



Earle Baum Center

Serving People With Sight Loss

Volume 14, Issue 4 November 2014

Safety, Technology and Life

When Liz Stafford's macular degeneration in both eyes started to get bad, she began visiting the Earle Baum Center. That was about three years ago. A retired teacher, in recent years, Liz has been an artist. As you can imagine, vision loss greatly affected her ability to create art in the usual way. In stepped Earle Baum. With the help of magnification, lighting, and a newfound attitude, Liz is back to work. In fact, she's looking forward to seeing where this takes her art. She's now being "freer with her work," sometimes in a more abstract way.

The attitude part of the turnaround is no small thing. From the time you enter Earle Baum, Center you're shown that sight loss doesn't mean life loss. When you understand Liz's history, you know that attitude is especially important. As a child, Liz was abused and from that time on, safety was a huge issue for her. She worked on healing those wounds as an adult, but that was when she had all of her senses and could depend on her vision to help keep her safe. With sight loss came severe panic attacks, anxiety, and a feeling of isolation. The human-based and caring community support given at Earle Baum made Liz feel safe.

"From the time you enter Earle Baum, you're shown that sight loss doesn't mean life loss."

If you're not struggling with sight loss yourself, you may not realize how important technology is to people with low vision. These tools enable people to stay connected with others while at the same time helping with self-reliance. Never a "techie," Liz was way behind, but EBC has helped her make great strides. She now works on a laptop, an iPad, and, soon, an iPhone.

"I now see the possibilities of new adventures and I look at life in a different way," says Liz. "The Earle Baum Center has been totally life changing."



The Earle Baum Center works to help those with vision loss learn skills that enable them to reach goals and be active members in our community.

Government funding continues to diminish, and the majority of support now comes from private donations. A year-end donation, or a pledge for monthly support will be leveraged by our skilled staff to produce life-changing results.

***You being here for us today
ensures we will be here for you tomorrow***



Greetings friends of the Earle Baum Center

Fifteen years ago, just before Thanksgiving, the Earle Baum Center began the noble cause of providing skills training and support to people with sight loss. In a region void of vision rehabilitation and with virtu-

ally no money, Earle Baum brought an abundance of passion and determination to serve those facing any degree of blindness. Our goal was simple—to show by example that life can be rewarding, safe, and fulfilling, even without sight. Over time, it became clear that the only way to achieve our goals would be with the help of friends and neighbors. If we waited for the "system" to fund the good work of

the Earle Baum Center, we would be waiting a very long time. We soon understood that our work would depend largely on the generosity of donors. We learned, too, that donors expect and insist upon excellence, and that is something we're proud to say we have always provided. In this season of giving, if you are able to contribute to the Center, know that we will maintain the high standards and quality services that have been the foundation of this organization since its inception. To make an investment in our future, please donate now and consider including the Earle Baum Center in your long-term planning. Together, we will achieve greatness.

Happy Holidays,
Allan Brenner, CEO

*The EBC staff sends a special thank you
to all our wonderful volunteers and clients.*

Tom Farrell

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Tom Farrell. Having suffered macular degeneration, Tom came to the Earle Baum Center in 2008 to learn how to continue his very independent life. After successfully completing Adjustment to Vision Loss and Living with Vision Loss classes, Tom continued to use the Center as a life base where he met new friends and shared his amazing wealth of community experiences to help the Center grow. We're proud to have been able to help him and we celebrate his life and the time he spent with us.



Let's Get Fit and Stay Fit Together!

The 2014 Earle Baum Fitness Challenge Summary

The United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) and the California Anthem Blue Cross combined with several agencies across the nation. The goal was to enhance and improve the quality of lives of people with visual impairments through fitness. There were 800 participants nationwide with 21 of them being from the Earle Baum Center. It has been an incredible 10 month journey. We want to congratulate the athletes and volunteers and send a special thanks to the participating agencies including: Katherine Bell and the Santa Rosa Junior College Adaptive PE Department, Katie Salinas Karate Studio, Fleet Feet Running Gear, Tone Fitness Center, Environmental Travel Companions, YMCA, Antonio Moran with Santa Rosa Salsa, Active Sports Club in Petaluma, Gene Russo Dance Instructor and Steven Cozza Tandem Bike Pilot. For further information, please contact, Denise Vancil, instructor at 707-523-7832.

Just a Simple “Welcome”

Laurel Fichman had a bilateral occipital stroke in late 2013, leaving her with about 10% vision in each eye. She just woke up one morning and couldn't see. “I didn't know what I was doing. My confidence level was very low and I was frightened,” says Laurel. Laurel started going to Earle Baum in early 2014 and found the help there that she needed.

Instead of being stuck in the house as she'd feared, Laurel spent time at the Center taking every class she could get her hands on—mobility and tech training, cooking, counseling, tap dancing, book club, you name it. Now, if you ask Laurel how it's going, she says, “Earle Baum has given me my confidence back. I can now walk on my own. It's changed me personally and has opened up my life. It's like a second chance for me—the next chapter.”



The start of that next chapter began from the moment she was welcomed to the Center. Laurel was greeted with a simple “welcome” and just that one word made her feel like part of the family. She was very sensitive after the stroke and everything was raw. Coming to Earle Baum was healing “All of the staff walked around with open hearts. I could feel that. It was really important to me.”

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Currently Laurel, with the help of prism glasses and strong lighting, has been making jewelry. In fact, her first show happened in November. She's also volunteering in the Earle Baum Center office, so should you pay a visit, you can be sure you will be greeted with a very heartfelt “welcome.”



Art Show at EBC Gallery Four

The EBC art class, under the guidance of Deborah Little Bear, held its first art show and sale on October 15th. Also featured was a special sale of Collage art by Tamae Baugh.

Various art projects done by the students throughout the year were hung in groupings reflecting elements of different art movements as presented in the Art History Through Touch And Sound books--a program developed by Art Education for the Blind, Inc., upon which the class series is based.

In the words of Deborah Little Bear, "You must have dreams. At one point this was just a dream, and look what happened!"

The next 10-week class series is scheduled to start on Tuesday, January 27th from 10:00am-12:00pm. A \$55.00 fee is required for class materials. The Elizabeth Cooley scholarship program is available, so don't let a shortage of funds stop you from applying. Learn about art history and make art that you can feel with your hands. For information, contact Patricia at 707-636-2314.



“Art to me is creating from the heart and soul something beautiful. With color, contrast and texture, I can become an artist”

What's Happening at the Earle Baum Center

Earle Baum Center

Serving People with Sight Loss

- Independent Living Skills
- Orientation and Mobility
- Assistive Technology Services
- VA Support and Senior Services
- EBC Site Tours—call for a tour appointment.
- Exercise, Tap, and Tai Chi classes

Visit our website:

www.earlebaum.org

Call our office for more information: 707-523-3222



Activities and Events

Audio Newsletter

Ways to Help

Classes

Resources

Directions to EBC

Support Groups

Support Groups

Contact Us



EARLE BAUM CENTER
4539 Occidental Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Earle Baum Center

MISSION STATEMENT

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

**FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND**