



# California Grey Bears

Supporting Seniors and Our Community

## Dear Friends

**M**ay this find you enjoying the amazing weather and a terrific start to the new year.

Thanks to our generous community, 2011 was a record year for Grey Bears, collecting and distributing 2.6 million pounds of groceries to Santa Cruz County seniors. We've been busy working with our food partners to continue to source fresh produce and dry goods that have been filling the brown bags this winter.

Thank you so much for all that you do to support Grey Bears.



### Thrift Store Winter 1/2-Off Sale This Saturday, Feb 11

We're bursting at the seams with everything you need to update your wardrobe, add function and beauty to your home or workspace, find a good book, start a craft project or pick up medical equipment. And it's all 1/2-off this Saturday, from 10am - 3pm. Our friendly volunteers gratefully accept your gently used donations Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm.

#### Upcoming Events

**Feb 11:** Thrift Store monthly 1/2-Off Sale

**Feb 23:** Visit us at the Aptos Chamber's Green Showcase, Capitola Mall, 3:30-7pm

**Feb 24:** Thrift Store Bag Sale (\$5 for a shopping bag full of clothes)

**Mar 27:** Enjoy dinner at Shadowbrook and support Grey Bears

**Apr 21:** Earth Day Festival - Grey Bears booth at San Lorenzo Park, 11am-5pm

**May 23:** Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, 11:30am

**Sep 18:** Annual Harvest Picnic, Harvey West Park, 11:30am

**Dec 2:** 39th Annual Holiday Dinner, SC Civic Auditorium

# The Bears in Brief

# Grey Bears Happenings

by Ron Stephenson

Volunteer E-Waste Manager, Treasurer - Board of Directors

**S**CRAP celebrates 20 years - Back in 1992 Grey Bears consolidated a group of four recycling partners to form the Santa Cruz Recycling Alliance Program (SCRAP). Today, 200 area businesses recycle their cardboard and clear stretch plastic collected by our friendly SCRAP truck drivers. Recycling through SCRAP directly supports the Grey Bears Brown Bag Program, delivering a bag of groceries to 4,000 seniors every week. We are so grateful to these businesses for their support.



**Transitions** - Our beloved office manager, **Pat Brown** is retiring after 13 years of service. During her tenure Grey Bears membership more than doubled. Pat ably handled that growth and the many challenges with grace and a ready smile. New administrative assistant, Sharon Gross will take on many of Pat's duties as well as volunteer coordination. Grey Bears wishes Pat a happy retirement.

## **NEW Electronics & Appliance Store**

**Opens** - Grey Bears now offers donated, quality electronics including amplifiers, speakers, DVD and CD players, televisions, cables and connectors, and appliances such as microwaves, refrigerators, vacuums and more (pictured at left). As with our computer store, all items are sold as is and there are no refunds.

**Our recycling centers are bustling** - Grey Bears Chanticleer recycling center is open every day to receive all of your recycling materials - plus e-waste, appliances large and small, aluminum and non-ferrous metal, plastic and more, with no drop fees and someone always here to help you.



*Retiring Pat Brown welcomes new Administrative Assistant, Sharon Gross.*

**Class Updates** - The Grey Bears iPad Users Group is growing. More of you are coming to share ideas, explore new apps and learn how to get the most out of your iPad. Come with your iPad every Tuesday, 2:30 - 3:30pm, and it's free ... Donna Merriman teaches another 4-week Intro to Personal Computing class on Mondays starting March 5, 1-2pm ... And don't forget about our other drop-in classes including senior fitness, Spanish, Taiko drumming and a monthly cooking class complete with lunch. Call or email the office for details and to sign up, 831-479-1055 ext. 223, sharon@greybears.org.



**H**appy New Year! Grey Bears finished another fantastic year with many new members and lots of new and exciting things happening. The board approved many site improvements including expanding the thrift store, repaving the main parking lot, and acquiring two new coolers and a refrigerator truck to maintain the chain of cooling for the fresh produce that goes in the weekly bags. **Our most sincere thanks** to our members, donors and local government partners for their financial and volunteer support.

Last year's three major events were rousing successes thanks to you and the great work by staff and volunteers. With the new year comes new projects and improvements on everything we do. We've just opened **our new electronics and appliance store** that sells donated VCRs, DVD, TVs and appliances that we receive that are still usable. The electronic e-waste department continues to recycle all of your devices that you're no longer using.

**Free computer** - Last year we began a program to provide a free desktop computer to members who need one. A limited number are available. Just be a member of Grey Bears and take a basic computer class. Among other tools, the class will teach you how to set up and run the machine correctly.

**Looking for your input** - The Grey Bears Board has begun researching a new program to provide low-cost dental services for seniors. If a dental clinic for seniors is a service you need or could financially support, please let us know by sending an email to giving@greybears.org. We thank you!

# Volunteer News



## Spotlight

**Monica Payne** - You'll find Monica in the back of the warehouse tending "the store" and assisting the bag delivery drivers with their bags. She began her tenure at Grey Bears in 2004 on the brown bag line and loves making friends with others dedicated to serving our senior community. "Grey Bears is such a fun place to volunteer and there is always enough food," Monica says. Monica credits her husband of 40 years, three children,

two more by marriage, one granddaughter and her 92-year old mother, still living independently, for their support of her volunteerism. Thanks Monica for your help, caring and dedication!

## Volunteer Opportunities

**Thrift Store** - We always need help with cashiering and pricing, and anyone skilled at crafts and linens, books or eBay sales. We also need men in the receiving area to help sort items, unload boxes and to help with furniture.

**E-Waste Dismantler** - If you enjoy taking stuff apart and not having to put it back together, then the Grey Bears e-wasters need you to help break down computers.

**Earth Tub Composting** - Sid will be gone for a month (and can always use help) so our four earth tubs need someone who loves to help them make high quality dirt. For more info on volunteering call Sharon Gross at 831-479-1055, ext. 223.

## Connect With Us

California Grey Bears  
2710 Chanticleer Avenue, Santa Cruz CA 95065

PH: 831.479.1055, FAX: 831.479.8465  
[www.greybears.org](http://www.greybears.org) ■ Follow us on Facebook



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Email us at [info@greybears.org](mailto:info@greybears.org).

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Santa Cruz CA 95065

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