

SONOMA SENIORS TODAY

Record Need for Respite Care, Caregiver Support

by Renee Tolliver
Director of Social Services, Council on Aging

Soon after the Valentine's Day event (see accompanying article), three of the Council on Aging day program sites were able to reopen, following the decline in active COVID cases in Sonoma County. That's the good news.

There's more, however. Prior to the March 2019 shutdown due to the pandemic, Council on Aging received 2-3 inquiries a month regarding the Adult Day Respite program, designed to provide socialization, mental stimulation, gentle exercise and a nutritious lunch for adults age 60+ living with mild to moderate dementia, while providing a few hours of respite for their family caregivers. The program operated 2-3 days a week at four sites around Sonoma County (Healdsburg, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol and Sonoma). The program is funded by the Area Agency on Aging through the Sonoma County Human Services Department, the Santa Rosa Junior College Older Adult Education Program, and voluntary contributions from participant families. There is no fee charged for the program, which has been an invaluable support to thousands of families over its nearly 30 year history.

As the pandemic continued, and older adults experienced the negative effects of isolation, the volume of calls increased to an average of two calls per day. A quick pivot was made to a virtual platform, with live streamed activities available every weekday. It was remarkably well received, and it continues to be offered. A virtual support group focused on self-care for caregivers was also implemented, which is still in high demand.

In-person programming resumed in September 2021, at a time when caregivers were experiencing unprecedented stress and seeing significant declines in their loved ones' condition resulting from the long and grueling period of limited contact with others. A reduction in funding has forced a cut to hours of service. An additional challenge has been a shortage of qualified employees available to staff all four original sites, and the Healdsburg location has yet to reopen, further reducing Council on Aging's capacity to provide services as need continues to increase at an alarming rate. Waiting lists have been established for the first time ever. In fact, on a recent day in March, the program manager received an unprecedented 10 calls from families seeking enrollment in the program!

Although Council on Aging is very proud of its program, the increase in demand isn't all due to its quality. It's because, worldwide, as our population ages, the number of dementia diagnoses is rising as well. The need for dementia services is rarely discussed compared to other societal hot topics. However, we are in the midst of a public health, economic, medical and mental health emergency that impacts the entire community.

An October, 2021 report released by the Alzheimer's Association, *Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Facts and Figures in California: Current Status and Future Projections* showed the number of people living with Alzheimer's will more than double from 660,000 estimated in 2019 to nearly 1.5 million in 2040. One in five Californians over the age of 65 will develop dementia. For Sonoma County, if current projections hold, there will be 25,800 older adults living with dementia. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, a total of \$325,000 of Sonoma County Human Services funding was allocated to all (not limited to dementia) caregiver support services, caregiver respite and adult day respite programs. Eighty-three percent of the help provided to older adults in the United States comes from family members, friends or other unpaid caregivers. Nearly half of all caregivers who provide help to older adults do so for someone living with Alzheimer's or another dementia.

Who are the caregivers?

There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.

Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter

- About one in three caregivers (30%) is age 65 or older.
- Approximately two-thirds of caregivers are women; more specifically, over one-third of dementia caregivers are daughters.
- Most caregivers (66%) live with the person with dementia in the community.
- Approximately one-quarter of dementia caregivers are "sandwich generation" caregivers — meaning that they care not only for an aging parent, but also for children under age 18.

Dementia takes a devastating toll on caregivers. Compared with caregivers of people without dementia, twice as many caregivers of



those with dementia indicate substantial emotional, financial and physical difficulties. Of the total lifetime cost of caring for someone with dementia, 70% is borne by families — either through out-of-pocket health and long-term care expenses or from the value of unpaid care.

California's recently adopted Master Plan for Aging states: "We will be prepared for and supported through the rewards and challenges of caring for aging loved ones." Yet, it also recognizes that, "As rewarding as this work may be, the time needed to care for a loved one can result in financial hardship and a decrease in lifelong Social Security earnings (if a caregiver needs to leave or reduce their paid employment), which can continue the cycle of poverty and debt for low-income households. The emotional and physical stress of caregiving can also lead to poor health outcomes for the family caregiver." Physicians and mental health professionals consider caregivers to be "hidden patients." Studies show that caregivers are at higher risk of health problems that have stress related components such as depression, anxiety, high blood pressure, cardiac issues, increased drug, alcohol and tobacco use, obesity, diabetes and others.

How can you help?

Tell us your stories

We want to hear from you about your experiences caring for a loved one with dementia.

Donate

Contributions in any amount to the Council on Aging Adult Day Respite Program are most welcome and will help close gaps in funding. Our contract funds a portion of services for 100 individuals yearly. It's not nearly enough to meet the current demand for services. To plan for the future, we will need additional support from the community.

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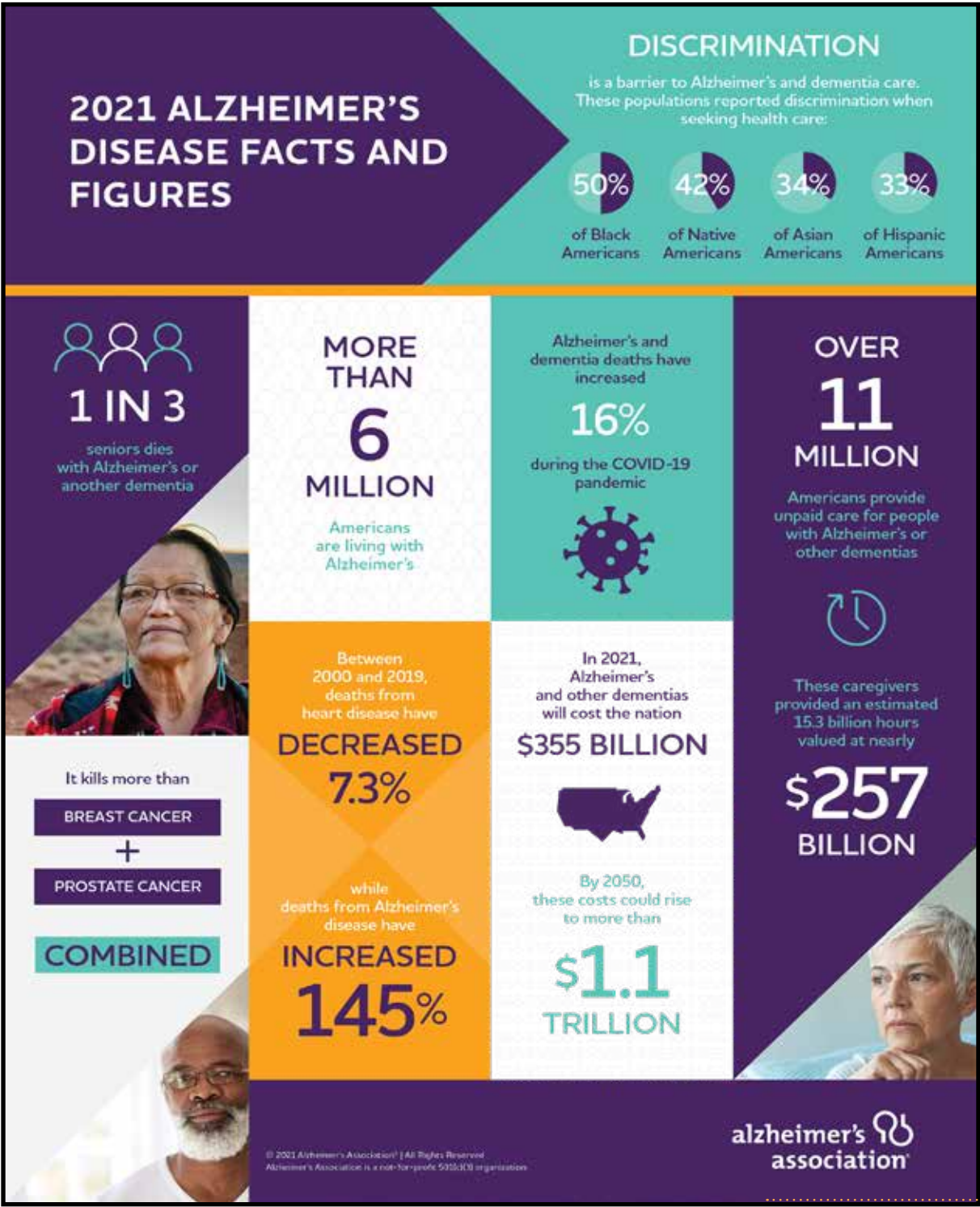
Volunteer

The Council on Aging Adult Day Program welcomes volunteers who can assist staff with activities and provide additional support for participants during program hours. Also, if you have a talent to share—music, art, exercise, travel stories—we’d love to hear from you!

A background check, TB screening and COVID vaccination are required. Contact Leigh Galten, Volunteer Coordinator at lgalten@councilonaging.com or 707-525-0143 x121.

Advocate

Contact your County Supervisor: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Board-of-Supervisors>, or 707-565-2241 and the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging, 707-565-5950. Tell them about the community you want to live in as you age. Everyone should have the supports in place to stay engaged with family, friends and their community for as long as possible. As the percentage of older adults in Sonoma County approaches 25% of the population, it’s important that we think of our community as a great place to grow up AND a great place to grow old!



Graphic - Alzheimers Association

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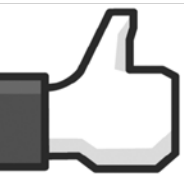
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Summit State Bank

Sunshine and Music Signal End to Latest Shutdown!

The sun was shining. The birds were singing. One man saw a bird bobbing its head in time to the music. “It felt like we were in a Disney movie,” said Council on Aging Adult Day Respite Program Manager Jake Larkin. “It was perfect!”



The Razzle Dazzle Duo - Nancy Proctor and Nancy Nelle

delivering laughter, beautiful floral arrangements and gift bags to day program participants and their caregivers. Love was in the air that day, reminding us that in an Age Friendly Community, everyone has the supports in place to stay engaged with their friends and communities for as long as possible.

Many thanks to the performers, and to the volunteers and local merchants who donated cookies, candies, scarves and soaps. They secured flower and vase donations from Sequoia Floral and Trader Joe’s, then created gorgeous arrangements and wonderful goodie bags. Santa Rosa Site Coordinator Debbie Baldaramos applauded the great team effort of volunteers and staff and the “magical” event they created. “There were smiles all around, and it came at such needed time, when the program was closed because of the COVID surge,” she said. “It was a great way to celebrate our upcoming reopening!”

Unanimous enthusiasm greeted the Valentine’s Day ukelele serenades presented by volunteer musicians Nancy Proctor and Nancy Nelle, the Razzle Dazzle Duo. They performed 11 front and backyard concerts over two days, sharing their considerable repertoire, and



Helen (age 103) and her daughter, Judy enjoy their serenade!



April Rossi and Susan Austin assemble gift bags.



Nancy Proctor, Roxanne Lemereis, and Nancy Nelle design Valentine's Day Floral arrangements.

March Puzzles

Puzzle solutions are on page 10

WORD SCRAMBLE
Kinds of Tea

1. OSBOORI _ _ _ _ _ _ _
2. ACIH _ _ _ _
3. ONGLOO _ _ _ _ _ _
4. LCKAB _ _ _ _ _
5. LEIACMOMH _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
6. LBAHRE _ _ _ _ _ _
7. ENSAIMJ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
8. EUHPR _ _ _ _ _
9. HECANS _ _ _ _ _ _
10. HEIWT _ _ _ _ _
11. GRINGE _ _ _ _ _ _
12. EGREN _ _ _ _ _

WORD SCRAMBLE
Kinds of Coffee

1. AICARAB _ _ _ _ _ _ _
2. UROBSTA _ _ _ _ _ _ _
3. EATLT _ _ _ _ _
4. SSEPROES _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
5. ACMOH _ _ _ _ _
6. OCPPICCUAN _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
7. MOERIACAN _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
8. EFARPP _ _ _ _ _ _
9. BVERE _ _ _ _ _
10. SHIRI _ _ _ _ _
11. VINEAN _ _ _ _ _ _
12. KSIRTUH _ _ _ _ _ _ _

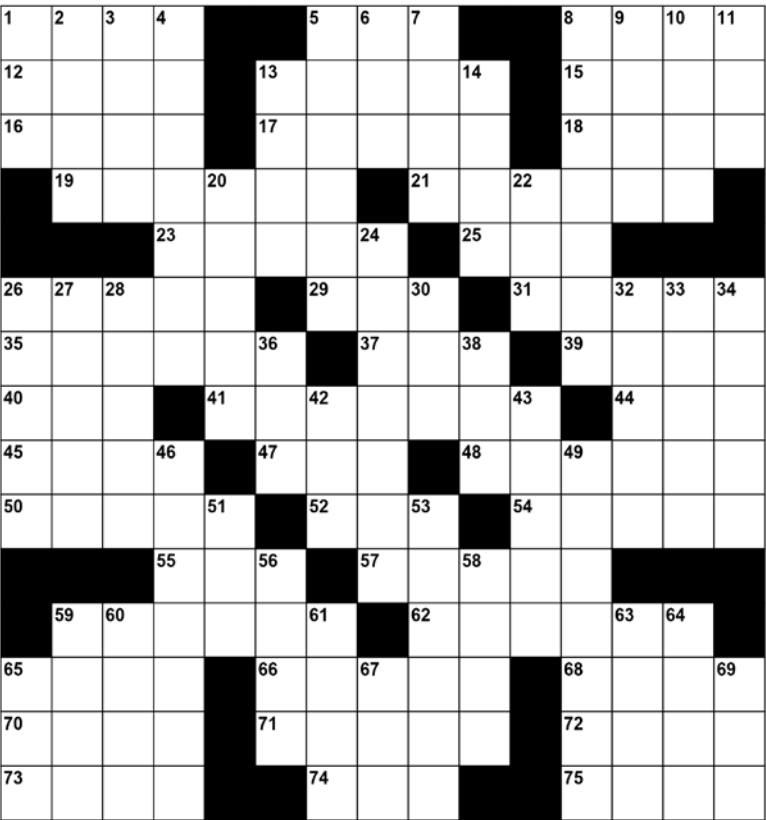
WORD SEARCH
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

- SARODE PIANO
- ACCORDION BAGPIPE
- VIOLIN BANJO
- HARMONICA TROMBONE
- CORNET RECORDER
- MANDOLIN CELLO

APRIL

ACROSS

- 1 Affliction
- 5 Spider's net
- 8 Go from being a frozen solid to being a liquid
- 12 Preparation (abbr.)
- 13 Express indifference
- 15 Costa ____
- 16 Tableland
- 17 Marsupial bear
- 18 Colored part of eye
- 19 Artist's workplace
- 21 Found fault with
- 23 Slipup
- 25 High naval rank (abbr.)
- 26 Smooth
- 29 Embrace
- 31 Black and white animal
- 35 Relating to the mail
- 37 Pod vegetable
- 39 Cowboy fight
- 40 Gone to lunch
- 41 Correctly
- 44 Basketball association
- 45 Secondhand
- 47 Collection of animals
- 48 Hat fastened with ribbons
- 50 ____ cotta (clay)
- 52 Explosive
- 54 Creator of Sherlock Holmes
- 55 Roman three
- 57 Harnesses
- 59 Flowing in
- 62 Stalk vegetable
- 65 To incite
- 66 Taunt
- 68 Movie ____
- 70 Dreadful
- 71 Fourth month of the year
- 72 Qualified
- 73 Aroma
- 74 Decade
- 75 Bark in pain



By Jimmy and Evelyn Johnson - www.qets.com

DOWN

- 1 Tempo
- 2 Greek god of war
- 3 Structure used by a bird to lay eggs and rear young
- 4 Ornament for military uniform
- 5 Swooping sound
- 6 Epoch
- 7 Plant buds that begin to grow underground
- 8 Pruned
- 9 Engage
- 10 Basic's opposite
- 11 Had been
- 13 Leave undone
- 14 Merry
- 20 Capital of Senegala
- 22 Cutting tool
- 24 Pleasant combination of sounds
- 26 Water faucet
- 27 Aphid
- 28 Fragrant organic compound
- 30 Acquire
- 32 Easter animal
- 33 Resist forcefully
- 34 Having wings
- 36 Movie star Taylor
- 38 Loose gown worn at mass
- 42 Obtained
- 43 Warble
- 46 Wanderer
- 49 Posy
- 51 Cause of sickness
- 53 Warning signal
- 56 Small particle
- 58 Careen
- 59 As previously cited
- 60 Roman emperor
- 61 Cried
- 63 After-bath wear
- 64 Speak loudly
- 65 Hoopla
- 67 To be
- 69 Representative

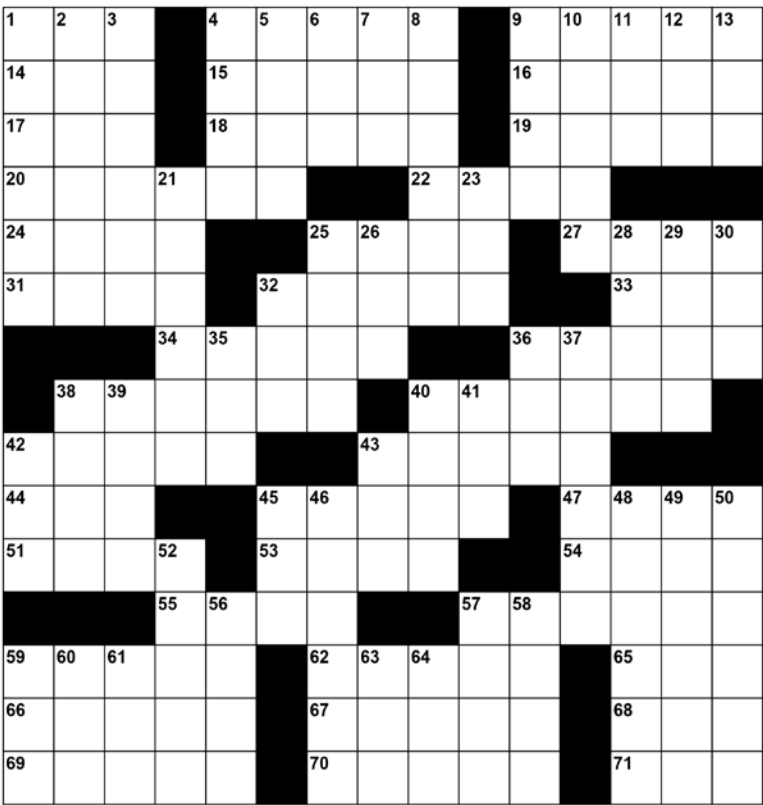
WORD SEARCH - MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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

EARTH DAY

ACROSS

- 1 Spiritedness
- 4 Review
- 9 Rubbish
- 14 Wing like part on a living organism
- 15 Help
- 16 Recycle
- 17 Tear
- 18 Striped animal
- 19 Enthusiastic
- 20 What we breathe
- 22 Require
- 24 Italian money
- 25 Baseball glove
- 27 Dirt
- 31 Canal
- 32 Vice ____
- 33 Pacific Standard Time
- 34 French city
- 36 Sacred poem
- 38 Away from home
- 40 Container usually made of glass or plastic
- 42 Spew forth violently
- 43 Relating to the sun
- 44 Knot
- 45 Complain
- 47 Asian country
- 51 Phone
- 53 Weightless
- 54 Treaty organization
- 55 Young Men's Christian Association
- 57 Employ (2 wds.)
- 59 Chili con ____
- 62 Bird claw
- 65 Business title ending
- 66 Girl in Wonderland
- 67 Drug does
- 68 Constellation
- 69 Day's opposite
- 70 Ply
- 71 High naval rank

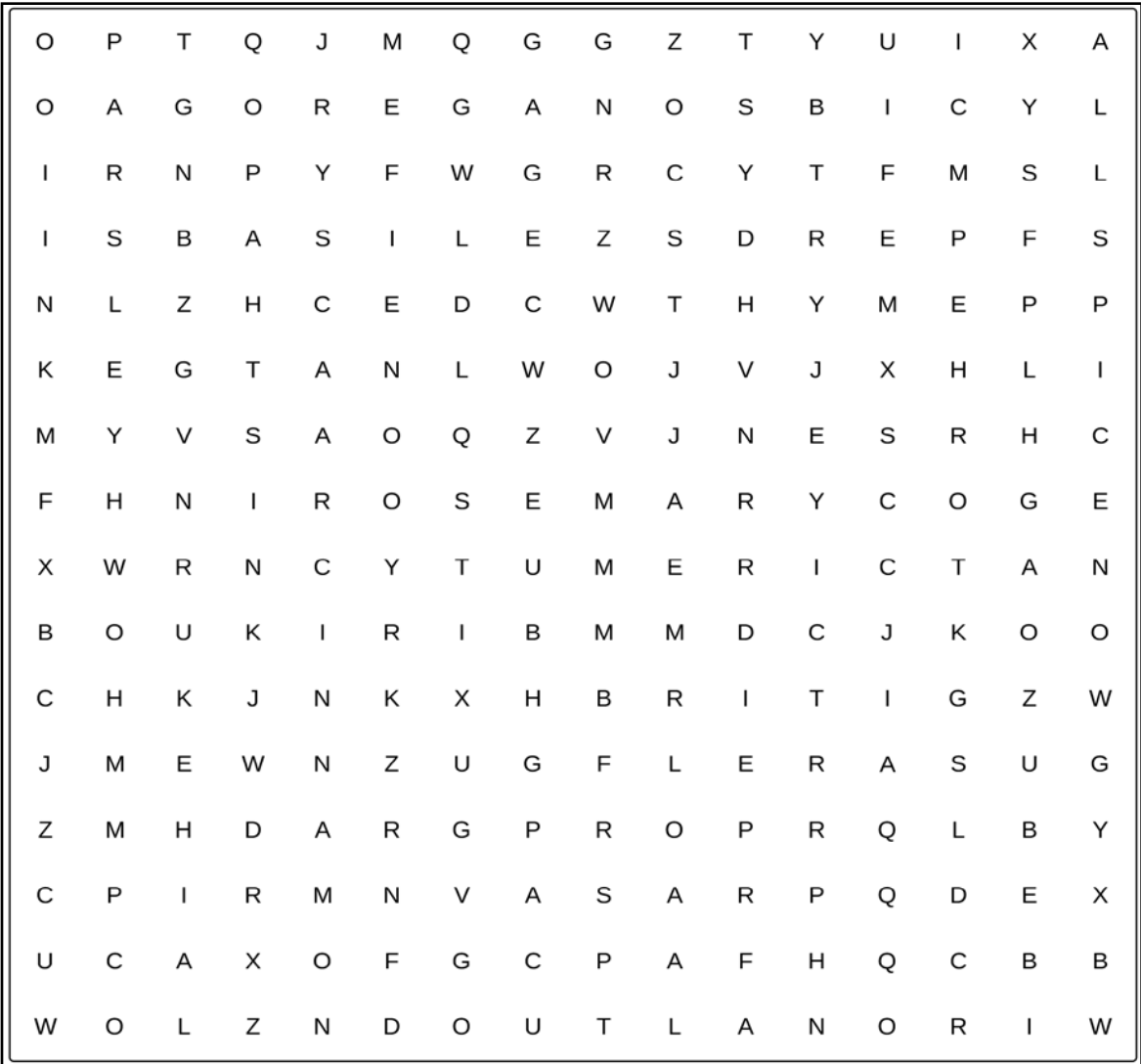


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DOWN

- 1 Type of probation
- 2 Medicinal drink
- 3 Ancient paper (plr.)
- 4 Take down
- 5 Fair
- 6 Taxi
- 7 Mixture of gasses that surrounds the earth
- 8 Places in soil
- 9 Leaf maker
- 10 Looks at a book
- 11 August (abbr.)
- 12 South southeast
- 13 Possessive pronoun
- 21 Celtic language
- 23 Estimated time of arrival - abbr.
- 25 Repair
- 26 Internal Revenue Service
- 28 Opaque gem
- 29 Island
- 30 Long-term memory
- 32 Volume (abbr.)
- 35 Still
- 36 School group
- 37 Opp. of weak
- 38 Melody or song
- 39 Anything that is burned for energy
- 40 Emaciated
- 41 Bullfight cheer
- 42 And so forth
- 43 Mr.
- 45 Western Athletic Conference
- 46 Interruption
- 48 Capital of the Philippines
- 49 Made amends
- 50 Noncommissioned officer
- 52 Type of mob
- 56 Get together
- 57 Painful
- 58 Institution (abbr.)
- 59 Metal container for food or products
- 60 Boxer Muhammad
- 61 Set up
- 63 Tree
- 64 Downwind

WORD SEARCH - HERBS AND SPICES



SUDOKU

SUDOKU - Medium #1

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

SUDOKU - Medium #2

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

SUDOKU - Hard

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

WORD SEARCH
HERBS AND SPICES

- CINNAMON
- ROSEMARY
- THYME
- PAPRIKA
- ALLSPICE
- PARSLEY
- BASIL
- TARRAGON
- CORIANDER
- OREGANO
- TUMERIC
- GARLIC

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- Donating to Council on Aging feels good and makes a difference!

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Roy Johnston

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Santa Rosa

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A NURSE MODEL AGENCY, WE HAVE VERY STRICT POLICIES ON COVID. REGULAR TESTING, USE OF N95 MASKS AND KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE! WE ARE ABLE TO TEST OUR CLIENTS AT HOME IF NEEDED AND OUR NURSES ARE OVERSEEING OUR CLIENTS' CARE.

Resources for Seniors

County Resources

- Call 565-INFO (4636) or email 565INFO@schsd.org. For adults 60+ who need help finding resources.
- Call 2-1-1 for a person guide search to find the Coronavirus information and Food or Financial Assistance resources you need.
- SoCoEmergency.org has an updated list of resources for seniors and high-risk populations. Resources include groceries, meal services, pharmaceuticals, emotional support and others.

Adult Protective Services (APS)

sonomacounty.ca.gov/Human-Services/Adult-and-Aging/Adult-Protective-Services
To report suspected abuse, neglect or self-neglect of an adult (65+) or a dependent adult (18-64) living at home, call 565-5940 or online

Alzheimer's Association

www.alz.org/norcal
Visit our Training and Education Center to learn more about Alzheimer's disease, caregiving, healthy living and planning for the future. Examples of available courses include Know the 10 Signs, Effective Communication Strategies, Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body, Legal and Financial Planning, and the Living with Alzheimer's series for caregivers in each stage and for people with Alzheimer's. https://www.alz.org/norcal/helping_you/education_conferences.
24-hour helpline - (800) 272-3900 for support and to be added to local support groups. Caregiver Support Groups: call 573-1210 to find and join virtual support groups by video or telephone conferencing. Visit alz.org/crf for list of groups. Early diagnosis counselors on hand.

Disability Services & Legal Center

(707) 528-2745
mydslc.org/slider/covid-19-update/
Providing a wide range of services for those with disabilities to help them live as independently as possible. Benefits, Legal, Home Access Modifications, Housing & more.

Institute on Aging - Friendship Line

(800) 670-1360
www.ioaging.org/friendship-line-california
Free crisis intervention hotline and a warmline for non-emergency emotional support calls. 24-hour toll-free hotline for ages 60+ and adults living with disabilities. Can arrange outreach calls to lonely older adults.

Jewish Community Center

(707) 528-4222 • www.jccsoco.org
Senior Friendship Circle: Virtual programs www.jccsoco.org/friendshipcircle/friendship-circle

Parkinsons Support Group, Sonoma County

April Virtual General Meeting - April 9, 2022
Rima Ash, MD. 1 pm "Mental Health Challenges in Parkinson's Disease". One hour presentation followed by an hour in breakout groups. See our website: <https://parkinsonsonomacounty.org/> where you can sign up for our newsletter with the Zoom link, as well as access past programs and other offerings. Call (707) 431-8767 for more info.

Senior Advocacy Services

(707) 526-4108
senioradvocacyservices.org
TDD/TTY 800-735-2929 or 7-1-1 to report abuse, neglect or self-neglect of a long-term care resident. Available 24-hours.

SHARE Sonoma County

Housing Resources: sharesonomacounty.org
(707) 766-8800 info@sharesonomacounty.org

The Sonoma County Library

Curbside Pickup hours with morning, evening and weekend hours. Central Santa Rosa Library with Sundays, 1-5pm. Forestville, Occidental and Sonoma County History and Genealogy library schedules are the same. <https://sonomalibrary.org/.++>

City Resources

Cloverdale Senior Center

Dinner, Comedy and Auction Benefit
Celebrating our 35th Anniversary Supporting Seniors of the Cloverdale Area and Community. Saturday, July 9th 5-10 pm at the Cloverdale Citrus Fairgrounds. Enjoy a seated dinner with a silent and live auction, senior art show, full bar, and a professional comedy show to top off the night with laughter. Special guest, State Senator Mike McGuire, will be our auctioneer. This is an outdoor event under the stars. <https://www.cloverdaleseniorcenter.org> or call 707-894-4826, 8:30 am-4 pm, Monday through Friday. Staff available Weekdays, 8:30 - 4pm
The Produce Market has reopened, Fridays 10-11 am.

Healdsburg Seniors Center

(707) 431-3324. senior@cityofhealdsburg.org
cityofhealdsburg.org/269/Senior-Service
The Senior Center offers activities, programs and services including, but not limited to Educational programs, Information and referral services for Active & Older Adults, Excursions "Trips to Remember", and a State-of-the-art computer center with internet access. Other services include:
Care Calls: Staying connected and checking in. Free food distribution. Redwood Empire Food Bank, Senior Food Boxes & Groceries to Go. DASH: Volunteer drivers for essential rides
Neighbors Network: Help with errands, etc.

Petaluma

cityofpetaluma.org/departments/coronavirus-news-updates
Petaluma People Services Center petalumapeople.org/seniors/caregivers_express. You Are Not Alone: (707) 765-8488
Weekly check-in calls for age 60 and older or with a compromised immune system. Offered countywide. Call 765-8488 or submit referral to notalone@petalumapeople.org.

Petaluma Senior Center

Dementia Caregivers Support Group meets at the Petaluma Senior Center Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Caregivers of people with Alzheimers or other forms of dementia are welcome. Meetings are fragrance-free. \$6 per meeting and registration happens on monthly, rolling basis. Call Petaluma Parks and Rec to register for the class: (707)778-4380.

Rohnert Park

www.rpcity.org for information.
Rohnert Park Senior Center (707) 585-6780
www.rpcity.org/city_hall/departments/community_services/senior_center.

Santa Rosa

srcity.org/3243/Resources
Seniors: (707) 543-3737, scgsonline.org
Santa Rosa Senior Center: Virtual classes at sebastopolseniorcenter.org/virtual-classes.
Santa Rosa Junior College: Free Online Adult Online Classes. Older-adults.santarosa.edu/join-class

Sebastopol

ci.sebastopol.ca.us/City-Government/Departments-Services/Fire/Shelter-in-Place

Sebastopol Senior Center

sebastopolseniorcenter.org.
The Harvest Cafe is Open weekly Tue - Fri for Take Out ONLY. From 11am - 1pm Call us at 707-829-2440 to place your order!

Sebastopol Center for the Arts

(707) 829-4797 For the most updated list of classes, visit our website: <https://www.sebastopolseniorcenter.org/virtual-classes+Gentle+Yoga> - This mindful, slow practice incorporates standing postures, balancing postures, seated, supine, and deep relaxation. Open to all ages and all levels of mobility seeking a gentle yoga practice. Days: Tuesday & Thursday Location: Currently on ZOOM Time: 9:30am - 10:45am Instructor: Barbara King Cost: Members \$10 | Non-Members \$8.

Sonoma

www.sonomacity.org/coronavirus-resources include Food Assistance Calendar. Vintage House Delivers: Complete online application for grocery, prescription delivery. vintagehouse.org/vintage-house-delivers. Vintage House staff available at (707) 996-0311 F.I.S.H. (707) 996-0111 for help. Resource lists at friendsinsonomahelping.org.

West County Community Services

(707) 823-1640, www.westcountyservices.org

Windsor

townofwindsor.com / Windsor Senior Recreation Center 707-838-1250

Online Games / Virtual Classes

AARP Games Portal

aarp.org & games.aarp.org/games

Jewish Community Center

Monday Mornings, weekly 10:30 am - 12 pm
Free. RSVP carolk@jccsoco.org. 707-528-1182

Highway61.co

Online chat rooms to learn, support and communicate. Aging Alone Support Group, Daily Bingo, Classic Movies discussion group, Morning Coffee Chat, Poetry Hour, and more.

Gentle Chair "YogaCise"

Zooming Fridays, 2:30-3:30 pm. Developed for Brookdale Assisted Living, great for anyone wanting to avoid injury. Enjoy a thorough program, mindful breathing and movements. Closing meditation. Instructor Marcia Singer, MSW: lovearts@att.net.

Green Music Center

The Green Room - Virtual Conversations with Artists, Personal Connections, Performances gmc.sonoma.edu/all-events/.

SRJC Older Adults Program

Santa Rosa Junior College offers free, noncredit courses designed specifically for older adults. Our Older Adult Program (OAP) courses provide opportunities for personal growth and development, group interaction, mental stimulation, and physical activity. No minimum age requirement. Spring 2022 -To see list of classes and register: <https://older-adults.santarosa.edu/join-class>.

Sonoma State University OLLI

OLLI is a unique learning community for adults age 50 years old or better. SSU faculty and other Bay Area educators enjoy sharing their expertise. Spring 2022 OLLI Classes — IN-PERSON and on Zoom! Active OLLI members and new OLLI inquires will receive the 2022 OLLI spring catalog. Class listings and descriptions, and online registration will be available on the OLLI website (olli.sonoma.edu) beginning Wednesday, March 16. Phone registration - 707-664-2691. Credit Cards now accepted.

Connections, Respite Top Priorities for New Manager

By Jake Larkin, Adult Day Respite Program Manager, Council on Aging

The Council on Aging Adult Day Respite Program is available to Sonoma County adults age 60+ with a diagnosis of dementia, who need a safe place to socialize with their peers, filled with enjoyable and engaging activities. In searching for a program that meets these needs, it is important to know there are caring, competent staff who are in tune with the unique needs of someone with cognitive impairment and memory loss, and can ensure their safety throughout the day.

Each day, program participants enter a relaxed setting at a local church or senior center, and are warmly greeted by coffee, snacks, and the smiles of our staff and volunteers. They start the day by sitting together and talking to each other, getting a chance to catch up with friends and make new connections. The staff join in, and offer conversation starters if needed. The rest of the day is filled with Bingo, art projects, chair exercises/group walks, and other engaging activities. Most popular are the live performances by volunteer musicians in the community who love to give back. A tasty and nutritious lunch is provided by our Meals on Wheels kitchen, which gets great reviews from participants. Before anyone enrolls, they visit one of our program sites accompanied by a caregiver to get a feel for what it involves. Caregivers have given an abundance of satisfactory feedback after shadowing the program. Although they are in desperate need of a break from caregiving around the clock, they express a huge amount of relief after visiting the program. They know their loved one can engage with their peers and participate in activities they will enjoy. They are not merely dropping their loved one off at a day care program with space for them to occupy. We try to empathize with the needs of caregivers and participants.

The caregiver role is often filled by friends or family members who want their loved one to receive the daily support they need and deserve. This is a daunting task. Our society places an unfair expectation on family members to care for their loved ones as they age, with a one-size-fits-all model that overlooks the varying needs of each person. Our Day Program runs for four hours a day, twice a week. Imagine yourself in the shoes of a person who cannot leave their family member alone for more than a few minutes at a time. This means not being able to run to the bank, shop for groceries, cook proper meals, visit your doctor, or care for your own daily living routines. Hobbies and leisure activities are probably neglected altogether. It is hard to believe that a total of eight hours per week of respite can make a monumental difference, but it does. Awareness of these challenges helps our team to focus not only on those who attend the program, but also on their supportive caregivers, who put their personal needs aside to ensure the safety and happiness of their loved ones.

When I started as the Day Program Manager last October, my background up to that point was with disability services. I was admittedly brand new to dementia care. There were a lot of obvious similarities within the two realms. Mainly, the wonderful program participants, staff and volunteers who will restore your faith in humanity. One obvious difference that stood out immediately was the lack of awareness of dementia related needs in the community and the lack of dementia services. The need far outweighs the available resources, particularly for those with limited incomes. Pre-pandemic, the program would receive an average of two or three inquiries each month. Now, we get at least two calls per day from caregivers who want to enroll their loved one in the program. Some days we receive up to ten inquiries, a shocking result of how much the need is growing. The tone is

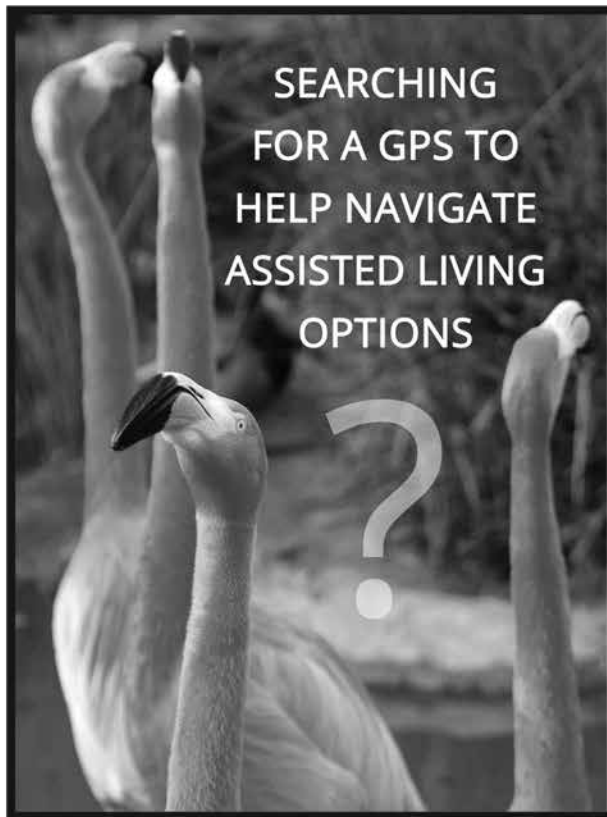
often apologetic, as if it is selfish to ask for help. As I settle into my new role, I hope that our community can come to the realization that we are experiencing an epidemic, and for families caring for a loved one with dementia, a day respite program is an invaluable service.

Testimonial from a Day Program participant

The people at Senior Day couldn't be nicer... thoughtful, experienced, interesting and interested in us. There is a wonderful variety of activities throughout the day and always great music and fun musicians. I love the "belly dancers" - they can do the most amazing things with scarves. I never feel herded and I always feel heard. The best parts: the lovely staff, the lunch, the participants, and I never feel like people are telling me what to do!"

From her spouse/caregiver

I don't know what I would do without the day program. It is the one thing in the week that she always looks forward to. She has fun, she wins at BINGO, she feels that everyone is eager to listen to what she says. She has made friends with participants and staff and everyone knows just what she is going through. The pacing of the day is perfect and she doesn't have to try to keep up and "be with it" all the time. And she is wild about the lunches and always wants to report that the restrooms are spotless. Thank you for providing such an incredibly supportive service. More people should try it out. It uplifts spirits and builds on each person's competence. And the staff are terrific, always ready to e-mail or call should there be a concern and filled with love and compassion for participants and family members alike. They have made our lives so much richer and better in the midst of the many changes brought on by dementia and Parkinson's.



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We can help you find your way.

Tell us your Story!

Are you a family caregiver for a loved one living with dementia? We are gathering stories about your journey - your fears, challenges, learnings and triumphs. Where have you found the most help? Where is more help needed? We want to share your insights with funders, donors, elected officials and others just like you.

Help us raise awareness about the medical, emotional, economic and public health impacts that a dementia diagnosis brings to a growing number of Sonoma County families. Our goal is to generate resources in support of local caregivers and adult day respite services. If you would like to participate in a confidential interview for this project, please contact:

Jake Larkin, Adult Day Respite Program Manager
707-525-0143 x103 or
jlarkin@councilonaging.com

Renee Tolliver, Director of Social Services
707-525-0143 x124 or
rtolliver@councilonaging.com

55 or older and tired of sitting at home? Become a Senior Companion Program Volunteer!

The North Bay Resource Center's Senior Companion Program

We help seniors improve their lives and feel more connected by partnering Volunteers with people who have cerebral palsy, epilepsy, Downs Syndrome, autism or other intellectual or developmental disability in a supervised setting.

What is required?

- 55 years or older and low income
- Pass criminal history checks
- Able to drive or take a bus
- Attend and pass required training
- Be caring, accepting, kind and patient with staff and clients
- Follow confidentiality requirements
- Available 5-40 hours per week

Is there training?

Yes! 20 hours of in-service training before starting the supervised Day Program and ongoing in-service training each month. Spend a few hours each service day playing games, creating art projects, reading, singing, going on walks and being a friend. If you meet income limits, \$3/hr, meal and transportation costs, paid training/time off.

To volunteer or learn more, contact **Ana Horta**, SCP Supervisor at 707-566-3005 or anah@nbrc.net.

What volunteers say : I feel alive again for the first time in years." "It's so good to be needed again." "The clients are so delighted to see us.

Relationships Shift When Spouse Diagnosed with Dementia

By Sarah M. Tucker, LMFT 99024
Clinical Supervisor/Senior Peer Support
Council on Aging

First in a Series

When a spouse or partner receives a dementia diagnosis, the news can be devastating for the couple. If dementia is diagnosed in its early stages, the individual with dementia might have the awareness to forecast their future loss of memory and functioning. The diagnosis can evoke a wide spectrum of emotions and reactions for each spouse as their relationship adapts and evolves over time with the progression of dementia.

Initially, a couple's relationship may change very little, depending on how they handled the changes that were occurring prior to the diagnosis. The actual diagnosis might even come as a relief to the spouse who has been witnessing their loved one's decline in functioning. There can be a sense of hope and direction once the diagnosis has been made, with referrals and resources to guide the way. However, the initial diagnosis could be received with shock and denial; the spouse may minimize or compensate for their loved one's errors or mistakes, expressing that "it's not that bad," or thinking that they can manage on their own. A common barrier to seeking services for dementia care in the early stages is that the spouse may insist that they "should be able to handle it" on their own. Just the term "dementia" can strike fear or doom for the couple's future. Keep in mind that the emotions are not singular or static; both partners will experience several different emotions simultaneously, and the various feelings will come and go.

When more significant impairment becomes evident in the partner diagnosed with dementia, their spouse tends to shift into the caregiver role. Spouses as caregivers are faced with new challenges and responsibilities, such as single handedly managing and maintaining the household—taking on the shopping, cooking, cleaning, and bill paying, as well as navigating medical, financial and legal issues. For some, these had been shared responsibilities, while for others the rookie caregiving spouse has to learn new skills and find helpful resources. This process can be overwhelming, and it's understandable that feelings of resentment, helplessness, and frustration can both impact the relationship and exact a heavy physical and emotional toll upon the caregiver. Meanwhile, the spouse with dementia is often aware of their increasing dependence and their diminishing role as a partner. Over time, the caregiver assumes increasing responsibility for assisting with activities of daily living, such as dressing, hygiene and eating. As more time and attention are required from the caregiving spouse, the burden becomes more pronounced. By this stage, a loved one may not be recognized or a partner/married relationship is not remembered. This can worsen feelings of grief and loss in the relationship.

One of the difficult decisions a care partner faces is if/when to seek additional help in providing care, ranging from day respite programs to in-home care (or both) or to place their loved one in a residential memory care facility. Securing the services can seem like another layer of separation in the intimacy of the coupleship. Adding others to the care routine is disruptive to long-established dynamics and requires the caregiver to become a care manager needing even more time, energy and patience to

establish new relationships and routines, while still tending to their own and their loved one's well-being. While it should eventually bring enormous relief, it can initially be a burden. Out of home placement is another difficult and emotional process that brings more change to the couple's dynamic and identity. Both caregiving partners and their loved ones commonly experience grief and loss throughout the stages of dementia, as many changes occur within the partnership that used to have friendship and intimacy at its foundation. Roles shift, and each partner may experience a loss of identity; their own and who they knew the other to be.

It's important to try to find new ways to connect with your partner and for both of you to stay connected with others. When one partner is diagnosed with dementia, the couple may become socially isolated from others at a time when connection can be a lifeline. Contacts may have pulled away thinking that you have little time for them or that they just don't know what to do or say. Changes in behavior caused by the disease may not be understood, and it might be difficult to accept that the friend/loved one has dementia.

Take the initiative to contact family and friends and explain that while dementia has changed your lives in some ways, you value their friendship and support. Consider inviting one or two friends or family members over for a short, casual visit. Allow them to bring snacks or a meal. Let them know in advance of any physical or emotional changes in the loved one with dementia. Provide suggestions about how to best communicate and what activities they might enjoy together.

Caregiving is an unpredictable and sometimes grueling process. Self care is essential to endurance. It can seem impossible for a caregiving spouse to consider their own needs when so much time and attention is devoted to their loved one. It is truly impossible to successfully navigate the journey without making the time to eat well, get adequate rest, and avoid mood altering substances. Keep your body moving, even if it's just for a quick walk around the block– the exercise and fresh air are rejuvenating. Ask for help from family members, friends, or community resources; this is not a solo endeavor. Learn as much as possible about dementia– knowledge is power and it will help a caregiver develop their own unique and useful strategies. Participate in a caregiver support group to share struggles and successes with those on a similar path. Remember that there is no “right way” to manage the process of caregiving for an individual with dementia - you will always be doing your best. Have compassion for your loved one and compassion for yourself.

There is help available. Council on Aging can help you identify programs and services that are helpful to you and your family. Call our Resource Specialist, Kathleen Sinnott, at 707-525-0143 x102 for general information about services for seniors in Sonoma County. In addition, these organizations can provide additional support for caregivers:

1. Council on Aging Adult Day Respite Program and Caregiver Support Groups: 1 707-525-0143 x103 Jake Larkin, program manger, jlarkin@councilonaging.com
2. Petaluma People Services Center Adult Day Respite Program: 707-765-8488
3. Redwood Caregivers Resource Center: 707-542-0282

4. Care Partners Initiative (Sonoma):
707-509-0031
5. Alzheimer's Association: alz.org
6. Alzheimer's Foundation: alzfdn.org
7. Lewy Body Dementia Association: lbda.org 800-539-9767
8. Family Caregiver Alliance (in San Francisco): <https://www.caregiver.org/>
(415) 434-3388
9. Seniors at Home: seniorsathome.jfcs.org
415-449-3700
10. UCSF Memory and Aging Center:
ucsfhealth.org/clinics/memory-and-aging-center (415) 353-2057
11. National Institute on Aging: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/>
12. Sonoma County Human Services Adult and Aging Division—707-565-4636



A Caregiver's Bill of Rights

I have the right...

- To take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capacity to take better care of my relative.
- To seek help from others even though my relative may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
- To maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things for myself.
- To get angry, be depressed, and express other difficult feelings occasionally.
- To reject any attempt by my relative (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt, anger, or depression.
- To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance for what I do for my loved one for as long as I offer these qualities in return.
- To take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it has sometimes taken to meet the needs of my relative.
- To protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in the time when my relative no longer needs my full-time help.
- To expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired older persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.
- To

(Add you own statement of rights to this list. Read the list to yourself every day.



Volunteer Appreciation Day

April 20th

A HUGE HEARTFELT

Thanks to Our Volunteers!

Thanks!



Value of One - Power of Many!



THANK YOU TO THE HUNDREDS WHO VOLUNTEER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!



council on aging

May 6th 11am-2pm

Doubletree Rohnert Park



Heels4Meals

A Fashion Show & Luncheon
Benefitting Meals on Wheels
& Nutrition Programs

Go to
Heels4Meals.com



council on aging
living better together

VOLUNTEER with MEALS ON WHEELS!

Deliver nutritious and fresh meals to homebound seniors in your neighborhood



DRIVERS NEEDED

from 10am - 12pm Mon - Fri
Choose a day(s) that works for you
Call 707-525-1043 x 121
or register online today - councilonaging.com



council on aging

6 Benefits of Broccoli

FOR NUTRITION AND HEALTH



helps to create healthy skin, bones, and eyes

assists with healthy gums and teeth

excellent source of vitamin A and vitamin C

nutrient rich (folate, riboflavin and B6)

helps our bodies use energy from foods

aids in healthy hair, nerves, and muscles

Broccoli is a dark green vegetable that is low in calories but high in nutrients



Try adding broccoli to salads, soups and stews

By: Maria Carlucci, NDTR
Source: hss.gov.nc.ca



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Wouldn't you rather be at home?

At Home Caregivers has served Sonoma County for more than 16 years with licensed and vaccinated employee caregivers.

Services provided include:

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- Hospice & Dementia Care
- Light Housekeeping
- Meal Preparation
- Transportation



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