

Link2Care

Summer 2007

A Publication of the Stanislaus County
Public Authority

Handling Food Safely

Have you ever opened the refrigerator browsing around for something and discovered a small “garden” of life forms brewing in a forgotten container (or two!)? Have you ever visited a Recipient and found this situation?

Many of us are on a budget, and to waste food means we are wasting money. Providers will sometimes call our office with concerns about Recipients who refuse to throw food out, even though it's well past its prime. For some foods, being past their prime simply means they won't taste quite as good as they would have a few days ago. For other foods, eating them past their “due date” could be dangerous, and even deadly for those who are elderly or have serious medical conditions.

How you prepare foods can also have serious consequences on someone's health. There are many ways food borne bacteria can get into food, but by taking some simple steps, you can reduce the likelihood of illness.

Always wash your hands before handling food, and make sure your cooking utensils and preparation surfaces are clean. Never use a cutting board for both fresh foods (vegetables and fruits) and raw meats. Always sanitize cutting boards after cutting raw meat. If possible, put cutting boards in the dishwasher.

Sponges and dish towels can harbor dangerous bacteria. Sanitize these items frequently. Sponges should be washed in the dishwasher or put in the microwave on high for two minutes at least once per week. If you choose to microwave the sponge, be sure there is no metal present, and take care when removing the them, since they will be hot. Dish cloths and towels should be changed and washed regularly.

If your preparation surfaces are clean, the next step in food safety is to make sure you thoroughly cook all meat and egg products. Salmonella, e-coli, and other harmful bacteria can be found in these foods, so it's important that you cook them properly. Eggs should not be “runny” and meat should not have any pink tint when finished cooking.

After you have enjoyed your meal, you still need to be vigilant about food safety. Bacteria that causes food poisoning grows best when food is lukewarm. Refrigerate all leftovers promptly to avoid bacterial growth.



The general rule regarding food safety is: When in doubt, throw it out! It's not worth your health to save a few dollars on food items. Protect yourself and your loved ones by following these food safety tips.



Know when it should go...

Here is a guideline for when to throw out food. Remember, when in doubt, **THROW IT OUT!**

Milk: 5-7 days after the sell-by date

Hard cheese: 3-4 weeks once opened (it's OK to cut off mold on hard cheeses)

Soft cheese: 1 week (discard if mold develops)

Eggs: 3-5 weeks if purchased before date on the carton

Luncheon/Deli

Meats: 7 days in original package, 3-5 days if opened

Hot Dogs: 7 days after sell-by date

Raw Fish: 1-2 days

Raw Poultry: 1-2 days (1 day if cut in pieces)

Raw Beef or Pork: 3-5 days (if ground or chopped, use within 2 days)

Leftovers should be discarded within 3-4 days.

Source: www.foodsafety.gov

Message from the Director



Since January 1, 2007, the Link2Care has offered in-house training for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Registry Providers. Prior to that time Link2Care had contracted with a local non-profit, the non-profit had done a fine job but it was time for Link2Care to do the training so that it could be more easily customized to fit the Providers needs.

The training has gone through a couple of revisions and will undergo additional revisions to accommodate Provider needs. The current training provides information on the Registry, caregiver stress, the timecard process, working with individuals with disabilities, Adult Protective Services, personal care for IHSS Recipients, nutrition, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)/First Aid and a presentation by the United Domestic Workers on the benefits of union membership.

The training class is held on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 10 AM to 4 PM, once per month (see page 7 for the next schedule) at the Link2Care office. Monday is focused on the Provider, Tuesday is CPR and First Aid, and Wednesday is focused on the Recipient and their needs and issues. Link2Care uses a combination of training styles; we have lecture material, video presentations, group discussion and group activities. By using a combination of presentation methods we hope to honor all learning styles and make it more enjoyable for all.

One of the most popular activities is our brain teaser exercise. Brain teasers are picture puzzles of common sayings or phrases. We have the class work as a team or in teams; the point is not the activity but the interaction around the activity. We had noticed that all lecture and video presentations tended to put the Providers to sleep, by making them part of the training and making it fun for them we have a better class; a class that asks more questions and discusses relevant issues (such as when to call the APS Social Worker). We all win, Link2Care gets a better trained group of Providers who more thoroughly understand the demands of the job and what is expected, the Providers win by learning more at the training and networking with their peers and the Consumer wins by having more qualified Providers in the available pool.

Each training class completes an evaluation of the training, they rate the training on the scale of one to five, with five the best, on issues of overall satisfaction with the training, knowledge of the instructors, class materials, length of class, etc. There is also an opportunity to make suggestion on what additional information Providers would like for future training classes. By providing a variety of relevant topics, top flight training materials, and an interactive atmosphere we at Link2Care hope to make the training valuable for all our Registry Providers.

Hope we see you in a training soon!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey M. Lambaren".

Jeffrey M. Lambaren
Executive Director

Flag Day: June 14th

The flag was adopted by Congress on June 14, 1777, but it wasn't until 172 years later that Congress officially declared June 14th a holiday.

Each year, America celebrates the red, white and blue symbol that is recognized around the world as a symbol of freedom and democracy. The design of the flag has changed since the first one was created, but our present day flag has 13 stripes, representing the 13 original colonies. It has fifty stars, representing each state in the union. California's star is the 31st—the middle star on the sixth line. It is unclear whether the red, white and blue were chosen for a specific reason, but over the years colors have come to symbolize courage (red), purity (white), and justice (blue).

This year, Vintage Faire Mall will host the annual Walk to the Flagpole. KIA, POW/MIA officials will be present, as well as Gold Star families will be present to honor America's fallen heroes.



Show your pride in America by displaying the Stars & Stripes on June 14th!



Last summer, temperatures in California soared. The record breaking temperatures went on for so long that the Governor issued a mandate to all IHSS Programs in the State to check on the Recipients of the IHSS program to ensure their safety.

No one knows what to expect this year, but by taking a few precautions, we can protect ourselves and the people we love from a potentially dangerous situation.

Everyone should follow the common sense guidelines presented at the end of this article, but it is especially important for the elderly to care for themselves during times of intense heat. There are many reasons for this. Elderly

people do not adjust as well as young people to sudden changes in temperature. They are more likely to have a chronic medical condition that upsets normal body responses to heat, and they are more likely to take medications that impair the body's ability to regulate its temperature or that inhibit perspiration.

Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. Signs of heat stroke include:

- An extremely high body temperature
- Red, hot and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache, dizziness or nausea

To protect yourself and loved ones from heat related illness, follow these tips:

- Drink cool, non-alcoholic beverages
- Take a cool shower

(Continued on page 6)



Caregiver's Corner

In this issue for Caregiver's Corner, Link2Care has an opportunity to report what we have learned about you! A recent survey has helped us to discover the topics that are important to you. We will use this information to bring you more articles and information that you've told us you find helpful. One thing you told us is you would like more information on resources. We have devoted this page of Caregiver's Corner to telling you more about the staff at IHSS and the services they can provide. We hope you enjoy this article, and we will continue to bring you information on topics you stated were important to you. If you have an idea or suggestion for Caregiver's Corner, please contact us at 558-4787. We'd love to hear from you!

A Day in the Life... of an SSC

Supportive Services Coordinators (SSC's) are usually the first point of contact for Providers once they are hired by an IHSS Recipient. SSC's help Recipients and Providers with hiring, orientation and timesheet questions. This includes assistance in completing timesheets, help with lost timesheets, tracking change of address or phone numbers, mediating between Recipients and Providers, home visits, processing hiring paperwork and more. SSC's also help with transporting Recipients, report cases of abuse to Adult Protective Services, and help with emergency services that may need to be addressed.

We asked the SSC's to share some tips to help Providers navigate the IHSS system more smoothly. Here are their suggestions:

- **Communication is vital.** If you are aware of a change to the Recipient's health or status, please report this. If you have a change that affects your IHSS employment, such as a change of address or phone number, or will be out on vacation, report this as well.
- **If you are experiencing difficulties with a Recipient,** please let your SSC know. They help to mediate issues occurring between Recipients and Providers, and do home visits to help orient Recipients and Providers to the program, training them on what is appropriate and what is not.
- **Read the handbook** that was given to you in your hire packet. Most questions the SSC receives are answered in your handbook. (Don't have one? Call your SSC or 558-3976 to obtain one.)
- **Leave clear phone messages!** SSC receive many calls each day, sometimes more than fifty. When you leave a message, be sure to leave the reason for your call and clearly state your name, social security number and phone number. A big complaint from Providers is that calls are not returned. But SSC's report that phone messages are often incomplete or unclear. Staff have had messages that stated "This is Maria, can you please call me back?" with no other information! The better your message, the more prepared the SSC will be to help you when they call back.
- **Only leave one message per day.** SSC's try to check their messages and return calls at least once per day. As mentioned above, SSC's may be on home visits, transporting recipients or helping with Adult Protective Services or other emergency issues. Leaving multiple messages will not help your call to be returned more quickly.



- **Complete a hire packet for each new recipient.** Even if you have been working for IHSS for many years, each Recipient must have their own paperwork completed. Be sure complete ALL of the highlighted information and include a

(Continued on page 8)

Getting to Know You...



Most of us have completed a survey at some point in our lives, whether we were trying to win a free gift, or we really had something to say about a product or service. Recently, Link2Care mailed a survey to IHSS Providers who were receiving insurance or were active on the registry. While we didn't offer a gift for completing it, we do promise to use the information we received to improve our service to you.

We were unable to get enough providers to respond in order to have a "statistically valid" sample (this means we can't apply the following information to every IHSS Provider). But, there were enough responses to help us make some changes for the better. Here are some of the results:

The typical survey respondent was female, between 35 and 64, and spoke English. Eighty-one percent had a high school diploma, and most had been providers for 3 or more years. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents worked for family members.

Almost half of the respondents who didn't have insurance didn't even know it was offered. The registry had similar results, with half of those not on the registry reporting they weren't aware it existed. (You can call us at 558-4787 to learn more about either of these services.)

Respondents said better access to training classes and resources would improve their job satisfaction. Of the training classes listed on the survey, respondents were most interested in nutrition, CPR, and managing emotions. (See the free CPR class offered on page 7!)

Respondents were connected with their world: 80% have DVD players, 40% have internet access, and all but 7% had some other form of technology in their homes.

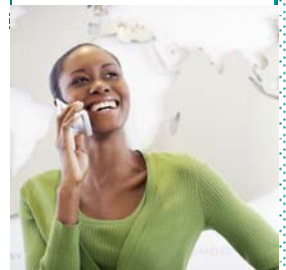
Respondents told us the newsletter was a great way of getting information from us. Over 75% have received the newsletter, and feel that it is a helpful publication. You suggested adding personal stories about providers and recipients (see page 9!) and more IHSS Info (see Caregiver's Corner article, A Day in the Life...).

While 40% of respondents had internet access, only 7% had visited our website. Check us out at www.StanLink2Care.org! All our previous newsletters, information about staff, insurance and registry information can be found there.

Link2Care is still growing, and our services are improving all the time. We will use the feedback you've given us to provide the services and resources you feel is important for you.

Link2Care would like to thank those who responded to the survey. This information helps us to be a better program. We will continue to check with our Providers from time to time and see what we can do to make your lives a little easier. Thanks for your input!

**Our providers
are connected
to their world -
80% have
DVD's and
40% have
internet access**



“Check” it Out!

Understanding your payroll check

We frequently get questions from providers asking what all the deductions are on their payroll checks and what they are for. Here is a quick overview of the most common deductions:

- FICA*:** Social Security deduction, taken out automatically according to the gross
- MED:** Medicare deduction, taken out automatically according to the gross
- SDI:** State Disability, taken out automatically according to the gross
- FIT:** Federal Income Tax, deducted from the gross according to the deductions you have declared on your W-4
- SIT:** State Income Tax, deducted from the gross according to the deductions you have declared on your W-4
- Dues:** Union dues for United Domestic Workers, deducted on a sliding scale depending on the number of IHSS hours worked
- Health Ins:** Medical insurance, deducted ONLY if you are enrolled in the health insurance plan

*Note: FICA is not withheld or paid on wages earned by a recipient’s parent, spouse, or child under the age of 21.

Help with Heat

(Continued from page 3)

- Seek an air conditioned environment (this can be a library, shopping mall or other public place with air conditioning)
- Wear light weight clothing
- Remain indoors during the heat of the day
- Do not engage in strenuous activities

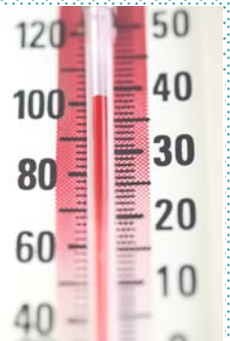
There are things you can do to help protect elderly relatives and neighbors:

- Visit or call older adults at risk at least twice per day and watch (or listen) for danger signs
- Take them to cooling centers or air-conditioned locations if they do not have transportation
- Make sure older adults have access to an electric fan whenever possible

If you suspect someone has heat stroke, you may be dealing with a life threatening emergency. For some, body temperatures can rise to 106° or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Have someone call for immediate medical assistance while you begin cooling the affected person. Do this by:

- Getting the person to a shady area
- Cooling the person rapidly, using whatever methods you can. For example, immerse the person in a tub of cool water, sponge the person with cool water, or wrap the person in a cool wet sheet and fan him or her vigorously
- Monitoring body temperature and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102 degrees

At the date of publication, locations of cooling centers in Stanislaus County were unavailable. However, as the hottest summer months approach, Stanislaus County Office of Emergency Services will provide information to your social worker and other agencies about where the public can go to get out of the heat. If you need these services, please call your IHSS Social Worker for more information.



Portions of this article were taken from www.cdc.gov

Caregiver Class Schedules

If you are interested in caring for more Recipients on the IHSS Program, please join us at one of these orientations to learn more about being a Registry Caregiver.

A new Registry Caregiver Class began in January 2007. This monthly class now includes CPR training, as well as an overview of all aspects of IHSS, including the intake process, tasks paid for by IHSS, caregiver wellness and more. We're delighted to be able to offer this class at no cost to our Registry Caregivers. To enroll in the Caregiver Class, you must complete the Registry Orientation Class. At the orientation, they will explain how to enroll for the Caregiver & CPR Classes.

Interested in additional Recipients, and more hours through IHSS? Come to a Registry Orientation Class to learn more! Call our office at 558-4881 to register.

Registry Orientation Classes	
<i>Call 558-4881 for class times & registration</i>	
June	5th and 21st
July	12th and 24th
August	2nd and 23rd
September	6th and 18th
October	2nd and 25th
November	1st and 15th
December	13th

Registry Caregiver & CPR Class	
<i>You must register for these classes. Come to our Registry Orientation Class to learn more!</i>	
June	11-13th
July	9-11th
August	6-8th
September	10-12th
October	8-10th
November	5-7th
December	3-5th

Link2Care is offering a free CPR class for all IHSS Providers on Tuesday, July 17th.

This class is available to all IHSS Providers (even if you are not on the registry). Space is limited, so if you are interested in completing a CPR class, please call our office at 558-4787.

We Need You!

The Advisory Committee is looking for new members who would be willing to meet once per month to discuss issues that face IHSS Caregivers and Recipients. By joining the Committee, you would make suggestions and advise the Board of Supervisors on changes that you feel should be made to the program.

To join the committee, you must:

- Be a current or former IHSS Recipient or Caregiver, OR
- Be a community activist, AND
- Attend the monthly meetings

A \$30 stipend is paid for each meeting you attend. If you are interested in becoming a member, call the Advisory Committee at 558-4787.



The Advisory Committee meets on the second Friday of every month at the Link2Care offices located at 305 Downey Avenue. The public is welcome to attend. Come see what your committee is all about!

A Day in the Life of an SSC

(Continued from page #)

SIGNED copy of your Social Security card. Be respectful of Recipients. Put yourself into the Recipient's shoes. How would you feel if a stranger came into your home and began providing very personal services for you? Be respectful of their preferences. If you will be late or ill, call your Recipient and let them know. They are dependent upon your help, and they need to know if other arrangements must be made because you are unable to work.

• Don't ask your Recipient for money! This happens frequently enough to be noted by more than one SSC. It is very inappropriate to ask for money to pay for anything not job related. The only situation that Providers should request money is if they use their vehicle for transporting the client, and they request just enough to cover gas expenses.

• Know what tasks the Recipient is approved for and how many hours you are authorized to work. You will not be paid for tasks or hours that are not authorized. If you are unsure, contact your SSC and they can help you.

As you can see, SSC's handle a variety of issues and can answer many questions regarding your employment with IHSS. One SSC shared that even though this is a job, they are involved in very personal aspects of people's lives. She had one case in particular where the husband had a terminal illness, and she got to know the family quite well through her work with them. The SSC often had only brief telephone contact with the Recipient's wife, but just sharing some news or a joke, and being of assistance made a big impact during the difficult times. This SSC was able to see beyond the paperwork to the faces and lives of these clients. SSC's get great satisfaction from helping make a difference in the quality of life for our Recipients.

Spotlight on Caregivers:

A match made in... Modesto!

Written by: Maria Osuna-Baldwin



Before Mamie Hicks went to work for Joseph Bruno he was bed-ridden, and his 91 year-old mother was caring for him. He said it was tough on his mom, but they “were getting through it.” Joseph is diabetic, blind, & goes to dialysis for his kidneys 3 times a week. He requires a lot of personal care. On top of all that, Joseph’s mom did not trust anyone to come into their home to help out. In-Home Supportive Services became involved and asked Link2Care to send a provider to go meet with them. We sent Mamie Hicks and from that day on their lives have been transformed.

Mamie is a sweetie with a gleam in her eye and a lot of experience in the field of care giving. She went into the home with IHSS staff and they gave her a run-down on what was needed. That’s all it took. Mamie took over like a whirlwind. She started by cleaning Joseph’s room from top to bottom and doing everything she could to make him comfortable. If you were to drop by at the home you would very likely find Joseph sitting up and watching Fox News with Mamie taking care of Joseph’s needs by cooking nutritious meals (he has gained weight since she came to work for him, which has made his doctor very happy), bathing or dressing him, giving him a shave, clipping his finger nails, cutting his hair and doing his laundry.

Mamie has been a great advocate for Joseph. Whenever she has seen a need, she has followed through with doing her best to make things better. Because of this, they now have a hospital bed in his room, Joseph goes to physical therapy twice a week and he is now walking!!! There are grab bars in the walls to aid him in practicing his walking, and the overall quality of his life has improved tremendously.

When asked what he thought about Mamie, Joseph answered that he likes everything about her and that she is a great friend. The feeling of friendship is mutual. During our interview, Joseph made sure that I knew Mamie “does wonderful work”, has his “full confidence” and he is “very thankful for her.” Mamie says that when she first came to work for Joseph he was very quiet. Now they are always laughing about something.



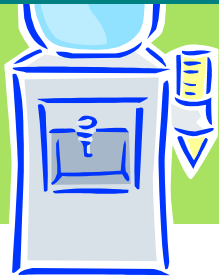
Has your Provider delivered exceptional care?

Please let us know by calling us at 558-4787. You and your provider may be showcased in an upcoming issue!

We are so proud of Mamie Hicks. We cannot take the credit for who she is... but it is rumored if you look real close, you can see little angel wings on her. If you were hoping to hire her as your provider, sorry, but Joseph’s care keeps her quite busy.

The Water Cooler

A place to hear about current events, local news, and other issues ...



Local Events

Farmers Market Open for the Season

The farmers market is back! Modesto has a farmer's market held downtown on 16th street between H & I streets every Thursday and Saturday from 7am to noon. Vendors carry everything from fresh fruits and vegetables to flowers and handcrafted items.

Join the Community in Celebrating Graffiti!

June is Graffiti month in Modesto! We go back to our roots with classic cars and a myriad of events. Some of the planned festivities include Back to Graffiti at the Fruit Yard on June 9th, Graffiti Summer with the Modesto Nuts on June 23 and the 2nd Annual Graffiti Party in Riverbank on June 27th. Galaxy theater in Riverbank will be showing the movie "Grease" for \$2.50. There will also be a classic car show, costume contest and a live band. Enjoy the heritage of the valley and attend one of these events!

Web Sites

Prescription Drug Discount Programs

Having trouble paying for your prescription medications? There are many programs out there available to help. These are not insurance plans, but discount programs.

One such program is the Sun Association Card. You can find out more information at www.esunhealth.net. This program is available to everyone, regardless of age, income or insurance status. All prescriptions are covered. The average saving on prescriptions is usually 15%. While it is possible to have no savings, the savings can be as high as 35% or more. There is currently no charge for this prescription card. Beginning January 2008, Sun Association will charge \$20 per year for this benefit.

Can't access them on the internet? You can call them at 1-866-662-1351.



Stamps are changing "Forever"

Have you heard? On May 14th, the cost of a first class stamp rose to 41 cents. This means you need an additional 2 cent stamp to mail a letter with the old 39 cent stamp. Every time the postage changes, consumers have to purchase additional stamps in small amounts, and only enough to cover the remaining stamps they have!

Well, this year the postal service didn't just listen to all the grumbling at the post office, they actually did something about it. Enter the "Forever" stamp. This new stamp features the Liberty Bell and the word "Forever" where the price used to be listed. The Forever stamp will be good for mailing one-ounce First Class letters anytime in the future—regardless of price changes. So, the next time the price of stamps goes up, you can use up your remaining postage without having to purchase additional postage to make up the difference in price. As the Postmaster General remarked, "Who says nothing lasts forever?"



Where can I get help with....



IHSS Payroll & General Information:

558-3976

This number is answered from 8:30 to 4:30pm Monday through Friday. They can help you identify your social worker, transfer you to a support coordinator (who helps with questions about paychecks and timecards), and answer general questions regarding IHSS.

IHSS Intake:

558-2637

Do you know someone who needs IHSS or would you like to sign up for the program? Call this number to apply for benefits. Be sure to have the applicants social security number handy, since applications are taken over the phone.

United Domestic Workers Union:

526-5274

This is the Union that represents IHSS Providers. Contact them for questions regarding dues and other questions requiring representation.

Link2Care, the Public Authority:

558-4787

Call our office with any questions about insurance, working for more recipients, and training classes.

Born Famous....

Not every famous person was born with the famous names we know them by. Here are the birth names given to some of today's most recognizable figures. Can you match them to the name we all know and love?

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Cary Grant | A. Chaim Witz |
| 2. Elton John | B. Lucille LeSueur |
| 3. Dean Martin | C. Marion Morrison |
| 4. Gene Simmons | D. Archibald Leach |
| 5. Jamie Foxx | E. Allen Konigsberg |
| 6. Joan Crawford | F. Betty Perske |
| 7. John Wayne | G. Reginald Dwight |
| 8. Lauren Bacall | H. Dino Crocetti |
| 9. Twiggy | I. Eric Bishop |
| 10. Woody Allen | J. Leslie Hornby |

Source: www.didyouknow.cd



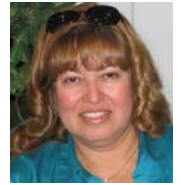
Answers: 1-D, 2-G, 3-H, 4-A, 5-I, 6-B, 7-C, 8-F, 9-J, 10-E

Did you work hours for which you did not receive pay?

Jamie was hired on April 11th and her new Recipient had been without a caregiver since the last day of March. Her Recipient was authorized for 90 hours a month, so Jamie assumed she could claim the full 90 hours for April. When she got her check for April she was surprised to see she only received pay for 60 hours. She called me quite upset until I reminded her that we had talked about prorating of hours during our 3-day training.

Since she did not start working on the first day of the month, she was not entitled to all of the hours. Why? Because hours for the Recipient are authorized on a time for task basis and most of the hours are for personal care; items like bathing and dressing. If you were not hired until the 11th, you cannot claim the hours that pertained to the 1st thru the 10th of the month because you can not go back in time and bathe and dress the Recipient.

To avoid this situation, take the total authorized hours and divide them by the days in the month (April had 30 days). The Recipient was authorized for 90 hours per month divided by 30 days in April which equals 3 hours a day. Multiply 3 hours times the 10 days that you did not work, and it equals 30 hours. Subtract the 30 hours (the days you did not work) from 90 hours (the total authorized hours) and your allowable hours for April 11th thru 30th is 60 hours. After we talked, Jamie remembered that we discussed this during our training, and said she would be sure not to do this again. As for you providers out there, I hope this helped you & that you will continue to get paid for a job well done.



Maria Osuna-Baldwin,
Registry Specialist



PO Box 42
Modesto, CA 95353

Do you have a registry question?

Write me at:
Maria's Corner
305 Downey Ave.
Modesto, Ca 95354