March has been an anniversary for the world, marking the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic changing all of our lives and shortening many lives too soon. Most of us did not truly understand what the future was to bring, but we didn’t sit back and wait - we took action to protect ourselves, our families and our neighbors. For the majority of our volunteers, it meant staying home and relying on others for help for the first time.

The need to protect our older adult community meant the younger population needed to step up - and you did. The value of one person calling to help became the power of many.

236 new volunteers stepped up in the past 12 months to show care and compassion for our 965 older adults who rely on the nutritious meals and fall prevention classes offered each day. Your commitment to be trained in paperwork and safe food handling, background checked and assigned a spot paid off! The power of many added up to 17,834 hours of service!

I reach out remotely to show my love to each one of you who bring a smile, a joke, a special moment to our senior neighbors - we could not do this without each one of you.
Recipe of the Month

CHICKEN GUMBO WITH OKRA
Serves 4  |  Cook Time: 2 hr 30 Min  |  Prep Time: 15 Min

INGREDIENTS:

For the Roux:
- 1/4 cup Oil
- 1/4 cup Flour, all purpose

For the Gumbo:
- 10 oz, Chicken Andouille Sausages, sliced on a bias (optional)
- 1 Tbsp. Oil
- 1/2 cup Onion, diced
- 1/2 cup Bell Pepper, diced
- 1/3 cup Celery, diced
- 2 cloves Garlic, chopped or minced
- 6 cup Chicken Broth, Low Sodium
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 1 tsp. Gumbo File
- 1 tsp. Thyme, dry
- 1 tsp. Smoked Paprika
- 1/2 cup Okra (fresh or frozen), sliced
- 3/4 lb Cooked Chicken, diced or shredded
- Black Pepper, to taste
- Hot Sauce (Tabasco), to taste (optional)

Serve with:
- 2 cups cooked Brown Rice

INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1: Prepare the roux - Over medium-low heat whisk the flour with 1/4 cup of oil in a saucepan until smooth. Cook the roux over moderately low heat, whisking often, until deep brown, about 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Optional: If using sausage. In a separate skillet on medium-high heat place the sausage slices in one layer in the pan. Brown them well on one side (2-3 minutes) and then use a fork to flip each over onto the other side to brown. Remove to a plate.

Step 2: In a large soup pot, heat up 1 Tbsp. oil and add the onion, celery, bell peppers and garlic and cook over moderately low heat, stirring, until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Adjust heat to med-high, then add Chicken broth and bring to a boil, about 7 minutes.

Step 3: Using a whisk, gradually add the roux to the soup, whisking until smooth. Add the bay leaf, gumbo file, thyme and paprika and bring to a simmer. Cook over low heat for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Step 4: Add the okra and simmer until tender, 15 minutes. Stir in the chicken andouille sausages (optional) and cooked chicken meat. Season the gumbo with pepper and hot sauce. Discard the bay leaf. Ladle the gumbo over rice to serve.
As we mark a full year of the pandemic, Alameda County continues to have a lot of families in need of assistance and we are here to help.

Currently here is a moratorium on California utilities to prevent them from shutting off utilities for customers who are behind on their bills through June 2021. We highly encourage everyone to not wait for a crisis situation, keep making monthly payments and get help now.

The Federal COVID relief Acts are providing extra support to low-income families who have been hurt economically by COVID-19. We can help qualified families with up to $414 towards their utility bill.

NEED HELP WITH ENERGY BILLS?
The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps keep families safe and healthy. We provide federally funded assistance in managing costs & savings associated with:

- **Home energy bills**
- **Energy crises**
- **Weatherization and energy-related minor home repairs**

If you need help with your utility bills please see details on our website [www.spectrumcs.org](http://www.spectrumcs.org) to apply online, print an application or to request one be mailed to you. All applications are accepted only through the mail.

ENERGY SAVING **tips**

- Take shorter showers to reduce water-heating costs. Turn on a 5-minute playlist each time you shower, and then challenge yourself to finish before the music does.
- Don’t waste money on electronics or appliances that aren’t in use. Turn off and unplug unused devices.
- Keep the refrigerator between 38 F and 40 F and the freezer between zero and five degrees F.
- Wash full loads of laundry using cold water. Modern detergents work great in cold water. 90 percent of the energy used by clothes washers goes to water heating.
- Make sure the lint trap in the clothes dryer is clean before you press start. Add a tennis ball or a clean, dry towel to improve air circulation and reduce drying time.
- Run cold water when using your garbage disposal. Cold water solidifies grease, moving it more easily through the disposal and pipes.

Darryl Glass is a real estate broker with Advent Properties, a long-time supporter and corporate sponsor of Spectrum Community Services. Two years ago, Darryl led the Advent team to victory during the “Feed the Need” Throwdown at the Coliseum. Darryl will proudly tell you that Advent has been the holder of the Golden Lunch Bag trophy two years running and that he can’t wait to defend that title again post COVID-19 pandemic.

Spectrum Community Services isn’t the only

Jennifer Choi describes herself without hesitation as a mother, a wife and a daughter. “If there is a single expression that pumps up my adrenaline, it’s ‘I’m hungry’. No matter how tired or how busy I am, that phrase puts me in motion. Whoever comes into my house leaves with a full stomach.” Feeding people is her delight and obsession and eventually brought her into a position as a Meals on Wheels coordinator.

As a Meals on Wheels coordinator, Jennifer registers eligible seniors in the program, assesses their needs, orders meals, and most importantly, works with volunteers. Making a positive impact on someone’s life is truly humbling and also overwhelming. Every morning my husband says jokingly, ‘Are you going out to save the world?’. Then I say, ‘yes!’,” said Jennifer.

There isn’t a single day that goes by when Jennifer isn’t told “Thank you” or “God bless you”. “How many other jobs are filled with positive vibes all around!”, Jennifer says.

Jennifer emigrated to the United States from South Korea. It was unusual for Jennifer to see elderly seniors living alone, but then she began to understand how much seniors value their independence. “I see a void in the culture and I think it’s where Spectrum steps in. We’re like sons and daughters to them. We bring meals to them while checking their well-being. We help them keep their independent life longer.”

When Shelter-In-Place orders were put in place, Jennifer had to ask her senior volunteers to stay at home, losing almost 80% of her volunteers. Shortly thereafter, she says there was a rush of young volunteers pouring in and it didn’t stop! “Even now when we have a 40% increase in the number of seniors in the program compared to last year, we can still serve them without difficulty thanks to the amazing volunteers.”

The Advent team during the “Feed the Need” Throwdown.
organization Darryl Glass has provided service to; having learned from his parents at a young age to give back to those in need, Darryl is on the board for a non-profit organization called “First Place For Youth” that helps transition age youth that are aging out of the foster care system with housing, employment and education. Darryl is also a mentor to a high school senior in East Oakland through iMentor.org.

“You never know when you are going to need help yourself. Both of my parents have volunteered for different organizations throughout my life. As I continue to give back to both youth and seniors, who I feel are in the most need, I get excited when I hear about the good I am able to provide to these populations. My grandmother tried to stay in her home as long as she could and had meals delivered to her. We knew the people delivering meals spent some time chatting with her and doing wellness checks when we were not there.”

Last March, Darryl and a group of his friends, dubbed “The Maskateers”, wanted to help provide face coverings for those struggling to protect themselves against the virus. “Pulling together our own resources and using GoFundMe, we raised over $6,000 to help purchase 3,000 masks to supply the most vulnerable populations.” Spectrum Community Services received a very generous donation of face coverings from “The Maskateers”, which were promptly distributed among our senior clients.

Darryl has been volunteering with Spectrum for almost 4 years and served on the “Feed the Need” planning committee. When shelter in place orders came down last March, that committee became the “Show your Love” planning committee and started researching ideas for a virtual fundraiser.

“The “Show Your Love” event was SOOOO fun. It was a creative and fun way to learn how to cook a new dish. I loved that the ingredients were delivered pre-measured with basic instructions. Chef Jason made the cooking process easy and enjoyable. And who doesn’t love some good wine while cooking and paired with dinner.”

Darryl has the adventurous goal of traveling to 100 countries. He has already visited 51 different countries and can’t wait to get back to travelling once things are a little safer. If you are in need of help buying or selling properties, or need property management services including tenant occupied properties, please visit Darryl’s website at www.adventpropertiesinc.com
Spring is right around the corner! As the weather gets nicer and we begin planting our favorite fruits, vegetables and flowers, it’s time to think about Fall Prevention. Here are some tips to stay safe in the garden:

- **Remove tripping hazards.** Garden hoses, gardening tools, planters big and small, twigs, leaves, rocks, and bins. Make sure the path through the garden is safe. If your garden path is cracked, uneven or cracked, repair it.

- **Wear gloves.** Protect your hands from blisters, bacteria, chemicals, bugs and sharp gardening tools.

- **Warm up.** Do some upper body stretches and march in place for a few moments to get your muscles ready.

- **Avoid repetitive motions.** Digging, raking, trimming and planting can all be irritating to your muscles and joints. Switch up the activity frequently and switch the tools from hand to hand.

- **Kneel using knee pads.** Kneeling instead of bending will be much less stressful on your back, and lessens your risk of falling. You are more stable on your knees then you are when you bend over. If kneeling is not an option, then get a short stool to sit on.

- **Don’t lift heavy objects.** Check the weight of things before you lift them. Bags of soil and planting pots can be heavy. Some tools are awkward and heavy, so move them around slowly.

- **Block the sun.** Wear a wide-brimmed hat that covers your face and ears and shades your neck. Use sunscreen on exposed areas.

- **Check for pests.** Spiders and ticks are common garden pests. Check your body, hair and clothing to be sure you are free from bugs.

- **Stay hydrated.** Keep a water bottle nearby.
Wayne, 78, and his wife, Louise, 82, have participated in Spectrum’s Senior Meals program off and on for 10 years after hearing about the program originally at their local senior center. These days, the couple comes to the Josephine Lum Lodge five days a week to receive their “pick-up and go” meals. Their favorite Spectrum meals are the Chicken Dijon and the Catfish.

Wayne and Louise have been together for 51 years and have two sons. They are proud members of Unity Church in Castro Valley. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Wayne and Louise stay at home more often and haven’t been able to visit with friends and family the way they used to. They keep in touch with loved ones over the phone to stay connected. They both said that they were excited to receive their COVID vaccinations, and hope things will get back to normal soon.

“We are pleased and grateful for the meals.” says Louise who had both hips and both knees repaired, requiring multiple surgeries. Wayne has a chronic lung condition, along with a steel plate and screws in his ankle, both of which can make shopping, preparing and cooking meals difficult. “We really appreciate the senior meals program you provide. Thank you.”

Despite some past medical issues, including arthritis, Wayne and Louise remain an active couple, walking together every day. They also participate in Spectrum’s Fall Prevention program to keep up their strength and balance to prevent further injury.

Wayne and Louise say they feel lucky to live in an area where seniors have the opportunity to receive healthy meals. “We have friends and relatives in many other states that do not have access to programs like those provided by Spectrum.”

Save the Date

SPECTRUM COMMUNITY SERVICES INC.

A VIRTUAL COOKING & WINE EVENT

2621 Barrington Ct., Hayward, CA 94545
(510) 881-0300
www.SpectrumCS.org

MAY 7, 2021 · 6 PM PDT

Prepare a decadent meal from the comfort of your own home with the guidance of a Michelin Star chef.

**TICKETS INCLUDE**
- Ingredients to make dinner for 2
- Two bottles of Benzinger Wine
- Zoom log-in link · A "Swag Bag"
+ All items delivered to your doorstep!

A perfect Mothers’ Day gift!
FOR TICKETS & MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.SPECTRUMCS.ORG

Proceeds from this "FRIEND-raiser" event will help to fund Spectrum Community Services' Senior Nutrition Meal Programs.

**Sponsorship opportunities are currently available. If you are interested in learning more, contact Caryl Mahar at 510-600-7729 or email development@SpectrumCS.org.**

2621 Barrington Ct., Hayward, CA 94545-1100 · (510) 881-0300 · www.SpectrumCS.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED