CarePartners INITIATIVE

JULY 2025 E-NEWSLETTER

caring for the caregiver

Our New Memory Cafe a Real "Adventure!"

An article by Daniel Johnson, Index-Tribune Staff Writer

The Sonoma Index-Tribune

MEMORY CAFE PROGRAM TO OFFER 'FIELD TRIPS' FOR THOSE WITH DEMENTIA, THEIR CARE PARTNERS

Building on the success of Sonoma's Memory Cafes, which provide engaging activities for those living with dementia and their care partners, a new cafe program launching in August will enable them to have stimulating experiences in the greater community.

Building on the success of Memory Cafes — held twice each month at Sonoma United Methodist Church to provide engaging activities for those living with dementia and their care partners — a new café program will be launched in August that will enable them to have stimulating experiences in the greater community.

Memory Cafe Adventures will debut on Thursday, Aug. 21, with a "field trip" to Sonoma Community Center. They will be offered on the third Thursday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at various places in Sonoma County. As with the other Memory Cafes, everyone in the community who has memory loss and their caregiver — or friend or loved one — is invited to attend.

"We will meet at the Sonoma Community Center for a tour led by a staff member to learn about all its offerings and then one of the employed artists there will lead us in making clay pots," said Heidi Lage, director of programs at the CarePartners Initiative, which offers the Memory Cafe programs. "Vanessa Roglien (executive director of the center) has been incredibly welcoming and immediately open to the idea of a collaboration with us."

The center's development director, Mary Catherine Cutcliffe, is pleased that it will be the inaugural location for the Memory Cafe Adventures program. "We are delighted," she said. "Bringing the community together is what we do at the center. "'Community' is our middle name and the heart of what we do."

Click **here** to read the full article.

Featured Resource

My Spouse Has Dementia

Personal stories and interviews to help dementia caregiving spouses

Shortlisted for 2025 Int'l Award!

A free, bi-weekly podcast that uses personal stories, occasional interviews, and simple rituals to support dementia caregiving spouses. Find a new perspective, a moment of humor, and just maybe, a way to survive. Two episodes below.

Click here to select any of their various 28 episodes.

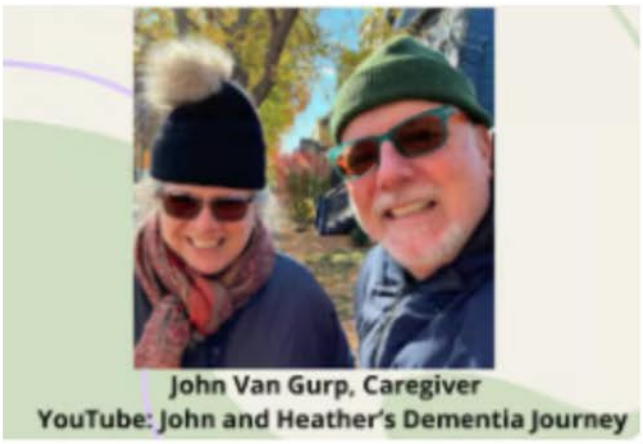
Governor Marty Schreiber - "My Two Elaines"
https://MyTwoElaines.com

May 9, 2025

My Two Elaines - A Governor's Dementia Caregiving Memoir

Former governor of Wisconsin, Martin L. Schreiber ("Marty") married his high school sweetheart, Elaine. Sixty-two years later, she died from Alzheimer's Disease. To help other spouses on the same dementia caregiving journey, Marty wrote a memoir: My Two Elaines. In it, he says, "None of the books I...

Listen to the episode here.



John Van Gurp, Caregiver
YouTube: John and Heather's Dementia Journey

April 19, 2025

A Husband Videos His Dementia Caregiving Journey

At part of their daughter's wedding ceremony, Heather was supposed to give their daughter a necklace that had once belonged to Heather's mother. Heather's husband, John, talks about what it was like when he and his daughter realized Heather had...

Listen to the episode here.

Memory Cafe

CarePartners Initiative offers a free Memory Cafe twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Monday, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, at the Sonoma United Methodist Church (Community Room), located at 109 Patten Street, Sonoma.

Upcoming Memory Cafe dates:
Monday, July 14
Monday, July 28

On July 14th we will celebrate the 4th of July together as a group.

On July 28th, we will have a 50's theme Memory Cafe. We have some young talented men coming to play piano and sing 50's music for us and we will make banana split sundaes. Get out your poodle skirt and saddle shoes! You won't want to miss it.

We enjoyed two Memory Cafes in the month of June. On June 9th, we celebrated Summer and Safety. We shared our favorite things about Summer. We also were educated about fire safety and disaster preparedness by retired firefighter Matt Lage. Our very own Ken Cavalli shared about his 7 vintage firetrucks. And we had a wonderful surprise. The Sunshine Preschool kiddos came to sing for us!

On June 23rd, we enjoyed Art and Poetry. As a group we discussed different paintings and what it evokes in us. We then took all the thoughts, words and comments and formed it into a community-built poem. It was a lot of fun!

Attending a Memory Cafe is a very important time for loved ones and caregivers to socialize and enjoy fun activities. Loved ones must be accompanied by a caregiver, however, a friend or family member may bring the loved one in place of the primary caregiver. It's free to attend.

We hope to see you!

Memory Cafe Adventures - NEW Program!

We have very exciting news to share! Starting in August, we will be launching a THIRD Memory Cafe!!!! Many of you have asked for more Memory Cafes and we listened.

This additional Memory Cafe is called **Memory Cafe Adventures** and will be held 10:00 am – 12:00 pm on the third Thursday of the month. We will be meeting in a different location in our community each month.

The inaugural Memory Cafe Adventures will be on Thursday, August 21. We will be meeting at the Sonoma Valley Community Center and will get a tour of the Community Center and then make clay pots in the pottery center.

We already have plans for the rest of the year to meet at different locations such as the Sonoma Valley Museum, the Sebastiani Theater, the Sonoma Valley Library, etc. Our Sonoma community has been very supportive and eager to work in collaboration with our Memory Cafes.

CarePartners Initiative is honored to continue adding more support for those care partners in our community caring for their loved one living with memory decline.

Support Groups for Caregivers (in-person and Zoom)

CarePartners offers a free in-person support group each month at the Sonoma United Methodist Church (Community Room), located at 109 Patten Street, Sonoma.

4th Wednesday, 11:00am - 12:30pm ✦ Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
- **Upcoming: Wednesday, July 30** (moved from the 4th Wednesday to the 5th Wednesday for July only)

Please consider joining us. It is a confidential space to share difficulties and wins with other caregivers. It is truly validating to be in the company of others who intimately understand the journey of a care partner of a loved one with memory decline.

Please **RSVP** here to let us know if you plan to attend. We are planning to limit the support groups to 10 people to be sure everyone has adequate time and space to share.

Testimonial: "*Having support groups to connect with has been great because you can talk about what you've been going through and everyone can relate. We talk about situations that have been challenging or tactics to use when actually caregiving. There is no judgment and knowing you are not alone in this journey is comforting.*"

CarePartners offers a free ZOOM caregiver support group each month.
1st Tuesday of the month, 12:00-1:30 pm ✦ Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
- **Upcoming: August 5**

Have you been hesitant to join our caregiver group because it was only offered in-person? Are you unable to leave your loved one to attend a support group? Do you work and only have a lunch break to attend a support group? Or do you want to attend two caregiver support groups a month (once in-person and one via Zoom)? Then this group is for you! You can join via video teleconferencing or simply dial in.

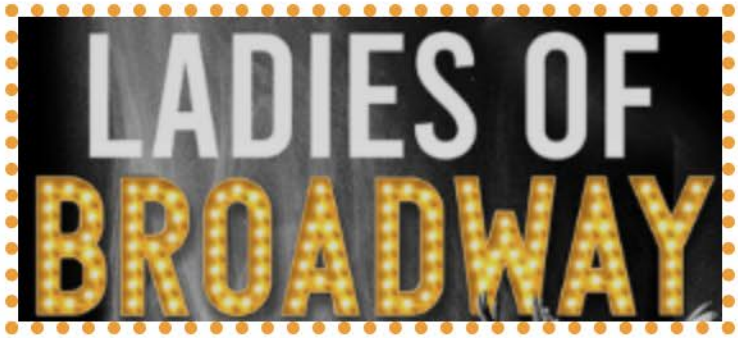
Please contact Heidi for a short intake and the Zoom link: (707) 640-3734 or via email here.

Social Activities Group

July Social Activity
Date: Monday, July 21
Time: 11:30 am
Location: Sonoma Garden Park
19996 7th Street E, Sonoma

Please join us for a bring your lunch gathering at The Sonoma Garden Park. A good time is had by all while enjoying the outdoors, socializing, and listening to live music performed by our fabulous volunteer, Brady Hoff! Everyone is welcome and it is free to attend.

If you would like to attend, please email Susanne here.



August Social Activity
We are coordinating with Transcendence Theatre to attend a dress rehearsal for their upcoming August production of ***Ladies of Broadway***! We will send a special email notification when the date is confirmed. Everyone is welcome and it is free to attend.

TRANSCENDENCE
THEATRE COMPANY

Featured Profile

Dan Johnson, The Sonoma Index-Tribune/The Press Democrat Staff Reporter

For quite some time, I've identified my dharma as to do whatever I can in my work and personal life to build bridges of understanding and appreciation among people from different backgrounds as well as to help those in need. I take this mission quite seriously but always try to maintain a sense of humor and an awareness of my capabilities and inherent subjectivity.

When I was hired as a staff writer for The Sonoma-Index Tribune in 2022, my main aim was to do whatever I could to work toward realizing this dharma while fulfilling my day-to-day responsibilities. One of my vehicles has been the many stories I have written about the amazing group of nonprofit organizations in Sonoma Valley, including CarePartners. I often tell staff members of these organizations how gratifying it is to write about the very meaningful work they are doing and to play my own small part in spreading awareness of it.

I have been deeply inspired by the life and work of Rabindranath Tagore, the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature (in 1913). I wrote my master's thesis about river imagery in his work and have been especially moved by a poem he wrote in "Gitanjali" ("Song Offerings"). The English translations of his work generally don't do justice to the original Bengali versions, but this poem provides a hint of their lyrical beauty and embracement of the interconnectedness of all life.

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

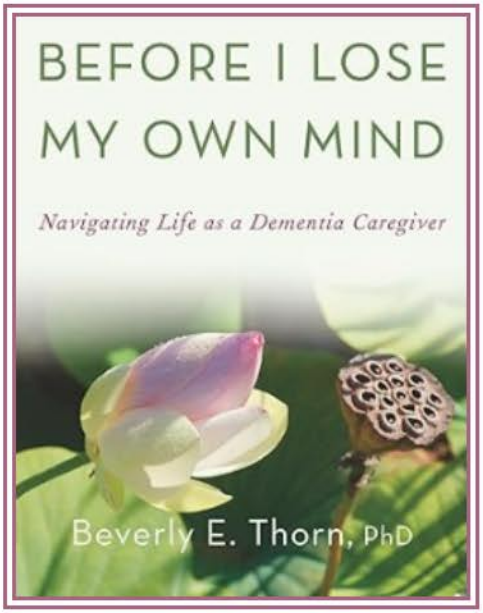
It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

Sonoma Index-Tribune racks up awards at state newspaper contest
The Sonoma Index-Tribune came away with a total of 15 awards, including first and second place honors, in the 2024 California Journalism Awards held on Saturday, May 17, 2025 in Los Angeles.

The Index-Tribune competed in a variety of categories that were judged against submissions from other weekly newspapers with circulations between 4,301 and 11,000. The annual contest is sponsored by the California Newspaper Publishers Association.

We CONGRATULATE Education, community and news reporter Dan Johnson on his awards!
He took a First Place for his two-part series on the environmental impact report on the Hanna Center development that included resident concerns about the project.
He took a **Second Place** award in the Health coverage category for his article on CarePartners Imitative: ***Magical Memory Cafes boost people with mental challenges***

Book Report



Before I Lose My Own Mind: Navigating Life as a Dementia Caregiver
by Beverly E. Thorn (Author)

Both a practical guide and a deeply personal memoir from a psychologist, neuroscientist, and end-of-life doula, Before I Lose My Own Mind helps dementia caregivers find ways to support their loved ones—while centering their own well-being.

When Dr. Beverly E. Thorn became a caregiver for her husband, Walt, she joined a massive army. Worldwide, unpaid dementia caregiving requires the equivalent of forty million full-time workers, and that number will only grow. But navigating dementia caregiving can feel like trying to climb a mountain in the dark—and few resources exist to support caregivers in finding their way.

In this book, Dr. Thorn provides an honest vision of caregiving that is tender, openhearted, and genuinely useful. Filled with resources and insights on financial planning, advance care directives, clinical trials, support groups, death with dignity, grief, recovery, and more, this book is a roadmap for all caregivers, whether they're family or friends, spouses or children, professionals or novices.

For those coping with the grief, exhaustion, and loneliness of a challenge they never expected, help is out there. Surviving dementia caregiving is a team effort. Consider this book a part of your support crew.

Resource Corner

Dementia Action Alliance
An Outreach Initiative Of **The Eden Alternative**

Caring Connections | via Zoom
Date: Wednesday, July (2nd Wednesday of each month)
Time: 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
For Care Partners Only. Together, we navigate the challenges of dementia care partnering, exchange practical advice, and foster connections that help lighten the journey. With open conversation and open hearts, we learn, share, and support each other on this path of caring for our loved ones.
If this is your first time participating, please click here to register.

Dementia Discussions | via Zoom
Date: Weekly on Thursdays
Time: 9:30 am - 10:30 am
An educational platform where individuals gather to learn, share and support each other through the dementia journey. Each session features an informative presentation on a dementia-related topic, followed by an open, caring conversation. Together we explore practical strategies for living well and creating a compassionate community.
If this is your first time participating, please click here to register.

Redwood caregiver resource center

The mission of Redwood Caregiver Resource Center is to help families and communities master the challenges of caring for adults with brain disorders through programs and services that address the emotional, physical, and financial needs of family caregivers. All services are free or low cost. Throughout the year they offer a variety of classes.
Telephone: Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm, (707) 542-0282 | (800) 834-1636

Respite Care If needed: Redwood CRC helps families locate appropriate respite care for a loved one. Limited financial assistance may be offered to help with the expense of in-home aids, daycare, overnight care, weekend respite or transportation for a family member with brain impairment.

Caregiver 101 Class | via Zoom
Date: Tuesday, July 15
Time: 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
For the family members or caregivers of loved ones with dementia.
Discussion: Strategies for dealing with dementia associated symptoms and the importance of advance planning. Who should attend: Family members or caregivers of patients who have a diagnosis of dementia. It is recommended that patients with dementia should not attend this class.
Click here to register.

Share & Care Support Group | via Zoom
2nd and 4th Thursday of each month, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
ZOOM video teleconferencing or call-in
• To receive Zoom information please contact
Amie at axh@redwoodcrc.org | Phone: (707) 582-2329

Evening Caregiver Support Group | via Zoom
(in partnership with First Presbyterian, Santa Rosa Care Ministries)
2nd Thursday of each month, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
ZOOM video teleconferencing or call-in
• To receive Zoom information please contact
Amie at axh@redwoodcrc.org | Phone: (707) 582-2329

Champions of Chaos Supportive Peer Weekly Meeting | via Zoom
Date: Weekly on Wednesdays
Time: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Champions of Chaos is hosted once a week and offered by enABLE Care ManagementSM. The virtual gatherings are always free and always optional. It is a supportive peer weekly meeting for individuals navigating the aging process for someone else. This is a mutual self-help group, not a therapy group. Hopefully, this group will provide emotional, psychological, and moral support for its members. Each of us is encouraged to participate to whatever extent we feel comfortable.

How the Free Champions of Chaos Group Works:
Complete the registration form. Receive a link to the one-hour weekly call. Join as you can/need to.

Whether you need to vent, need to brainstorm resources or solutions, or just know that you are not alone in the chaos of helping someone through the challenging chapters of their lives, enABLE invites you to join whenever you can.

Types of Chaos you might be Championing for someone in decline:
• Worries about COVID-19
• Fall worries or issues
• Concerns about finances
• Wondering am I doing enough?
• Resources or tips to help
• Guilt
• Frustration
• Little wins or magical moments!
• Gratitude
• Hope
Click here to learn more or to register. Phone: (415) 828-3733

Is It Normal Aging or Dementia? | via Zoom
Date: Tuesday, July 15
Time: 10:00 am - 11:30 am
Do you know the difference between Alzheimer's and Dementia? Do you know what behaviors are in each the stage of Alzheimer's disease? Do you know how to react to those behaviors? Join this workshop to find all the answers.
Click here to register. Phone: (800) 675-6694

Del Mar Caregiver Resource Center
A Program of Health Projects Center

A Conversation on Grief and Loss | via Zoom
Date: Tuesday, July 29
Time: 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm
Grief can take many forms. There is the grief we feel as we witness the loss of health of a loved one, there is the anticipatory grief we feel when caring for someone at the end of life, and the profound feelings of loss when someone we love dies. It is an experience many of us are unprepared for. The standard process of grief and loss will be discussed in addition to exploring valuable strategies for coping and self-care.

The presenter will be Joy M. Smith RN MSN, an oncology and palliative medicine nurse educator at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and a Certified Grief Counselor. Joy's years of experience working with patients and families and facilitating grief support groups have given her wisdom and ease in discussing loss and grief.
Click here to register. Phone: (831) 459-6639

CarePartners' Library at Vintage House

CarePartners Initiative has a collection of books and DVDs relating to caregiving of loved ones with dementia in the library at Vintage House. The above photo on the left shows the location of the shelf on the right-hand wall next to the clock, just inside the Vintage House library, and the photo on the right shows the shelf itself. The books must be checked out at the front desk and returned ASAP. If you have library donations, please email Susanne here.

We hope you have an opportunity to stop by the Vintage House library to delve into all our resource shelf has to offer.

Vintage House Senior Center is located at 264 1st St. East, Sonoma.

Dementia Friendly Sonoma Valley

Sonoma is a Dementia Friendly Community

Dementia Friendly America: https://dfamerica.org/
Part of our mission is to deepen awareness of the symptoms and signs of dementia. As a community, we can enhance the safety and quality of life for the estimated 1,000 people in Sonoma Valley with dementia and their caregivers.

Dementia is complex. Click here for a short video that summarizes it well.

If you would like more information on Sonoma's program, please visit the Dementia Friendly Sonoma Valley information page on our website here.

Dementia Friends Milestones
There are currently 188,262 Dementia Friends throughout the United States.

Make a Difference!

Looking for a New Sense of Purpose in Your Life?

CarePartners Initiative is looking for volunteers with experience in fundraising, program management and hands-on help executing our many cost-free programs. If you are looking for a rewarding volunteer experience, please contact us at info@carepartnersinitiative.org or call our Helpline (707) 732-9436. We look forward to hearing from you!

We would also love to welcome you as a volunteer at one of our hosted Memory Cafes - a safe and supported place for individuals with memory decline and their care partner. We know that those in attendance will appreciate your time and attention.
For more information, please call or email Heidi Lage, LMFT (707) 640-3734 | via email here

"Volunteers are America's silent strength. Those who give of themselves in a spirit of unselfish devotion to the needs of others are truly this nation's most generous, unsung heroes."
William Arthur Ward, Who's Who in American Education

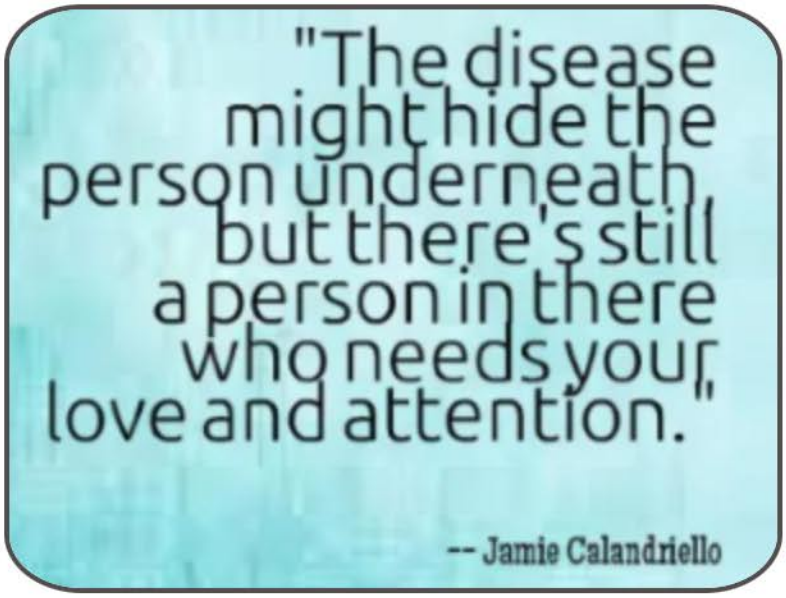
Please Consider Donating

We are excited how 2025 is taking shape! We know there is so much more we can do though. We need your help as we expand our **cost-free programs** to support caregivers and their loved ones impacted by memory decline. Our programs touch lives and make a difference, and you can too.

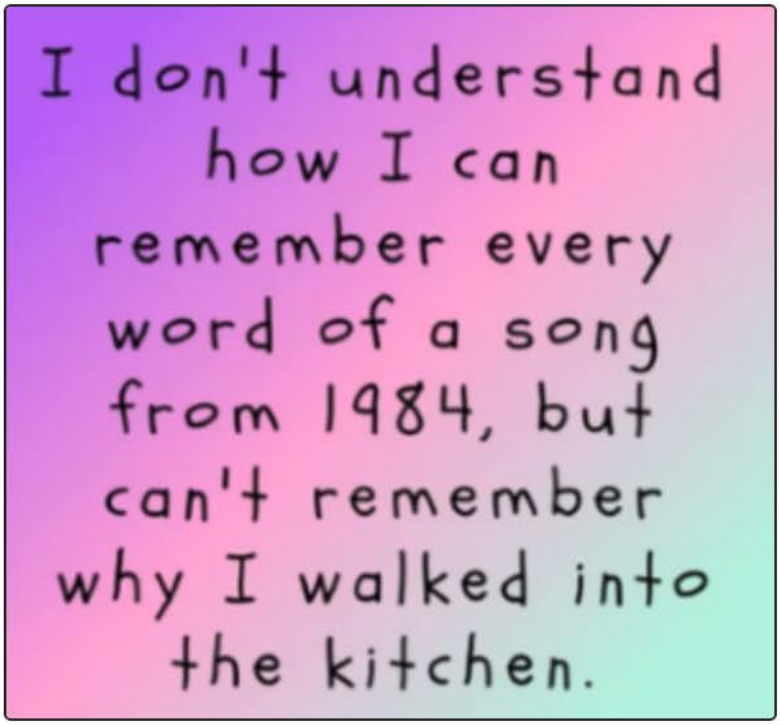
Please consider a tax-deductible donation. It will help drive our efforts to expand our programs and reach many more people whose lives can be transformed. We appreciate that you have many choices when it comes to your charitable giving, and we would be grateful for any amount you choose to give. Thank you. 501 (c) (3) Tax ID: 94-2524840

Click here to **Donate Now**

Monthly Quote



A Bit of Humor



Don't forget to visit our website for more information about us and our no cost programs!
carepartnersinitiative.org

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Add us to your address book
Helpline: (707) 732-9436

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