

## Alison Foulis - City Clerk

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**From:** Mary Neilan - City Manager  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 09, 2016 11:32 AM  
**To:** Alison Foulis - City Clerk  
**Subject:** FW: Lyme Disease

**From:** Melissa Prentis  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 5, 2016 3:19 PM  
**Subject:** Lyme Disease

Dear Belvedere City Council,

I wanted to offer some information pertaining to the proposal to curb the deer population.

We lived in Belvedere for 11 years and recently moved to Tiburon. My daughter and I were diagnosed with **Lyme Disease** after tick bites in Marin county from 12 years ago. Lyme disease is an infection caused by several strains of the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi* (*Bb*). The bacteria is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected tick. These ticks can also transmit other diseases and infect pets and livestock. Deer are hosts that provide the ticks with a bountiful supply of food (i.e., blood meals), enabling the ticks to live, reproduce, and/or infect a human. High risk areas to contract Lyme Disease include those areas that have a large deer population.

Lyme disease is a truly awful chronic illness if it is not diagnosed immediately which, unfortunately, is generally the case due to poor diagnostic testing and a lack of awareness from GP's. It can affect any organ and tends to have many neurological consequences. We have been under treatment for 3 years and are still symptomatic.

Here are some facts about Lyme Disease:

- **Untreated, Lyme disease can become a severely debilitating disease** affecting joints, the heart, the brain, and/or the central nervous system. There are half a million Americans struggling with late-stage Lyme disease.
- **Late-stage and post-treatment Lyme disease (PTLD) cause immense suffering and severe health issues** for thousands of patients with little remedy. Controversy over prolonged antibiotic use, highly variable disease progression and genetic conditions, and masquerading symptoms often impede treatment.
- **Prevention is key, yet few are aware of the risks or how to take precautions.**

Reduced **deer populations** can lead to a reduction in **Lyme disease** cases, researchers in Connecticut have found that after a 13-year study was conducted. White-tailed **deer** serve as the primary host for the adult blacklegged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*) -- the vector for **Lyme disease**. <http://www.entsoc.org/press-releases/fewer-deer-may-mean-less-lyme-disease>

For the 11 years that we lived in Belvedere, we noticed a definitive increase in the number of deer in addition to a number of friends and neighbors who had aggressive deer interactions. The deer enter our yards and live within our properties. Furthermore, Lyme disease is on the rise in Marin County over the last decade with more and more people being diagnosed (according to the doctors trained to treat Lyme in the Bay Area e.g. Stricker, Green, Leone, McDougall, Patel, etc). If we have the opportunity to reduce the incidence of Lyme Disease by reducing the significant increase in the deer population, we would be wise to seize on that opportunity for the benefit of everyone in the community.

All the best,

Melissa Prentis