



S U M M E R 2 0 2 1

NEWSLETTER



SHERRY · Martinez

Meet Sherry. She lives within walking distance of our Martinez dining room and is a guest there nearly every day. In 2008 Sherry suffered from a medical condition that put her in a coma for 6 months. When she came out of the coma, she had to learn to read, write and learn how to do many daily life skills over again. As a result of the coma, Sherry also suffered long-term brain damage.

As Sherry was recovering, she lost her house to a family member that took advantage of her situation. After living on the streets for two years, then staying at the Concord Shelter, Sherry finally received assistance and moved into public housing in Martinez in 2019. Sherry likes to say, "I've survived due to the kindness of others."

Sherry walks with the use of a cane and struggles with long-term pain but comes to Loaves and Fishes because it gets her up and moving and out of her apartment.

Although Sherry is allergic to tomatoes, the staff at Loaves and Fishes typically can find her something from the food pantry to eat if the hot meal has tomatoes in it. "The groceries from the food pantry help tremendously," said Sherry. "I can usually find something to eat or something to cook on my own. Everyone is so nice and helpful at Loaves and Fishes," added Sherry.

Sherry is known at Loaves and Fishes as the "Tomato Lady." "Even though I'm in a lot of pain, I come because I love the people here and they always make me laugh calling me the Tomato Lady," said Sherry. "It's tough to be isolated, especially with the pandemic. I love the sense of community here at Loaves and Fishes and want people to know how great everyone is here. The kindness of people is everything," added Sherry.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Lafayette Juniors Raise \$32,500 to Feed Those in Need!



Loaves and Fishes is extremely grateful to the Lafayette Juniors for their amazing fundraising efforts to support our mission. Lafayette Juniors transitioned from their traditional Kitchen Tour fundraiser to a COVID-friendly outdoor tour of beautiful Lafayette homes with masterfully designed, unique and awe-inspiring outdoor living spaces.

Lafayette Juniors raised a total of \$65,000! The funds raised were split between two organizations of their choice. Loaves and Fishes is honored to be one of them receiving \$32,500. Lafayette Juniors are a great example of the community coming together to help those in need.

Thank you, Lafayette Juniors!





NEW PARTNERSHIP

Loaves and Fishes has recently partnered with **RR Ministries in Antioch** to help feed our community.

We are currently preparing the meals for their **'Free Summer Learning Program for Children'**

on Mondays and Tuesdays from June through August 2021.

We also prepared the meals for their 'Free One Week Summer Program for Kids' for one week in July. The kids and volunteers loved our food and we certainly appreciate the new partnership!

CULINARY ARTS TRAINING PROGRAM

The Culinary Training Program is Back! A new class will start September 7. For details and an application, please visit our website: loavesfishescc.org

Professional CULINARY TRAINING

Loaves and Fishes of Contra Costa offers a free culinary training program to individuals interested in starting a career in the culinary industry.

2021 classes start in September

Apply Today!



Watch Our Garden Grow!

MARTINEZ GARDEN UPDATE

The Martinez Refining Company, formerly Shell Martinez Refinery, continues to help us keep our Martinez community garden thriving. Martinez Refining Company visits twice a year to plant a beautiful garden for our community to enjoy. This summer there's tomatoes, lettuce, peppers, blueberries, raspberries and more. Please stop by to see our garden grow!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Register your team today!
The Big La Bocce is Back!



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul
of Contra Costa County



September 11th, 2021

10:30am - 2:00pm

100 JOE DIMAGGIO DRIVE, MARTINEZ

Includes a light breakfast, lunch from New Mecca Cafe, beverages, a silent auction and a raffle

SCHEDULE:

10:30am - Registration and Practice

11am - 12:30pm - 3 Games per Team

12:30pm - Lunch and Top 16 Teams Advance to Knock Out Round

2:00pm - Final Rounds

Event Details and Registration:

<https://loavesfishescc.ejoinme.org/2021Bocce>

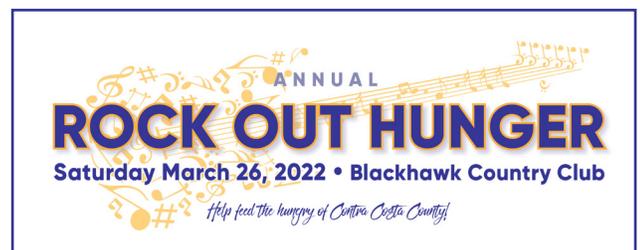
SAVE THE DATE

ROCK OUT HUNGER

Saturday, March 26, 2022

Blackhawk Country Club

Planning an in-person event



New Staff Members



BAYARDO

Bayardo joined Loaves and Fishes in June as the Walnut Creek dining room manager. He spent more than 40 years in hospitality and was thinking about retiring when this position became available. Bayardo enjoys bringing his experience and knowledge to serve the community. He feels lucky to be working with the supportive staff and volunteers at Loaves and Fishes.



CYNTHIA

Cynthia joined Loaves and Fishes in June and is job sharing with Marlene as the Martinez dining room manager. Cynthia recently moved back to the Bay Area from South Lake Tahoe where she was volunteering at St. Theresa Kitchen for more than 5 years feeding those in need. Cynthia knew when she moved back she wanted to get involved in the community that has been her home for forty years. Cynthia is happy to be a part of the Loaves' family. On her days off she loves to bake, read, bike ride and hike with her husband and dogs.



LISA

Lisa joined Loaves and Fishes in July as a Development Associate with the goal of using her skills on initiatives that positively affect the people in our community. Previously, she spent over 25 years as a global HR leader/executive team partner with diverse industry exposure. In her free time, you can find Lisa spending time with her family and serving as a board member of an animal rescue nonprofit organization.



Director's Letter

This time last year we were all in lock down with no summer vacations, no dining out, no fourth of July celebrations and we had no idea how long the lock down would last. Here at Loaves and Fishes this was never the case, we all came to work and continued our mission every day. There was no working from home, we knew we had a mission to fulfill, and our mission was in more demand than ever. It was the most challenging year in my 20-year career at Loaves and Fishes. I had to figure out how to serve our guests safely while keeping my staff safe, provide our services with fewer volunteers, put our culinary program on hold, hire new staff for the weekend programs, open a new dining room in the middle of a pandemic and on a positive note Loaves and Fishes reached a major milestone of serving more than 5 Million Meals.

Many ask, "Why is 5 Million Meals served an accomplishment?" It is an accomplishment for our mission because it confirms the impact that Loaves and Fishes has on the community in need. All of us here at Loaves and Fishes agree it was a challenging year, but we are proud of our efforts and will continue to serve our mission with 100% effort in our meals served and every attempt forward to keep up with the demand.

As we begin our new fiscal year (July 1), it's a great time to reflect on the past as well as look forward to the year ahead with new goals, new staff, new guests, new donors, and new community partners. As I look at the year ahead, I believe the Loaves and Fishes' meal program will continue to be in high demand. Unfortunately, the pandemic is not 100% gone, it is still present in our communities. Food insecurity is real in Contra Costa County, many of our guests tell us they do not know what they would do without our services. We not only have a very reliable program for our guests, we also serve some amazing meals, thanks to my chefs in the kitchen!

I am hoping to expand our services in 2022, we need to reach more people in need living in Contra Costa County who cannot travel to our dining rooms. Through a grant from John Muir Community Health Fund, we are working with a consultant and evaluating how we can expand our services. We are almost done with the work plan and will be presenting the plan to the Loaves and Fishes' Board of Directors. I am excited to do more for our community with the Loaves and Fishes' services. I should have more information for everyone in our next newsletter.

Loaves and Fishes needs your donations this summer to keep all our good work going. I hope you feel comfortable knowing that your donation is in good hands and will go towards a program with a strong team behind it who are making your community a better place. I encourage you to come visit our program. I love to show people how Loaves and Fishes is "Nourishing Lives" every day!

Joleen Lafayette, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



835 Ferry Street, Martinez, CA 94553
Tax ID# 68-0018077



Write a check or donate online at
www.loavesfishescc.org

We also accept food donations



LOAVES AND FISHES OPERATED DINING ROOMS/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

ANTIOCH

American Legion Hall
403 W. 6th Street

MARTINEZ

Dining Room/
Admin Offices
835 Ferry Street

PITTSBURG

Central Kitchen
510 Garcia Ave, Unit H

PITTSBURG

St. Vincent de Paul
1415 Simpson Court

OAKLEY

Red Man-Pocahontas Hall
1403 Main Street

WALNUT CREEK

Trinity Center
1888 Trinity Ave.



Dennis and Linda, helping make smoked ribs

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Although the State of California is slowly beginning to reopen, Loaves and Fishes has not yet decided when the dining rooms will be reopened. As you know, since the pandemic began, we are serving more than twice the number of meals than we used to. And with the new variant strains, we feel that it is safer for staff, volunteers, and guests to continue serving to-go meals out the front doors and requiring that masks be worn by the person handing out the meals as well as the guests receiving the meals. That being said, we are looking forward to eventually having more volunteers join us again. Perhaps some of you may want to check in with members of your group to see if they are interested in continuing their volunteer duties once we do reopen? We will definitely need the assistance when the time comes. In the meantime, please continue to stay safe and healthy.

WE MISS ALL OF YOU!

Currently we are looking for volunteers for Saturdays and Sundays in our Pittsburg dining room. 2-3 volunteers needed, 10:30am-1:00pm. Contact Karen if interested: karen@loavesfishescc.org

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Norene is a dedicated, caring and compassionate volunteer, and has been volunteering with Loaves and Fishes in our Pittsburg dining room for more than 5 years. When the pandemic hit, Norene was one of the first to volunteer for a daily shift every week, including weekends when we opened for weekend service in June 2020. Norene also regularly donates bottled water and fresh fruit; and even helps pick up donations from Panera every Friday. Loaves and Fishes is very grateful for the tireless support of our volunteers like, Norene. Thank you, Norene, for all you do for Loaves and Fishes!



info@loavesfishescc.org

