CarePool Kicks Off and We Need You!

Did you mean carpool? No, CarePool, it’s the caring way to share rides with those in need. Whistlestop recently won a grant from Marin Transit to initiate a Traditional Volunteer Driver Program we are calling “CarePool.” CarePool is a program whereby Whistlestop recruits lots of community members who don’t mind offering a ride to an older adult in need of a trip to a doctor or to grocery shop. Once we have lots of volunteers willing to lend a hand, or rather, a ride, we will roll out the program to the thousands of seniors in our community in need of such a ride. The service uses an innovative software program that enables Whistlestop to match the requests from those in need with volunteers willing to give the rides.

Curious about being a driver? Who are the volunteer drivers?

These are people in our community who have a clean driving record, a clean background check, a mobile phone, auto insurance, and a generous willingness to help out. Please sign-up with Laurie at volunteer@whistlestop.org.

Is there a minimum commitment requested? We ask that you commit to providing at least a couple of rides per month, as we imagine there will be a high demand for this new service.

Is there a mileage reimbursement? We have some funding to reimburse drivers from the Marin Transit grant and have applied for other grant funding. For starters, we will be able to offer a small per mile fee to reimburse for up to 10 miles per ride.

When will the rides be given? Whenever there is a demand for a ride, perhaps on weekends, during the day and early evenings.

How will I be asked to fulfill a ride? You will sign-up for the area that you would like to cover, central Marin on weekends for example. When a request comes in that matches your stated interest, you will receive an email requesting that you accept the ride request. You will login to our website, review the details, and accept the ride. Once you’ve completed the ride, you will login again to complete the ride.

continued on page 6
As I passed my first anniversary as Volunteer Program Manager at Whistlestop this January, I began reflecting on the changes I have witnessed in myself as a person and at work as the volunteer manager.

For many years I have led, motivated and encouraged teams of people, both in the corporate world and in the non-profit world. My teams have been composed of young and older adults working a job, volunteers promoting their businesses in hopes of growth, and students, adults and retirees putting on a large event or trying to help people in their community improve their lives.

I never thought much about why I liked working with volunteers before, but after my year here at Whistlestop, I have discovered so much more than I ever thought possible. I have found tireless and dedicated individuals who give their time week after week to help others. They have become friends with the Whistlestop clients they serve and with each other. Volunteering has become a way of life for so many of them, and an inspiration to me.

Most important is that I look forward to coming in to work each day to see the volunteers scheduled in the Café, on parking lot duty, setting up the Brown Bag Pantry, teaching a class or shopping for homebound clients. Although I do not see the drivers who deliver Meals on Wheels, I look at their schedules each week and know if they are on vacation or home sick. They care about the work they do and I care about them.

As I learned in the business world, success is all about relationships. It is not always what you know, but who you know. I think that building a volunteer team works with similar principles. Even if each volunteer has a different reason for being here, the end result is working for the good of the organization and the people we serve.

In honor of National Volunteer Appreciation Week, April 12-18, I invite anyone interested in serving the community to follow your passion and get involved. There are many opportunities to volunteer at Whistlestop, including the new Volunteer Driver Program, CarePool. More are listed in the Volunteer Announcements on page 6. Please visit us at our booth at the Marin County Volunteer Fair on Saturday, April 11, from 10am to 2pm, at the Buck Institute.

All Whistlestop volunteers are honored for the jobs they do each and every day. Please check out our upcoming full-page thank-you ad in the Marin IJ.

Laurie Vermont is Volunteer Manager at Whistlestop.
From early onset dementia to end of life care, we help those who wish to stay safely at home with carefully screened and trained employee caregivers. At Home Caregivers provides assistance with shopping, transportation, bathing, dressing, and medication reminders.

“Many, many thanks for sending such a gem of a caregiver as John. My husband would light up every morning when John arrived. His ability to care was wonderful, thorough, and gentle. He really became part of our family!”

– Erdie F., Mill Valley

“Thank you so much for helping to coordinate care from the hospital to home for my husband, Jack. We were so overwhelmed with what we needed to do! Your caregiver, Bruce, was a gift! He was so compassionate and caring. He’s now family to us!”

– Peggy L., Novato

“I want to thank you for having someone sit with my father in the last few hours of his life. I know it was short notice, but you made it work and it is a comfort to know he was not alone.”

– Gail D., Santa Rosa

www.AtHomeCaregivers.com

Monty, Chairman

Wouldn’t you rather be at home?
Volunteer Q & A

What Motivated You to Volunteer at Whistlestop?

*Interviews by Roving Reporter Volunteer, Karen Carlsen*

**Gloria Purdue, Friday morning Brown Bag Pantry Volunteer, 2 years**

“Listen, when you reach my age, you move it or you lose it. I want to be part of a team and I found it at Whistlestop.”

**Michael Gordon, Volunteer Cardio Instructor, 4 years**

“Whistlestop asked me to start a cardio class and share my 16 years of experience and my health enthusiasm. I wouldn’t miss it. I always feel like exercising.”

**Janice Fong, Jackson Café Volunteer, 2+ years**

“I knew of Whistlestop because my mother used the Whistlestop transportation service after she suffered a stroke. I wanted to pay back with volunteering. I find joy in meeting patrons, working with the other volunteers and serving my community.”

**Susan Duncan, Volunteer French Instructor, 2 years**

“Whistlestop learned that I taught French in San Rafael High School and asked if I would be interested in volunteering. I said Oui! And so it began. Vive le Francais!”

**CORRECTION**

A story in the February issue of the Express said that Howie Herrin was a former president of Lighthouse for the Blind of Marin. Actually, Mr. Herrin is a former president of Visually Impaired of Marin. The editors regret the error.

**DID YOU KNOW...**

...that you can rent a Scooter, Powerchair or Wheelchair for as little as $15/day?!

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Facilitating Movement through Technology

SALES REPAIRS RENTALS

New & Used The only repair facility in Marin Daily • Weekly Monthly

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**PHYSICAL THERAPY FOR SENIORS**

- Specialized treatment for a variety of problems
- Balance and Fall Prevention Programs
- Visits are up to 60 minutes of personalized therapy
- Seniors are eligible to receive outpatient therapy in their homes under Medicare Part B

Licensed Physical Therapists

800-931-5769 Jennifer Holland, PT
CA Lic #10957
Volunteer of the Month

Georgia Anker

Although she was born in South Dakota, Volunteer of the Month Georgia Anker has been in California most of her life and has lived in Marin since 1961. At that time, she and her husband Bill purchased their first home in Fairfax for $15,750, using a $2,000 wedding gift from her parents. It recently sold for $800,000. Good planning, Georgia!

Georgia has been volunteering in the Whistlestop Resource and Information (R&I) office since 2009. After retiring as a real estate broker, volunteering has become her hobby. Georgia also helps the Marin Humane Society Thrift Store in San Anselmo with their banking and volunteer scheduling.

In addition to answering questions and calls in the R&I office, Georgia often covers the front desk and schedules handyman visits for a program in partnership with Mission San Rafael Rotary, Marin Center for Independent Living and Marin Episcopal Senior Communities.

“We love having Georgia staff the R&I office every Friday. She adds a kind voice of authority and experience when answering difficult calls and has a wealth of knowledge about where to go to get the answers to the many questions and problems which need solving,” says Volunteer Manager Laurie Vermont. “I look forward to seeing her every week.”

Jackson Café Volunteers

Volunteers at the Jackson Café wore plenty of green for the March 17th St. Patrick’s Day celebration, featuring music compliments of Bread & Roses. To see what they are serving this month and the low prices, see the menu on page 10 of this issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOURLY AND LIVE-IN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trusted providers of compassionate care for seniors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LICENSED • BONDED • INSURED</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Light Housekeeping &amp; Laundry</td>
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<td>• Meal Preparation &amp; Clean Up</td>
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<td>• Medication Reminders</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Personal Care</td>
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<td>• Respite Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Wardrobe, Dressing Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Help with Daily Grooming</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Toileting Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Help with Ambulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bed-bound Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Protective Supervision for those with Impaired Judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Companionship, Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encouraging Hobbies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And much, much more…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(415) 599-4333  
HomeWell Senior Care  
Serving Marin and Sonoma Counties  
Free Consultation • Same Day Staffing  
whistlestop.org  5
Better Care Starts at Home

90% of seniors prefer to remain at home as they age.

Seniors At Home is the leading provider of senior care in the Bay Area. We help seniors live safer, healthier, more independent lives in their own homes.

Call 415-449-3777

info@SeniorsAtHome.org  •  www.SeniorsAtHome.org

CAREPOOL continued from page 1

process, provide feedback, and you may request a mileage reimbursement.

Curious about getting a ride from the new CarePool service?

Who are the riders? These are older people who need to get to a medical appointment or go grocery shopping. Riders need to be able to ride in a passenger car.

What are the eligibility requirements? 1. Are you 65+? (or younger and have a disability?) 2. Marin County resident? 3. Is your home accessible by car? 4. Can you get yourself into and out of the driver’s car?

How is a ride requested? Older adults in need of a ride will call in to a special number (To Be Announced) to make the request Monday through Friday and at least 24 hours in advance. Once a volunteer driver is identified, the rider will be called to confirm the ride. More details to come.

When will the first rides start being matched? Before we source volunteer drivers, it is difficult to predict, but we are aiming for a June 1st start date.

VOLUNTEER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Make a Difference in an older adult’s life.

Cashiers and Servers Needed

The Jackson Café at Whistlestop needs a few reliable, friendly volunteers who are interested in serving lunch at the café. Cashier experience is a plus but not required. Volunteers must commit to a minimum of one weekday from 10:45am – 2pm.

Tutors Needed

Provide individual tutoring to older adults who are learning English or preparing to take the citizenship exam. Tutoring is a supplement to classroom teaching and tutors are not expected to know or speak the language of origin. Must be willing to commit to at least one hour per week.

Meals on Wheels Drivers Needed

Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers are needed to deliver meals to homebound meal recipients. A valid California Driver’s License and a clear DMV report are needed as well as a reliable vehicle and current insurance certificate. A minimum of one 3 hour weekday shift is required.

To learn more about these opportunities or others contact: volunteer@whistlestop.org Phone: 415 456-9062 x 117 www.whistlestop.org
Keep Learning at WHISTLESTOP

To support our Center, Whistlestop has instituted a new fee structure for classes, activities and special events. There are now fees (or suggested donations) for most programs, and discounted rates for Whistlestar members. Whistlestop has also instituted a “new member annual fee” of $5. Membership entitles participants to reduced rates for classes and meals in the café, and also supports the funding for our center and improves our method of collecting participation data. Please pick up an application at our front desk or register for membership or classes at 930 Tamalpais Avenue, San Rafael, from 8:30am-5:30pm, Monday-Friday. Or call 415-456-9062.

For a full list of classes and services, refer to the Whistlestop monthly calendar online at whistlestop.org/classes/calendar or pick up a calendar at the Active Aging Center. Fees listed below show the member fee first, followed by the non-member fee (e.g. $3/$5)

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS & PROGRAMS

“SPRING FLING” EASTER LUNCHEON with LIVE MUSIC
Thurs, Apr 9, 11:30am-2pm
Music: 12-1pm
Fee: $10/$12 tickets in advance by Apr 6 at Front Desk
Enjoy a traditional Easter lunch accompanied by the “Redwood Wind Quartet”— four musicians who play saxophone, clarinet, and flute, to get your feet tapping with swing, jazz, pop, rags and ballads!

LIVE MUSIC LUNCH
Fri, Apr 24, 11:30am-2pm
Music: 12-1pm
Fee: Regular menu pricing
Enjoy live 1950’s hit music with the Jonny Darlin Band, while dining on your favorite menu entree at the Jackson Café.

POETRY CELEBRATION to honor National Poetry Month
Thurs, Apr 30, 4:15-5:15 pm
No Fee: (donations appreciated)
Enjoy recitations of poetry from local Marin County poets, in honor of National Poetry Month. Call to reserve your seat.

HIGHLIGHTED CLASSES AND PROGRAMS

ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOPS
Wednesdays, 10am-12
Fee: $3/$5 for materials per class
Join a fun new group to explore knitting, collage, embroidery, painting, sewing, and other arts and crafts projects. All abilities and skill levels are welcome. Led by Anna Ladyzhenskaya.

ZENTANGLE CLASS
Thur, Apr 23, 1:30-3pm
Fee: $3/$5
Zentangle is an easy-to-learn, relaxing, fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns. Paula Egan, a certified Zentangle teacher, will teach basic techniques of this increasingly popular art form.

BEGINNING GERMAN CLASS
Starting Fri, Apr 10, 12:30-2pm, for 12 weeks
Fee: $20/$25 for 12-week class; call to sign-up
Learn Beginning German with a 12-week class, taught by native speaker Traute Exkersdorff, who recently taught German at Tam High School and with Berlitz Language Academy.

MIND EXERCISES with Lloyd
Thur, Apr 16, 3:30-5pm
Fee: $3/5
Stimulate your mind by exploring dynamic word and number puzzles. Facilitated by experienced YMCA teacher Lloyd Licher.

DISCOVER YOUR GOALS & DREAMS OVER 60
Starting Thur, Apr 21, 3:30-5pm, for four weeks
Fee: $25/$30 for four-week program
The magic of synchronicity happens when we discover our goals and dreams. Spiritual counselor and workshop leader Gloria Wilcox has taught classes in “Living your Dreams and Aspirations” for decades. She was born with the gift of intuition to help each person discover what they were born to express in the world.
Keep Learning at WHISTLESTOP
For a complete list of classes, visit whistlestop.org

RETIREMENT INCOME: HOW MUCH DO I NEED AND SOURCES OF INCOME
Thur, April 23, 2-3:30pm
No Fee: (donations appreciated)
Attend this informative workshop, led by Don Maxon, to learn about retirement income and planning. Topics to be addressed: Planning for retirement, when to retire, estimating retirement income needs, sources of retirement income, personal savings considerations, and long term care. Don Maxon is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER AND REGISTERED INVESTMENT ADVISOR™.

NEW RUSSIAN SOCIAL GROUP
at Margaret Todd Senior Center in Novato
Wed, Apr 29, 10:30-11:30am
No Fee: (donations appreciated)
Margaret Todd Senior Center, 1560 Hill Rd, Novato, is hosting our new Russian-speaking social group for older adults in Marin. Socialize and learn about community resources, then stay for lunch from 12-1pm and the Brown Bag Pantry from 1-2pm. To sign-up, or if you would like to participate in Brown Bag and/or Lunch Program, please call our Russian Multicultural Coordinator Anna Ladyzhenskaya at 415-456-9062, ext. 138.

NEW HEALTH PROGRAMS

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING AND MEDICATION REVIEW
Tues, Apr 14, 11am-1pm
No Fee: (donations appreciated)
Monthly blood pressure screenings provided by Dominican University nursing students. Bring your medications, both over-the-counter and prescriptions, for review.

MANAGING INSOMNIA PRESENTATION
Tues, Apr 14, 3:30-4:30 pm
No Fee: (donations appreciated)
Did you know that some form of insomnia affects more than 50% of individuals over 65 years of age and more women than men? Do you find it difficult to fall asleep? Do you frequently wake up in the night? Join the Dominican University nursing students for an informative presentation on sleep.

MEMORY SCREENING
Wed, May 13, 8:30am -12:30pm
No Fee: (donations appreciated)
Sign-up in advance as space is limited
Are you concerned about your memory? Take action! Memory screening makes sense for anyone concerned about memory loss and involves a simple short test with a geriatric professional that takes 30 minutes, provided by Health Navigator and Certified Nurse Assistant Cynthia Seymour.

MEDICARE 101 SEMINAR: LEARN THE NUTS AND BOLTS
Tues, April 28, 1-2:30 pm
No Fee: (donations appreciated)
To sign up, call Cara Suminski at 415-720-2133
Turning 65? Trying to make sense of Medicare? What’s the difference between Part A and Part B? How much gets deducted from Social Security? What are your options when it comes to Health Plans? Let Cara Suminski of SCAN Health Plan show you how simple Medicare can be. This event is only for education purposes; no plan-specific benefits will be shared.

QIGONG: RELAX & RENEW
Mondays, 4-5pm (No classes on Apr 13 or Apr 20)
Fee: $5-$10 sliding scale (per class); $12 non-member
Release your stress, renew your zest with Qigong. Easy, gentle practices for all levels of ability optimize self-healing, body-mind health, and a happy, bright life. Includes both standing and sitting options. Drop-in OK. Bring a water bottle. Barbara Lovejoy, MSW, is a Certified Teacher of Qigong.

HIGHLIGHTED SUPPORT SERVICES

HOMESHARE PROGRAM
Call Leslie Klor: 415-456-9062, ext. 132
This is a free referral service for older adults providing an affordable and alternative way of meeting housing needs with numerous benefits to renters and homeowners. Do you have a room to share, or do you need a place to live?

MULTICULTURAL CONSULTATIONS
By appointment: 415-456-9062, ext. 131
No cost for consultations; small fee may apply for translation services.
Spanish: Marta Villela, ext. 133; Russian: Anna Ladyzhenskaya, ext. 138;
Vietnamese: Dina Duong, ext. 129
Assistance in Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese. We assist with applications for social services, such as healthcare management, citizenship, housing, employment, and federal assistance, plus translations and referrals.

ROTARY HOME TEAM
Coming in May 16. Call Leslie Klor at 415-456-9062 x132 for more information.

Check the calendar on our website daily or call for updates to the schedule during the holidays.
11th Annual Healthy Aging Symposium

Thursday, May 14, 2015
9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Embassy Suites Hotel
101 McInnis Parkway, San Rafael

The Marin County Health & Human Services Office of Aging & Adult Services and the Commission on Aging present

“Living in an Age-Friendly Marin”

Matthew Willis, MD, MPH
County of Marin Public Health Officer
Other Speakers to be Announced

Partners
• Kaiser Permanente • Marin General Hospital
• SCAN Health Plan • Sutter Health • Whistlestop

FEE: $20 (includes lunch)
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 30th
Call to Register: 415-473-2980

Pre-registration required. No admission at the door. Payment by cash, check or money order only please. No refunds. For more information call (415) 473-2980.

TECHNOLOGY

Pre-registration and payment required. To register, call 415-456-9062. See details of classes online.

Using Android Smart Phones & Tablets
Tuesdays, Apr 7 & 14, 10am-Noon
Fee: $48 • Maximum 8 people
Did you get a new phone or tablet? In this class, we will take you through common tasks like making phone calls, sending a text message, watching a video clip on YouTube, and surfing the Web. You’ll learn fundamentals such as: configuring the security options for safe and private use, finding and installing apps, adjusting the brightness of the display, working with a wireless network and more. See how smart your device really is.

How to Use the iPad/iPhone
Tuesdays, May 5 & 12, 10am-Noon
Fee: $48 • Maximum 8 people
In this personalized two week course you’ll get one-on-one help on everything from email to pictures and instructional handouts so you can practice at home. (For Apple devices only)

iPad/iPhone Applications
Tuesdays, June 2 & 9, 10am-Noon
Fee: $48 • Maximum 8 people
You’ve learned the basics and now want to find out about the apps. In this workshop, we’ll highlight the most popular, fun and useful apps to get the most out of your i-device. (For Apple devices only)

ONGOING

Computer Tutor
Monday & Wednesday, Noon-1pm by appointment
Fee: $20/hour
Personalized computer assistance, troubleshooting and instruction for the PC user specializing in assisting older adults and novices.

Open Lab
Every Monday and Wednesday, 10am-Noon
No Fee
Use our desktops for your own purposes, access internet, etc. Volunteer staff available for advice on problems with your electronic devices; laptops, tablets, etc. and can help with software applications.

Marin County Commission on Aging

Thursday, April 9, 10am to 12:30pm
San Rafael Community Center (Club Rooms)
Topic: Public Hearing
Speaker: Commission on Aging and Adult Services

whistlestop.org 9
Whistlestop Weekly ACTIVITIES
This Month at Whistlestop
Please view our most recent class schedule at www.whistlestop.org/classes/calendar/ or call 415-456-9062 for updates to the schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INFO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONDAYS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td>Zumba</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–1PM</td>
<td>Chair Massage</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>415-472-6020</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td>Movement &amp; Music</td>
<td>415-485-9305</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–1:45PM</td>
<td>German Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30PM</td>
<td>Russian Social Group</td>
<td>415-456-9062</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td>ESL Basic/Advanced</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td>Beginning Korean Drums</td>
<td>415-456-9062</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>4–5PM</td>
<td>Qigong: Relax and Renew</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUESDAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30 AM</td>
<td>Whistlesizers</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Mah Jongg</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45–11:45AM</td>
<td>Cardio/Yoga Exercise Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>11AM–2PM</td>
<td>Manicurist</td>
<td>Appt. Req.</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30AM–12:30PM</td>
<td>French Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–2PM</td>
<td>French Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td>Learn Spanish</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–3PM</td>
<td>Mastery of Aging Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEDNESDAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>9–10:15AM</td>
<td>Tai Chi</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–11:30AM</td>
<td>Seniors’ Circle</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Crafts Workshop</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>415-472-6020</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>* 11AM–1PM</td>
<td>Corazón Latino</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x131</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOON–1PM</td>
<td>Beginning Ukeleke</td>
<td>Ends 4/15</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–2PM</td>
<td>English Pronunciation</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td>ESL Basic/Advanced</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td>Citizenship Class</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>THURSDAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td>Whistlesizers</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td>Chair Massage</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td>Zumba</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15–3PM</td>
<td>Vietnamese Social Group</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x129</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–2:30PM</td>
<td>Intermediate Italian</td>
<td>Ends 5/7</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:45–3:45PM</td>
<td>Balance Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4:30PM</td>
<td>Beginning Bridge</td>
<td>Ends 4/9</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td>Advanced Korean Drums</td>
<td>415-456-9062</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30–5:30PM</td>
<td>Salsa/Cuban Dance</td>
<td>Ends 4/2, will resume 6/4</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRIDAYS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30AM</td>
<td>Community Breakfast</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–NOON</td>
<td>Brown Bag Pantry</td>
<td>456-9062 x117</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–2PM</td>
<td>Beginning German</td>
<td>Starts 4/10</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td>ACASA</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3PM</td>
<td>Chinese Brush Painting</td>
<td>4/10 &amp; 4/24</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td>Practice Spanish</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td>Ping-Pong</td>
<td>4/3 &amp; 4/17</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Except for Corazon Latino Group, held weekly at Pickleweed Community Center, all classes are held at Whistlestop’s Active Aging Center, 930 Tamalpais Ave., San Rafael.
Birds on a Wire

Why do birds sit on electrical lines and why don’t they get fried? Birds sit together for the same reasons people congregate on park benches and in coffee shops: to see and to be seen. For small birds, sitting high on a wire is important for other reasons, one of which is the ability to see predators approaching from far off. Of course predators such as this Kestrel Falcon sit on the wires too, in order to spot prey, especially on the ground.

For some reason the smaller birds (like the starlings in the photo) don’t sit on the same wires as the Falcons and Hawks. Probably their parents warned them about hanging around with “that sort of bird” – bad for the health, I suppose.

The reason birds can sit on electrical wires without being electrocuted is because they have both feet on the same wire. In order to be electrocuted they would have to have one foot on one wire and the other foot on another wire, or on the ground (earth). Fortunately their legs are not that long. Birds don’t seem at all bothered by the buzz we hear and they feel coming from the high wires they cling to.

Every weekend I send a free photo to a list of bird fanciers around the world. You can get on the list if you just ask me at: SHENmaker@MSN.com.

Till next time,
Richard
Volunteers Receive as Much as They Give

We have many wonderful volunteers helping with Whistlestop’s Hispanic Multicultural program. Volunteers tell us how much they love their jobs and that they get much in return from their service.

Amigos Consejeros A Su Alcance, ACASA, is a peer-counseling program that utilizes the experience of Hispanic-descent older adult participants to help others who suffer from emotional challenges, such as depression, loneliness or the loss of a loved one. Participants provide confidential counseling and support to those in need in their native language. Susan, who works in the ACASA program, said, “I like to help and support each person who is suffering because of loneliness, frustration and other emotional issues. They have inspired me to be a volunteer counselor.”

In addition, Josefina, volunteer Counselor who also volunteers with the Brown Bag Program, said, “It is good to serve people because they receive benefits from me. I listen, talk to them, and we both enjoy the time we share.”

We have 13 to 15 Hispanic people volunteering at Whistlestop’s Active Aging Center. They volunteer in the following areas:

- Our peer counseling ACASA Program
- Telephone Assurance
- The Brown Bag Pantry program

At the Corazon Latino social group meetings on Wednesdays, volunteers also help us serve milk during the luncheon, following the meeting.

Volunteering for multicultural programs are very rewarding. We’d love more volunteers, especially for the ESL and ACASA programs.

Marta Villela Morales is Whistlestop’s Hispanic Multicultural Coordinator.

Volunteers Laurie Peterson and Teresa Pilian.
A long time ago, I volunteered to be a hostess for the homeless women who were guests every Wednesday night at the Lutheran Church in Fairfax. It was cozy, holy, warm and welcoming, and I felt like I could be everybody’s grandmother. The ladies camped all over the sanctuary, finding niches, nooks and crannies to hold their sleeping bags, and sometimes their prayers. I stayed overnight with them — sometimes telling a story — but most often listening to theirs.

Some ladies I especially remember: Celeste carried a doll with her, and she made a special bed for it every night. “Always have and I always will,” she told me. “Where I go, she goes.” Anita had a Bible almost as big as a shoebox, four inches thick. She would color texts on the pages with pastel colored marking pens: God’s word in blue; faith in green; salvation yellow, she would say, rolling her eyes. She would read ‘rainbows-of-words’ to anyone who’d listen.

The women aren’t being hosted at churches anymore, but in big meeting rooms at the County Health Facility on Bellum. We are bussed there in the evening. We sleep in sleeping bags on pads on the floor. Volunteers from the Lutheran church bring us a delicious meal and generous good will.

One night, shortly before Easter, I took four dozen free-range, hard-boiled eggs to the shelter with me, and when some had crashed, others accepted my invitation to decorate them. First tentative, spidery writing on the side: Happy Easter, Love. Then, gaining confidence, end dunking and designs. Pretty soon we had a bowl full of very interesting eggs with bright colors and drawings with marking pens. I remember a tiny, pink bunny in jail with a blue background, black bars around him.

We sang old songs and shared stories about fireflies in the garden, pet bunnies who’d run away. “My dad barbecuing crocodile,” Josephine shared. “You had to watch out that a big crocodile didn’t grab your leg while you were eating its cousin.”

The bus came at six to take us to Saint Vincent de Paul’s (Vinnie’s) big dining room on B Street. Many of the people sitting at the tables are ill, depressed, with heads down on the table or staring into space. Small groups of men and women hunched over coffee cups and old food. A lot of the conversation I overheard was someone trying to convince his neighbors that he was successful, or about to be.

It was hard to approach them. “Would you like an Easter egg?” I’d say, holding one out. I got lots of “No, thanks,” but I think I communicated that I saw them and had volunteered because I cared.

When I left Vinnie’s, after doing my best to emulate the Easter Bunny’s finer qualities of inclusion and generosity, I took the last two eggs with me. A man was sitting with his dog on a collapsed cardboard box under the window. “Would you like an egg?” I said to him. “Sure.” He took the egg, tossed it in the air. His dog caught it, gobbled the whole thing in a nanosecond. Some really gnarly men gathered round. A dude, wearing a skin-tight bicycle suit, took the last egg. He rolled it up one arm, around his back, into one ear and out the other. It disappeared! Couldn’t find that egg anywhere. Everyone laughed. Just what we needed -- a magician! I’m going back tomorrow.
Volunteering More, Living Longer

Older adults who stay active by volunteering are getting more out of it than just an altruistic feeling – they receive a health boost! A new study, led by the Rotman Research Institute at Baycrest Health Sciences examined 73 studies published over the last 45 years involving adults aged 50-plus who were in formal volunteering roles.

Among the key findings: Volunteering is associated with reductions in symptoms of depression, better overall health, fewer functional limitations, and greater longevity. Health benefits may depend on a moderate level of volunteering. There appears to be a tipping point after which greater benefits no longer accrue. The “sweet spot” appears to be at about 100 annual hours, or 2-3 hours per week.

More vulnerable seniors (i.e. those with chronic health conditions) may benefit the most from volunteering.

Feeling appreciated or needed as a volunteer appears to amplify the relationship between volunteering and psychosocial wellbeing.
Silver-Haired Legislature Helps Seniors Voices Be Heard

The California Senior Legislature (CSL) is a volunteer body meeting for four days each year to propose legislation regarding senior citizens at both state and federal levels. Meetings are held in the State Capitol building for four days in October. It was created from an idea of California State Senator Henry Mello, who called for a meeting of a “Silver-Haired Legislature” in 1980. It first met in 1982. There are 40 Senior Senators and 80 Senior Assembly members selected through elections in 33 planning service areas.

The session meets to arrive at ten state and four federal proposals. These are then taken to state legislators or members of congress, who are asked to author and carry appropriate bills in the Legislature or Congress. Eighty-85% of the bills proposed are endorsed and carried; more than 197 proposals have been enacted into law. Allen Bortel has been Senior Senator for three years and Ellie Block has been Senior Assembly Member for 10 years. Both are from Tiburon. The CSL is supported entirely by donations and the primary funding source is through the Contribution Section of the California State Income Tax Return, where it is tax-deductible. To join Friends of the CSL, visit 4csl.org.

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