Pg 4: Friendships Celebrated
Pg 7: Thanksgiving Luncheon – November 22
Pg 10: Gratitude for Ability to Help Others
When asked what he is grateful for, Bob Sonnenberg took about three seconds to answer, “My family and friends and the opportunity to give back – to help others.”

Family members in Sonnenberg’s support system include his wife, Cindy, sons Tim and Rob and their wives, Vivi and Kathy. The latest addition, born 14 months ago, is Cali, Rob and Kathy’s daughter.

Sonnenberg, who lives in San Rafael, commutes on the SMART train daily to Santa Rosa, where he is development director for the Earle Baum Center for the Blind. He will never forget losing his sight in January 2004. “I was driving, on my way to Sacramento, and suddenly I couldn’t see freeway signs.” It was the result of myopic degeneration. Since then he has dealt with his vision loss and leads an active and enjoyable life.

Now he is in a position to help others with sight loss. “What an opportunity it is to be able to give that gift to someone else – to give the little spark that might help, might turn them around to move forward.”

Although it was difficult, Sonnenberg made the decision early on to overcome his loss. “I decided to move forward. It was hard but I did it. The hardest part was to embrace my blindness.” He said at first he did not want to tell anyone about it. “It’s somewhat like admitting that you have a weakness.”

He said in a way, his situation is analogous to folks who benefit from Whistlestop’s services. “You can choose to be isolated or you can decide to be engaged; Whistlestop makes it easy for people to be engaged – so many programs, so much opportunity to connect with people in classes or sharing meals at the Jackson Café. That’s the magical thing about Whistlestop.”

Sonnenberg has been a Whistlestop Board member for eight years and is excited to be part of the organization. He said, “At Whistlestop, transportation is a big part of it, but there’s so much more. It is a community connector of people. And Whistlestop is great at forming partnerships with organizations like Eden Housing and BioMarin in the new affordable housing project. I’ve run a couple of businesses and I know how important it is, this building partnerships. Whistlestop is a great model for this. As a board member, I am thankful to learn how powerful these partnerships can be.”
WHISTLESTOCK

Elvin Bishop

Guests of Alten Construction. Left to right: Jeanine Farrell, Shannon Alten, Laura Kelley, Maryanna Chmielewski and Jessica Lazor.

Pauline Angleman Celebrated her 110th Birthday (Pictured Above with Joe O’Hehir and Yvonne Roberts).

Volunteer Penny Mackrack (left)

Pauline Angleman

Elvin Bishop & His Big Fun Trio

Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.

Jeri Dexter

Marin Sanitary Service

PG&E

Sutter Health

RHYTHM & BLUES PRESENTING SPONSOR

At Home Caregivers

COOL CAT SPONSORS

BrightStar Care

HIP SPONSORS

Whistlestop Volunteers

SPECIAL THANKS

To the hundreds of community members who purchased tickets to the event!

And to the Whistlestop staff who worked tirelessly to create an amazing concert!

BEBOB SPONSOR

Dennis and Susan Gilardi

SPECIAL THANKS

Pauline Angleman

Bella B

Elvin Bishop & His Big Fun Trio

Allan Bortel

Tommy Castro & The Painkillers

Diehard Security Solutions

Floyd Construction

H & H Printing

Hospice by the Bay

Matt Jaffe

Kistler Vineyards Winery

Lloyd Licher & Inga Gilbraith

Marin Clean Energy

Marin Foundation Driftwood Unit

Onspot Welding & Design

PacificSun

Partnership Resources Group

Price Family Vineyards & Estates

Vickie Soulier

Stellar Fundraising Auctions & Devon Bell

Team Pro Events

Westamerica Bank

Whistlestop Board of Directors

NOVEMBER 2018 WHISTLESTOP EXPRESS
Friendships Celebrated at Whistlestop

By Sue McQuinn

Whistlestop is a friendly, diverse community. In honor of International Friendship Day, Whistlestop created a project to celebrate all the friendships fostered over the years at our Active Aging Center. The project started out as a concept of two hands, one heart; we let the painting process organically evolve. We are individuals who have different perspectives on what makes friendships special and what is our favorite place to spend time with friends?

Amazingly, we had exactly enough tiles to create two hearts ... all that is needed for a friendship to start and grow. We created a four- by eight-foot mural, now displayed in the Active Aging Center Lounge Area for everyone to enjoy. The mural is composed of 171 tiles, painted over one week, by artists from age three to 90 plus.

When thinking about healthy aging, diet and exercise are the most recognized factors. I think friends and socialization should be high on the list. Older adults may have difficulty making friends or maintaining life-long friendships due to many obstacles: ailments, transportation, and hearing loss.

Every day, we observe members and staff reaching out to one another for support, sharing lunch, attending classes, laughing, and enjoying life. Italian students started their own study group and are eager to learn and not miss a class. Lounge Ladies arrive elegantly dressed for the day at least four days a week, ready for their next adventure with big smiles on their faces. Men’s lunch table in our Jackson Café is where men come in every day to enjoy conversation and lunch together.

Skip Bo Gals are five friends meeting for lunch and a Skip Bo card game. They gather together to ensure they have a ride to Whistlestop and attend our Themed Monthly Luncheons with entertainment. Ukulele Class members come early to talk, then strum their ukuleles and stay for lunch together.

Volunteers – the majority are older adults – enjoy reaching out to help other older adults. The Writer’s Group meets and confidentially discusses their dynamic life stories. And there’s the various Social Groups that meet weekly.

Where do you fit in? Join us at Whistlestop’s Active Aging Center and meet a new friend or bring a friend to an activity or lunch. You are always welcome!
This Veteran is Grateful For Each Moment

By Val Bowman

When I first talked to Larriece Stuart, she was calling me from the hospital and said, “I’m waiting to be cut up.” She was about to go into surgery for her first of two knee replacement surgeries. She values her independence and that means walking many places, as well as getting rides from Whistlestop and other resources.

In 2003, she stopped driving because she had developed Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP), a group of inherited diseases causing retinal degeneration. Larriece has been a member of Whistlestop for a long time; she loves the independence it provides her. A favorite part of Whistlestop is the Jackson Café. “Oh, man! The food is so good.”

She was in the Air Force from 1967 to 1970 during the Viet Nam era. She had wanted to fly, but at that time, women weren’t allowed to be pilots. She was trained in graphic arts and served in Massachusetts.

She is grateful to the Veteran’s Affairs Administration, where she has obtained low vision aids that help her. Technology that translates written words into speech has been helpful and she enjoys books on tape. She has a guide dog, Jessie, who was recently retired; Jessie is losing her eyesight, too. She still acts as Larriece’s emotional support dog.

Living in San Rafael, she walks a lot with the help of her seeing-eye cane, which she has named Lucy. “Like I Love Lucy,” she tells me. Her upbeat attitude helps her make the best of her situation. She says she embraces it and has learned to better use her other senses.

She is grateful for her ability to travel. She has gone to France, Venice, Canada, Maine, and Jackson Hole. She can go thanks to Mind’s Eye Travel for the visually impaired and blind that includes sighted people to help on trips. Larriece’s philosophy is “Living in the present moment is a gift; remember to breathe and take one moment at a time.”

Easy & Healthy Apple Pie For 1

It’s apple season. Do you love homemade apple pie? Well, you don’t need to make an entire pie to satisfy your craving. You can whip up this recipe to have your home smelling like you’ve been baking all day, while only making enough for yourself!

1 apple (sliced or cubed, with some skin)
2 tbsp melted butter
3 tbsp quick oats
3 tbsp brown sugar
½ tsp cinnamon

Mix the ingredients in a microwave safe bowl. Cook in your microwave for 5 minutes or until the apples are soft enough to cut with a fork. Enjoy!
KEEP LEARNING AND HAVE FUN AT WHISTLESTOP

The following is a sampling of the events, workshops and classes at Whistlestop’s Active Aging Center. For a full list of classes, please see page 8. Visit us at whistlestop.org. For more information or to register, call 415-456-9062, ext. 100 or 101. Many of our classes are free or offered at a reduced rate, but donations are always welcome. Annual Membership is $20. Please note: Whistlestop holiday closure information listed below.

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Thursday, November 22 the Active Aging Center is closed, but the Jackson Café will be open from noon to 2pm to serve Thanksgiving Lunch.

Friday, November 23. The Active Aging Center is closed. Please enjoy the day with friends and family.

EXERCISE CLASSES

SPECIAL EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

League of Women Voters Presents: Pros & Cons of 11 State Ballot Measures
Tues, Oct 30; 11am-12:30pm; No fee; Drop-in
Confused by the 11 ballot measures on our California State Ballot? You are not alone. The League of Women Voters will educate attendees with a Pros & Cons presentation on all of the ballot measures.

Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body
In partnership with the Alzheimer’s Association
Tues, Nov 13; 11am-12:30pm; No fee; Registration required
The Alzheimer’s Association will present current research on how adopting a healthy lifestyle will improve brain health and possibly delay the onset of cognitive decline.

Nutrition Bites
Thurs, Nov 1 & 15; 3-4pm; No fee; Register required
Join Sophia Osotio, Whistlestop’s Nutrition Program Coordinator, and learn how to improve your health by modifying your diet. Discussion topics: pre-diabetes, hypertension, and weight loss.

Age Reversing Essentrics
Mon, 12:45-1:45pm; $6/8; Drop-in
Slow-paced class with relaxed movement to improve your mobility, strength and balance. Instructor: Elizabeth Lynn

Ping Pong
Fri, 2-4pm; $2-4; Drop-in
Energetic group of players led by Vivian Malcy. Please wear tennis shoes.

Veteran’s Day Luncheon
Thurs, Nov 8; 11:30am-2pm; $10 includes entertainment & dessert (advance purchase encouraged)
They’re back! Bread & Roses presents the Lovin’ Harmony Trio singing jazz and pop standards from the Swing Era through the 1960’s to honor our veterans. Hearty pot roast, potatoes and apple pie a la mode will be served, along with a vegetarian option.

When the world comes together to give...

#GIVINGTUESDAY
November 27, 2018

Please consider donating to Whistlestop to support our many programs and services for older adults. Visit: www.whistlestop.org

Nutrition Program Coordinator, and

Café for a tasty, hot buffet breakfast including coffee, tea or juice.

Consider This: Headlines and Current Events
Wed, Nov 7; 12:30-1:30pm; No fee; Drop-in
Come join us for a cup of coffee and a lively, engaging take on the headlines. Our facilitator, Steve Gordon, will guide the group through an entertaining and intelligent discussion of current affairs and major national and international news events.

Vivian Malcy. Please wear tennis shoes.

Veteran’s Day Luncheon
Thurs, Nov 8; 11:30am-2pm; $10 includes entertainment & dessert (advance purchase encouraged)
They’re back! Bread & Roses presents the Lovin’ Harmony Trio singing jazz and pop standards from the Swing Era through the 1960’s to honor our veterans. Hearty pot roast, potatoes and apple pie a la mode will be served, along with a vegetarian option.

When the world comes together to give...

#GIVINGTUESDAY
November 27, 2018

Please consider donating to Whistlestop to support our many programs and services for older adults. Visit: www.whistlestop.org

When the world comes together to give...
MAKE A PERSONALIZED HOLIDAY CARD FOR A HOMEBOUND OLDER ADULT

Sharing is caring! It is never too early to gather friends and family to create personalized holiday cards for a homebound person over 60 who receives Meals on Wheels or Whistlestop Nourish. **We need hundreds of cards!**

All holiday cards should be non-denominational, in unsealed envelopes addressed to Dear Neighbor/Friend.

Please drop off or mail cards by **Monday, December 3; Whistlestop, 930 Tamalpais Ave., San Rafael, CA.** Questions contact Sue 415-456-9062, ext. 102 or programs@whistlestop.org

**Tai Chi NEW TIME!**
**Mon, 11am-noon; $8/10; Drop-in**
Learn Tai Chi gentle movements from instructor David MacLam.

**Whistlesizers**
**Tues, 9:30-10:30am and Thurs, 11am-noon; $4/5; Drop-in**
Gentle chair exercises with light cardio exercises to improve strength, flexibility and motion. Instructor: Elizabeth Lynn

**Yoga**
**Fri, 3-4pm; $3/5; Drop-in**
Improve balance, strength and flexibility with Kelly Lynch, instructor. Bring your own yoga mat.

**Zumba**
**Mon & Thurs, 9-10am; $6/8; Drop-in**
Dance to the beat of exciting music! Led by Pam Munter

**MARIN COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MONTHLY MEETING**
**WHEN:** Thurs, Nov. 1
10am – 12:30pm
**WHERE:** Pickleweed (Albert J. Boro) Community Center
**TOPIC:** Dia de los Muertos: Latino Perspectives on Death/Dying and Family Caregiving
**SPEAKER:** Diana Lopez

**SNEAK PEEK OF UPCOMING DECEMBER’S HOLIDAY EVENTS**

**Evaluación de memoria para hispanohablantes en asociación con Senior Access**
**Miércoles 5 de diciembre; Del mediodía a las 3pm; Sin cargo; Cita necesaria**
Preocupado por la pérdida de memoria o simplemente desea tener una prueba de detección de referencia. Llame hoy para programar una cita gratuita de 45 minutos. La evaluación de la memoria no es diagnóstica, pero es una oportunidad para hablar en privado y de manera confidencial con un evaluador profesional. Limitado a 10 nombramientos.

**Singers Marin at Holiday Tree Decorating**
**Wed, Dec 5; 11am-noon; No fee**
Listening to the Singers Marin perform, under the direction of Jan Pedersen Schiff, is magical and gets you in the holiday mood. We would love help decorating our holiday tree. If you can’t attend our event, consider Singers Marin’s Tis the Season … Sing Joy! Concert, Dec 16, 4-6pm; Marin Veterans Memorial Auditorium.

**Michael Pritchard’s Magical, Mystical Elf Tour**
**Mon, Dec 10; 11am-noon; $5/7; Advance ticket purchase recommended**
Will he or won’t he be dressed as an elf to entertain us? Either way, he will make us laugh with his outstanding comedy.

**HOLIDAY CARD CREATING WORKSHOPS FOR HOMEBOUND OLDER ADULTS/MEALS ON WHEELS**
**Tues, Nov 6; 10am-noon; No fee; Registration suggested**
We have all of the supplies; you supply the creativity.

**Mon, Nov 19; 10am-2pm; No fee; Registration suggested**
Kids of all ages, join us in creating cards. What better way to spend time during Thanksgiving Break – create cards that bring great joy to our Meals on Wheels recipients over the holidays!

**Thanksgiving Luncheon**
**Thursday, November 22**
Noon-1:30pm
Advanced ticket purchase suggested, limited number available: $12 or $15 after Fri, Nov 16th
Lunch: roast turkey & gravy, sweet potato casserole, cranberry-orange relish, garlic mashed potatoes, roasted green beans, rolls and if you have room, a slice of pie.
Entertainment by pianist, Nancy Fox
Please bring a container for your leftovers

**Healthy Care Connection**
A Licensed Homecare Agency offering
Home Care Aide Services:
Agency is employer; insured, bonded, Employees registered with the state
Geriatric Care Management:
RN resource specialist and advocate for seniors and their families
Nancy Mack, RN, PHN, GCM
(415) 457-2256 • www.HealthCareConnectionLLC.com

**NOVEMBER 2018 WHISTLESTOP EXPRESS**

**7**
WHISTLESTOP WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Please view our most recent class schedule at www.whistlestop.org/classes/calendar/ or call 415-456-9062 x100 or 101 for updates to the schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>INFO</th>
<th>FEE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:30AM</td>
<td>Zumba Gold</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM–NOON</td>
<td>German Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–NOON</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00AM–NOON</td>
<td>Tai Chi</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$8/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30PM-1:45PM</td>
<td>Russian Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45-1:45PM</td>
<td>Age Reversing Essentrics</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00PM-3:30PM</td>
<td>ESL 100, 150, 250</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>$40/45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30–10:30AM</td>
<td>Whistlesizers *</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM–NOON</td>
<td>Mah-Jongg</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30AM–12:30PM</td>
<td>French All Levels</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15PM-2:00PM</td>
<td>Vietnamese Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00–3:00PM</td>
<td>Spanish 2 *</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00-4:00PM</td>
<td>Spanish 1 *</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$3/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00-4:00PM</td>
<td>Too Much Stuff?</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00AM–NOON</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15AM-12:15PM</td>
<td>Beginner Ukulele (5 weeks)</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>$40/45</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30AM–NOON</td>
<td>Persian Social Group</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30PM-1:30PM</td>
<td>Inter. Ukulele (6 weeks)</td>
<td>Register</td>
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<td>2:00PM-3:30PM</td>
<td>ESL 100, 150, 250</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>$40/45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30PM-5:00PM</td>
<td>Citizenship Exam Prep Class</td>
<td>Ongoing registration</td>
<td>$30/45</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00AM-10:00AM</td>
<td>Rollin’ Root Farmers’ Market</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30AM-10:30AM</td>
<td>Zumba Gold **</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00AM-NOON</td>
<td>Whistlesizers **</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$4/5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30PM-1:30PM</td>
<td>Italian 3 ** (11/1-12/20)</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>$30/35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00PM-2:00PM</td>
<td>Italian Study Group **</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$2/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00PM–2:30PM</td>
<td>Adv.Write Your Life Stories **</td>
<td>Prerequisite required</td>
<td>$20/30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00PM-3:00PM</td>
<td>Italian 2 ** (11/1-12/20)</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>$30/35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00-10:00AM</td>
<td>Community Breakfast 11/02</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$3/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30AM-NOON</td>
<td>CalFresh 11/2-11/16</td>
<td>Reg. 415-697-7411</td>
<td>free</td>
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<tr>
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<td>BrightStar Health Ck 11/9</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00AM-NOON</td>
<td>Brown Bag Pantry **</td>
<td>Register at 11:30 am</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00PM-2:30PM</td>
<td>Movie Club **</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30PM-3:00PM</td>
<td>Spanish Social Group **</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00PM–4:00PM</td>
<td>Ping-Pong **</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$2/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00PM-4:00PM</td>
<td>Yoga with Kelly **</td>
<td>Drop-in</td>
<td>$3/5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No class on Tuesday, Nov 6. Whistlestop is State Election Polling Place

**No class on Thanksgiving Thursday, November 22 or Friday, November 23, 2018

COMPUTER CLASSES
November & December 2018

Pre-registration & payment required: 415-456-9062

Tech Tips for Transportation
Tuesdays, Nov 13 & 20, 10am-noon (2 classes)
Fee: $10
In partnership with Marin Transit, this beginner class will teach you how to use your iPhone to get rides without a car. Download Uber and Lyft apps and learn how to use them. Learn about the Marin Transit navigator program and how to find the best bus routes. (Apple iPhone or iPad users only)

iPad/iPhone Basics 1: Getting to Know Your Device
Tuesdays, Dec 4 & 11, 10am-noon (2 classes)
Fee: $48 Maximum 8 people
In this two-week course, you’ll learn how to make calls, send emails, send texts, download music and add applications. One-on-one help and instructional handouts. (Bring your charged-up Apple device to class.)

ONGOING
Open Lab | No Fee
Every Monday and Wednesday, 10am-Noon
Use our Apple and PC computers to access the Internet. Volunteers are available for advice on problems with your laptops and tablets and software applications.

VOLUNTEER FAIR

Make a difference every day!
We are seeking friendly and reliable volunteers who want to give back to their community.

Date: November 8, 2018
Time: 3pm to 4:30pm
Location: 930 Tamalpais Ave.
San Rafael

Volunteer positions include:
• Home Delivered Grocery Shoppers (in partnership with Covia)
• CarePool volunteer drivers
• Meals on Wheels drivers
• Jackson Café lunch servers & cashiers
• General office help and Parking Services

For more information contact:
Laurie Vermont, Volunteer Program Manager
Phone: 415-456-9067 or
Email: volunteer@whistlestop.org

930 Tamalpais Ave., San Rafael, CA 94901 ∙ 415-456-9062
It all began with a dream—a dream shared by Guide Dogs for the Blind’s co-founders, Lois Merrihew and Don Donaldson, to create the first guide dog training school on the West Coast. They recognized the urgent need to help wounded servicemen returning from World War II without their sight. Today, 76 years later, Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) is proud to carry on its legacy as the largest guide dog school in North America.

Throughout Guide Dogs for the Blind’s history, the goal has remained the same: to increase independence, mobility, safety, and inclusion for individuals who are blind or have low vision. GDB is able to achieve this goal thanks to a passionate community of staff, donors, and volunteers. In fact, since GDB’s founding, our amazing community has helped support the creation of more than 14,000 guide dog teams throughout the US and Canada!

The comprehensive services provided by Guide Dogs for the Blind are provided free of charge to those it serves, and includes: the cost of the guide dog; client transportation to and from its campuses in California and Oregon for two weeks of in-residence training; and comprehensive post-graduate support. GDB offers its graduates a world-class alumni association; financial assistance for veterinary care, as needed; in-person follow-up visits; access to a dedicated support center, and other benefits.

As these quotes from GDB’s grads convey, its exceptional guide dogs make such a positive difference in the lives of their handlers:

“I feel safe, comfortable, accepted, and just part of everyday life.”

“Thank you for giving me my freedom and the ability to make my own joy in this world.”

“My dogs have been my soul mates, my super heroes.”

GDB receives no government funding and relies on the generous support of its donors and volunteers to fulfill its life-changing mission. Donors help through general contributions, grants, honor or memorial gifts, bequests, and numerous estate planning options. Guide Dogs for the Blind is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, charitable organization and all donations are fully tax deductible.

Volunteering with GDB is a great way to give back while connecting with GDB’s mission. To learn more about joining the Guide Dogs for the Blind community, touring the campus, or attending a graduation, please visit guidedogs.com or call 800-295-4050.

Guide Dogs Offer Freedom

By Karen Woon, Vice President of Marketing, Guide Dogs for the Blind

You Can Make a Difference

Join the Whistlestop Family by making a gift

I want to become a monthly supporter with a gift of:

☐ $10  ☐ $15  ☐ $20  ☐ $50     ________ /month

Or make a single donation in the amount of:

☐ $500  ☐ $250  ☐ $125  ☐ $100  ☐ ________

Billing Info

Name ________________________________
Address ______________________________
Phone _______________ Email ___________

Payment Info

☐ MC  ☐ Visa  CC# ________________________
Exp Date _______________ 3 Digit Code __________

Mail to:
930 Tamalpais Ave, San Rafael 94901

Thank You!
Getting Around

Gratitude for Being Able to Help Others

By Joanna Huit, Mobility Manager

When the idea of gratitude comes up, it’s hard to narrow in on one thing or person because there are countless things we can be grateful for. This month in particular, we in Transportation Services have been reflecting on how grateful we are for the opportunity our work gives us to assist people in accessing the things that help them thrive in the community, and to be able to learn and grow our skills as individuals.

Assist Those with Barriers to Accessing Needed Services – Jennifer Munoz, Call Center Lead, assists clients with eligibility and scheduling for Whistlestop transportation programs. She states that, “Assisting community members with transportation is such a rewarding job because I know that without our services, many clients wouldn’t be able to thrive in the community. I also am grateful that I’m able to assist people in their primary language. If we didn’t offer this service, many people may not have the opportunity to stay active and engaged.”

Building New Skills – Althea Boxley, Contracts Coordinator, has been with Whistlestop for three years. She says that she is grateful for her job because it allows her to build new skills. In the past year, she has coordinated the use of a new routing and scheduling system that improves our ability to serve our clients. Althea says, “Employment at Whistlestop has provided me the opportunity to advance my knowledge of systems that allow us to improve our operations and allows us to spend more time focusing on what matters – the people we serve.”

At Whistlestop Transportation Services, we have nearly 150 dedicated staff members who help provide transportation services for people across Marin. Each staff member brings something unique to our organization and the community we serve. We are grateful for all of our staff and their dedication to our mission, our clients, and our community!

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.” —Melody Beattie
New U.S. Citizen Expresses Gratitude

By John Bowman

Simin Vali of Novato is grateful to be a new U.S. citizen and is overjoyed that she was able to join her daughters here.

She came from Tehran, got her Green Card in 2007 and became a citizen about two months ago after completing classes at Whistlestop.

Her teacher, Mehrbanoo Esmaili, said, “Simin was a very good student. Very smart.”

She said that she has worked with Simin on her English for about two years, adding, “She had not had much education when she came here but she caught on quickly and speaks English now.”

Mrs. Esmaili attended Simin’s swearing-in ceremony in San Francisco and said, “It was an exciting, beautiful ceremony. Very emotional.”

Mrs. Esmaili has been volunteering at Whistlestop for 20 years, teaching Farsi speakers English and helping them prepare for US Citizenship tests.

Simin now lives with her daughters, Bita Mostofi, who is a US citizen, and Sima Mostofimoab, who has a Green Card. Her daughter, Roya Mostofimoab, lives in England. Her husband died years ago in Iran. Simin attends English classes at Whistlestop’s Active Aging Center on Mondays and Wednesdays. She enjoys visiting with her Persian community friends there, has lunch in the Jackson Café, and then rides home on a Whistlestop bus.

She said what she likes most about being here is being with her children.

When asked what she missed most about Iran she replied, “Nothing, really. I have my children and my Persian community at Whistlestop. That’s all I need.”

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Thanksgiving – a Time for Reflection and Gratitude

By Serena D’Arcy-Fisher, CFRE

I did not grow up with a Thanksgiving tradition but it has become my favorite holiday of the year. It’s a time when people open their hearts and homes and the bounty of their tables to family, friends and even strangers in a magnanimous way. It’s also time to reflect and express gratitude.

I have a long list of things I am grateful for every day. What are you most grateful for in your life?

Over the past two years, I have had the privilege of working with dedicated Whistlestop staff and volunteers, with a daily opportunity to meet the amazing clients who come to the Whistlestop Active Aging Center in downtown San Rafael for classes, socialization, and for nutritious meals in our Jackson Café. These older adults are the fortunate ones who know about Whistlestop’s services. My colleagues and I are acutely aware that there are thousands of less fortunate older adults and people living with disabilities here in Marin who struggle day to day. They are our forgotten poor. Many of them are our neighbors who must choose between food, medicine or rent, but are too proud to ask for help. Others suffer from isolation and loneliness, which leads to declining health.

This Thanksgiving I invite you to see who in your neighborhood or various circles might appreciate an extra helping hand or a show of kindness. There is a real joy in giving.

By donating to Whistlestop you help us continue to provide vital nourishing meals to homebound older adults and people living with disabilities. Your support also provides rides to medical appointments and grocery stores and to important social connections. Together, let’s help our community age with dignity, independence and grace.

To make a donation, please mail a check to Whistlestop, 930 Tamalpais Ave, San Rafael, CA 94901, or donate on our website at whistlestop.org. Please also consider supporting Whistlestop in your will so that your legacy may live on beyond your lifetime. Thank you for your generous consideration. May you have a joyful Thanksgiving.