

- Suisun V.E.T.S. Housing Program
- Program Participant Spotlight Story
- The North Bay Stand Down
- Payee Services
- Health News
- Holiday Food Program

COMMUNITY ACTION NORTH BAY — SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 1967

# Solano County Community News

## Suisun V.E.T.S. Housing Program Opens Its Doors

Community Action North Bay (CAN-B) strengthens communities by providing housing and safety net services to assist those in-need in living healthy and productive lives.

That is why CAN-B is always looking for new opportunities to expand its services and grow its programs based upon the needs of the community.

In August 2013, CAN-B and the California Veterans Foundation (CVSF) opened the **Suisun V.E.T.S. Housing Program**. This permanent supportive housing program for male Veterans is the first of its kind in the local community.



Mike Mendoza, left, a retired Army sergeant major talks with Geoffrey Wilson, in Wilson's room at the Suisun V.E.T.S. house (Brad Zwerink/Daily Republic)

CAN-B has been providing transitional housing for Veterans for over three years now through its Dixon V.E.T.S. Housing Program and when approached by CVSF looked at opening another transitional house for homeless Veterans in Solano County. After studying the needs of Veterans and the barriers that they were facing once leaving transitional housing it was determined that a permanent supportive housing program would better serve local Veterans.

The **Suisun V.E.T.S. Housing Program** is designed to provide permanent housing to Veterans who have limited income and/or disabilities that make it difficult for them on their own to obtain and maintain mainstream permanent housing.

The program provides the Veteran housing through income based rent which includes

a private room with all utilities, cable, and internet services.

In addition the Veteran will receive supportive services including individualized case management, benefit assistance and broad-based community support.

For their part, the CVSF has implemented

the **VET 2 VET** program, with mentoring designed to offer the Veterans the chance to interact with other Veterans who serve as a support system to them as they navigate through the Department of Veterans Affairs, substance abuse and mental health issues,

educational goals and/or other circumstances that led them to



William Chadwick, center, with the California Veterans Support Foundation in Napa, Ruth Matz, executive director of Community Action North Bay and Ken Weeman, of St. Helena, right, take a tour of a new home for veterans in Suisun City during an open house, in August. (Brad Zwerink/Daily Republic)

# A Place To Call Home When You Are Lost & In Need

For all whom are homeless and feel lost with no place to go, I felt the very same way! I came to Fairfield with the clothes on my back and a small back pack with just the personal belongings.



One of the most blessed things about CAN-B is that I have a place to call home, an address to give to people and a safe surrounding. My life has changed so much!

I never knew about programs or shelters until I was alone and without a place to go.

I was lost, confused, afraid, and deaf. I was told about Mission Solano's shelter and that's where I went.

I stayed there for a couple of months I left the shelter and went to the Bridge To Life Program. While there a friend I had met told me about Community Action North Bay.



Building Better Lives Transitional Housing Program Participant Sue Lamb.

For those who have lost hope and feel like a failure, CANB can help them to believe in themselves again.

I have now completed my two-year program, and I am so grateful for all they have done for me.

The strength I have gained in myself is all

I went to CAN-B the next day and filled out an application for their Building Better Transitional Housing Program.

The next day I received a call from Lisa who I later met with. She was one of the nicest people I had met since I became homeless. She didn't judge me and her kindness gave me a secure feeling.

A few days later I received a call from her and she told me I was accepted into the program. WOW!

I don't think I had smiled so much or cried so many tears of joy! That afternoon, she picked me up and moved me into the house.

The home was beautiful and it was like a dream. After a few meetings with my case manager Lisa I felt a trust. Her kindness understanding, and the advice she gave me helped me work through a lot of issues.

It had been so long since I had talked to someone and opened-up. Lisa worked with me, so my self-esteem was stronger. I had the ability to trust someone and knew that it was confidential.

In the program, we attended classes about starting over and how to get back on our feet. From budgeting to health and nutrition classes; job searching and how to present ourselves. They cover it all!

because of the program. I'm now ready to move on to a new chapter in my life.

I wanted to share my story in hopes that others will not lose hope. CAN-B is a wonderful organization and I hope that all who need help reach out to them!



## Another Service CAN-B: Representative Payee

CANB is proud to announce the launch of its Representative Payee Program. The Representative Payee program manages money for elderly individuals and adults with physical and/or mental impairments who cannot manage their own funds.

This program ensures that their daily living needs are met, and maintains their well-being and independence. “The idea of becoming a Representative Payee came to us after watching so many of our at-large clients who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) struggle with basic financial problems and the inability to manage their finances effectively alone,” states Program Manager Judy Thompson. “Many were being financially abused or neglected by friends or family members they had selected to help them..”

CANB learned that when the Social Security Administration (SSA) makes a determination that a person

needs help to manage their income, they are required to select someone else to manage their money for them, a payee.

The SSA prefers to assign a responsible adult family member or close friend to act as payee. However if the recipient has no one, or the person they selected cannot handle the responsibility, or fails to use the benefits as intended, the SSA may elect to assign the responsibility to a Certified Agency Representative Payee.

Solano County has no local resources to handle this responsibility and most cases were referred to out of county agencies.

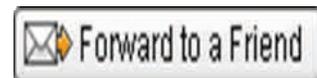
“We are awaiting the final steps in the review process,” says Thompson.

When officially recognized as an Agency Representative Payee service, CANB will be authorized to collect a nominal fee from each

client. These fees, while small, collectively will help CANB continue to provide jobs and expand safety-net services to the most vulnerable members in our community: the disabled, very low income and homeless.



Carl L. Pirtle has been a payees for four months and describes the program as, “excellent! It’s making my life better!”



## SWAP A CARB!



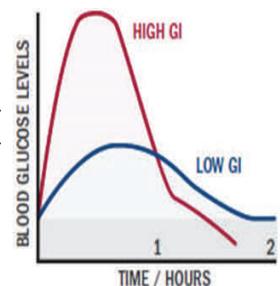
If you have diabetes, you know all too well that when you eat carbohydrates, your blood sugar goes up. The total amount of carbs you consume at a meal or in a snack mostly determines what your blood sugar will do. But the food itself also plays a role.

A serving of white rice has almost the same effect as eating pure table sugar — a quick, high spike in blood sugar.

Instead of this high-glycemic index food	Eat this lower-glycemic index food
White rice	Brown rice or converted rice
Instant oatmeal	Steel-cut oats
Cornflakes	Bran flakes
Baked potato	Pasta, bulgur
White bread	Whole-grain bread
Corn	Peas or leafy greens

A serving of lentils has a slower, smaller effect.

Picking good sources of carbs can help you control your blood sugar and your weight. Even if you don’t have diabetes, eating healthier carbohydrate-rich foods can help ward off a host of chronic conditions.



You can see the values for 100 commons foods and get links to more at [www.health.harvard.edu/glycemic](http://www.health.harvard.edu/glycemic)



### **Veterans Day Parade**

Monday, November 11, 2013  
10:00 Downtown Fairfield

### **VETS Express Program Launch**

**&**

### **CAN-B Open House**

Friday November 15, 2013  
10:00 11:30

416 Union Ave, Fairfield

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

If you are looking to make a difference in your community, then CAN-B is the place for you. At this time, we are looking for individuals with office skills to assist us with the front desk and other clerical tasks.

If you like working as part of a team and enjoy the rewards and challenges of working with those in need please contact Keetra Welling at 707-427-1148 x 131 For more Information



## **North Bay Stand Down October 15 - 17 At The Dixon Fairgrounds**

The North Bay Stand Down is an event designed to assist homeless and at-risk veterans to "hook up" with VA and/or County services.

Basically, we're building trust with our Veterans who may be alienated from family, friends, and society for various reasons, some of which maybe service related.

So what we do is set up a three-day event. The Veterans come in via buses or personal transportation. We have tents set up, meals planned, VA and County staff as well as community organizations on hand to help with the

many issues that our Veterans face. Health, dental, mental health, substance abuse, court services, child support, probation, food stamps, Medi-Cal/CMSP, clothing distribution and many other services are offered.

The Stand Down is intended to be the first step on that road back home. **We offer a hand up, not a hand out.**

To register for this years Stand Down as a participant or volunteer please go to [www.nbstanddown.org](http://www.nbstanddown.org)

Registration closes on **Friday October 4, 2013**

### **September is National Preparedness Month**

It is a time to prepare yourself and those in your care for emergencies and disasters.

- ✓ **Stay Informed:** Information is available from federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial resources. Access Ready.gov to learn what to do before, during, and after an emergency.
- ✓ **Make a Plan:** Discuss, agree on, and document an emergency plan with those in your care. For sample plans, see Ready.gov. Work together with neighbors, colleagues, and others to build community resilience.
- ✓ **Build a Kit:** Keep enough emergency supplies - water, nonperishable food, first aid, prescriptions, flashlight, and battery-powered radio on hand - for you and those in your care.
- ✓ **Get Involved:** There are many ways to get involved especially before a disaster occurs. The whole community can participate in

### **HOLIDAY FOOD PROGRAM**

CAN-B in collaboration with Families Helping Families and the Food Bank of Solano & Contra Costa will once again be hosting our annual Holiday Food Programs for Thanksgiving & Christmas.



To apply for the both Holiday Food Programs individuals will need to call CANB at **707-427-1148 x 131** to make an appointment..

Appointments for the Thanksgiving Program will be Tuesdays and Thursdays from

**October 29 - November 14** Appointments for the Christmas Program will be Tuesday and Thursdays from December 3 - December 19

Community Action North Bay would like to send a special thank you to Bryan-Braker Funeral Home for their continued support and sponsorship of our newsletter. We are immensely grateful for all that you have done for us.

