

# BCPUD PIPELINE



Fall 2021

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## Water Supply Update

What a difference a month makes! At the end of September, Bolinas had received 1.52 inches of rain for the 2021-22 rain year. By the end of October, that total was up to 9.35 inches, due largely to the major rains received during the storm of October 23-24, 2021. (By comparison, as of the end of October 2020 just one year ago, the district had received only 0.3 inches of rain.) As a result of these welcome rains, the Arroyo Hondo Creek is recharging and our reservoirs are filling. At the time this newsletter went to press, the Woodrat 1 Reservoir is full and the Woodrat 2 Reservoir has come up more than four feet, significantly increasing the district's stored water supply.

While the drought is not over yet, the 2021-22 rain year is off to a promising start. The BCPUD will continue to keep you updated on the status of our water supply via our website and occasional posts on Nextdoor. Thank you for your continued conservation!

**Water or Sewer emergency? Please contact our office at 415-868-1224**

## MEET THE BCPUD OPERATIONS CREW!



From left to right: Evan Kahn, Andrew Spalding, Stew Oakander, Blake Miller. Photo by Lynn Bagley

### Stew Oakander (Chief Operator):

Stew Oakander was born at Marin General Hospital in Greenbrae and he grew up in Bolinas with his parents, Jack and Kathy, and his siblings, Alex and Holly. He attended the Bolinas-Stinson Union School and graduated from Tamalpais High. He attended the College of Marin for a year and met Redwood High School graduate April Ginsberg while walking his dog. April happened to be on a walk in Bolinas with Sophie Setrakian (a mutual friend), who introduced them. As Stew says, "we've been together since then". While April attended U.C. Davis, Stew held a variety of jobs (including one as a bouncer at an Irish Pub in Davis), until they settled together in Bolinas after April graduated in 2013. Stew worked with his dad and his uncle, Chuck Oakander, for Pacific Slope Tree Company until 2015, when he started work as a Shift Operator for the BCPUD. April currently works as a counselor at Tamalpais High. Stew and April live in a brand-new BCLT home on Overlook Road with their sons Grayson (5) and Sawyer (10 months), and their dog Bodhi.

Stew became Chief Operator of the BCPUD in March 2021 and served a three-month "transition" period with then Chief Operator Bill Pierce before Bill retired after 37 years with the district. When asked what he has found to be the most unexpected aspect of working for the BCPUD, Stew says that before working here, he "took water for granted" and "never thought about the complexity of water treatment" or the level of knowledge required to

produce safe drinking water. Asked to name his favorite thing about working for the BCPUD, Stew said working with his fellow employees (“everyone’s great!”) and walking up the Arroyo Hondo Creek canyon to monitor the district’s water source. Outside of work, Stew says he loves to go fishing with Grayson and to barbeque with friends and family; “we grill what we catch”, he says!

### **Andrew Spalding (Shift Operator):**

Andrew was born in Columbia, Missouri and grew up in the surrounding area with his parents, Joe and Lisa, and his siblings, Luke and Natalie. When he was 22, Andrew moved to Santa Barbara to attend photography school and that is where he met Lynn Bagley. Lynn grew up in Bolinas with her parents, Jodi and Raymond, and her sisters, Anna Lee and Eleanor; like Stew Oakander, she attended the Bolinas-Stinson Union School and graduated from Tamalpais High. After finishing photography school in Santa Barbara, Andrew and Lynn moved to Bolinas and eventually were married at Big Mesa Farm. They both continued to work in the photography world - Lynn is a professional photographer - until Andrew applied for a job at the BCPUD in 2016. Andrew says his job as a Shift Operator is a great fit with his outdoor lifestyle and he particularly appreciates that every day presents a different set of challenges, so his work is never boring. He also appreciates the aspect of small town living whereby people look out for each other and know they can reach out to the BCPUD crew for help. Andrew is a life-long vegetarian, which he says is easier for him in California as people here don’t tease him about it. Outside of work Andrew loves bike riding (notwithstanding breaking his right foot several times while BMX biking!) and throwing the Frisbee for his dog, Atlas, an Australian Shepherd and Border Collie mix. He and Lynn enjoy living downtown and close to the beach in their BCLT home on Wharf Road. They eagerly await the birth of their first child in January.

### **Blake Miller (Shift Operator):**

Blake is a native of Encinitas, California, a beach town in the North County area of San Diego County, where he grew up with his parents, Dan and Deborah, and his sister Whitney. Following his graduation from college, he lived in Telluride, Colorado, where he worked as a rafting guide, and in the Lake Tahoe area, among other places, which is where he met Sierra Dierks. Sierra is a Bolinas native and grew up in Paradise Valley, the daughter of Dennis and Sandy Dierks, and sister to Jeremy and Zeke. After marrying in 2017 on the family farm in Bolinas, Blake and Sierra eventually moved to Panama for about 6 months to work for a non-profit agency seeking to introduce more sustainable food systems there and reduce deforestation. After concluding their work in Panama, they traveled in Central America and then returned to Marin (Fairfax) where Blake worked for the Agricultural Institute of Marin for several years and Sierra pursued her degree in Business and Marketing. Ultimately they moved back to Paradise Valley with the goal of taking over the farm from Dennis and Sandy, who were ready to retire; their daughter, Olive, was born in January 2019. After two years of farming, Sierra and Blake decided to take a different path (although they still farm for personal consumption). Sierra is now pursuing a masters degree in Speech Pathology and Blake began work for the BCPUD in April 2020. Outside of work, Blake enjoys surfing and fishing. Blake says the BCPUD oversees “a lot more than I realized” when he applied for the job and that people in town don’t know him yet as well as they know the other operators. “A lot of people call me Blair, for some reason” he says, laughing.

### **Evan Kahn (Shift Operator-in-Training):**

Evan is a Bolinas native, the son of Lloyd Kahn and Leslie Creed, and brother to Will and Peter. He graduated from Bolinas-Stinson Union School and attended Tamalpais High for two years; he then transferred to and graduated from San Andreas High. He moved to Santa Barbara after high school to attend Santa Barbara City College, where he studied computer science, animation, machinery and astronomy. After four years in Santa Barbara, Evan returned to Bolinas where he has worked at a variety of jobs since then, primarily assisting his father at Shelter Publications and working as a painter for Vest Painting. He met his wife, Chelsea Maissen-Kahn, fifteen years ago through a friendship with her older brother, and they have been married for ten years. Chelsea is locally employed, as well, working part-time at Smiley’s as well as running a daycare center in Mill Valley with her mother. Evan and Chelsea live with their cats, Coconut and Jack, and their bulldog, Kahuna, in a home on the western end of Larch Road. When he isn’t working for the BCPUD, Evan enjoys spending his time relaxing with friends (three of whom are his colleagues!) and working on his glass art. He says that one of the most unexpected things about working at the BCPUD is how complicated the district’s water and sewer systems are and how much regular oversight and maintenance they require - “lots of behind the scenes late nights and early mornings”, he notes. Evan says his favorite aspect of the job is helping the town; “it’s very gratifying to have a job helping the town have safe and reliable water”.