Georgia Anker was volunteer of the month in April for the outstanding job she does in the Whistlestop’s Resource and Information office. She has been volunteering here since 2009. Former Whistlestop staff member Vicky Voicehowsky talked her into posing for a photographer who was taking photos of women over 80. Georgia, at 84, qualified and she brought her daughter Debi along. Georgia also volunteers at the Marin Humane Society Thrift Store in San Anselmo and Debi is her technology expert and the person who convinced her mom to set up and maintain an online calendar for the store.

Debi is a graphic designer with her own company called Bestype. Georgia says Debi explains that her job is to make things look pretty.

The mother and daughter team live next door to each other in a duplex in Fairfax, one of two that Georgia and

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A Mother’s Day Story All Year Long

By Valerie Bowman

Georgia Anker and daughter Debi

Photographing Human Condition Is Her Passion

Join Us For Cinco De Mayo on May 5th

Family Is Everything To the Flynns
A Mother’s Day Tribute: My Mother Loves Everyone

The longest relationship I have ever had with anyone is with my mother. Her recent trip to the hospital is full of evidence of strong bonds with all her children. It’s a natural time to pause and reflect upon relationships with my mom and her mother.

Grandma was loving but tough! Grandpa died in 1943 when my mother was six, so Grandma went to work when very few women did so. Raising her daughter to 18 would have been terrific but Grandma made sure my mom graduated from college. I remember meeting Grandma around 1969 when she retired. I was a twig of a six year old girl and I’d heard she had a heart condition so I vowed never to stand too close to her because if she died of a heart attack standing next to me, I could be crushed. She suffered a massive heart attack 25 years later after we’d enjoyed so much life and love together. My grandmother eloped during the Depression. She said, “Tongues wagged about that and, sure enough, 15 years later Lois arrived!” My family is wonderfully blessed to have 99% of ‘water under the bridge’ with tons of love and a good sense of humor.

My mother, Lois Ellison, loves everyone and everything good. Although she had four challenging teenagers at once, she has always been there for all of us. Lois works six days a week and drives to Whistlestop for her lunch break. She enjoys friendships with many clients and volunteers. She was even in a flash mob.

My mother has an extremely full life. She has found so many wonderful friends, fine cuisine and joy at Whistlestop. Thank you! My sister and I have been very pleased to lend support for their wonderful work. I enjoy joining Mom for lunch occasionally and meeting so many great people there. “Faith, love and hope abide, but the greatest of these is love.” Happy Mother’s Day to Mom and everyone!
Whistlestop: One Of My Families

By Lois Ellison

I’ve been thinking about families and support systems since my recent hospitalization, especially about how special they are. I am thankful for various “families” I have, including my Whistlestop family, which includes clients, staff and volunteers. My Whistlestop friends give me so much pleasure; meeting new friends is wonderful at any age.

As a mother, I have enjoyed having my four adult children “come back as friends.” My two sons live away, one in Reno and one in England — but we stay close. Two daughters live in Marin, so I talk with them and see them more frequently. Each of us five is unique and different, and the common denominator for us is family. Though families are imperfect, they are learning and personal growth laboratories for us and are continually evolving.

In November 2014, and again in March 2015, I was hospitalized and subsequently went to a rehabilitation center before going home where I live alone. Both daughters did so much the entire time: visiting, driving me around, buying and making food for me, staying overnight, doing laundry and whatever needed to be done. What a joy all of this is to me. I am so thrilled and thankful. My grandchildren, too, are delightful. What a blessing our various families are! Happy Mother’s Day!

From left: Suzanne Walker, her mother Lois Ellison and Jolene Macpherson.

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Learn more at hiredhandshomecare.com/bestof
Lea Del Pomo: Photographing the Human Condition

By John Bowman

Many people spend their working careers dreaming about retirement and the day they can pursue something they really love. They vow to finally write that novel, or travel around the world, or go to culinary school. Lea Del Pomo of San Rafael decided a long time ago to live her dream while she was working. Her day job is as an employment counselor with the County of Marin, a position she thoroughly enjoys. And, she also loves photography. Lea works four days a week at the county, but on Mondays, her day off, she is a photographer.

A BFA graduate of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, she says, “It started out with black and white portraits and photographing the human condition.” But in the past few years, she has learned digital photography and now shoots in both black and white and in color. Lea has self-published one-of-a-kind books of her photographs ranging from street photography to travel, but her ultimate goal is a book featuring photographs and stories of women over 80.

Lea took many of the photographs featured in this month’s issue of the Whistlestop Express.

Fifteen years ago, she began to organize her portraits of women over 80 in a series called “The Bird Cage and Other Portraits of Older Women.” Lea says, “These photographs challenge our beliefs about women and aging, beauty as a superficial concept and our ability to pay attention to what may frighten us. Our beliefs about older women since then have evolved and, hopefully, ‘women of a certain age’ are now less invisible and more celebrated.”

“When I photograph these beautiful faces of women in their 80s and 90s, I am inspired. Older women are much like trees – as we get older we get more and more magnificent.”

Lea had been acquainted with Whistlestop through her county job. One day she met Whistlestop CEO Joe O’Hehir at a meeting and told him about her Women Over 80 project. She offered to take photos of women at Whistlestop and O’Hehir immediately took her up on the offer. She worked with Whistlestop staff to photograph a number of Whistlestop participants. “We put out a call and 13 women showed up,” she recalls. “Some came with their daughters and we included them in the shoot.”

Recalling the day of that memorable shoot, Lea said, “As an artist, that was just about the best day I’ve ever had.”

Lea with photo of Maria Hass, one of her Women Over 80 series, started 15 years ago.
Amalia Camacho Loves Whistlestop Classes

One of the qualities that Connie Del Rosal appreciates most about her mother, Amalia Camacho, is her devotion to education. “She instilled the importance of education in all of her children,” Connie said. “My mother has a PhD in literature and has taught at the university level.”

Both Connie and her mother, who is 84 years old, live in San Rafael and usually spend Mother’s Day together, although they won’t this year because Amalia is in Mexico. Both mother and daughter were born in Mexico. Connie has worked in legal accounting and insurance for lawyers in San Francisco and San Rafael.

Amalia has been a longtime regular at Whistlestop. “She has taken all the exercise classes, English, Tai Chi, Yoga—just about every class there. She just loves being at Whistlestop.”

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Fun From the Mind Exercise Class

- I tried to catch some Fog. I mist.
- When chemists die they barium.
- Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went. Then it dawned on me.
- This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I’d never met herbivore.
- I’m reading a book about anti-gravity. I can’t put it down.
- I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.

Marin County Commission on Aging

Thursday, May 14, 9am to 1pm
Embassy Suites, San Rafael
Topic: Healthy Aging Symposium:
“Living in Age-Friendly Marin”
Keynote speaker: Matt Willis, MD, MPH

VOLUNTEER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Make a Difference in an older adult’s life.

NEW! CarePool Volunteer Driver Program
This position offers round trip rides to ambulatory older adults going to the doctor or grocery store. Drivers use their own cars and receive ride requests through email. Drivers can accept or decline the calls, and drive on their own schedule. CarePool volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum of three months volunteering with at least two rides a month. Ride lengths may vary but are about two to four hours for each round trip.

Jackson Café Lunch Servers, Cashiers and Friday Community Breakfast Servers
The Jackson Café provides a warm and comfortable setting for older adults to eat a nutritious meal at an affordable price. Café volunteers provide friendly greetings, excellent customer service and support social interaction.

Our lunch hour shifts are: Monday-Friday, 10:45am-2pm. The Café is open from 11:30am-2pm. Cashier or food service experience is a plus but not required. The Friday morning breakfast shift is from 8:30-10:30am. Breakfast is served from 9-10am.

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

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

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

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)

SPECIAL EVENTS

CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION

**Tues, May 5, 11:30am-1pm**

Tickets: $10/12

Cinco de Mayo – or the fifth of May – commemorates the Mexican Army’s 1862 victory over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War (1861-1867). Come and enjoy a celebration of Mexican pride with a special lunch and entertainment in the Jackson Café. The lunch will feature pork enchiladas with drunken pinto beans, Spanish rice, and flan, accompanied by festive dances from the Corazon Latino Social Group. Reserve your seat and purchase your ticket by May 1 by calling or visiting the Active Aging Center front desk.

MOTHER’S DAY LUNCHEON WITH LIVE MUSIC

**Thurs, May 14, Lunch: 11:30am-1pm/Music: 12-1pm**

Ticketed Price: $10/$12

Come and celebrate mothers with a special lunch and music from the fabulous Harmoni-Katz Barbershop Quartet, who will serenade you with style! Reserve your seat and purchase your ticket by May 11 by calling or visiting the Active Aging Center front desk.

GET FIT EXERCISE SAMPLER & WELLNESS FAIR

**Wed, May 27, Exercise: 9am-1pm/Wellness Fair: 9:30-11:30am**

To celebrate National Senior Health & Fitness Day, Whistlestop and the San Rafael Chamber Health & Wellness Resource Group bring you an event that includes a variety of movement classes and a health fair for you to learn more about local services to support your health (such as mini massages, nutritional information and guided imagery). Take one or more classes to see what we offer and enjoy the Wellness Fair.

Exercise Sampler Schedule

- Cardio Class: 10:35am
- Tai Chi: 9am
- Qi Gong: 9:35am
- Movement & Music: 11:35am
- Yoga with Kelly: 12:05pm
- Zumba: 12:35pm

Receive a free commemorative T-shirt. If you bring a new friend to register as a Whistlestop member, you will receive a free, nutritious lunch at the café that day! Call Whistlestop for more information.

MULTI-CULTURAL PICNIC AT PICKLEWEED

**Wed, June 3, 11am-1:30pm**

Albert Boro Community Center (Pickleweed)

50 Canal Street, San Rafael

Fee: $3 suggested donation, 60 and over

$6 for people under 60

Registration required prior to the event

Come join us once again at our Annual Multicultural Party. Live entertainment provided by Bread & Roses Presents ™ with a bubble man, polka performance, and more. Hot dogs and burgers will be served during this fun event. Don’t miss out!

NEW/HIGHLIGHTED CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

MASTERY OF AGING

**Tuesdays, 2:30-3:45pm**

No Fee: Donations Appreciated

Learn how to become an empowered medical patient. Through instruction, practice, and discussion, you will learn how to optimize communication with doctors and the medical team. You will learn how to be an expert in your particular medical conditions. A science-based breathing method, mental imagery, and other practices are taught to improve mind-body health and wellbeing. Taught by Larry Berkelhammer, PhD, author of In Your Own Hands: New Hope for People with Chronic Medical Conditions.

WHISTLESIZERS CHAIR EXERCISE WITH ELIZABETH

**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:30am**

Fee: $4/5

This exercise class offers a new way to improve your health and quality of life with gentle chair fitness. Keeping the focus on safety and fun, this class includes sitting range of motion,
strength, flexibility, and light cardio exercises (with some standing if possible). Drop-ins welcome! Whistlesizers is facilitated by Elizabeth Lynn, a Certified Senior Fitness Leader (through the National Senior Fitness Association). For information, call Whistlestop’s Front Desk at 415-456-9062.

**TAI CHI**  
**Wednesdays, 9-10:15am**  
Fee: $5-10 (sliding scale for members); $12 non-members  
Tai Chi offers gentle energy work for all levels of ability. When you have experienced these slow, healing, relaxing exercises from ancient China, you may agree with the definition of Tai Chi: it is the supreme ultimate. This class is run on a drop-in basis, so no advanced sign-ups are required. Instructor Calvin Ahlgren has taught at Whistlestop for eight years.

**MIND EXERCISES WITH LLOYD**  
**Thur, May 7 & 21, 3:30-5pm**  
Fee: $3/5  
Stimulate your mind by exploring dynamic word and number puzzles in this fun class. Facilitated by experienced YMCA teacher Lloyd Licher. Call the Active Aging Center to sign-up today.

**BEGINNING & INTERMEDIATE UKELELE**  
**Wednesdays, starting May 13 for 6 weeks, 12:30-1:30pm**  
Fee: $20 for 6-week class  
Maximum 25 participants; sign up soon!  
Come and learn to play the ukulele from musician and teacher Fred Riley. Bring your own ukulele. No experience required.

**WATERCOLOR TECHNIQUE WITH ANNA**  
**Thursdays, starting May 14 for 12 weeks, 3-4:30pm**  
Fee: $20 for 12 weeks, or $3 per class  
Join artist Anna Ladyzhenskaya for a course in watercolor technique. Supplies and instruction provided. All abilities welcome.

**IMPRESS YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WORKSHOP**  
**4-week workshop series from May 19-June 9, 3:30-5pm**  
Fee: $25/30  
Limited to 16 participants, so sign-up soon.  
Learn to increase your ability to love by releasing blockages, old angers and resentment, and core issues of the past. Taught by Gloria Wilcox, spiritual counselor and former Director of Inner Growth Seminars since 1975, who has a gift for helping each person meet their goals in relationships and life.

**NEW/HIGHLIGHTED HEALTH PROGRAMS**

**QIGONG: RELAX & RENEW**  
**Mondays, 4-5pm**  
Fee: $5-$10 sliding scale (per class); $12 non-member  

**RABEL’S MEDITATIVE MASSAGE CLASS**  
**Mondays starting May 11, 3:30-4:30pm**  
Fee: $10/$12  
Practice gentle self-massage and learn to massage others using peaceful meditation. Focus on specific health issues related to your needs and the needs of others. Acquire inner peace in appreciation of the miracle of your body and share this with others. For singles or couples. Facilitated by Certified Massage Therapist Rabel Mangahas, Medical Massage Specialist.

**MEMORY SCREENING**  
**Wed, May 13, 8:30am-12:30pm (half-hour appointments)**  
Free: Donations Appreciated  
Are you concerned about memory loss? Take action! Memory screening makes sense for anyone who is concerned about their memory. It 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 as space is limited!
HIGHLIGHTED SUPPORT SERVICES

FREE LEGAL CONSULTATION FOR OLDER ADULTS
Thursdays from 12:30-2:30pm at Whistlestop and
1st and 3rd Thursdays from 12:30-2:30pm at the
Mill Valley Community Center
By appointment only: 415-459-6700 for both locations
Legal Aid of Marin provides a free 30-minute legal consultation
for Marin County residents who are 60 years and older. Marin
lawyers volunteer to give general advice, offer options, explain
rights and, if appropriate, refer them to attorneys who have
expertise in certain areas of law.

MULTI-CULTURAL CONSULTATIONS OFFER HELP
By appointment: 415-456-9062
Spanish/English: Marta Villela, ext. 131; Russian/English: Anna
Ladyzhenskaya, ext. 138;
Vietnamese/English: Dina Duong, ext. 129
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.

TELEPHONE REASSURANCE PROGRAM
To register: Call Leslie Klor: 415-456-9062, ext. 132
No Fee
Do you live alone? Would you like someone to care about how
you are doing? If you 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 you.
We can answer questions about other senior resources; now
also offered in Spanish.

ROTARY HOME TEAM
Sat, May 16, 9am-1pm
Get help with those household chores. 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 or for more information,
contact Leslie Klor at 415-456-9062, ext. 132.

NEW RUSSIAN SOCIAL GROUP
Margaret Todd Senior Center in Novato
Wed, May 27, 10:30-11:30am
No Fee: 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
12-1pm and/or the Brown Bag Program from 1-2pm. To sign-up
or if you would like to participate in Brown Bag and/or Lunch
Program, call Anna Ladyzhenskaya at 415-456-9062, ext. 138.

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

May and June COMPUTER CLASSES

How to Use the iPad/iPhone
Tuesdays, May 5 & 12, 10am-Noon (2 classes)
Fee: $48/Maximum 8 people
In this personalized two week course you’ll get one-on-one help on
everything from email to pictures and instructional handouts so you
can practice at home. (For Apple devices only)

iPad/iPhone Applications
Tuesdays, June 2 & 9, 10am-Noon (2 classes)
Fee: $48/Maximum 8 people
You’ve learned the basics and now want to find out about the apps
that can be most helpful. 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)

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

Open Lab
Mondays and Wednesdays, 10am-Noon
Use our PCs for your own purposes, to access the internet, etc.
Volunteer staff are
available for advice on problems with your electronic devices, lap-
tops, and tablets, and they can help with software applications.

VICTIM-WITNESS PROGRAM
2nd & 4th Thursdays, 9am-12pm
Yolanda Johnson, Advocate from the District Attorney’s office,
will be available to meet with you to answer questions, provide
information, and connect you to resources, or call 415-473-6450.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>FEE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td>Zumba</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–1PM</td>
<td>Chair Massage</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>415-472-6020</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td>Movement &amp; Music</td>
<td>415-485-9305</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>12:15–1:45PM</td>
<td>German Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
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<td>12:30–1:30PM</td>
<td>Russian Social Group</td>
<td>415-456-9062</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td>ESL Basic/Advanced</td>
<td>End May 6</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td>Beginning Korean Drums</td>
<td>End May 11</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td>Meditative Massage</td>
<td>Starts 5/11</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–5PM</td>
<td>Qigong: Relax and Renew</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td>Whistlesizers</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Mah Jongg</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45–11:45AM</td>
<td>Cardio/Yoga Exercise Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>11AM–2PM</td>
<td>Manicurist</td>
<td>Appt. Req.</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>French Class</td>
<td>No Class 5/12-5/26</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–2PM</td>
<td>French Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td>Learn Spanish</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30–3:45PM</td>
<td>Mastery of Aging Class</td>
<td>No Class 5/26</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td>Improving Relationships</td>
<td>5/19-6/9</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:15AM</td>
<td>Tai Chi</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–11:30AM</td>
<td>Seniors’ Circle</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>415-472-6020</td>
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<td>* 11AM–1PM</td>
<td>Corazón Latino</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x131</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30PM</td>
<td>Beginning &amp; Intermediate Ukelele</td>
<td>5/13-6/17</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–2PM</td>
<td>English Pronunciation</td>
<td>Ends 5/6</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–3:30PM</td>
<td>ESL Basic/Advanced</td>
<td>Ends 5/6</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td>Citizenship Class</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x131</td>
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<td>Whistlesizers</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td>Chair Massage</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>11–NOON</td>
<td>Zumba</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–3PM</td>
<td>Vietnamese Social Group</td>
<td>415-456-9062 x129</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–2:30PM</td>
<td>Intermediate Italian</td>
<td>5/28-7/10</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45–3:45PM</td>
<td>Balance Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4:30PM</td>
<td>Beginning Bridge</td>
<td>Ends 5/21</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4:30PM</td>
<td>Advanced Korean Drums</td>
<td>Ends 5/14</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4:30PM</td>
<td>Watercolor Technique</td>
<td>5/14-7/30</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–5PM</td>
<td>Mind Exercises</td>
<td>5/7 &amp; 21</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30AM</td>
<td>Community Breakfast</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00–NOON</td>
<td>Brown Bag Pantry</td>
<td>456-9062 x117</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30–2PM</td>
<td>Beginning German</td>
<td>4/10-6/26</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td>ACASA</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30–3:30PM</td>
<td>Practice Spanish</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–3PM</td>
<td>Ping-Pong</td>
<td>5/1,15 &amp; 29</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30–4PM</td>
<td>Chinese Brush Painting</td>
<td>5/8 &amp; 5/22</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td>Yoga</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.
Gathering Eiderdown

Eiderdown is the much prized fluffy down pulled from the chests of the Eider, a large black and white sea duck that lives in the Arctic. Centuries ago, the Vikings in Norway devised a clever method of harvesting large quantities of Eiderdown to make the pillows and quilts that they traded throughout Europe.

Every year millions of Eiders would descend from their Arctic home to the marshes of southern Norway to breed. Before they arrived, the crafty Norse feather gatherers moved through the breeding ground arranging groups of four small stones in a pattern that attracted the female Eiders. After choosing a nesting site, the females plucked fluffy down from their chests with their bills and lined the stones to make warm nests for their eggs. They laid as many as seven eggs, which they covered with more down.

As soon as all the eggs were laid, the gatherers collected the down and the eggs, which were considered a delicacy. The female Eiders, with the aid of their always eager mates, immediately began the egg laying process all over again. The cycles of egg laying and down harvesting continued until the end of the season approached, when the gatherers would leave the final batch of eggs to hatch, assuring more Eiders the following year.

Unfortunately I have never photographed an Eider. I’m happy to share these two photographs of a Mallard attempting to land on, and missing, a thin puddle of water to go splat on the mud.

Every weekend I send a special photo to a self-selected group. If you wish to join, just ask me at SHENmaker@MSN.co. It’s free.

Till next time,

Richard
In Like the Flynns

Imagine showing up for a Whistlestop class and standing right in front of you is your best friend from high school. 65 years ago. That’s someone you knew in 1950!

Frances Flynn, 86, mother of 10, enjoyed this happy and unlikely reunion recently when she came for a Movement and Music class. The friend she met is Doris Immethun (was Cooney).

The reunion resonated with Frances’s daughters, Fran and Margaret. They like the idea of their mother being active and finding new friends and things to do. They say Whistlestop is an ideal place for her.

Fran, Frances and Margaret Flynn

Frances, a Whistlestop member since 2013, lives in San Rafael and Doris, a member since 2014, in Fairfax. Doris is a regular at Whistlestop, taking many classes and she comes for lunch regularly.

“When I come to Whistlestop with my mother, it reminds me of the time when I was four years old and she took me with her to college,” says Margaret.

Frances takes computer classes, Movement and Music, and a Balance class that has become her favorite way to exercise.

Together they enjoy what Frances affectionately calls the “funnest” class at Whistlestop, Mind Exercise with Lloyd. You’ll also spot Frances at Senior Circle, and almost every day at Jackson Café, where she loves to have lunch with Margaret.

Frances and her daughters consider Whistlestop her “home away from home” and can’t wait to see who she runs into next. A new friend or even another old acquaintance!

“To describe my mother would be to write about a hurricane in its perfect power. Or the climbing, falling colors of a rainbow.” —Maya Angelou
her husband, who died six years ago, owned on their property. Georgia says mother and daughter usually have coffee together in the morning and they eat dinner together every night. “I’m glad about that because I didn’t want to cook for one.” She said they really like each other and they enjoy their living situation because they have their own lives and their own space, yet are close enough to help each other out. Debi’s daughter, Jennifer, lives a couple of blocks away and Georgia says she lovingly told her granddaughter that she can’t move away from Fairfax.

Georgia was a real estate broker in Marin County for 40 years before retiring when she was 80. She and her husband worked together at Anker and Anker. She said she thought she would have lots of time on her hands when she retired but she found that, “It takes me twice as long to do half as much now.”

Some of her time is spent caring for her black and white cat who found her one day 13 years ago. The cat stayed on the front deck until two years ago and wouldn’t come into the house. Now she lives inside but still won’t let Georgia pet her. “We call her Poor Pitiful Pearl, or Kitty.”

May is Older Americans Month

Older adults are a vital part of our society. Since 1963, communities across the country have shown their gratitude by celebrating Older Americans Month each May. The theme of this year’s celebration is “Get into the Act,” to focus on how older adults are taking charge of their health, getting engaged in their communities and making a positive impact in the lives of others.

The theme also reflects on the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed this into law in 1965. Since that time, the Act has provided a nationwide aging services network and funding that helps older adults live with dignity in the communities of their choice for as long as possible.

Whistlestop provides critically needed services with the support from the Older American’s Act.
Nona Knows Best
by MARY ANN MAGGIORE

A Mothering Moment

My mother looked a lot like Elizabeth Taylor. She also looked too young to be toting around five kids. It brought out the Joan Crawford in her. She yelled. If that didn’t work, she hit. How else are you going to get three youths, a toddler and an infant into a car and off to swimming lessons at the lake?

She was often angry and frustrated. She was also soft and warm and she smelled good. Before day camps and after-school programs, my mother taught us crafts and games and baking, and created trips to farms, museums, and the beach. When we were inside too much, she wanted us out of her hair. “Go out and play! Don’t come home till I call you.” When later she yelled your name from the front porch, you’d better come and come quickly.

My mother had a natural streak of decency, which I think was endemic to her generation. She never shunned the poor or the handicapped or the sickly. She ran the Cancer Society in our town and in our county. A high school graduate, she started an Adult School to give the town what she had never had in the way of education.

She took no truck with vagaries. You were either right or you were wrong. You were in or you were out. Yet, she was a fierce defender of her children. She was very clear about that. We were Hers and she did not let others take her place. When I had my own daughter, my mother was gone. I was at loose ends about the whole meaning of motherhood. I was nervous and unsure.

My baby was four months old and I was pushing her along in my old-fashioned perambulator down a street Washington had once known. I came upon a friend in her later years who had never had children. My friend leaned in to see my sleeping baby. “Has having this baby changed you?” she asked. Thoughtlessly I answered, “I would give up my life for her.” Suddenly I felt the magical power of this truth. I knew what all mothers know and have always known: we give life and we protect it. Is any task greater or more amazing than this?

Mary Ann Maggiore’s practice “Launching Young People into Adulthood” guides young people to create a meaningful adulthood: the right education, meaningful work and an independent life. Contact her: maryannmaggiore@gmail.com, 415-577-6627.

I start my day walking through our wildlife preserve …

I was concerned about moving from my home until I visited The Redwoods. It’s everything I could hope for.

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The Institute on Aging believes the future should be something to look forward to at every age. Karyn Skultety has been with IOA for over seven years and feels inspired every day by the creativity, dedication and hope that their staff brings to their work with older adults.

She provides leadership for one of IOA’s flagship programs — the Friendship Line. The Friendship Line is the nation’s only toll-free, accredited, 24-hour suicide prevention hotline and warm-line for seniors and disabled adults. The service makes and receives more than 100,000 calls every year, providing a lifeline for thousands of lonely, isolated older adults, who are two to three times more likely than teens to commit suicide. For many of their clients, the Friendship Line is the only human connection they can count on.

Unfortunately, this vital program is facing a significant challenge. The Friendship Line recently lost two-thirds of its funding, putting the program’s future in jeopardy. The IOA is mounting a significant effort to identify long-term partners and sponsors to restore lost funding to maintain the existing program, and to expand and improve the Friendship Line. But that will take time, and callers need this service right now.

Your help is vitally needed. Please visit http://igg.me/at/friendshipline to learn more about the Friendship Line.

Together we can ensure that the Friendship Line remains open 24/7, and there will always be a friend at the other end of the line.
Like a Dog Loves a Bone...

Wouldn’t you rather be at home?

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.

Marin

415-898-HOME (4663)

Call now to receive a free client book.

Sonoma

707-575-HOME (4663)

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

– Erdie F., Mill Valley

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

– Peggy L., Novato

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

– Gail D., Santa Rosa

www.AtHomeCaregivers.com