

CITY SCENE SAN DIEGO

# MAMA'S KITCHEN GOES GREEN

BY DAVID BENNETT

Mama's Kitchen San Diego now uses an all-electric vehicle (EV) for some of its meal deliveries. The 20-year-old organization delivers meals to HIV-symptomatic clients, AIDS patients, and cancer patients under 60.

The electrified 2000 VW Beetle belongs to employee Vickie Randle. She's the bilingual meal service administrator, assisting their Spanish-speaking clients. Randle is also the backup delivery person.

The Solar Beetle, as it's dubbed, "is backup in case one of the volunteers has an emergency," Randle explained. The EV is not powered by onboard solar power. It has 12 regular batteries. "I can charge it here at work," Randle said, "but we have 20 photovoltaic panels that were installed in 2002 at my home in North Park, and I charge it there."



The conversion happened as a class project during a 2-week summer class in 2008 at San Diego High School. It was held for auto shop teachers and EV enthusiasts. Randle took the old internal combustion engine to a recycling company.

EV vehicles are still new enough to attract attention. "People who are riding their bikes have stopped at the stoplight, and asked if it's really 100 percent electric," Randle said. "They are excited about seeing an electric car driving around in downtown San Diego."

Randle said her work has been totally rewarding. "The time I've been here since 2005 has just flown by. Everybody is so wonderful to work with, the volunteers and the staff. They really make a difficult life situation a little more bearable for our clients, Randle said. "And I get to drive this car; I love it."

Mama's Kitchen was founded in 1990 when volunteers from the AIDS Assistance Fund, a food bank for people with AIDS, realized that many patients were becoming too ill to take care of themselves. They knew a reliable home-meal delivery service was needed to make sure clients would continue to receive nutritious food.

To celebrate its 20th anniversary, Mama's Kitchen will host a Great Gatsby brunch on Sunday, September 12, from 11 am to 2 pm, at an elegant historic private estate in Marston Hills, San Diego. Tickets are \$250, and tables seat 10. Great Gatsby! Mama Turns 20! will be a seated brunch that will evoke the carefree romance of the Roaring '20s. It will offer classic cars, flowing cabanas, live jazz, champagne and superb cuisine. All proceeds will help Mama's Kitchen to continue its work for another 20 years and beyond.

Supporters of Mama's Kitchen are encouraged to leave their mark on Mama's history by buying a customized ad in the 20th Anniversary program book. Ads range from \$75 for a black-and-white name listing to \$2,000 for a full-color cover. Programs will be given to 350 guests at the event, and are used as a marketing tool to recognize Mama's special friends. For information on ticket sales, VIP cabanas, or to advertise, email [lynn@mamaskitchen.org](mailto:lynn@mamaskitchen.org).

**TO DONATE OR VOLUNTEER** — Mama's Kitchen, Inc. is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization. Donations to Mama's Kitchen are deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the IRS. For more information, surf to [mamaskitchen.org](http://mamaskitchen.org).

storm international florist  
902 WEST UNIVERSITY  
619.543.9599

RECYCLE  
YOUR USED VASES  
AND BASKETS AND GET A  
FREE CASH-N-CARRY BOUQUET!  
THREE OR MORE VASES OR BASKETS AND GET YOUR FREE BOUQUET.