



VIM VIEWS

A Newsletter of Vision Impaired of Marin

VIM's NEW WEB SITE

We did it! Now everyone can learn about VIM's many activities and programs by visiting our new web site. It had been many years since the old web site had been up-dated. So, the Board of Directors retained a new Web Master to modernize VIM's profile and that was certainly done!

VIM's story is told in words and pictures. To reach the site go to: <http://www.BVIM.org>. After reading the home page, note the "links" in the upper right corner of the screen. Just click on each link and appreciate what VIM does to keep visually handicapped people involved in an active life. After viewing VIM's story we would welcome your comments or questions.

VIM WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBER

JR Hastings, Esq. was elected to the VIM Board at it's March meeting. Mr. Hastings, who likes to be called "JR", brings a great deal of talent to VIM as his law practice specializes in the problems facing seniors such as estate planning and probate law. He is a member of the Bar Association of California, Nevada, Colorado and the Washington, D.C. Bar.

He is also a licensed Real Estate Broker and is a past President and now an upcoming President of the Mill Valley Rotary Club. JR is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and earned his law degree from the McGeorge School of Law.

JR flew combat missions in the Viet Nam war and then became a Captain with United Airlines. He was a Captain flying Boeing 737's, 757's, 767's and, finally, 777's as an instructor. And all the while building his law practice located in San Rafael and Mill Valley.

ORGANIZATIONS HELP VIM

The Allensby Charitable Trust of the San Rafael Elks Lodge No. 1108 awarded a \$2,000 Grant to VIM at a reception held at the Elks Lodge on January 17th. VIM member Eddie Simon, accepted the much appreciated Grant on behalf of VIM. Eddie, 92, is a long time member of VIM. He & his wife, Marilyn, attend VIM luncheons regularly and he attends the Support Group at Novato's Deer Park Retirement Community. The Allensby Trust is dedicated to helping local non-profits carry out their Missions to benefit the too often ignored needy of Marin. **VIM is very grateful for their support.**

The San Rafael Lions Club delivered a \$1,000 check to VIM at the Holiday luncheon. Past Lions President, Ray DeLeon, spoke about the many programs the Lions have to aid visually impaired people. Ray's son Ray Jr is visually handicapped so helping VIM is "close to home".

VIM thanks the Lions for their financial help.

VISION IMPAIRED OF MARIN EVENTS 2017

Novato Support Group

1st Monday 10:00 a.m. —11:30 a.m.
Deer Park Residence 646 Canyon Rd. Novato

San Rafael Latino Support Group

2nd Tuesday 11:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
Pickleweed Community Center

Mill Valley Support Group

2nd Wednesday 2:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m.
The Redwoods in Mill Valley

San Rafael Talking Book Club

2nd Thursday 10:30 am—Noon
Whistlestop Building in San Rafael

Novato Support Group

2nd Friday 1:00 p.m. -3:00 p.m.
All Saint's Lutheran Church in Novato

San Rafael Support Group

4th Monday 10:00 a.m.—Noon
Community Action Marin in San Rafael

San Rafael Support Group

4th Friday 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Whistlestop Building in San Rafael

Luncheon Meetings

2nd Saturday in April, June, August,
September, October & December
Noon-2 pm

Lucas Valley Church

ART Classes

Last two Thursdays of the Month
Quarterly: January, April, July & October
Marin Society of Artists

For Information or to make a reservation, please
contact the VIM office at (415)459-5066

Most events require a reservation

New Support Groups

VIM has a new Support Group in Novato. The Group, sponsored by Deer Park Retirement Community, meets on the first Monday of each month from 10:00 am to 11:30 am in the private dining room. The Group is open to any vision impaired person whether they reside at Deer Park or not. Reservations are not required.

A pilot Support Group program is underway at The Tamalpais, a Senior Retirement Home located in Greenbrae. The ten member Group is initially meeting weekly. This Group is open to Tamalpais residents only.

Several folks in the Terra Linda area are interested in forming a Support Group. They are looking for additional members to qualify for a new Group. If interested, please call the office (415) 459-5066.

Member News

Virginia Dziomba is resting at home after suffering a heart flare-up that kept her in the hospital for many weeks. She is weak but can visit on the telephone. She appreciates all the kind messages & calls she got while in the hospital.

Larriee Stuart is sailing the Mediterranean Sea as we go to press. She & her guide dog, Jessie, will spend four days in Venice as one of the ports of call. The cruise, for vision impaired people, is arranged by a travel agency that specializes in taking groups that have limitations on all sorts of tours both on land and on the water.

James Proctor has resigned from the VIM Board of Directors due to health problems. His creativity and knowledge will be missed and we thank him for his many contributions.

Bobbie Gray is settled into her new home at The Redwoods. Bobbie founded & led the VIM Art Classes for ten years. Her love of art & for all her students produced amazing water colors for everyone to enjoy.

ASK DR. GUS

Is your glass half-full? Or half-empty?

How do we approach life? As we get older, do we whine about the physical strength we no longer have? Or do we celebrate the wisdom and experience we have gained over so many decades?

As members of the Vision Impaired of Marin, how do we approach our visual impairment? Do we emphasize the part of the glass that is half empty? Or do we attempt to do as much as we can with the part of the glass that is half-full?

The Vision Impaired of Marin were once known as the Blind and Visually Impaired of Marin. We dropped the word “blind”, because that word emphasizes the part of the glass that is half-empty. We do not want to be identified by what is missing; our mission is to help ourselves, as well as our fellow members to achieve as much as is possible with the potential that we still have.

Too often, though, we may be overwhelmed by the difficulties we encounter. We may become depressed when comparing ourselves to others, who can do more. It is well-known that depression is more common among those who have suffered vision loss. Depression may, in turn, reduce the desire to try new things and to meet with others. This, again, may worsen the depression, because in our isolation we may think that we are the only one with this deplorable condition.

Our lunches, support groups and other activities of VIM provide a counterpoint by providing social activities with a lot of fun and laughter. But above all, by providing role models of others who are dealing successfully with similar conditions. Those activities teach us that we are not alone, and that there are others who may be worse off. It also provides us with an opportunity to share with others the solutions we have found, and to learn from others how they are coping.

There are many tools and devices that can help us. Often, we do not find them by ourselves, but need guidance. The VIM groups can help by exposing us to more options. Visual aids are important. They include glasses and simple magnifiers, but also more advanced electronic devices. Many have found that iPads and other tablets are among their most effective tools, even if they were not designed exclusively for the Low Vision population. Beyond optical aids, there are many aids that can help with activities of daily living and other chores. The advent of LED lights has brought us many lighting sources that can improve illumination without the extra heat of traditional devices.

Equally important as finding the right devices and techniques, however, is our ability to shift our focus to the part of the glass that is half full, and away from the part that is half empty. Cultivating the remaining abilities that we can use to build a fulfilling life is our best strategy, since the old saying states that the area where you keep your focus will expand.

REPRINTS AVAILABLE—The column, “Ask Gus”, written by Dr. Gus Colenbrander, is available in both English and Spanish. A call to the VIM office and we will gladly send you the reprints.

2017 Board Members

Lillian Dreyer, Ara Apkarian, Susan Malardino, Anabella Denisoff,
Ron Leach, August Colenbrander, M.D, J.R. Hastings, Esq.

ART CLASS

It's not too early to sign up for the next Art Class scheduled for the last two Thursdays of April. The class can accommodate up to ten students, so reserve your space NOW. The cost is \$10. The classes will be held at the usual place: The Marin Society of Artists, 1515 3rd Street, San Rafael, 10:30—noon.

TAKE A WALK?

VIM is planning an excursion to take a walk on May 24th to enjoy the wildflowers, fresh air and good fellowship on Mt. Burdell. The plan now is to meet at Whistlestop and bus to the destination. After a two hour walk, return to Whistlestop. Space is limited as we'll be joined by some blind Veterans. If you are interested, call the VIM office to save your space and get the final details. First calling, first served. Cost will be \$10.00

UKULELE CLASS

VIM's second ukulele class is in the planning stage. To learn to play takes a commitment and perseverance as there is class time and practice at home. Classes are usually held weekly on Friday mornings at VIM's office. Ukuleles can be supplied if necessary. A call to (415) 459-5066 will add your name to the list.

THANK YOU

To the City of San Rafael for approving the use of a classroom at Pickleweed Park for the use of our Spanish speaking Support Group. This popular group meets for two hours once a month on the second Tuesday. The Group welcomes any Spanish speaking person who is visually impaired.

Vision Impaired of Marin
Founded 1974
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Free Matter for the
Blind and Vision Impaired