

Located in San Francisco's Tenderloin district, Curry Senior Center helps meet homeless or isolated seniors' essential needs for health care, meals, housing, and social connections, right in their own neighborhood. Visit www.curryseniorcenter.org to learn more.

SF-DPH Community Health Network
333 Turk Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Curry Senior Center



The Change You've Made Possible This Quarter

- 2,679 vital health appointments were completed.
- 88 seniors are now receiving support in behavioral health.
- 12,288 breakfast meals were served.
- 7 more seniors are sleeping safely in their own new homes.
- Over 2,000 volunteer hours sustained our senior services.



Senior Independence

Summer 2013

Curry Senior Center

News about Seniors in the Central City

Solving Homelessness: Permanent Housing Is Critical



Pamela Coates

Ever since the Department of Aging rented 12 rooms at the Cadillac Hotel for homeless people in the 1980s, San Francisco has been trying to house the homeless—first in shelters and temporary housing and now in permanent housing. The thought is that without permanent housing and attendant medical, social, and employment services they will be back on the streets in short order.

As we know, seniors are among the most vulnerable as they age, especially when their aging is compromised by dementia, mental illness or chronic diseases, and a lack of resources—both financial and social. Without the stability of housing, they have little chance to survive on the streets. At the safety net clinics and centers in San Francisco, seniors receive help with such challenges as finding employment, if they are able, and applying for social security and supplemental security income (SSI), as needed. **There are a growing number of sites for permanent housing in the city which also offer supportive social services, as Curry does. Our case managers therefore have more opportunities to find homes for the hundreds who turn to Curry for relief.**

Pamela Coates is an example of a senior, 63, who has benefited from permanent housing in a single occupancy room, supplemented by medical help at Curry Senior Center. Hers is a story of survival and renewed hope for a better future, since she is fortunate to be able to work.

The event that put Pamela on the street was the third eviction as the result of a controlling and abusive husband. “He was both physically and mentally abusive,” she says, “but I stayed with him for 15 years. As I look back now, I wonder why, but when you are the victim of domestic abuse, the perpetrator manages to isolate you and intimidate you into believing that you have very little power to stand on your own.

“In 2008 I had a complete breakdown. I had been in a shelter, but was doing some work for a temp agency when it all caught up with me, and I couldn’t concentrate or focus on my work, or anything. Then, a quick stop by a MUNI bus pushed me into the seat ahead of me and I badly fractured my knee. Now I was on crutches on the street!”

Pamela was diagnosed with PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) and was eligible for public assistance and housing. She has lived at the Boyd Hotel since 2009 and has slowly, persistently worked her way back into a life with dignity and purpose.

A former actress with the Royal Shakespeare Company in London, Pamela will serve as production manager for “Keith Moon ‘The Real Me’” in July at the Eureka Theater on Jackson Street.

Because of you, she’s back on her feet.

“I want very much to help people who cannot advocate for themselves,” says Curry senior Pamela Coates. To do so, she serves on the board of the Community Benefit District and is a peer counselor at the Central City SRO Collaborative.

Early Intervention Helps Prevent Homelessness

There's no doubt about it: the Tenderloin is colorful and controversial. As Don Falk, executive director of the Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation and long-term partner with Curry, notes:

"The sidewalk here is the front yard of people who live in SROs (single-room occupancy hotels)."

But the mix in the Tenderloin is much more complex, including immigrants from many countries, families, people of all races, and singles and couples who pay market rates for their apartments in the heart of the city. As one of our Curry clients from Latin

America puts it, "The Tenderloin is the United Nations of California." (Visit curryseniorcenter.org to see a video of several of our clients.)

The Tenderloin is also a barometer of our city's caring for its most vulnerable: seniors who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. For years San Francisco has tried to cure the homelessness problem—with the help of studies and policies, federal and local funding. Part of President Obama's stimulus package, for instance, provided affordable housing for 1,100

people. We are nearly there for moving the 3,000 chronically homeless identified a decade ago into permanent housing because of new housing projects that have come to fruition.



David Knego, Executive Director

What Falk and Vera Haile, former executive director of Curry (see story, page 3), both bemoan is the lack of enough community advocacy for those at risk of homelessness, because prevention is still the best cure. Curry's client-centered medical and social services address the whole person's needs in hopes that solving smaller problems

as they arise—providing "wraparound services"—will avoid that fateful slip into homelessness and hopelessness for seniors.

Still, permanent housing remains the top priority, and we are happy to have 12 units on site for formerly homeless seniors, like Diane Evans (see gala photo). I am in awe of our funders, community partners, and staff, as together we support our seniors with dignity, allowing them the opportunity to live safe, healthy, and independent lives.



Long-time supporter Rae Mignola plays to win, although most team members have never even held a bocce ball!

Save the Date: Sunday, September 29

Join us for a great day of bocce and barbeque at the Marin Bocce Federation in San Rafael as we raise funds for Curry Senior Center's Meals Program and other senior services.

Call Arlo Bushnell at 415-292-1064 for more information.

Sign-up today online at: www.firstgiving.com/curryevents/2013CurryBocce.

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Former Curry Executive Director Vera Haile Is Honored by Mercy Housing

Groundbreaking for the new Vera Haile Senior Housing units at 121 Golden Gate Avenue occurred in January. Vera was executive director of Curry Senior Center from 1983 to 1996. The project is a joint development of Mercy Housing California and St. Anthony Foundation, which is constructing an expanded dining room and social services center on the first two floors of the 10-story building, expected to be completed by September 2014.

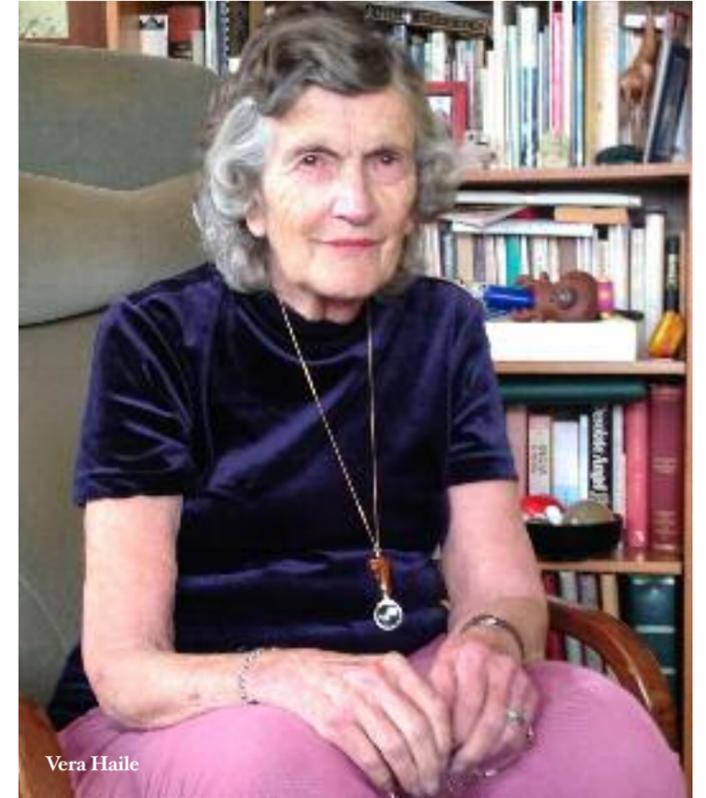
The 90 housing units for low-income and homeless seniors will represent a capstone to Vera Haile's lifetime of working for affordable housing for seniors and other vulnerable populations in San Francisco as well as for stronger community advocacy to improve the lives of the elderly and those with disabilities.

"She served on our board for Presentation Senior Housing, one of the first developments in which HUD allowed non-residential use, and now the Adult Day Health Center," says Amy Bayley, RSM, Mercy Housing's vice president for community planning. "She was also on the board of our Dorothy Day complex for 10 years. Vera is one of the early visionaries to integrate affordable housing and services for seniors and persons who have been homeless."

In a recent interview, Vera marked the milestones of some of the major influences on housing for the homeless in San Francisco and at Curry Senior Center:

- The establishment of programs and shelters for the homeless in the 1970s by Mayor Art Agnos, a former social worker
- The establishment of Curry Senior Center (1972) and St. Anthony's medical clinic by Dr. Francis Curry
- Curry Senior Center's success in attaining the city's first mental health grant for case management for homeless people
- Establishment by Curry of the adult day health care program now known as SteppingStone
- Programs, such as Mayor Gavin Newsom's "Care, Not Cash" and "Homeless Connect" and Bevan Dufty's "Housing Opportunities, Partnerships, and Engagements" (HOPE) under Mayor Ed Lee

All of these influences, as well as the cuts to federal housing and social service programs, have had a major impact on the city's approach to homelessness, a chronic problem in San Francisco. But Vera Haile's



Vera Haile

focus on the problem has never wavered: not since she worked at a settlement house in Pittsburgh as a college student and earned her master's in social welfare with a major in community organization and administration from UC Berkeley.

At 78, she serves on the San Francisco Immigrants Rights Commission, the Advisory Council to the Aging and Adult Services Department, the Mayor's Long-Term Care Coordinating Council, the San Francisco In-Home Supportive Services Task Force, and the Coalition of Agencies Serving the Elders.

Curry Senior Center is proud to call Vera Haile "one of our own" and thankful to you for being such strong advocates for improving the lives of our elderly.

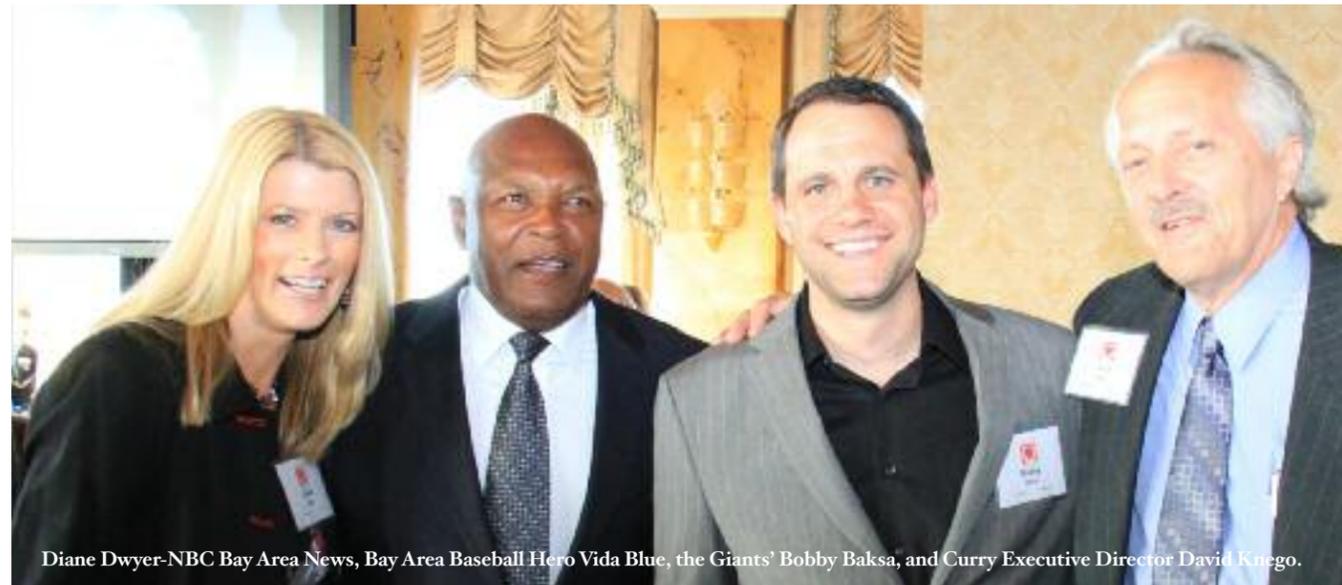
The 90 new units of housing dedicated in Vera's name will help, but Curry case managers say at least a third of our clients are homeless, and the waiting list can be well over a year until a door opens.

'Helping Hands, Healing Hearts' Breaks All-Time Fundraising Record

Bay Area baseball legend Vida Blue and NBC Bay Area News' Diane Dwyer electrify the guests as funds are raised to open doors for new homes and services.

On May 9, the Crown Room at the Fairmont Hotel, with its breathtaking vistas, overflowed with Curry enthusiasts. The vibrant gala was punctuated by a robust silent auction and a highly competitive live auction, expertly hosted by Diane Dwyer, NBC Bay Area News Weekend Anchor, as she incited bidding wars between different sides of the room and even husbands and wives.

The gala honored the work that all of you, our supporters, have enabled this past year and paid homage to the San Francisco Giants with the Joseph J. Mignola, Jr. Award to thank them for enhancing Curry's promotional and fundraising efforts both on and off the field. Moli Steinert, Executive Director of Stepping Stone, was also honored with the Francis J. Curry Award, for her advocacy on behalf of Adult Day Health Care and her over 30 years of community activism.



Diane Dwyer-NBC Bay Area News, Bay Area Baseball Hero Vida Blue, the Giants' Bobby Baksa, and Curry Executive Director David Knego.

The room buzzed with excitement when famed Bay Area Baseball hero Vida Blue walked in with Bobby Baksa to represent the Giants as they received their award. Donors and sponsors were thrilled to have their photos taken with this baseball legend. Perhaps the most exciting moment was when Diane Evans, previously featured in our last newsletter, received an exuberant and sustained standing ovation after she told the story of how Curry provided her with the first permanent home she's had since she escaped New Orleans with her family after Hurricane Katrina. Diane said, "I helped my daughter and grandson move on and then found myself homeless. After I got a place at Curry Senior Center, the clouds opened for me. There are hundreds of seniors who need you, San Francisco, to open a door to a new home, a new life."

The gala raised \$115,000, a nearly 65% jump over the previous record set last year during Curry's 40th Anniversary. This comes at a time when seniors are turning to Curry in ever-increasing numbers. Consider a similar percent increase when you next support this vital work, ensuring that no senior that comes to Curry is turned away.



Curry Resident
Diane Evans

"Our hands applaud you but you should also applaud yourselves, knowing that you are the ones who make this all possible, actively changing lives and healing our community. Thank you for being Curry!"

— David Knego, Executive Director

Diane Evans is one of the many faces at Curry. Another face is behind this thank you letter written as much to you as it was to the Curry staff.

Dear Curry Center,

March 21, 2013

To those responsible for funds and for all of the other things that got me my own place to live, my deepest thanks from my heart. May the Lord bless each one of you. Thank you! I was homeless. I spent all of my time on the streets; at night I was going into Golden Gate Park to sleep. I grew so tired, and when it rained I was so cold. I did not think that I would make it. Living on the streets makes one grow old, fast; a feeling of old age sets in.

Thanks to all of you, now I live within a community. God's foundation is sure, and I now have a new foundation under me where there are activities and services of every kind.

I am going to miss my park friends—squirrels, raccoons, and skunks, but now I can just go visit them in their world, because it seems I have a new life and world of my own. Thank you!

JL

P.S. I got very sick and also broke my wrist while on the streets. I'm still healing, but now—thanks to Curry—I have a wonderful place to live.

Annual Gala

Special Thanks to our Generous Sponsors, Donors, Volunteers and to You!

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Volunteering

Why I Volunteer at Curry

An Interview with Curry Board Member Alice Zhang

Alice Zhang is a relative newcomer to San Francisco, working at XCEO as its program director for public sector governance and board leadership development. (XCEO, Inc., in Santa Clara, offers professional mentoring and personal leadership development programs, as well as corporate governance and board leadership development programs, for individuals and corporations.)

Q. Why were you attracted to Curry?

I love being around seniors. I was raised by my grandparents in China. When I came to San Francisco three years ago, I learned Cantonese (I spoke Mandarin) from my boyfriend's grandmother, whom he had grown up with.

I agree with Curry staff that we learn life lessons from our elders for free. They have contributed to society during their whole life, and now it's time for them to receive from society.

Q. What do you like to spend your volunteer time doing?

When I was exploring volunteer opportunities, I came to the Curry lunches and would get tearful seeing how the Curry staff and volunteers treated the seniors and how they responded. **We know the seniors by name at the center, and the medical staff makes home visits!** I like to help out at the lunch program, especially. In addition, I am a member of the Development Committee and I also will help to build the Professional Advisory Council at Curry.

I'm also on the board of a few nonprofit organizations, including VolunTEARS Foundation, which helps professionals find volunteer opportunities in the Bay Area. I

feel fortunate to be able to develop close relationships with the boards of both non-profits and universities through my volunteer and professional life.



Alice Zhang

Be the Difference – How You Can Help

Curry Senior Center accepts any of the following donations on behalf of the clients we serve.

Call Arlo Bushnell at 415-292-1064.

- Does your company **match donations**? If so, make a donation through your company's **workplace campaign** and double the impact of your donation. Ask your HR representative at work how.
- **Volunteer!** Come down and help to serve breakfast or lunch at the Curry Dining Room. **The seniors love meeting and interacting with volunteers, and you'll feel terrific. Bring some friends!**
- **Donate cereal, peanut butter, new clothes, or hygiene items** and guarantee one of our seniors will have breakfast and warm clothes.

- **Community Thrift Store** (623 Valencia St., San Francisco) accepts donations on behalf of Curry Senior Center. Bring your old clothes, jewelry, books, sports equipment, furniture, CDs, electronics, and luggage and tell them you want the proceeds to go to Curry Senior Center.
- **Shop at Cole Hardware** and mention Curry Senior Center at checkout; a portion of your purchase will go to the seniors.

Want to stay up-to-date with what's happening at Curry Senior Center?

Like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter! Go to CurrySrCenter on **Facebook** and @CurrySrCenter on **Twitter**.