The Affordable Care Act is already making it easier for people to get, keep and afford healthcare benefits. It helps to protect consumers, including older adults, from discriminatory insurance practices and it strengthens coverage for people who are on Medicare.

One of the most important benefits for older adults, according to AARP, is the change with the prescription drugs “donut hole” or coverage gap.

The coverage gap is when the amount you pay for your prescriptions suddenly increases. In the past, most people had to pay the full cost of their drugs in the coverage gap. Due to healthcare reform, you no longer have to pay the full cost of your drugs during this period. The coverage gap starts when your total drug costs – including what you and your plan have paid for drugs – reaches a certain amount since the start of the calendar year. In 2013, this amount was generally $2,970.

The law has been gradually closing the Medicare Part D “donut hole.”

If you reached that gap in 2013 you received a 52.5% discount on brand name prescriptions and a 21% discount on generics. Savings will increase each year until the gap is closed in 2020.

According to California Health Advocates, since January 2013, more than 6.6 million seniors have benefited from the reduced out-of-pocket costs of their medications.
Whistlestop is sitting right now at the cutting edge of need and opportunity. In my 30 years in the healthcare field, there have been vast changes – hospitals only serve the sickest patients; others are cared for in a variety of settings; mental health services are almost entirely provided in the community, not a hospital. Older, disabled, and recovering patients rely on transit to connect with providers and specialized community centers which meet their physical and socialization needs. In the meantime, I think that nonprofits, while they have also changed, have somewhat lagged behind these universal shifts. Whistlestop is rising to meet new and expanding needs for housing, good food, and interesting, engaging opportunities for older adults. Whistlestop is indeed sitting at the intersection of opportunity and need.

I am pleased to be on the Whistlestop Board, where there is such a wide range of experience and skills. Whistlestop is serving as a model for other nonprofits in effecting change and rising to new challenges.

When I was invited to join the Board, I decided to check it out. I knew about Whistlestop largely because of its buses and the Jackson Café. I met with some of the staff and attended part of a Board retreat. I liked what I saw. I was quite impressed with the operation, and with the broad range of services available here. Also, I had known Joe O’Hehir for some time and I knew and respected his work.

What I didn’t know was the extent to which Whistlestop provides services for older adults in Marin.

What I didn’t know was the extent to which Whistlestop has reached out and collaborated with other nonprofits and organizations. Homeward Bound is a perfect example. The organization’s Fresh Starts Culinary Academy trains out-of-work residents for jobs in the culinary industry. Everyone benefits, including Whistlestop participants who get nutritious meals at affordable prices and enjoy the added benefit of meeting other older adults.
million people have saved $7 billion on drug costs as a result of this provision of the ACA, an average savings of $1,061 per beneficiary. Other developments important to older adults:

- Medicare now covers more preventive services, such as colonoscopies and mammograms with no out-of-pocket cost to you.
- Insurers cannot drop your coverage even if you become sick or disabled.
- Some people with Medicare may feel confused as the enrollment period for Covered California overlaps with Medicare’s Annual Election Period (AEP), commonly referred to as fall Open Enrollment (Oct. 15-Dec.7). As with previous AEPs, Medicare beneficiaries need to review and evaluate their Medicare options and make any changes for 2014 during the AEP. Anyone who tries to convince you otherwise (as an example, says you need to buy new coverage through Covered California) has false information or is possibly pushing a scam.
- If you have family and friends who do not have Medicare or Medi-Cal or other health insurance, or if they want to explore new health plan options, tell them to call Covered California at 1-888-975-1142 or go to healthcare.gov or coveredca.com.

Something very important for older adults to remember is this: Beware of false claims. Advertising or insurance agents may try to convince you to buy or change your health insurance coverage through Covered California. If you have Medicare, do nothing without first calling your local HICAP at 1-800-434-0222. Also inquire how to prevent, detect and report Medicare fraud. If you suspect fraud, report it to the California Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) at 1-885-613-7080. ✪

Volunteer of the Month

Lucille Bailey of San Rafael has been a volunteer since March of 2011. Lucille is so friendly and everyone knows who she is. She makes people feel welcome at Whistlestop. She cares about people and truly wants to get to know them. Lucille is always kind and helpful. You will often see her zipping around the building directing people and offering them information. “Lucille has a pleasant demeanor and we love having her,” said accounting specialist Charmina Pariani.

FREE seminars - Not to be missed!

OCTOBER 29 • 6:30-8pm
Transitioning to Your Senior Living Home/Questions to a Homecare Provider
Speakers: David Knepler; Drake Terrace and Lenice Cally Smith, MBA; Hired Hands, Inc.

NOVEMBER 14 • 6:30-8pm
How to Preserve Your Legacy in a Life Story: Narratives for Generations
Speaker: Veronica Balseiro, MA

NOVEMBER 20 • 6:30-8pm
Personal Tax Planning
Speaker: J. Ryan Hastings, LLM, CPA

DECEMBER 4 • 6:30-8pm
Planning ahead: Funerary Decision; Your Life, Your Legacy
Speaker: Brigette LaFauci, Keaton’s Mortuary

More Great Seminars to Come!

For more estate plan information visit: jr hastingslaw.com and estate planning.com
Reserve a Seat Today on Our Website
www.jrhastingslaw.com/event.php
or Telephone 415-459-6635

whistlestop.org 3
When She Needs You
Are You Ready?

Medications. Treatments. Insurance...
There are so many decisions when your loved one faces challenges. But finding good information isn’t easy. Between our highly knowledgeable staff and public seminars, we give you the information you need to make good decisions.

Let us help. Our expert staff can answer your questions. Call today to schedule your visit.

415.233.6095
almaviaofsanrafael.org

SIR Group Loves Bocce Ball & Fun

Two SIR Bocce Ball teams get together every Monday morning at the Marin Bocce Federation on B Street in San Rafael.

Want to join a Marin County group that does not raise money, has no political agenda and no religious orientation? Then consider the Sons in Retirement (SIR) Branch 68 of San Rafael. Bocce ball is one of the group’s favorite activities – Branch 68 has two teams (above) that play on Monday mornings, 9am to Noon, at Marin Bocce Federation on B Street.

SIR Membership is open to men regardless of age, race, national origin or religion. Founded in 1958, SIR has thousands of members and branches in most areas of Central and Northern California. The group has monthly luncheons with interesting speakers and good fellowship. Additionally, members have lots of fun engaging in a variety of other activities such as golf, fishing, bowling, and hiking. Wives of members are invited to many activities including travel, dining, picnics, and holiday parties.

There are about 80 members, retired men from diverse backgrounds – training, education, experience, and past careers, both civilian and government. SIR meets the second Tuesday of the month at The Club at McInnis Park, Smith Ranch Road, at 11am for a luncheon meeting with guest speakers. ♦

To find out more: Contact Joe Grasso at 479-3432 or email giuseppe459@comcast.net.
Many of us look to the start of a New Year with anticipation while holding tight to our resolutions as we pledge to be better to ourselves, our families and our communities. We hope to live differently, but mostly we hope to make our lives better. In essence, we hope to change.

Beginning January, 2014, there will be noticeable changes for our California domestic workers. California Assembly Bill 241 will go into effect January 1. This assembly bill will affect domestic work employees such as home care workers, childcare providers and housekeepers with increased labor laws. This most directly affects overtime and could drastically impact seniors’ ability to receive affordable home care services. There are strong arguments on both sides, impacting both the consumer, who will certainly be calculating the effects of long term cost for necessary and valuable service, and the worker, who for a long time has felt overlooked while providing a meaningful role in the home.

Another change will be Assembly Bill 10, which will increase minimum wage from $8 to $9 effective July 1, 2014. The 2014 New Year will certainly bring a transformation. I have made but one resolution … take time to express and receive kindness. ♡

For more information on AB241 visit http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml or for AB10 visit http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml.

continued from page 2

over lunch. The collaboration with Eden Housing is another example of partnering with field leaders to provide housing in the center of San Rafael with easy access to services and entertainment in walking distance. I want to build on what previous Whistlestop Boards have done in partnering with these other entities. I believe my experience in managing change and coping with a changing environment will help us move in the right direction. ♡
Keep Learning at WHISTLESTOP
For a complete list of classes, visit whistlestop.org

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Tests You Want To Take
Wed, Jan 8 • 10-11am
No cost
Register: 456-9062
Participate in a special presentation brought to you by SCAN Health to receive a general guide for prevention screenings and vaccines for people age 60 and older.

Memory Screenings
Wed, Jan 22 • 9:30am-3pm
No cost
Registration required: 456-9062
Whistlestop is partnering with Senior Access, Senior Helpers, and Etheridge Care Management to offer free memory screenings. A memory screening is as simple as a short “test” with a geriatric professional, Laurel Etheridge, certified Geriatric Manager and Dementia Care Specialist, will conduct private and confidential face to face screenings. Appointments are required and will be offered in half hour increments. It’s never too early (or too late) to make lifestyle changes that can affect your overall health. Sign-up today!

Hearing Screening and CTAP Equipment Distribution
Thurs, Jan 16 • 9:30am-12:30pm
No cost
Hearing Screenings by appointment: 456-9062
The primary goal of the California Telephone Access Program (CTAP) is to provide specialized telephone equipment and services to Californians who may have difficulty using a standard telephone. CTAP phones make it easier for these individuals to connect with friends and family, conduct business and access medical and safety services. Join our Specialized Phone distribution event to learn more about this program. Be certified for hearing difficulties and pick up your equipment the same day. Free hearing screenings by Kim Zeller Hoppin from Marin Hearing Center.

Marin County’s Choice for Home Health Care
To arrange for care or learn more about our services, please call 415.492.4600 or visit us online at www.SutterCareAtHome.org
www.facebook.com/SutterCareAH
Not For Profit, Locally Based
Visiting Nurses • Home Care • Mom/Baby Visits

Sutter Care at Home offers you the most comprehensive range of home care services available.
Keep Learning at WHISTLESTOP
For a complete list of classes, visit whistlestop.org

CLASSES AND SERVICES

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Jewelry Class
**Thurs, Jan 16 • 1:30-2:45pm**
Fee: $8 per class/includes materials
Registration and payment required prior to class: 457-0586
Maria Barsesat, local bead artist, will show you how to make beautiful, simple and easy jewelry items for yourself or as gifts. Class limited to 10 people.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Energy for Life Wellness Coaching Workshop
4 Thursdays: Jan 16, 23, & 30; and Feb 3 • 1-2pm
Fee: $10 for the workshop
Registration required: 456-9062 (8 people maximum)
This 4-week workshop fosters motivation to move forward on improving your health, well being and quality of life. Wellness Coach Margaret Wallace will help you develop sustainable behavioral changes for your lifestyle. Let us help you do what you have not been able to do alone.

Ping Pong
3 Fridays: Jan 3, 17 & 31 • 2-4pm
No cost/Drop-in
Join the Whistlestop “Racketeers” for Ping Pong. Good for your mind, spirit and body. We have a wonderful group of regulars who enjoy the benefits of the game. All levels are encouraged to come.

LANGUAGE

Whistlestop English Language Program
**Semester dates: Jan 27-May 7**
Registration required

Basic, Intermediate and Advanced English
**Mon & Wed • 2-3:30pm**
Fee: $15 for materials

Imparare l’italiano! (Learn Italian!)
Learn Italian with our new teacher Elizabeth Guagenti. Elizabeth has a Bachelor’s degree in Italian Language and Literature from UCLA.

**Beginning Italian**
**Thurs • 1:30-2:30pm**
Fee: $80 per semester
Semester dates: Jan 9-May 29

**Continuing Italian**
**Tues & Thurs • 2:30-4pm**
Fee: $240 per semester/$48 per month
Semester dates: Jan 7-May 29
For more information: call 456-9062
Registration required

SOCIAL GROUPS

Russian Social Group
Whistlestop has a new Russian Multicultural Outreach Coordinator, Anna Ladyzhenskaya. We would like to welcome her to our Multicultural Department and announce that Whistlestop will be forming a Russian social group. This will be a great opportunity for Russian speakers to have a support group, learn about resources in the community, make connections and receive assistance with social services. Please contact Anna at 454-0998 for more information.

French Social Group
**Tues • 1-2pm**
Contact: Vicky, 457-0586
Come join the French Social group on Tuesday afternoons and connect with other French speakers in the community.

Marin County Commission on Aging
**Thursday, Jan. 9 10 am – 12:30 pm**
**Where:**
Aldersly Retirement Community
326 Mission Ave., San Rafael
**Topic:** Get Ready Marin
Conversation Group for 90-Year-Olds & Older
3rd Thursday every month • 1:30-3pm
No cost
Contact: Virginia Dziomba, 456-6647
Join this group for lively conversation. Only one rule: no discussing ailments!

Mastery of Aging Class
Tues • 1:30-3pm
No cost
Contact: Larry Berkelhammer, 453-9808
Learn new skills to master the various challenges associated with aging. Learn how to take charge of your healthcare and self-care. Discover new ways to give your life meaning and purpose, and explore as a group how to best adapt to all the age-related changes and losses. Please join us.

SERVICES

Immigration Assistance Clinics
Last Fri every month • 9-11:30am
General consultation fee: $30
By appointment only; call Vicky, 457-0586
Whistlestop and Brazil Alliance are offering Immigration assistance consultations regarding Immigration Law and Reform, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and citizenship and naturalization.

Hand and Foot Reflexology Massage
Thurs • 10am-Noon
Cost: $1 a minute
Drop-ins welcome
Gena Galenski, certified massage therapist since 1997, will be offering hand and foot reflexology massage. Reflexology massage promotes relaxation, improves circulation and encourages the body to heal itself.

Telephone Reassurance Program
Live alone? Would you like someone to care about how you are doing? If you live by yourself and often feel isolated and are looking for connection and peace of mind, this program is for you. Trained volunteers will call you three mornings a week to check on how you are doing. We can answer questions about other senior resources. We now also offer this service in Spanish.

To register for this free program, call Leslie Klor at Whistlestop, 456-9062, ext. 132.

Homeshare Program
The Homeshare Program is a free referral service for older adults which provides an affordable and alternative way of meeting housing needs with numerous benefits to renters and homeowners alike. Do you have a room to share or do you need a place to live? Do you know someone who can use our services? Call Leslie Klor, 456-9062, ext. 132.

The Blind and Vision Impaired of Marin
BVIM has several support groups and other activities to assist people with vision loss. For information, call 459-5066 or 456-6647, or visit www.bvim.org.

GOING PLACES

Marin YMCA and Whistlestop invites you to join Adventures in Culture.
To register for one of these trips: Lauren Clapperton, MARIN YMCA, 446-2114
Cost: $45-65

Fri, Jan. 3 • 9:30am-4:15pm
Shopping trip to Yountville and Napa Outlets with Lunch at Oxbow Public Market

Fri, Jan. 17 • 10am-4pm
Trip to Oakland Museum and lunch
Current exhibitions -- Bay Motion: Capturing San Francisco Bay on Film; Peter Stackpole: Bridging the Bay; Above and Below: Stories from our Changing Bay; and The Smallest of Worlds. Enjoy lunch at the museum café or bring your own. Includes transportation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bridge Anyone?
Whistlestop is interested in starting a bridge group. We are also looking for people who want to teach or lead this program. Proposed time and day for a bridge group are Friday afternoons from 1pm-4pm.

IN-KIND DONATIONS NEEDED
Mah Jongg sets, Chess set, Dominos, books, yarn, movies on DVDs. If you have items to donate, call 456-9062.
How to use the iPad/iPhone  
**Fri, Jan 10 & Jan 17 • 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $48

Using Android SmartPhones & Tablets  
**Thurs • Feb 13 & Feb 20, 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $48

iPad/iPhone Applications  
**Tues, Feb 11 & 18 • 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $48

Intro to Computers (Windows)  
**Tues, Jan 14-Feb 4 (4 classes) 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $65

Computers Level 1 (Windows)  
**Tuesdays, Feb 25 & Mar 4 • 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $48

Tech Connect-Intro to Social Media  
**Fri, Jan 24 & Jan 31 • 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $48

Managing Your Photos  
**Fri, Feb 7 & Feb 14 • 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $48

Digital Scrapbooking  
**Fri, Feb 21 & Feb 28 • 10am-Noon**  
Cost: $48

Teen Tech Support  
**Every Thursday starting Jan 16, 1-2:30pm**  
Cost: $15/session

OPEN LAB  
Use our desktops for your own purposes to access the Internet. Volunteer staff available for advice on problems with your electronic devices: laptops and tablets, etc, and to provide help with software applications. Practice what you learn in our classes.  
**Every Monday and Wednesday • 10am-Noon**  
Free

COMPUTER TUTOR  
We offer personalized computer assistance and instruction for the PC user, specializing in assisting older adults and novices from computer basics to learning how to use the software on your computer. We can also troubleshoot software, hardware, and configuration problems.  
**Wednesdays • 1-2pm, by advance appointment**  
Cost: $20/hour

**WHISTLESTOP COMPUTER COURSE OFFERINGS**  
*(See full spring catalog online)*

**TALKIN’ TECH LECTURE SERIES**  
Join us for a monthly talk demonstrating how you can use technology in your everyday life. Lectures will be the first Thursday of the month (except Jan.) in the Computer Lab from 10am-Noon limited to 15 people.  
**Jan 9:**  
Let’s Tell A Story: Managing photos & sharing as books and slide shows.  
**Feb 6:**  
Gadget Guide: Do you want an iPhone, tablet or computer? Come try them out.

**REGISTRATION**  
Pre-registration and payment is required for all computer classes. Space is limited. We cannot hold space in a class unless you have registered and paid. No prorating to join already in-session class.

**Payment**  
Visa or Mastercard (for classes $20 and above), Cash and Check made payable to Whistlestop.

**2 ways to register**  
In-Person: Office is located at 930 Tamalpais Ave., San Rafael. We are open Monday – Friday, 8:30am-4pm.  
Or by Phone: Have your credit card and class information handy! Call 456-9062.

**Refund Policy**  
A full refund with notification before the class begins. Once the class begins, there are no refunds. If a class is canceled by Whistlestop, your payment will be fully refunded. We cannot apply payment from one class to another.

**Class Make-up**  
A make-up class will be scheduled if instructor is ill or unable to teach a class during the session. Make-up class will not be offered based on personal absence. It is your responsibility to attend all classes as scheduled.
# Whistlestop Weekly ACTIVITIES

This Month at Whistlestop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9–NOON</td>
<td>Relax Chair Massage</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$4/8 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td>Exercise Zumba</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$6/$8 Non Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Learn Computer Lab</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Language Persian Social Group</td>
<td>472-6020</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:10PM</td>
<td>Exercise Movement &amp; Music</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>Starts 1/27/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–1:45PM</td>
<td>Language German Social Group</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td>Language ESL</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15–10:15AM</td>
<td>Exercise Whistlesizers</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00–NOON</td>
<td>Relax Mah Jongg</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45–11:45AM</td>
<td>Exercise Cardio Exercise Class</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30AM–12:30PM</td>
<td>Language French Class</td>
<td>457-0586</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–1:45PM</td>
<td>Exercise Movement &amp; Music</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td>Support Mastery of Aging Class</td>
<td>453-9808</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30–4PM</td>
<td>Language Continuing Italian</td>
<td>454-0998</td>
<td>$36/mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–10:15AM</td>
<td>Exercise Tai Chi Qigong</td>
<td>Sugg. Donation</td>
<td>$10 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td>Relax Chair Massage</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$4/8 mins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–11:30AM</td>
<td>Support Seniors' Circle</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–12PM</td>
<td>Learn Computer Lab</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Language Persian Social Group</td>
<td>472-6020</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30–11:30AM</td>
<td>Support Corazón Latino</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM–12PM</td>
<td>Relax Chiropractor</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>$2/$5 Non Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–2PM</td>
<td>Language English Pronunciation</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td>Language ESL</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15–10:15AM</td>
<td>Exercise Whistlesizers</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Relax Reflexology</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$1/min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td>Exercise Zumba</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$6/$8 Non Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–2:30PM</td>
<td>Language Beginning Italian</td>
<td>454-0998</td>
<td>$18/mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30–4PM</td>
<td>Language Continuing Italian</td>
<td>454-0998</td>
<td>$36/mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45–3:45PM</td>
<td>Exercise Balance Class</td>
<td>Sugg. Donation</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–NOON</td>
<td>Support Brown Bag Pantry</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–3:30PM</td>
<td>Support ACASA</td>
<td>Peer Counseling</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–3:30PM</td>
<td>Language Practice Spanish</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td>Learn Arts &amp; Crafts w/Vicky</td>
<td>Jan 10 &amp; 24</td>
<td>$3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td>Exercise Ping-Pong</td>
<td>Jan 3, 17 &amp; 31</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td>Exercise Yoga</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>$3/$5 Non Members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a complete list of all classes, visit whistlestop.org

The Caboose, Computer Lab, Board Room and Jackson Café are all located at Whistlestop’s Active Aging Center – 930 Tamalpais Ave., San Rafael.

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**Jackson Café**

Monday-Friday

11:30am-2pm

Located in Whistlestop Active Aging Center • Open to the Public •

**LUNCH MENU**

WHISTLESTAR MEMBER

(LOWEST PRICE)

NON-MEMBER OVER 60 / UNDER 60

Main Entrée

$4.95/$5.95/$6.95

Sandwiches

$4.25/$5.25/$6.25

Soup du Jour

$1.95/$2.95/$2.95 bowl

(yes two prices are the same)

Hamburger w/Fries

$4.25/$5.25/$6.25

Garden/Caesar Salads

$3.50-$4.50

**OTHER ITEMS**

Tuna Salad Side $1.25

Beverages $1.00

Desserts/Fruit $2.00

Cheese $0.50

Avocado $1.00
Our Shrinking Shorebird Habitat

Southern Marinites have two stellar shorebird viewing locations, the freshwater pond at the Gallinas Water Reclamation Facility and the pond just north of Nordstrom’s in Corte Madera. Both of these sites are slated to disappear.

The Corte Madera Pond:
The pond was designated as part of the Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve in 1983-84. The pond was intended primarily for flood control and secondarily as wildlife habitat. It has a tide control gate at the northeast corner and storm drain inlets at the southwest corner, necessary to flush out sediment deposited in the pond’s basin by tidal seawater.

Years later, the City of Corte Madera rerouted storm drainage from the western storm sewers to enter Corte Madera Creek farther upstream so the pond’s storm drains no longer flush its basin. The pond is slowly becoming a mud flat, attractive only to Gulls. Where we once had hundreds of Avocets and Stilts, we are now lucky to have a dozen. When the pond is low we can see how the channels in the flats are filling in. Losing the pond will take some time, but its character is changing as are its inhabitants.

The Gallinas Freshwater Pond:
Over the past four years, a huge mass of Cattails has overtaken most of the shore. By next April, I estimate the pond will be completely surrounded and there will be no place for shorebirds. There are no plans to eradicate the canes. Eventually the sloped edges are to be razed and replaced with steep stone and gravel embankments similar to the adjacent ponds.

Birds never come first in politics. Marin likes to think it is bird friendly; unfortunately no authority is designated to watch out for the birds’ interests.

Would you like an interesting bird photo in your inbox every weekend? Send me your name and email address at: SHEN-maker@MSN.com. It’s free.

“Till next time,
Richard
We all make New Year’s resolutions and plans and try our best to stick by them. While some of us are busy doing that, some cultures are only preparing to celebrate their new years.

In Russia, the New Year is celebrated on December 31 and January 1. Under Soviet rule, for many years Russians were not able to observe any religious holidays. The New Year celebration is the biggest holiday in Russia. “We dance, we sing, we eat, we drink a lot of vodka, and we wish each other well,” describes Frida Velikovskaya. For some in Russia, the coming of the New Year is celebrated until January 14, which is when the Old Year becomes part of the past.

Come January 31, many Asian cultures will be celebrating their New Year, the Year of the Horse, with colorful decorations, money bags, lion dancing and lots of food. Anh Ho, from Vietnam, says, “I think the most special part of the New Year Day is that everybody puts on their best clothes, exchanges best wishes with each other, and avoids arguing or saying bad words. Younger people always give best wishes to the elders, who in return give them lucky money bags.”

When we are ready to welcome spring, the Iranian culture celebrates their New Year, which happens the day spring arrives. Mrs Esmaili, Whistlestop’s Persian Group Volunteer Coordinator, organizes big Persian New Year parties every year. “We set long tables with candles, colored eggs and seven things that start with an ‘S’ on a special dish. We do this as a prayer of gratitude and prosperity to God for these seven things.” This New Year celebration has a history of more than 3,000 years and is not related to a religion; it is about celebrating nature.

From all of us at Whistlestop, we wish you a happy, healthy, and culturally inspiring New Year 2014!
Congress of California Seniors Voices Strong Support for ACA, Medicare

by LOIS ELLISON

The Congress of California Seniors (CCS) has passed a number of resolutions urging the U.S. Congress to take action that supports older adults in California. At its annual conference in October in Sacramento, the CCS resolved, among other things, to Reconfirm Support for the Affordable Care Act, Restore Funding for Meals on Wheels and to Make a Solemn Commitment to Medicare and Social Security.

(CCS) is a nonprofit advisory organization dedicated to improving the lives of older adults and their families. Lois Ellison of Marin and David McLain represented Whistlestop at the Annual Convention. Organized 36 years ago, CCS works at the community, state and national levels advocating for older adults and by influencing policy decisions.

The convention theme was “New Challenges,” especially in the Senior Services network. The convention is an opportunity to come together for education and networking with others from more than a hundred affiliated groups like Whistlestop. Sixteen resolutions passed. (See the bulletin board at Whistlestop for a list of all of the resolutions.) In the resolution regarding the ACA, the group said it was reconfirming its support because, “Access to quality affordable care is essential for the good health and productivity of every American citizen and the well-being of every retiree and senior citizen and qualifies as a human right, not a privilege.”

Access to ACA qualifies as a human right, not a privilege

Meals on Wheels Valentine’s Cards

With February fast approaching, we are putting out a call for Valentine’s cards for our Meals on Wheels recipients. Anyone who wishes to participate may drop off signed Valentines (with a personal message inscribed) at Whistlestop: 930 Tamalpais Ave. in downtown San Rafael no later than Feb. 10, 2014.
I just said goodbye to one of the happiest years of my life. I set out to make it happy. And it worked. Now that I know how to be happy for one year, I want to do it again and again. Here’s what I figured out:

**Gratitude:** I don’t do New Year’s resolutions. Why push myself to hate the way I look when I like the way I look. What’s more, I’m lucky to even be here. Let’s be glad to be alive instead of making self-hating diets the center of our precious time.

**Prayer and Meditation:** Stop, I tell myself. Sit. Breathe. See the world’s wonder. Listen. In the night, hear a baby cry and hear her mother’s comforting. Hear men laughing over something on TV. Notice the sound of teenagers coming back from a party. Bless them. Bless them all. This is your prayer. And a worthy one.

**Smiling:** Psychologists, physiologists, sages all say that a smile actually lifts your body chemistry. Who can deny the effect of laughter. Yogis believe that a good laugh energizes every part of you. Why not give yourself this delightful workout. Fun movies, joke books, and riddles shared with others are all good smile provokers.

**Bathing:** I don’t shower; I bathe. I revel in the luxury of soothing waters every day. Even a quickie in a few inches of the precious stuff makes me feel queenly. Studies show 18 minutes in a hot bath significantly eases tension as well as unhappy thoughts.

**Walking:** I work as a Chaplain in a hospital so I’ve seen the healing methods that work. Walking is key. No matter how old you are or how much you ache, walking at least 30 minutes a day is so worth it. Walk everywhere. From the end of the parking lot, up the office stairs, over to your friend’s house, the post office, the computer store. Walk! Increase your life by increasing your steps.

**Loving:** Start with yourself and work outward. Love your kids and your grandkids. Take every opportunity to tell them so. Love your friends. Be good and gracious to them. Continually build your friendships. Love your neighbors by helping them and asking them to help you. Love the world and all its heartbreaking struggles.

Next month, let’s talk love letters and how they can bring you happiness.

Mary Ann Maggiore consults with teens, young people & their families on building a happy life. maryannmaggiore@gmail.com / 577-6627.

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**Is Selling Your Home the Right Option?**

- Is moving the best alternative?
- What are the tax implication of a sale?
- Are close family members on board with the decision to sell?

As a Seniors Real Estate Specialist, I can help navigate the financial, logistical and emotional issues involved.

Matt Masson, CCIM, SRES
Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage®
36 Main Street, Tiburon | (415) 902-5590
A few years ago, on a trip to the Loire area of France, we met a very helpful family in the village of Oisly. We were driving around completely lost and not only did they direct us to our destination, but they invited us, as total strangers, to have dinner with them and have the new experience of eating cassoulet. And that’s an experience! We got along famously, stayed in touch with them via email, and the following year, we arranged another visit at Thanksgiving time, in which we were to buy and cook the turkey and they would do whatever else French people eat with turkey.

Now to the details of the explosion -- their freestanding oven and range had the typical four burners on the top, together with a feature that we don’t often see here. The burner section had a kind of plastic cover that was hinged at the rear of the stove top, making it possible to lower it and use it as a cutting board when the burners were off. Pay attention now -- when the burners were off.

The roasting of the turkey was completed and I placed it on top of the lowered burner cover. Then without thinking about it, I turned on a couple of the burners in order to keep the turkey warm. That was the biggest mistake I could have committed.

In a couple of minutes, there was an explosion that could probably have been heard in Paris. The burner cover, which should have been raised but wasn’t due to my negligence, exploded into a zillion shards, flying all over the kitchen, but fortunately doing no damage to the turkey or to any of the people standing around.

For reasons that I failed to ask, the lady of the house was less than charitable. The stove must have been a wedding gift or whatever. Her husband laughed it all off, I paid for the repairs, but our family friendship was never the same after that stupid gaffe on my part.

Please submit your stories of 700 words or less to TALES OF MARIN, john.bowman58@gmail.com. Please include your name, age, where you’re from (must be 60 or over and from Marin County.)
**Improve Quality of Life and Delay Cognitive Decline- at Home!**

![Image of caregiver and client]

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*Introducing the Dementia Therapeutics Method™, a new program developed by Home Care Assistance!*

All our caregivers are trained in cognitive intervention. **Home Care Assistance** doesn’t just offer basic dementia care training to caregivers. We use our Dementia Therapeutics Method™ to teach caregivers how to perform cognitive activities to keep clients mentally engaged. Using the Dementia Therapeutics Method™ can even prevent cognitive decline! Best of all, this service is available at no extra cost, as a gift to the valued clients we are privileged to serve.

We provide education and support for family members. Our **Home Care Assistance** office is a resource center to help families navigate the challenges of supporting a loved one with dementia. We offer educational tools and regular information sessions to the families of clients who partake in Dementia Therapeutics Method™ activities.

Our program is researched-based. **Home Care Assistance** pioneered the Dementia Therapeutics Method™ to improve the care of millions of older adults who experience cognitive decline. Activities are based on our clinical expertise and cutting-edge scientific research that suggests that cognitive stimulation is associated with slower decline.

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