



## New Sequoia Living CEO Appointed

The Board of Directors of Sequoia Living are pleased to announce that **Sara McVey** has been appointed as Sequoia Living's next Chief Executive Officer, effective September 30, 2019. She will succeed **David Berg**, our current President and Chief Executive Officer, when he retires on September 30.

Sara McVey brings more than 20 years of management experience in senior living organizations. For the most recent five years, she has served as Chief Executive Officer of Horizon House, a nonprofit CCRC located in downtown Seattle. Prior to that time, she served in several executive capacities for Mather Lifeways, an Illinois-based owner/operator of multiple senior living communities and an institute on aging.

We are grateful for David's continued leadership, and we are happy to welcome Sara to Sequoia Living. Our next newsletter will feature more details about Sara and this exciting transition.



Photos courtesy Wes Bard & Rob Goerzen

## The Tamalpais Rings in 50 Years with a Week of Festivities

Tamalpais residents and staff celebrated the community's 50th anniversary with a week-long extravaganza in early June. Activities included a champagne toast, a concert by their Women's Chorus, a Tamalpais history presentation, and a Tamalpais Spirit Day.

Laughter was in the air at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show, featuring skits written and performed by Tamalpais residents and dance numbers choreographed by

**Heather Harris**, Director of Wellness and Enrichment. Sixty-one residents participated in two "sold out" shows. The week closed out in flair with an elegant anniversary party on Saturday, June 8.

Heather and a steering committee of residents worked for four months to bring the festivities to fruition. "The whole week was a great example of the Tamalpais community coming together," Heather said.



Photos courtesy Michael Cataldo

## The Sequoias Portola Valley Celebrates Renovations with Grand Opening & Garden Party

The Sequoias Portola Valley (SPV) has a beautiful new look, with updates designed to enhance the experience of residents and staff. The first phase of the main building project is now complete, and features a new dining room, gallery, front entrance, offices, guest rooms, and entrance canopy.

On June 18, SPV's residents and staff gathered to celebrate the grand opening of their remodeled dining room. Visiting celebrity chef **Jet Tila** led a cooking class for

residents and collaborated with SPV's Food Service team to create a delicious first class dinner.

The next day, SPV hosted a party to showcase improvements to their Cutting Garden. Thanks to the new paved walking paths, the garden is now accessible for all SPV residents. Other garden upgrades included a new storage shed, new planters, and soil. Congratulations, SPV!



Photo courtesy Wes Bard

## Out and About

Contributed by Wes Bard, Executive Director, The Sequoias San Francisco

Although the Giants may be having a rough go for the division title this year, about 25 Sequoians from The Sequoias San Francisco went on an outing to the ball park to root for the Giants as they took on the Atlanta Braves. What started out as a probable win ended in an extra inning loss. Nevertheless, it was a fun day at the Yard!

"We had great seats, great weather (until about the eighth inning when the fog set in) and a great game," said resident **Bob Kriegel**. "Made me feel like a kid again!"

"Talk about fun—good seats, gorgeous day and peanuts and cracker jacks supplied by Glen, who's a bigger fan than I ever realized," added resident **Betty Carmack**. "I didn't know we have so many spirited Giants fans here at SSF. Sign me up for next year!"



Photo courtesy Sue Horst

## Fab Fundraiser Brings SF Senior Center Supporters Together

On May 31, San Francisco Senior Center (SFSC) members, staff, and supporters gathered at the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center for a fab fundraiser featuring the greatest hits from the most popular band in history: The Beatles.

Guests boogied to tunes performed by nationally-touring Beatles tribute band Hard Day's Night, enjoyed delicious food and drink, and took part in a lively raffle and auction featuring French posters, collectible coins, opera and symphony tickets, a weekend in Tahoe, and original art from SFSC Aquatic Park artists. The rockin' event raised approximately \$40,000 for SFSC.

"The crowd danced in the aisles and in every open space and sang their hearts out to Beatles classics," said **Sue Horst**, San Francisco Senior Center Executive Director. Thanks to everyone who made this unforgettable evening a smashing success! To learn more about SFSC's work, visit [www.sfsenior.org](http://www.sfsenior.org).

## Save the Date: 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Sequoia Living Gala is October 15!

Mark your calendars for October 15, when the residents of the Tamalpais will host the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Sequoia Living Gala at the beautiful St. Francis Yacht Club in San Francisco from 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. This annual fundraiser benefits Sequoia Living's Community Services programs. The Gala will include a cocktail reception featuring a wine bar, dinner, dessert, live auction and entertainment by The Tom Shaw Trio.

Look for raffle tickets and the invitation in the mail in September. As always, we will offer bus service from our CCRC communities to and from the Gala. Last year's Gala was attended by more than 200 residents, board members, staff and community supporters and netted over \$194,000 in support of Sequoia Living's Community Services programs.

For more information, please contact Christina at [christinac@sequoialiving.org](mailto:christinac@sequoialiving.org) or 415.202.7819.



Artist unknown. View of the Golden Gate Bridge from the St. Francis Yacht Club. Painting, 1955. Courtesy Nancy Kearny.





Photo: Tealbox Video Services

## Viamonte Makes Exciting Progress

This stunning aerial photo offers a glimpse of the exciting progress taking place at the Viamonte construction site. Scheduled to open in 2020, Viamonte at Walnut Creek is Sequoia Living's bold new vision in retirement living; a community of close to 200 graciously appointed residences anchored by a walkable neighborhood of shops and restaurants with the peaks of Mount Diablo as a backdrop. Watch Viamonte come to life in the latest construction video:

[www.viamonteliving.org/construction-updates](http://www.viamonteliving.org/construction-updates)

## AARP Experience Corps Marin Receives Golden Bell Award

On Friday, May 24 on the campus of Dominican University, Experience Corps Marin was presented with a Golden Bell Award from San Rafael City Schools District for being an outstanding community partner. The Golden Bell Awards celebrate public education in Marin County by honoring exceptional teachers, faculty, staff, community partners, and student programs. Way to go, Experience Corps Marin!

## Administrator Rob Goerzen Earns CARF Surveyor Credentials

Tamalpais Administrator **Rob Goerzen** recently concluded his training to become a Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) surveyor.

CARF is an international nonprofit accreditor that sets standards of excellence for health and human service organizations. CARF accreditation is the highest level of accreditation that a senior living organization can receive, and demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement, rigorous peer review, and resident-centered care. All three of Sequoia Living's CCRC's have earned CARF accreditation.

CARF surveyors are the cornerstone of CARF's peer-review

survey process. Successful surveyor candidates are professionals who are actively involved in the accreditation process and implementation of CARF standards at their organization.

Rob's path to surveyorship began when **David Berg** asked him to represent Sequoia Living in the ranks of CARF surveyors. After nearly one hundred online training hours, Rob was accepted to attend surveyor training at the CARF International Headquarters in Tucson, Arizona in late April.

In addition to his responsibilities as a CARF surveyor, Rob will bring best practices he observes in other surveys back to Sequoia Living. Congratulations, Rob!



Photo courtesy: Experience Corps Marin

## AARP Experience Corps Marin Volunteer Spotlight

Meet **Blanca Figueroa**, a bilingual Experience Corps Marin volunteer who uses her language expertise and love of learning to tutor English Language Learners at Venetia Valley K-8 School in San Rafael. "Many newcomer children speak only Spanish at home," Blanca explains. "If they can practice reading and speaking English with someone, it makes a huge difference."

"I have truly enjoyed getting to know Blanca and her love for children," says **Alex Campos**, who teaches third grade at Venetia Valley. "My student has loved working with Blanca, and the two of them have developed a real relationship. He has also become much more comfortable speaking English."

Venetia Valley teachers and students also appreciate Blanca's kind heart and generous spirit. Recently, Blanca noticed a large pile of lost and found clothing at the school. She took the clothing home, washed and dried every item, and hung the clothes up at the school for students to claim.

Blanca's dedication to newcomer students extends beyond the classroom. After learning about a third grader from Guatemala who was struggling with English, Blanca offered to tutor the girl and her brother after school. Four afternoons a week, Blanca tutors the children in their home, and even brings them books from the dollar store. Today, both students are more confident speaking, writing, and reading in English. "It's an amazing experience to work with kids and to see them get into reading," Blanca says.

Thank you, Blanca, for using your creativity and talent to help students become better readers! To learn more about Experience Corps Marin, a Sequoia Living Community Services program, please visit [www.ec4marin.org](http://www.ec4marin.org) or call 415.464.1767.



FROM THE DESK OF DAVID BERG, SEQUOIA LIVING PRESIDENT & CEO

# Supporting a Culture of Engagement

Employee engagement is a hot topic for many senior living providers. Whether big or small, many organizations wonder how they can help their staff feel more connected to their daily work.

At Sequoia Living, employee engagement isn't just a buzzword; it's a part of our culture. In our 60+ years of experience, we've learned that when our employees feel their work is meaningful and valued, everyone benefits. Teams work together more effectively. Productivity increases. Turnover is lower. And, most importantly, our residents experience exceptional service and care.

Twice a year, Sequoia Living conducts an employee engagement survey to understand what keeps our staff motivated and identify areas for improvement. Time and again, our staff members tell us that the best part of working at Sequoia Living is the connection they feel with residents. Our employees also ranked Sequoia Living highly on statements such as: "My work contributes to Sequoia Living's mission to provide homes and services for healthy aging," and "I have a positive working relationship with my other team members."

This year, Sequoia Living kicked off an initiative to recognize departments with outstanding improvements in their staff engagement scores. We look forward to sharing some of their inspiring success stories with you in the months to come.

David Berg  
Sequoia Living President & CEO

[www.sequoiainliving.org](http://www.sequoiainliving.org) | [www.seniorservicesnorcal.org](http://www.seniorservicesnorcal.org)



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