



SENIOR INDEPENDENCE

NEWS FOR AND ABOUT THE SENIORS OF THE CENTRAL CITY

Celebrating 35 Years

Curry Senior Center's, 35th Anniversary Gala was held at the Fairmont Hotel on April 4, 2008. This year's event honored three former Curry Senior Center Executive Directors: Mr. Bob Heavner, Ms. Vera Haile and Ms. Gay Kaplan, for their leadership during our first 35 years. Through their stewardship, Curry has become a model of integrated health and support services for seniors. Bob helped launch the agency during its formative years; Vera added new programs and solidified funding sources, and Gay has lead the staff in the creation of a model geriatric program, as well as expanding the center's physical space.



2008 Honorees, Vera Haile, Bob Heavner and Gay Kaplan

Special guests and friends were treated to spectacular views from the Crown Room, a Silent Auction, as well as delectable food, Cannon Wines and Margarita King Margaritas, which were generously donated. The event drew over 200 people and together we raised \$30,000 which will support Curry's programs for the elderly in the Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods.

A very special thank you to our 2008 Gala Sponsors and we look forward to seeing all of you next year! (To view more Gala pictures, please go to: www.curryseniorcenter.org)



Gay Kaplan, Director of Services and Rae Mignola

Phil Marechel, Michelle Rogers, Dana Turner and Robin Myers

Hon. Mark Leno and David Knego, Executive Director

Allen Meyer, Ron Perez, Sarah Gordon and Amy Petersen

The Tenderloin, A Vibrant Community

Meet our Medical Director, Dr. Richard Zercher

When I moved to San Francisco in 1989, I was fortunate to find a job in a setting that matched a very specific desire - working in an urban area with patients who, for one reason or another, had difficulty accessing medical care in the usual way. My work at Curry Senior Center has been more interesting and more satisfying than I could have predicted. What I didn't expect was the sense of community that has been so evident.

Certainly I had been told that Curry Senior Center (then North of Market Senior Services) was a community clinic - it said

so on our clinic license, we were part of the SF Community Clinic Consortium, and the clinic had specifically been established to reach out to patients of the Tenderloin. However, my expectation of work in an urban setting was one where I would know my patients who came to the clinic, but where I had little contact with people and activities outside the clinic walls.

The reality has been so much better than that expectation. The Tenderloin is a vibrant community - at times colorful, at

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is a publication of Curry Senior Center.

We welcome comments and suggestions. Please direct them to any of the following members of the Board or Staff at 333 Turk Street, San Francisco, CA 94102 or call us at (415) 885-2274.

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A Message from the Executive Director . . .

Dear Friends:

A very big thank you to our friends and our generous Sponsors, who joined us for our 35th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser on April 4, 2008. The spectacular views from the Fairmont's Crown Room never get old (I've been going to the Crown Room for years, as it was our regular Mother's Day outing!). I am humbled to follow in the foot steps of Curry's three former Executive Directors; Bob Heavner, Vera Haile and Gay Kaplan. I've known them all for many years, and sometimes find it hard to believe that I'm sitting in their seat. Today, with their guidance and forethought, we are able to provide services to over 2,000 low-income seniors over the age of 55, who have made the Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods their home. This is an outstanding achievement, in which I am honored to play a part.



As Curry Senior Center continues to grow and thrive, there is an even greater need to continue raising money for our programs and services. As you may already know, people are living longer, and the sixty plus age group is rapidly growing. In fact, it is expected to grow 28% by the year 2020. Seniors age 85 and older are expanding at an alarming rate. In the Tenderloin alone, home to many low-income seniors in San Francisco, this translates into almost 9,000 elderly.

You may be thinking that you are already doing all you can to help. Many of you have already contributed generously of your time and money, for which we are extremely grateful. Thank you! Certainly, our programs and services can only succeed through such acts of kindness. But today I would like to suggest another form of financial support. May we ask you to consider a legacy gift by naming Curry Senior Center as a beneficiary in your will or estate plan? Such gifts will help build an endowed fund to generate steady, reliable income well into the future. We are ready to work with you and your advisors to craft a gift plan that meets your financial and charitable goals. For more information, please contact Katie Nickol or me. We can be reached at (415) 885-2274 or knickol@curryseniorcenter.org.

Now that Summer is upon us, we at Curry are busy scheduling activities for our seniors through the Fall. These events are additional opportunities for volunteering for you or your friends! If you are interested in intermittent volunteering or some regular, ongoing involvement, please give us a call. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

– David Knego, Executive Director

THE TENDERLOIN, A VIBRANT . . . (continue from pg 1)

times harsh, but always full of activity. The patients we see represent the variety in the community as well as the common problems that are present.

However, the connections between individuals define a community more than the demographics. Patients watch out for and care for each other. When someone does not show up as expected in the Meal Site, staff in the clinic are alerted that there may be a problem. Managers in apartments and single room occupancy hotels, IHSS workers, and store owners are frequently involved in helping patients remain living in the community. When I am out on a home visit, I usually see one or two of our patients who are out and around in the neighborhood. And I have been told by more than one person that they are watching to make sure I am safe when I am walking to my home visits.

There are certainly some of our patients who prefer the anonymity that a large city can provide. But even those patients frequently come to the staff at Curry Senior Center when they need assistance in difficult circumstances.

It is in this way that we feel a part of the community. We know our patients and clients. We visit them in their homes. We provide care for them. They watch out for each other and for us as well. And although the Tenderloin can feel like (and is, at times) a rough place, it is the patients and clients we see every day that makes it a community - one that I hadn't expected to experience when I first arrived, but one that I value highly.

– Dr. Richard Zercher, Medical Director



A true Volunteer-Staff partnership; Kham Vongrasamy, volunteer and Community Programs participant and Ngao Theppanya, Community Program Aide, at 2008 Gala

Opportunities for Involvement: Volunteering

Volunteers are vital to the heartbeat of Curry Senior Center. With your help, we can create positivity in people's lives. We value your gifts, talents, commitment, service and time. If you have just a few hours, join us as we serve lunch in our Meal Site where hundreds of seniors are served 365 days a year. Are you interested in assisting in our Medical Clinic or able to assist in teaching English to new immigrants? Join our daily Community Programs and share your talents with our participants! We are also looking for web savvy volunteers to help us keep our website current, graphic design professionals, photographers, and individuals with a knack for fundraising! Come and see how your involvement can make a difference today. Contact knickol@curryseniorcenter.org for more information.

MORE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

There are many ways to help Curry Senior Center. *Examples of other, welcome, in-kind donations include:*

- Food for the meal program, including boxed juices, instant oatmeal, soup, macaroni and cheese, instant coffee and tea
- Household items: new bedding, blankets, towels, dishes, etc.
- New personal hygiene items: soap, combs, brushes, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc.
- Knitting needles and yarn
- New T-Shirts for men and women, size Medium and Large
- Grocery store gift cards
- VHS movies, books, CD's, table games, large print crossword puzzles
- Party decorations, including table cloths, streamers, paper products, etc.

Please contact Katie Nickol at (415) 885-2274 if you would like to contribute in these, or other ways.

Community Programs, Summer Happenings

Be a Volunteer or Sponsor an Event!

In addition to Curry's daily scheduled program activities, we also have several special events coming up this Summer! Volunteers are needed to help plan and celebrate with us. In addition, we are looking for individuals and corporate sponsors who are interested in partnering and underwriting these important events. Please contact Katie Nickol at (415) 885-2274 if you would like to become a tangible part of our services.

JUNE

- De Young Museum outing
- Gay Pride Day Celebration
- Juneteenth Celebration
- Quarterly Birthday Celebration

JULY

- Western Day in Curry Meal Site
- Ferry Building & Farmer's Market outing

AUGUST

- Hawaiian Luau
- Summertime Arts & Crafts Fair

SEPTEMBER

- Russian Celebration
- Quarterly Birthday Party Celebration

Comings and Goings....

We take this opportunity to highlight some Board and staff transitions at Curry Senior Center. The volunteer leaders of our organization, the Board of Directors welcomed new members, Cathy Murphy and Celia Ryan, RN. Cathy is the owner-operator of Home Instead Senior Care which assists families in finding qualified staff to care for aging parents. Celia Ryan, RN, is Senior Director, Quality Care and Care Management at Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, and is responsible for strategic planning and oversight.

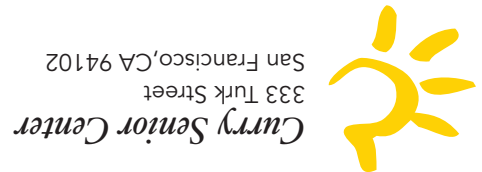
Our Primary Care Clinic recently welcomed three new staff, Alana Kane, Rochelle Foster and Carol Stumpf. Alana is a Registered Nurse who is working two days per week. Carol, a Registered Nurse joins us from Sacramento County and has taken over as the charge nurse. Rochelle is our newest staff person, a Nurse

Practitioner, Rochelle most recently worked at Kaiser Permanente. Deirdre Morrissey, a Curry Nurse for over a year, has a new job – in the clinic, moving into a Nurse Practitioner position.

New staff in our Substance Abuse department include counselors Samara Lewis and LaTonya Smith. Both Samara and LaTonya will be working individually with our clients as well as leading recovery groups.

We also said so-long, thank you and goodbye to a few staff this past year. We thank Nurse Practitioner Rebecca Siegel for her tenure at Curry, as well as a hearty goodbye to Substance Abuse Clinic Supervisor, Vinita Lee. More farewell's to Administrative Associate Perry Klecak and Community Program Aide, Jackson Zhou. Lastly, to Thelma Gonzales who served for 10 years in our Community Services Program. They will be missed! We wish all of them the best of luck in their future endeavors.

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New Leaf Elders Lunch Bunch

For over 12 years, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender elders in the Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods have been meeting twice a month at Curry Senior Center to participate and engage in socialization activities, support group meetings and adventurous excursions around the Bay. By providing experiences and support that lift their spirits, these elders are often times led out of depression and seclusion. "The Lunch Bunch group is a front door for people", says Bill Kirkpatrick, a Social Worker from New Leaf, which organizes the Lunch Bunch. Some elders have met their partners and friendships develop as elders share and learn from each other. Lunch Bunch is held the first and third Wednesdays of each month, with a hot lunch provided by Project Open Hand. For more information, please contact Marqui LaPoe, Community Programs Supervisor at (415) 885-2274.

Vietnamese and Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration 4706 Leap Year of the Rat

On Valentine's Day, Curry Senior Center welcomed the Leap Year of the Rat with the celebration of Chinese and Vietnamese Lunar New Year. This year's celebration coincided with Valentine's Day, creating a lot of excitement of love, health and compassion. This year's surprise was the dedication from the ARC group's seniors, who designed a Leap Year Rat art piece while the Curry Senior "Pack Rat trios" entertained the crowd with singing. Pete, a Community Program participant, dedicated a song "My Clementine", welcoming the new Community Programs Supervisor, Marqui LaPoe. Curry's Executive Director, David Knego and Development Manager, Katie Nickol, passed out the Red Envelope (pronounced "Li Xi") to the seniors. To the Chinese and Vietnamese guests, for a moment in time the Red Envelope revitalizes their childhood memories and for the other guests in attendance, it is a joyful experience of another culture's traditions. There was also a raffle of plants with beautiful blooming flowers, representing the abundance of health to the incoming Lunar New Year of the Rat. The event closed with lunch, provided by Self Help for the Elderly. Happy New Year!

Special Thanks to our **2008 Gala Sponsors**

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