Mobility Matters

Connections

NEWSLETTER—Year End 2021

Matching riders with providers

KEEPING THE PROMISES WE MAKE

About this time last year, I wrote about what a difficult but triumphant year 2020 had been. I, like many others, was hopeful that 2021 would be better for all. In many ways it was. Most of us are fully vaccinated against COVID and have not become infected. I know that was not true for everyone and many of you were sick or had family members and friends who were sick, and even lost loved ones to this horrible disease. Please accept my deepest sympathy for all you have endured.

With the advent of vaccine availability, we encouraged our volunteers to get vaccinated and called each of our clients to see if they needed help making an appointment; helped them make an appointment; and then provided them with escorted transportation to get their shots. We also checked in with them the day after to see how they were doing. We are currently helping them get their COVID booster and flu shots.

It never fails to amaze me how wonderful our staff and volunteers are and how far they will go to help the vulnerable population of seniors and veterans we serve. Some of our volunteers took a leave of absence during the worst of COVID, due to health and safety concerns, but most are now vaccinated, trained in precautions, supplied with all the personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies they need, and are back to driving. No one just walked away!

As we prepare for 2022, we are again hopeful that this virus crisis will fade away, and we can get back to our "normal" lives. Challenges remain and a lot has changed in our world. Political strife; a struggling economy; people having to give up their homes and jobs; what seems to be a predominance of attitudes that tend to be very negative and judgmental; fears about the future near and far, etc. , but I have been an optimist my entire life and have seen time and again that basically people are good and want the best for each other. We may not always agree what is "best", but this county has shown time and again that we are resilient and never give up and eventually find our way to compromise. What I know for certain is that those of us at Mobility Matters will continue to do everything we can to make other's lives better.

Those of you who are our loyal donors and volunteers have shown what really good people there are in this world, and we are so grateful for your generosity and selflessness. You not only give Mobility Matters your time and resources, so we can keep the promises we make to those we serve, you encourage us at the most difficult of times and circumstances.

As the year end holidays approach, it is a time to reflect on the positives and be thankful for what we have and for what we can do for others. I want to thank everyone involved with Mobility Matters for your continued support and faith in us. Bless you for all you are and all you do for others!

Wishing everyone a healthy, happy, safe, and peaceful New Year!

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Elaine Welch RN, MBA
CEO—Mobility Matters

Mobility Matters

Matching riders with providers

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Our Mission

Mobility Matters provides mobility management services throughout Contra Costa County by matching riders to transportation providers that meet their individual needs. Mobility Matters operates volunteer driver programs that provide free, one-on-one, door-through-door rides for seniors and disabled veterans who cannot access other forms of transportation.

A Message from Francesca Vogel, Board President

I am truly thankful and honored to have served for the last six years as your Board President.
I am very grateful for the hard work and commitment of the amazing volunteers of this organization. Mobility Matters is such a great organization carrying out its important mission to help those in need in our community through Elaine's strong leadership and her dedicated staff.
I look forward to continuing to support Mobility Matters in any way I can in the near and distant future.
Happy Holidays to everyone!

Celebrating our Centenarians

This year in the middle of the pandemic we noticed that our clients were isolated like they have never been before so Mobility Matters came up with a fun idea along with the Boys Team Charity Lamorinda League. The Boys Team Charity is a volunteer service organization dedicated to developing an altruistic spirit in young men (7th to 12th graders) through active participation of parents and sons in philanthropic projects in their communities. They were looking for projects to help seniors so we asked them to make birthday cards for our Centenarians. We currently have 6 clients who are over 100 years old and our oldest client turned 105 years old. This year four of our Centenarians received a box filled with 100 birthday cards. Each card was designated for a certain year with a fun fact. Some of the fun facts that were included are as follows: In 1957, Wham-O invented for the modern day "Frisbee"; February 7, 1964 the Beatles arrived in America; and my favorite fun fact from one of the boys is that he declared that in the year of 2007 he was born. Some of the cards were purchased at a store and other cards were handmade. The cards were all very creative. This act of kindness gave unexpected joy to our clients. Our clients were so happy that we spent time and energy to help them celebrate on their Birthdays!

Happiness is Helping Others,
David Benet – Volunteer Coordinator







“MORE THAN A RIDES PROGRAM”

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

“What is the essence of life? To serve others and to do good.” -Spoken by Greek philosopher Aristotle over 2300 years ago, one of the most ancient quotes about volunteering offers proof that giving back to the community is hardly a new concept. With so many people less fortunate than those of us who can afford to travel, and with funding for social services being brutally slashed, volunteering is becoming increasingly important these days.

We are delighted to be celebrating our extraordinary volunteers this year. Our annual volunteer appreciation event always gives us the chance to express our gratitude, but particularly this year, as we recognize their commitment which has allowed us to continue operating throughout the pandemic without much interruption. Our volunteers are truly our heroes, each and every one! We could not do the amazing work we do without their help. Thank you to those who have come to Mobility Matters during the pandemic, and welcome back to those who are newly returning – we have missed you so much! The COVID -19 pandemic left Contra Costa County, the country, and the world in a state of crisis. Our volunteers have been a huge part of making this challenging time safer for our clients. We give our thanks for everything each volunteer did, and continues to do, to keep our clients lives well served.

Each of you take a client out usually once a week for a few hours, getting groceries, going to the doctor’s office, having a nice chat and making sure they’re safe. The benevolent nature of your proceedings may seem a small, but significant, piece of the social construct, so we thought it might be ideal to add a “big picture” to your weekly volunteer activities.
Here are some ways our over 200 volunteers helped us respond to the mobility needs of our almost 500 clients this year.

Mobility Matters Rides Stats	
Rides	3016
Miles	89,172
Hours	7987

Yes, you did read that right! To shed some light on these numbers, you have volunteered cumulatively for 333 days, driven the distance from San Francisco to New York City 31 times.

In addition to the incredible statistical contribution, your contribution has resulted in an investment in the protection of our senior and veteran community. Not only do our clients need assistance with daily transportation activities, healthcare, and obtaining basic necessities like food, but as a mandatory reporting agency, we have actually been called to think outside of the box. The senior community, in particular, are a vulnerable group and susceptible to fraud, abuse and crime. The elderly are targeted by criminals, or abused by friends and family at such a high rate that it can boggle the mind. Our clients are not exempt from such activity, and thanks to your keen observations, you’ve reported many issues that have protected them from harm.

And so as another year approaches the end, we are smiling in **your** laurels at what **you** have all accomplished over this pandemic season, and we look forward to what is to come. You can see from the previous statistics that your contribution to the volunteer community is tremendously important. As Elaine Welch, our CEO, often says, you are actually enabling seniors who cannot drive an opportunity to stay independent, age in place, and the bonus is that they gain friends, family, community, and a safety net.

When I started this adventure many years ago, I decided to add a quote to my signature. I thought about the quote, thought about our volunteers, our staff, and board and decided on the following quote which has proven to be accurate and true.

“A Community will be judged based upon how they take care of their own.”

Our community of volunteers is well judged, because we take care of our own, so well done!

THANK YOU !

Roque Torres
Director Of Transportation

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Mobility Matters

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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..
- 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.
- Trained, certified service animals welcome.

RIDES 4 VETERANS

- Live in our service area, which is anywhere in Contra Costa County.
- Must be an honorably discharged veteran of any age.
- 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.
- Trained, certified service animals welcome.

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 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!