SEPTEMBER 2025 E-NEWSLETTER

caring for the caregiver

Some highlights in our September E-Newsletter:

★ Our feature story this month is all about our very first Memory Cafe Adventures! Attendance was great and the participants enjoyed all the aspects of the Sonoma Community Center.

★ Our feature profile is on one of our favorite and talented artists, Alana Tillman, who very generously volunteers her time to teach our Memory Cafe participants how to paint beautiful art.

★ Be sure to check out the Resource Corner for various free classes in our Sonoma community.

Feature Story - Memory Cafe Adventures Program

Our program participants have been asking for additional Memory Cafes and we listened! CarePartners Initiative is proud to continue to expand and fill the needs of caregivers by now offering a no-cost monthly **Memory Cafe Adventures** program which takes place on the 4th Wednesday each month at a different location in our Sonoma community.

On August 21st we held our inaugural Memory Cafe Adventures program!

For this inaugural event we received a tour of the Sonoma Community Center including the history and available activities and classes by the executive director, Vannessa Rognlien. We ended the adventure in the pottery room where everyone was able to make their own clay pot.

We were given instructions by the director of ceramics, Meg Billngham. Meg is graciously going to fire the art pieces for us. A big ***Thank You!*** to Sonoma Community Center for your kindness and collaboration. We are grateful! Check out all their resources and classes here: Sonoma Community Center - Enriching lives through the arts.

Educational Forum - Documentary Film

Wine, Women, & Dementia

SAVE THE DATE

Documentary feature film "Wine, Women, & Dementia"
When: Saturday, October 25
Where: Sonoma Community Center, 276 E. Napa Street, Sonoma

- 2:30 - 3:00 pm - Wine reception
- 3:00 - 3:15 pm - Welcome speaker
- 3:15 - 4:45 pm - Film screening
- 4:45 - 5:30 pm - Q & A session

FILM SYNOPSIS

"Wine, Women, & Dementia" tells the tale of dementia life through the lens of the family caregivers who strive to accept the beauty and the brutality, the hilarious and the horrific - for themselves and their dementia person. It a celebrates family caregivers while exploring themes of familial duty, perseverance, the power of surrender, the aftermath of healing, and most importantly, how to honor LIFE on the long road to death.

Seeking healing and comfort in community, a dementia family caregiver roadtrips the U.S. to swap caregiver stories of love, humor, devotion, and death with other dementia caregivers who share this hilariously heartbreaking end-of-life journey.
It's a roadtrip connecting the disconnected - because until there's a cure, there's community.

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, September 8 and Monday, September 22

The incredible artist, Alana Tillman, visited our Memory Cafe on August 11th. She led the group in an art lesson to paint grapes and grape leaves. Everyone's paintings were gorgeous. Heidi Lage, Program Director, said "I have never heard the Memory Cafe so quiet with everyone concentrating so intently." Alana has a really amazing story and business. Please see our profile story on her in this month's newsletter. Thank you to Alana (and her mom Denise) for her time and generosity!

Our Memory Cafe on August 25th had the theme of "Giving Back". After chair exercises, singing and bingo, they decorated bags were to be distributed to Sonoma Overnight Support. Inn at Sonoma generously donated the toiletries. They added kind and inspirational notes along with snacks and drinks.

CarePartners Initiative also offers a free Memory Cafe Adventures program once a month on the 3rd Thursday, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, meeting at a different location in Sonoma each month.

Upcoming Memory Cafe Adventures date: Thursday, September 18

For the next Memory Cafe Adventure the group will be watching "Singing in the Rain" at the Sebastiani Theatre, meeting in the lobby at 10:00 am. The snack bar will be open so please bring approximately $5 for popcorn, drinks or candy. Please RSVP here so we know how many to expect; however, this time there is no limit for this Memory Cafe Adventure.

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!

Support Groups for Caregivers (in-person and Zoom)

CarePartners offers a free in-person support group each month.
Location: Sonoma United Methodist Church,109 Patten St., Sonoma

4th Wednesday, 11:00am - 12:30pm ✦ Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
- **Upcoming: Wednesday, September 24**

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 limiting 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.

2nd Tuesday, 12:00-1:30 pm ✦ Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
- **Upcoming: Tuesday, September 9**

Please **RSVP** here to let us know if you plan to attend. We are limiting the support groups to 10 people to be sure everyone has adequate time and space to share. If needed, you may attend our two monthly caregiver support groups (once in-person and one via Zoom).

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

CarePartners now offers a free in-person grief support group beginning in September.

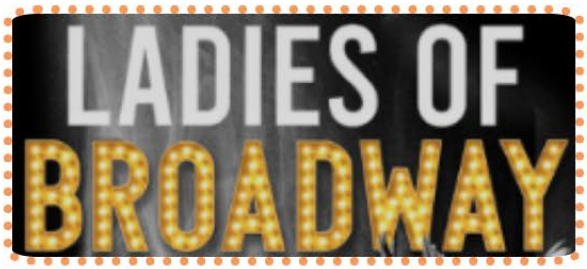
4th Wednesday, 2:30 - 4:00 pm ✦ Facilitator: Heidi Lage, LMFT
Location: Sonoma United Methodist Church, 109 Patten St., Sonoma

The grief support group is a 4-week series (see dates below). It is a closed group which means it will be the same people every time with no drop-in. It will be a combination of talking, education and activities to process the grief and loss experienced when losing someone you love who lived with dementia.

Wednesday, September 24
Wednesday, October 22
Wednesday, November 26
Wednesday, December 17 *(please note this is the 3rd Wednesday of the month due to 12/24 being Christmas Eve)*

Space is limited to eight (8) people to be sure everyone has enough time to share and receive support. We currently have only three (3) remaining spots. Please contact Heidi for more information and to RSVP: (707) 640-3734 or email here.

Social Activities Group



For our **August Social Activity** we were invited by Transcendence Theatre Company to attend a rehearsal for their September performance of *Ladies of Broadway*!

A delightful time was had by all who attended the rehearsal! It was a big hit. Many thanks to Transcendence Theatre Company for their continued support of CarePartners, they are amazing.

Ladies of Broadway performance details:
Dates: September 4 – 14 (Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday)
Location: Sonoma Field of Dreams
5:00PM – Pre-Show Picnic Begins
7:30PM – Showtime
Click here for tickets.

September Social Activity

Please join us for a bring your own lunch and listen to music at Sonoma Garden Park on Monday, September 15th, at 11:30 am.

Music will be provided by our amazing volunteer Brady Hoff! The Sonoma Garden Park is located at 19996 Seventh Street East, Sonoma. It is free to attend; we hope you can make it!

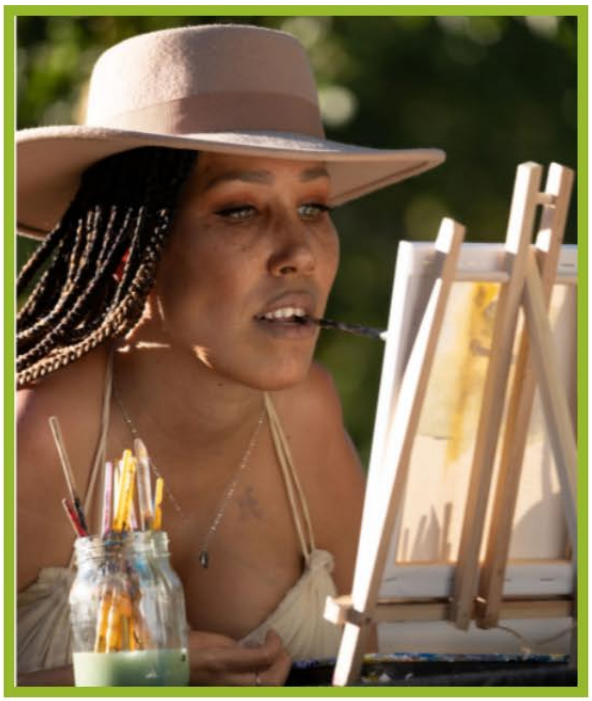
Feature Profile - Guest Artist Alana Tillman

Alana Tillman, from California, was born with Arthrogryposis; a birth defect that left her without the use of her arms and hands. As a result, she began to draw and write by using her mouth or feet.

As a child Alana endured multiple surgeries, however she quickly realized she could use art as a healing mechanism during her recovery. As time went on, her artistic endeavors progressed, earning her an Associate degree in fine arts and liberal science from the Santa Rosa Junior College in 2008. From 2006-2008 Alana worked as an assistant curator at the college's art gallery.

She primarily uses acrylic paint to create vibrant impressionistic pieces depicting subject matter from the rich agricultural environment she lives in. She became a student member of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists in 2013.

Alana's passion for art continued, persistent in her quest to share more about the MFPA, launched Artxcursion in 2018. Artxcursion is a creative and social event company. She Hosts paint sessions regularly throughout her region. Click here to visit her website.



Featured Resource

This month Vintage House and Sonoma Valley Hospital are partnering again to bring back the Active Aging Series! Four Friday afternoons of inspiring talks from local health experts, all focused on staying healthy and active as we age.
The talks are open to the entire community at no charge and held in-person. Light refreshments will be provided. Seating is limited, so save your spot now! Click here to register online. Questions? Call SVH at 707-931-9206

- Friday, September 5: Grief & Loss – Kristie Walthard M.A. AMFT APCC, Hanna Center
- Friday, September 12: Age Friendly Health System: What Matters – Rebecca Spear DNP, ARNP, AGNP-C, GS-C, Geriatric Nurse Practitioner
- Friday, September 19: Sleep & Weight Management – Rafael Sepulveda MD D-ABOM, Sleep Fit Medical
- Friday, September 26: Aging with Strength, Grace & Connection – Danielly Rocha-Lanter NSM, Danielly's Fitness

Please Consider Donating

We need your help as we expand our **no cost 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

Resource Corner

Redwood caregiver resource center

Caregiver 101 Class via Zoom
Date: Tuesday, September 16 | 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
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

Redwood Caregiver Resource Center in partnership with Area Agency on Aging presents POWERFUL TOOLS FOR CAREGIVERS. One of the greatest challenges of being a family caregiver is maintaining one's own physical and emotional health. This class will offer you tools to:

- Reduce personal stress
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Reduce guilt, anger, and depression
- Use community resources
- Make tough caregiving decisions
- Set goals and problem-solve

Who should participate: Family and Informal Caregivers. Class size is limited to 12 participants.
Offering 2 Different Class Locations - 6 Consecutive Tuesdays
Each Class Builds upon the Others y and Informal Caregivers

Sebastopol Community Center (Annex Room)	**Sonoma Community Center** (Morphy Community Room-2nd Floor)
Dates: September 30, October 7, 14, 21, 28 & November 4	**Dates:** September 30, October 7, 14, 21, 28 & November 4
Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm	**Time:** 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Location: 390 Morris St. Sebastopol, CA 95472	**Location:** 276 East Napa Street Sonoma, CA 95476

Cost: Suggested Contribution of $20 to cover materials. Scholarships are available.
Respite: 4 hours of respite each week will be available to attend the class. Must be requested by September 23, 2025.
To register contact: Amie Huynh at (707) 542-0282 ext. 107 or axh@redwoodcrc.org

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enABLE CARE MANAGEMENT

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.
Click here to learn more or to register. Phone: (415) 828-3733

New online course - Dementia Care Essentials: A Guide for Family Caregivers

This self-paced educational training series is designed to support caregivers of people with dementia. Choose topics based on your personal learning goals.

This training was developed in collaboration with the University of California, San Francisco (Fresno), and the Valley Caregiver Resource Center and is supported by the California Department of Public Health, Alzheimer's Disease Program. © 2022-2024, funded under contract # 22-10944.

Created for caregivers: These topics were created using feedback from caregivers just like you. Many caregivers shared that they needed short, practical presentations that could fit into their busy lives. That's why each module averages about 20 minutes and includes real-life examples, practical tips and trusted advice.

This training series contains a lot of information. Don't feel you need to complete the topics all at once. We encourage you to explore freely and select topics that are of most interest to you. Click here to view modules and/or start course.

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.

Help Us 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 here or call our Helpline (707) 732-9436. We look forward to hearing from you!

"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

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

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