Ever was born with Retinitis Pigmentosa, an eye disease that makes it difficult to see at night and perceive colors, eventually leading to severe vision loss or blindness. Ever began receiving services from Vista Center in third grade, but within four years his vision had decreased dramatically. “Vision loss is like being trapped inside your own body and scared of what’s coming next,” he explains. “The depression and sadness can seem unbearable.”

Not wanting to stand out in the crowd Ever admits he rebelled against using a cane and being identified as “the teenager with vision loss.” But something clicked during his senior year at Gunn High School in Palo Alto. He started taking a greater interest in Vista Center services, specifically computer lessons and mobility training. Shortly after graduation in 2007, Ever’s cane training was advanced enough to make him eligible to apply for a service dog at Guide Dogs for the Blind. He said his training there and interaction with other blind individuals affirmed that “there are no limitations for me,” he says.

Ever says the advances in technology have also helped minimize the limitations for people with vision loss. “I rely on technology daily and count on Vista Center to stay current,” he admits.

Continued on page 16

**In This Report**

2 Keeping Up with Technology
3 Notes from the Executive Director
4 Woof to Woof
5 Vintage Affaire
6 Menlo Charity Horse Show
7 Vista Center at School
8 Statement of Financial Activities
9-11 Donors, Legacy Circle & Volunteers
12-13 News of Note at Vista Center
14-15 Appreciation & Acknowledgements
Overcoming obstacles to link clients with technology

A lab designated for technology has been a dream of Steve Nakagawa’s for several years. As Vista Center’s Access Technology Resource Manager, he envisions a space that features the latest technology aimed at those with vision loss and a room for proper demonstration and training.

So far, the lab is still a dream, but Steve and his co-workers are doing everything in their power to make sure Vista Center responds to the technology needs of its clients.

“Products for the blind are typically a generation behind what is currently available,” he said. “I want to make sure we share the latest information as quickly as possible.”

Technology is now addressed in two ways at Vista Center. Steve oversees a monthly tech users group and focuses much of his energy on the continuing education needs of tech-savvy clients who use technology every day. Jan McKinley, Access Technology Training Manager, turns her attention to clients new to technology and the resources available to them.

Vista Center calls in the experts for help

Steve says his monthly groups feature tech experts or individuals proficient in a specific area who are “adept at describing features and instructions for people with limited vision,” he stated. These sessions are 90 minutes and have been offered at Vista Center for more than two years.

The challenge with this group is making sure the content is balanced and applies to varying levels of vision loss. “Something that is focused on Braille is not always of interest to someone with low vision,” Steve said. Recent subjects included a session that concentrated on advanced uses for the Apple iPhone and iPad as well as an overview of Google’s Android Jelly operating system for smartphones and tablets.

Jan’s time is split between individual work with clients and leading classes and seminars. “Right now there is a build up of students on the wait list in Santa Cruz so I’m following up on that,” she said. Jan’s instruction varies from basic keyboarding and screen readers to an introduction to bar code scanners and screen magnifiers.

Her students are typically new to the technology that is geared to people with vision loss. Moving a student from beginning to intermediate or advanced levels is a lengthy process. “At the advanced level, the student is able to troubleshoot and contact vendors of specialized software and understand what they are being told to do,” she said.

Jan’s one-on-one instruction is done in person or over the phone. Trying to keep up with the requests for assistance and staying abreast of technology are her greatest challenges. “There is more demand for individual and class instruction than I can provide,” she said.

Contact Steve Nakagawa at snakagawa@vistacenter.org for info on upcoming monthly tech user groups.
Celebrate
This issue of Insight celebrates another year of many lives changed by Vista Center’s stellar team of trained professionals, volunteers and donors who make possible our important services. Thank you for your very generous support in 2012 — together we empowered nearly 2500 individuals to embrace life to the fullest.

We have a long tradition of caring for those who live in our busy and complex world with little or no vision, and for their families and caregivers whose lives are also impacted because a loved one is visually impaired. We have been providing this care on the Peninsula since 1936 and from our Ray Westman Branch in Santa Cruz for the last ten years.

Support
You help make our work possible by your support of Woof to Woof, Vintage Affaire and the Menlo Charity Horse Show fundraising events, by giving to our annual solicitations and including us in your estate plans. And thanks to our many volunteers — you help in our Palo Alto and Santa Cruz offices, you work directly with our clients as friendly visitors and helpers, you provide leadership on our board and you create unique and eagerly awaited fundraisers each year. You are valued partners at Vista Center!

Programs and Services
We continue to provide our core client services — Low Vision Clinic, Social Services, Orientation and Mobility and Daily Living Skills instruction — throughout our four county area. Technology plays a more important role in what we offer as we search out the latest in accessible devices to introduce to our consumers. Our website (www.vistacenter.org) is an increasingly important venue for services with the addition of training videos and other resources. We have significantly increased our services to school children in Santa Clara and San Benito Counties and have added Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Orientation & Mobility instructors to support this need. Please see the story on page 7.

Looking Ahead
The future holds many challenges. Based on our demographics, we anticipate that many more people will need our services. At the same time, we know that we will face greater demands on our financial resources. We look to you to help us respond and react to these challenges and demands.

Please know how appreciated and important you all are in improving the lives of thousands of visually impaired and blind individuals each year. Enjoy this Insight!
Pooches and dog lovers unite for Vista Center

On a sunny day in June, a canine condition swept through Santa Cruz County. It was Retriever Fever, the 8th Annual Woof to Woof held in Scotts Valley on Saturday, June 2, 2012.

An estimated 1000 attendees, including dogs and their handlers, took part in the event at Skypark Field. While described as a dog-gone fun day, the gathering offered access to a wide-range of all things dog: veterinarians, dog boarding, customized dog furniture, photographers specializing in dog portraits and canine trainers. Attendees also were tutored in pet CPR and treated to a fly ball demonstration.

“We had a wonderful response to our last Woof to Woof,” said event chair and Vista Center Past President Claire Biancalana. “The attendees were happy with what was on hand, vendors were pleased with the foot traffic and our dogs seemed to have a great time.”

One of the most competitive parts of the event involves the parades that take place throughout the day including contests for best hair and best costume. A parade of adoptables — dogs available for adoption — got a lot of attention from attendees. The judges also crowned a Retriever King and Queen in keeping with the event’s theme.

Fundraising goes to the dogs in Scotts Valley

Competition of a different kind took place away from the pooches. The silent auction tables were laden with chances to bid on wine, dining experiences, jewelry, vacation getaways, pet services and spa treatments.

“Thanks to our hardworking volunteers and a supportive and generous community, we raised almost $30,000,” Biancalana said. “It’s a great way to spend a day.”

Plans are well underway for the 2013 event, scheduled for Saturday, June 1 in Scotts Valley. The event is slated to run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and admission is free.

For sponsorship opportunities and additional event information, please consult the Woof to Woof website at www.wooftowoof.com or call Michele Rossi at 831.458.9766.
Wine Lovers Wined and Dined in Woodside

Thirty years of good wines and goodwill celebrated

The tradition of fine wine, extravagant auction lots and generous donors continued last June as the 30th annual Vintage Affaire was celebrated in Woodside. Featured were two well-orchestrated events in surroundings that were fitting for this popular fundraiser.

Festivities kicked off at Vintage Evening, held at Villa Lauriston, a 13,000 square foot estate in Portola Valley. Attendees enjoyed wine and hors d’oeuvres inside the lush surroundings and also toured the manicured gardens. After a welcome by Vintage Affaire Chair Susan Martin, long-time Vintage Affaire volunteer Martha Edwards was recognized with the Founders’ Award for her unwavering dedication and enthusiasm.

The setting for Vintage Affaire a few days later was at a grand residence in Woodside. Guests were shuttled to the location and later descended upon a meadow that offered ample space for the silent auction and wine and food pairings. More than two dozen vintners were on hand to share their wines. Local chefs prepared delicacies for the attendees including a tartare of Wagyu beef with capers and a truffle vinaigrette, and seared bay scallops with an asparagus flan and Meyer lemon emulsion.

Event generates more than $200,000

Cool evening temperatures did not deter the enthusiasm for the live auction. Plush wraps were available for guests and Auctioneer John Glines and his staff helped to keep the bidding brisk in the meadow. More than 25 individuals raised their paddles to purchase a week’s stay at one of Inspirato’s many vacation destinations around the globe. Following the auction, Patrons and Underwriters enjoyed dinner on the Oak Terrace.

The event resulted in a contribution of $240,000 to Vista Center. Since 1983, Vintage Affaire has raised more than $8 million to help those who are blind or visually impaired.

This year’s event will take place Saturday, June 22 in Woodside. For more information, visit www.vintageaffaire.org.

Well deserved kudos

Vista Center
Legacy Circle member and Vintage Affaire co-founder Mona Armistead was recognized for her commitment to the community with the 2012 Los Altan of the Year award. Congratulations, Mona! It’s an award that’s very well deserved.
Still dazzling after 42 years

It is a daunting challenge to improve upon an event that has drawn thousands of competitors for more than four decades. But not only did the Menlo Charity Horse Show (MCHS) committee meet this challenge, they exceeded expectations by adding new elements to this award-winning affair.

With more than $150,000 in prizes at stake along with points for national competition, the 42nd annual event sold out in less than a week. The 500-plus riders descended upon the Menlo Circus Club for six days to find several additions and enhancements. The jumper and warm-up rings received a special footing due to the ground being too compacted for competition and the hunter ring featured brand new jumps.

Underwritten by Stephen Silver Fine Jewelry, Friday night’s gala dinner and auction boasted new technology that allowed attendees to socialize and keep track of their bids via a handheld device. The auction included a Vista Center client video prior to the evening’s fund-a-need lot, which raised nearly $30,000, more than twice what was raised in 2011.

MCHS Earns Esteemed Recognition

MCHS grande dame Betsy Glikbarg presented the Vista Center Board of Directors with a check for $450,000 at its September board meeting. Over the years, MCHS has contributed nearly $7 million to Vista Center.

While the competition wrapped in August, one award was earned later. In September, the MCHS received word they were being recognized by the U.S. Equestrian Federation with a Heritage Competition award. Only 14 horse shows in the United States receive this honor. A member of the U.S. Equestrian Foundation will attend the 2013 show to present a certificate, and highlight the MCHS with the Heritage designation.

The 2013 event runs Aug. 6-11. For more information, visit www.menlohorseshow.com.
TVIs help visually impaired students succeed

Whether one is young or old, becoming familiar and comfortable in new settings can be a challenge. But imagine a blind child entering a new school for the first time. How will the student find the classroom, the cafeteria or a bathroom? How will they read the materials the teacher passes out or know what’s written on the blackboard?

Vista Center and a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI). A TVI’s mission is to adapt the academic environment so it is accessible for the visually impaired student — be it accessible via large-print text, Braille or through speech output. TVIs work with classroom teachers to make sure instructional materials have been translated into the format necessary to give the visually impaired student the best chance for academic success. They may also facilitate the acquisition of necessary equipment to help students meet their educational goals. TVIs also work one-to-one with the student to teach concepts that most children learn visually.

Vista Center has three TVIs on staff and contracts with three retired TVIs to meet the growing needs of local school districts. Though these specially trained teachers have been active in schools for more than 25 years, this area has seen “explosive growth” in the last four years, according to Sharon Hudson, Vista Center’s Associate Director.

Seventeen school districts contract with Vista Center

The spark to this growth occurred in 2008 when San Benito High School District contacted Vista Center to assist in administering their special education program for children with vision loss in the county’s three school districts. Today, Vista Center has a presence in 17 school districts within its four county service area.

TVIs have a general education background with a special education credential, and a specialty in vision impairment. Hudson said the demand for TVIs far outweighs the supply of specialists within this educational niche. “Although many educators gravitate to special education, they often aren’t aware that working with visually impaired students is in great demand,” she said.

While academic pursuits receive the bulk of attention at school, TVIs also oversee an expanded core curriculum, a set of skills that must be mastered for students to flourish in both educational and personal settings. Included in the expanded curriculum are career and vocational education, self-determination, living skills and social interaction.

“You can have brilliant blind children but if they don’t know how to shake hands and look someone in the eye when they’re speaking, it can limit their opportunities,” Hudson said.

A significant loss

Vista Center wishes to send our heartfelt condolences to the family of long-time Horse Show volunteer Tom Glikbarg who passed away February 13. He will be greatly missed.
Statement of Financial Activities for the Fiscal Year

Ended June 30, 2012

General Operating Fund for Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE — Public Support Received Directly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributions</th>
<th>$1,391,228</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Kind</td>
<td>14,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SUPPORT</td>
<td>$1,406,033</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REVENUE

| Sales to Public – Net of Expenses    | $15,158    |
| Contracts and Government Grants     | 392,665    |
| Program Service Fees                | 759,468    |
| Special Events                      | 33,849     |
| Investment Income                   | (55,182)*  |
| Miscellaneous                       | 1,315      |
| TOTAL REVENUE                       | $1,147,273 |

TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE $2,553,306

EXPENSES

| Program Services                    | $2,176,842 |
| Management and General              | 198,736    |
| Fundraising                          | 247,176    |
| TOTAL EXPENSES                      | $2,622,754 |

Change in Net Assets $ (69,448)

Net Assets, Beginning of Year 5,132,979

Net Assets, End of Year $5,063,531

*Includes unrealized gains (losses) on investments
Donors

Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired wishes to recognize the following donors whose gifts and pledges were received between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2012. We are grateful for your generosity and your commitment to our neighbors living with vision loss.

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Vista Center Legacy Circle Members

We want to highlight the individuals, couples and families who have made a planned gift to Vista Center. These gifts ensure that Vista Center will continue to provide core services to those living with vision loss for generations to come.

Anonymous
Mona and Bob Armistead
Mary and Glenn Johnson
Pam Brandin
Susan Martin
Alice Hilda Brunings
Buff and Cindy Miller
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*Deceased
Every effort has been made to ensure that this list is correct and complete. We apologize for any names that may have been omitted. If you have questions, please contact us at 650.858.0202, ext. 118.

Volunteers

Thank you to the volunteers who work in our Vista Center offices and with our clients.

Cynthia Acker
Ed Baird
Rohit Behl
Nancy Bengtson
Ralph Bohnet
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Joan Vierra
Martha Warren
Diane White
Dawn Wilcox
Angela Wong
Vista Center — News of Note

660
Low vision exams provided last year.

3,144
Hours of Orientation and Mobility instruction provided.

74
Outreach events conducted by Vista Center staff.

275
Combined number of years the current staff has been with Vista Center.

285
Clients receiving Adaptive Daily Living skills training.

258
Number of countries from which our clients hail.

603
Individuals who received in-home visits from our social workers for initial assessments and information and referral.

4,381
Health Library contacts and inquiries.

2
Low Vision Expos sponsored by Vista Center in 2012.
Chinese
The second most frequently spoken language of clients seen in our low vision clinics.

343
Clients taking part in support groups or low vision education sessions.

49%
The portion of our clientele that lives alone.

160
Participants in our Youth Group.

5
Decades of board membership represented at a recognition luncheon last year.

99
Students served in a school setting.

1
Number of Vista Center donations that were hand delivered via motorcycle.

2,096
YouTube views of Vista Center’s Low Vision and the Low Vision Exam video.
Appreciation and Acknowledgments

Thank you to the committee members and supporters of our 2012 fundraising events. Your commitment to these events has a life-changing impact on those living with vision loss. We appreciate all that you do!

Woof to Woof Sponsors
Anonymous
Brian and Maryann Barry
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Bones and Jones
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Suzanne Legallet
Susan Kokores
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Alla Panchenko
Candy Provines
Vanessa Roach
Clay Tingley
Anne Vitullo
Stephanie von Thaden
Jan Woolsey
Alisa Young
Kent Yunk
Melanie Yunk

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ShowBiz Magazine
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Tiffany & Co.
Today Sotheby’s International Realty
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Triple Point Capital
U.S. Bank Wealth Management Services
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Wasserman Foundation
Willow Brook Stables / Kate Considine
Windy Hill in Memory of Larry Mayfield
WP Advisors, LLC

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Sonya Arriaga
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Mark Salvador
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Bente Tellefsen
Sally Tennyson
Christian Thon
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Agneta Turner
Eric Wassman
Patricia Wyrod
Jane Yates
Kelly Zeytoonian

Annual Report
Continued from page 1

“Previously, you needed to carry a GPS, a bar code scanner, a laptop, a color identifier. You used to see blind people always with a backpack because we had to carry all that stuff,” Ever explained. “Now, it’s just the phone. And there are applications for just about everything. Some are free and some cost money, but it’s better than spending $400 just for a color scanner.”

Over the past 15 years, he’s received services in nearly every department of the agency. But at the moment, Ever is busy giving back to Vista Center. For the past two years, he has assisted staff as an interpreter with Spanish-speaking clients. Sometimes a client doesn’t realize that Ever is blind himself. “Often times there will be a family member with our client who mentions that I am blind,” Ever said. “I guess I motivated one client to practice harder with his cane to be more confident when traveling independently.”

Ever says his new-found confidence stems from having a positive attitude and perseverance, and having Vista Center there to support him. “There’s always a way to find your way around an obstacle. It might take you longer than someone with sight, but it can be done. We need to focus on what we’re capable of and find a way to walk down the path to what lies ahead.”

Technology Takes Center Stage May 18

The second Visually Impaired Persons Technology Users Conference (VIPTUC) is scheduled for Saturday, May 18 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Startup Lab at Google Ventures in Mountain View. This free conference is aimed at individuals who frequently utilize smartphone and tablet accessibility options.

Google engineer and Vista Center board member Charles Chen will present the latest Android features while former Vista Center board member Walt Raineri will demonstrate iPhone applications for those using the VoiceOver screen reading option. Damian Pickering, Western Regional Manager of Humanware, will share the latest products aimed at keeping those with vision loss independent.

Space is limited and pre-registration is required.

To make your reservation and receive a free lunch, call 650.858.0202, ext. 137 or leave a voice mail at ext. 102.