WHISTLESTOP
930 Tamalpais Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901
www.whistlestop.org

Main office: Open 8:30am-5pm M-F
415-456-9062
Transportation – 415-454-0902
Meals on Wheels – 415-457-4636
Help Desk – 415-459-6700
resource@whistlestop.org

To have the Express emailed sign up at whistlestop.org. For annual subscription mailed to your home, send $10 to Whistlestop.

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Our Mission
Whistlestop believes we share a responsibility to ensure all Marin residents have an opportunity to age with dignity, independence and grace.

ON THE COVER:
Two Whistlestop volunteers — Lola Duarte and Reg Guy.

Whistlestop PERSPECTIVE
By TOM ROBERTS

Times, They Are a Changin’

Transportation means independence. I remember being 15 years old, anxiously awaiting the day I would get my driver’s license. At last, freedom! But times, they are a changin’. Today, an increasing number of teenagers have no interest in driving at all. And every time I get in my car to go anywhere, the congestion seems so bad I feel anything but free.

For over 40 years, Whistlestop has provided the transportation to allow thousands of Marin residents who cannot drive to live independently with dignity. But as we look forward, perhaps we have to change with the times and expand our thinking to include not just older adults who cannot drive, but those who are still driving but perhaps shouldn’t be, and many more that can but, for economic reasons or convenience, prefer not to.

Consider the numbers. The fastest growing segment of Marin’s population is over the age of 85. In 10 years, one in three residents will be over the age of 60. One wonders how many car trips a day our older adults take on our local streets and roads? What does that amount to in the form of greenhouse gas emissions from all those tailpipes? If even a small percentage of older adults elected not to drive by choice, what would be the impact on congestion, air pollution and our overall quality of life?

Of course, making the choice not to drive requires efficient and affordable alternatives. We see younger adults increasingly getting out of their cars to take regular public transit and utilize services like Lyft. For many older adults these options seem, at best, a bit exotic and mysterious. How do you read a bus schedule anyway? Where do you even get one? The good news is that thanks to funding from Marin Transit, Whistlestop operates the Travel Navigator program. By simply calling 415-454-0902 or stopping by our Active Aging Center in downtown San Rafael, older adults can receive bilingual personal assistance in connecting with a host of transportation alternatives. This is a good beginning. But there is much work to do.

As we look toward the future, Whistlestop’s transportation planning efforts will focus on listening and learning, adapting and advocating for new and dynamic solutions to meet the mobility needs not just of folks who cannot drive, but to include older adults looking for workable alternatives. And who knows, maybe we can even learn something from these teenagers.

Tom Roberts is Whistlestop’s Chief Operating Officer.
Whistlestop Keeps Marin’s Seniors Independent and Connected

By YVONNE ROBERTS

 whistlestop operates many of the Marin Access special needs transportation options, thanks to funding through tax measures via Marin Transit. Call our Travel Navigators at 415-454-0902 to find out how to use the following services.

Public Paratransit operated by Whistlestop

Do you have difficulty getting to the bus stop? Are you unable to use the public bus due to an illness or disability? Marin Access paratransit service operated by Whistlestop may be the right alternative. Paratransit service is a curb-to-curb ride share program for people with disabilities that prevent them from using the public buses. It provides rides for local and intercounty trips in Marin County that are within ¾ mile of a public bus route.

Catch-A-Ride

Catch-A-Ride is a taxi voucher program that allows Marin residents who are either over the age of 80 or between 60-80 years old and no longer able to drive to receive discounted rides on taxis and other licensed vehicles within Marin. Catch-A-Ride will provide eligible riders with $14 toward each one-way ride taken ($18 for low income riders.) Riders are allowed eight, one-way rides per month.

CarePool

CarePool is a volunteer driver service that offers free rides to Marin residents aged 65+ and to people with disabilities. This program helps older adults get to medical appointments or the grocery store and offers a unique “door-through-door” service. Volunteer drivers provide extra support, such as escorting the rider from their front door to the car, unloading groceries for riders, walking riders into their doctor’s appointment and waiting for them until the appointment ends.

Safe Transport and Reimbursement (STAR)

STAR is a volunteer driver program that provides a mileage reimbursement. Seniors in need of a ride locate a trusted friend, neighbor or relative to provide the ride. Mileage is reimbursed through a grant from Marin General Hospital.

Mobility is vital to healthy, active living. Whether visiting a friend or attending an important medical appointment at Sutter’s Novato Community Hospital, to get out and about usually means the need for transportation. In addition to the ride options mentioned above, for Novato residents we also have a few more options:

Novato Dial-A-Ride

Everyone who lives in Novato is welcome to use Novato Dial-A-Ride and there is no application process. This service provides passengers curb-to-curb pick-up and drop-off service. You can use the dial-a-ride service to make a complete trip within Novato or connect to fixed route transit service for travel outside of Novato. To use the service, you must schedule your trip by calling 415-892-7899. All trips must start and end within Novato.

Hamilton Shuttle

The Hamilton Shuttle is a free service of the Hamilton Field of Marin Home Owners Association operated by Whistlestop. It transports residents and employees of Hamilton Field around a loop from Safeway to the Alameda del Prado bus stop Monday through Friday from 5:30 am to 7 pm. For information on the route map and the scheduled times, visit hamiltonfield.org “public documents.”

Public Bus Service

Visit MarinTransit.org or GoldenGateTransit.org for several expanded schedules and new routes.

Yvonne Roberts is Whistlestop’s Development and Marketing Director.
CarePool Comes to the Rescue

By VAL BOWMAN

Jaime Yan Faurot came to the U.S. from Malaysia eight years ago to live in Cooperstown, New York, before moving to the Bay Area. She’s been in Marin County for almost six years and met her husband four years ago. Jaime was involved in a serious car accident in 2012 that left her with chronic pain. Because she suffers from a permanent disability, Medi-Cal PHP suggested that she apply to Whistlestop for their paratransit services about two and half years ago.

She lives in Novato and has frequent doctors appointments she needs to get to. At first she rode the Whistlestop buses and she found the drivers to be very accommodating and approachable, but it was uncomfortable for her to sit on the bus for a long time. Then, at a Marin Transit meeting last July, she learned about the new CarePool program at Whistlestop, where volunteers use their own cars to help people who need rides. She is grateful to the Travel Navigator team members who helped her – Kristen, Stephanie, Raphael and Ingrid. She says they were patient and helpful and the program works very well for her because she needs rides to doctors’ appointments, sometimes as many as three or four times a week, and weekly to the Food Bank. Jaime says having to face constant chronic pain is no fun. “Most of the time it’s like a full-time job. You don’t know when the pain will hit you or how long it will last. The best way forward is to be content in what you have because it’s the source of where true happiness lies.”

She says the volunteers are very kind and help her a lot. She says each is special in their own way. “All I can say is thank you to each and everyone of you – Linda S., Betsy G., Martin S., Wayne B., Sheila, Don C., Beth, Julie, Marie F., and Richard. For me, to get one ride a week to a doctor’s appointment is already a blessing. Anything else on top of that is a bonus. And now, after being here in the Bay Area, especially Marin for almost six years, I have finally found our cozy little apartment with my husband, Jason, in Novato. We might not have much materially, but we are simply grateful that we have each other.”

To get one ride a week to a doctors’ appointment is already a blessing. Anything else on top of that is a bonus.

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SeniorsAtHome.org

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HHA License 220000378
New Program Manager
Always on the Move

Whether completing her first Ironman triathlon or caring for older adults, Melissa Groos says, “I love giving back to the community and helping others reach their potential by overcoming perceived or real obstacles.”

Melissa, who has worked for 24 years as a Certified Recreational Therapist, is Whistlestop’s new Active Aging Services Program Manager. She said, “My past experience has afforded me opportunities to help educate, teach and mentor older clientele on how to reclaim their quality of life after a temporary or permanent disability. I am passionate about creating a warm environment of inclusivity, while providing specialized holistic recreational experiences to showcase their potential abilities based on their quality-of-life preferences.”

She has worked in skilled nursing care at The Rafael and at the Nineteenth Avenue Healthcare Center, in PACE/Adult Day Care at Institute on Aging, and in transitional care at Kindred Nursing & Transitional Care, South Marin. “I am excited to be part of the talented Whistlestop team that shares a responsibility to ensure that people in Marin age with grace, dignity and independence.”

Melissa also has been an active volunteer in Marin, for the past nine years with the Sustainable Sports Foundation in San Rafael, marking runners’ bodies for the triathlon, passing out water and cheering on competitors.

“Seven years ago, I accomplished something I never thought I would do. With Team in Training for the Leukemia Lymphoma Society, I raised over $13,000 and successfully trained for and completed my first Ironman triathlon (swimming, biking and running 140.6 miles). My efforts were fueled by my passion to overcome mental demons and in honor of both my uncle and aunt, who lost their lives to blood-related cancers in the same year.”

Melissa stays busy on weekends. “You will find me either on my road bike with friends, hiking Mount Tamalpais or learning how to paddle an outrigger canoe with my friend at 101 Surf Sports.”
Classes and events in advance by visiting or calling the front desk at 415-456-9062.

Keep Learning at WHISTLESTOP

For a full list of classes and services, check out the monthly calendar online at whistlestop.org/classes/calendar or pick one up at the Active Aging Center. Fees listed for classes show the member fee, followed by the non-member fee. Join Whistlestop for the 2016 year to enjoy valuable discounts and benefits! Remember to sign up for all classes and events in advance by visiting or calling the front desk at 415-456-9062.

Celebrations/Events

Slavic Celebration
Thurs, Aug 4, 11:30am-1:30pm;
Entertainment: 12-1pm; Fee: $8/$10
Slavic Celebration returns to Whistlestop. This year’s cultural attractions include: traditional Slavic folk and romantic music performed by San Francisco musician Alexandr Smirnov, dancing, and chicken shashlik or mushroom stroganoff, ice cream, and Napoleon cake. Purchase tickets by July 29 at the front desk.

Tina Carella Duo
Mon, Aug 15, 2-3pm; Free
The Singing Chef/chanteuse, Christina Carella Waldek, accompanied by John Hoy on the guitar, serenades members and guests with her charismatic musical standards and other favorites from their repertoire. A must listen.

New/Highlighted Classes & Workshops

Zumba Gold
Mondays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:30am; Fee: $6/$8
Instructor: Marion Boumans-Isaacson
Zumba is a great way to stay fit and active. Fun, motivating combination of Latin-inspired music and dance steps guaranteed to get you moving.

Community Arts and Crafts: DIY Succulent Container Garden
Tues, Aug 1, 2-3pm; Free
Instructor: Caroline Remer, Multicultural Coordinator (Bilingual-English/Spanish), It’s easy to plant a succulent container garden with your grandchildren or neighborhood friends. Learn basic steps to ensuring the succulents stay healthy too. Supplies provided. Call 415-456-9062 to sign up.

Brain Fitness & Memory Workshop
Thurs, Aug 11, 9:30-10:30am; Free
Instructor: Bob Nations, President, Senior Access Board of Directors
The top four things to promote good brain health as we age: move your body, eat right, find a challenge, and socialize. This Senior Access Brain Fitness class offers all four.

Senior Circle
Wednesdays, 10-11:30am; Fee
Volunteer Facilitators from Center for Attitudinal Healing
A drop-in, open support group for independent older men and women (55+), who give each other the gift of listening in a caring environment, which encourages mutual sharing of older adult experiences – the joys, concerns, and wisdom.

New/Highlighted Health Programs

Medicare 101 Seminar: Learn the Nuts and Bolts
Wed, Aug 10, 10am-12pm; Free
Instructor: Cara Suminski of SCAN Health Plan
Turning 65? Have questions? Losing coverage with an employer? Medicare can be confusing. What’s the difference between Part A and Part B? What are your options when it comes to Health Plans? How to avoid penalties? Cara will share the basics of Medicare and answer your questions. Call 415-456-9062 to sign up.

Memory Screening
Wed, Aug 24, 8:30am-12:15pm (45-min. appointments); Free
It’s a simple, 30 minute verbal and written screening with a geriatric professional by Senior Access. Sign-up in advance, as space is limited.

Weekly Blood Pressure, Cholesterol Screenings, and Medication Reviews
Fridays, 9:30-11am; Free
Weekly blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, and medication reviews offered by Bright Star Care, a local agency providing home care, caregivers, and medical staffing solutions to families and businesses in Marin, 415-332-3300.

Highlighted Support Services

Need Assistance? Multicultural Consultants Can Help You
By appointment: 415-456-9062
Spanish: Caroline Remer, 415-454-0998; Russian: Anna Ladyzhenskaya, ext. 138; Farsi: Mrs. Mehrbanoo Esmaill, 415-472-6020
Whistlestop offers information, resources and referrals in Spanish, Russian, English, and Farsi. No fee for consultations; small fee for translation services.

Homeshare and Telephone Reassurance Programs
Call for appointment: Leslie Klor: 415-456-9068, ext. 132; Free
Homeshare is a free referral service for older adults seeking or offering housing. Telephone Reassurance is trained volunteers calling isolated older adults who need connections.

Free Legal Consultation
Most Thursdays of each month at Whistlestop and the Mill Valley Community Center. By appointment only: 415-459-6700
Legal Aid of Marin provides free 30-minute legal consultations for Marin County residents who are 60 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.

Victim Witness Assistance
2nd & 4th Thursdays, 9am-12pm; Free
Advocate Yolanda Johnson from the District Attorney’s office answers questions, provides information, and connects you to resources. More information? Call 415-473-6450.

Marin County Help Hotlines

Good phone numbers to keep handy in your home:

Whistlestop Information and Referral: 415-459-6700
County Information and Referral: 415-457-4636
Special Needs Transportation: 415-454-0902
Suicide Prevention Hotline: 415-459-6700
Domestic Abuse Hotline: 415-924-6616
Domestic Abuse Hotline Spanish: 415-924-3456
Are you looking for more meaning in your life? Want to provide a much-needed service to your community that fits your busy schedule?

If this sounds intriguing, you may want to become a CarePool Volunteer Driver.

CarePool provides round trip rides to older adults for medical appointments and grocery shopping. Drivers use their own cars and are alerted of ride requests by email, choosing which rides they want to fulfill.

Contact Laurie for more information and to register for the free training: volunteer@whistlestop.org.

TECHNOLOGY AUGUST 2016
Pre-registration and payment required. 415-456-9062

Android Basics 2:
Understanding Your Smart Phone or Tablet
Thursdays, Aug 11 & 18, (2 classes)
10am-12pm
Fee: $48 Maximum 8 people
This course covers basics of your device and built-in features you might have missed. Learn how to get the most out of photo editing, storing and retrieving photos, the calendar, email, texting, and maps/GPS. Learn how to find and install new apps, update, delete and organize them. A perfect sequel to the Basics 1 course. (For Android devices only)

ONGOING

Open Lab
Every Monday and Wednesday,
10am-12pm
No Fee
Use our PCs to access the Internet. Volunteer staff available to troubleshoot issues with your electronic devices, including laptops, tablets, and cell phones. They’ll also help with software applications.

* Call for Sept iPhone, iPad Basics dates and registration.

FREE PARKING
Lot at corner of 3rd St. & Tamalpais Ave • 8:30AM-5:00 PM for Whistlestop & Jackson Café guests.

Jackson Café
Fresh. Affordable. Delicious.
Entrees from $6-$8
Open to the public for lunch every weekday!
Located in Whistlestop Active Aging Center.

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

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<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>FEE</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>MONDAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30AM-10:30AM</td>
<td>Zumba Gold</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td>Therapeutic Massage</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10AM–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–NOON</td>
<td>German Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>415-472-6020</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>11AM–NOON</td>
<td>Tai Chi</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30PM</td>
<td>Russian Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUESDAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30 AM</td>
<td>Whistlesizers</td>
<td>Drop-in, not 8/16</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td>Laughter Yoga</td>
<td>Drop-in, 8/16 &amp; 8/23</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10AM–NOON</td>
<td>Mali Jongg</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Manicures</td>
<td>Call</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>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30AM–12:30PM</td>
<td>French Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–2PM</td>
<td>French Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–3PM</td>
<td>Beg./Int. Conversational Spanish</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>11AM–1PM</td>
<td>Corazón Latino</td>
<td>415-454-0998</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td>Ukelele</td>
<td>8/2-9/6</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEDNESDAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–11:30AM</td>
<td>Seniors’ Circle</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td>Therapeutic Massage</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–NOON</td>
<td>Acrylic Painting</td>
<td>7/6–8/10</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–1:30PM</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>415-472-6020</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>11AM–1PM</td>
<td>Corazón Latino</td>
<td>415-454-0998</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td>Knitting Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>THURSDAYS</td>
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<td>9:30AM-10:30AM</td>
<td>Zumba Gold</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>10AM–1PM</td>
<td>Therapeutic Massage</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15–2:15PM</td>
<td>Vietnamese Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1–2:25PM</td>
<td>Intermediate Italian</td>
<td>6/9–8/18</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30–3:30PM</td>
<td>Beginning Italian</td>
<td>6/9–8/18</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:45–3:45PM</td>
<td>Balance Class</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAYS</td>
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<tr>
<td>9–10AM</td>
<td>Community Breakfast</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–11AM</td>
<td>Weekly Blood Press./Cholesterol Checks</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>11AM–NOON</td>
<td>Brown Bag Pantry</td>
<td>415-456-9067</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–3PM</td>
<td>ACASA</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–3PM</td>
<td>Spanish Club</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td>Movie Time</td>
<td>8/12, 8/26</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–4PM</td>
<td>Ping-Pong</td>
<td>8/5, 8/19</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–4PM</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>Y</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* At Albert J. Boro Community Center (Pickleweed)
I wonder what I would be thinking if I had endured three amputations over the past four months and now was spending excruciating hours in physical therapy. I do not think my thoughts would be bright.

Not so for Dieter Schien, 62, of San Anselmo, who has lost toes, then a leg just below the knee after a stereo speaker tumbled from a table in his home and onto his foot. Because Dieter is a diabetic, this was a calamitous accident.

Despite his situation, which might be hopeless to many people, Dieter says, “Yes, it’s been a hard four months. But now I am looking forward to the future. Once I’ve completed my PT, I will get fitted for a prosthesis, and before long I will be walking across the Golden Gate Bridge again. It’s one of my favorite pastimes.”

Dieter is a strong advocate of Whistlestop. He first heard about Whistlestop from a social worker. He has used several of the active aging center’s services for 12 years. He is especially appreciative of the Whistlestop buses, which have taken him to countless medical and other appointments.

He was a driver for seven years for Golden Gate Transit. “So I know what it takes to run an efficient transportation service. Whistlestop does a great job of it. Often I’ve had to go to San Francisco at odd hours for dialysis – sometimes leaving at 5:30 in the evening and returning at 2:30 the next morning.”

He has found Whistlestop drivers to be extremely compassionate. “They do a wonderful job of making you feel comfortable and safe.”

Once Dieter is through this next period of healing, he will get back to his passion. “I play San Francisco tourist. I love the City and all it has to offer. One of my favorite things – I recommend this highly to visitors – is the 49-mile drive around the city. People do it in cars and bikes. It’s a great way to see all of the famous landmarks in one day.”
Your Journey. Our Commitment.  
NCPHS We're Here For You.

Skilled Nursing
Skilled nursing for patients who need medical care following surgery, hospitalization, injury or illness.

Assisted Living
Live life your way and when assistance is needed, our caring and dedicated staff are there to help.

Memory Care
Our team takes a highly personalized approach to help residents with all forms of memory care.

NCPHS is accredited by CARF-CCAC for meeting the highest national standards for quality care.

The Sequoias
SAN FRANCISCO
A Life Care Community
1400 Gary Boulevard
San Francisco, CA 94109
sequoias.sf.org

The Sequoias
PORTOLA VALLEY
A Life Care Community
501 Portola Road
Petaluma, CA 94954
sequoias-pv.org

The Sequoias
GREENBRAE
A Life Care Community
501 Via Consperi
Greenbrae, CA 94904
them.org

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Director of Health Services Marketing
Tel (415) 351-7956  
Email jdobson@ncphs.org  
Website www.ncphs.org

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- Meal Preparation & Clean Up  
- Medication Reminders  
- Personal Care  
- Respite Care  
- Wardrobe, Dressing Assistance  
- Help with Daily Grooming  
- Bathing & Toileting Assistance  
- Help with Ambulation  
- Bed-bound Assistance  
- Protective Supervision for those with Impaired Judgment  
- Transportation & Errand Services  
- Companionship, Conversation  
- Meal Planning, Grocery Shopping  
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3rd Annual Whistlestock  
Set For September 25

Rick Stevens, the Unauthorized Rolling Stones and Lydia Pense and Cold Blood are among the rockers booked for the third annual Whistlestock concert on Sunday, Sept. 25.

The event will be from 3 to 6:30pm at Rancho Nicasio, 1 Old Rancheria Road, Nicasio.  
Tickets now on sale at Whistlestock.com.

Proceeds from the concert go to Whistlestop to provide its myriad services to people 60 and older in Marin County. Pull out your tie-dye and plan to have fun with us again this year!
Marin Airporter in 51st Year

By JOHN BOWMAN

David Hughes, vice president and charter manager of Marin Airporter, said his grandfather, William Melbern, started the company in 1975 with two shuttles, and the company has grown to a fleet of over 20 vehicles with Airporter and Charter fleets.

“All of the buses in our Airporter fleet are equipped with wheelchair lifts to accommodate passengers who cannot use the stairs to board the bus,” Hughes said.

Buses depart to SFO every 30 minutes from our main terminal at 1081 Andersen Drive in San Rafael at 10 minutes to and 20 minutes after the hour, beginning at 3:50am. Hughes added, “We pick up on the hour and half hour on Sir Francis Drake Blvd., across from the Ferry Terminal in Larkspur, and then just after that at Seminary Drive, Manzanita, and Spencer Ave. We also have buses departing once an hour from our Hamilton Terminal in Novato at 5 minutes before the hour, starting at 3:55am, and at 10 past the hour from the Central San Rafael Transit Center.” Parking is available at Andersen Drive for $6 per day, or at Hamilton for $4 per day.

Buses pick up at SFO every 30 minutes at the green and white curb outside of baggage claim. The last bus picks up at midnight.

The fare is $20 per person each way. Kids 12 and under ride free. There is no senior fare, but the Airporter offers a “Meet and Greet” ticket, $20 for a round-trip if you return within four hours.

Hughes said, “We also have buses available for charter for groups who would like to travel anywhere in the Bay Area or beyond. We regularly take the San Rafael Goldenaires, and the Novato Seniors on their trips to San Francisco, as well as to many other locations as far as Reno, and on multi-day trips around California and out of state.”

For more information on Airporter service, call 415-461-4222.

SPECIAL NEEDS TRANSPORTATION ANNUAL FAST FACTS

1,600
Completed one-way rides

50
CarePool Drivers

393,000
Completed one-way rides

107
Whistlestop Vehicles

10,789
Completed one-way rides

67
Star Volunteer drivers

See page 3 of this issue for more information on these Whistlestop transportation options.
Karen Raccanello, Whistlestop’s new Italian teacher, says that working with older adults is different from teaching high school students. Although she teaches the adults the same skill set that she taught teens – conversation, grammar, reading, listening, writing and a little culture – the resulting conversations are more engaging because of the wealth of experiences the older adults bring to the class.

Karen was born and raised in San Francisco’s North Beach where everyone spoke Italian. For many, Italian was their first language and most people in their self-contained neighborhood were bilingual.

Karen realized early on that she had an affinity for languages. She majored in Italian and Spanish in college, which led to her career as a teacher. She was a language teacher in San Francisco for 13 years and, after moving to Marin to raise a family, she taught Italian at Marin Catholic and led student study tours through Italy during summer vacations.

After retiring from 30 years of teaching at Marin Catholic, Karen happened to meet Whistlestop CEO Joe O’Hehir and his wife, Vicki. Joe mentioned that he was looking for a new Italian language teacher. Karen thought it might be a good fit, and she agreed to teach a small but dedicated group of students at Whistlestop.

After working for so long in the protected and narrow world of academia, Karen loves meeting adult students who have led interesting and exciting lives. She enjoys the students’ passion for learning and dedication to their studies.

Karen tries to incorporate their interests and experiences into the classroom. Many class conversations begin with translations of articles and stories that the students are intrigued by. The class is excited about learning and has a wide variety of knowledge on topics from environmental issues, technology, wine, food and more.

Karen is involved with several other organizations, including her local parish group and the Italian Catholic Federation. She spends much of her free time with her family, which includes her husband, uncle, two adult children and grandchildren.

Laurie Vermont, Whistlestop’s Volunteer Manager, says, “We are so lucky to have Karen bring her wealth of experience, enthusiasm and love of the Italian language and culture to our seniors. She and her class created and organized an Italian Carnival lunch in February. It was a huge success and fun for everyone who attended.”

To learn more about volunteer opportunities at Whistlestop, contact Laurie at volunteer@whistlestop.org or 415-456-9067.
VOLUNTEER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Make a Difference in an Older Adult’s Life

Meals on Wheels Drivers
We need Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers 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 2-3 hour weekday shift is required.

Brown Bag Pantry Volunteers
Helpers are needed Friday mornings from 9:15am-12:15pm for the Brown Bag Pantry. Duties: unload the truck from the Food Bank, sort produce, greet and help recipients get their food. This fun group is looking for new members. Ability to lift 25 lbs. is a plus.

Jackson Café Weekday Lunch Servers and Cashiers & Friday Community Breakfast Servers
The Jackson Café provides a comfortable setting for older adults – and the public – to eat a nutritious meal at an affordable price. Café volunteers provide friendly greetings, excellent customer service, and support social interaction. Café volunteers receive a free breakfast or lunch. Cashier or food service experience a plus. Lunch hour shifts: Monday-Friday, 10:45am-2pm. (Café hours: 11:30am-2pm.) Friday Breakfast shift: 8-10am. (Breakfast is open to the public and served from 9-10 am.)

Whistlestop CarePool Volunteer Driver Program
Volunteer drivers provide round-trip rides to ambulatory older adults for medical appointments or grocery shopping. Drivers use their own cars and receive ride requests through email. Drivers can accept or decline, depending on their own schedules. Volunteers need a reliable automobile with current insurance certificate, a valid California Driver License, and a clear background check and DMV report.

To learn more about these opportunities or others, contact Laurie, volunteer@whistlestop.org or 415-456-9067.