

SONOMA SENIORS



COUNCIL ON AGING

Today

FEBRUARY 2008

Love Blooms for Council on Aging Volunteers

A Valentine's Day story for our time

by Bonnie Allen

Neither Leone Boyle nor Rod Linhares, both widowed, was looking for a partner.

They lived 30 miles apart, and there was no particular reason why their paths should have crossed. Except that both signed up for a training class at Council on Aging to become Senior Peer Supporters.

At 79, Leone is no stranger to volunteer work. She sings at convalescent homes in and around Cloverdale with a group called "New Friends." But she was looking for something more. And since her daughter, Council on Aging's Director of Volunteers Michele Leonard, was conducting a volunteer training for Senior Peer Supporters, it was a natural fit.

Meanwhile, Rod, retired and living in Oakmont, was looking for a new direction.

"I was kind of lonely at Oakmont, and I really didn't have much to do."

He thought he'd see if Senior Peer Support was right for him. He soon had his answer.

"Michele is a great leader. She drags you right in, and I mean that in the best way.

They are extremely nice people, devoted people who work in that field. We were at home right away. And if you can help and have the opportunity to work with people, it's a wonderful thing."

At the class, Leone spotted Rod and thought she'd like to get to know him.

"We were sitting across from each other and I noticed Rod and was quite taken with him," she recalls. "He was a very interesting person, very nice looking, very clean cut and very intelligent."

So Leone took the initiative.

"I asked Michele if she would ask Rod if he'd like to take me to one of the senior dances."

Rod said no.

And that was that, as far as Leone was



concerned. But there was more.

Rod, 80, had been working through some taxing health problems.

"I like to dance," explains Rod, "but I just couldn't. I was a mess. My ankles were swollen, my knees were swollen, I was just a mess."

"I love living, and I want to live a long, long time and I want to enjoy it. And I have a lovely lady to be with me that will say the same thing. We join hands and we go forward with that thought on life." —Rod

Was he surprised at the invitation?

"Yes, I was. I really was. I was too busy taking notes to notice Leone in class. But then she got to that business of 'would I like to dance,'" he laughed.

"I thought, my god, this is a lady that doesn't really know me and would think enough of me to ask me to go to the senior center to dance—that's a rather nice person."

He invited her out to dinner. And the rest was history.

"We found out that we had many, many things in common," said Rod. "Especially to learn, to be constantly learning new things satisfies that and going places."

Besides, added Leone, "he fell in love with

my dog, Jackie.

The 30-mile trip to Cloverdale to visit with Leone became a regular event for Rod.

"It began to be a comfortable thing for us," says Leone. "We felt we were friends."

Last summer Rod moved to Cloverdale to be near Leone.

"He's had some knee problems—he'd had some surgery, so it has not been all blue skies, but we have been working on this together and trying to make our lives a little bit more active."

Rod was a teacher and school administrator in Pacifica before retiring. Leone, a probation officer before retiring, had lived in Walnut Creek most of her life, on a couple of acres where she raised her three children. When her husband passed

away, she moved to Cloverdale to be near Michele. Between the two of them, Rod and Leone have 10 grandchildren.

Rod's sly sense of humor becomes apparent in their conversation. Asked for a comment, he quipped, "This is the first time I've had to speak since we've been together."

"He has a wonderful sense of humor, says Leone. "It's one of the things that attracted me to him. He's a great man and wonderful."

Healthy all his life, Rod has been challenged by some recent health problems. But he's confident he'll overcome them.

"You have two ways to go: give up and ruin yourself or go beyond it and know that you will succeed—and I will! Leone is wonderful in that vein, she helps me so much. I couldn't even describe it, it's unbelievable. I have my own doctor right here in the house. She's practicing medicine without a license! But I appreciate it.

"It's easy to say positive things about yourself, or it's easy to go the other way. But I just think we come together beautifully: our interests are broad and I can't think of a thing that one of us has suggested that the other hasn't gone along with because the other

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Consider This...

by Shirlee Zane, CEO

I have fallen in love! Graham and Henry—all seven pounds of them—are the objects of my adoration in this month of cupids and hearts. Although they have only celebrated their first month on this planet, they have captured the hearts of their parents and grandparents.

Yes, at last, the CEO of the Council on Aging is a grandmother, and no longer can people claim I am too young for this job! Even though I am still in my forties, I have no problem being called a grandmother...it is a most cherished title!

My husband and I returned late last night from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where we spent four marvelous days falling in love with our new twin grandbabies. We changed many a diaper, took many a walk, burped the babies, and lay on the couch for long stretches so they could sleep on top of our chests while their very exhausted mother caught up on her rest.

We also took care of Graham and Henry's parents, my son and daughter-in-law. They needed some nurturing too, so we cooked and shopped for them and bought them baby furniture. The four days went by incredibly fast, and I found myself fighting back the tears of leaving these beautiful babies as we drove the two-hour trip back to the Charlotte airport. I then became a part of the "Shameless, doting grandmother club" and started showing the waitress at the airport café the photos of the babies on our digital camera!

Being a grandparent is a gift in so many ways. I found myself living completely in the moment when I was with the babies. What else can you do when you have the warm head and cheek of a newborn upon your shoulder curled up like a kitten, purring softly into your ear? You simply enjoy the moment and it becomes the most important moment of your life.

When I think that it was just 10 months ago that Jamie called us to tell us Sally was pregnant, it is a wonder to now hold these little human beings with completely different looks and personalities.

On Sunday afternoon when it was about 39 degrees out, Peter and I bundled up the babies and then had them wrapped around



Grandma Shirlee with Graham and Henry

us in the newest baby slings so that they were strapped to our chests with their faces up against our hearts. After a brisk walk, we returned to the apartment and Graham and Henry were fast asleep strapped tightly onto our chests. We didn't want to disturb their sleeping mother so we kept them bound to us for another hour and I went about making a roast Sunday dinner while Graham happily snored on me. As I chopped up potatoes and carrots while I felt his warm breath against my throat, I thought to myself, "Does life ever get better than this? Nurturing people I love and feeling the miracle of life breathing next to my own heart."

Each stage of life brings new challenges and new gifts. While I was tickled that some shoppers at the mall thought the babies were mine, I also remembered how hard it is to take care of an infant, let alone two. I remembered the days of getting no rest, nursing, rocking, holding, and caring for my infant son when I was 29 years old. Twenty years later, I do have the stamina to care for babies, but not 24 hours a day like I did when my son was born.

The real gift of being a grandparent is that you slow down, ponder the miracle of life, and the joy of babies and children. You get to play again but without all the responsibility of parenting and you are reminded that no matter what age we are, we all need to be nurtured.



*"A grandchild fills
a space in your heart
that you never knew
was empty."*

—Unknown Author

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Council on Aging

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To provide services that support the independence and well-being of older adults in Sonoma County, and to be a strong advocate for the quality of life of elders locally and nationally.

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George and Jeanne Anderson: A Love Story

by Bonnie Allen

At age 33 and well on his way to becoming a confirmed bachelor, George Anderson met the love of his life.

He worked at the New York Stock Exchange; she was a teacher in California. Like many couples in the 1940s, they can thank the draft board for bringing them together for 57 years of a near-perfect marriage.

And it has been good for him. At 97, Anderson lives alone, and still drives to church and the supermarket and plays bridge with friends. A lifetime athlete, he still takes a daily walk around the nearby golf course at Oakmont and plays ping-pong three times a week.

He is reading a hefty 2-inch biography, *Ike: An American Hero*, by Michael Korda, as well as working through his wife's voluminous collection of literature.

What's his secret?

"A good wife. A marvelous person to live 57 years with. She took care of me, kept me happy. She fed me right. Never had a meal without fresh vegetables. I still eat a lot of fruit."

As an older draftee in 1943, Anderson didn't quite fit the mold. But he was ready for a break from a rather unchallenging job, and he saw the service as a way to take a few years off and still have his job when he came back. While he was waiting to be processed and assigned, he met a soldier who told him he could expect to be shipped out the next day.

However, said the soldier, he himself would be staying. "They had a problem with me. My IQ is 150, and they don't know what to do with me," said the soldier.

Sure enough, he was transferred the next day. After boot camp in Florida, Anderson was given several stateside assignments.

In one, he was assigned to a camp that housed Italian prisoners of war.

"They had no guards," he recalls. They had the run of the camp; they took over the PX and the dining room; and they were noisy, singing and carousing into the night.

"You couldn't chase them out of there. There were so many, they were a problem for us." His unit became more and more resentful. A potential riot was brewing.

The Army's solution was to transfer the whole company out.

Anderson wound up in Tracy,

California. He was assigned to what turned out to be a secret camp at Byron Hot Springs for interrogating Japanese prisoners.

The Japanese, he remembers, were much quieter than the Italians. "They gave us absolutely no trouble. We had a ball with them."

He had dinner with a buddy and his wife, who was so taken with him that she arranged a blind date with her friend, Jeanne McCollum. Like most soldiers, Anderson wasn't going to turn down female company, but Jeanne flat out refused at first. She'd had enough of soldiers. But the date was set, and Anderson enjoyed it enough that he asked her out a second time.

"We talked about ourselves," he says, getting to know each other, sharing their backgrounds. Then out of the blue, he blurted out, "I don't think you should marry me, but I wish you would."

The following week, to his surprise, she accepted. It was the beginning of a 57-year love story.

"She was the love of his life," says Karen Poer-Siela, Anderson's grandniece and food service manager for Council on Aging.

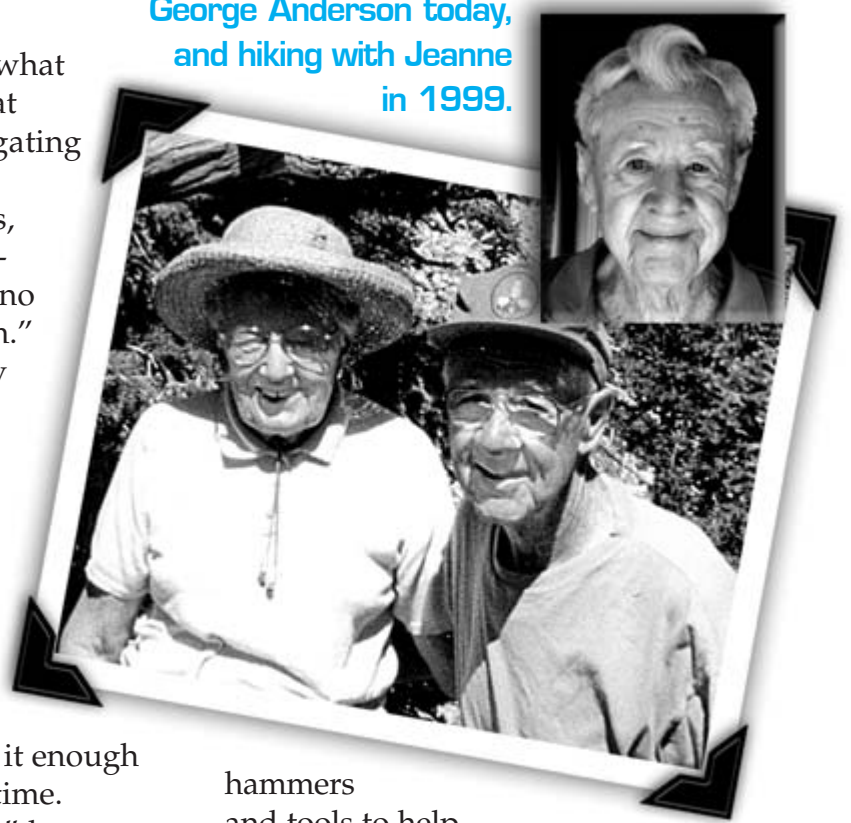
What drew him to her?

"Her personality, intelligence. We had a partnership. We did a lot of hiking all over the place. She and I ran the hikers club." She was active in church work and the American Association of University Women, ran a book club in Oakmont a couple of years, and wrote book reviews. Anderson built her an office and a pine-paneled sunroom in the home they moved to when he retired in 1971.

Jeanne passed away five years ago. But her presence is everywhere in Anderson's home, where he is surrounded by the furniture and bookcases she designed herself, collections of baskets and art objects from their many trips to Mexico, as well as her own paintings.

Marrying Anderson meant giving up her job and family in California and moving to New York. She took to it like a duck to water. Anderson's large, inclusive family took her in and won her heart. When Anderson decided to build a summer house, dozens of relatives showed up with

George Anderson today, and hiking with Jeanne in 1999.



hammers and tools to help.

What did Jeanne, a college graduate and professional teacher, see in Anderson, who had never been to college?

"She saw that I liked to read." And she knew he was intelligent. One day, she asked him what his IQ was.

"I said, 'I don't know, the army says 110.'" Since he'd never taken an IQ test before, Jeanne realized he didn't know how to take the test.

She said, "You didn't know how to take the test, did you?" If he knew how to take the test, she believed, he would have been one of those people the Army didn't know what to do with.

But then, the couple would never have met. Not a religious man, Anderson nevertheless is convinced that a higher power was at work to bring him together with his beloved Jeanne.

On Love



"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength; loving someone deeply gives you courage." —Lao Tzu

"Only love can be divided endlessly, and still not diminish." —Anne Morrow Lindbergh

"Love does not consist of gazing at each other, but in looking together in the same direction." —Antoine de Saint-Exupery

"Love is a choice you make from moment to moment." —Barbara De Angelis

"Anyone can be passionate, but it takes real lovers to be silly." —Rose Franken

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'The Savages'



Sonoma Seniors Today Goes to the Movies

Reviewed by Gary Weiner
Senior Legal Services



I first saw the trailer for Tamara Jenkins' new film "The Savages" while I was putting the finishing touches on the brand new Council on Aging Mediation Services. The trailer promised the story of Jon and Wendy Savage (played with charm and understatement by Philip Seymour Hoffman and Laura Linney) as they came to grips with the fact that their father was failing.

The movie would show how two middle-aged adults with their own issues, living far away from a very distant father for whom they each had, at best, ambivalent feelings, try to cope with the sudden onset of responsibility for his welfare. There would be conflict. There might be mayhem! What perfect fodder for promotion of a new mediation service targeted at just these types of issues. The movie opened at the Rialto, and I made a beeline for it the first chance I got.

First, this is a wonderful film in its own right. The acting is superb: we believe these are real people and we come to care an awful lot about them. Hoffman plays a drama professor, presumably at New York State University at Buffalo.

Linney plays Wendy Savage, aspiring playwright and full time temp worker who is stuck in a long term, unsatisfying affair with a married man. She fervently wishes to have one of her plays see the stage. So far, no luck. Linney's portrayal of the starving artist in Manhattan is a delight. Wendy tries to make her life work well, but her reservoirs are running low. Boy, do we wish something good would happen for her soon; she's adorable and resilient but luckless.

The plot takes off in the middle of the night when she is awakened by a call from the way too sunny Sun City, Arizona. The woman's mother is in the end stages of Alzheimer's. Her paid caregiver is charged with her care and that's it; even though dad lives in the house he's been on his own. Only now, dad is beginning to decline. The call is prompted by a bad bathroom incident. No need to explain this part, you get it. The gist of the call: come get your father.

Wendy calls Jon. He tries to calm things down. It's only a warning, he says. Soon, though, it's code red, and they are both on the plane to Sun City to get dad.

The real meat of the film, though, is in the depiction of the emotional and logistical challenges faced by these two adult children of dependent seniors in working through their decision making process. Not surprisingly, and entirely consistent with everything we all know to be real, the decision making is done in the shadow of the psycho-social charges between the siblings and between each of them and the father from whom they have been estranged for so long. Each of the "kids" also brings their own internal turmoil and the interpersonal complexities back at home to the table. Again, just like real life.

I went to see the film for two reasons: I wanted to be entertained, and I was hunting for material. Total success on count one and good, but not great, results on count two. The movie is fun to see and it plays with your heart. There are plenty of laughs and the opportunity to cry a little if you are so inclined. Go see the movie or rent it; it's a fine night's diversion.

As a professional, I find plenty to talk about here. Although the conflict between the siblings is not totally poisonous and they manage to make the necessary decisions in a fairly functional way, life might have been a bit easier on them both with a little help from a mediator. There is one strong confrontation scene that might have been avoided, had the kids gotten a little help with their communication. In fact, there are plenty of moments when a good mediator might have been able to smooth the waters enough to make a difference.

All told, a fine movie, perfect for a rental as soon as it comes out on DVD. And if you and your sibs haven't yet had the talks you need to have amongst yourselves and with your parents, watching this film together might just help jumpstart some serious talking. It could even help you avoid unnecessary conflict later on. If you don't, and conflict erupts, call me at Council on Aging Mediation Services. 545-0143, ext. 145.



COUNCIL ON AGING SENIOR DINING ROOMS



CLOVERDALE M-F, 12 noon
Cloverdale Senior Center
311 Main Street
894-4826

SANTA ROSA M-F, 12 noon
Santa Rosa Senior Center
704 Bennett Valley Road
545-8608

FORESTVILLE T & Th, 12 noon
Forestville Methodist Church
Center & Covey Streets
887-1070

SANTA ROSA M-F, 12 noon
Silvercrest Senior Housing
1050 3rd Street
525-4487

GUERNEVILLE T & F, 12 noon
Russian River Community Center
15010 Armstrong Woods Road
869-3998

SANTA ROSA T & Th, 11:30 am
Knox Presbyterian Church
1650 W. Third at Stony Point
525-0143, ext 135

HEALDSBURG M-F, 12 noon
Healdsburg Senior Center
133 Matheson Street
433-7515

SEBASTOPOL M-F, 12 noon
Sebastopol Senior Center
167 High Street
829-831

OCCIDENTAL M & W, 12 noon
St. Phillip's Church
3770 Bohemian Highway
525-0143, ext 135

SONOMA T, Th & F, 12 noon
Jerry Casson Senior Center
264 First Street East
996-1414

ROHNERT PARK M-F, 12 noon
Coddington Senior Center
6800 Hunter Drive
585-6787

WINDSOR M-F, 12 noon
Vinecrest Senior Apartments
8400 Hembree Lane
838-9261

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Leaving Your Legacy



"Inspired Philanthropy"

by Marianne McBride
Director of Development

We all receive many requests for donations from charities, local and otherwise, year round. How do we choose which to support?

I had a donor tell me once that he likes to play Santa Claus by giving a little to everyone. Others give only to organizations that they are familiar with—they volunteered for it, know people involved with it, know someone who was helped by it, or believe in its mission.

Honestly, with so many needs and so many great organizations, my personal list of contributions continues to grow. Having previously run a Boys & Girls Club and currently Director of Development at Council on Aging, my top philanthropic priorities are youth and seniors, but there are many other causes that are compelling to me.

Recognizing my own challenges in this area caused me to pick up a book by Tracy Gary entitled *Inspired Philanthropy—Your Step-by-Step Guide to Creating a Giving Plan and Leaving a Legacy*. This is a great book if you have asked any of the following questions:

- ◆ Considering becoming more thoughtful in your giving?
- ◆ Want to get organized in your giving so that you're less reactive and more proactive?
- ◆ Want to save your time by using exercises and worksheets that organize your values and prioritize your giving?
- ◆ Want to increase your energy by helping you focus on what matters to you and reducing "donor overwhelm"?
- ◆ Want to optimize your giving by helping you leverage with mission matches and well-honed giving strategies?
- ◆ Hope to get your family involved in giving together?

Filled with worksheets and exercises, this book shows how anyone can align and integrate values, passions, and dreams for their communities and families into their plans. *Inspired Philanthropy* explains how to make a difference by creating giving and legacy plans, tells what questions to ask nonprofits, and spells out how to partner with advisors and nonprofit leaders for inspired outcomes.

My goal this year is to create my own giving plan and to begin to think about how I will leave my legacy. If you have thought of doing the same, *Inspired Philanthropy* is a great place to start.

Donors Continued from page 3

Jean Gill	Susan Randall	Charlotte Baird	Patricia Hassett
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Q: How can you invest in the well-being of Sonoma County seniors?

A: Set up a charitable trust or estate plan that will help us feed and care for seniors now and into the future.

For information on how you can help Sonoma County seniors, call Shirlee Zane, CEO, at 525-1059.

The Council on Aging is proud to announce that the Endowment Fund is managed by Exchange Bank. The Exchange Bank continuously serves Sonoma County community charitable endeavors.

For more information, call 524.3151.



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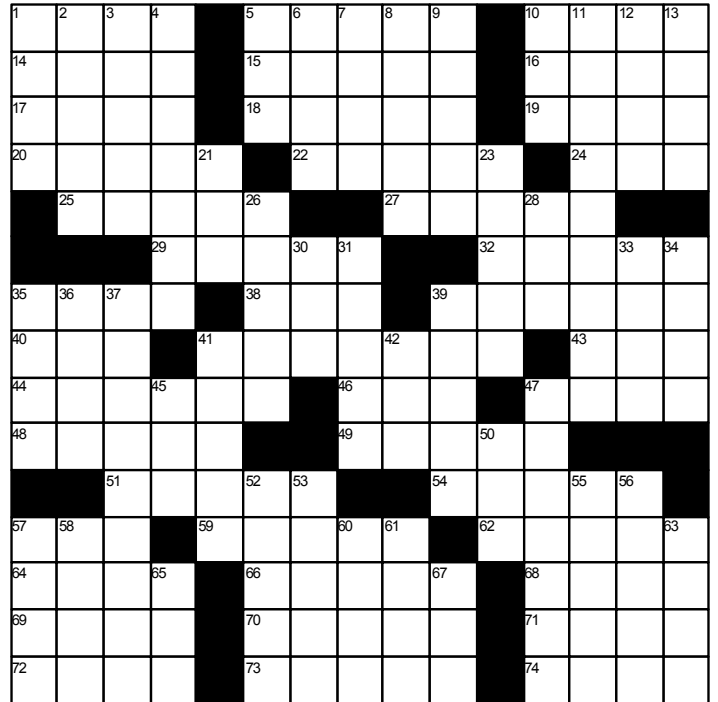
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February Crossword Puzzle

Solution on page 8

ACROSS

- 1 Niche
- 5 Shrub
- 10 Western Samoa capital
- 14 Take the wrinkles out
- 15 Car manufacturer
- 16 Rear
- 17 Doorbell sound
- 18 Install
- 19 Wager
- 20 Sharp
- 22 Divest
- 24 Negative prefix
- 25 Test copy
- 27 Swelling
- 29 Moved furtively (informal)
- 32 Chocolate tree
- 35 Trends
- 38 Calistoga specialty
- 39 Space platform
- 40 Winter hazard
- 41 Riot dispeller
- 43 Bard's before
- 44 Leone's dog
- 46 Take control of
- 47 Spot
- 48 Lazed about
- 49 Active
- 51 Christian love
- 54 9 Down's weapon
- 57 "Take ___, She's Mine," 1963 film
- 59 This month it really is free
- 62 Gold weight
- 64 Heroic
- 66 Fast food side dish
- 68 "___ Driver," 1976 De Niro film
- 69 Tear
- 70 Mares' offspring
- 71 Bullet point
- 72 Supplicates
- 73 Incline
- 74 Yield



www.CrosswordWeaver.com

DOWN

- 1 Helps
- 2 Make oneself pretty
- 3 Echo sounder
- 4 Occupy wholly
- 5 Female sib
- 6 Wiolds
- 7 Pooch
- 8 Blue
- 9 Valentine's Day messenger
- 10 Palindromic shout
- 11 National monument near Hollister
- 12 Towards
- 13 City in Yemen
- 21 Truck weight unit
- 23 Tiny kisses
- 26 Signal flare
- 28 "Mother, ___ I?" child's game
- 30 Tax time expert, for short
- 31 Destiny
- 33 Senior grp.
- 34 Comply
- 35 Pacific island nation
- 36 School, for short
- 37 Avowing
- 39 December hero
- 41 Like the Petaluma River
- 42 Fuel
- 45 Frat party accessory
- 47 Unpredictable
- 50 Gall
- 52 Cigarette emanations
- 53 Register
- 55 Speechify
- 56 Grew
- 57 Sage, for one
- 58 Fencing sword
- 60 Giovanni's greeting
- 61 Beatles' film, 1965
- 63 "Of ___ and the River," 1935 Thomas Wolfe novel
- 65 Recordings
- 67 Cotati-Petaluma dir.



More Reasons to Enjoy That Cup o' Joe



A French study found that older women who drank more than three cups of coffee a day were 33 percent less likely to lose any of their verbal memory than women who drank one cup a day or less. A Japanese study also found that women who consumed three or more cups of coffee were about half as likely to develop colon cancer.

Sorry, men, only women reap these benefits. However, an Italian meta-analysis concluded that by drinking coffee women and men alike cut their risk of liver cancer by a substantial 41 percent!

More coffee, anyone?

"Love is the thing that enables a woman to sing while she mops up the floor after her husband has walked across it in his barn boots."

—Hoosier Farmer

"What the world really needs is more love and less paper work."

—Pearl Bailey



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Supply the missing numbers so that every row, column and 9-digit square contain only one of each number. No math skills are required, and no guesswork.

For hints on doing Sudoku puzzles, visit www.websudoku.com, or send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Sonoma Seniors Today, 30 Kawana Springs Rd., Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

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

Working for You

Information & Assistance/ Case Management:

Do you need help with senior resources? Call us any time for information, assistance and case management services. Call Carol Martin at 525-0143, ext. 113. Sebastopol seniors only: call the Russian River Senior Center at 869-0618.

Senior Financial Services:

Our bonded and insured counselors assist seniors who are unable to handle bill paying, checkbook reconciliation, eligibility documentation for retirement programs, and other financial needs relative to their daily money management. This program is especially designed for the forgetful senior or the senior with poor vision and often protects them from financial abuse and late fees associated with forgetting to pay their bills. For peace of mind, call Connie Aust, Director, today at (707) 525-0143, ext. 108.

Senior Peer Support:

This program is to help seniors struggling with serious mental illness access services and programs that help them develop skills and social support, leading to a more constructive and satisfying life. After an assessment visit by CoA case managers and a licensed marriage and family therapist, clients are matched with trained volunteers for 12 weekly support sessions to develop a care plan solution with the client's approval, then follow-up with progress notes. Sponsored by the Department of Mental Health Services. Call Michele Leonard, Director of Volunteers, 525-0143, ext. 147, for information.

Lawyer Referral Service:

If you are 60 years old or older and need an attorney, you will be referred to a panel of elder law attorneys experienced in working with seniors. An initial half-hour consultation is \$30. If you retain the attorney for further services, fees will be at the attorney's usual rate. The service is certified by the California State Bar, Certification #0111. Call 525-1146 for information.

Nutrition:

Meals on Wheels delivers hot meals to temporarily home-bound or chronically ill seniors. Ten dining sites provide meals and companionship. Therapeutic meals and nutritional counseling are available for special needs. Call Shelli Kittelson, 525-0143, ext. 135, for information on home delivery or dining site locations.

Senior Day Services:

This service has helped hundreds of people to reconnect with others through our Senior Day Activities program, offering the opportunity to gather for meals, exercise, entertainment, companionship, and arts and crafts. The programs are held in Healdsburg, Sonoma, and Sebastopol. Call Sharon Boyce at 525-0143, ext. 116.

Senior Helper List:

Our referral list includes caregivers in the county pre-screened with DMV/criminal background checks, employer references and interviews. Their services include some light housework, driving, cooking, and personal care. They charge approximately \$15-\$18 per hour. The cost of the list is \$50. Call Caroline Edillor, 525-0143, ext. 104.

Senior Legal Services:

Legal consultation and representation in matters of housing, consumer fraud, Social Security and SSI, Medi-Cal and Medicare, and elder abuse are provided. Also available are simple trusts, wills and durable powers of attorney for health care and finance. Call 525-0143, ext. 140.

Mediation Services:

Are you about to create an estate plan and document all of your wishes about medical and financial decision making? Would you like to include your family in the process? A mediator or facilitator can help make that conversation work smoothly. Mediators can help everyone participate in the most useful way. For more information call Gary Weiner, General Counsel, 525-0143, ext. 145.

Save the date...✓

◆ Three LandPaths Family Outings.

Bring the grandchildren to these FREE winter outings. To reserve space and for outing details, call 524-9318, or email outings@landpaths.org. FREE, reservation required:

• Feb. 10: Annual Steelhead walk.

Rain or shine; Easy walk & talk w/ optional moderate hike. Explore a stretch of Salmon Creek, look for fish and learn about innovative efforts to highlight local natural history and conservation.

• Feb. 16: Petaluma River By Foot.

Easy 2 or 4 mile flat walk; BYO binoculars and lunch; Include age(s) of kid(s) 9:30 AM-2 PM. Explore District protected Alman Marsh & Shollenberger Park, with its nearly 150 bird species. Optional picnic lunch at McNear Peninsula—a piece of protected open space in the heart of Petaluma.

• Mar. 1: Family Amphibian Search at

Healdsburg Ridge. Easy walk; BYO lunch; Include age(s) of kid(s); 10 AM-2:30 PM.

Connect your grandchildren with the outdoors as we hunt for frogs, newts, salamanders, and their kin at the District's Healdsburg Ridge Preserve.

Visit landpaths.org online for more LandPaths outings this month.

◆ Nov.-June: Free Senior Movies.

(First Thursday of every month), 10 AM, Third Street Cinemas, 620 Third Street, Santa Rosa. For movie titles, call 522-0330, ext. 3. Sponsors: Todd VanDenburg Financial & Insurance Services, Santa Rosa Memorial Park & Mortuary/Eggen & Lance Chapel, and Dr. Daniel Brown/Synergy Medical Group. For info call 523-1586, ext. 21.

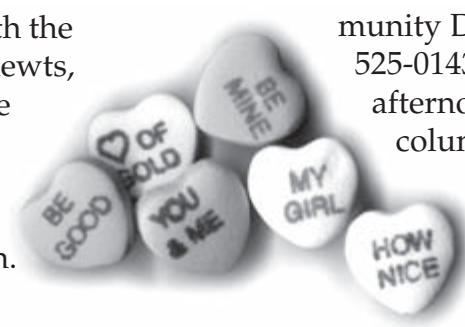
◆ Feb. 5: Vote! For info on candidates and the 7 propositions, visit smartvoter.org or the California League of Women Voters at ca.lwv.org.

◆ Feb. 9: 5th Annual "Chowder Day in Bodega Bay."

Taste and vote on your favorite clam chowder from restaurants in Bodega Bay. Start at the Sonoma Coast Visitor Center, 850 Hwy One, Bodega Bay, visit each of the participating restaurants for your free clam chowder sample and vote! Call for more information. FREE. 11 am-3 pm. Info: 875-3866.

◆ Feb. 28: Empowered Women:

Aging to Perfection. The Event Center at Vintner's Inn, 11:30 am-1:30 pm. A benefit for Meals on Wheels and the Community Disaster Kitchen. \$250. 525-0143, ext. 146. An afternoon with advice columnist Amy Dickinson ("Ask Amy.") See page 4 for full description.



Valentine, Continued from page 1

asked it and because it was interesting.

"I don't feel old. I don't feel like I'm 80. I don't think that way, feel that way or have thoughts of the future that way. I know it's a strange thing to say, but I feel dynamic. I love living, and I want to live a long, long time and I want to enjoy it. And I have a lovely lady to be with me that will say the same thing. We join hands and we go forward with that thought on life."

"Maybe every day is Valentine's Day for you?" I ask.

"Absolutely. It is!" says Rod.

Leone: "Just keep doing and reading and walking and exercising. Those are our goals. We're very fortunate; we know that too."

"There are so many older people out there who would be glad to have a friend. But they're shy, a lot of people are shy—Rod is shy! I don't know if he would have ever made the effort to meet me had it not been for the fact that I said, I think I like that man. I liked him for what he represented to me.

"I just want to assure you there's always an opportunity to bring a new person into your life, to be open to it and to take chances—and you know, you have to be a little aggressive at times," she suggests with a laugh.

It's been a wonderful ride; but if they hadn't volunteered, and if Leone hadn't asked Rod to go dancing, none of it would have happened.

