Ceres Community Project began in March 2007 with the simple idea to provide nourishing prepared meals for people dealing with illness while teaching teens about healthy eating and volunteer service. From the beginning we served many different kinds of people dealing with a wide range of health issues including multiple sclerosis, ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease), Crohn’s Disease, Hepatitis C, heart disease, and recovery from surgery. Because so many of our clients have a cancer diagnosis, Ceres has sometimes been seen as a program only for people with cancer.

We want to be sure that everyone in the Ceres’ community understands the full breadth of who we serve so that you can help us reach out to those who might benefit from our program. Thanks to our beautiful new home, we’re now providing meals to about 60 clients and their families a week, 50% more than we were a year ago. We’re still growing, though and would like to support 70 clients and their families each week by the end of this year.

Ceres Community Project clients are people dealing with a serious illness who are interested in experiencing and learning about healthy eating. Many of them also lack the income and/or the support system to eat well without Ceres’ meals. Since cancer treatment goes on for a long time and is so debilitating to the appetite, many of our clients do have cancer. But we’re also here for people facing many different health challenges because all of us deserve to feel cared for, and the nourishment of real food can make a difference no matter what the health situation.

Many of our clients tell us that it was hard for them to call Ceres. They wanted to take care of themselves, or were sure that someone else must need the help more than them. Learning to receive is difficult, but we know from those same clients that accepting the gift of meals connects them in powerful ways to their larger community, nourishing their hearts as well as their bodies. And of course, without clients willing to receive we would not have a teen development program. As in life, all of us at Ceres are inter-dependent – both givers and receivers at the same time.

While we would never wish a serious illness on anyone, over and over again our clients have told us that their diagnosis created the opening and motivation to make important life-style changes. “I thought I was a pretty healthy eater before I was diagnosed,” past client Julie Carmen told us. “But when I was fighting for my life, my standards went up dramatically. What I learned from Ceres has totally reshaped what and how I eat. Instead of that bowl

Delivery went well. I do like the food. It’s more than “like”… It’s the surprise of everything. The immediate impression was wow! The freshness… the color. The balance of flavors and textures. The variety of ingredients. The preparation and presentation behind the packaging. It all adds to the power of the healing affect. So the result is more than organic… It’s curiously inspirational.

Thanks,
GW

(continued next page)
Nourishing Meals for People Dealing with Illness (continued)

of Cheerios I now start my days with kale smoothies and I still drink the Ceres Immune Broth every day.” Illness shifts our priorities and very often making more time for self-care, including eating better, is one of the things that rises to the top of the list.

Our first goal is always to help our clients stay well nourished – both by the beautiful and delicious meals we provide and by the caring we show them. Even for those who know how to eat well, preparing healthy meals consistently is rarely possible during the stress and challenge of illness. Beyond that, our intention is to walk with our clients towards often new and always healthier ways of living. As past client Cindy Molina shared in our last newsletter, when she started eating the meals from Ceres she felt better. That direct experience is a powerful motivator for continuing to make healthy choices. Paired with the knowledge and skills we provide through our classes and cookbook, it’s a formula for fostering long-term positive change for our clients and for their families.

At Ceres our mission is to build healthier communities by transforming what and how we eat, and by creating heart-centered ways for people to express and receive caring support. Providing healthy and delicious meals to people dealing with illness nourishes their bodies and souls as they work to heal. It helps them, and all of us at Ceres, feel part of a caring community. Please help us spread the word about who Ceres Community Project serves, and encourage those dealing with health challenges to contact us about joining the Healing Meals program. . . and remind them that when they do, we’ll joyfully nourish them while they provide opportunities for our teens to learn and grow. ♥

More than 52.5% of all deaths in the US are from diseases where poor nutrition and lack of exercise are a precipitating cause.

It’s estimated that $500 billion a year in health care costs could be totally avoided by changes in diet.

American Cancer Society estimates that 1/3 of all cancers could be avoided by changes in diet; nearly all cases of Type 2 diabetes could be avoided by changes in diet; heart disease and stroke are also closely tied to eating habits.

In Sonoma County, the percentage of teens that are overweight or obese rose to 44.5% in 2009, and only 21% of teens report eating at least five servings a day of fruits and vegetables. Without a change in how they eat, this generation may have shorter life spans than their parents.

Visit our website to keep up with all the latest news on classes and events.
While you’re there, like us on Facebook and sign up for our monthly e-newsletter.

www.CeresProject.org

New Ways to Support Ceres’ Work

There are almost as many ways to support Ceres as there are people involved, from the traditional – such as making an annual or monthly gift – to the more creative, like Pam Davis’s 50th birthday benefit this past January which raised more than $6,000. Here are a few ways to donate that you may not be aware of:

• Contact My Broker Donates to find a top real estate broker anywhere in the country that will donate part of his or her fee to Ceres when you buy or sell a home. mybrokerdonates.com/

• Join businesses like Peter Lowell’s, Sushi Tozai and Silk Moon and hold a Donation Day for Ceres, donating a percentage of the profits and garnering lots of goodwill as well.

• Give Nourishing Connections Cookbooks, our Eat Kale t-shirts, or gift certificates to our classes for birthdays and holidays.

• Purchase Ceres’ food products – Almond Butter, Almondella, Nori Nettle Spice Blend, Vital Bites, Ginger Glycerite (great for nausea including morning sickness), and Immune Broth Herbs. You can purchase from the office any time we are open, and soon from our website.

• Donate in honor of birthdays, anniversaries or other special occasions.

• Hire Ceres to cater your party or other event. We’ll create a custom menu just for you and can provide service as well. Contact cathryn@ceresproject.org.

• Join escrip and a percentage of all your purchases at select retailers – including Oliver’s Market – will be directed to Ceres. Enroll today at escrip.com and start earning money for Ceres every time you shop. Our group ID number is 500042362.

• See if your employer will match your gift. ♥
Profiles:
Ceres helps hundreds of people each year.
Here are just two stories of how your support is touching and transforming lives.

Debi was diagnosed with melanoma

and was receiving chemotherapy. Her daughter was her caregiver but neither of them had any information or experience with nutritious eating or cooking. The four months of meals we provided helped Debi regain her strength and inspired her daughter on a new path. Debi’s daughter began taking yoga classes and is now enrolled in Bauman College’s nutrition program.

My cancer diagnosis was a huge shock to both myself and my daughter. We had no idea where to turn and who to ask for much of the help that we needed. Ceres Community Project gave me the beautiful, healthy meals, delivered by smiling strangers, just in the nick of time. My volunteer called me every week just to see how I was doing. She also helped me find a support group. My daughter got inspired to learn to cook from the Ceres cookbook, and has since decided upon a career in the nutrition field. Although my illness is not curable, I am eating a healthy diet in order to make every day count.

Thank you, to all of the unknown faces at Ceres who made such a change in my life.

Susan suffers from chronic back pain.

Earlier this year a car accident triggered an episode of severe pain. Despite increased pain medication, acupuncture and physical therapy, her doctor could not get the pain under control. This independent 65 year old could barely move, wasn’t sleeping, and was unable to care for herself. Her family was considering moving her to a nursing home which would have been devastating for her self-esteem and independence. Her doctor suggested they contact Ceres. After the first week of meals, Susan shared with her doctor how excited she was about the quality of the food and the interactions she was having with the whole team at Ceres. Here’s what her doctor shared with us,

I saw Susan in the clinic during the third week, and things had really turned around. She had started to see a chiropractor, had stopped losing weight, was moving around fairly well, and had stopped overusing her pain medication. Now, after 6 weeks on the meal program, she has completely stabilized and is back to her baseline, and has made changes towards a more whole foods diet based on her exposure through Ceres.

I had exhausted the resources available to her – family and the conventional and alternative medical services that she could afford. This woman almost certainly was going to a nursing home, at least temporarily, and we have all seen people for whom that is a one-way street. The meals and the caring that came from the Ceres program allowed this member of our community to stabilize and return to her previous level of functioning. She also gained a very clear understanding of the power of good nutrition to help decrease inflammation and increase vitality.

♥
Cutting Carrots
by Ceres Teen Jenna Brinkman

The first day I volunteered at Ceres Community Project, a social project where over one hundred teens cook and provide food for people with life-threatening illnesses, I was terrified. I didn’t want to do it. My mom pushed me to volunteer because I am homeschooled and have lots of free time. I was nervous because I didn’t know anyone and I was sure I would make mistakes. Little did I know that Ceres would be this incredible journey that would enrich my life.

When I first walked into the kitchen I was kindly greeted by the mentor chefs. They gave me a tour of the kitchen and the volunteer-created garden that surrounds the building and is full of organic vegetables that are harvested for the meals. Ten minutes later I was cutting carrots and part of the team. By the end of the day I felt more comfortable and had made new friends.

After sixteen weeks of hard work I finally earned my own personalized apron. My green apron has three pockets at the bottom, with my name sewn in black cursive on the front. My new smock symbolized my commitment and loyalty to the kitchen team and the clients and their families.

Now every Tuesday is the highlight of my week. Sometimes we have music playing and the festive atmosphere makes me feel like I am at a party. Some nights we have a teen get-together and have dinner and watch an inspirational movie. For example, the movie Queen of the Sun changed the way I think about the environment and the importance of bees. We need bees to pollinate flowers and make honey, and so the birds won’t die and we get the right variety of nutrition in our diet.

Now I ask my mom to drop me off early to volunteer, knowing my friends are going to be there. I look forward to cutting carrots, tasting new foods that I would never try before, and when I make mistakes the team is very forgiving and understanding. Working at Ceres has changed my thinking on nutrition and how it affects my health. And when the day is over, I feel special knowing that I have cared for Ceres’ clients by making them nutritious meals.

Jenna wrote this article about her work at Ceres for Girls’ Life Magazine. We thank her for allowing us to publish it here.
The Cancer Journey Welcomes Commonweal’s Michael Lerner

by JoEllen DeNicola, Nutrition Director

We are thrilled that Michael Lerner, a member of Ceres’ Ambassador Council and founder of Commonweal in Bolinas, will give the keynote talk at this year’s The Cancer Journey: Nurturing Ourselves, Loving Ourselves. Dr. Lerner, who created the internationally renowned Cancer Help Program, will speak about Intentional Healing with Cancer. The day-long program also includes a humorous talk by Terri Tate, RN, called Telling Ourselves Well: the Healing Power of Story & Laughter, and a presentation by Annie O’Connor LMFT, Tending the Soul: Cultivating Self-Care on the Cancer Journey.

The intention behind the event, which Ceres’ premiered in partnership with Sutter Integrative Health & Healing Services in 2011, is to nurture those who have experienced cancer or are in the midst of treatment, and their caregivers. Wisdom Healing Qigong with Bonnie O’Brien Jonsson from the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine at UCSF starts the day, helping to revitalize and heal the body, mind and spirit. Along with presentations there will be time to meet new people, ask questions, share stories, and gather in small groups to exchange experiences and information. Healing Foods Demos by Ceres’ staff and nutrition educators will share simple but easy ways to prepare foods that help fight cancer. There will be a large Resource Room with information about a broad range of support services, and integrative practitioners will offer short body work sessions in the Rest and Rejuvenation Room.

By providing an opportunity to come together in a healing environment with others, we hope to dispel some of the isolation that may come with illness, and to nourish all who attend with love, laughter, tenderness and of course beautiful and delicious food. More than 100 participants attended the inaugural event in 2011. We encourage you to register early as we expect to sell out.

The $15 fee covers the fresh, whole and organic snacks and lunch prepared by Ceres Community Project teen chefs. 

The Cancer Journey
Nourishing Ourselves, Loving Ourselves

Sunday October 14, 2012
8:30 am-5:00 pm
The Finley Center
2060 West College Ave, Santa Rosa

$15 per person
includes lunch catered by Ceres Community Project Teen Chefs

Pre-registration required
Limited scholarships are available
For more information or to register, visit
or call 829-5833 ext. 220

We are grateful to the Dan Smith & Joan Marler-Smith Donor Advised Fund of the Community Foundation Sonoma County for providing lead funding for The Cancer Journey in memory of Rae Cary of Sebastopol.

Additional Sponsors

CERES COMMUNITY PROJECT PRESENTS

The Cancer Journey
Nurturing Ourselves, Loving Ourselves

Sutter Pacific Medical Foundation
A Sutter Health Affiliate

LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA SOCIETY
fighting blood cancers

SONOMA COUNTY ONCOLOGY NURSES
Harvest of the Heart Celebrates Community

photos
Thanks to the generous support of our event sponsors, 100% of the money raised at Harvest of the Heart will be used to provide nourishing meals to people facing serious illness, teach teens about growing, preparing and eating healthy food, and educate our community about the connection between food and health.
Harvest of the Heart Celebrates Community

Thanks to the generosity of hundreds of people and businesses, Harvest of the Heart raised $115,000 to support our work over the next year. The funds – from our event sponsors, ticket sales, auction and Fund a Need – will provide 3 months of nourishing meals and caring support to nearly 200 clients while teaching hundreds of teens about growing, cooking and eating healthy whole foods, and helping us reach thousands of others with knowledge, skills and inspiration about the link between what we eat and our health.

Like all of Ceres’ work, Harvest of the Heart helps us remember what it means to be a community. By working together, each of us contributing what we can, we create miracles of caring, connection and healing for everyone involved. We want to thank our generous event sponsors, especially Presenting Sponsor and longtime partner Whole Foods Market; all of the businesses and individuals who donated to the auction; our table hosts; the wineries and food vendors; all of you who attended and gave generously through the auction and Fund a Need; and most especially to the more than 100 teen and adult volunteers whose hard work, graciousness and professionalism made it such a lovely evening for everyone.

Harvest of the Heart 2012 Auction, Food & Wine Donors

6th Street Playhouse
Allen Land Design
Andy’s Produce
Artisana Functional Art
Baker Lane Vineyards
Benziger Family Winery
Bistro 29
Bistro Des Copains
Bliss Organic Day Spa
Blue Whale House/ Hilary McCalla
Bob Amiral
Brasserie Restaurant, Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel & Spa
Buddleia’s Clothing for Her
Caution Kites
Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards & Winery
Cheryl Thomas
Chocolatier Bleu
Churchill Cellars
Cobb Wines
Costanoa Lodge Resort
Coturri Winery
Crow’s Nest Restaurant
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DeLoach Vineyards
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Dutchcr Crossing Winery
Dutton Estate Winery
Dutton-Goldfield Winery
Ella & Matt O’Donnell
Ferrari-Carano Vineyards & Winery
First Light Farm
Flavor Bistro
Flowers Vineyard & Winery
Francesca Fifs
French Garden Farm & Restaurant
Gourmet Mushrooms
Gregg Crawford/The Gopher Guy
Gypsy Café
Hafner Vineyard
Harvest Moon Estate & Winery
Hawley Winery
Hook & Ladder Winery
Howard’s Station
Imwalle Gardens
Inn at Occidental
Iron Horse Vineyards
Jack & Tony’s Whiskey Bar
Jackson’s Bar & Oven
Jill Stocks
Jim Sullivan
John Dolinsek & Kathy Kent
Johnson’s Beach
Judi Pereira
K & L Bistro
KAZ Winery
Kendall Jackson Wines
Kristee Rosendahl & Matthew Edwards/Big Dream Ranch
Lagunitas Brewing Company
Landmark Vineyards
Laura & Ed Dangers
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Less Claypool Wines
The Links at Bodega Harbour/Bluewater Bistro
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Moshin Vineyards
Nancy & Bob Aita
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Oberon Designs
Olive’s Market
Osmosis Day Spa Sanctuary
Outpost Winery
Padi Selwyn & Reuben Weinzev
Patrick Amiot & Brigitte Laurent
Patrick Hamilton
Patti Dedrick
Petaluma Poultry
Petite Syrah
Plumas Pines Resort/ Longboard’s Restaurant
Quivira Vineyards & Winery
Rack & Riddle Winery
Redwood Hill Farm & Creamery
Rick Goldberg
Robert Craig Winery
Rocker Oysterfeller’s Restaurant
Rodney Strong
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Tommie & Jack Fritz
TR Elliott Family Wines
Underwood Bar & Bistro
Veritable Vegetables
Vineyards Inn Spanish Bar & Grill
Vintners Inn/John Ash & Co
Wells Fargo Center for the Arts
Whole Foods Market
Willow Wood Market Café
Wind Gap Winery
The Wine Library
Woodenhead
Artisano Festival Celebrates Local Artisans & Supports Ceres

Mark your calendar for Saturday November 17, and join us at Artisano for a celebration of all that makes Sonoma County so special – small batch artisan wines, restaurants committed to supporting local farmers and ranchers, unique food purveyors, and talented artists. A terrific silent auction will support our work at Ceres while helping you find some very special gifts for the holidays.

If you love great food and wine, you won’t want to miss the “Grand Tasting,” where local is defined as being within 75 miles. You’ll sample artisan ultra-premium wines rarely available to the general public including Acorn Winery, Capture, Failla, Foursight Wines, Garden Creek Vineyards, Kelley & Young, Paul Mathew Vineyards, Valdez Family Winery and many others. Enjoy small plates from renowned restaurants like Peter Lowell’s, Diavola Pizzeria and Salumeria, and Charlie Palmer’s Dry Creek Kitchen that feature locally raised meat and produce.

The event will also include samplings of local artisan cheeses, charcuterie, chocolates, and other culinary delights from producers like Dry Creek Peaches, Malaysia Mei, Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese and Costeaux French Bakery. Has the new interest in butchering piqued your interest? Dino Bugica will be giving a demonstration. Wondering how difficult it is to make your own sauerkraut or other healthy fermented vegetables? Ceres Nutrition Director JoEllen DeNicola will demystify the process. And if you’re an art connoisseur, you’ll be able to browse and purchase original works of art from water color artist Cara Brown, ceramicist Amy Halko, painter Lino Vicente and more.

Hosted by Vintners Inn in the heart of Wine Country, the event takes place from noon to 4pm, and will be followed by an exclusive family style Harvest Dinner prepared by John Ash & Co. chef Tom Schmidt starting at 5pm. The 75 dinner guests will enjoy intimate conversation with a number of the wine makers featured at Artisano. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit www.artisano.org. Tickets can also be purchased at Relish Culinary Adventures in Healdsburg, Vintner’s Inn and in the Ceres Community Project office at 7351 Bodega Ave. in Sebastopol. ♥

Making a Difference with a Legacy Gift

by Deborah Vogan

In early 2009 I was looking for a new place to put my volunteer energies, hopefully some place that would really engage my heart. I read about Ceres Community Project in the Press Democrat, came to a Volunteer Orientation in February of that year, and have never looked back. I started my “career” at Ceres as a Delivery Angel and more than three years later, delivering meals to our very grateful clients is still the highlight of my week.

From the very beginning, I sensed there was something special happening at Ceres. The whole community – people from all different walks of life – coming together to nourish and care for those dealing with the stress and challenge of a serious illness. Teens being given real and significant opportunities to contribute, and shining in remarkable ways as a result. Everywhere I turned at Ceres there was real caring, and incredible attention to expressing that in all parts of the organization.

2012 has found me dealing with my mother’s declining health and making sure her affairs are in order. It got me thinking about my own estate. I’m divorced with no children and hadn’t made a plan about what to do with my assets once I am gone. As a board member, I knew that we had begun reaching out to donors, volunteers, clients and others in our community inviting them to consider leaving a legacy gift to Ceres. When I started to think about making my own will, I realized how much I want to support Ceres even after I’m gone.

Every year I am more inspired by what Ceres does, the lives we touch and the impact we are making. While my estate may be modest compared to others, I know that my contribution as a Legacy Donor is important. It’s the same reason I give on a monthly basis to Ceres… to touch the hearts of our clients and our teens, and help make their lives just a little bit better. ♥
Visit the deli counter in your local Whole Foods Market these days and you are likely to see the Ceres Community Project’s logo adorning at least several of the items. The unique program, which was developed by Team Leaders in the Sebastopol store, was extended in July to all nine stores in Sonoma and Marin. Whole Foods Market is donating $1.00 from every pint sold to support Ceres. For the first three and a half weeks of the expanded program, the nine stores generated more than $1,000 in donations just from one item!

The offerings with the Ceres logo are based on recipes from Ceres’ Nourishing Connections Cookbook which is also available for purchase at each store. Current recipes for sale at Whole Foods Market delis include Tuscan Kale Salad, a Caesar salad-like blend of raw kale, lemon, garlic, bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese – one of the top sellers at the Sebastopol store, Fruity Quinoa Salad with goji berries and toasted almonds, White Bean Salad, and Pumpkin Curry Soup with Coconut Milk.

Through the end of September, Ceres Community Project will also be the recipient of the bag donations from all five Whole Foods Market stores in Sonoma County, and three of the four stores in Marin (all except the San Rafael store – see below). The stores pooled the donations – an estimated $15,000 – to participate as the Presenting Sponsor for Harvest of the Heart, Ceres annual fundraising event which took place on August 11 (see story on page xx)

Since 2008, Whole Foods Sebastopol has provided nearly $50,000 in in-kind support as well as $10,000 in cash donations. Ceres’ program in Marin is benefiting from in-kind donations from the San Rafael store and was recently the recipient – for the second time in two years – of $5,800 from that store’s 5% day.

The innovative deli foods program grew out of the Sebastopol team’s desire to create an ongoing way to express their support for our work. “Ceres is a perfect fit for us,” said Sebastopol Store Team Leader Colin Davidson. “We share strong values about healthy eating, community building, and supporting the health of the planet. As Ceres takes their incredible work to more communities across the country, we want to have a way that local stores can partner with these new projects to improve community health.”

Thank you, Whole Foods Market! We are blessed to have your partnership in our work to create health for people, communities and the earth. ♥
Ceres Marin Celebrates 9,000 Meals... and More

by Julie Burford, Co-Project Manager, Ceres Marin

Ceres Marin’s Healing Meals program celebrated two landmarks in August: the delivery of their 9,000th meal and, in the process, Julia Child’s 100th birthday… Ceres style of course!

Not quite two years after their launch in fall 2010, Ceres has brought more than one hundred Marin teens into the kitchen at San Rafael’s Whistlestop. Two afternoons each week they prepare beautiful, nourishing and free meals for Marin families struggling with serious illness. While the teens craft dishes according to Ceres’ model for health-supportive food, the Marin team took a little creative license on August 15 and 16, applying the Ceres philosophy to a menu featuring some of Julia Child’s classic recipes.

Julia, who would have turned 100 on August 15, is credited with bringing American cooks back into the kitchen beginning in the 1960s. While we define healthy food a bit differently, she was instrumental in teaching the value of fresh whole food at a time when convenience foods and processed products began to dominate American mealtimes, and she taught a generation of women and men to cook real, delicious food with confidence.

Wearing their green Ceres aprons and white chef coats, as well as a commemorative sticker acknowledging Julia’s birthday, Ceres Marin teens set out to do “the French Chef” proud. Here’s their menu that pays homage to Julia but does it with Ceres’ insistence on local, organic and health-supportive ingredients, prepared and presented with care:

- Vichyssoise (cold leek and potato soup – dairy free)
- Salade Nicoise (veggie version with potatoes, green beans, eggs, tomatoes and olives)
- Ratatouille (with tomatoes, eggplant, zucchini, bell peppers, garlic, onions and herbs)
- Bouillabaisse (fish stew with snapper, halibut, fennel, tomato, onion, garlic and saffron)
- Fresh fruit salad with strawberries, nectarines, melons, blackberries and plums

Instead of cream in the soup, Ceres’ version used house made cashew cream, and instead of butter, organic olive oil supplied the healthy fat. All of the ingredients in the salad and ratatouille came from local farmers and producers who donate their fresh organic products each week; and instead of the mixture of Mediterranean style fish and shellfish that usually comprises the basis of bouillabaisse, this version featured local wild-caught fish in a mineral-rich immune broth with precious saffron donated by a Ceres supporter. The abundant servings of fresh summer fruit garnished with sprigs of mint added color and a seasonal treat thanks to farmers at the downtown Novato farmers market.

By joining chefs, cooks, and diners everywhere in a salute to Julia Child’s centennial, Ceres Marin chefs and volunteers showed how easy it is to craft beautiful meals from classic recipes while boosting their nutritional value “Ceres style”. So, as Julia always said, Bon Appetit! ♥

If you live or work in Marin and would like to volunteer, please contact julieb@marin.ceresproject.org or annw@marin.ceresproject.org. Donations can be directed to Ceres Project Marin and sent to 7351 Bodega Avenue, Sebastopol, CA 95472.
garden photos