



## Matching riders with providers

# ANOTHER GREAT YEAR AT MOBILITY MATTERS!

2017 marked the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Rides for Seniors program and the launch of our Rides 4 Veterans program! When we started Rides for Seniors in September 2005, we knew we were going to be providing sorely needed services to a vulnerable group of seniors who were at risk for premature placement in long term care facilities or even early demise, but we had no idea how much continued mobility would add to their quality of life. Every year about this time, we send satisfaction surveys to all our clients and volunteers in both programs. I read each one as they come in, and they are summarized for staff and Board members to review. I have yet to read them without tears in my eyes. Their responses serve an annual reminder of why we do what we do. Some of the comments received this year from clients were as follows:

- I had no one to help me and I was led to Mobility Matters and for the first time, since forever, I feel like I matter to someone.
- I'm a 97 year old woman and so appreciate the kindness and assistance they so freely give.
- This program is a blessing and I really appreciate it. It has improved my life so much!
- I have nothing but respect for your organization and volunteers. I am so thankful that you are serving the needs of seniors, and disabled veterans who without your help would suffer!
- You make a difference in people's lives. God bless you!
- Your program makes it possible to fight my battle with depression and anxiety, because I am assured I can keep my medical appointments and get my food supplies. I don't worry anymore.
- What can I say?! I cannot survive without you!
- The volunteers are friendly. We chat and have a nice time. They are patient and never try to hurry me. I feel like I have made some new friends.

Aging in place is a common goal of seniors who want to and are able to enjoy their lives by living at home. It is hard to enjoy life if you are homebound and feel like nobody cares. All the clients in our two rides programs know we care, and that we keep the promises we make! Over the past year those promises were kept by five staff members and 286 volunteers donating 3,588 hours, driving 388 clients, 39,120 miles, for 3,107 trips to insure that they had food and other basic necessities and the medical and dental care they needed. Our selfless, generous, compassionate volunteers are the life blood of this organization, and each is a treasure to us and our clients.

Programs that are free to participants are not free to run, and those of you who have been our loyal donors, or plan to become one, are changing the lives of seniors and veterans of all ages who reside in the communities of Contra Costa County and are stranded without a volunteer driving and escorting them to and from where they need to go. In our society mobility=independence, but you don't have to drive to keep your independence! If you are able to take other forms of transportation like a bus, paratransit van, taxis and the like, we will help you find the appropriate provider. Our Transportation Information & Referrals Helpline responds to thousands of calls a year to help match riders to providers.

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 be blessed for all you do for others.

Elaine Welch RN, MBA  
Chief Executive Officer

1035A Carol Lane  
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## MOBILITY MATTERS RIDES PROGRAMS

### Qualifications for Clients

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

#### RIDES FOR SENIORS

- 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 or dental care and basic necessities, like grocery shopping.

#### RIDES 4 VETERANS

- Live in our service area, which is anywhere in Contra Costa County.
- Must be an honorably discharged veteran of any age.
- 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 or dental care and basic necessities, like grocery shopping.

### 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 or disabled veteran 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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Chief Executive Officer

Sam Sotelo  
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Chalo Reyes  
Intake & Referrals  
Coordinator

Dale Welch  
Scheduling Coordinator

Joan Butterfield  
Office Manager/  
Program Assistant

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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 Francesca Vogel, 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. Without our selfless volunteers, our generous donors, and dedicated, hardworking staff, we could not carry out our mission! This amazing team of donors, volunteers, and staff all help make our community a friendlier and better place to live and to age. Thank you for helping us keep the promises we make to the vulnerable populations we serve! We look forward to the challenges of the upcoming year and a lasting partnership with you.

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

**HAPPY RETIREMENT, DALE!!!**

Many of you have had the pleasure of knowing or working with our Scheduling Coordinator, Dale Welch. Dale came out of retirement from SeaLand as a Port Engineer in 2002 to help me out with my new job at what at that time was known as Contact Care Helpline. He volunteered in a number of capacities and soon became the Office Manager. When we decided to offer a free, door-through-door, one-on-one volunteer driver program for seniors in 2005, and I could not find the right person to help develop and run it, Dale agreed to help out until we could find someone who could do it fulltime. After all.....he was enjoying everything about his retirement, especially working on lowering his already good handicap on the golf course, and the last thing on his mind was going back to work full time!

Somehow 15 years went by, and Dale has continued to give me the best gift I have ever received. He stayed at our organization that had now gone through two name changes....Senior Helpline Services and then Mobility Matters. He has helped me sing my song for so long I don't know how it will sound when we are no longer harmonizing at the end of this year.

Dale has been the most wonderful husband for over 42 years, and of course, I always thought he was special. Hearing from volunteers, clients, their families, and many others with whom he has worked with over the past several years has confirmed time and again that it is not just my imagination, he is indeed an amazing human being.

Feedback from clients and volunteer drivers, especially in the annual satisfaction surveys we send to all come back consistently with praise and accolades not only for our rides programs, but the man they have come to count on week after week.



As two of our clients so aptly put it in this year's survey:

***"Dale has a halo before leaving this Earth. His patience and kindness is wonderful. There is goodness in this world, and Dale is an example of real goodness!"***

***"Dale is an exceptional person. His voice is kind, gentle, and caring. I will miss him. No one will ever be as good at his job or better than him. Thank you, Dale. Hope you can enjoy many years in retirement."***

On Friday December 8, 2017, we will celebrate Dale's retirement (at age 79!) at Our Saviors Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall at 1035 Carol Lane Lafayette, CA from 5pm - 8pm. An invitation with more details is included in this mailing. I hope you can come, and if you are able, bring a tax deductible donation in Dale's honor to help perpetuate the Rides for Seniors and Rides 4 Veterans programs! I can't think of a better way to thank him for his years of service to Mobility Matters!



**Rides 4 Veterans Update**

In June 2017, Mobility Matters implemented a new program, Rides 4 Veterans, focused on providing no cost rides to veterans in need throughout Contra Costa County. Since June, we have recruited 33 volunteers who have given more than 200 rides to 31 veterans providing essential transportation for medical appointments and basic necessities, like grocery shopping.

The willingness of America's veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude. Now is our chance to show them our support by continuing to serve those who have served our country. Thank you to everyone who has made this program possible, the staff at Mobility Matters, the volunteers, Contra Costa County and any other funders of this program, but most importantly the veterans who allow us to serve them.

If you are interested in helping, check out the requirements for being a volunteer driver on the back of this newsletter and come join our team!

*"This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave."*  
-Elmer Davis

**WAY TO GO CONTRA COSTA!**

In addition to providing our Rides for Seniors and Rides 4 Veterans programs, Mobility Matters serves as a mobility management center for Contra Costa. In this role, we provide mobility management services to facilitate 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.

In addition to responding to thousands of phone inquiries on our Transportation Information & Referrals Helpline, we just published the second edition of Way to Go Contra Costa, a travel guide for Contra Costa residents needing accessible transportation. This guide is set up so that you can look up your city and find out what types of accessible transportation are available where you live. In addition to hard copies, it is available on line and translatable in several languages at [www.waytogocc.com](http://www.waytogocc.com).

If you or anyone else you know needs help finding the most appropriate form of transportation, feel free to call our Helpline at (925) 284-6109 or toll free at 1(855) 234-RIDE (7433).

Also, if you have any suggestions on how to make transportation in Contra Costa County better in any way, please give us a call, and we'll see what we can do with our own programs or others.

☆ **Welcome Sam & Chalo!** ☆

This year brought two new members to our Mobility Matters family....Sam Sotelo and Chalo Reyes!



Sam Sotelo

Sam joined our team in May and began working on the roll out of our Rides 4 Veterans (R4V) program. Being a disabled veteran gave him unique insight into the needs of the disabled veterans we would be enrolling in this program. About a year before Sam came on staff, he served as a volunteer driver for our Rides for Seniors program. We had recruited him to serve on our Rides 4 Veterans Advisory Group, and as soon as we were ready to start interviews to fill the new position of R4V Program Coordinator, he stepped up to the plate. Of all the candidates interviewed, Sam stood out as the right person for the job.

Sam got busy right away finishing the preparations for R4V launch, and the first R4V ride was provided in June! Sam was recently promoted to Director of Programs and now has the responsibility of recruiting volunteers for both of our Rides programs, as well as supervising two program staff. He spends most of his time continuing to grow and develop the Rides 4 Veterans program, since that program is still in its infancy, while our 12 year old Rides for Seniors program is more stabilized and mature, although volunteer recruitment is a never ending challenge for both programs! Sam is well liked and respected by everyone he comes into contact with and shows us daily the he was indeed the right person for the job! WELCOME SAM!



Chalo Reyes

Chalo joined our team in June as the Intake & Referrals Coordinator for both our Rides programs. She reports to Sam and works in synergy with our Scheduling Coordinator, Dale. She responds to calls on our Transportation Information & Referrals Helpline and matches callers to the appropriate transportation provider to meet their mobility needs. If their needs match one of our programs, she completes an application for them on the phone and then arranges an in home assessment visit in the next few days to ensure they are a safe transport for our volunteers.

The feedback we have had from clients, family members, and professional staff since she started has been 100% positive. Her kindness, patience, and gentle sense of humor have made her the object of admiration by all. She is a major asset to our team, and her work embodies the meaning of teamwork! WELCOME CHALO!