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Senior Center Without Walls Reaches Out to Our Community

By Sophie Braccini



Rosalee Biasatti Photo Stephen Biasatti

Rosalee Biasatti moved to Orinda to be close to her son when her mobility became compromised. Being in a wheelchair she has difficulty going out, so to keep busy and intellectually active the former English and Drama teacher, now in her seventies, joined Senior Center Without Walls, a free non-denominational service that connects elders over the phone through all kinds of activities and classes.

"I very much enjoy the connection that we have with other people our age and with similar interest," says Biasatti. "I couldn't do without it now, I would be lonely." The free service organizes group discussions and classes that are held in the form of conference calls where people interact. "I belong to groups where stories are read aloud and we can discuss them at the end," explains Biasatti, "we've been as many as 18 people on the conference call, this is very popular." She also belongs to the play-reading class. "At the moment we are working on Eugene Ionesco's play Rhinoceros, which I had not read since college, it is wild and fun," says Biasatti, who adds that she is making friendships with some of the members and that the people managing the service are very nice and professional.

"The holiday season is an especially challenging time for many older adults. With the current decrease in availability of Adult Day Centers and other senior programs, it is vital that other options be available to help reduce the isolation of elders who have difficulty leaving their homes," says Terry Englehart, Director of the Senior Center Without Walls. "Senior Center Without Walls is an option for those seniors in California who are unable to go to a community senior center. Participants call in from their homes to join others in activities, friendly conversation, and an assortment of classes and support groups." The service is a non-

denominational community outreach program of the Episcopal Senior Communities. For more information call (877) 797-7299 or go to www.SeniorCenterWithoutWalls.org.

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