



Earle Baum Center

Serving People With Sight Loss

Volume 14, Issue 3 September 2014

Spotlight: Client Martha Baxes

Though Martha Baxes is one of Earle Baum Center's newer clients, she is a true ambassador for the organization. "I just can't tell you how much I've learned at Earle Baum Center," says Martha. "After the worst thing that happened to me, the Earle Baum Center is the best thing that's happened to me!"

Martha Baxes was diagnosed with glaucoma about ten years ago. For the first few years, she had no symptoms, but things slowly got worse and worse. It's finally reached the plateau, Martha says, where "it's terrible, but it's not going to get any worse."

Martha began going to the Earle Baum Center four months ago and she has only good things to say about the Center and its impact on her life. "I tout the Earle Baum Center to everybody I talk to," says Martha. "The people there are gold. They teach you everything from how to cope, to dealing with frustration, to an easier way to chop onions and vacuum!"

Martha is just finishing a 14-week class with Susan Hirshfield on coping mechanisms—how to live emotionally and psychologically with fading eyesight and blindness (Living with Vision Loss Class). In that class, there were twelve people, all of whom Martha will miss now that the class is ending. To make sure she stays connected with those folks, Martha has already signed up for the book club that meets once a month. She'll also take advantage of the field trips with Barbara, and attend lectures given by visiting speakers. To stay in shape, she'll hit the Earle Baum Center's gym and the beautiful trail on the campus.

Another class Martha took was a 12-week session with Denise Vancil, Introduction to Vision Loss, that covered everything from handling money to cooking—anything that's more difficult with visual impairment. The fact that the teacher, Denise, is blind herself and teaching these important skills to others really impressed Martha who called Denise "just wonderful."

Though retired now, Martha (Martha McFarland) was once a professional actor and director, and was a professor of acting at the University of California at Irvine. She was very active in the South Coast Repertory, Orange County's Tony Award-winning theater. She's still teaching audition and monologue techniques, but now students come to her home. When asked how visual impairment is affecting her ability to work,



Continued on page 2

From page 1

she said, "It's amazing. The teaching process hasn't changed at all." As someone who has been on the theater route all of her life, when diagnosed with glaucoma, the very thought that she couldn't go to the theater was awful. But Martha learned to call ahead of performances to say she's visually impaired and needs to sit in first or second row. She says every theater from the California Shakespeare Theatre, to ACT, to 6th Street Playhouse, and Berkeley Repertory Theatre has accommodated her requests. "These are big theatres," says Martha, "you'd think they wouldn't be as accommodating, but they are!"

She asks that all reading this article recommend The Earle Baum Center to everyone you know. And she says tell anybody who's in the mood for gift giving, the Earle Baum Center is the place to give it!

"The video magnifier from the Earle Baum Center loaner program opened the door to the world for me!" G.V.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EBC BOOK CORNER

Calling all book lovers! In case you were not aware of a wonderful gathering of kind hearted folks who LOVE to read, you know it now!!! Just because we can't see very well has not stopped us at all!! About year ago last February, a group of us spent 12 weeks under the care and counseling of Susan Hirshfield at EBC, stepping our way through some of the usual emotions that being new to visually impaired creates. We finished the session with deep friendships and the goal of THRIVING! From there, a few of us book lovers decided to get together because of our mutual love of books. Susan cheered us on. From several of our EBC instructors, we have learned how to access talking books through the BARD services via the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. So a book club was born at the Earle Baum Center in February of 2013, and now it encompasses all of our book-loving friends at EBC!

We meet the 1st Monday of the month at 12:30 PM. We bring a brown bag lunch so that we can munch as our friendships grow. Several of us also attend the EBC Tech Club that meets at 11 AM on the first Monday of every month. WOW! Doesn't that make sense? Two meetings on the same day so that our Paratransit times can be well planned! We choose a different snack hostess every month who gifts us with a lightly sweetened, but healthy, treat. And choosing several books every month gives us the incentive for plot discussion which is usually accompanied with lots of laughter and sharing! Our book discussions start at 1 PM, with our discussion facilitator, Nancy Turner. At the end of each gathering we choose next month's books and the snack hostess. If you are visually impaired and like to read, try us out!

Your reading buddy, Jan Seeley

FITNESS CHALLENGE UPDATE

The nationwide fitness challenge through the United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) with participants from the Earle Baum Center is going into the 7th month of the 10-month challenge. Groups



all over the nation are working to improve health while learning new ways of getting fit. Our group has gone through a few changes with some new additions, but we are all enjoying being together as a team this summer despite a variety of challenges. In June, we joined Fleet Feet, which offered a sighted guide to lead a run or speed walk on the Santa Rosa Creek trail. In July, we did another tandem bike ride and a few



even tried a bike built for three. We also did classes back-to-back in Pilates and yoga through the Tone Fitness Center. Since our self-defense experience in May was so popular, many are participating in a 6-week self-defense class that began July 18th, taught by Katie Salinas, an expert instructor who was a former client of the Earle Baum

Center. August started out in a thrilling way with an all-day sea kayak trip in Sausalito. There were 13 Earle Baum Center kayakers, nine of whom experienced the water sport for the first time. Fun was had by all, learning the techniques of paddling and using their core muscles while adventuring in the Bay passing Sea Lions and sailboats. We mainly used



triple kayaks with a great group of kayak guides through the outdoor adventure organization Environmental Traveling Companions (ETC).

Participants were so enthused, they were trying to plan future trips before this one had even ended. Our fitness challenge group has salsa dancing, tandem bike rides, gym experiences, a

beach run and a sand dune climb as some of the upcoming challenges. The team

Continued on page 4

From page 3

approach combined with the technology of the Nike Fuel Band sports bracelet that tracks one's movements is helping



participants realize the importance of exercise to enhance their quality of life. We are going to keep on moving and grooving. If you have any questions or would like to sponsor any challenges, please contact Denise Vancil, the Fitness Challenge Leader, at 707-523-7832.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

We're looking for a volunteer who can help us with our fleet of vehicles. It's hard for our busy staff to find time to take them in for oil changes, tire rotation, washing etc. A couple of hours a week should do the trick to keep our fleet in tip-top shape.

You'd need a DMV report and proof of insurance. If you think you can help us out, call 707-523-3222, or email the office, ebc@earlebaum.org.

Ray Thompson
Facilities Manager

Eye Care America

If you are over 65, you may qualify to have a volunteer ophthalmologist perform a comprehensive medical eye exam and provide up to one year of care at no out of pocket cost. Visit: www.eyecareamerica.org

"I don't know what I would have done without this service. I felt so scared before and now I resolved so many problems, I know I am going to be okay."

V.V.

EBC Low Vision Clinic

The Low Vision Clinic at the Earle Baum Center is open on Tuesdays each week. During a Low Vision Clinic evaluation, each patient's lifestyle, needs, and functional vision are established. At this point, the best low vision aids for each individual are shown. Please note that the aids are only shown after an evaluation has been conducted.

If you would like to have a low vision clinic evaluation with a low vision specialist, please call our main number. An overview of the programs we offer will also be discussed, as well as the steps necessary prior to the exam. Call 707-523-3222. Let us help to maximize your remaining vision!

THE 7TH ANNUAL

SONOMA COUNTY

EARLE FEST



A CELEBRATION
OF AMERICANA MUSIC



The GREAT IDEA Band

Audrey Auld • Frankie Boots
John Courage • David Luning
Katie Phillips • Corinne West
and More!

Great Music, Food, Drink, Vibes & A Really Great Cause!

Saturday, September 27

A benefit for **Earle Baum Center of the Blind**

4539 Occidental Road, Santa Rosa • Music 11am – 6pm (Doors at 11am)

TODD SNIDER

THE BROTHERS COMATOSE

THE BLUES BROADS

THE GREAT IDEA BAND

HOPMONK TAVERN STAGE

11am & between Main Stage Acts

SPARK & WHISPER • GALEN ASH

ONE GRASS TWO GRASS RED GRASS BLUEGRASS

\$35 Advance/\$40 Day of (Under 10 Free)

Tickets at Last Record Store, Tall Toad Music, Peoples Music, Online

www.earlefest.com

BROWN PAPER TICKETS

PRE | EARLEFEST | BENEFIT • Sunday, August 17 • Hopmonk|Sebastopol

Details – www.Hopmonk.com/Sebastopol



The Press Democrat



BOHEMIAN



THE SONOMA COUNTY
GAZETTE
Written by Readers

NOTABLE TALENT



**FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND**

**EARLE BAUM CENTER
4539 Occidental Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95401**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MISSION STATEMENT

**To provide opportunities
for people who are blind
or visually impaired to
improve and enrich their
personal, social and
economic lives.**

**Contact us. email: ebc@earlebaum.org Telephone: (707) 523-3222
Fax: (707) 636-2768 Website: www.earlebaum.org**

EARLEFEST 2014 September 27, 2014 Save the Date!

Planning is in full swing for the EarleFest 2014! Sponsors are lining up, Vendors are signing contracts, wine and beer is promised and the lineup is shaping up to be over the top this year! Please save the date and check the website for

Event Details at www.earlefest.com. It's going to be fantastic!

THANK YOU SANTA ROSA HOST LIONS!

Many Thanks to the Santa Rosa Host Lions group for the donation of flat panel monitors for our CCTV loan program. This gave new life to the machines and the clarity of the screens now gives more definition to the page being viewed. We are so appreciative for the support the Lions groups give and for their participation in making the Earle Baum Center a beautiful place to learn and develop new skills!