



# West Marin Senior Services NEWSLETTER Honoring Volunteerism

"Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value." - Albert Einstein

Spring 2011

wmss.org

**OUR MISSION:**  
to help seniors live safely  
and with dignity in our  
community

**OUR SERVICES:**  
Care management,  
screening & placing  
homecare workers,  
preparing & delivering  
Meals from Friends,  
assisting with  
transportation,  
information, referrals,  
assisted living in  
West Marin  
and much more.

**Creamery Annex**  
PO Box 791  
Pt. Reyes Station  
CA 94956  
415-663-8148  
415-663-1268 (fax)  
www.wmss.org

**Stockstill House**  
12051 State Route One  
Pt. Reyes Station  
CA 94956  
415-663-0722

## The Benefits of Volunteering

Perhaps the first and biggest benefit people get from volunteering is the satisfaction of making a difference. The intangible benefits alone—such as pride and accomplishment—are worthwhile reasons to become involved. "Volunteering can help with depression. Helping others feels good, providing a connection with your own values and strengths. Getting out & about is good for you," says Pam Osborn, R.N., Program Director of WMSS.



Nicasio Valley  
4-H sing-a-long at  
Stockstill House

In addition, when we share our time and talents, we...  
...build social connections and relationships.  
...feel connected, make a difference in our community.  
...improve the lives of others.

Research demonstrates that volunteering leads to better health and that older volunteers are the most likely to receive physical and mental health benefits from their volunteer activities. \*

Volunteer activities can strengthen social ties that protect individuals from isolating themselves during difficult times. Helping others leads to a greater sense of self-worth & trust. \*

\* Corporation for National & Community Services. A Review of Recent Research.



Chloe Cook, Director of Volunteers

Bring your talents & energy to our residents. Play our piano, do an arts & crafts project, plant a garden or bake cookies.

## ROAR at Stockstill House

We had a wonderful gathering in January at our monthly tea. The West Marin chapter of ROAR (Reach Out and Read) shared poetry & a variety of original and borrowed works. One of our Stockstill residents knew the words to the Shakespeare sonnets read

by Linda Beigel and he recited them along with her. Thank you ROAR members Lynda Beigel, Claudia Chapline, Barbara Martin, Devi Weisenberg and Sandra Cross for sharing your intimate poetry. The next ROAR event at Stockstill House will be April 27 at 3 pm.

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ANNUAL REPORT  
2009 – 2010

CONNECTING SENIORS TO SERVICES

*If you'd like our latest  
Annual Report, call or  
email us & we'll send  
you one.*

**Katie Warfield, Stockstill House volunteer**

When I spontaneously stopped by WMSS, Chloe invited me over to Stockstill House for my first visit (I had been donating flowers I had grown & learned the residents had cut & arranged them). It was a treat to finally meet everyone. I was particularly impressed with all the windows & the smell of home cooked meals. It is the best experience of elder care I have ever seen. Being a licensed massage therapist, I asked about the possibility of volunteering. It has been lovely! Seeing Jim with his eyes closed & a broad smile warms my heart. I am equally touched when Phyllis lifts her head up in the midst of her massage and says, "This is the life!" One of my favorite poetry lines from Galway Kinnels, "Sometimes it's necessary to reteach a thing its loveliness." This describes my deepest intention in offering massage at Stockstill House. Each hand & foot, and shoulder & leg, is as beautiful and loveable as it ever was, and is worthy of great care and delight. May we all remember our "loveliness" now and always! I am grateful to enjoy all the "loveliness" that is undeniably at Stockstill House.

**Debbi Seymour of Lagunitas**

As I write to convey the "who, why & what" reasons that have kept me volunteering for the last 12 years for Meals from Friends, the "who" I am is easy. I'm just a regular person (now 63) who went to nursing school, raised 3 children, worked as a paralegal, bookkeeper, bartender and treasurer of the San Geronimo Valley Lions Club. But, the highlight of my week is each Wednesday, when I take an hour to drive through the valley delivering meals. As I write, I realize the "why" I volunteer is much easier than the "who." Plain & simple, I like to help others, whether they are seniors disconnected from family, assisting the disabled, tutoring children or whatever makes ME feel good. Delivering those meals is SO easy & has made me countless friends over the years. I LOVE the light in their eyes when I stop in to check on their welfare with a meal & a smile. "What" I do is simple....sometimes my Wednesday friends want nothing but their meal & a smile. On some occasions there's a small problem: like a propane smell, or heater malfunction. Just a quick phone call to a repair person or WMSS brings help. The point is: No matter how busy anyone is, for their own wellbeing they should find an hour a week to give to others. The rewards? Your efforts will inspire others to give.



## Support our local restaurants who support Meals from Friends

**Meals from Friends** is an all donation, all volunteer home delivered, hot meal program. Individual cooks & drivers help deliver 175-180 meals a month. Along with our home cooks, we have many restaurants who donate their food & time.

Please support & thank all the local restaurants who help feed our home bound seniors through this program.

The restaurants listed below donate hot meals 1-2 times a month for 6-9 people in Inverness/Pt. Reyes or the San Geronimo Valley:

**Cowgirl Creamery, Lagunitas Deli, Olema Inn, Olema Farmhouse, Pine Cone Diner, Priscilla's, Spirit Rock Meditation Center, Station House Café, Two Bird Café Whale of a Deli and the Woodacre Market.**

Next time you are enjoying a meal at one of these restaurants, please let them know much you appreciate their commitment to this important program.

## How you can make a difference . . .

**WEST MARIN SENIOR SERVICES launches a new ride program for seniors!**



**West Marin TRIPtrans** is a volunteer driver service that provides transportation assistance to seniors. Due to a generous grant from the Marin Transit Authority, we can now reimburse drivers their mileage. If you need rides or want to provide transportation for seniors, call Chloe Cook to participate.

### MEALS from FRIENDS

Prepare 6 to 9 meals once a month or more for home-bound, low income clients:  
Where: San Geronimo Valley or Pt. Reyes/Inverness.

**Deliver** hot meals once a month or more for home-bound, low income clients:  
Where: San Geronimo Valley or Pt. Reyes/Inverness.



### FRIENDLY VISITING



This program provides dedicated, caring volunteers who offer genuine companionship to West Marin seniors. We will match you with a senior and ask you to meet at least once a week.

This program encourages lasting relationships for seniors who are feeling alone.

## ONGOING EVENTS for SENIORS

**Dance Palace/Pt. Reyes Senior Lunch:** every Thurs. @ 12:30 (call the Dance Palace for reservations)  
**Bingo:** 2nd Thurs., 1:15  
**Blood Pressure Clinic:** 4th Thurs., noon-1  
**Exercise for Life:** Mon. & Wed., 11:15-12:15  
**Gentle Yoga:** Fri., 10:45-noon  
**Senior Friendship Circle:** Fri., 10:15-noon  
**Stockstill House Monthly Tea:** 4th Wed., 3-4 pm

### Tomales Presbyterian Church

**Sit & Be Fit:** Tues. & Thurs., 9:30-10:30

### Stinson Beach/Bolinas

**Whitecaps Pot Luck Luncheon:** 3rd Thurs., 11:30 at the Bolinas Rod & Boat Club  
**Stinson Beach Community Center Senior Stretch:** Tues., 11-noon

### San Geronimo Valley Community Center

**Senior Luncheon:** Thurs., noon-1  
**Bingo:** Thurs., 1:15-2:00  
**Bookmobile:** 4th Thurs., 1:30

### Walnut Place

**Sit and Be Fit:** Thurs., 11:15-noon

WMSS in collaboration with Alzheimer's Assoc. will be addressing the concerns & challenges of loved ones with dementia.

May 16th, 10 am - 12 pm  
Dance Palace Church Space

We have meaningful and fun volunteer opportunities waiting for you. Call Chloe Cook, Director of Volunteers at 663-8148 x114 to learn how you can make a difference.

## STOCKSTILL HOUSE WISH LIST:

- Bird bath & feeder
- 12 twin sheet sets (deep pocket)
- 12 pillow cases
- 5 wall clocks
- Pruning & clipping tools
- Tool box w/ basic tool set
- Shampoo and soap

Stockstill House  
Brick Campaign

WMSS is the grateful recipient of pro-bono services from Meeks, Coates + Eaton Architects. Michelle Eaton, of Forest Knolls, is the lead architect for our Donor Recognition Patio.

Donors who have contributed \$1,000 or more in a fiscal year qualify for a brick. If you would like your name or that of a loved one engraved on a brick and included in the donor recognition patio, call Joan Corbett, ED at 663-8148. This October will be the unveiling to celebrate our 35 year anniversary of WMSS.



Creamery Annex  
PO Box 791  
Pt. Reyes Station, CA 94956

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## POSTAL FRIEND

### Paul Coopersmith, Meals from Friends

When I was in my forties, and living in the East Bay, the idea of doing volunteer work cropped up from time to time. But it wasn't until I moved to West Marin that I felt sufficiently motivated to give it a try. I realized that by volunteering I would get to meet some of my fellow West Mariners, thereby lessening the feeling of isolation that came with having moved to a rural community. I called Senior Services, and settled on a once-a-week "Meals from Friends" position.



I was surprised by how much I enjoyed my new role. Without exception, the people I met were grateful, gracious, interesting, and glad for my company, as I was for theirs. Just as an acquaintance of mine had predicted years earlier, I soon realized I was receiving more than I gave.

There is, of course, a downside to this kind of service. Many of the people to whom I've delivered meals over the years have been near the end of their life's journey. As someone who, prior to volunteering for Senior Services, never had to mourn the loss of an immediate family member or even a good friend, working in this capacity has necessitated my developing a certain stoicism. There are good days, but some very sad ones, too.

That said, I wouldn't dream of giving up my one-evening-a-week deliveries. I am continually grateful for the opportunity to help my fellow West Mariners, playing my part in enabling them to remain in the comfort, warmth, and familiarity of their own homes. For this I thank the good folks at West Marin Senior Services. And I feel honored so many who have helped make West Marin such a special place, have allowed me to sit with them as night sets in.