

walnut creek

BEST OF 2019

M
FLORIST

A G A
PET SUPPLIES

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PLAYGROUND

N E
EYEWEAR

TACOS

PUBLIC ART

RIBS

AUTO DEALER

OF

Best WVC

2019 READER'S CHOICE AWARDS

SUSHI

BREAKFAST

SHOE REPAIR

FACIAL

BREAKFAST

DATE SPOT

BURGER

BARBERSHOP

COFFEE

ALTERATIONS

YOGA



SHARING THE WEALTH

FEEDING PEOPLE IN NEED NOURISHES MARY BROOK'S SPIRIT

When Mary Brooks volunteered five years ago as a “runner” for White Pony Express—redistributing surplus bread from Morucci’s deli to the Bay Area Rescue Mission and Monument Crisis Center—she never expected to one day be running the place. Contributing time and energy to help the community has always been a personal priority for Mary. It’s also consistent with her belief that the giver always receives more. She thinks most people want to give, they’re just not always sure how and where to do it. “You just have to put it at the top of your to-do list,” Mary explains.

That organized, results-focused, business-like approach is just what you would expect from a successful, 35-year, financial services professional. Starting in 1983 as a financial consultant with Merrill Lynch in Walnut Creek,

Mary established her own group, Invera Wealth Management of Raymond James in 2009, where today she serves as managing director. Over the years she’s shared her business acumen, with a variety of civic, philanthropic and leadership organizations, served on countless boards, and recently founded M2-One to elevate women into leadership roles.

But it’s White Pony Express that really feeds her spirit. Founded in 2013 by Dr. Carol Weyland to address the incongruity of widespread hunger in an area of such abundance, White Pony Express, and its legion of dedicated volunteers, collect surplus food from local grocers and restaurants then distribute it to organizations that serve those in need. In 2014, White Pony General Store opened to add free clothing, toys and books to the things given away. Since then, over 500,000 free

items have gone to people in need. And during the past six years, White Pony’s Food Rescue program has delivered over 5,000 pounds of fresh, nutritious food every day to area shelters or a staggering 10 million pounds to about 80,000 people.

Mary took on this massive distribution undertaking when she stepped up as interim director in 2018. She likes to say her “organized mind” has helped the non-profit to continue to grow. Currently leading the search for her replacement, so she can return to her financial practice and role as a “worker bee,” Mary says, “I am in awe every day of the difference White Pony Express makes in the lives of all the donors, recipients, volunteers, and staff. It really is all of us taking care of all of us.”