



REDWOOD COAST SENIOR CENTER NEWSLETTER

JULY 2010

BBQ, Beer, & Back Porch Music

A new tradition is about to begin at the Redwood Coast Senior Center. On Saturday evening, July 24, everyone is invited to an old fashioned Barbecue Dinner. From 5:00 to 8:00, Chef Sal will be serving up a huge platter of marinated, slow grill cooked chicken and tri tip with potato salad, corn on the cob, garlic bread, and home baked apple pie and coffee for \$15.00. The bar will be open, serving beer from our own prize winning North Coast Brewery, wine from local vineyards, and special margaritas.



All that is only half the fun! Across the hall from the main dining room the "Back Porch Pub" will be open from 5:30 to 9:30 featuring the down home style music of John Pitts and John Bush. Regulars for the last 25 years at the famous Comptche Father's Day BBQ, this dynamic duo are taking time out from their other musical obligations and heading to the coast for this exclusive, not to be missed performance. If you like great guitar picking and vocalizing, and hearing all your favorite songs performed in real down home style, come on by the Senior Center and settle in for an entertaining evening. The Pub Bar will be serving small BBQ plates for \$8.00 if you just want to catch the show and a lighter meal.

This special all-age event marks the beginning of a series monthly celebrations for the whole community to enjoy our beautiful Senior Center Building next to Cotton Auditorium on Harold Street. All proceeds from these great food and music gatherings will benefit the various programs that support local elders here on the North Coast.

How Expensive is a Free Lunch?

By Charles Bush

Keeping everybody fed - that's the most important thing that happens here at the Senior Center! Every month folks have about 4,000 great meals, either here in our dining room, or if they can't get out, delivered to their home. Eating with our friends regularly, or getting that daily visit and meal at home becomes a regular part of the pleasure of each day.

One of the greatest things our federal government has done is to provide respect and support for the elders of our communities. There were three important kinds of support that were valued so much, that they became part of our way of doing things. The first was Social Security in 1935 - a small pension for all elders who worked and cared for their communities. The second was Medicare in 1965, which made sure that health care would be available as we aged. The third was the Aging Americans Act in 1975, that help set up Seniors Centers all across the country to provide food, support and social centers for elders everywhere.

If you get around to visiting other senior centers you notice that we have a much better building and dining room than most places. Our local community made sure of that by letting us have this beautiful old school building. We also have one of the best Chefs, and kitchen crew anywhere! Twenty five volunteers help every week to make every meal easy and fun. What a blessing!

Now all of this is not free. It costs about \$7.50 for each meal we serve. That's \$360,000 a year! On the other hand, it is free, or available for whatever you can contribute, for every person in this community who is at least 60 years old. It's such a great, simple idea - the whole community contributes to this wonderful service for the elders out of appreciation and respect. We spent many years sharing the burdens of creating a great society, and the Senior Center is one of the ways that society honors us.

Of course we elders continue to take care of both ourselves, our families and our community in lots of ways. We

directly pay one third of the cost of the meals here at the Senior Center. The federal government pays its third. We raise the other third from the local community directly in contributions. In order to maintain our part, we ask each person to donate toward every meal they eat.

The question is - how much should each person donate? The answer is - whatever you are able, comfortably to afford. I would like to suggest you consider a range of \$4.00 - \$6.00. Now everyone can't necessarily afford that much, and no one should feel obligated to give more than they can. At the same time, if we have more, it's good to give more. If you have a big old pile of money lying around, you could donate \$100 every meal! If you hardly have any money, you should eat for free.

Right now we receive an average of about \$2.50 from you for every meal we serve. The Federal Government pitches in about \$2.50 for each meal - actually a little less this coming year. Since it costs \$7.50 per meal, then I have to get out and raise the other \$2.50+ from community donations and fund raising events.

So I'm asking you to do three things to help me out. First, contribute a little more for lunch if you can - an extra dollar or two a week from everybody would amount to \$50,000 a year - the amount we are losing this year in government funding! Second, celebrate the fact that you built and live in a community that respects and appreciates all its elders by supporting our Senior Center. And third, be grateful that we have enough to make sure that every senior citizen of our community gets food and hospitality here regardless of how wealthy they are and how much they can afford to pay.

Looking for Something to Do?

by Patti Brill

Our **COMPUTER LAB** opens at 8:00 am, 5 days a week. Six computers are available. A printer is available as well, which can be used for a small donation per page. An instructor is available each Thursday at 10:30 to help with your questions.

Low-impact **EXERCISE CLASSES** especially for seniors are

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10:30 – 11:30.

Tuesday and Wednesday **MOVIES** at 12:30; admission is free, and so is the popcorn. Look for the posters!

A registered nurse is available to take your **BLOOD PRESSURE** free of charge every Wednesday at 11:30.

SENIOR CHORUS led by Ira Rosenberg meets on Friday, 1:00 – 3:00. A chance to perform your favorite traditional jazz standards. Ocean Wave **QUILTERS** meet Tuesdays 2:00 – 4:00. Hand quilting and a great chance to visit and learn about the art of quilting. Duplicate **BRIDGE** event held every Tuesdays at 6:00 pm.

TOASTMASTERS International helps you develop your public speaking and leadership skills through practice and feedback. Meets Wednesdays 10:45 – 1:00.

Play **BINGO** twice on Thursday: Nickel Bingo from 1:30 – 3:30 pm, and the big high stakes (well not really that high) game from 7:00 – 9:30 pm. Volunteer to work in the Senior Center's **KITCHEN GARDEN** – get your hands dirty, grow food and help beautify the Center, Thursdays 10:00 – 11:30.

Happy July Birthdays

by Clytie Potter

On behalf of the Redwood Coast Senior Center, we would like to extend a "Happy Birthday" wish to all the guests and visitors whose birthdays will be celebrated in July.

We would like to especially recognize the July birthdays of staff members and loyal volunteers who contribute to the everyday success of the center. Without the continuity of dedicated staff and loyal volunteers, the Center would be unable to provide diverse services to the senior citizens of our community.

Florence Dahl is a volunteer for Preston Hall in Mendocino. Florence has been a dedicated volunteer for the last 20 years. **Toni Fernandez** has been serving diners at Redwood Coast Senior Center for many, many years. We appreciate you, Toni! **David Jenks**, our own favorite local artist, paints the portraits that hang on our walls. Keep the good work David!

Peter Moylan, has been volunteering for many years, arriving early in the morning to make the coffee and get the day going. **Sharon Stegmen** is one of the early bird volunteers who arrive every Friday to prep and reset all the tables in the dining room. **Nancy Struthers** is another of our long time favorite dining room servers who has helped out for years. **Jack Struthers** is one of our magical bus drivers who provides personal transportation to seniors – it's as easy as a phone call. Need a ride, call 964-0443!

Volunteer Heros

by Charles Bush

The most popular activity at the Senior Center is having lunch with friends. But the next favorite thing to do is helping out as a volunteer. Nearly fifty of us work every week to staff, clean and maintain the dining room, deliver meals to people's homes, run the thrift store, tend the garden, help in the office, pack food for children, provide day care support staff special events, and serve on the Board of Directors. Most of the volunteer staff are seniors. If we had to hire people to do that work it would cost more than \$100,000 every year. Our government contracts require us to match some of the money we are awarded each year – and we do that with the value of our volunteers.

Serving as a volunteer is so important – there would literally not be a Senior Center without the volunteer staff! Being part of a volunteer team working here at the Center is just as demanding, rewarding, and vital as taking a paid, important job in any other business. The reward is making a contribution to your own community, and helping to maintain a high level of hospitality here for your own neighbors and friends. It takes skill, patience and dedication to join the volunteer staff. I urge you to give it a try.

My job here really doesn't include working in the Dining Room most days – that's my volunteer contribution – and it is the favorite part of my day. I especially love joining a different crew every day – and having the more experienced volunteers show me what to do to make the dining room work smoothly.

We need a few new people to take on some shifts or be available for backup in the Day Program, Dining Room, Thrift Store, Garden, working on newsletters, making signs - well, just about everywhere. If you would like to lend a hand just catch me in the dining room or come by the office and pick up an application – we can make an appointment and figure out where your help would be most important.

Need Help? - Give us a call by Waldi Helma

Have you every been overwhelmed by navigating through information, filling out forms, or simply getting frustrated dealing with agencies? Redwood Coast Senior Center is offering support services to anyone who is at least 60 yrs. or who is a caregiver addressing issues faced by a senior.

Professional staff will guide you diverse forms you need such as Medicare or Energy Assistant. We provide information and referrals about housing, legal advice, or caregiving agencies. We advocate for you if you're dealing with a difficult situation or don't get anywhere with agencies like Social Security Administration, Insurance, Telephone or Utility Companies.

We also offer various support groups. The Caregiving Support Group meets from 10:30 – 11:30 on the first Friday of the Month. Our Vision Support Group meets at 10:30 – 11:30 On the second Wednesday of the Month. On July 14th we'll have a guest speaker who will provide information about vision products. AA meetings are available on Monday and Thursday evenings and Sunday morning. Call 964 0443 for more detailed information.

Another service is our Meals on Wheels program. We deliver hot meals to seniors who are not able to consistently shop or cook for themselves. Our consultation service is extended to homebound seniors through home visits.

Granny's Attic - A New Look by Beth

Some of you might have noticed the Senior Center's thrift store, Granny's Attic, has been making some changes. We are

trying to utilize Granny's tremendous potential to help increase income to benefit the R.C.S.C.'s many irreplaceable programs. Our most recent success is the increase in donations and the new consignment program that was started in May. The amount of sales of consignment items has far exceeded our expectations. Sales are soaring!

We are successfully selling a variety of quality clothing, household items and fine jewelry. It's a great way to clean out some of your unused items that are just too good to give away. It's a great way to get a little extra cash too! Please see Beth in Granny's Attic for details. We will soon be adding a layaway program to compliment the addition of the consignments. Please stop in and see what's new!

Social Day Program Expands by Elizabeth Morton

Good news! The Circle of Elders Social Day Program has expanded. The State budget cuts have created one positive impact on day programs. Prior to the budget cuts participants had to have dementia, chronic illness or some other disability. Now seniors experiencing social and emotional isolation can also attend. Do you know anyone seeking more connection with others and a lot more fun in their life? We are asking you to help us spread the word.

A study by San Francisco's Institute on Aging finds that adult day programs play a vital role in helping senior participants maintain their health and independence. After one year, day program participants reported significantly fewer problems with regular daily activities than those not attending. They also felt their quality of life had improved which researchers say can result in better health and longer life. The study shows that day programs make good sense for older people who simply need a fuller life and the help to continue living in their own homes despite the challenges of aging. Come check out the Circle of Elders Day Program!

Exciting New Programs Coming

by Charles Bush

Watch for the special announcement on the back of the August Menu about four exciting new programs starting here at the Senior Center in August. We are truly planning “something for everybody”. Look for the schedule of these events!

Do you want to dance? Ed Tausic, local Square Dance Caller/Instructor is going to be offering an 8 week Beginner Square Dancing Class. You can come with a partner and try it out before making a commitment for the whole class. Ed is very experienced, and a wonderful teacher. If you’ve never square danced - here is your chance to learn, and if you know how - come and dance.

How about a new Arts Program being offered by Cecile Cutler and Carol Deetch? You will have an opportunity to work in a relaxed environment which nurtures creative expression and artistic development. Various projects in drawing, painting, collage, and movement will be available. Catch the menu for more information.

Ever wished you could be part of a Knitting and Crocheting Group? Whether you want to learn, or just want to share the experience with good company, you will be able to join Betty Graubard who will help this program get organized and will be available to help those without experience. Catch more details on the August Menu.

Finally, for you scholars, the Center will offer a special weekly discussion group focused on “The Wisdom of History”, a series of short DVD presentations by awarding winning Professor J. Rufus Fears. Finally a chance to see what we can learn from the mistakes and successes of great events in our past. Don’t miss the details along with the August Menu.