciting impactful testimony from the victim and other witnesses and argued the case like a pro," said Marin County Deputy District Attorney **Shari Goldman**. "No one would have believed it was his first-ever jury trial."

Where Are They Now?

Shae Daly interned with the Board of Supervisors District 2 Office from 2016 until the summer of 2019. It opened her eyes to the important role of communication between the Board of Supervisors and local businesses. Now a senior at the University of Oregon, she expects to graduate in June 2022 with a bachelor's degree in political science and a minor in legal studies. She then plans to continue her education at law school.



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Spanish Paves the Way for Friendly Couple to Help

By *Clariss Ajanel*

For the past five years, MarinShares volunteers **Kenn Kovitz** and **Gail Mitchell** have spent Wednesday afternoons practicing their Spanish conversational skills with other Spanish Conversation Club patrons at the Novato Library.

Kenn and Gail have been married more than 25 years, and both are retired attorneys.

In studying the language for 50 years, visiting their home in Mendoza, Argentina, and conversing with Spanish-speaking people they encounter in the street at home and while traveling, Kenn and Gail have developed the skills they now use to help others as county volunteers.

Their group facilitator and staff supervisor is Library Assistant **Maria Lee Goodrich**. She said, "Kenn and Gail are a great duo! Their positive energy, enthusiasm, and fun fact-sharing keep our group in a positive mindset. They also help to lead the group with ease and willingness. It is a pleasure to work with and have them in our Spanish Conversation Club family!"

The pair built their home in Mendoza to immerse themselves in the local Argentine community and learn first-hand about the community and dialect used there. "We have been able to build solid roots in Argentina, which is something I always wanted to do," said Kenn.

Connections formed in Argentina have helped them find new ways of assisting people while simultaneously practicing their Spanish. For example, early in their travels, they met a teacher in Argentina who taught at a school for the deaf and blind and was unable to acquire braille



PHOTO COURTESY OF KENN KOVITZ & GAIL MITCHELL

Gail Mitchell & Kenn Kovitz hold reptiles that belong to one of their friends in the Spanish Conversation Club.

machines for blind students. Upon returning to the States, Kenn and Gail contacted the Novato Lions Club, which put them in contact with the California Medical Facility in Vacaville, where inmates were learning to rehabilitate braille machines. They were happy to provide several to Kenn and Gail, who then transported them to Argentina. One of the recipients later had a party to celebrate getting the braille machine and his first cane. This experience brought Kenn and Gail closer to the school-teacher's family, and they have stayed in touch ever since.

Along with serving the community in Argentina, they have helped in Marin by volunteering at Canal Alliance and the Lions Club. There they helped Spanish speakers test their eyes and get new glasses at no charge. "It was a rewarding

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Spanish Paves the Way for Friendly Couple to Help

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experience. I love being able to use my skills to help others and it is something I hope to continue to do,” said Gail.

Gail grew up in San Jose and attended UC Berkeley and then Hastings College of the Law. She has resided in the county 33 years.

Kenn grew up in Los Angeles and attended both UCLA and UC Santa Barbara, from which he attained his bachelor’s degree. He also attended Hastings College of the Law. He has lived in Marin 37 years.

The two are also discussing plans to help UC Davis students by donating their

home and vineyard in Argentina to the school’s viticulture department. “We don’t have any children, so we are hoping to donate our home and vineyard, once we pass, so the oenology students can learn firsthand how to grow wine in another hemisphere and in such a beautiful area,” said Kenn.

El español hace sendero para que una pareja amigable ayude a la comunidad

Por Clariss Ajanel

Por los últimos cinco años, Marin-Shares voluntarios **Kenn Kovitz** y **Gail Mitchell** han pasado los miércoles por la tarde practicando sus habilidades del español con otros clientes del club de conversación en español en la biblioteca de Novato.



Kenn y Gail casaron hace más que 25 años y los dos son abogados jubilados.

En estudiando español durante 50 años, mientras visitaban su casa en Mendoza, Argentina, y conversaban con personas que encuentran en las calles, Kenn y Gail han usados sus habilidades para ayudar a otros necesitados como voluntarios del condado de Marin.

Su facilitadora de grupo, **Maria Lee Goodrich**, les ha ayudado los 5 años que Gail y Kenn han estado asistiendo al grupo. Ella dice: “¡Kenn Kovitz y Gail Mitchell son un gran equipo! Su energía positiva, entusiasmo y el intercambio de datos divertidos mantienen a nuestro grupo en una mentalidad positiva. También se hacen cargo del grupo con facilidad y disposición cuando estoy ausente de la facilitación. ¡Es un placer trabajar con ellos y tenerles como nuestra familia del club de conversación en español!”

Construyeron su casa en Mendoza para sumergirse en la comunidad local

y aprender de primera mano sobre la comunidad y el dialecto que se usa allí. “Realmente pudimos echarraíces fuertes en Argentina, que es algo que siempre quise hacer y lo hicimos construyendo una casa allí”, dice Kenn.

Las conexiones que formaron en Argentina les ayudaron a encontrar nuevas formas de ayudar a las personas mientras practicaban español. Conocieron a un maestro en Argentina que enseñaba en una escuela para sordos y ciegos que no pudieron obtener máquinas de braille. Cuando regresaron a los estados, Kenn y Gail contactaron el Club de Leones en Novato, y ellos les dijeron que fue una programa en el Facilidad Medical de California en Vacaville para reparar estas máquinas de braille. Estaban alegre dar las máquinas a Kenn y Gail, quien los han transportado a los estudiantes en Argentina. Uno de los destinatarios de la máquina braille, Juanche, tuvo más tarde una fiesta para celebrar la obtención de la máquina y su primer bastón. Esta experiencia acercó a Kenn y Gail a la familia de la maestra y se han mantenido en contacto desde entonces.

Además de servir a la comunidad en Argentina, han servido al Condado de Marin ofreciendo su tiempo como voluntarios en Canal Alliance y en el Club de Leones. Allí ayudaron a los hispanohablantes a probarse la vista y obtener nuevos anteojos gratis. “Fue una experiencia gratificante. Me encanta

poder usar mis habilidades para ayudar a los demás y es algo que espero seguir haciendo”, dice Gail.

Gail creció en San Jose, California y estudio en UC Berkeley y luego Hastings College of the Law. Ha vivido en el condado de Marin por 33 años.

Kenn creció en Los Angeles, California y estudio en UC Los Angeles y Santa Barbara, donde consiguió su licenciatura. Luego estudio en Hastings College of the Law. Ha vivido en el condado de Marin por 37 años.

También tienen planes a donar a UC Davis su casa y viñas en Argentina a su departamento de viticultura. “No tenemos hijos, así que tenemos esperanza a donar nuestra casa y viñas, una vez que pasemos, para que los estudiantes puedan aprender de primera mano cómo cultivar vino en otro hemisferio y en una zona tan hermosa,” dice Kenn.

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CARTOON BY JOHN DONAGHY

Who's New & Welcome!

Bryana Alvarez (Santa Rosa), Adult Probation Intern, Probation Department

David Balderama (San Rafael), Copy Editor Intern, Human Resources

Tristan Bauer (Sugar Land, TX), Office Aide, Community Development Agency

Lauren Duncan (Tiburon), District 2 Intern, Board of Supervisors

Abby Ivancevich (Novato), Pre-Law Intern, District Attorney's Office

Maura Nakahata (San Francisco), Epidemiology Fellow, Health & Human Services Department

Chloe Ovbiagele (Novato), High School Intern, District Attorney's Office

Happy Anniversary

We congratulate these volunteers who celebrate their anniversaries this month and thank them for their ongoing involvement.

36 YEARS

Jerry Foster (Novato), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Marin County Sheriff's Office (MCSO)

23 YEARS

Linda Comella (San Rafael), **Jane Johnson** (Novato), Patrol Volunteers, Marin County Parks (Parks)

19 YEARS

Doug Kunst (Danville), Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

Linda Novy (Fairfax), Patrol Volunteer, Parks

13 YEARS

John Newman (San Rafael), Fire Lookout, Marin County Fire

11 YEARS

Michael Fischer (Mill Valley), RACES/ACS Volunteer, MCSO

Maria Gregoriev (San Rafael), **Susan O'Brien** (Mill Valley), Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST) Volunteers, Health & Human Services (HHS)

10 YEARS

Joan Brown (Kentfield), Frankly Speaking Proofreader, Human Resources

9 YEARS

Paula Kamena (San Rafael), Cold Case Investigator, MCSO

Amory Willis (Sausalito), Patrol Volunteer, Parks

6 YEARS

Marie Fitzgerald (Mill Valley), Event Aide, Human Resources

5 YEARS

Pamela Ross (Greenbrae), Marinfo NOW Copy Editor, Human Resources

3 YEARS

Cythea Harrison-Homitz (Fairfax), Preservationist, Fairfax Library

Milton Hyams (San Rafael), RACES/ACS Volunteer, MCSO

Sandy Wargo (American Canyon), Public Information Officer, Marin County Fire

1 YEAR

Clariss Ajanel (Greenbrae), Newsletter Writer Intern, Human Resources

Sofia Casano (Novato), **Harita Kalvai** (San Rafael), **Kate Lane** (Kentfield), **Simon Scheuer** (San Rafael), Teen Leadership Crew Interns, Fairfax Library

Deborah Gregor (Novato), Administrative Aide, Human Resources

Rebecca Hurwitz (San Rafael), Data Management Project Intern for the Nutrition Wellness Program, HHS

Scott Smith (San Rafael), Steward, Parks