

Connections

NEWSLETTER—Year End 2016



Matching riders with providers

A YEAR IN REVIEW AND PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

Those of you who have read this Newsletter in the past are familiar with my take on how time flies as we get older. I hit a milestone birthday this year (70!), and I swear 2016 went by twice as fast as most! Can't wait to see what happens next year and the ones after that (of which I hope there will be MANY more!).

Mobility Matters celebrated the 11th anniversary of our Rides for Seniors program this year. I remember the launch like it was yesterday. This is an amazing and much needed program that helps otherwise homebound seniors safely get where they need to go for medically necessary care and to obtain basic necessities like groceries and other household items. In the past year, 200 volunteers gave over 5,300 rides to 250 seniors, driving over 65,000 miles, and donating 6,200 hours of their time as well as the priceless gift of compassion.

As we announced last year, when we became the Mobility Management Center for Contra Costa County, we would no longer be taking new clients in our Reassurance Phone Friends program and now refer all seniors who would like a phone friend to other agencies with phone friend programs. We want to thank the 25 volunteers who continue to call the 33 clients remaining in this program.

One outcome we did not anticipate when we expanded our Rides for Seniors program to seven cities in Alameda County three years ago was that we would not be able to continue to provide those services any longer. (Please see article written by Program Manager, Victoria Williams on page 2.) No one tried harder than Victoria to keep this program up and running, but significant funding shortages for services in Alameda County and an inadequate number of volunteer drivers led to this difficult decision. The program will close on December 31, 2016 and by that time all former clients will have been matched/referred to an appropriate alternative transportation provider.

But..... our mobility management work, including the operation of our two programs Rides for Seniors and Transportation Information & Referrals Helpline, will continue and grow in Contra Costa County.

Henry J. Kaiser was known for saying, "Find a need and fill it!" Mobility Matters has long embraced that philosophy. Recently, we have found a major need in Contra Costa County and plan to begin to fill it in early 2017 with a new program called Rides 4 Veterans. (Read about our plans on page 3.) We are very excited about taking on this new challenge and hope you will support us in our efforts!

If you are in receipt of this newsletter, you are a donor, volunteer, client, staff member, board member, or friend of Mobility Matters. Each of you is precious to us, and without you, we could not carry out our mission. Thank you for your continued support and may you all be blessed with good health and happiness this holiday season and all year long!

Elaine Welch RN, MBA
Chief Executive Officer

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."

AESOP

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Matching riders with providers



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MOBILITY MATTERS RIDES FOR SENIORS PROGRAM

Qualifications for Clients

In order to apply as a regular client for our Rides for Seniors program, the individual must meet **ALL** the following criteria:

- Live in our service area, which is anywhere in Contra Costa County.
Age 60 or older.
- Able to walk with the aid of a cane, walker, knee scooter, crutches, or elbow assistance.
- Require escorted, door-through-door assistance.
- Able to call in to request rides.
- Unable to use other forms of transportation for medical care and basic necessities, like grocery shopping.

Temporary Clients: If an individual, age 60 or older, resides in our service area, and is usually able to use other forms of transportation, including driving self, does not have someone to drive him/her home after an outpatient surgery or procedure requiring general anesthesia, we can provide transportation to and from the outpatient facility that day.

Qualifications for Volunteer Drivers

In order to apply to become a volunteer driver, the individual must meet **ALL** of the following criteria:

- Be a caring, mature individual who is willing and able (usually one trip per week) to provide transportation to a senior who can no longer drive or take other forms of transportation.
- Age 25 -75 with a current driver's license.
- Excellent driving record and crime free background.
- Own or have access to a reliable, safe vehicle that is registered and insured.
- Participate in a three hour training class before giving first ride.

When a volunteer driver joins our team, we can usually enroll at least two more clients. Come join us and find out what a difference you can make in other people's lives. It will change their lives for the better, and it will most certainly change yours as well!



Matching riders with providers

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Our Mission

Mobility Matters provides mobility management services in Contra Costa County facilitating collaboration and coordination between public and private transportation providers creating a network of integrated options that primarily address the mobility needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low income individuals.

A Message from Ray Zenoni, Board President

The Mobility Matters Board of Directors would like to thank you for your support of our vision of effective mobility management that provides accessible transportation options that best fits specific individual needs. We thank our donors for your generous contributions, our volunteers who give up their time and provide free rides, and our supporters, who help us in many different ways. We also would like to acknowledge the Mobility Matters staff for their dedication, hard work and vision. Through your selfless contributions, you all help make our community a more friendly and better place to live and to age. We look forward to the challenges of the upcoming year and a lasting partnership with you.

Wishing you a Happy Holiday Season!
Mobility Matters Board of Directors

SAYING GOODBYE TO ALAMEDA COUNTY RIDES FOR SENIORS PROGRAM

Thank you to everyone involved with the Alameda County Rides for Seniors program!

A heartfelt thank you to each and every volunteer driver who provided escorted rides to help Alameda County older adult clients living in Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, Piedmont and San Leandro. You assisted clients in getting to their medical appointments and obtaining groceries which might have been very difficult or even impossible without your help.

A sincere thank you to all Rides for Seniors clients who have enriched the lives of each volunteer driver and my life as well!



Mobility Matters staff honoring Alameda County Rides for Seniors volunteers.

Accomplishments during the 3-year term of the program:

- Enrolled 202 Clients
- Recruited, screened and trained, 76 Alameda County and 26 Contra Costa County, a total of 102 volunteer drivers
- Provided 4,469 rides
- Drove 59,552 miles.
- Donated 5,464 hours of their time

I'd like to thank Elaine Welch, our CEO, for having the confidence in me to allow me the opportunity to manage the Alameda County Rides for Seniors program. It's been a very rewarding experience!

I am grateful to all Mobility Matters staff members for their on-going help and support.

Thanks to the Board of Directors for agreeing that Alameda County seniors needed rides too.

I'd also like to thank Alameda County Transportation Commission for funding the Rides for Seniors program in Alameda County.

Victoria Williams

Rides 4 Veterans

As mentioned on the cover, in early 2017, we plan to start a volunteer driver program specifically for veterans. The VA Acute Hospital was severely damaged during the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 and never reopened. That means veterans in Contra Costa County need to be able to access medically necessary care in the outpatient setting to get the treatments and care they need to maintain or improve their health both mentally and physically avoiding the necessity of frequent emergency room visits due to poorly managed outpatient care.

The VA offers some types of transportation for medical care, but there is a huge gap in services for those who need one-on-one rides with someone who can escort them safely door-through-door for medical care and basic necessities. In fact only medical trips are covered by the VA. There are no transportation services covering shopping and other types of trips that we will offer in our new program.

We will use lessons learned and best practices based on our Rides for Seniors program, but age will not be a factor for clients so that we can serve younger disabled veterans in addition to those who are seniors.

If you are a veteran and would like to help us make this vital program a success, please contact Kurt Harris at Kurt@mobilitymatterscc.com or 925-284-4831 to offer your help. Thanks!

Check out our new Transportation Guide, Website and Facebook!

In addition to all the hard copy materials and documents we produce, Mobility Matters is now embracing digital media. This year, as one of our most important mobility management projects, we published a guide to transportation options focused on seniors and individuals with disabilities in Contra Costa County called "WAY TO GO CONTRA COSTA!" This user friendly, easy-to-read guide has been widely distributed throughout the County and serves as a tool to find alternatives to driving when that mode of transportation is no longer or was never an option. In addition to the English version, it will soon be available in Spanish and Chinese. This Guide is also available on line and can be translated into numerous languages at the touch of a button. Find it at www.waytogocc.com.

We have also recently updated our website at www.mobilitymatterscc.com. Check our site throughout the year for updates on our activities and watch the progress of our new Rides 4 Veterans program as it evolves!

We also launched a Facebook page this year! You can find it at www.facebook.com/mobilitymatterscc. Be sure to "like" us and keep up-to-date with our many and varied activities and accomplishments on an ongoing basis! Great photos and stories and so much more in real time!

Meet our newest staff member!



Kurt Harris



Kurt and his beautiful family, Elijah & Mackenzie

This year, Kurt Harris joined the Mobility Management team. He is our Director of Development concentrating his efforts on both program and financial development.

Kurt is a graduate of CSU Channel Islands with a major in Political Science and a minor in Social Business, and he also completed studies in Environmental Policy. In addition, he served as the Director of Statewide Affairs and Lobby Corps for his college in his junior and senior years.

Just prior to joining us at Mobility Matters, Kurt served as the International Commerce Coordinator for Mode Transportation. His previous positions were primarily in banking and sales.

Since coming to Mobility Matters, Kurt has hit the road running! He created and launched our Facebook page and has shown us how valuable it can be in attracting donors and other types of supporters; completed key data based projects for information sharing, funding, and advocacy; has engaged a number of elected officials and key community and political leaders throughout Contra Costa County and Sacramento in the mission of Mobility Matters; helped our community partner agencies with communication efforts related to transportation; and enthusiastically began the process of creating our new Rides 4 Veterans program to be launched in early 2017.

Kurt walks the talk, considers no task too large or too small, and is always willing to help others, inside or outside our organization.

If you haven't already had the pleasure of working with or at least meeting Kurt, feel free to give him a call at 925-284-4831 or email him at kurt@mobilitymatterscc.com. He'd love to fill you in on his activities, answer your questions, and listen to your ideas!