Helping Older Adults to Make Ends Meet

By John Bowman

In order to balance their personal budgets, Marin County older adults need to become more resourceful than ever. Consider that Social Security payments will increase 1.7 percent in 2015, while the Cost of Living average for the San Francisco Bay area is 2.7 percent higher than it was a year ago. And, older adults on average have 28 percent lower income than people under age 65. According to the Census Bureau and the Public Policy Institute of California, median household income in 2013 was $60,190, but for those over 65, it was $43,495. 

continued on page 5
Whistlestop’s Tamalpais Avenue address in downtown San Rafael is truly an historic location. It is the birthplace of Marin’s Active Aging movement, and for the past 44 years has been the community-gathering place and lifeline for thousands of older adults.

Evelyn Radford’s biographical book, *Vera, the First Lady of Marin*, has a chapter titled “What to do About the Old Folks.” It describes the efforts of Vera Shultz and other prominent Marin citizens who founded the Marin Senior Coordinating Council 60 years ago. Their group was in the forefront of experimentation in social engineering focused on the elderly population.

In 1952, County Board Supervisor Vera Shultz was elected a delegate to the first National Council on Aging established by Congress. At that time, a study was published titled “Aging in Marin,” which revealed prophetically that though Marin might be an affluent, upscale place where most of its citizens lived the good life, the elderly were more numerous and more seriously neglected than anyone had known. The top issues facing the elderly in the 50’s were transportation and access to community services.

In 1971, Lu Hodgen, the second employee hired into the organization, suggested they lease the old Southern Pacific Railroad station on Third Street and convert it into a senior community center. They would call it “The Whistlestop.” Vera was able to convince the San Francisco Foundation, which at the time controlled the enormous fortune left by Mrs. Buck for the benefit of Marin County, to grant $206,000 to purchase the property and building in April 1980. As a result, Whistlestop has saved over $12 million in operating costs at the 930 Tamalpais location. In addition, being located in Marin’s central transportation hub has helped Whistlestop address the critical service needs facing thousands of Marin’s older adults.

What has happened to impact the value of Whistlestop’s current location? The answer is the future location of the SMART downtown station directly adjacent to the east side of our property. During 2008-09, we held several meetings with SMART staff about the impact their station location would have on Whistlestop. We asked SMART to purchase

---

*continued on page 4*
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.

“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

“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

Sonoma
707-575-HOME (4663)

For more information, call today and ask for Peter Rubens.
Whistlestop’s property, but SMART was focused on what was happening within their right-of-way. Whistlestop’s issues, such as parking and proximity to their station platform, would have to be solved in some other creative way.

What about moving Whistlestop to a different location? During 2009-12, we worked with the City of San Rafael’s Economic Development staff and a commercial real estate broker to identify an alternate site. We analyzed 10 different locations within central San Rafael and unfortunately came up empty-handed because of reasons stemming from location, cost, or not a fit for a nonprofit organization serving and housing seniors. Whistlestop continues to be open to reviewing alternate site proposals as long as the location is right and the cost makes financial sense for the organization.

In 2012, with no identified alternative feasible location, we focused our efforts to address the value in our current location and transform our building into a transit-oriented senior center with onsite services and housing for seniors. This transformation will allow us to increase value with a modernization and expansion of our facilities. Whistlestop is partnering with Eden Housing, a well-respected area nonprofit housing developer with the knowledge, skills, and experience to build the new facility. This effort will sustain the value of Whistlestop’s location and honor the vision of the founders of the Marin Senior Coordinating Council.

Charles Keast has been a Meals on Wheels driver for more than 2 years. He says he loves doing it because it gives him a purpose and he is serving his community in the most basic way. He also knows that the homebound clients benefit from seeing a friendly face consistently every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Charles grew up in the Midwest, but after returning from the Vietnam War, he fell in love with San Francisco and never made his way back. He found a job working for the San Francisco Chronicle as an accounting manager and moved to Marin.

There has been a lot of volunteering in Charles’ life, including working in the Marin County library system taking books to San Quentin prison and tutoring elementary school children in Marin City and in the Canal area of San Rafael.

In addition to volunteering for Whistlestop, Charles is in the College of Marin Emeritus Chorus, practicing every Thursday and performing at various assisted living facilities around the area. If we are lucky, we might get them to sing at the Jackson Café one lunchtime.

Erika Vaughn, Meals on Wheels Coordinator, says, “No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burdens of others. To me, this is Charles Keast. He arrives each day with a huge smile and a big heart and shares that with each and every one he comes in contact with. We are blessed to have him on the Meals on Wheels volunteer team.”
Many older adults struggle to make ends meet on Social Security checks.
More than ever, discounts for people aged 60 and older – at local restaurants, movie theaters, grocery stores and other retail shops – are critical to financial survival. And there are plenty of discounts and bargains to be found in Marin.

Laurie Vermont, Whistlestop’s Volunteer Services Manager, says, “We have two great bargain stores right down the street: Hodge Podge, the Hospice Thrift Shop, and Goodwill. I got some great deals on teapots, cups and saucers for the volunteer tea party for a fraction of the cost of purchasing something new. Same goes for clothing. There are many thrift stores in Marin with lovely used clothes. Some places have bargain days. I went to the Salvation Army store once looking for a hat for an event and it was 2 for 1 day. I got both a leopard skin pillbox hat and a black felt hat for only $15.”

Local discount stores are great options for good deals. Marshall’s, T.J. Maxx and Ross feature Tuesday as Senior Discount Day, when they offer 10% off for older adults.

As an example, Laurie says, “My son went shopping at an upscale department store and spent $300 on underwear, socks and ties. I went to T.J. Maxx and bought the same stuff and added a shirt and slacks for $50.”

She adds, “I have five Home Delivery Grocery Shoppers who go out every week shopping for our homebound clients. They go to Safeway and use the clients’ membership card number. Sometimes the clients include the coupons they clip from the newspapers or get in the mail. Grocery discounts are very important for older adults with fixed incomes. Even if they have some security, when there is no more money coming in, they try to save as much as they can in case of emergencies or in the case of an elderly couple, if one lives longer than the other.”

Here are a few more discounts offered to older adults:
- AMC Theaters: up to 30 percent off (55 or older);
- Amtrak: 15 percent fare reduction (62 or older);
- Supercuts: 10 percent off haircuts (60 or older);
- Kohl’s: 15 percent off (60 or older);
- Denny’s: 10 percent off (55 or older);
- U.S. National Parks: $10 lifetime pass offers free admission to more than 2,000 national parks and federal recreation sites (62 or older).
Perfect Choice HD™ is simple to use, hard to see and easy to afford…

Invention of the Year
PERSONAL SOUND AMPLIFICATION PRODUCTS (PSAPs)

THEY’RE NOT HEARING AIDS

Perfect Choice HD is NOT a hearing aid. It is a Personal Sound Amplification Product (PSAP). Hearing aids can only be sold by an audiologist or a licensed hearing instrument specialist following hearing tests and fitting appointments. Once the audiologist had you tested and fitted, you would have to pay as much as $5000 for the product.

Personal Sound Amplification Products use advanced digital processing to amplify the frequencies of human speech. Thanks to the efforts of a doctor who leads a renowned hearing institute, this product is manufactured in an efficient production process that enables us to make it available at an affordable price.

The unit is small and lightweight enough to hide behind your ear... only you’ll know you have it on. It’s comfortable and won’t make you feel like you have something stuck in your ear. It provides high quality audio so soft sounds and distant conversations will be easier to understand.

Try it for yourself with our exclusive home trial. Some people need hearing aids but many just want the extra boost in volume that a PSAP gives them. We want you to be happy with Perfect Choice HD, so we are offering to let you try it for yourself. If you are not totally satisfied with this product, simply return it within 60 days for a refund of the full product purchase price. Don’t wait… don’t miss out on another conversation… call now!

Perfect Choice HD is not a hearing aid. If you believe you need a hearing aid, please consult a physician.

New
Now with more power and clarity!

Perfect Choice HD™ is simple to use, hard to see and easy to afford…

Virtually impossible to see.

WEIGHT
Less than 1 ounce

SOUND QUALITY
Excellent: Optimized for speech

FITTING REQUIRED?
No

ONE-ON-ONE SETUP
Free

RETURN POLICY
60 Days

Call toll free now for the lowest price ever.

1-888-581-4923

Please mention promotional code 60729.

1998 Ruffin Mill Road,
Colonial Heights, VA 23834
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 by improving 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 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

ST. PATRICK’S DAY LUNCHEON
Tues, Mar 17, 11:30am-2pm
Music: Noon-1pm
Fee: $10/$12
Come and paint the town green with our annual St. Patrick’s Day Luncheon, featuring your favorite corned beef and cabbage entree, green alcohol-free beer, festive decorations, and live Irish music provided by Bread & Roses. Celebrate your Irish heritage or be Irish for the day! Purchase your tickets in advance as space is limited!

“SHARE YOUR TALENT” OPEN MIC LUNCH IN THE JACKSON CAFÉ
Fri, Mar 27, Noon-1pm
Fee: Regular menu pricing
Come and share your talent at this new monthly lunchtime program in the Jackson Café. Please call Diana at 456-9062 for more information and to sign-up for a time slot by Tuesday, March 24.

“CELEBRATING WOMEN” PERFORMANCE & LUNCH
Mon, Mar 30, 11:30am-2pm
Entertainment: Noon-1pm
Fee: $10/$12
Celebrate Women’s History Month & International Women’s Day with a musical performance by Lucina Tison and Sandy Bailey, who will perform the songs of three great female legends: Marlene Dietrich, Patsy Cline and Tina Turner. Special menu to be announced. Purchase your ticket in advance; space is limited.

HIGHLIGHTED CLASSES AND PROGRAMS

CHINESE BRUSH PAINTING
Fri, Mar 13 & 27, 1:30-3pm
Fee: $3/$5 for materials per class
Learn the art of Chinese brush painting with artist Louise Yee.

ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOPS
Wednesdays, 10am-Noon
Fee: $3/$5 for materials per class
Come and 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. Call Anna to learn more, 456-9062, ext. 138.

CONVERSATION GROUP FOR 90+
Every third Thursday, 1:30-3pm
Free (Donations appreciated)
Contact: Virginia Dziomba, 456-6647
Join this small, friendly conversation group for women and men who are 90 plus.

SALSA/CUBAN BALLROOM DANCING FOR OLDER ADULTS
Thursdays, 4:30-5:30pm
Fee: $6/$8
Come and learn beginning cha cha cha, mambo, and rumba dances (geared for older adults of all levels and abilities) with professional dancer Dale Louise Evje. Pay per class; cash only. Drop-in.

MIND EXERCISE CLASS
Thur, Mar 5 & 19, 3:30-5pm
Free (Donations appreciated)
Stimulate your mind by exploring dynamic word and number puzzles. Facilitated by experienced YMCA teacher Lloyd Licher.

ZENTANGLE CLASS
Thur, Mar 5, 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 show you basic techniques of this increasingly popular art form.

We want to thank those of you who generously crafted/inscribed/delivered valentines for our Meals on Wheels recipients this year. You helped bring a little light and love in the form of over 800 cards.
Keep Learning at WHISTLESTOP
For a complete list of classes, visit whistlestop.org

BEGINNING UKULELE
Wednesdays, starting March 11 for 6 weeks,
Noon-1pm
Fee: $20 for 6-week class
Maximum 25 participants; sign up soon
Come and learn to play the ukulele from teacher Fred Riley.
Bring your own ukulele. No experience required.

BEGINNING BRIDGE
Thursdays, starting Mar 12 for 6 weeks, 3-4:30pm
Fee: $20 for 6-week class
Learn basic bridge from Allan Nichol in the Active Aging Center Lounge. No experience required. Sign-up in advance; space limited to 16 people.

CREDIT CPR
Tues, Mar 24, 3-4pm
Free (Donations appreciated)
“How can I use my credit to improve my financial life?” Get some assistance and tools from a financial expert on borrowing, debt management, creditors and obtaining and understanding your credit report. Bring a current credit report to the workshop if you have one or get one free at annualcreditreport.com. Don Maxon, facilitator, is a Certified Financial Planner and Registered Investment Advisor.

NEW RUSSIAN SOCIAL GROUP
at Margaret Todd Senior Center in Novato
Wed, Mar 25, 10:30-11:30am
Free (Donations appreciated)
Margaret Todd Senior Center, 1560 Hill Rd., Novato, is opening its doors for this new Russian-speaking social group for older adults in Marin County. Come to socialize and learn about community resources, in addition to staying for lunch from Noon to 1pm and/or the Brown Bag Program from 1 to 2pm. To sign-up, or if you would like to participate in Brown Bag and/or the Lunch Program, call Whistlestop’s Russian Multi-Cultural Coordinator Anna Ladyzhenskaya, 456-9062, ext. 138.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING WORKSHOP
Tues, Mar 31, 3-4pm
Free (Donations appreciated)
Home sharing can be the answer to affordable living and provide you with companionship, mutual assistance, and shared utility costs. Learn how home sharing can work for you. Hosted by Leslie Klor, Director of Shared Housing, Episcopal Senior Communities. Call Leslie to sign-up for the program and for more information at 456-9062, ext. 132.

NEW HEALTH PROGRAMS

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING AND MEDICATION REVIEW
Tues, Mar 17, 11am-1pm
Free monthly blood pressure screenings provided by Dominican University nursing students. Bring your over-the-counter and prescription medications for review.

THE MIND FIT SERIES:
ACTIVITIES TO BOOST BRAIN HEALTH
Based on the Cognitive Therapeutics Method from Home Care Assistance
Tuesdays starting Mar 10, 1-2:30pm, for 6-week series
Fee: $25/$30 for 6-week class
Join us for a fun and informational six-part Mind Fit series, led by brain fitness expert Kaiva Dahrian from Home Care Assistance. In this series, you will learn about proactive ways to enhance cognitive functioning while engaging in fun and effective group activities used in the Cognitive Therapeutics Method, a science-based cognitive activities program. Sign-up now as space is limited.

FOOT CARE FOR SENIORS AND DIABETICS PRESENTATION
Wed, Mar 18, 10:30-11:30am
Fee: Free (Donations appreciated)
Ohhh, my aching feet! Presenting a great class to bring you soothing relief. Seniors and Diabetics have special requirements to keep their feet healthy. Come join us for an informative lecture with topics including: solutions for common foot problems, how to correctly select shoes, socks and orthotics. Get some tips to keep your feet healthy, happy and give you many more enjoyable miles in your life. Class offered by Ramona Draeger, RN with Balancing Touch Foot Care.

MEMORY SCREENING
Wed, Mar 18, 8:30am-12:30pm
Fee: Free (Donations appreciated)
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. Sign-up in advance; space is limited.

STRESS-MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP
Tues, Mar 17, 3:30-4:30pm
Fee: Free (Donations appreciated)
Dominican University nursing students will provide a free workshop about how to reduce your stress. All welcome.

Check the calendar on our website daily or call for updates to the schedule during the holidays.
QIGONG: RELAX & RENEW
Mondays, 4-5pm, Drop-in
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. Bring a water bottle. Barbara Lovejoy, MSW, is a Certified Teacher of Qigong (Yuan Gong style) and a Certified Life Coach. For information, www.claimjoy.com.

HIGHLIGHTED SUPPORT SERVICES

HOMESHARE PROGRAM
The Homeshare Program is a free referral service for older adults providing an affordable and alternative way of meeting housing needs with numerous benefits to renters and home-owners. 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.

MULTI-CULTURAL CONSULTATIONS
By appointment: 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
Whistlestop helps English and non-English speakers in Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese. Help with applications for healthcare management, citizenship, housing, employment, and federal assistance, plus translations and referrals.

ROTARY HOME TEAM
Sat, Mar 28, 9am-1pm
If you are a San Rafael homeowner, the Rotary Home Team offers a free service for seniors and people with disabilities who may have financial or physical challenges in performing basic household repairs. To arrange a Rotary Home Team visit, contact Leslie Klor at 456-9062, ext. 132 by March 21.

TELEPHONE REASSURANCE PROGRAM
To register: Call Leslie Klor: 456-9062, ext. 132
Free
Do you live alone? Would you like someone to care about how you are doing? Call if you feel isolated and are looking for connection and peace of mind. Trained volunteers will call you three mornings a week. We can answer questions about other senior resources. Services also in Spanish.

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

iPad/iPhone Applications
Tuesdays, Mar 3 & 10, 10am-Noon
Cost: $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)

Using Android Smart Phones & Tablets
Tuesdays, Apr 7 & 14, 10am-Noon
Cost: $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
Cost: $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)

ONGOING

Computer Tutor
Monday & Wednesday, Noon-1pm by appointment
Cost: $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 Cost
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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Make a Difference in an older adult’s life.
Volunteer Drivers Needed
Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers needed to deliver meals to homebound clients. A valid CA Driver’s License and a clear DMV report are needed, as well as a reliable vehicle and current insurance certificate. Must be reliable, friendly, and clean in appearance. A minimum of one 3-hour weekday shift is required.

continued on page 15
**WHISTLESTOP EXPRESS**
**MARCH 2015**

Please view our most recent class schedule at [www.whistlestop.org/classes/calendar/](http://www.whistlestop.org/classes/calendar/) or call 456-9062 for updates to the schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>FEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Zumba</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–1PM</td>
<td><strong>Chair Massage</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Computer Lab</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Persian Social Group</strong></td>
<td>472-6020</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Movement &amp; Music</strong></td>
<td>485-9305</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–1:45PM</td>
<td><strong>German Social Group</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Russian Social Group</strong></td>
<td>456-9062</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>ESL Basic/Advanced</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td><strong>Beginning Korean Drums</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–5PM</td>
<td><strong>Qigong: Relax and Renew</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30 AM</td>
<td><strong>Whistlesizers</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Mah Jongg</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45–11:45AM</td>
<td><strong>Cardio/Yoga Exercise Class</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11AM–2PM</td>
<td><strong>Manicurist</strong></td>
<td>Appt. Req.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30AM–12:30PM</td>
<td><strong>French Class</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>ESL Basic/Advanced</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>ESL Basic/Advanced</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td><strong>Citizenship Class</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–10:15AM</td>
<td><strong>Tai Chi</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–11:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Seniors’ Circle</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Computer Lab</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Arts &amp; Crafts Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Persian Social Group</strong></td>
<td>472-6020</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>11AM–1PM</em></td>
<td><strong>Corazón Latino</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOON–1PM</td>
<td><strong>Beginning Ukelele</strong></td>
<td>3/4 - 4/8</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–2PM</td>
<td><strong>English Pronunciation</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>ESL Basic/Advanced</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td><strong>Citizenship Class</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x131</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Whistlesizers</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td><strong>Chair Massage</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Zumba</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–3PM</td>
<td><strong>Vietnamese Social Group</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x129</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–2:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Learn Italian</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45–3:45PM</td>
<td><strong>Balance Class</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:45–4:45PM</td>
<td><strong>Beginning Bridge</strong></td>
<td>3/12 - 4/16</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td><strong>Advanced Korean Drums</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td><strong>Mind Exercises</strong></td>
<td>3/5 &amp; 3/19</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30–5:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Salsa/Cuban Dance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30AM</td>
<td><strong>Community Breakfast</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–NOON</td>
<td><strong>Brown Bag Pantry</strong></td>
<td>456-9062 x117</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td><strong>ACASA</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00–3:00PM</td>
<td><strong>Chinese Brush Painting</strong></td>
<td>3/13 &amp; 3/27</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td><strong>Practice Spanish</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td><strong>Ping-Pong</strong></td>
<td>3/6 &amp; 3/27</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td><strong>Yoga</strong></td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

---

**LUNCH MENU**

**WHISTLESTAR MEMBER (LOWEST PRICE)/ NON-MEMBER OVER 60 / UNDER 60. PRICES INCLUDE TAX**

- **Main Entrée**
  - $5.75/$6.90/$8.05
- **Sandwiches + Burgers**
  - $5.20/$6.10/$7.25
- **Soup du Jour**
  - $3.40/$4.35/$5.70 bowl
- **Garden/ Caesar Salads**
  - $4.05/$4.35/$5.20

**OTHER ITEMS**

- **Tuna Salad Side** $2.50
- **Beverages** $1.25
- **Desserts/Fruit** $2.25
- **Cheese** $0.50
- **Avocado** $1.25
It is unusual to see a Great Blue Heron nonchalantly balancing on one leg, squawking as this one is. Most often they are sleeping with eyes closed. How can birds stand this way for so long? Unlike human legs, a bird’s leg locks in place when the bird stands erect. A bird can stand erect on its outsized foot for hours as it sleeps with its leg muscles completely relaxed. Why do birds draw up one leg? Simple, standing on one leg conserves heat.

Unlike most humans, birds sleep many times during the day. Just as soon as they have a full belly, it’s time for another nap! While their brains and bodies nap, their digestive organs are busy chemically converting breakfast (or brunch or dinner) into energy. As soon as his belly is emptied, the bird wakes and slowly puts the resting leg down to stand on two feet.

In a few moments, the bird will begin its wake up ‘yoga’ stretches, first one wing, and then the other, followed by long neck stretches, up and back and then forward and down. After a few minutes more, you will see the tail lift slightly as the bird expels the chalky remnants of its digested meal. Get your camera ready, in just a few seconds, the bird will fly off to find its next meal.

I saw my first Great Blue Heron deep inside the Grand Canyon in 1970, when there were thought to be fewer than 300 in the United States. I will never forget the sight of that great bird landing. Magnificent.

Every week I email a bird photo to a selected list. If you want on it, please email me at SHENmaker@MSN.com and ask.

‘Till next time,

Richard
No Regrets: Living With Dying

(Excerpt from an article published in Natural Transitions Magazine, written by Kitty Edwards, executive director of the No Regrets Project, a program of The Living & Dying Consciously Project. She says, “The journey to death in our society is frequently a lonely one. Those who are dying have no map to follow and few to share their experience. It is the mission of The Living & Dying Consciously Project to help individuals become engaged in the final stages of life, celebrating the accomplishments of navigating death as a rite of passage.” See kindspring.org for more inspiring stories.)

Patti Pansa was courageous in her life and in her death. Often, she saw people choose to be invisible or masterfully reflect what others wished to see. For Patti, who stood six feet tall, being invisible was never an option.

In June 2013, Patti underwent radiation treatment to alleviate some of the symptoms of bone pain, treat a fractured vertebra and shrink a tumor in her neck. To precisely target the areas for the radiation, a radiation mask was built for Patti’s torso. The process of creating the mask was excruciating and frightening. At the end of the radiation treatments, although her sister wanted to run it over with a car, Patti wanted to take her mask home. She then stepped into ceremony with her friends to create transformation.

With some imagination ... some glue ... and a sense of fashion ... the radiation mask was transformed into a symbol of strength and beauty; a beautiful bust of Patti was created. Patti’s friends then took the mask on adventures that Patti herself could no longer manage. It was photographed at sunrise in the high mountains. It was spotted in a sporty, red convertible. It was seen sipping a strawberry margarita. The mask even posed for an advertisement in a national magazine.

continued on page 14
For Some Immigrants, Getting 2nd Chance is the Bargain

The Whistlestop Express wanted to find out from various participants about discounts, “freebies” and bargains available to older adults in Marin County. We asked Anna Ladyzhenskaya, Whistlestop’s Russian Multicultural Coordinator, to talk with people about this.

“The benefits to older adults are many once they live in the United States,” Anna reported. “Obviously, people who came to the US had different financial situations and different abilities in their countries, than they have here,” Anna said. “This particular group (talking about most of our Russian-speaking participants) is grateful and thrilled to live in this country and this state.”

Anna continued, “The phenomenal benefits gained can hardly be called bargains. It’s called – life. Many people probably wouldn’t be alive now if they had stayed in their countries and had not immigrated to the US. The pensions there are too little and they wouldn’t be able to afford living expenses. There are so many seniors who worked all their lives who are now on the streets, penniless. And if you are 50 or older back there, you are basically unemployable.”

Anna said that it’s not really a matter of finding special bargains. “This country gave many of them a second life. That’s the bargain. So, when I asked my group to list their benefits, they started with Social Security, food and clothing donations, affordable housing, medical care, senior discounts for pharmacy, transportation. It is a long list.”
“Please stop telling people you got that blue dress for a dollar at a garage sale,” my teenage daughter admonished me years ago. “It sounds so tacky.” I laughed at her sensibilities. Why not take pride in such a gift? Isn’t that why we call such things Finds?

I delight in the treasures I have discovered in my meanderings through town. I was thrilled when I found a pair of Pappagallo pumps and a pair of Dansk sandals in the trash near my house. They fit me perfectly. I wanted to tell every passing stranger where I got those adorable shoes. “Look at my good luck!”

I am a magpie, always looking for something bright. One afternoon, I was driving home when I spied an intriguing box by the roadside. I stopped to get a look. Inside was a lovely rust-colored woolen coat, tailored in Hong Kong. It fit me beautifully but it had a bleach stain on the hip. I took the coat, bought a black satin rose at a fabric store and pinned it over the stain. Every time I wear that coat someone says, “That’s a beautiful coat. Did someone make it for you?” What am I supposed to say?

I stroll, I find things. I found a tiny table in a junk heap. It was a terrible brown color and the knobs were no good. At home, I found a can of red paint in the garage, painted it that day and then hunted down two ornate metal drawer pulls at Fairfax Hardware for a total of $2.50. Bingo! A perfect hiding place for the day’s mail.

I have to be careful though. Some finds should be resisted. I pulled a gigantic patio umbrella away from a “Free” sign last summer. Staggering under its weight, I plunked it into my Miata convertible and drove it home only to learn it’s too big for my garden. Now it’s moldering in my back yard. Live and learn.

Though I still take both pleasure and pride in my treasure hunting results, I discovered in my regal, mature years that I am heeding my daughter’s youthful admonition. So now when someone says, “Where did you get that fabulous sweater?” I smile and say, “It was just a lucky find.”

Mary Ann Maggiore’s practice, “Launching Young People into Adulthood,” guides young people to find their treasure: the right education, meaningful work and an independent life. Contact her: maryannmaggiore@gmail.com, 577-6627.

NO REGRETS continued from page 12

Patti’s radiation mask now resides at the University of Colorado Cancer Center in Denver, where workshops are held to assist children with cancer to decorate their own radiation masks.

“Happiness is a choice that I can make no matter how grim circumstances might seem. The joy of being alive is always attainable at some level.”

~Patti Pansa
Bargain Hunting Stretches Dollars

Bargain Hunter Sally Socolich spent 40 years searching for the best bargains across the Bay Area and she shared her finds in her books (Bargain Hunting in the Bay Area), newspaper columns and on television and radio appearances. Her book is still available online.

In an article in the San Francisco Chronicle, she shared that when she started, there was nothing like a Ross or Marshall’s. She thinks of bargain shopping not as being cheap, but as being as smart as you can to make your money go as far as you can. She stopped writing her books in 2000 because everything is now online. She says you can Google prices and shop on Craigslist or eBay and adds that the Internet has revolutionized the way we shop.

Some people are even finding things for free by using Freecycle.org. It’s a grassroots and entirely nonprofit movement of people who are giving (and getting) stuff for free in their own towns. It’s all about reuse and keeping good stuff out of landfills. Each local group is moderated by local volunteers and membership is free.

Goodbye to GrandMom

In last month’s Whistlestop Express, we ran the final column of Audrey Mettel Fixmer, who wrote as GrandMom in the Express until health issues caused her to give it up. Last month she wrote that she had recently been given six months to live and she shared that when she went to her current physician for the first time, she asked if the doctor could keep her alive until she was 87. Her doctor asked why that age and Audrey replied it was the family record and she wanted to match it. She died one day before her 87th birthday, on January 22. She will be dearly missed by her family and many friends.

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. Benefits are doing something good for older adults and a “Free Lunch.”

Tutors Needed

Provide individual tutoring help to older adults who are learning the English language and preparing for citizenship. Other assistance might include: reviewing class material, discussing text, or working on conversation and pronunciation exercises. Tutoring is a supplement to classroom teaching. Tutors are not expected to know everything about the subject for which they tutor nor speak the language of origin. Must be willing to devote at least one hour per week and occasionally sit in on the ESL class with your student.

Contact: volunteer@whistlestop.org/456-9062, x 117, www.whistlestop.org

Recognized experience and excellence.

Family owned-and operated since 1994.

These honors are a source of pride for us, security and peace of mind for you.
Whistlestop Offers Treasure Trove of Bargains

Older adults seeking ways to save money need to look no further than Whistlestop, which provides a long list of opportunities in the areas of food, transportation and activities.

**Transportation:**
Whistlestop began serving Marin County with specialized transportation in 1969. In partnership with Marin Access, Whistlestop serves residents with special transportation needs in Marin County, and individuals traveling to or through Marin from the surrounding counties of San Francisco, Sonoma, and Contra Costa, for the same price as a public bus ride. With a current fleet of 60 buses, Whistlestop provides more than 500 trips a day to those unable to use public transportation. We act as a lifeline and help our clients maintain their independence by transporting them anywhere they need to go.

**Nutrition:**
*The Jackson Café* offers nutritious and inexpensive meals in Downtown San Rafael Monday through Friday each week. Whistlestop also offers **Meals on Wheels** and our Brown Bag Pantry. Through its Meals on Wheels program, Whistlestop delivers fresh, chilled meals up to three times each week to more than 250 housebound older adults in our community. You may be in need of meals for a short-term due to an illness or the absence of a caregiver, or in need of the home-delivered meals on an on-going basis. Either way, simply call 457-4636 to get signed up through the County of Marin. Meal recipients or their families are asked to make a small, suggested contribution of $3.50 a meal to help offset the costs of providing the service. In partnership with the San Francisco/Marin food bank, the **Brown Bag Pantry** program at Whistlestop is Fridays from 11am - 12 noon. The pantry is a supplemental food program that allows older adults to choose from a vast array of seasonal fruits and veggies; protein items, such as meat, eggs, or beans; grains – pasta, bread or rice, and canned goods for those with limited income.

**Activities:**
Marin residents 60 and older can find myriad classes, activities and events at Whistlestop’s Active Aging Center. They are listed monthly in the **Whistlestop Express** and are always available online at **Whistlestop.org**. Some of the classes require a small fee but many are offered for free. Consult pages 7 through 10 for details.