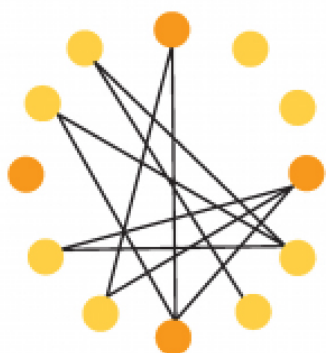




SEBASTOPOL AREA TIME BANK

Building Community One Hour at a Time

Spring 2026 Newsletter



I started with an ad last year on the SATB site to try to get help upgrading my living room/kitchen music system, which was 20 years old and just a converted boom-box, with two speakers in each room. No one answered that ad, so I eventually got input from my daughter's partner (they're in Minneapolis!) that I should buy a Yamaha receiver, within a certain range of model numbers for my needs. I found one on ebay, and then had to hire a handyman to widen my built-in shelves by an inch to fit it. Since he was here, I asked him to hook up the receiver. Then I was golden, with much improved sound, for about eight months.

Then one Sunday morning last fall I turned on the radio and it blasted at top volume, frighteningly loud, louder than anything I'd ever heard. I turned it off, and, fearfully, back on, and it worked for a while. But later, when I turned it back on mid-day, it blasted again. This time it crashed completely, with a distorted fuzz sound that made me think the speakers, as well as the receivers, could be blown.

After contacting Yamaha support, doing a test they described that suggested the receiver was in fact blown, and then learning that the nearest Yamaha service store was five hours away, I put an ad in SATB to see if anyone out there could help me out of my muddle! There was a lot going on in my life at the time (still is!), and the various steps of figuring out whether to try to repair or replace (and if so, would I have to buy new, at much greater cost?) felt truly daunting. Meanwhile, I was sorely missing not having my good stereo sound! (I'm a musical person - play the piano and percussion, and sing in a chorus.)

To my amazement, someone new to the Time Bank, Rossa Sheridan, answered my ad right away. Just what the doctor ordered, as he's a professional home stereo technician! I couldn't believe my good fortune. He came out the next day with all his tools for testing to determine the problem. I had initially done a little of that, with

email instructions from Yamaha support, but he identified the real problem, which was that the handyman had hooked up the wires to the speakers incorrectly - an easy mistake to make if someone is not a professional, he said. This had put tension on the system, creating a time bomb condition waiting to go off, which it did!

In addition to affirming the receiver was blown and not worth trying to repair, he pointed out I'd also do better with upgraded speakers. That very day he went to thrift stores and found some, which he said are excellent quality, for \$40, and bought them for me. (I of course paid him back.)

He also proposed I get a different, digital sound system and not get an old-world type receiver, but I decided to stick with my old-school approach, told him I wanted another Yamaha. He worked with that, did some research and found just the right, much simpler Yamaha that I could buy new for quite cheap at BestBuy. I had it shipped, and Rossa came back within a day of its arrival and hooked it up. I've since been in sound system heaven! This includes the fact that the speakers in my kitchen, which I didn't replace, work much better than in the former setup, because the wires are hooked up correctly!

Moral of the story: the SATB is awesome. Being so thoroughly helped by Rossa I feel is an incredible Time Bank miracle story.

—Diana Badger

Laguna Cleanup

Four intrepid SATB members – Nina F, Lynda H, Katy B, and David G(i) took on the Laguna in a “flash” cleanup event. We did well ... until the mosquitos drove us out! We expect to have more flash community events in the coming months.





Member Spotlight



Jim and Lynn as young teachers after they found each other on New Years Eve; Jim and Lynn happy in later life; Jim displaying his dad's WWII medals and other heirlooms.

Jim Deis, who describes himself as “an old man who can’t sit still,” has likely logged more hours at the SATB than anyone who isn’t a timebank administrator. He likes seeing his hours posted in SATB’s Weekly Digest each Friday. “Part of my fun in life is being of help to people, and I like to check in case my mom is reading the thing, wherever she is.”

Jim, who is 87, lost his mom long ago, but “the family on her side had the attitude that of course you help people—doesn’t everyone? And if you need something done, have a party.” In this family with lots of cousins and skills, many BBQs and celebrations resulted. His mom and her brothers grew up doing farmwork; his

uncles all became contractors so they could be their own bosses. They happily transitioned from hand tools to power tools, and appreciated how quickly houses got built when the basements weren't dug with picks and shovels, and wood was sawed by machine.

Jim's paternal grandfather came from a German settlement on the Volga River; the Russian czar enlisted German settlers to farm the area. He eventually settled in Selma, California to grow peaches, then grapes. Jim's dad was a star athlete in high school who had a wicked good pitching arm. During WWII, he served in North Africa, Sicily, France, and Germany, and won battle ribbons in every campaign. He also pitched fast-pitch softball, and his team won the North African military championship.

He was such a good pitcher he was often brought in for championship games, and his career at Ford Motor Company was coupled with his playing on the company's fast pitch team—and winning. Jim, too, was a good athlete, leading the football team in tackles his sophomore year in Walnut Creek. Then the family moved to Campbell, which had a much bigger high school. He went out for football there as a junior, 5'6" and 119 pounds. "The coach was so polite, so graceful, in telling me that I wouldn't make the team."

No matter—by high school Jim had other interests: botany, insect collecting with museum-quality Latin labels, hiking, camping, photography. He was at a local camera store so much, the owner hired him. This led to a lifelong love of cameras and photography, and Jim did his own black and white developing. He shot weddings to earn cash. And he explored: gas was 20 cents a gallon in the late 1950s, and he went to the beach at Santa Cruz often.

Because of his dad's work at Ford and his good grades, Jim got a full four-year scholarship to Stanford. He studied there until he fell in love, dropped out, got married, and became a dad. He worked at a grocery store and took more community college units than would transfer. The marriage didn't work out, but being a father has been fantastic—see recent photo with his T-shirt that says "I'm a Dad, a Granddad, a Great Grandad—Nothing scares me!"

Jim earned degrees in math and psychology. He began teaching high school math, and became a counselor. Some ski buddies decided on New Year's Eve 1966 to teach him to "hustle" for a date, but Jim did fine on his own: he literally bumped into a woman at a ski resort bar, and his apology must have been good because they skied together the next day, were engaged by February, and married in August.

Rexlynn Knox was warm, loving, and supportive—she'd already put her ex-husband through medical school when she met Jim, and "we began the best 53 years of my life - she was a wonderful wife, loved cooking, gardening, and any family event!"

They were both teachers, but frustrated by school politics and low pay. "Respected by everyone, paid by no one," he says. So they decided to move to Bear Valley and run a grocery store for 240 week-day inhabitants and 7000 weekend skier visitors. Living in Bear Valley made locals picky about skiing under conditions that are less than perfect!

The Deis came to Sebastopol in 1988 and Jim was a realtor and property manager until his real estate company was bought out. At 58 he needed a job. His brother, who headed the math department at Forestville's El Molino High School, offered him a good one: teaching math again, to which Jim was able to add classes in photography and woodshop.

He loved teaching high school students. "I love minds just beginning to mature—they're inquisitive, they question everything, they only trust you as far as you are willing to build that trust. My favorite is teaching geometry. It's numbers and also it's the real world."

Eventually he retired to work on hobbies and spend time with family, especially his ailing wife. Lynn died in 2020. To get out of the house, Jim started volunteering as a driver for less able seniors. One of his passengers mentioned a home repair, which he promptly completed for her. So she told him about the Time Bank.

"I've been helping people all my life. Even as a young teacher, I'd go hang a door for someone or build cabinets. I always enjoyed building stuff and fixing things." His youngest grandson once asked how Jim learned the skills he offers on the Time Bank. "Mostly by doing things wrong the first time. Experience is what you get by making mistakes."

But the lifelong habit of hard work is part of the formula. "The harder I work, the luckier I get. There is no substitute for hard work, so if you're looking to live a free life and have parental support, choose good parents. For the rest of us, be prepared to work."

Jim has had some sewing exchanges from Time Bank members, but generally he's earned laughably more hours than he's spent. That makes him happy. "People don't have the reticence to call because they would have to pay for it. The Time Bank breaks that bridge down and makes it ok to call for help. There's nothing I like more than using experience and knowledge to make peoples' lives better."

Full disclosure: Jim's done that for this writer, and for so many others that he should wear a cloak and fly from job to job like Superman.

He does request, for his weekly check of the Weekly Digest on Fridays, that people post his hours so he can take a moment to feel good for his mom's sake.

—Leah Halper



Jim used his woodworking skills to run a recent Sebastopol Grange workshop on making raised beds for community members; some of Jim's finer woodworking projects, including a lathe-turned bowl that made him proud.



Somewhere along the way, many of us become prudent savers of money. And it is honorable to save money for your heart's desire, your future needs, your loved ones.

But in a time bank, saving isn't the point at all, and can be counter-productive.

Many people new to SATB are anxious about wasting or exhausting the ten bonus hours they get for completing their profile and subscribing to the SATB mailings. Closely guarding hours undercuts how the whole thing works: while saving money is often wise, saving time bank hours is often foolish.

The point of a time bank is to offer what you have, and SATB members offer amazing skills and talents. If others don't take your offers and hoard their hours, the time bank can't work.

For the good of the whole, it is best to NOT save hours but to spend them on help you need, discussions you want, or exploring activities you wouldn't otherwise venture. The more you spend, the more people you meet, the more community connections you make, the more you contribute to a vital and healthy social web of people to whom you have made a difference. You get a good feeling, hopefully, and social capital, and perhaps a little broader idea of who is in your community and what is possible here.

You also support the Time Bank so it can continue to help all kinds of people: those short of cash, or time; those who don't know a skill or want to teach it; those needing company or needing respite; those who can use expertise others wish they had.

The SATB doesn't necessarily encourage deficit spending (i.e., using more hours of others' time than you contribute to others), but it is allowed as a sometimes unavoidable circumstance, and you are trusted to catch up on your own by scheduling more hours for yourself to complete. Generally, if you use up a lot of hours, it's easy to find simple activities like yard work or driving errands, to get caught up. The SATB also runs events that can earn you hours.

Don't let anxiety about spending hours be an issue: when it works right, you get as much good from helping someone else as you do from being helped. Or more?!

So jump in and spend, and enjoy what comes back to you. It may be a lot.



Time Bank Tidbits

- **SATB participated** in the Russian River Rotary Fix-it Fair on May 2 in Forestville. We staffed an information table, and three of our members served at the sewing table.
- **Easy Onboarding!** The new SATB member onboarding process has been streamlined, and applicants can start time banking in less than 24 hours! In addition, they can receive a 10-hour bonus! Go to www.sebastopoltimebank.org, read the requirements for membership, and click on "APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP". First JOIN, then PARTICIPATE!
- **"I didn't join the time bank** because I couldn't think of anything to offer." This is something we hear all the time, but we know that EVERYONE has something to offer and we'll help you figure out what. Email any member of the admin team for help.
- **"Weekly Digest" Email.** Every Friday at 3:00 p.m. members receive our Weekly Digest that contains new requests posted since the previous digest was sent. Each request is a link to the item in our Time and Talents member website. There's more in the digest, but you must be a member to receive it and see.
- **Read about SATB in the Sebastopol Times.** Our collaboration program with local nonprofit organizations was highlighted in a Sebastopol Times article. Read about it here: https://www.sebastopoltimes.com/p/roundup-wanna-get-away?utm_source=publication-search (and scroll to the third article).
- **Many Ways to Earn Hours!** There are multiple ways to earn hours and have them in your account to spend on the things you need.
 - Provide a service to another member.
 - Provide services to the time bank in administration, at events, on special projects, etc.
 - Volunteer at a nonprofit organization that has a collaboration agreement with the time bank.
 - Claim bonus hours from the time bank's periodic promotions

- Receive periodic gift hours that we grant because we like to!
 - **Sebastopol Farmers Market.** SATB members are staffing an outreach table at the Sunday market. They'll be there on May 17, June 21, and July 19. Stop by and ask questions or just say hello! Bring your friends!
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[Read our recent newsletters](#)



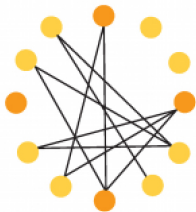
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Our Core Values

- Everyone is an asset. Everyone has something to contribute.
- Everyone merits respect.
- All work is equally valued.
- We promote both giving AND receiving.
- Networks are stronger than individuals and build local resilience.

When you become a member of the Time Bank, you agree to these core values as well as our Terms of Service.

For questions or help contact an admin team member:

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