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Published September 16th, 2009

One Stop Shopping for Senior Transportation

By Cathy Tyson



"Lunch bunch" regulars, from left Patricia Boudoin, Audrey Eatmon, Bill Brochier, Norine Helms, Eddie Carvalho, Bill Dodge, in front Rosalee Biasatti Photo by Mei Sun Li

clients to doctor appointments, on shopping trips, to lunch at the nutrition program at the Walnut Creek senior center and to concerts at the Lafayette Senior Center - all for a modest \$6. For those attending the lunch program the ride is free, but the meal costs \$2.

"'Lunch Bunch' regulars enjoy a nutritious meal in a social setting; and participants seem to relish the company of fellow riders along with Eddy, the popular driver who looks after them," said Bruns. She adds they are continually building the lunch and errand clientele.

Errand rides, provided by volunteer drivers, are equally positive. Clients get a lift to Safeway, where the driver will wait for you, then perhaps head to the drug store and the driver will, once again, wait for you, and then on to the bank, post office and so on. This personalized service is a great boon to seniors who want to continue to live on their own.

In addition to the Spirit Van, via the generosity of volunteer drivers, Orinda residents can avail themselves of Orinda Seniors Around Town - a service that provides one on one, door through door service. For seniors that need a bit of extra help with grocery bags, the driver can provide assistance; (925) 254-0800.

Contra Costa Yellow Cab and DeSoto Company offers a 20% discount for Lamorinda seniors. A dispatcher at Yellow Cab confirmed they help clients in and out of the house, up stairs and with packages (925) 284-1234.

Finally Senior Helpline Services Rides for Seniors, covers Contra Costa County providing rides to medical appointments during the week and rides to grocery shopping on the weekend (925) 284-6161.

"The more you stay home, the scarier it gets to try something new" said Bruns. "That's why we encourage buddy rides for first timers; the senior's adult children or caregivers are welcome to accompany riders on the Spirit Van. The goal is not only to provide a service, but to make seniors feel welcome and part of a comfortable and connected neighborhood group.

Lamorinda Senior Transportation An Alliance of Transportation Providers

Call each program for information, opportunities to volunteer and to make tax-deductible donations.

Volunteer drivers are always needed.

Lamorinda Spirit Van, 283-3534

The Lamorinda Spirit Van (283-3534) provides rides to lunch at the Walnut Creek Senior Center Monday through

Friday; rides to errands on Tuesday (for Orinda seniors), Wednesday (for Lafayette Seniors), Thursday (for Moraga Seniors); and rides to medical appointments in Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, Concord, and Martinez on Mondays and Fridays. Rides are \$6.00 round trip. Please make your reservation one business day ahead of time by 1:00 p.m. (two business days ahead of time by 1:00 p.m. for medical/dental appointments.) Rides to lunch are free; the lunch is \$2.00; reserve your lunch by calling 280-7310 by 11:00 a.m. one business day ahead of time. Contra Costa Yellow Cab and DeSoto Company, 284-1234

20% discount for Lamorinda seniors. A taxi is often an economical alternative to owning, insuring, fueling, and maintaining a car.

Orinda Taxi, 253-TAXI 253-8294

Gives a 10% discount and doesn't add a surcharge for short rides, will help with packages and provides personal service.

Volunteer Driver Programs

(Door through door; one on one service. The volunteer driver uses their own car.)

Orinda Seniors Around Town, 254-0800

Orinda volunteer drivers serving Orinda seniors.

Senior Helpline Services Rides for Seniors, 284-6161

Serving Contra Costa County seniors. Monday - Friday medical appts.

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