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facebook

Look for Casa Allegra on Facebook

Casa Allegra Community Services (CACS), a 501(c)3 nonprofit agency, has been providing innovative supports for adolescents and adults with developmental disabilities and their families in Marin and San Francisco Counties since 1975. CACS supports individuals through separate but integrated services.



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LIVING SERVICES

- **Residential Living** is provided in two long-term care homes located in San Rafael.
- **Community Living Services (CLS)** supports individuals to live safely and successfully where and with whom they choose.

ADULT DAY SERVICES

- **Income Opportunities Unlimited (IOU)** assists participants to earn income; may include microenterprise ownership or membership in a cooperative.
- **Adult Community Services (ACS)** offers support for college, adult education, employment opportunities, and community activities.
- **Community Inclusion for Adults (CIFA)** provides integrated education and community inclusion for those who require additional support due to therapeutic and medical needs.

Josh Lyons, newly elected President of Keep Marin Green, & Gavin Reimer, Vice President of KMG at work at the co-op.



You are a valued member of Casa Allegra's family & circles of support. You help our clients live meaningful lives in the community

Mark your calendars:

HUMAN RACE & Picnic Sat. May 7 • BOCCE TOURNAMENT Sat., Oct. 1

Wanted

Human Race T-shirt sponsors (\$250) & pledges (in any amount) on behalf of participating clients.

Bocce sponsorships with benefits available starting at \$100.

Contact Jeanne (415) 898-6525, jeanne@casaallegra.org

Casa Allegra Community Services

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Spotlight on Families



Bobby between brother Richard & Chris, with friends & support staff from Adrian & Devon in front of Fountain in Memory of Eileen Sherman

“...with perseverance and hope this family brings into 2011...the love, joy and peace they found in each other.”



Richard Richman, sister & brother-in-law Sharon & Jerry Hallstrom at the Holiday Party

whereabouts for many, many years. But they held onto the hope that one day they would find each other. And they began to connect in May of 2010. Then four months ago, they found their brother Bobby – living at the Devon Drive Home. Until this reunion, we had little knowledge of Bobby’s past. But with perseverance and hope this family brings into 2011 the essence of the Christmas Season – the love, joy and peace they found in each other.

~ Chris Bonfiglio, CACS Executive Director

We hope you enjoy our newsletter, now published biannually with the focus of this edition on families – clients and their families, staff and their families, and our family of volunteers and donors. Most of you know I cofounded Casa Allegra. Over the past 36 years I married, had children who have now grown into adulthood, grieved the death of a parent and most recently divorced. I feel so fortunate and grateful that I have had

the Casa Allegra Family as the one constant in my life and in my children’s life.

We begin 2011 building on some wonderful accomplishments of the past year as people started their own businesses, lived lives of meaning and choice, and overcame medical obstacles. But it has also been a difficult year in many ways. We lost some of our family members – Lynn Holbrook, Peter Murphy, Giselle Eades, Florence Falvey, Kay McCarthy and most recently Dolly Reynolds. We also lost one of the original residents who moved in when we opened Casa Allegra in 1975, Lisa Jay. We have had several people we support critically ill, but thankfully now healthy. But we have each other and continue to push forward.

The weeks before Christmas were a time of Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. I spent the morning of our Holiday Party with Socorro and Kirsten at a service at Glide Memorial in SF looking for some inspiration that I could carry with me into 2011. It was a wonderful celebration but ultimately and not surprisingly I found the essence of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace right here at Casa Allegra Community Services and most profoundly in the story of Bobby and his siblings.

Fifty-eight years ago this family was torn apart and separated from each other because of the severe abuse they endured as young children. They did not know each other’s

Mark Your Calendars

HUMAN RACE & Picnic Saturday May 7, 7 a.m. to noon San Rafael Civic Center Lagoon

BOCCE TOURNAMENT Saturday, October 1, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. San Rafael Albert Park Bocce Courts

Wanted: Human Race T-shirt sponsors (\$250) and pledges (in any amount) on behalf of participating clients

Bocce sponsorships with benefits available starting at \$100. Contact Jeanne (415) 898-6525, jeanne@casallegra.org

Casa Allegra Board President Receives Advocacy Award from GGRC

by Dale Dutton

On Sept. 22, 2010, I was quite surprised to receive the James Latin Memorial Advocacy Award at the Golden Gate Regional Center Self-Advocacy conference. It was made to me, as President of the Board at CACS for innovative advocacy in the area of employment options for persons with developmental disabilities. They gave three awards – one to a self-advocate, one to an advocate, and one to a service provider. Unknown to any of us, we were nominated, voted on, and selected to receive the very nice “statue” – a burning flame - a beacon!

I accepted on behalf of CACS and thanked all the self-advocates present (several hundred), and brought the award

back to Chris and the office.

Shirley Rodriguez, GGRC said at the presentation, **“Dale you have been a strong advocate in making many folks dreams come true, not just Dusty’s, especially supporting so many folks start their own business...this is one of the most meaningful awards that is given. We are really glad you have been given this honor.”**

This isn’t about me, folks - it’s about you! It is about staff and supervisors and managers willing to try something new, think about what they are doing in a different way, feel safe in experimenting, know they may not succeed 100%, but learn something in the process. The very nice citations from Jared Huffman are about the same things. [see Recognition Event page 8]

Casa Allegra was at the leading edge of service as it was known 35 years ago, and it is at the leading edge of service as it is known today - Congratulations all - and “thanks” for letting me tag along!

CACS Annual Financial Report July 2009 to June 2010

INCOME:

Program Services	\$ 2,868,595
Donations	91,951
Special Events	45,751
Grants	38,000
Endowment	24,200
TOTAL	3,068,477

EXPENSES:

Program Services	\$ 2,595,949
Fundraising Costs	44,010
Management General	285,663
TOTAL	2,925,622
NET:	142,855

Note: This is prior to depreciation and amortization 2010-11 forecast: due to double digit rise in health insurance costs, increased medical needs of our aging clients, and continued reductions in state funding our net will be further reduced. We continue to explore and implement ways to reduce overhead and increase revenue. Our administrative costs are already among the lowest in the nonprofit sector.



Marin Access Mobility Management Center

Community-based, high-tech transportation management center opened on Oct. 1, 2010. One-Stop Transportation Information & Referral to transportation programs in Marin – public, non-profit, and for-profit. This service helps seniors, people with disabilities and low-income resident callers identify which type of transportation will best meet their needs.

Call Marin Access at (415) 454-0902.

Sponsored by Marin Transit and operated by Whistlestop. Marin Access will soon add an interactive website & pre-paid rider accounts. Casa Allegra is a member of the Marin Paratransit Coordinating Council and the Marin Mobility Consortium.

Casa Allegra Community Services

Board of Directors

- Dale Dutton, President
- Larry Mason, VP
- Allen Peters, Treasurer
- Jane Scurich, Secretary
- Jacki Anderson
- Cyr Miller
- Pauline Basaran

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- Allen Peters
- Michael Scurich

Staff

- Chris Bonfiglio, Executive Director
- Socorro Gallardo, Director of Supported Living
- Eny Campos, Director of Residential Services
- Daniel Reichling, Director of Day Services
- Kirsten Irvin, IOU Director of Business Development
- Debbie Falvey, Human Resources
- Theresa Eisenberg, RN
- Jeanne Santangelo, Development Director
- OPEN, Volunteer Manager

Newsletter

- Editor Jeanne Santangelo
- Articles & Photos by Staff & Volunteers

Vol. 7, No. 1, 2011

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 Barry & Madeline Kohn

In Memoriam

Dolly Reynolds



June 5, 1928-December 28, 2010

Dolores Analisa Reynolds was born in Brooklyn, NY to Elizabeth and Louis Sieber. She was a long time resident of Marin and lived the past 22 years in Petaluma. Along with her husband John, she opened the first Century 21 Real Estate office in Northern CA and worked as a real estate broker for many years. She is survived by her husband of 63 years, John Craig Reynolds and by four daughters, Lorraine

Ragozzino, Kathryn Grossi, Denise Ragozzino and Elisabeth Marie (Lisa) Reynolds. Lisa is supported by Casa Allegra's Residential Living Services. She is preceded in death by her daughter Susan Ragozzino. She was the proud grandmother of nine and great-grandmother of three. Dolores was known for her strength, grace, kindness and spirited character. She was truly a "woman of substance." Dolores was a tireless advocate for the rights of people with disabilities and served several years as President of Easter Seals in Marin County.

GRANTS

Autodesk
 The Outdoor Art Club
 The Special Hope Foundation
 The Turrisburnea Club
 Union Bank

Thank You Volunteers

Recognition Event

Elia Haworth
 Christopher Holbrook
 Johnathan Holbrook
 Amy Hosa
 Pati Stoliar
 Lonnie Suhrke

Bocce Tournament

Nicki Andrews
 Lonnie Suhrke
 Debbie Falvey
 Al Farbstein
 Michael Feno
 Jane Murphy
 Stephen Murphy
 Patti Somers
 Linda Vaio
 Clipped Wings of Marin
 Stevie Serleth

Thank You Donors & Grants

From July 1 to December 30, 2010
We sincerely apologize if we have
omitted or misspelled any names.

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF

In Honor of Her Daughter
Shirley Anderson

In Honor of Gannett Hosa-Betonte
M. Florence Dougherty

In Honor of Michael Birch
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Donald & Mary Lea Burden

In Honor of Dusty Dutton
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In Honor of Eileen Falvey
Bernadette Baraty

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Joseph Coria

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In Honor of Dave Jelniker
Marian Stein

In Honor of Bruce Lusty
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The Gosselin Family
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Richurd & Patricia Somers

In Honor of the Somers Family
Joanne Linn

In Honor of Alesa Tomsky
Robin Aitken-Bullard

In Honor of Krystal Tremblay
Valerie Coleman
Joseph & Carol McCabe

In Honor of Janet White
Patricia & Clark Shank

DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF

In Memory of Eleanor Butt
Thomas & Kathryn Grossi

In Memory of Richard Chicca
Patricia Chicca

In Memory of Thelma Cox
George & Linda Vaio

In Memory of John Eager
Judith Ann & William Sherman

In Memory of John Eagleton
George & Linda Vaio

In Memory of Raymond Emery
Gwendolyn Emery

In Memory of Florence Falvey
Sharon & Patrick Falvey
Carol Palombino
Eileen Falvey

Louise & Harvey Birch
Mario & Juliana Del Piccolo

In Memory of Liam Falvey
Eileen Falvey

In Memory of Pompeo Gardin
Mario & Juliana Del Piccolo
Frank & Laura Busnardo
Don & Josephine Grant

In Memory of Steve Haramis
Teresa Fiorentini
Laurel Feigenbaum
Leila Lanctot
Sue Scott
Carol Svetcov

In Memory of Lynn Holbrook
The Marin Volunteer League

In Memory of Tay Johnstone
Thomas & Mary Quinlan

In Memory of Rose Linzi
Judith Ann & William Sherman

In Memory of Catherine Marcone
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In Memory of Kathleen McCarthy
Ralph Cordero
Jolyne Mamber
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Anna Phillips
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Daniel Spencer

In Memory of Geoffrey Maynard
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Ralph Cordero

In Memory of Michael McCarthy
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Ruth Jay
Barbara Jelniker
Alan & Judith Johnson
Edward & Linda Kangeter
Jane Karp
Mimi Katz
Kathy Kay
Dorothy Kelton

Family members talk about Casa Allegra supports



“My brother Nicholas or “Big Nick,” has been 30 years with Casa Allegra. He is 6’2” and 200 lbs. All gratitude goes to you, it’s been an amazing journey. Nick is nonverbal but lights up when I enter the room. Today he has a great quality of life – his moods are happy and even

compared to the way he was as a young child – agitated and easily overwhelmed. He participates in the Day Services program at Marin Ventures. Nick is a huge success story any way you slice it. My 6-year-old son is developing a nice relationship with his uncle and Devon House – He figured it out –they are just people who need help. ~ Anton Haramis

“My daughter Dusty has been with CACS for 16 years. She has an incredible life, making money, having fun. I am privileged to be a member of the board, - it has been quite a ride – we are lucky to have you.” ~ Dale Dutton

“My brother Jonathan, is 30. He has a pretty big life thanks to CACS. He has awesome relationships with his staff and peers. Jonathan is the glue of our family.” ~ Christopher Holbrook

“My brother Jared turned 30 in April 2010. We’ve known Jared had autism since he was 2. CACS provides support he needs for staffing and caregiving. He lives in a house with staff that provides consistency

and stability. He has grown from it. He goes to Halleck Creek once a week and his house in Forest Knolls has a garden. Having other people come in helps him be more independent. It’s been incredible – we can’t put anyone in a box.” ~ Sonya Gordon

“My daughter Robin has been with CACS for 12 years and working at Banana Republic for 13 years in a great setting with support staff. It has been smooth sailing – she is enjoying feeling her own autonomy. [CACS] Supported Living provides the missing pieces so that she can support herself.” ~ Pati Stoliar



“I’m in love with CACS and your staff – Chris has brought such marvelous people together. Once I couldn’t imagine trusting my sister Cary [age 63] to anyone but I knew she could have more of a life than I could give her. I’ve dropped in to visit and seen her at her happiest – most-loved, clean, bubbling with energy.” ~ Elia Haworth



Lisa Jay



March 23, 1968 – January 11, 2011

New Year’s Eve with Lisa by Chris Bonfiglio

My time has come
 My work here on earth done
 I hope I helped all who I touched to realize
 – That a smile and the look in one’s eye speaks a thousand words
 – That people with disabilities, even the most severe, have feelings just like everyone else, likes and dislikes, and are more like you than unlike you
 I hope you know how much your care, kindness and friendship meant to me.
 I will give Eileen, Scotty, Rigo, Janette, Steven, Missy and all who have gone before me your love.
 Look for me, let yourself feel my presence,
 I will be around and you will know I am near.
 I will be here for you – always, Lisa

Lisa was one of the original five clients of Casa Allegra and has been supported by CACS for over 35 years. Lisa passed away peacefully at her home on Adrian Way with Chris by her side. She had been receiving constant vigilance, care and love from a multitude of support staff who will miss her dearly since her hospitalization at Marin General December 26th.

The Falvey Connection

by Debbie Falvey with Chris Bonfiglio



Diedre Falvey greets you at the CACS offices

When one hears the name “Falvey”, many think of Casa Allegra Community Services. The history between the Falvey family and Casa Allegra goes back to its inception in 1975 when Eileen Falvey, along with Chris Bonfiglio, CACS’s Executive Director, opened the doors of Casa Allegra’s first group home.

During the early years the entire Falvey family was active in the organization. Eileen’s sister, Mary and later along with her husband Richard (Rosenberg) served as mentors, advisors, and collaborators. Eileen’s late mother, Florence was a member of the St. Patrick’s Helping Hands group which organized a yearly crafts fair that benefitted CACS (in those days that was our primary fundraising activity!). Eileen’s late father, Liam, and Eileen’s two brothers, Michael and Tim were also available to lend a helping hand when repairs to the homes were needed. Eileen’s youngest sister, Brigid (Oswald) started as a residential aide and later returned in 2000 to be [CACS client] Janette Gordilla’s roommate.

Eileen’s brother, Michael, married Debbie who began working at Casa Allegra in 1988 when her oldest daughter, Diedre (currently our office assistant) was 6 months old and Chris went out on maternity leave. Debbie continues to work at Casa Allegra in Human Resources, Benefits Manager and general “Jack of all trades”.

Tim married Alison who joined CACS in 1991 as Personnel Manager, then as one of the Directors. She left CACS for several years to concentrate on raising their 3 girls, then returned as Volunteer Manager and Maintenance Coordinator from 2008 to January 2011.

Eileen’s oldest sister Kathleen and her husband, Patrick, raised their family in Minnesota, yet Tara, the oldest of their children still managed to spend a summer working at CACS.

The Falvey Family continues to be involved in supporting CACS’s mission. Tim, owner of Tim’s Treads in San Rafael, is a sponsor of CACS events and other brothers, sister, aunts and uncles continually offer their financial support to CACS.

And who knows...there are more Falvey children to carry on the CACS tradition!



Chris with her children Karli & David at Holiday Party

Growing up Casa Allegran

By David and Karli Cowman
Growing up Casa Allegran means...

Knowing that the Devon house has the best tree to climb, the Duran house has the best back yard to explore and the Adrian house has the best movie selection, as long as you were alright only watching Addams Family

Knowing that Scotty most appreciated the new tricks that you learn in gymnastics, it wasn’t a big deal when Tom took out his eyeballs* and Marina had the best jokes

Knowing that wedges made the best tools for building, wheelchairs were the best means of transportation and stand up walkers made the best forts

Being jealous that Janette was still allowed to wear diapers

Knowing that when Licensing was around, Mom wouldn’t be in a very good mood

Remembering when going to the office meant going to the garage at the Devon house

Summer vacation meant spending months with Diedre and Darcy** in the office being occupied by the treasures in the supply closet for hours

Remembering the first Human Race at the Ferry Terminal, before the grey, yellow, turquoise, blue, maroon or beige shirts

Knowing that if you were looking to upgrade your rubber band ball, Debbie’s desk most likely had the most ammunition

Bringing sleeping bags to the office because Mom wouldn’t leave until after bedtime

Learning your best dance moves from the clients at the Christmas party

Making candy money by selling bags of plums from the Adrian house to the neighbors

Knowing about belly tube*** feeding before knowing how to read

Being the only person who used adult diaper boxes to move into your college dorm

*artificial eyes, **Falvey, ***stomach or “G” tube



WISH LIST

Call (415) 499-1116x248 to arrange for pick up of large items.

Gift Cards to Target, Old Navy, Trader Joe’s, Safeway
Gift Certificates for carpet cleaning or cleaning services

Quality Cookware/pots & pans
Framed Artwork, modern, bright
Leather Couches & Recliners



First Place Team Pakiotoma: Mark & Patti Bassett, Akiko and Tom Miller



Murphys: Kathy, Mary Whitfield, Joan, mom Jane, Stephen & Stefanie, cousin Kevin McCormick



2nd Place Team combo Shredded Lettuce & Que Serra Serra: Stephen Murphy, Mark Campbell, Mary Jaffe, Barbara Rozen, Damon Campolo (not pictured - Brian Dryer & Rory O'Neil)



Team Goobers: Gary Towslee, Judy McGrath, Joe & Rose Gregorian, Nancy Towslee, Joe McGrath



Jeanette, Ron & Michael Bruciati with a fabulous Gift Basket donated by Jeff Mezzetta, a family friend. Jeanette was CACS'-nominated Volunteer of the Year, Heart of Marin Awards January 6.



Team Lannon: Nyles, Skye, Elaine Black, Caitlin, Maisie Tift with Cecilia in the back

The 10th Annual Bocce Tournament benefiting Casa Allegra was a resounding success with 170 players and spectators. 28 teams participated and raised over \$16,000 for Casa Allegra – a record! Held in memory of Peter Murphy, a long-time board member, father of the late Scott Murphy (supported by Casa Allegra's Residential Living services for 20 years). In honor of Peter, his son Stephen Murphy emceed.

Special Thanks

To out of town Cash Drawing ticket purchasers. Winners: \$200 Winnie Coleman, \$100 Pat McGrath. To raffle item donors & the Murphy girls for wrapping so beautifully! 14 lucky people took home fabulous Gift Baskets. To the Committee – Jane & Stephen Murphy, Al Farbstein, Linda Vaio, Debbie, Alison & Diedre Falvey, & Patti Somers. To our wonderful volunteers from Clipped Wings of Marin & National Charity League. Visit Casa Allegra's Facebook page to view more photos

~ Thank you 2010 Bocce Sponsors ~

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As of 9/27/10. We sincerely apologize if we have omitted or misspelled any names.

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Cyr & Mary Miller
Jane Murphy
Allen & Sue Peters
Richard & Patti Somers
Gary & Nancy Towslee
George & Linda Vaio
Maysie Tift, MFT

Recognition Event for Community Colleagues & Supporters

On August 26, 2010 CACS hosted a Recognition Event at the CACS offices attended by about 70 of our community colleagues and supporters. Certificates from Jared Huffman were presented by Field Representative Nick Ely to:

Marin Community Foundation “in recognition of your vital support of Casa Allegra Community Services. By providing a crucial refinancing loan at a critical time you helped Casa Allegra to become more financially stable. Furthermore, MCF has also provided support by contracting with Casa Allegra-based Keep Marin Green, a co-op owned and operated by people with developmental disabilities dedicated to lessening the carbon footprint of Marin County.”

Brayton Purcell, LLP “in recognition of your support of Casa Allegra Community Services through your sponsorship of the Bocce Tournament and your culture of volunteerism that directly allows Casa Allegra to provide services and supports that bring meaning and quality to the lives of people with developmental disabilities.”

Golden Gate Regional Center “in recognition of your 35 years of unwavering support to Casa Allegra Community Services. Your steadfast support of Casa Allegra’s mission has allowed Casa to provide innovative, individualized services and supports to people with developmental disabilities.”

Clipped Wings of Marin “in recognition of your board and volunteers’ multifaceted support of Casa Allegra Community Services through donations, fundraising efforts and your ongoing shopping assistance for Casa Allegra’s residential homes; all of which helps Casa Allegra to meet their mission of providing services and supports to people with developmental disabilities.”

Rebuilding Together “in recognition of your board and volunteers who have helped keep the people with developmental disabilities who live in Casa Allegra Community Services’ two residential homes safe and healthy by designing, funding and constructing home maintenance and improvement projects over the years.”

Special Certificates were presented to **Chris Bonfiglio** “in recognition of your 35 years of steadfast support and advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities as Executive Director of Casa Allegra Community Services. Your vision

that all people are entitled to live meaningful lives with dignity in the community regardless of disability became Casa Allegra’s mission. Your focus on doing what it takes every day to provide supports necessary for the success of individuals’ lives and dreams and to live in safe and healthy homes of their choice has become the standard to which others aspire.”

And to **Dale Dutton** “in recognition of your leadership as President of the Casa Allegra Community Services Board during challenging economic times and for your work and expertise that led to the creation of the innovative Income Opportunities Unlimited customized employment that includes Keep Marin Green, the first cooperative in California owned and

governed by people with developmental disabilities. You have positively impacted the lives of so many people.”

Special thanks to volunteers Lonnie Suhrke for event coordination including food and beverage staging; to Johnathan & Christopher Holbrook for bartending, Elia Haworth, photographer, and Amy Hosa, printing & framing created large color photo portraits of our clients for the office that were unveiled at the event.

Chris Bonfiglio, executive director of Casa Allegra, said, **“Over the years, these outstanding organizations have gone out on a limb during difficult times, allowed us to test innovative ideas, helped preserve the integrity of the long term care homes and provided hours of volunteer time and service for our participants with developmental disabilities.”**



Back row: Dale Dutton, CACS; Tony Thurmond, Golden Gate Regional Center; Chris Bonfiglio, CACS; Dave Hammond, Rebuilding Together; Diane Bazler, Clipped Wings; Al Brayton, Brayton Purcell. Front row: Heather Johnson, Marin Community Foundation; Gwendolyn Soberay, Rebuilding Together; Jan White & Stevie Serleth, Clipped Wings

Out & About

Featuring the Legends!



Legends rock band played a benefit for Casa Allegra on Sat. Sept. 11, 2010 at Sleepy Hollow Clubhouse in San Anselmo

“What a good time we had tonight. Legends are great!! They played until 10:30 and we stayed till the end. Talked to some of the Band afterwards and introduced ourselves as part of Casa Allegra. We thanked them for their support and they were so gracious and really enjoyed Michael. One of the guys from the Band said that Michael went up to him and told him how much he loves music. This made him so happy. They said they will do this again for CACS. That would be great! Love, Jeanette Bruciati”

Thank you Legends – Gail Damert, Diana & Rich Shortall, Dave Pangaro, Andrew Eldridge and Sean McGuire, www.legendsmarin.com.



Julia Peters participated in a one day kayaking trip Sept. 30, 2010 through her day program, Marin Ventures. She has gone before and enjoyed it. By the look on her face, it appears she enjoyed it again.

Mia Brown was the Featured Artist at the St. Vincent de Paul dining room on Oct. 8, 2010 during the downtown San Rafael Artwalk. She was also a featured artist at Studio 333 in Sausalito

in November. In December, Mia's Holiday Show and book launch for *How to Take A Walk* by Mia Brown and Dar Wood was a huge success. Kirsten Irvin said, “Mia was the happiest I have seen her when her sister and aunt arrived. The conference room was full of laughter and fun with friends and family.”

Brendan Walsh

by Kirsten Irvin, IOU Director of Business Development



Brian Silo with Brendan Walsh – wearing his Giant's playoff cap

Brendan Walsh has been a participant in Discovery services for Income Opportunities Unlimited since May 2010. Discovery is the initial assessment phase that assists in identifying and developing participants' interests that may lead to self-employment.

Throughout the process, Brendan has engaged on a deeper and meaningful level into four main areas of interest: acting, sports, music, and advocacy. He has taken on new commitments to grow and gain confidence. His participation in Toastmasters has improved his public-speaking abilities and he won an award for best Icebreaker speech. Brendan created a Facebook advocacy group to share his passion with others on discussing and exploring ways to improve accessibility for people who use wheelchairs. Other activities include interviewing for a position on the Area Board V for the State Council on Developmental Disabilities and networking, meeting new people, and scheduling informational interviews.

Brendan has identified his ideal job and career objectives: to gain recognition in his community, share his voice, and have communion with others.

The Discovery process includes support from Brendan's family and direct support staff professionals. Robert Walsh, Brendan's father, said, “I participated in a discovery meeting organized by Casa Allegra. They brought a diverse group of friends, family, and advisors together for a brainstorming session, which led to many suggestions, ideas, referrals, and links. It was very impressive.”

Brendan's support staff acknowledges the importance of this process in Brendan's life and supports him wholeheartedly. “The Discovery Process has been very informative. The introspection and research have been a worthwhile process that continues to evolve,” said Jason Markel. Brian Silo said, “I have greatly enjoyed assisting in Mr. Walsh's exploration of potential career, volunteering opportunities, and new interests.”

Casa Allegra's Income Opportunities Unlimited team cheers for Brendan during his journey towards his destiny. Go Brendan!

Brendan's mother Diana Walsh said, **“Casa Allegra has offered Brendan the opportunity of a lifetime. The Discovery process is opening doors, presenting new ideas, and challenging Brendan to expand his life both personally and professionally. I am amazed to watch all the twists and turns unfold as Brendan pushes the limits in exploring just how big his life can be.”**



Karen, Roxana & mom Reina Araujo

Gavin Reimer, Krystal & Jan Tremblay, & Andy Woo



Jan Bilstad, Diane McLain, & Lonnie Suhrke



Kevin & sister Mary Ellen McCarthy, Bob & Barbara Amore

Special Thanks

To Lynn's Ladies – Lonnie Suhrke, Diane McLain, Judi Flowers, John Dixon, Jan Bilstad and Julia Urias of Epicurian, for cooking up a fabulous baked ham buffet with appetizers.

To National Charity League mothers and daughters and other volunteers who helped set up, clean up, greeted guests and served delicious appetizers. Don't the new aprons look great? That was Lynn Holbrook's idea.

To Laura Sherman, her partner John Lerch, and friend Mari Philo who bartended by candlelight and served wine and other beverages underwritten by Dan Murphy.

To Ann Newman for organizing gingerbread house making for the kids. To Michael Valcour from Sacramento who serenaded us with a lovely Christmas song. To the Lannon family who sponsored our DJ Chris Braun, a Senior at St. Vincent's High.

To staff Secret Santas who provided specially chosen gifts under the tree for our clients during the evening.

To Lonnie Suhrke and Alison Falvey who planned and staged the evening's entertainment, decor and food with the help of volunteers.

We especially recognize the Marin Volunteer League for their generous donation for the Holiday Party food and decor and the Marin Community Foundation for their support for all our 35th Anniversary events throughout 2010.



Judi Flowers, John Dixon & Lynn Ross



Dale, Dusty & Donna Dutton



Singer Kyla Knox & accompanist John Boyaji



Jared Jordan & sister Sonya Gordon



Kirsten Irvin between Cindy & John Irvin of Frisco, TX



Caitlin, Cecilia & Richard Lannon



Jennie Perkins, JR Jahnke, Alison Falvey

Back row: Jim & Terry Nevin, Rachel Jean
Front row: Joe Argueta & Larry Jean

Patti, Richard, & Joelle Somers & Pam Daly

Daniel & Summer Reichling, Leslie Rohrman





Michael Birch & extended family



Louise & Harvey Birch on either side of their children—Laura Jelniker, Ryan, John & Michael Birch



Josh Lyons & Michael Birch

CASA ALLEGRA COMMUNITY SERVICES 35TH ANNIVERSARY

HOLIDAY PARTY DEC. 19, 2010

IN MEMORY OF LYNN HOLBROOK



Eny Campos and her daughter Kaila



Arnold & Michael Valcour

Winter Wonderland was the theme at Marin Catholic High School's cafeteria in Kentfield. As we entered, we heard the angelic voice of Kyla Knox singing songs of the season with her accompanist John Boyaji.

This is the big event we look forward to all year. During this special evening Casa Allegra's clients, family members, board members, support staff and their families come together just for fun, food and dancing. Michael Birch's entire extended family including nephews and nieces held a clan gathering, some for the first time. Chris introduced us to Bobby Ingall's brother and sister. reunited after being separated for fifty-eight years.

There sure were a lot of great and enthusiastic dancers out on the floor! Even some of our more quiet folks took a turn. Hey everybody, Macarena! It was a real hoot to see Kevin McCarthy wheelchair dancing with his friend Bob Amore and Mary Uriz' daughter Maitane Cardenas-Uriz sharing his chair.



Chris, Gannett Hosa-Betonte, Amy Hosa



Vasfi & Pauline Basaran



Bob Amore, Kevin McCarthy & Mary Uriz' daughter, Maitane Cardenas-Uriz



Angela & Lexie Gallardo



Robin Sloan, Socorro Gallardo & Mia Brown

L to R: Theresa Eisenberg, Susan Peters, George Eisenberg, & Bruciati Family—Italia, Giovanna, Jeanette, Ron & Michael

Reynolds Family—Standing: Dan & Lorrie Zimmerman, Kathy Grossi, John Reynolds, Seated: Tom Grossi, Dolly & Lisa Reynolds, & support staff Ingrid Marin

Jonathan, Johnathan & Christopher Holbrook

