



Newsletter for the Earle Baum Center

Serving People With Sight Loss
(707) 523-3222 ebc@earlebaum.org

February 2013 Volume 13 Issue 1

From the Center



It is 2013 and I feel a sense of optimism. Our economy shows signs of improving and the California State budget is finally in the black. Although we may be only at the

beginning of recovery, all signs point to better times ahead. As we read more and more letters from clients expressing their heartfelt thanks for the impact the EBC has had in their lives, it raises our spirits and inspires us to believe that we are successfully achieving many of our goals.

As I am writing, solar power is being installed. It feels really good to know that the inspiration for the effort comes from the drive of our late, beloved volunteer, Beryl Brown. Beryl's gift of an ongoing legacy for the EBC will make it easy to remember her every time we turn on a light or heater. If you would like to donate in Beryl's honor toward this project, it would be a lovely way to keep her memory alive. Further, by dramatically reducing our electrical costs and carbon footprint, we make it possible for the Center to serve more people who need our help while being good stewards environmentally.

It seems like we are always looking ahead to expand and improve our facilities in order to meet the needs of the future. After several years of tabling construction of a multi-use building, we are back at the drawing board. The plan is to raise substantial funds for a building project made up of two parts: one is a large auditorium/meeting space and commercial kitchen; and the other is an exercise and fitness center. We realize that the project is huge but the time is right to begin work. Our architect, Ken Coker, is putting the project to paper and once the design is in hand, we will solicit large and small donations until we have a fund large enough to begin construction.

By the time this newsletter is published, we may have two new additions to the EBC family. Instructors Regina (and husband Chris) and Jacques (and wife Leilani) are both expecting babies before the end of January. Regina and Jacques have been glowing and the rest of us are excited for both of them.

Over the last several months, we have expanded the EBC Board of Directors to include several new members. They are Linda Burille, Tim Webster, Tom Miller and Elizabeth Fritzinger. Linda is the Vice President and Trust Officer of Exchange Bank and has been affiliated with the EBC since her tenure on the Friends of Earle Baum Committee about 12 years ago. Tim

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is a retired gemologist and former client of the EBC and has been a popular personality around the EBC for some time. Tom is the recently retired CEO of the Blinded Veteran's Association out of Washington, DC and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the EBC. Elizabeth, a talented and energetic attorney with the law firm of Abbey, Weitzberg, Warren and Emery is relatively new to Sonoma County and a real find for the EBC. Members of the Board are very excited about the new members and look forward to benefiting from their participation.

All of us at the EBC wish you a healthy and prosperous year. Thank you for being a part of such an incredible organization.

Allan Brenner, CEO

Chelce Nolan is a Book Waiting to Happen...

There are so many interesting stories in Chelce Nolan that this small article is just a tease for someone to take the bait and get to work on a biography of this fascinating man.

Recalling his history, particularly his music career, Chelce says is like fanning the pages of a thick book. Chelce was born in 1919 in Alabama ("But I got out in time."). He spent most of his early years in Michigan and began drumming in school. He remembers hearing the Cab Calloway Big Band and young Ella Fitzgerald in Berkeley, Michigan and that was perhaps where his musical seed was planted. He explored law school for about three years ("I was a better person at my other job."), but then he was drafted during the war and had the great fortune and was competent enough to become a member of the Army

Band. Remember Bond Drives? Chelce Nolan was at the aircraft factories as a part of the 18 piece swing band encouraging us all to buy Bonds to support WWII. "The band was so good the young girls would go 'Waaaaa.' We had groupies who would come and pull the buttons off our uniforms!"

After the War, Chelce was living in Los Angeles and eventually San Francisco where he applied for a job at the Golden Gate Theater. There was a waiting period because of Local 6 American Federation of Musicians issues and he could only play one day a week until he could be hired full time – he filled the rest of his week playing and touring with other bands.

In the late forties, big band leader Ernie Heckscher took command of the Venetian Room at the Fairmont Hotel and Chelce Nolan began his thirty-seven year career as the drummer in Ernie's famous band. On a roughly three- week cycle, the music industry giants played the Venetian Room with Chelce supplying the rhythm. "Nat King Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, Tina Turner, Liberace, Benny Goodman, Sammy Davis, Lena Horn, Red Skelton, Dean Martin, Peggy Lee, James Brown, Jerry Lewis, Mel Torme, Harry Belafonte, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and that's just a few. I'm a real drummer. I made a living at it and became known by some musical greats."

Chelce's stories about the music business are so interesting and he is so captivating, it was a chore to steer the conversation to his vision limitations. The condition Chelce has is a very common one as we mature – Macular Degeneration. It is a slowly progressing condition and reading and seeing specific things like road signs seem to be his biggest issues, though he says he's careful now when he steps off a curb and admits: "The world closes in on you a bit when you can't see very well or drive a car."

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Patricia Jefferson is Chelce's much appreciated point person at Earle Baum Center. She consults with him occasionally in his home in Vineyard Commons and has been a great help to him in a variety of ways, particularly with tools – she has provided a magnifying machine and most recently a special new phone. Chelce would recommend the Earle Baum Center to anyone with visual challenges – “I have certainly benefited from Earle Baum Center and I think it's great.”

Chelce has a treasure of inside stories about the music world (take note, biographer!) And he's just a very interesting and entertaining man. The drummer can be the worst looking guy in the band and still get the most women out to dinner – because drummers are more interesting than any other player. That's a known fact.

Go Laurie Ballard!

The immediate impression one has of Laurie Ballard is that she is speeding along the healing and recovery road! Laurie experienced two strokes less than fourteen months ago, but her great spirit



and sparkling laugh belie the certain challenges she has confronted and overcome. At this point in her healing process, Laurie has vision issues and she says she has cognitive/memory issues, though I wasn't aware of any rough spots in our conversation. Laurie is enthusiastic, engaging and has a terrifically positive vibe!

Foggy and blurry with parts missing is the way Laurie describes her vision. Her vision

has improved a bit with time (with some days better than others) and she hasn't even reached the 18-24 month window after a stroke when most of the healing and biggest improvement are predicted to occur. Laurie was going through a rehabilitation program at Memorial Hospital and first heard about EBC from Jeff Harrington's wife and then the hospital made a referral for her.

Laurie worked in the specialty food business and as a sales representative before her life took a sudden turn. She isn't sure what kind of work will be appropriate in the future, but, “Whatever it is, I look forward to it! I miss working.”

When we started talking about the Earle Baum Center, the first thing Laurie mentioned is the Stunning Staff: “All the people who work there are phenomenal – it's as though they are hand-picked very, very special people. They are just awesome people, all of them.”

Not sluggish in the least, Laurie is taking advantage of all the services EBC has to offer. She has studied Mobility with Lora Monemzadeh. Susan Hirshfield has been a great help in discussing issues and ideas. She is currently working with Jeff Harrington, deep into the world of technology. “Jeff has been awesome, because we're working my brain out!” She just started a class with Denise Vancil learning adaptive living skills which she finds very interesting and helpful. She's also attended Jeff's exercise classes. Laurie mentioned Receptionist, Ahlia Warren and Facilities Manager, Ray Thompson as examples of just how “awesome” ALL of the EBC Staff are. Dale Chapman, Laurie's partner of 23 years (“Dale keeps me going!”) chimed in

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at this point in the conversation to mention how patient everyone is who has been working with Laurie and how much it has meant for her to work and learn without a feeling of stress and pressure.

Laurie and Dale attended all of the Barbeques last year to meet people and maximize their experience of Earle Baum Center and all it has to offer. Laurie is adapting to not being able to remember people by how they look and the Barbeques are a good opportunity to practice those skills. "It's a learning curve for all of us and it makes you explore all of the different avenues of communication and become more aware."

Laurie loves music and was very inspired by the musicians at this year's EBC Christmas party. As a result, she is starting to play the guitar again. She's very excited to have discovered that some talking books include musical instrument instruction. Go Laurie!

There is real sense of community at EBC which makes it a standout among rehabilitation centers. Laurie appreciates that quality as well as the Center as a place to meet people and form friendships. "It's a great place, it's like a big family!" Laurie feels a personal commitment and dedication to EBC and imagines that she will always be involved with EBC in some capacity – as a client and beyond as a volunteer. "We're lifers," she says.

Summer BBQ's

We would like your input! EBC is thinking of having one monthly BBQ on the First Friday of the summer months.

Let us know how you feel by emailing ebc@earlebaum.org, or call 523-3222 and voice your opinion on what you would like to see at EBC!



EBC is Going Solar!

This January the work began on the classroom roofs preparing for the new Solar Installation. By the time you read this newsletter, we should be drawing our power from the sun!

Solar panels are being installed on both front and back of the classrooms and should provide enough power to run the majority of our facility.



Thanks to PetersenDean Roofing & Solar

A Book Club Has Come to the EBC!

With requests from our EBC clients, a book club has been established and will be meeting on the 4th Tuesday of every month from 12:30-2pm in the Visitor's Center. There is no cost to join but costs of books, etc. are the responsibility of each member.

Please contact Kat Aby at (707) 636-0082 for more information.

Planned Givingand Your Estate

How your planned giving can support the Earle Baum Center

We have all heard about the impending “fiscal cliff”, a series of tax increases and spending cuts that were set to go into effect on December 31, 2012. One aspect of the “fiscal cliff” that is getting very little mention is gift and estate taxes.

Estate Taxes are increasing in 2013. Any estates worth more than \$5 million dollars will now face a 40% tax rate, a 5% increase from last year's 35% rate.

One way to avoid estate tax is to leave a portion of your assets to charitable organization such as the Earle Baum Center .

Even if you don't have a taxable estate, charitable giving should be considered a vital part of any estate plan. Charitable organizations need your help now more than ever.

Charitable giving in the last several years has dropped significantly as the nation tries to cope with an economy that has been in a slump since 2008, a federal deficit that has reached a record high of OVER \$16,000,000,000,000.00 (that's 16 Trillion), and a state economy that is still crippled by budget shortfall issues.

Luckily, we have dedicated contributors. We thank you for your continued contribution.

But who will make that contribution after your death? For anyone that feels that they cannot make a contribution right now, or cannot make as big a contribu-

tion as they would like, YOU CAN STILL SUPPORT THE EARLE BAUM CENTER.

Leaving a charitable bequest in your Will or Trust is a way to support the Earle Baum Center now but pay later.

While many people make annual contributions to their favorite charity, most people do not leave charities any money in their estate plan. It is estimated that 70% of Americans make annual contributions but only 20% leave any charitable gifts as part of their estate planning. *Let's work on raising these numbers!*

Making a charitable donation at your death is a wonderful way to support those organizations and individuals that have been important to you during your life.

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**Tate Birnie, Attorney
Past President
Sebastopol Area Senior Center**

Thank you to our In-Kind Donors!

PetersenDean Roofing & Solar

Ken Coker, Architect

BKF Construction

National Building Maintenance

Hardware Tech

We appreciate your service!



Earle Baum Center Staff

Sitting front row from left: Jacques Law, Assistive Technology Specialist; Denise Vancil with Ceasar, Vision Rehabilitation Specialist; Jeff Harrington with Lucas, Senior Technology Specialist; Allan Brenner with Delta, CEO.

Standing from left: Ray Thompson, Facilities Manager; Tanya Stefan, Bookkeeper/ Administrative Assistant; Regina Kutches, Low Vision Specialist, O&M/ILS Specialist; Patricia Jefferson Vision Rehabilitation Assistant; Ahlia Warren, Receptionist; Cathy Lawson, Office Manager; Susan Hirshfield, Independent Living Specialist; Cathy Mulhern, Assistive Technology Specialist and Low Vision Coordinator;

Back Row Right: Dan Needham, COO; Brianna Pettit, Orientation & Mobility/ Independent Living Skills Instructor; Lora Monemzadeh, Orientation and Mobility Specialist

New Support Groups

Highlands Support Group - Open to visually impaired seniors age 55+.

Meets monthly 2nd Thursday, 10:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

Highlands Senior Center West Room – 3245 Bowers Lane, Clearlake, CA.

Lakeport Support Group – Open to visually impaired seniors age 55+.

Meets monthly 2nd Wednesday, 10:30 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Lakeport Senior Activity Center Conference Room – 527 Konocti Ave., Lakeport, CA.

Ukiah Support Group - Open to visually impaired seniors age 55+.

Meets monthly 2nd Monday, 2:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Ukiah Senior Center Activity Room C – 499 Leslie St., Ukiah, CA.

Merrill Gardens Support Group - Open to visually impaired seniors age 55+.

6 Meets monthly – 1st Wednesday 1:30 P.M.-3:00 P.M.

Merrill Gardens of Rohnert Park – 4855 Snyder Lane, Rohnert Park, CA



**THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS!
YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IS MUCH APPRECIATED**

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Tony Sivillo

Gracye Sjostrand

Susan Smile

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Dortha Sonnikson

Nancy Spaletta

Helen Spencer

David & Marcia Sperling

James Spicer

Walter Stebbins

Roe Swetman

Bernice Thomas

Naomi Tolf

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FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND

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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 www.earlebaum.org

**Introduction to Vision Loss
Class Series**

(Open to 55+ visually impaired)

Oakmont Gardens
Senior Living Facility

Mondays 10:00 AM-12:00 PM
April 15th thru June 24th

301 White Oak Drive
Room G at the Berger Center
Santa Rosa, CA

!! SAVE THE DATE !!

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2013**

**A CELEBRATION OF
AMERICANA MUSIC**

SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2013