SEBASTOPOL AREA TIME BANK

Building Community One Hour at a Time

Summer 2026 Newsletter



Cautionary Tale: The Too Tight Lid

Following is a delightful tale about one valiant SATB member's ingenious 'rescue' of another member from a potential debacle!

Patricia Cavanaugh (partner to our beloved SATB helmsman David Gill) shared that she was cooking pot stickers for dinner one night for David in her high-end (aka pricey!) pan. The process was simple, involving putting a lid on the pot stickers once the water came to a boil, and then steaming them with the lid on.

But when Patricia went to take the lid off the pan, she couldn't for the life of her get it off. It was locked on with air-tight suction. She tapped on it, she ran cold water on it, she put it in the freezer for a spell. She checked with ChatGPT (as many householders are now wont to do for 'life instructions'!) She put it in the fridge overnight.

The next morning, she gave up. She had tried everything she could think of to rescue those pot stickers, without damaging her very expensive pot. (She'd had to come up with a Plan B dinner!)

One interesting detail Patricia revealed in all this is that the pot had not come with a lid. So she had needed to find a lid from among her kitchenware, which she did.

One that fit quite well—too well, as she later learned.

Contemplating her conundrum the next day, a light bulb went off: “I wonder if Jim Deis (Time Banker handyman par excellence) knows what to do?” She gave him a call, and he showed up within a few hours. He looked at the pot, and then took it home to work his wizardry.

I spoke with Jim about what kind of magic he had wielded. He explained that when metal is heated it tends to expand. And that when it then cools [and slightly contracts], the seal of a tightly fit pan-and-lid can create a strong vacuum. (Patricia thinks perhaps she didn’t take the lid off the pan immediately after turning the heat off, which would have allowed the cooling to happen.)

“It was a nice pan, and it was very hard,” says Jim. “I couldn’t put the pan in a vice, as it would get scratched. So, I scratched my head, and then I took a little wedge of wood to tap the edges of the seal. But that didn’t work.”

“Then I thought, if it created that strong seal by going to a high temperature and then cooling, I need to heat it again. So I ran hot water over the pan, but not the lid, to get *only* the pan to expand, cause the lid fits inside. That didn’t *quite* work—but, it loosened the seal a bit.

“Then, I took a long piece of wood, slipped it under the lid’s handle, held the wood against the counter, and worked it like a lever. That did the trick!” Off came the lid!

“The pan sustained no damage at all, and even the pot stickers looked fine to me!”

A few valuable lessons from our story: 1) the Time Bank is a great resource for ‘rescue’ situations!! 2) watch out for too-tight lids on metal pans, and 3) it’s great to have a handyman on board who knows his chemistry and his physics!

Thanks to Diana Badger, SATB Reporter





The problematic pan - Before and After

SATB Picnic

On Saturday, July 18, about 35 SATB cowboys and cowgirls gathered for a BBQ at Mike Ferguson's beautiful home and property in Freestone. Annual summer picnics are a SATB tradition, and this one topped them all.

Highlights of the day included grilling by resident SATB grill master Richard Murphy, games led by Kiki Takishima, potluck with amazing contributions from the members, and a wonderful session where Time Bank members shared their personal time bank success stories.













Photos by Lynda Hadley, Mike Ferguson, and David Gill









Left: Richard Murphy's SATB member profile photo.

Center: Richard taking time from his grilling duties at the SATB BBQ to sample his

wares. *Photo by David Gill.*

Right: SATB griller Richard serves it up. *Photo by Mike Ferguson.*

Richard Murphy Has Always Known How to Make a Trade

Long before Richard Murphy joined the Sebastopol Area Time Bank, he was already a time banker in spirit.

“I’ve been a person who trades,” Richard says. “I call it barter.” He has been finding creative ways for people to exchange what they have for what they need for roughly half a century.

Early in his career, Richard worked in radio and television, including for NBC. Advertising time was something the station had to offer, and restaurants, hotels and other businesses had things Richard’s clients or colleagues could use. Why not trade?

Later, after Richard became owner of the Jenner Inn on the Sonoma Coast, the possibilities multiplied. An empty hotel room represented something useful, even if nobody had booked it that night.

“I had a lot of nights where the rooms were not sold, so I would trade them for services I needed—massage, haircuts, travel trips, restaurants, you name it.”

His most memorable trade may be impossible to top.

When Richard’s daughter was born, the doctor at Healdsburg Hospital recognized him as the owner of the Jenner Inn and asked whether Richard might pay his bill with gift certificates to the hotel.

“So I didn’t pay for my daughter,” Richard laughs. “I paid for my daughter on trade.”

Richard joined SATB in February 2018 after learning about it through Gayle Bergmann, one of the Time Bank’s co-founders. Since then, he has participated in 82 exchanges with 33 different members.

The Time Bank is different from direct barter, of course: Richard can spend an hour helping one member and use the hour he earns to receive help from someone entirely different. But he appreciates the same fundamental idea.

“You find somebody that needs what you have,” he says, “and you have a need for something else.”

Richard has found plenty of uses for the Time Bank himself. Member Ray Chin helped him select a new Dell computer and has tutored him on using it. Other members have helped him with gardening and weeding, and two members once cleaned all the windows in his house.

But Richard has also contributed a remarkable reservoir of experience.

Before retiring, he spent decades designing, renovating and operating the Jenner Inn. When he purchased it, the restaurant building already existed, but Richard says he renovated nine other buildings from the ground up, ultimately creating 22 guest rooms.

“I have a really great eye for beauty, an eye for design,” he says. Formal design training was not what gave him that ability. “I just picked it up.”

And he has had plenty of practice. Richard estimates that over his lifetime he has renovated around 50 different buildings.

That experience has already found its way into Time Bank exchanges.

“I’ve designed a couple of bathrooms, and I think maybe even a kitchen,” he says. He has helped members think through remodeling projects, interior spaces, decks, guest houses and landscaping. In some cases, he has also connected members with a trusted builder he has worked with for many years.

That is worth remembering if you have a household project and aren’t quite sure what to do with it.

Richard may not need to be the person swinging the hammer. He might instead be the person who looks at an awkward room, a troublesome layout or a remodeling idea and helps you see what it could become. He can offer ideas, design experience and decades of renovation knowledge—and perhaps help you think through what to ask a contractor or handyman to build.

That ability to see possibilities extends well beyond houses.

Richard operated the restaurant at the Jenner Inn and sometimes stepped into the kitchen himself. For years, he made breakfast for guests every Tuesday morning.

His specialties included scones, quiches, frittatas and other egg dishes. His cooking leans Mediterranean—olive oil, garlic and Italian flavors, influenced in part by his Italian mother and his years living in San Francisco.

Today, Richard is retired, but hardly inactive. He gardens, bicycles and travels,

particularly to Hawaii and Europe. A brother lives in France, giving Richard a convenient base for cycling trips through France and Italy. He is also an enthusiastic ballroom and swing dancer and says he often spends four to six hours a week dancing.

Closer to home, he volunteers with Slow Food Russian River and its community apple press. And he has found exactly what he hoped for when he returned to Sebastopol after many years living on the coast.

His daughter lives nearby, but there was another attraction.

“Eventually I decided, God, this is the best place to be,” he says. “There’s such a wonderful community of people here.”

That sense of community is also what Richard values most about the Time Bank.

His advice to members is to be creative about both what they need and what they have to offer. Maybe you need windows washed. Maybe someone can sew something for you. Maybe you need computer help, a household repair, gardening, writing—or simply somebody experienced who can help you figure out what your project actually needs.

“You have to be creative,” Richard says. “That’s part of being a trade situation.”

And exchanges can lead to something that doesn’t appear on anybody’s list of services.

“You make friends with these people,” he says. “Most people here that you do trade with end up being your friends.”

For Richard, that may be the best description of the Time Bank of all:

“Neighbors helping neighbors.”

Thanks to Julie Wright, SATB Reporter



Summer 2026

● **SATB** gave a presentation to the Sebastopol Grange membership at their July monthly meeting. If you have a group you'd like us to give a presentation on time banking to, email admin@sebastopoltimebank.org and we'll set it up.

● **SATB** had an information table at the recent Sebastopol Area Senior Center open house.

● **Sebastopol Farmers Market.** SATB volunteers staff an outreach table at the Sunday market. They'll be there on September 20, October 18, and November 15. Stop by and ask questions or just say hello! Bring your friends!

● **Easy Joining, Easy Onboarding!** To join, go to www.sebastopoltimebank.org, read the requirements for membership, and click on "APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP". At the Time and Talents website (for members only), click on "Join". After your membership is approved, the streamlined onboarding process can have you time banking in less than 24 hours! In addition, you can receive a 10-hour bonus! 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.

● **Nonprofit Collaborations.** 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).

● **"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 view its contents.

● **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

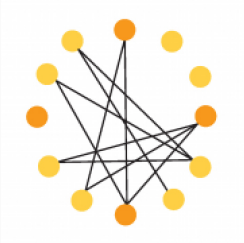
- Provide services to the time bank in administration, at events, on special projects, etc.
- Volunteer at a nonprofit organization that has a collaboration agreement with the time bank
- Claim bonus hours from the time bank's periodic promotions
- Receive periodic gift hours that we grant because we like to!

Thanks to David Gill, SATB Reporter

Read our recent newsletters

Share this newsletter to Facebook Tweet about SATB Forward to a friend

---



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:
Steve Bursch / Technical: steve@sebastopoltimebank.org
David Gill / Administrative: david@sebastopoltimebank.org
Lynda Hadley / Engagement: lynda@sebastopoltimebank.org

Newsletter team: Diana Badger, Julie Wright, David Gill, Leah Halper, Wendy

Dayton, Lynda Hadley, and Steve Bursch

Suzanne Wright / Social Media

The Sebastopol Area Time Bank was originally funded by the City of Sebastopol and is sponsored by the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center.

Copyright © 2026 Sebastopol Area Time Bank, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.