Fun Way to Bridge the Digital Divide

By STEPHANIE POWELL
(Excerpt from The Pacific Sun)

“I typed in www.email.com,” says Frances Jerry, a member of Cyber-Seniors, to her teen mentor. “Yeah ... that's the problem,” Max Schellenberg, her mentor, quickly replies.

The exchange takes place during a mentor session filmed for Cyber-Seniors, a documentary that focuses on teens helping seniors get online and gain technological fluency. Starting as a high school project, Cyber-Seniors was launched as a program in Toronto, Canada, by sisters Macaulee, 16, and Kascha, 18, after they recognized the impact the Internet had on their grandparents' lives. Using Skype, and communication tools like it, their grandparents were able to watch family members grow up across the Atlantic Ocean in Ireland. The sisters developed Cyber-Seniors to help seniors get online with the help of teen mentors. Their older sister, Saffron Cassaday, noticed a story emerging and began filming early Cyber-Seniors sessions, which marked the beginning of a promising documentary.

From carrier pigeons delivering messages to smartphones automatically sending out birthday texts, communication styles continue to diversify from generation to generation. “I think it’s scary to learn something new especially at an older age,” says Saffron Cassaday, director of Cyber-Seniors the documentary. “They don’t want to break the computer first of all, and it’s embarrassing for them—they don’t want to fail or look stupid. It takes a patient and kind mentor; this isn’t something they grew up with.”

Today our culture has a strong digital divide—a gap that separates two sets of people: those who readily have access to communication technology and the skills to make use of it, and those who do not. Factors that contribute to that divide and its affected demographics range from income disparity to social inequality or, in many cases, age and familiarity. Attempt-

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In my daily life, I work in two worlds. In my work as a hospital chaplain, I serve many of our community elders. In my work as a consultant to young people and their families, I serve people aged 13 to around 30. The elders I meet are toning down their lives, easing into a realm of less drama and fewer risks. This is age appropriate. Many of the youth I meet are toning down their lives, too. They are taking fewer chances and fewer risks. This, to my mind, is not age appropriate at all.

We elders have had amazing lives of adventure and work around the country and across the world, building communities and our own families. Many of the young people I meet are afraid to leave their family homes, to find meaningful work and meaningful relationships. This means many of our youth have not launched into adulthood. They haven’t taken flight. They don’t know how. And they are afraid. They need the guidance that we can offer them. It’s time for those of us who have age, wisdom and connections to get busy once again. It’s time to teach our young how to take charge. Will we be able to turn around a generation that needs such focus? Can it work? It’s a risk, certainly. It is also the one risk we cannot pass up.

The economy is tough for the young. No doubt about it. Many college grads are working in coffee shops. That’s okay. It’s money and it’s a start. But how shall they progress? Many feel they cannot find an apartment they can afford. Wouldn’t it be a help to nudge them out of their parents’ homes into cooperative and shared housing as we once did? Our youth cannot create meaningful livelihoods for themselves. What if we stepped in to make things happen? We could find out what their real dreams are and help them make these dreams real. We could introduce them to people and networks that could get them going. We could teach them the fine art of the interview. We could show them how to make a viable plan and go for it. Teach them to try and maybe fail and try again. We took these risks. We can help this generation take their own risks. And fly.

Mary Ann Maggiore is a consultant “Launching Young People into Adulthood.” Reach her at maryannmaggiore@gmail.com.
Cyber-Seniors’ pairing of senior citizens with teen mentors resulted in a symbiotic relationship, and left many teens surprised by the mutual benefits.

“(The teens) learned to be more patient,” Cassaday says. “They learned to speak clearly, stop looking at their phone while they talk and to stop mumbling. You have to put the phone down and make eye contact. I think they learned that they like being around older people. Many of the teens thought, ‘Oh my God, what am I going to talk to this person about?’ But we saw this great deal of mutual respect.”

Increased curiosity with and concern about the aging population isn’t an isolated concern and has certainly permeated Marin’s county lines. The Marin County Grand Jury released a report in June titled “Aging in Marin: What’s the Plan?” … According to the report, one in four residents in Marin is 60 years or older and by 2030, one in three residents will be a senior. The need to address isolation and inclusion within the increasing demographic continues to grow ever so potent.

Nancy, a Baby Boomer from Mill Valley and an avid texter, says younger generations’ communication styles can leave many older people feeling disconnected.

“Many older people feel frustrated at the amount of time they see younger people face-down into an electronic device, especially when they are together in family groups,” Nancy says. … At the same time, many older people also feel left behind and wish they had a personal teacher who could show them how to get online and do searches, for instance.”

Seniors should be able to make informed choices about whether or not the Internet proves useful. FaceTime and Skype might be innovative communication methods that help maintain relationships for less-mobile octogenarians and nonagenarians, but changes in communication patterns will continue to evolve. What are we gaining and losing from digital communication and where exactly should generations meet?

Cyber-Seniors offers its website as a resource and does not manage programs throughout Canada or the U.S. Rather, the goal is to eliminate social isolation and foster inclusion for all generations through new age communication tools.
Older Adult Winners in Photo Contest

The annual Whistlestop-Pacific Sun photo contest produced some of the best entries ever by older adults, according to the judges. We are presenting the photographs of first place winners in this issue. See our October issue for second and third place winners’ photos.

**Older Adult winners by category were:**

**Manipulated Images**
- 1st Place: “Miss Sarah Studio” by Rut Klempan, San Anselmo
- 2nd Place: “Angel Island from Sausalito Rooftop” by Marilyn Bagshaw, San Rafael
- 3rd Place: “Beach People and Dog” by Jack Androvich, San Rafael
- Honorable Mention: “Saint Vincent’s Driveway Painterly” by Stephen Sarhad

**Marin Images**
- 1st Place: “Children’s Avenue at Italian Street Painting Marin” by Joy Phoenix, San Rafael
- 2nd Place: “Tomales Bay” by Rebecca Viola, Larkspur
- 3rd Place: “Waiting by the Water” by Frederik Penn, Sausalito
- Honorable Mention: “Sunset on the Path to Abbot’s Lagoon” by Gary Topper

**Marin People, Pets & Animals**
- 1st Place: “Joel Yau Paints Lucille Ball” by Joy Phoenix, San Rafael
- 2nd Place: “Marin County Fair Artist” by Marilyn Bagshaw, San Rafael
- 3rd Place: “Fairfax Festival Yoga Class” by Gary Topper, San Anselmo
- Honorable Mention: “Bay Point Bird” by Jack Androvich

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Judges for the annual Whistlestop-Pacific Sun photo contest were, from left, Terry Scussel, photographer; John Bowman, co-editor of the Whistlestop Express; Patty Spinks, Lead Photographer for To Celebrate Life Breast Cancer Foundation; Molly Oleson, staff writer, Pacific Sun; and Robert Vente, photographer.

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Keep Learning at WHISTLESTOP

Unless otherwise noted, please call 456-9062 to register for all classes; most classes are free. For a full list of classes and services refer to the Whistlestop monthly calendar at www.Whistlestop.org or pick up a calendar at Whistlestop, 930 Tamalpais Ave., San Rafael. There is no fee for programs unless noted in the descriptions below.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

FOREVER YOUNG LUNCH WITH LIVE MUSIC
Celebrating Whistlestop's 60th Anniversary!
Thurs, Sept 18, 11:30am-2pm
Lunch, with live music from Noon-1pm
Celebrate Whistlestop's 60th Anniversary at the Jackson Café with a special lunch of Chicken Cordon Bleu (or a roasted vegetable turnover for vegetarians), a Chop Salad, and brownies for dessert. Sing-along to the live music of Kurt Huget and Friends playing popular 60's songs, dress up in your favorite 60’s duds, and raise your glass with CEO Joe O’Hehir as he makes a toast to Whistlestop. Raffle prizes awarded! Regular menu pricing.

TRUNG THU VIETNAMESE SOCIAL CLUB CELEBRATION
Thurs, Sept 4, 1-3pm
The Vietnamese Social Group will celebrate Trung Thu, or the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival, at Whistlestop, with special food and music. Call Lieu Phan for more information and to sign-up at 456-9062, ext. 131 by August 28.

HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION LUNCH
Thurs, Sept 11, 11:30am-2pm
In honor of National Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month, Whistlestop will offer a special lunch in Jackson Café, with Peruvian chicken, vegetables, and sweet plantain pudding, along with festive music and decorations. Regular menu pricing.

MARIACHI CONCERT AT GOLDENAIRES
Thurs, Sept 25, 2-3:30pm
Fee: $7 in advance or $10 at the door
Open to the public; children 12 & under free

Information: 456-9062 and 485-3348
Advanced registration recommended
Mariachi Nueva Generación will be playing and singing popular Latin songs at Goldenaires, 618 B Street, San Rafael. Join us for live music, friendship & raffle prizes.

HIGHLIGHTED CLASSES

NEW AGESONG MARIN DISCUSSION GROUP
Thurs, 2-3:30 pm. Beginning Sept 18
Cost $80 for eight weeks; full and partial scholarships available
Sign up: Call 591-5726
AgeSong Marin, a lively and congenial discussion group for older adults, is accepting new participants for a group beginning Sept 18. The eight-member group, led by two experienced facilitators, will explore important topics for this stage of life such as: coping with change, re-engaging after retirement, dealing with loss, making new connections, and validating insights and wisdom of this age. By talking with others, we feel more understood and can discover new connections and possibilities. For more information: www.agesongmarin.org.

BRAIN FITNESS WORKSHOP
Thurs, Sept 18, 2-3pm
Seriously, it's all fun and games. The top four things to promote good brain health as we age: move your body; eat right; find a challenge and socialize. The Senior Access Brain Fitness classes offer all four. Move your body to the workshop where we’ll talk about eating right, challenge you with fun activities in a room full of people for socializing. Facilitated by Bob Nations, president of the Senior Access Board of Directors, and Ruby Beallo, volunteer at Senior Access.

CARDIO/YOGA CLASS
Tues, 10:45-11:45am
If you don't mind breaking a sweat, this class ensures a good 50-minute workout with chair and standing exercises and warm up & cool down – complete with audio descriptions so participants who are visually impaired or blind can easily join in. This is followed by gentle and conscious breath-based yoga that will help renew your body and spirit. Led by Michael Gordon and Heidi Segedin.
CONVERSATION GROUP FOR 90+
Every 3rd Thurs, 1:30-3pm
Contact: Virginia Dziomba, 456-6647
Join this small, friendly conversation group for women and men who are 90 plus every third Thursday.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES
Mon and Wed, Sept 8-Dec 10, 2-3:30pm
Fee: $15 one time fee
Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced English classes led by teachers from Canal Alliance. Call Marta at 456-9062, ext. 131, for more information. Register by calling or visiting Whistlestop's front desk.

INTERGENERATIONAL ART PROJECT
Fri, Sept 19, 3:30-4:15pm
Catholic Charities Kids Club, at the Albert J. Boro Community Center at Pickleweed Park, serves children and families living in the Canal neighborhood through after-school, summer and family support services. The Intergenerational Art Project is a special collaboration between Catholic Charities and Whistlestop that involves students and older adults creating art together and getting to know each other. Call 456-9062 to sign up.

JEWELRY CLASS
Wed, Sept 17, 1:30-2:45pm
Cost: $8 per class/includes material
Maria Barsesat, local bead artist, will show you how to make a leather chanlu bracelet. This is a fairly easy project with lots of style. Class limited to 10 people.

KOREAN DRUMMING
Beginning and Advanced Classes
Starting Tues (Advanced) and Thurs (Beginners)
Sept 16 & 18, 3:30-4:30pm for 12 weeks
Invigorate your body and spirit with the rhythms and graceful moves of traditional Korean drumming and dance. This intergenerational program includes Whistlestop class members and students from Dominican University. Classes offered for beginners and advanced students. There will be several public performances. All equipment and costumes are provided by Asian American Alliance of Marin and Service-Learning Program of Dominican University. Instructor Jong Lee. Sign-up soon; space is limited.

MIND EXERCISE CLASS
Thurs, Sept 4 & 11, 3:30-5pm
Stimulate your mind by discussing subjects of general interest and exploring dynamic words and puzzles. Facilitated by Whistlestop Program Manager Diana Gruhl and teacher Lloyd Licher.

MOVEMENT AND MUSIC
Mon, 11am-Noon
This class is for older persons who have not been exercising regularly or who have arthritis-related problems. Moderate, comfortable pace to meet individual needs. Chair exercises to tone both upper and lower body muscles. Includes: joint flexibility, muscle strengthening, balance, breathing coordination, and modified Tai Chi movements.

STRESS REDUCTION AND RELAXATION CLASS
Wed, Sept 10, 1pm
Donations appreciated
Ruthe Hirsch will teach you tools to reduce stress for a longer life, with gentle seated yoga, Qigong, and breathing techniques.

THEATER GAMES AND PLAY READING GROUP
Mon, 4-5pm
Cost: $5-10 per class (sliding scale)
Join Gina Pandiani, Managing Artistic Director for Fringe of Marin at Dominican University for an hour of theater games and play reading at Whistlestop. Try out your inner actor and join in the fun. No experience required.

SERVICES
BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING AND MEDICATION REVIEW
Tues, Sept 9, 11am
Free monthly blood pressure screenings provided by Dominican University nursing students. Bring your medications (over-the-counter and prescriptions) for review.

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.

IMMIGRATION ASSISTANCE CLINIC
Last Friday every month, 9-11:30am
General consultation fee: $30
By appointment only: call Marta, 454-0998
Whistlestop and Brazil Alliance are offering Immigration Assistance consultations regarding Immigration Law and Reform, DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and citizenship and naturalization.

MULTI-CULTURAL CONSULTATIONS
By appointment: 456-9062
No cost for consultations; small fee may apply for translation services.
Whistlestop offers assistance to English and non-English speakers in Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese. We assist with applications for many social services, such as healthcare management, citizenship, housing, employment, and federal assistance, plus translations and referrals.

Spanish: Marta Villela
Russian: Anna Ladyzhenskaya
Vietnamese: Lieu Phan

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meals on Wheels Delivery Drivers
Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers are needed to deliver meals to homebound clients. Deliveries are Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 9am-Noon or 1-4pm.

Cashiers and Servers at Jackson Café
Friendly volunteers interested in serving lunch are needed Monday through Friday from 10:45am-2pm. Contact: Laurie Vermont at 456-9062, ext. 117 or Volunteer@Whistlestop.org

Volunteer Tutors Needed!
The Multicultural Department is looking for volunteer tutors to help our English students improve their language skills. This is a great opportunity to help others better integrate into our community. Hours are very flexible. If interested, please contact Marta Villela at 456-9062, ext. 131.

In-Kind Donations needed
Mah Jongg sets, books, yarn, movies on DVDs and desktop or laptop Window 8 or Mac computers. If you have items to donate, please call 456-9062.

Marin County Commission on Aging
Thursday, Sept. 11
Margaret Todd Senior Center,
Hill Community Room, Novato
Topic: Travel: Education & Tips for Older Adults
Speakers: Housing & Transportation Committee

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

iPad/iPhone Applications
Thursdays, Sept 11 & 18, 10am-Noon
Fee: $48/Maximum 8 people
You’ve learned the basics and now want to find out the apps the young people are using. There are apps for everything. In this workshop, we’ll highlight the most popular, fun and useful apps. (For Apple devices only)

Intro to Computers (Windows)
Tuesdays, Oct 7, 14, 21 & 28 (4 classes), 10am-Noon
Fee: $65/Maximum 8 people
You will learn how to start your computer and turn it off, use the mouse and keyboard to perform basic computer tasks, use Windows components to create and print a document, identify the basic parts of a computer and their use, search the Internet to find information and set up an email account.

Using Android SmartPhones & Tablets
Tuesdays, Nov 11 & 18, 10am-Noon
Fee: $48/Maximum 8 people
Do you have 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

Computer Tutor
Wednesdays, Noon-1pm by advance appointment
Fee: $20/per hour
We offer personalized computer assistance, troubleshooting and instruction for the PC user, specializing in assisting older adults and novices.

Teen Tech Support
Every 3rd Tuesday: Sept 16, Oct 21, Nov 18, 3:30-5:30pm
Fee: $15 per session/Maximum 3 people
Bring your device and your questions to our lab, and our high school whiz kids will turn your technology fear into tech savvy. Open every Tuesday but sign up in advance as space is limited.

For additional computer class options at other locations, go to: www.technology4life.org.
Or call: 320-0363.
# Whistlestop Weekly ACTIVITIES

**This Month at Whistlestop**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>COST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONDAYS</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Zumba</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$6/$8 Non Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–1PM</td>
<td><strong>Relax Chair Massage</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$4.80/8 mins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Learn Computer Lab</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</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–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Movement &amp; Music (C.O.M.)</strong></td>
<td>485-9318</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–1:45PM</td>
<td>Language German Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30PM</td>
<td>Language Russian Social Group</td>
<td>336-8430</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td>Language ESL Basic/Advanced</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>$15 one-time fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–4:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Creative Theatre Games &amp; Play Reading</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$5-10 per class</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TUESDAYS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30 AM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Whistlesizers</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Relax Mah Jongg</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10AM–2PM</td>
<td><strong>Learn Weaving at Cedars</strong></td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45–11:45AM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Cardio/Yoga Exercise Class</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>11AM–2PM</td>
<td><strong>Relax Manicurist</strong></td>
<td>Appt. Req.</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30AM–12:30PM</td>
<td>Language French Class</td>
<td>457-0586</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12–2PM</td>
<td>Language French Social Group</td>
<td>457-0586</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td>Language Learn Spanish</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–3PM</td>
<td><strong>Support Mastery of Aging Class</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3PM</td>
<td><strong>Creative Advanced Korean Drums</strong></td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>Starts Sept. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEDNESDAYS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9–10:15AM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Tai Chi</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in/Sugg. Donation</td>
<td>$10 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–11:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Support Seniors' Circle</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–12PM</td>
<td><strong>Learn Computer Lab</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</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>
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<tr>
<td>10:30–11:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Support Corazón Latino</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30PM</td>
<td>Language ESL Basic/Advanced</td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>$15 one-time fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Support Citizenship Class</strong></td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>$25 one-time fee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THURSDAYS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Whistlesizers</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td><strong>Relax Chair Massage</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$4.80/8 mins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Zumba</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$6/$8 Non Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Support Vietnamese Social Group</strong></td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Support Aegosesong Group</strong></td>
<td>591-5726</td>
<td>$80 Starts Sept. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45–3:45PM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Balance Class</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in/Sugg. Donation</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Creative Beginning Korean Drums</strong></td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>Starts Sept. 18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FRIDAYS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Support Brown Bag Pantry</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x117</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td><strong>Support ACASA</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in/Peer Counseling</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Creative Art Exploration</strong></td>
<td>Sept. 12 &amp; 26</td>
<td>$3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Language Practice Spanish</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Ping-Pong</strong></td>
<td>Sept. 5 &amp; 19</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td><strong>Exercise Yoga</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$3/$5 Non Members</td>
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</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.
I hadn’t been in the field for a month; work on a new website has overwhelmed my life. Besides, it was foggy and windy most of the time and few birds were in the locations I usually scout. I decide to re-visit a site I used to frequent, the east side of the Corte Madera pond, before it became filled with silt.

I did find a Snowy Egret and then farther on down the channel, a couple of Terns made solitary patrols, peering down into the murky water. I got a few shots, but most of the time I was not where I wanted to be when the birds did something interesting.

So I returned the next day armed with some knowledge of the birds’ behavior patterns. Being able to anticipate their actions is a great help. So the ‘Day in the Field’ became two.

A startled Snowy Egret watched another Snowy land on his territory and chased the intruder away. Later, I was rewarded by a Great Egret falling into flight, by a Cormorant sweeping past and an Elegant Tern, peering down looking for breakfast.

A couple of good days!

Every week I send a photo I think interesting to those who have asked. To be on the list, just ask me at: SHENmaker@MSN.com

‘Til next time,

Richard
Multicultural NEWS
by MARTA VILLELA,
HISPANIC MULTICULTURAL COORDINATOR

Hispanic Heritage Month
Mes de la Herencia Hispana

Do you know that the Whistlestop Active Aging Center has served more than 900 Hispanic members since last year, and serves hundreds monthly with programs and services? These members have come from many Latin-American regions such as North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. They come to Whistlestop to enjoy the company of other participants with a similar background, language, and culture. They also come for English as a Second Language (ESL) and US Citizenship classes, social groups, knitting, jewelry and more. Whistlestop is a place where they can share their own knowledge, experience, and culture with each other.

The Whistlestop Multicultural Department provides various services to all Hispanic clients, including the Citizenship classes that started in August, ESL classes starting up again in September, and an on-going Hispanic social group, Corazon Latino, that meets at Whistlestop and Pickleweed Park Community Center on alternating Wednesdays. There are Fall intergenerational activities with youth and older adults; translation services; consultations to help with support services; a tutoring program; social services; and special events like Cinco de Mayo, and this month, a Hispanic Heritage Celebration, and Mariachi music event.

National Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month honors all of the Hispanic people who have made history in Latin America, such as the Founding Fathers of the independence in Central American countries, Mexico, Belize and Chile as well. Also, we will celebrate Hispanic people who have represented their cultures in the United States in many ways, including all of our Hispanic older adults who come to Whistlestop with their kindness, friendliness, wisdom, customs, and traditions.

There will be a Mariachi music concert on September 25 at the San Rafael Community Center and the Hispanic Celebration Lunch September 11 at the Jackson Café with Latin music, independence posters by our Corazon Latino members, and traditional Hispanic food.

Whistlestop is rich in members who express diverse cultures, language, and roots, including those of Hispanic descent. Whether you call us Latinos or Hispanics, we all share a common culture and joy of life. Let’s celebrate our diversity and community together! ¡VIVA LA INDENDENCIA! ¡VIVA AMERICA LATINA!

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Volunteer of the Month
September
Evan Egan

Evan Egan, a San Anselmo resident and graduate of Marin School of Arts and Technology, had his first volunteer experience during high school and found he really enjoyed doing his part to help out those in need. When he found out the Whistlestop Meals on Wheels program was looking for volunteer drivers, he was happy to join the team.

He believes that our seniors are valuable members of our community and they have much experience and wisdom to share. He says, “I’ve found the most important part of this experience is that Marin is full of interesting and friendly people wherever you look. It makes me happy to help brighten someone’s day, however briefly it might be.”

Meals on Wheels Program Coordinator, Erika Vaughn, says, “Evan has been with us for over a year and he is always willing to go the extra mile. I truly believe that Evan is one of our unsung heroes, a wonderful young individual who has positively impacted the community with his service.” When not volunteering, Evan enjoys playing guitar and doing artwork.

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Brazilian Kids Learn English

BY CHATTING ONLINE WITH OLDER AMERICANS

It’s such a great, simple idea: Young Brazilians want to learn English. Elderly Americans living in retirement homes just want someone to talk to. Why not connect them? FCB Brazil did just that with its “Speaking Exchange” project for CNA language schools. As seen in the touching case study below, the young Brazilians and older Americans connect via Web chats, and they not only begin to share a language—they develop relationships that enrich both sides culturally and emotionally.

The differences in age and background combine to make the interactions remarkable to watch. And the participants clearly grow close to one another, to the point where they end up speaking from the heart in a more universal language than English.

The pilot project was implemented at a CNA school in Liberdade, Brazil, and the Windsor Park Retirement Community in Chicago. The conversations are recorded and uploaded as private YouTube videos for the teachers to evaluate the students’ development.

“The idea is simple and it’s a win-win proposition for both the students and the American senior citizens. It’s exciting to see their reactions and contentment. It truly benefits both sides,” says Joanna Monteiro, executive creative director at FCB Brazil.

Says Max Geraldo, FCB Brazil’s executive director: “The beauty of this project is in CNA’s belief that we develop better students when we develop better people.”

Sept. 7th is Grandparents Day

Generations United reminds us that Sept. 7 is Grandparents Day 2014 in the USA.

Some suggestions on how to celebrate this special day:

Intergenerational Programs: You are doing something grand every time you bring younger and older people together. Generations United asks that you plan and coordinate grand intergenerational activism projects.

Grandparents and Older Adults: Do something grand and share your wisdom, perspectives and key civic values with young people and advocate on their behalf.

Together, adults and youth can reach out to decision makers and begin one of the most important dialogues in our history: discussing how, as a country, we can address the many challenges facing future generations—from literacy to health and wellness to financial stability.

Have a Bite & a Brew for Whistlestop

Every Tuesday
Iron Springs Pub & Brewery in Fairfax, 765 Center Blvd., donates a percentage of its proceeds to a local cause or organization. On Tuesday, Sept. 23, Whistlestop will be the beneficiary of this generosity starting at 4pm. Enjoy a delicious meal, support a locally-owned restaurant and Whistlestop at the same time. You can watch the Giants play the Dodgers on TV. For information, call 485-1005.

Health & Wellness Resource Group

Whistlestop is hosting a HEALTH FAIR for the community. Health professionals from the San Rafael Chamber of Commerce’s Health & Wellness Resource Group will be on hand with activities, treats and information on fitness, nutrition and overall wellness. Entry is free.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th
11:30am – 1:30pm
(415) 456-9063 for more info

SR Chamber
San Rafael Chamber of Commerce

Whistlestop

whistlestop.org 15
Meet Francie. Francie Bedinger is the Home Care Assistance Kentfield client care manager and works directly with clients and their families throughout Marin County. With a masters in Gerontology, Francie is an expert in health and wellness for older adults and works hard to ensure her clients are happy and healthy at all times.

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One last thing...

Other home care agencies require strict contracts and add on special charges. There could be hidden mealtime rates, transportation charges, an overnight rate or even a bathing rate. We have no contracts or obligations! There are never hidden fees!