



BE MOVED

MAKING THE ROUNDS WITH PRECIOUS CARGO

AS A LITTLE GIRL, Marlene Meyers observed disabled people being left behind when families went to events. Her father explained that it was hard to load and unload the person into a car along with wheelchair and other necessary paraphernalia like oxygen tanks. She thought how unfair it was for them to miss out. Meyers never forgot those early images and her father's sad assessment.

Precious Cargo opened its van door to the first client in 2004.

Meyers began providing non-emergency transport to North State residents with one van. She took the calls, drove the van and managed the business. Today, she reports, the business is "growing in leaps and bounds" with a fleet of Mercedes and Ford vans outfitted with hydraulic wheelchair lifts, power gurneys and oxygen. A busy office of computer stations and phone lines takes calls while vans are cleaned and sanitized in the fleet yard in preparation for new assignments. ▶

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Precious Cargo

non-emergency transport

Precious Cargo contracts with several hospitals and care facilities in the North State to provide transportation for non-emergency medical care that includes cancer and dialysis treatments, physical therapy and doctor's appointments. They also take calls and transport clients from private homes. They answer calls and provide transportation seven days a week, 24 hours a day. They have been called to provide transportation for disabled loved ones to holiday celebrations, reunions, weddings and anniversary parties. Precious Cargo will transport anywhere in Washington, Oregon, California and Nevada.

Meyers loves what she does. She continues a very hands-on approach to her leadership, taking late night calls and driving the van when needed. She's mapped out short- and long-range goals on a dry-erase board near the conference table where staff meetings take place amidst piles of tires and tools of the trade. She proudly points out state-of-the-art equipment and well-maintained vehicles.

Drivers all must maintain CPR and first aid certification and pass regular drug tests along with initial background checks. A few drivers are EMTs or paramedics. Their on-the-job training includes in-house certification in the use of all equipment. Each driver represents the company and the team. Her standards are high and she wants them to understand it is "a privilege to care for their precious cargo."

As with many businesses, partnerships support success. Meyers relies on her close relationships with several North State partners to maintain vehicles. She credits Gearan's Automotive, O2 Motor

Sports, G&T Auto Electric and J&K Muffler in Redding, as well as Bob's Tire in Red Bluff, for giving her vehicles priority treatment for preventive maintenance and repairs. "We're here to be the best we can be to serve people," she says.

Proud citizens, the Precious Cargo team can easily be spotted in red shirts and blue jackets with red, white and blue emblems, a conscious way to salute American heroes.

Meyers has taken only one vacation since moving to the North State from Southern California. She does have one other passion, though: She belongs to the Corvette Club, and this year drove her 2013 Grand Sport Corvette convertible in the opening lap of Kool April Nights.

Meyers learns something new from her clients every time she drives. Her only regret is "that I hadn't met them earlier," speaking of the interesting lives so many of her passengers share with her and her team when they meet. She brags about her staff, saying, "Our company would not be where it is today without the greatest team of employees. It is the teamwork that counts." •

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Sandie Tillery writes about the North State from 35 years of personal experience exploring it from corner to corner with husband John, their three grown children and four grandsons. She loves interviewing the amazing people who live here and telling their stories.