

# LAMORINDA Seniors

## Outward Bound: Music and Motoring with the Lamorinda Spirit Van

By Mei Sun Li, Lafayette Senior Services



Rosalee Biasatti Photo provided

One afternoon about twenty five years ago, Orinda's Rosalee Biasatti was told she had MS, Multiple Sclerosis. Rosalee was stunned but adhered to her plans that night for a fun evening with a friend. Soon thereafter, and pre-internet, she found herself immersed

in the local library, discovering everything one could learn about this debilitating and difficult disease.

Today, Rosalee Biasatti is one of the Lamorinda Spirit Van's most ardent supporters. The paratransit service, which has a wheelchair lift,

takes passengers to the local Walnut Creek Senior Center lunch program, gets them to medical appointments, and to shopping and banking centers. She says, "The Spirit Van is wonderful especially because of the people I've met who come from so many different backgrounds and careers. Also I get out of the house and this is particularly important for me since I am so confined in my wheelchair. I know that the social interaction is good for my brain."

Rosalee is used to using her brain. Rosalee today, a retired teacher into her seventies, still conveys a radiance and assurance that her teenage students must have found comforting. She taught just about everything in the Hayward school system - geography, civics, phys ed, dance - and loved it.

Rosalee lives next door to one of her three grown sons in Orinda

and enjoys all of her five grandchildren. She says that this is the time in her life for "soul growth" and routinely allocates periods of the day for prayers, meditation, and reading some of the important metaphysical writers such as Deepak Chopra.

Help Lafayette Senior Services (LSS) to help folks like Rosalee Biasatti stay outward bound. The Lamorinda Spirit Van program will be the recipient of all funds raised at the Lafayette Senior Services annual holiday concert event on Friday December 12th 1:30 - 3:00 PM at the Lafayette Community Center, 500 Saint Mary's Road in Lafayette. Violist Jennifer Carne along with Mark Shaw, fiddler extraordinaire, will present a musical concert program of holiday, bluegrass, and folk tunes. Light refreshments will be served. Tickets are only \$5 and discounts available

for senior resident groups. Call Lafayette Senior Services at 284-5050 to let them know you will attend this festive and important holiday event.

Raffle prizes have been donated by the following groups for which LSS is most grateful:

- Town Hall Theater Company
- Gold Coast Chamber Players
- Stratford at Countrywood
- Eldercare Services

- Amarin Thai Cuisine Restaurant
- Mt. Diablo Nursery and Garden
- Powell's Sweet Shoppe
- Howard and Mary Fuchs
- Ruth and David McCahan
- Lafayette Recreation Center

LSS would also like to extend its thanks to the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and Companion Care of Lafayette for their enduring support.

## Volunteering—An Exchange of Goodness

Submitted by Kay Schroeder



Volunteer Eileen Kempker helps with a fundraising mailing Photo provided

be enriched.

Volunteering allows you to step up and help out your "neighborhood." And, surprisingly, volunteers benefit as much as those they help. There's an exchange of goodness that benefits all parties. There is exciting research from more than 30 studies that show individuals who volunteer just two hours a week enjoy significant health benefits. Volunteerism is an important tool in our strategy to promote health and prevent disease," says Josefine G. Carbonell, Assistant Secretary for Aging at the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. Volunteering leads to improved mental and physical health.

Volunteering is a great way to build new friendships. Senior men and women begin to experience losses as they age. Losing close family members and friends is distressing, and a bit frightening. Volunteering is an easy and fun approach to senior life. Consider bringing a friend with you to enjoy the experience. The buddy system adds to the fun, sharing the gas and doubles the positive impact you can make on your community.

Eileen Kempker has been volunteering for several non profit or-

ganizations for the last three years. She says, "For me, activity keeps my lifestyle functioning. I have made new friends in all my volunteer activities. I started volunteering when my husband died. The reward for volunteering far exceeds my own effort and the variety of opportunities is endless."

For those recently retired, volunteering is a great way to keep your spirits and stay current. Jim Larkin, a volunteer at the American Cancer Society, used his corporate background and skills to develop and implement a new educational program for them.

He says, "My thought is that working with people of different ages is a critical piece of well being in our world. I recently worked with a 27 year old and it was such an interesting experience to be working along with a younger person. By experiencing people of all generations, an older person can increase social skills. They don't have to feel left out of multi-generational conversations."

The word is out—it's good to be good. Good for those you help. Good for your own health and happiness. Whatever your reasons for volunteering, there are hundreds of

different ways to help. The Volunteer Center for the East Bay sponsors a program, RSVP, specifically designed to help retired and senior volunteers find the right match given their passions, skills, and schedule. If you are 55 or older and want to volunteer, contact RSVP at 925-472-5769.

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## Not to be missed - Senior Events

**Lafayette Senior's Recreation Center Fund Raiser** will be held Nov. 13th from 10am-2pm at the Methodist Church 955 Moraga Rd, Lafayette. The Center has served seniors since 1950 and is run entirely by volunteers. Items for sale include: homemade cookies, breads, jams, handmade gifts for the holidays, hand knitted items and

much more. Drop by and support your senior community!

**Widowed Person Support** offers social events and a workshop for all widows and widowers: Call 925-932-3448. Saturday, Nov. 15, a luncheon at Terzetto Cuisine Café in Moraga. Saturday, Nov. 22, a free workshop to help widowed

people handle the holidays, at St. Stephens Church, Orinda.

**Classic Movies at the Hacienda**, Thursday, Dec 4th 2 pm, 2100 Donald Drive, Moraga. Join us on the first Thursday of the month for a Classic Movie and light refreshments in the Mosaic Room. The movie will begin at 2 pm and last approximately 2 hours. We will choose from an assortment of classic films including Casablanca, Sunset Blvd., Cat on Hot Tin Roof and To Kill a Mockingbird. We will take suggestions from viewers as well. A \$2 donation is requested. 925-888-7045.

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**Communicating with your loved one with Dementia**

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Speaker:  
**Dr. Ruth Pease, RN, MSN, EdD**  
Alzheimer's Association of the East Bay

Wednesday, November 12, 2008  
7:00PM

Light dinner will be provided

**Save the date for our Harvest Ball November 23, 2008 at 1:00PM**

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