



October 2020  
Volume 31 - No. 10

# The Scoop

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UKIAH SENIOR CENTER

## A Tale of Two Programs...



**Peer Counseling**

**Transportation**



## Community Spotlight

A grateful thank you for all the donations we receive on a daily basis from members of our community. We have been graciously gifted fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods and many other items. These donations have been a great addition to our To Go Meals and are available for our members to take home and enjoy as well.

*"So many in our community have brought in food, garden vegetables, fruit and supplies on a weekly basis. So many are struggling and yet still give to support our seniors and don't want to be recognized. Our kitchen staff appreciates everything we receive."* Lisa Silva, Chef -Kitchen Manager



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# Message from the Director

Dear USC Community,

With astonishment that it is already October, I keep finding moments to pause and feel gratitude for the Ukiah Senior Center and everyone who makes what we do possible. Our Members, Donors, Staff, Volunteers and Community Partners each play a role to ensure we make a difference in the lives of seniors every day.

Along with gratitude, I feel a great deal of compassion for those of us being impacted by the fires. Personally, I had to evacuate in August for a whole week, and while relocating with my cats to family and friends' houses, I realized how invaluable it is to be at home. I feel that the Ukiah Senior Center is another home for me. Here I am welcomed, people care how I'm doing, and there's an overall sense of belonging which is one of the essential needs we all have as human beings.

In September, we started off Labor Day weekend with another big sale in Bartlett Hall and the Thrift Store, bringing in close to \$2,000 just from one day of sales. Our thrift store continues to be a strong point for us as people appreciate having a local place to shop for gifts for others or themselves with diverse items. One gentleman I met was shopping for his granddaughter who lives out of state. He remarked with the 50% off sale that he's spending less on the gifts for her than he will pay to mail them.

Our programs also continue to shine with our Meal Program sometimes surpassing 80 in one day. Transportation and Senior Peer Counseling, which are highlighted in this issue, both remain strong in serving seniors to ensure their connectedness to others and the larger community. And our Outreach is a constant resource for anyone seeking information on how to meet their needs or the needs of a loved one.

In closing, I wish for each of you reading this to have a moment when the sun shines through the haziness and you feel grounded in the present moment knowing you are a part of something greater than yourself. You may never know how many lives you've touched but when you come to the Senior Center, as you see smiles reach under the masks, you will know you belong here.



## Recognizing Staff Anniversaries



Debbie Zimmerer has worked at the Ukiah Senior Center for 13 years. She is currently our Volunteer Coordinator/ Bartlett Hall Manager. Throughout her time at USC she has worked in several programs. Debbie said her favorite part about working at USC is the Seniors and Volunteers. USC volunteers say "They love and respect Debbie."

Bruce Jones has worked at the Ukiah Senior Center the past two years in the Transportation Department as a bus driver. Transportation Manager, Sheryl Mitcham says "Our riders love Bruce. They say he is always on time, courteous and goes above and beyond to help passengers" Thank you Bruce for being an important part of USC.



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# *Thank You to Our Supporters*

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## *Sustaining Donors*

Community Foundation of Mendocino County \* Eva Dunnebeck Estate Fund

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### *Donations Made In Memory of...*

Vondalee Weston from Francine Benassini



## *Recent Donors*

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BECOME A VOLUNTEER - MAKE A DIFFERENCE



As we gradually and safely reopen our services, we are in need of volunteers!

### ***Opportunities include***

Health Van Driver

Thrift Store Assistant

Office Support

Lunch Prep

Call our Volunteer Manager,  
Debbie Zimmerer to learn more!

## *Ask Heather...*



An advice column from our esteemed Outreach Manager, Heather Haydon.

- I'm moving out of the area. My elderly mother is still very independent, I still worry about her living alone. How do I still have peace of mind?

*Our Outreach Program does what we like to call a "friendly visit"... Ranging from a simple phone call once a month to weekly home visits and anything in-between.*

- I live on the outskirts of Redwood Valley and need a ride into Ukiah for a medical appointment. The Senior Center's bus service is not available where I live. What other options do I have?

*The Senior Health Transport van is a service we provide to help seniors get to their out-of-town appointments. This van can also be used locally*

**To submit questions to Heather call 707-462-4343 x102  
or e-mail Heather at  
[outreach@ukiahseniorcenter.org](mailto:outreach@ukiahseniorcenter.org).**

## *USC Recognizes A Key Volunteer...*



The volunteer we would like to recognize this month is Gretel Townsend. You may have seen Gretel in Bartlett Hall while picking up a lunch or grabbing a cup of coffee to go. That's because Gretel has been volunteering at USC for the last 15 years. After giving so much of her time to USC, she decided it is time to hang up her apron and take a little time for herself. Gretel has seen changes throughout the years, and with Covid-19 she says "its so different because everyone stays home". Upon further reflection of how Covid-19 has impacted USC, she shared how she misses the events like the monthly Ice Cream Socials and the Dances where she enjoyed a little dancing after food service was over." Gretel continued to volunteer during the Shelter in Place because she really enjoyed working with Lisa Silva, USC Chef and other staff at USC. For now she says she will spend her time with daily visits to see a friend who is in a convalescent home, she will putter around her home and enjoy a glass of wine with a friend. Lisa Silva, USC Chef says "*Gretel is truly one of the kindest, gentlest and classiest ladies I have ever met.*"



USC thanks you Gretel for your many years of support and service.





# A Tale of Two Programs

## Peer Counseling & Transportation



By Rachael McDavid

Every day, I witness so many moments where seniors are being served by the Ukiah Senior Center. I also know there are many moments I witness because they are happening behind the scenes. Two ways that lives are being supported by USC that you may not know much about are the Senior Peer Counseling program and Transportation. This is a story of two programs, two very distinct ways we are making a difference in the lives of seniors with a common theme that may surprise you.

The Senior Peer Counseling program is a very much behind the scenes service where Senior Volunteers are trained and led by our esteemed Patti Ridella, a registered nurse. “It is very enjoyable as we are able to be a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on at times for our clients,” shares Patti who has run the program for two years with over 12 years of home health and case management experience. “It makes a positive impact in a senior’s life in a small way. Our clients usually stay with us for several years as a part of their support system.”

The Senior Peer Counseling program begins with a referral from a community agency such as the VA, Adult Protective Services, or Cancer Center, and with a follow up phone call from Patti to get a clear understanding of their needs; if the services seem like a good fit, an appointment is set for an assessment. During the assessment, Patti also conducts a medication survey. This meeting is open to family members or a support person who the client would like to bring.

After the initial assessment, Patti matches the individual with a Senior Peer Counselor, in the first meeting there is an agreement and paperwork completed. With COVID, much of this is now done over the phone. “COVID has changed everything,” Patti reflects. “No physical contact unless agreed upon by both parties in an outside setting with masks on and social distancing. That is often a chore for some and the client may choose telephonic visits.”

Currently, Patti’s team includes three elderly volunteers and herself. “They’ve been with the program for many years and are a dedicated group providing an excellent and much needed service to the community. Our senior volunteers enjoy helping other seniors. They’re compassionate and dedicated. It also gives them a sense of purpose.”

When asked about a successful moment for the Program, Patti remembers how one client with a paranoid disability struggled with boundaries as the client would often call the Counselor outside of the regular meeting times. “Staff would talk the client down and assist with positive imaging and deep breathing techniques. Over the course of two years this client became more independent in recognizing triggers and using breathing techniques.” Although this person has relocated out of the area, Patti remains connected with the client.

The Senior Peer Counseling Program is always on the lookout for new volunteers. If someone wishes to make a referral or ask about volunteering, they are encouraged to call Patti Ridella at (530) 368-6176 or leave a message with the Ukiah Senior Center. No experience is necessary. Volunteers must be reliable to make the scheduled client phone calls.

The other program I would like to highlight is our Transportation services. Although its more visibly recognized with our three distinguishable buses, the stories are not so well known. Francine Benassini, a Member and Volunteer, shares her own experience of using our bus services. “I love the drivers, they’re like extended family,” Francine said. “I know customer service, having worked at Savings Bank for 39 years, and the Transportation team knows customer service very well.” Francine reflects on the many staff who make it possible for her to travel around town on our buses including the drivers to the dispatch team. “Vicki and Sheryl are wonderful,” Francine says about Dispatch.

*Continued on page 5*

I then spoke with Sheryl Mitcham, the Transportation Program Manager, and she shares that for her, one of the highlights of her day is talking with the riders. "I love talking to the people on the phone," Sheryl shares, "I would love to meet each of them in person. They are wonderful people, and are like my friends." When asked about how she would describe our services, she first says how caring the drivers are toward the riders. "The drivers, Debbie Mothershed, Mike Navarro, and Bruce Jones are very willing to help our seniors. They are so compassionate, and want the best for our seniors."

The typical rider is someone who does not want to or cannot drive and may be in a wheelchair, which requires a vehicle with a lift. Our service includes door-through-door service, which means we assist the rider from getting from their home to the bus, and from the bus to their destination whether that is the doctor's office or the store. While I was interviewing Sheryl for this article, one of our drivers, Debbie Mothershed, came in and shared a story of a particular rider who had her caregiver with her. "I'm really impressed by the daughter who cares for her mom," Debbie says. "You don't see that level of care a lot." Debbie went on to share about another rider with who she has developed a friendship. "Because I take her to many appointments, over time I can't help but get attached and care about her." Debbie went on to say how that rider is sometimes nervous and unsteady when using her walker and so Debbie helps guide her. "I gently guide the walker and it gives her comfort."

Later Sheryl recalls that sometimes people just want a ride on the bus because they are feeling isolated due to COVID19. "We offer them any place in town they wish to go and if it is just to get out of the house, we make that possible."

Our staff can schedule an appointment Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 8:00am and 5:00pm. Please call our main number (707) 462-4343 to schedule a ride today .

You may have found while reading this article the common thread for these two unique programs: Relationships give meaning to our lives and through the Ukiah Senior Center we are connecting our seniors to show how

## How You Can Support USC

### Sponsor a Senior Health Ride

Ensure a senior in need is able to get to their doctors' appointments local or out of town

- Ukiah—\$6.00
- Willits—\$30.00
- Santa Rosa—\$70.00



### Pay it Forward

Sponsor a Meal or Ride for a Senior

\_\_\_ # Meals X \$7.00 = \_\_\_

\_\_\_ # Rides X \$7.00 = \_\_\_

Mail this coupon with your donation to  
499 Leslie Street,  
Ukiah, CA 95482

OR

Bring by the office Monday  
through Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM

Call to find out how you can donate online



# Resources

USC is here for you!

Call our NEW Senior Chat Line

Monday through Friday 10 AM to 4 PM

We provide compassion, a listening ear  
and resources

Don't hesitate, call us at

1-844-744-8509



Order a Delicious Meal by Calling  
(707) 468-9256

For Same Day Orders, call by 7:30 AM

## Catch a Ride!

The USC Bus Service is Available  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday  
from 8 AM to 5 PM

Call 707-462-4343 x101 to Schedule



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# October Lunch Menu



Due to COVID-19 meals are only available for takeout.

To reserve your meal, call (707) 468-9256.

Same day reservations must be made by 7:30 am

Meals are \$7.00 each or purchase a 5 meal ticket card for \$30

*Meal items subject to change based on availability*

**Monday—Thursday meals prepared by: Chef Lisa Silva & USC Staff**

**Friday meals prepared by: Stan's Maple Cafe**

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
			1 Liver & Onion OR Chef Salad	2 Chicken Enchiladas Rice & Beans
5 Cheese Burgers with all the fixings JoJo Fries	6 Lasagna Veggies Salad Garlic Bread	7 Denver Omelets French Toast Sausage	8 Chicken Piccata Risotto Veggies	9 Fish & Chips Clam Chowder Cole Slaw
12 Roast Pork Loin with Gravy Apple Cranberry Stuffing Green Beans	13 Fried Chicken & Waffles	14 Hot Roast Beef Sandwich Creamy Celery Potato & Cauliflower Soup Macaroni Salad	15 Fish Tacos with Shrimp Kabobs Veggies	<i>Lisa's Birthday Lunch</i> Stuffed Peppers Pasta Caesar Salad Pumpkin Cheesecake
19 Beef Stew with Biscuits Green Salad	20 Hot Rubeen Sandwich Potato Salad Fresh Fruit	21 Ham Mac & Cheese Veggies	22 Steak Fajita Chili Corn Bread Cilantro Rice	23 Chicken Fried Steak with Gravy Mashed Potatoes Veggies
26 Hamburger Steak with Onion Gravy Herb Mashed Potatoes Veggies	27 Pasta w/Meat Sauce Green Salad Potato Rolls	28 Tuna Noodle Casserole Veggies	29 Chicken Pesto Pizza Garden Salad w/Ranch	30 French Dip Potato Salad Fruit

**THANK YOU TO OUR RECENT SUPPORTORS OF THE LUNCH PROGRAM**





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***50% Storewide***

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*Call Us to Learn More*

*707-462-4343 ext 107*



**Plus! Meet Our New Store  
Manager, Mary Glanders !**



# WILD FIRE SEASON IS UPON US: ARE YOU PREPARED ?



Put together your emergency supply kit long before a wildfire or other disaster occurs and keep it easily accessible so you can take it with you when you have to evacuate. Plan to be away from your home for an extended period of time. Each person should have a readily accessible emergency supply kit. Backpacks work great for storing these items (except food and water) and are quick to grab. Storing food and water in a tub or chest on wheels will make it easier to transport. Keep it light enough to be able to lift it

## BE PREPARED FOR EVACUATION Emergency Supply Kit Checklist

- Face masks or coverings
- 3 day supply of non-perishable food & 3 gallons of water per person
- Map marked with at least two evacuation routes
- Prescriptions or any special medications
- Change of clothing
- An extra set of car keys, credit cards, cash or traveler's checks
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- Sanitation supplies
- Copies of important documents



### ITEMS TO TAKE IF TIME ALLOWS:

Easily carried valuables

Family photos and other irreplaceable items

Personal computer information on hard drives and disks



## Wildfire Preparedness Resources

[ReadyForWildfire.org](http://ReadyForWildfire.org)

Checklists, toolkits, etc.

If you need further support, call our Outreach at (707)463-4343 x102

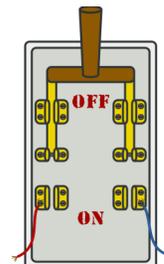
# POWER ⚡ OUTAGE INFORMATION

## Plan for Power Outages

Power outages may occur before and during the threat of a wildfire. It's important to be prepared and know what actions to take when leaving your home. Along with the [pre-evacuation preparation steps](#), these are a few ways to be ready in case of a power outage during these critical times.

During a Power Outage: If the power goes out, follow these steps:

- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed.
- Shut off the gas and other combustibles such as propane tanks.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from both overhead power lines and electrical facilities, and never approach or touch overhead



[Build a supply kit](#) —and more than just a First Aid Kit.

Include prescription medications and check the expiration dates. Include water, a battery-operated radio, flashlights and batteries (or a rechargeable flashlight), coolers or ice chests, and external rechargeable battery packs for your cellphones **and include an extra charging cable**. Also keep non-perishable food and a manual can-opener in your kit.

- Always keep the gas tank at least half full in your vehicles.
- Make your safety preparedness plan now and make sure your family knows each step and role they will play during this time.
- Don't forget your pets! Have an action plan ready for them too, and know how they will be cared for.



- **Learn how to manually open your automatic garage doors or gates - *this is extremely important!***
- **Be familiar with your home's utility boxes (electricity, water and gas).**

Visit these websites for more information about what to do in a power outage, and how you can ensure the safety of your family during the threat of wildfire: