

# Marin Independent Journal

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## Editorial

# *Vivalon affirms commitment to community*

In its nearly 70 years of serving the needs of Marin's elderly residents, Vivalon has marked many milestones.

One of the biggest happens Tuesday, when the countywide nonprofit officially moves into its new campus at 999 Third St. in downtown San Rafael.

The campus is a reflection of Vivalon's growth in advancing the independence, health and quality of life of Marin's growing population of seniors.

Vivalon has come a long way since the grassroots effort to start the Marin Senior Coordinating Council, which grew into Whistlestop and its programs headquartered in San Rafael's old train station.

The nonprofit took on the new name — Vivalon — in 2020.

Plans to expand its campus, including the addition of affordable housing, had been in the works for years. A proposal to build a new center and housing replacing Whistlestop's Tamalpais Avenue building ran into political opposition, mainly from those who wanted to preserve the train station.

Under the premise of the old saying, "Every cloud has a silver lining," Vivalon found a new opportunity.

A combination of the need to buy the property for a new enlarged transit center and BioMarin Pharmaceutical's plans to expand along Third Street become the foundation for Vivalon to build a new campus, one that could include even more affordable one-bedroom and studio apartments.

Most of the 67 units, managed by Eden Housing, an affordable housing nonprofit, are already occupied.

The quarters are in response to Marin's growing senior population. It is estimated that by 2030 one in three Marin residents will be 65 or older.

The new center features numerous classrooms, a medi-

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cal clinic and ample space for dining, games and table tennis. Class offerings range from cooking and nutrition to balance and computer coaching.

There's something for everyone.

The goal is to promote independence and healthful living, providing alternatives to the social isolation and food insecurity often found among seniors.

The new center is a hub of services, information and activities for a growing population and Vivalon's expanded new home is the right fit for Marin.

The 67 units of affordable housing also meet a long-standing community need.

For years, Vivalon's mission has focused on meeting the needs of Marin's seniors.

The nonprofit has served as a hub of programs, services and information.

Its new center opens a new chapter, one that builds on the strong history the organization has developed since the early 1950s when the community saw a need and worked to meet it.

Congratulations to Vivalon and its volunteers and supporters. Over the years, whether it was the Marin Senior Coordinating Council, Whistlestop or Vivalon, the nonprofit has been there as a service and social hub for Marin's seniors.