

SONOMA SENIORS TODAY

Caregiver Corner: Adult Day Programs Offer Many Benefits for Persons with Dementia and Their Caregivers

By Jamie Escoubas, Director of Social and Fiduciary Services at Council on Aging

Caring for a loved one with dementia can be both a deeply rewarding and a profoundly challenging experience. As the condition progresses, caregivers often find themselves balancing the responsibilities of providing continuous care with their personal needs and well-being. In such circumstances, adult day respite programs are invaluable resources, offering a range of benefits to both individuals with dementia and their caregivers.

Provides Support and Engagement for Persons with Dementia

Structured Activities

Adult day programs provide structured activities tailored to the needs and capabilities of individuals with dementia. These activities can include cognitive stimulation and physical exercises, arts and crafts, music programs, and reminiscence therapy. Engaging in these activities can help stimulate cognitive function, maintain social skills, improve sleep and reduce feelings of isolation or loneliness, potentially slowing the progression of dementia.



Professional Care and Supervision

Programs are typically staffed with professionals trained in dementia care. They understand the unique challenges individuals with dementia face and are equipped to provide appropriate support and supervision throughout the day. This ensures the safety and well-being of participants while allowing caregivers peace of mind.

Social Interaction

Social isolation is a common issue for individuals with dementia. Adult day respite

programs offer opportunities for social interaction with peers, fostering a sense of community and belonging. Building and maintaining social connections can improve mood, reduce behavioral symptoms, and enhance overall quality of life.

Empowers Caregivers

Respite for Caregivers

One of the primary benefits of adult day programs is the respite they offer caregivers. Caregiving can be physically and emotionally demanding, often leading to burnout and stress. Adult day programs provide caregivers with scheduled breaks during which they can attend to their own needs, rest, work, or pursue personal interests without worrying about the safety and well-being of their loved ones.

"Thank you, COA! Your staff's skill, warmth and caring allow my wife (with Alzheimer's) to feel at ease, valued, and connected to others—feelings she rarely has elsewhere!"

Participant at Sebastopol Adult Day Program

Education and Support

Many adult day programs offer educational resources, workshops, and support groups for caregivers. These resources can provide valuable information about dementia, caregiving techniques, and strategies for coping with the challenges that arise. They also offer a supportive environment where caregivers can share experiences, seek advice, and find emotional support.

Reduced Caregiver Stress

Studies have shown that regular use of adult day services can significantly reduce caregiver stress and burden. By alleviating some of the daily caregiving responsibilities, caregivers have the opportunity to recharge and maintain their own physical and mental health. This, in turn, enables them to continue providing high-quality care for a longer duration.

Improved Family Dynamics

Adult day respite programs can positively impact family dynamics by reducing the tension and conflicts that may arise from the stress of



caregiving. It allows family members to spend quality time together without the demands of caregiving duties, which fosters stronger relationships and enhances overall family well-being.

In conclusion, adult day programs play a crucial role in supporting individuals with dementia and their caregivers. They offer a structured environment that promotes engagement, socialization, and cognitive stimulation for persons with dementia while providing much-needed respite and support for caregivers. By enhancing the quality of life for both parties, these programs contribute to a more sustainable and compassionate approach to dementia care within families and communities.

As the prevalence of dementia continues to increase nationally and in Sonoma County, the importance of such programs in our healthcare system cannot be overstated, which highlights the need for continued investment, participation and support to ensure their accessibility to all who can benefit from them.

"The program, the people, the participants are wonderful! It gets my mom out of the house, she looks forward to it, it is the bright spot in her week and I get much-needed time away."

Participant at Santa Rosa Alzheimer's Day Program

To learn more about donating, enrolling a loved one, or volunteering at one of our four adult day programs in Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Santa Rosa, please contact Salina Gonzalez, Program Manager, at 707-525-0143 ext. 118 or sgonzalez@councilonaging.com. We would be delighted to provide further information.

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Communicating Effectively Around Dementia

Presented by the Alzheimer's Association

We'll teach you how dementia affects communication, including tips for communicating well with family, friends and health care professionals.

Thursday, October 10
3:30 - 4:30 PM
Space is Limited
Pre-Registration Required

Location:
Alzheimer's Day Respite Program
490 Mendocino Ave., Suite 105
Santa Rosa

To Pre-register, Call
707-525-0143 X103
sgonzalez@councilonaging.com





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To enhance the quality of life for our aging community by providing services that promote well-being and maintain independence.

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Welcome COA's New Registered Dietician

Hello, fellow Sonoma County residents! My name is Vanessa Hasslinger, and I am the new Registered Dietitian (RD) at Council on Aging. I am so excited to work alongside the amazing Council on Aging team! One of my roles as the RD is to analyze our meals, ensuring they provide one-third of the nutrient and calorie content seniors need daily. I also create the quarterly nutrition education you see here in Sonoma Seniors Today, and I ensure that clients in our nutrition programs at high nutritional risk have access to my services. I aim to implement Medically Tailored Meals, individual Nutrition Counseling,



Vanessa Hasslinger

and a Diabetes Prevention Program, which will be reimbursed by insurance. Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest and wanting to escape the dreary weather, I moved to the sunny state of Arizona. I attended Arizona State University, receiving my undergraduate degree in Dietetics. I completed my internship and Master's in Applied Nutrition through the University of Arizona. While my collegiate experience was turbulent (thanks to the global pandemic!), I couldn't be more thankful for all my experiences and how my education has prepared me to serve Sonoma County. While nutrition is now my passion, that was not always the case. I used to be an extremely picky eater (my husband would tell you I still am!), but as my willingness to try new foods grew, I can officially say I am not afraid to eat green things anymore! Every nutrition journey starts somewhere, and it wasn't any different for me. Before I learned that becoming a Registered

Dietitian was even an option, I wanted to be an equine therapist—helping teens and young adults overcome mental health struggles with horses. So, I began my psychology classes (which I loved!) but quickly learned how much I hated writing theory papers. During this time, I also enrolled in a general nutrition course, and for the first time in my life, I felt the information I was learning just clicked. From that day on, I have been so intrigued by all things nutrition—the chemical makeup of food, how we digest and absorb it, how food can help reduce/alleviate symptoms of various diseases, and most importantly, how food brings us all together. As it will be some time before I can meet some of you, here are a few fun facts about me: I love to travel (nine countries and counting!), I have hiked to the tallest point in Arizona (12,600 ft!), I have been married to my college sweetheart for three years, my favorite foods are mac and cheese and any pastry, and lastly, I am a huge bookworm. I look forward to serving the county of Sonoma.

PUZZLES & GAMES

Puzzle solutions are on page 8

WORD SCRAMBLE
"CELEBRATING AUTUMN"

1. PKUNMSIP - - - - -
2. ERDCI - - - - -
3. UTEHSSTCN - - - - -
4. EYHADIR - - - - -
5. VTRSHAE - - - - -
6. LVAESE - - - - -
7. UYTKRE - - - - -
8. SOECTMU - - - - -
9. AWEENLLHO - - - - -
10. GIINTKSAVNGH - - - - -
11. DNYAC - - - - -
12. UELLDM IENW - - - - -

SUDOKU - Medium

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SUDOKU - Hard

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	1				5			9
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		2				6	3	

WORD SEARCH
"JEWELRY"

- DIAMOND SAPPHIRE
- GARNET TOPAZ
- TURQUOISE PERIDOT
- EMERALD RUBY
- CITRINE OPAL
- OBSIDIAN AMETHYST

"AUGUST"

ACROSS

- 1 Knife
- 5 Block
- 9 Michelangelo's famous statue
- 14 Tel __ (Israel's capital)
- 15 Read attentively
- 16 Gentry
- 17 Nude
- 18 Assess
- 19 Motor lodge
- 20 Concerned
- 22 Giant wave
- 24 Day of the wk.
- 25 Not there
- 26 Misses
- 28 Harness horse
- 29 Compass point
- 32 Odor
- 33 Cherishes
- 35 Cut grass
- 36 Trainee
- 37 Bullfight cheer
- 38 Cut of beef
- 40 Airport abbr.
- 41 Incite (2 wds.)
- 43 Not inner
- 44 New Jersey's neighbor
- 45 Atmosphere
- 46 Common last name
- 47 Evils
- 49 Chicken creation
- 50 Crop
- 53 Worn when cold
- 57 Once more
- 58 Island
- 60 Wash
- 61 Gathered the leaves
- 62 Chill
- 63 Wagon pullers
- 64 Make flat
- 65 Compass point
- 66 Gust

DOWN

- 1 Baby's "ball"
- 2 Elliptical
- 3 Italian money
- 4 Pays time and a half
- 5 Larks
- 6 Stow
- 7 Artist's creation
- 8 German composer
- 9 Raise an objection
- 10 Lonely
- 11 Brief autobiographical sketch
- 12 Detail
- 13 Cafe
- 21 Alter
- 23 Southeast by east
- 26 Talk
- 27 Particular style
- 28 Black
- 29 Struck
- 30 Femurs
- 31 Pitcher
- 32 Did well
- 33 Military specialty
- 34 Curly, for example
- 39 Cottage
- 42 Girls
- 46 Jewelry need
- 47 Crawling vines
- 48 Allows to borrow
- 50 Angel's instrument
- 51 Seaweed substance
- 52 Collect leaves
- 53 Sloven
- 54 Cab
- 55 Fair
- 56 Tear
- 59 Plant

WORD SEARCH "JEWELRY"

S	Y	Y	B	A	V	P	I	O	W	M	M	L	R	I	I
D	O	R	H	D	Z	B	B	A	P	S	X	H	Z	V	W
I	X	B	H	F	B	V	E	Y	T	O	P	A	Z	W	F
A	E	Q	K	S	Y	R	G	I	Z	R	H	E	I	C	P
M	B	V	U	M	I	O	P	A	L	L	N	Y	O	C	U
O	O	I	U	H	O	W	L	B	G	A	R	N	E	T	S
N	X	A	P	P	Z	E	O	B	S	I	D	I	A	N	T
D	W	P	U	C	I	T	R	I	N	E	D	W	N	A	U
Z	A	U	A	R	D	P	B	Z	C	Z	F	A	E	L	R
S	Y	N	P	M	L	C	W	U	R	I	N	C	M	K	Q
D	V	L	B	E	E	L	J	J	W	W	M	Q	E	E	U
I	V	I	S	O	R	T	R	L	G	D	V	M	R	C	O
T	P	A	M	O	R	I	H	S	I	V	Q	Y	A	R	I
O	S	B	I	N	K	U	D	Y	Y	K	Z	N	L	R	S
L	E	R	A	L	E	P	B	O	S	Q	Z	D	D	C	E
U	E	N	J	Q	U	J	G	Y	T	T	S	N	P	B	P



Will you help take vulnerable Sonoma County seniors off the Meals on Wheels waiting list?

By donating monthly to our Meals on Wheels program, as a **Sustaining Member**, you can provide aging adults 60+ with healthy meals and essential daily safety checks, which can be life-saving.

Sign up by 10/1/24, as a Sustaining Member, and you'll receive a **FREE** subscription to Sonoma Senior Today mailed directly to your home.

To sign up, please visit www.councilonaging.com/donate, call us at 707-525-0143 ext. 146 or mail in the form below. If you'd like to pay by check, we will set you up with a monthly reminder and return envelopes.

Name

Email

Phone

Amount \$

☐ One-Time

☐ Monthly

Address/City/State/Zip

Credit Card Number

Exp:

CVV:

You can send a check payable to COA with Meals on Wheels the memo. Our mailing address is 30 Kawana Springs Rd. Santa Rosa, CA 95404.



Pumpkin Oatmeal

It will wrap around your heart like a yard of flannel!



Ingredients

1

Cup Steel Cut Oats (Scottish or Irish)
(Bob's Red Mill Quick Cooking Steel Cut Oats—Faster w/Great Texture)

1 ½

Cups Milk

2

TBS Pure Maple Syrup (More to taste later if you so desire.)

½

Tsp. Ground Cinnamon

¼

Tsp. Ground Ginger

1/8

Tsp. Ground Allspice

1/8

Tsp. Ground Nutmeg (Freshly Ground if Possible)

½

Cup Pumpkin Purée (Not pumpkin pie filling.)

¼

Tsp. Kosher Salt

Directions:

*

Bring milk up to a simmer.

*

Gently stir in the pumpkin purée and bring back up to a simmer.

*

Gently stir in all the other ingredients except the oatmeal and bring back up to a simmer.

*

Gently stir in the oatmeal and bring back up to a simmer and cook to the instructions from the oatmeal.

*

Enjoy (If you are feeling particularly decadent, add a wee bit of butter.)

Lunch & Learn



Emergency Preparedness

Join Us for a 2-Part Lunch & Learn Event!

Are you prepared for an emergency? Join us for this **FREE** 2-part workshop. Emergency Prep Help customizes their workshops for older adults. Guest speakers include first responders, emergency managers, and pet experts.

Part 1: Thurs, Oct 3 • 11 AM - 1:00 PM

Topics include fire and evacuation safety, where to go and what to do, basic equipment and emergency supplies and earthquake preparedness.

Part 2: Thurs, Oct 17 • 11 AM - 1:00 PM

Topics include steps to take in extended power outages, pet safety in emergencies, and working together as a community to stay safe.

Location: Finley Senior Center
2060 W. College Ave., Santa Rosa



ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A
FREE EMERGENCY GO-BAG & LUNCH!
RESERVE BY SEP 25th • SPACE IS LIMITED.

RSVP Denise Johnson
707-525-0143 x119 or
djohnson@councilonaging.com

NUTRITION NEWS

Why is Hydration Important



First, let's define hydration and explain its importance. Simply put, being hydrated means having enough water in your body to function properly. This may seem obvious, but as we age and the seasons change, the importance of proper hydration only increases.

Now, why is having enough water important? Water plays many critical roles within our body. First, it helps regulate our body temperature. Water helps absorb and distribute heat throughout our body and cools our body when it is overheating. Water also keeps our joints lubricated, reducing inflammation by keeping our bones and joints from rubbing against one another. Additionally, water is vital in delivering nutrients that help maintain our organs and body function.

You might ask, "How do I know if I am hydrated enough?" While lack of hydration, or dehydration, can be a severe issue, there are many warning signs to help prevent it. Early symptoms of dehydration include:

- Dark-colored urine or urinating less frequently
- Dizziness
- Headaches
- Dry mouth
- Fatigue or feeling weak/lack of coordination
- Muscle cramps

Dehydration can lead to many life-threatening complications like urinary tract infections (UTIs), heat stroke, and heart or kidney problems. Being dehydrated can also increase our risk of infection or our ability to recover or heal from injury quickly.

How can we make sure we are meeting our water needs each day? First, choose foods with higher water content, like watermelon, cucumbers, lettuce, strawberries, tomatoes, or celery. Soups, broths, and stews are excellent ways to increase fluid consumption. Consider trying a cold soup or drinking a cup of chilled bone broth during these hot months. Drinking 9-12 glasses of water daily can become dull, so consider adding berries, mint, or some other flavors, such as lemon, cucumber, fresh fruits, or citrus, to your water. Additionally, consider setting a timer to remind you to drink water every few hours or carrying a reusable water bottle while you're out and about or as you go from room to room in your living space.

Remember, you're not alone in this journey. If you have any questions or concerns about your hydration, your physician or registered dietitian is always there to provide guidance and support. Their expertise can help you make informed decisions about your health and well-being.

By Vanessa Hasslinger, MS, RDN, Council on Aging

Sources: National Council on Aging,
Harvard School of Public Health

CLIP AND SAVE

Sonoma County Farmers' Markets					
All locations accept Senior FMNP Vouchers.					
City	Market Name	Address of Market	Day of Week	Hours of Operations	Months of Operation
Cloverdale	Cloverdale Farmers' Market	122 N. Cloverdale	Tuesday	4:00 PM – 7:00 PM	March thru December
Cotati	Cotati Community Farmers' Market	8167 La Plaza	Thursday	4:30 PM – 7:30 PM	June thru September
Guerneville	Russian River Farmers' Market	16290 5th Street	Thursday	3:00 PM – 7:00 PM	June thru August
Healdsburg	Healdsburg Community Farmers' Market	Plaza St. between Healdsburg Ave. and Center Street	Tuesday	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM	April thru October
Healdsburg	Healdsburg Community Farmers' Market	Vine & North Street	Saturday	8:30 AM – 12:00 PM	May thru November
Petaluma	Petaluma East Side Farmers' Market	320 N. McDowell Blvd.,	Tuesday	10:00 AM – 1:30 PM	Year-Round
Petaluma	Petaluma Evening Farmers' Market	175 Fairgrounds Drive	Thursday	4:00 PM – 8:00 PM	June thru September
Petaluma	Petaluma Community Farmers' Market	Corner of Petaluma Blvd. and D Street	Saturday	2:00 PM – 5:00 PM	May thru November
Petaluma	Petaluma Bounty Farm Stand	55 Shasta Avenue	Thursday	3:00 PM – 6:00 PM	April thru December
Rohnert Park	Rohnert Park Farmers' Market	500 City Center Drive	Friday	2:00 PM – 8:00 PM 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM	June thru August September thru May
Santa Rosa	Mercadito Roseland Farmers' Market	665 Sebastopol Road	Sunday	11:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Year-Round
Santa Rosa	Santa Rosa Community Farmers' Market	1501 Farmers Lane	Saturday Wednesday	8:30 AM – 1:00 PM 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Year-Round Year-Round
Santa Rosa	Santa Rosa Original Farmers' Market	1450 Guerneville Road	Thursday	9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	July thru August
Santa Rosa	Santa Rosa Original Farmers' Market	50 Market West Springs Road	Wednesday Saturday	8:30 AM – 1:00 PM 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM	March thru December Year-Round
Sebastopol	Farm Stand - Hale's Apple Farm	1526 Gravenstein Hwy. N.	Daily	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM	August thru November
Sebastopol	Sebastopol Community Farmers' Market	6901 McKinley Street	Sunday	9:00 AM – 1:30 PM	Year-Round
Sonoma	Sonoma Valley Community Farmers' Market	Arnold Field; 1st St. West	Friday	9:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Year-Round
Windsor	Windsor Community Farmers' Market	701 McClelland Drive	Sunday Thursday	10:00 AM – 1:00 PM 5:00 AM – 8:00 PM	April thru December September thru October

CLIP AND SAVE

VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED

Day Respite Program Welcomes Volunteers!

The Council on Aging Day Respite Program offers a variety of activities that enrich the lives of older adults with cognitive decline. As a volunteer, you'll play a vital role in helping our participants stay engaged and active in a fun and lively setting.

Details:

- 1-5 Days per week available
- 4-hour shifts
- Assisting with group activities and general supervision of participants

Locations:

- Sonoma
- Sebastopol
- Santa Rosa

Interested in making a difference?

Call Leigh Galten
Volunteer Coordinator
707-525-0143 x121
lgalten@councilonaging.com

Looking to help the community in a way that touches your heart?

GRANDPA SEZ...

LIGHT TRAVELS FASTER THAN SOUND. DO YOU THINK THAT'S WHY SOME PEOPLE SEEM BRIGHT UNTIL THEY SPEAK?

© 2024 John Martin Features
Email: beezwaxcomic

New PEARLS Coach

Kitty Lum is the Meals on Wheels (MOW) Client Intake Specialist, conducting health interviews for seniors who want to enroll for MOW, and now she is adding the role of PEARLS Coach. She has experience interviewing thousands of seniors on MOW, supporting them with their nutritional needs and as their source of referrals to other senior services provided by Council on Aging (COA) and other community organizations. Kitty is passionate about advocating for seniors' health needs and loves listening to their stories! This passion has led her to also support them in their mental health needs as a depression coach for PEARLS. She has an Associate of Science from Santa Rosa Junior College in Dietetic Technology and is a Nutrition and Dietetics



Kitty Lum

Technician Registered, now working on her Master's in Public Health (MPH), with plans to do community education in nutrition/all fields of health. Her focus will be nutrition and epidemiology. Kitty is bi-vocational and also an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. She brings her pastoral care skills to her work with COA clients, giving care with "heart in hand." In the last three months, she has "filled in the gaps," supporting all COA staff when needed in the Nutrition, Accounting, Development, and Social Work departments. Besides working full-time at COA, Kitty is working on her online MPH program part-time through California State University, Northridge, completing her MPH internship at Blue Zones Project Petaluma, serving on the vestry (board of elders) at St. John's Episcopal Church, and is a mom to three dogs, Wally (Shih-Tzu mix), Shauny (Australian Blue Heeler), and Churro (Chihuahua mix). Churro is the COA Mascot who visits the team weekly to provide "dog therapy," bringing smiles and joy with his unstoppable enthusiasm and wagging tail. Kitty is excited to join this outstanding PEARLS team!

PEARLS Testimonial

Last August, Council on Aging began providing mental health support through PEARLS (Program to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives for Seniors). PEARLS offers short-term coaching to older adults who experience symptoms of depression or social isolation. In six months, participants receive individualized sessions focusing on challenging areas that come with aging. Throughout the past year, PEARLS has served over fifty older adults, some who have navigated depression throughout their lives, others who are experiencing depression for the first time, and some who feel isolated. JW recently finished her last PEARLS session and sat down with her PEARLS Coach to reflect on her experience in the program. Born into a small family in Upstate New York, JW recalls being fond of learning, immersing herself in school, and eventually earning scholarships that allowed her to attend Cornell University. She soon realized that Cornell's environment was not the college experience she craved and it significantly affected her mental health. JW described feeling

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Crossword

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Word Search

1	B	O	L	O		5	S	L	A	B		9	D	A	V	I	D		
14	A	V	I	V		15	P	O	R	E		16	E	L	I	T	E		
17	B	A	R	E		18	R	A	T	E		19	M	O	T	E	L		
20	A	L	A	R		21	M	E	D		22	T	S	U	N	A	M	I	
					24	T	U	E			25	H	E	R	E				
		26	O	M	I	T	S			28	C	O	B			29	S	B	E
32	A	R	O	M	A			33	L	O	V	E	S			35	M	O	W
36	C	A	D	E	T			37	O	L	E			38	T	B	O	N	E
40	E	T	A			41	E	G	G	O	N			43	O	U	T	E	R
44	D	E	L			45	A	I	R			46	J	O	N	E	S		
					47	I	L	L	S			49	E	G	G				
50	H	A	R	V	E	S	T			53	S	W	E	A	T	E	R		
57	A	G	A	I	N			58	I	S	L	E		60	L	A	V	E	
61	R	A	K	E	D			62	C	O	O	L		63	O	X	E	N	
64	P	R	E	S	S			65	S	W	B	S		66	W	I	N	D	

S	Y	Y	B	A	V	P	I	O	W	M	M	L	R	I	I						
ⓓ	O	R	H	D	Z	B	B	A	P	S	X	H	Z	V	W						
I	X	B	H	F	B	V		E	Y	Ⓣ	O	P	A	Z	W	F					
A	E	Q	K	S	Y	R	G	I	Z	R	H	E	I	C	P						
M	B	V	U	M		I	Ⓞ	P	A	L	L	N	Y	O	C	U					
O	O	I	U		H	O	W	L	B	ⓖ	A	R	N	E	T	S					
N	X	A		P	P	Z	E			Ⓢ	B	S	I	D	I	A	N	Ⓣ			
D	W		P	U		Ⓒ	I	T	R	I	N	E	D	W	N	A	U				
Z	A	U		Ⓐ	R	D	P	B	Z	C	Z	F	A		ⓔ	L	R				
Ⓢ	Y	N		Ⓟ	M	L	C	W	U	R	I	N	C		M	K	Q				
D	V	L	B		E	E	L	J	W	W	M	Q		E	E	U					
I	V	I	S	O		R	T	R	L	G	D	V	M		R	C	O				
T	P	A	M	O		Ⓡ	I	H	S	I	V	Q	Y		A	R	I				
O	S	B	I	N	K		U	D	Y	Y	K	Z	N		L	R	S				
L	E	R	A	L	E	P		B	O	S	Q	Z	D		D	C	E				
U	E	N	J	Q	U	J	G		Y	T	T	S	N	P	B	P					

SCRAMBLE - Celebrating Autumn

1. PKUNMSIP	P U M P K I N S
2. ERDCI	C I D E R
3. UTEHSSTCN	C H E S T N U T S
4. EYHADIR	H A Y R I D E
5. VTRSHAE	H A R V E S T
6. LVAESE	L E A V E S
7. UYTKRE	T U R K E Y
8. SOECTMU	C O S T U M E
9. AWEENLLHO	H A L L O W E E N
10. GIINTKSAVNGH	T H A N K S G I V I N G
11. DNYAC	C A N D Y
12. UELLDMIENW	M U L L E D W I N E

SUDOKU - Medium

1	4	2	9	5	8	3	6	7
8	6	7	1	3	2	5	9	4
5	3	9	7	6	4	1	2	8
3	2	4	5	9	6	7	8	1
9	1	8	2	4	7	6	3	5
6	7	5	3	8	1	9	4	2
4	9	1	8	7	3	2	5	6
7	8	3	6	2	5	4	1	9
2	5	6	4	1	9	8	7	3

SUDOKU - Hard

9	7	5	8	6	4	2	1	3
3	2	6	5	1	7	9	8	4
1	8	4	2	9	3	7	6	5
2	3	8	6	7	9	5	4	1
5	4	9	1	8	2	3	7	6
6	1	7	4	3	5	8	2	9
7	6	3	9	4	8	1	5	2
8	5	1	3	2	6	4	9	7
4	9	2	7	5	1	6	3	8

very depressed and luckily, she was able to transfer to a smaller state university where the smaller-sized classrooms allowed her to thrive. While juggling graduate school and work, JW had her children. When her son's father rejected committing to JW and her children, she was left to raise her kids on her own.

Eventually moved to Santa Rosa and started working on her Special Education degree at Sonoma State. After overcoming unhealthy relationships, family losses, and job rejections, JW landed a job as a special education teacher, where she took pride in helping her students progress and reach their goals

During the last few years, JW found herself overwhelmed with different challenges, including heartbreak. "The isolation, the pandemic, and a broken heart that couldn't mend—I couldn't get it out of my head." JW explained how challenging it was to find emotional support at the beginning of the pandemic when she became depressed, and her mental health quickly declined.

JW began contacting multiple therapists, most of whom did not take her insurance or were not accepting new patients. "And for a while, you're so freaked out, you don't even reach out for help; you don't even know what the hell you're doing." After months of feeling lonely, overwhelmed, depressed, and spending so much time looking for a therapist, JW was finally able to enroll in therapy and begin her path to mental wellness.

While at a local community center, JW found a flyer for PEARLS. "I still needed help, so I thought, 'Why not?'" She called Council on Aging and began her coaching sessions soon after.

"I enjoyed having a real-life person who wasn't just someone on the phone because there's a different level of communication that goes on one-on-one. The auras and vibes I felt with my coach were a whole extra thing. And that helped. I knew that someone understood where I was coming from and could direct me into ways to deal with the isolation and the weirdness of times like these. PEARLS gave me



JW

structure and goals. PEARLS gave me something to keep me focused and moving on... and away from what wasn't working. Eventually, when you can get rid of the depression, you can think about staining your fence. I have a lot to do in my house, but when you're depressed, you don't get into it. Now I'm okay, and I can work on house projects."

JW has one tip for those who are interested in participating in PEARLS. "If you can get to Council on Aging's office for sessions, go. If you can't, coaches will go to you. I needed to go to the office to get out of the house."

When JW isn't busy doing things around the house, she enjoys attending social events, exploring different senior centers, attending open mics, belly dancing, going to farmers markets, restaurants with family, and wine tasting with her son.

For questions or more information on PEARLS, please call (707) 525-0143 ext. 139 or visit www.councilonaging.com.

Free Tax Assistance

The Sonoma County AARP Tax-Aide program is again offering its in-person summer/fall tax clinics. These clinics are for taxpayers who have not yet filed a 2023 tax return or a prior year tax return and want to file. The clinic can also help file amended tax returns and can help taxpayers who have an issue involving the IRS or California Tax Franchise Board.

These clinics are offered on selective Tuesdays and Fridays through mid-October at the Franklin Park Clubhouse, 2095 Franklin Avenue, Santa Rosa. Appointments are available from 9:30 a.m. through 1:25 p.m.

Appointments are required and can be made by leaving a message via text or phone call at 707-582-0251. A volunteer will call or text back to you with available dates and times. Those with a tax question should text or call the main district number 707-327-2401 and leave a message.

This is a free service for low and moderate-income seniors, but is open to anyone regardless of age or income. It is sponsored by the AARP Foundation and staffed by trained, certified tax volunteers. You do not need to be a member of AARP to use the services.

Council on Aging's new Fall Prevention Program

Hello, fellow Sonoma County residents! My name is Kyle Rivers, and I'm thrilled to be joining Council on Aging as your new Fall Prevention Coordinator.

With our brand-new Fall Prevention Program, my mission is to help at-risk seniors prevent falls through an 8-week, in-home program tailored to their current level of ability. I'll be focusing on educating seniors on the value of daily physical activity and designing individualized exercise routines to improve strength, balance, and mobility. Beyond just fall prevention, our program includes a crucial



Kyle Rivers

emergency preparedness component where each participant will receive a personalized emergency go-bag, ensuring you're equipped and ready for any emergency.

Having grown up here in Sonoma County, I've always been passionate about fitness and the importance of staying active as we age. This passion led me to pursue a degree in Kinesiology at the University of Nevada, Reno. Now, I'm grateful for the opportunity to put my knowledge to work and support my community.

A bit about me: I love staying active with my friends and family, whether it's hiking, playing pick-up basketball, or hitting the golf course for a quick round. I believe that a happy and healthy mind starts with a well-maintained body. I'm also an avid sports fan, always excited to cheer on my favorite teams (Go 49ers, Warriors, and Giants!).

If you're interested in learning more about our In-Home Fall Prevention program, please don't hesitate to reach out via email at krivers@councilonaging.com or by calling (707) 525-0143 Ext. 140. I'm excited to help you stay safe, active, and prepared!

FALL PREVENTION

For Sonoma County Seniors 60 and Older

A Free 8 Week Fall Prevention Course
brought to you by
The Council on Aging

Pre-registration Required
Limited Space

This program focuses on homebound, Sonoma County seniors who are at risk of falling, ensuring they receive the necessary support to improve their safety and mobility.

The program spans eight weeks and involves an in-home Coach who will meet with the participants twice weekly. These sessions will emphasize a customized exercise routine and flexibility/mobility plans tailored to each senior's needs. The Coach will guide participants through the exercises ensuring they are performed correctly and effectively.

To assess the program's success, participants will undergo pre- and post- testing, providing valuable data on their progress. Additionally, each participant will receive exercise equipment and an Emergency To-Go Bag to enhance their safety and preparedness in case of a disaster.

Throughout the eight weeks, seniors will have ample opportunities for learning, education, and movement, contributing to their overall well-being. This initiative not only aims to prevent falls, but also to improve the quality of life for homebound seniors.

For more information, please contact
Kyle Rivers • 707-525-0143 Ext. 140
or by email: krivers@councilonaging.com

The Sonoma Wine Country Games (SWCG): Camaraderie. Community. Competition

By Coby LaFayette, SWCG Coordinator

It's nothing new, really; the idea that you can build friendship and community around a sporting event. What is new, is coupling that idea with the concept of active aging. Like the national and international games that inspired the creation of our SWCG, encouraging folks over 50 to find a sport that speaks to them has proven to make aging a whole lot more fun on so many levels.

The SWCG began in 2012 with 14 sports. Over the years, we'd found our sporting niche. We regularly offer six sports to our 50+ athletes: bocce, lawn bowling, pickleball, women's soccer, table tennis, and throws (think: javelin, discus, shot put, weight, and hammer throws).

This year, 843 athletes came from all over California—32 of our 58 counties—and 19 states (including Alaska & Hawaii)! One hearty soul even trekked all the way over from Auckland, NZ. Overall, we had 100 more competitors registered in 2024 than in 2023!

People love our Games, and we know this because 66% of our athletes are repeat competitors. Apparently, they are telling their friends about us since another 24% of our athletes check the "referred by a friend or relative" box. So, we are doing something right. What follows is a recap of this year's Games.

Bocce

Who knew that so many people could have so much fun rolling balls up and down a rectangular court? The purpose is to get your



Our Bocce Tournament gets underway

team's balls as close as possible to a tiny little target called a pallino. The team that successfully snuggles up the closest to the pallino gets the points. Of course, it's not as easy as it sounds.

This year's tournament took place over the weekend of May 31st - June 1st, at the beautiful, rose-filled Juilliard Park in downtown Santa Rosa. The weather cooperated, making it a perfect weekend to compete and spectate our bocce tournament, hosted by the Sonoma County Bocce Club.

Their hospitality is apparent everywhere, but especially evident in the commitment of club member Ralph Bowman, who gets up early (5:30 a.m.) each morning to prepare the courts for play. It's a matter of pride and principle for Ralph. It also ensures fair play for all bocce teams; everyone starts on a well-prepared court.

Fifteen teams (four players & two alternates) gathered to compete in elimination rounds on Day 1 of our two-day competition. Competitors came from as far away as Monterey, where a new iteration of last year's winning team showed up to defend their gold medal against a strong field of locals. On Day 2, the medals sorted themselves out over spirited competition, with the gold medal going to a local team: the Sonoma Valley Pumas.

Bocce's popularity isn't hard to understand. It is a very welcoming and accessible sport, which makes it an ideal activity for the over-50 set. Although it is considered a low-impact sport, it will most definitely improve your physical and mental health and provide stress relief.



The Sonoma Valley Pumas

If you are interested in learning to play, check out these links to the local clubs:

- Sonoma County Bocce Club: <https://www.sonomacountybocce.org/>
- Bocce Sonoma: <https://sscasonoma.org/bocce-sonoma-home/>

Lawn Bowling

Chances are good that if you see a group of people dressed in white rolling big, clunky balls around a large grassy court, you're watching lawn bowling. Close cousins with bocce, lawn bowling is a 13th-century European sport distinguished by the shape of its balls. Bocce balls are smooth and round and designed to go in a straight line. Lawn bowling balls (or bowls) are elliptical in one direction and round in the other, which causes them to curve when rolled, thus introducing all kinds of opportunities for strategizing.

Our lawn bowling tournament is a two-day event, and for us, is the sport that essentially "opens" the Games each year. Hosted annually by the Oakmont Lawn Bowling Club, our tournament represents the only time this private rink is open to non-residents. It is a lovely venue in the heart of the Valley of the Moon, boasting stunning 360-degree views.

This year, eight teams with names like the Rollin' Stone, the 49er Faithfuls, and the Walkin' Rollers gathered to compete in that friendly, low-key manner that epitomizes the sport. But don't let the names fool you; these athletes are a hardy bunch and are as serious about competing as they are about having a good time. As a matter of fact, over the course of two long days, they bowl a lot before sorting out the year's winner.



Lawn Bowling at the Oakmont Club

Like bocce, lawn bowling is a low-impact sport that meets you where you are with respect to your fitness level. Played frequently, lawn bowling can improve your coordination, balance, and flexibility. Studies suggest it may also increase cardiovascular fitness, strengthen muscles, and improve motor skills.

But before you get too excited, learning to bowl in Sonoma County is tough unless you live in Oakmont or have a friend in that club. The closest public clubs are in Berkeley, Oakland, and San Francisco. So, you've got to want to learn the sport, but from what I see, it's worth doing.

Pickleball

Pickleball has been described as a combination of ping-pong, tennis, and badminton. Whatever pedigree you want to attribute its genesis to, over the last three years, it has become the fastest-growing sport in the US. According to a popular pickleball website, there are over 36 million pickleball players (aka picklers) in the U.S.



Mixed doubles competitors

Pickleball's popularity has not bypassed Sonoma County. Over the past 12 years, the number of athletes playing in our pickleball tournaments has increased dramatically. In fact, both last and this year, over 280 picklers registered for our tournament, forcing us to close registration well before the cut-off date. Hopeful players were placed on waitlists; not a bad problem to have, but one that can be tricky to manage.

Our 3-day pickleball tournament is hosted by the Rohnert Park Pickleball Club (RPPC) at Sunrise Park in Rohnert Park. Each day features a different event: women's doubles, mixed doubles, or men's doubles. Play begins at 8:00 a.m. each morning and is sometimes still going on at sunset.

The amount of work that goes into producing an event of this caliber is extraordinary. In addition to the club's board members, RPPC provides a legion of volunteers who scurry around in support of tournament activities and players. It is a labor of love and passion that exemplifies the kind of uncanny devotion to the sport that is the hallmark of picklers worldwide.

And speaking of worldwide, it was pickleball that can claim bragging rights to this year's "athlete that came the furthest to play in our tournament." Yep, this is the sport with the player who came from New Zealand. Really!



Showing off that hand-eye coordination

Part of the popularity of pickleball is the welcoming community that builds up around it, a major attraction for people over 50. But, like table tennis, the health benefits are huge. The hand-eye coordination required of players sharpens mental acuity and improves overall strength and flexibility. These benefits translate into a stronger core and better balance. Given falls and balance issues tend to plague seniors, this is very good news.

If you'd like to learn how to play, you can reach out to one of these clubs:

- Rohnert Park Pickleball Club (our tournament hosts): <https://rohrnertparkpickleball.com/>
- Sonoma County Pickleball Club, in Santa Rosa: <https://www.sonomacountypickleballclub.com/>

Soccer

Women's soccer is the most popular event we offer at our Games. But, unlike pickleball, which attracts predominately California residents, these women come from all over the country and Canada. From the moment we opened registration this year, it became apparent that this would not be a "normal" year. Teams and players were clamoring to get into our tournament. When the dust settled, 26 teams and 313 athletes had registered. We had to close registration a month early and create a waitlist for our 50 and 65 divisions while our 70's division remained open. The popularity of our tournament is no secret within the world of women's soccer. And, lest I sound too "California," the secret is our vibe. The vibe is this: the spirited competition, the music, the healthy snacks, the venue itself, and the Saturday Night Social.



Women's soccer is serious competition

It's about creating an athlete-centric tournament that makes everyone feel special. But it comes down to the attention to detail our sports commissioner, Teri Simpson, turns upon every aspect of our tournament. A tiny, 70-something dynamo, Teri is well-known and respected within the soccer community. She knows how to run an efficient and welcoming tournament. Many of the 313 women who played in our tournament this year have been playing soccer for decades. Over the years, some of them have been teammates as well as opponents. It is a very fluid, competitive environment. Turns out that that competitive environment can be inter-continental. A surprisingly large number of these women travel around the world with their teams to compete in annual tournaments. We were tickled to learn that many of these globe-trotting athletes regularly wear their Games' t-shirts as an "away" uniform. How's that for sponsorship reach? Given soccer at this level tends to be a lifestyle, learning to play can be tough. Our Sports Commissioner Teri says that if you're a 50+ woman with a burning desire to play women's soccer, you can reach out to her at tas47srg@gmail.com. She'll point you in the right direction.

Table Tennis

We decided to put a fresh coat of paint on our table tennis tournament this year. We took our one-day competition, dusted it off, and turned it into a two-day tournament. With a significantly higher number of male athletes registering this year, this was the right call.

We scheduled all divisions of men's singles and doubles for Saturday. Women's singles and doubles, mixed doubles, and the new open competition were slated for Sunday. The two-day tournament also meant replacing a historically long and exhausting day of competition with a more humane experience. Having fewer events each day created a more



Men's table tennis players

relaxing tournament atmosphere and encouraged athletes to socialize, a win-win from both perspectives. Players gave this new format the thumbs up for 2025. Another change to our 2024 tournament came about due to a suggestion by a couple of our players. They suggested including a new event for our tournament, called the "open competition." It's been happening at other tournaments nationwide for a while now, so we were a bit late to this party. In an open competition, all registered players of any age, skill level, or gender can compete against each other. For example, a female player in her 50's can play a man in his 70's. Since we were "just" trying this event out this year, matches were loosely organized competitions between individual athletes (singles players only). No medals were awarded. Athletes had so much fun with this event that we agreed to do it again next year. Offered this year as a "free" event, it will be on the menu in 2025 as a permanent addition to our table tennis tournament. We have some very strong men and women players, so it will be very interesting to see how this shakes out; and who the best of the best will be.



Enjoying the table tennis tournament

- Where can you learn to play?
- **Finley's Person Senior Wing**
2060 West College Avenue
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 1–4 p.m.
Fee: \$4 per class or \$3.50 per class for pass holders. 707-543-3745
 - **Petaluma Senior Center**
211 Novak
Tuesdays & Thursdays: 2–3 p.m.
707-778-4399
parksnrec@cityofpetaluma.org
 - **Sebastopol Grange**
6000 Sebastopol Avenue
Table Tennis for Adults over 50
Mondays 3–5 p.m. and Thursdays 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Fee: \$3. New players welcome; paddles available. www.sebastopolgrange.org

Throws

Every year, it's the throws competition that puts an exclamation point on the end of our Games. It's a one-day event held at Santa Rosa High School's Nevers Field. Hosted by Paul Troppy of Empire Throwers!, it is an event beloved by athletes throughout the state. For those who don't know what a "throws" competition is, it is made up of five events that entail throwing something: a javelin, a shot put, a discus, a weight, or a hammer. Athletes can choose to compete in any or all five of these events. Those choosing to compete in all five are automatically registered for the throws' pentathlon. Most throws athletes—the men and the women--compete as pentathletes. It makes for a long day, but these athletes are here for the sport and the socializing. They show up with portable wagons filled with their implements (the things that get thrown), their lunch and their chairs. And, because the men outnumber the women athletes, the day opens with the women's first event, which the men will follow 30 minutes later. The day will be spent in that event rotation (men following the women) around the field, with plenty of time for spectating in between.



Perfect discus form

Like so many of our other sports, a community builds around throwing. Athletes who compete regularly will run into each other at other meets throughout California. Some have developed lifelong friendships "on the circuit," a benefit that many elder athletes truly appreciate. What is apparent in this community of athletes is the camaraderie observed in impromptu coaching sessions and well wishes to always "throw your far." If you think you'd like to learn how to throw locally, there are a couple of places:

- Empire Throwers!: drshot@att.net
- Chileno Valley Throwers: send email for info to: ed@empirewest.com.

At the end of the day, our Games are about what it can look like to be actively aging. But this year, at every venue, I noticed something else. It was joy. Turns out our Games are about the joy of moving your body; the joy of being out and doing something fun and good for you; the joy of being in conversation with people who share common interests. I could go on, but the bottom line is this: we could all use a little more joy in our lives. So, get your joy on. Find an activity your body is capable of doing where it is right now and connect with others around that activity. Your heart, mind, and spirit will thrive, a testament to the slogan of our primary sponsor, Kaiser Permanente (thrive YOUR way!)

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**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

Council on Aging Welcomes Volunteers!

We are excited to welcome new friendly faces to support our local seniors and other community initiatives. Let's build a stronger, more connected community together.

Sign-up and learn more about these opportunities by visiting our volunteer website at <https://councilonaging.galaxydigital.com>

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Adult Day Respite Assistant
- Senior Peer Support Coach
- Santa Rosa Meals on Wheels Drivers
- Community Table Support
- Lunch Buddy



Interested in making a difference?
Call Leigh Galten | Volunteer Coordinator
707-525-0143 x121
lgalten@councilonaging.com



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