



Gray Matters

Young at Heart Event brings Music, Dancing, Beautiful Cakes and Needed Funds for our Volunteer Driver Program

BY MAGGIE KRAFT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A1AA hosted a successful first ever Young and Heart event on October 1 at the Arcata Playhouse. Local Young and Lovely, a coy, theatrical and engaging jazz band provided a lively and entertaining mix of beloved “swing” jazz tunes from the 1930s to 1950s. Eight bakers provided their interpretations of “Young at Heart” with beautifully decorated cakes, and bidding was lively for the chance to take one of these cakes home.

A1AA thanks the bakers: Ramone’s Bakery, Savina Correll-Finley, Jade Hoff, Talya’s Cakes, Jeny G Bakes, Alexa Marquez, Melody Nellist, and Brandi Easter, and congratulates the winner of this first ever event – Natalya Humphrey of Talya’s Cakes for her “girl on a swing” cake.

We couldn’t have done it without our sponsors: Nancy Noll, Humboldt Senior Resource Center, Redwood Caregiver Resource Center, Lost Coast Brewery, Suzanne Smith, Realtor, Northern California Community Blood Bank, Northcoast Co-op, Express Employment Professionals and Humboldt Moving and Storage.

Thanks to our sponsors, attendees, and bakers, we made over \$5,000 for our Volunteer Driver Program. Raising funds for this program will continue to be critical as historical funding sources for this program will significantly decrease in July 2026. We are trying to get ahead of this and invite you to consider a donation to help maintain our ability to get folks to their medical appointments.

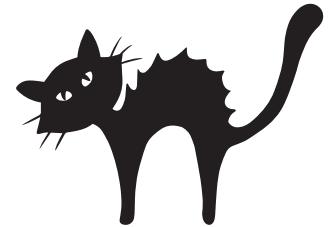
What does VDP actually do?

We recruit volunteers to take local older adults who can no longer drive to their appointments and may not have anyone else who can help them. Our riders don’t live near bus routes or can’t easily get to a bus stop. We pick them up at their front door and drop them off at their appointment. After the appointment we pick them up and take them home again.

Our drivers are screened and trained and receive mileage reimbursement for their efforts. We use an online system to make it easy for drivers to assign themselves rides, and drivers can do as many or as few rides as their schedule allows.

Our drivers are adored by our riders and our drivers say they greatly appreciate the opportunity to get to know new people and provide such an easy service to the community.

Join us. Donate. Volunteer. Make a difference.



Newsletter Highlights

YOUNG AT HEART 2025

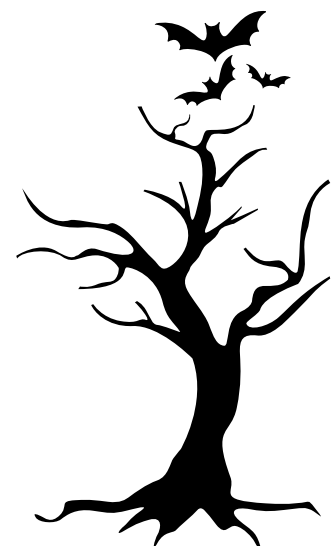
YOUNG AT HEART 2025
EVENT PHOTOS

STORIES OF A1AA

TIPS AND TOOLS FOR
CAREGIVERS

HICAP ENROLLMENT

UPCOMING EVENTS



Young at Heart 2025



Stories of A1AA Through the Years:

FROM WILL TIFT, ELDERCARE COORDINATOR, 2000-2003

I was hired by Sandi Fitzpatrick who remained a mentor for many years thereafter. My supervisor was the remarkable Marianne Nix. My title was Eldercare Coordinator. At that time, A1AA had contracts with the City of Eureka, Humboldt Bank, Humboldt County, the Humboldt County Office of Education and the Pacific Lumber Company to offer care consultation services to their employees when they needed help navigating the long-term care system (usually on behalf of an elderly parent).



This was my first “real” job after college, so I was very green in addition to being brand new to the aging services network. Fortunately, I was surrounded by good teachers who were also great people. I left in February of 2003 because my fiancé wanted to relocate to Sacramento. I’ve worked for the Area 4 Agency on Aging ever since in the capacities of Outreach Specialist, Planner and Assistant Director.

One of the more interesting and unique projects I worked on at A1AA was the development of the Long Term Care Referral Guide which featured a flow chart diagram showing where to send folks based on which types of issues they were having. I would always introduce us as “the number 1 Agency on Aging in California.” Though my time there was short, it shaped my understanding of how the system should function for people – greatly influencing the work I continue to do today.

My hope for A1AA going forward is that it continues to embrace the “unique local character” that the Older Americans Act expects and that its individual local communities deserve.



FROM ELAINE DAVID, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, 2002-2018

What I remember . . . It was a lucky break to find an accounting position that supported a mission I identified with. Despite the overwhelming workload & navigating some crazy federal & state compliance requirements it was a satisfying 16 years. I felt I made a difference even in the capacity of a fiscal employee - supporting the good-hearted program folks doing the front-line work of aiding our seniors.

Best thing . . . Squeaky clean audits! Maintained fiscal standards that ensured A1AA’s funding wasn’t jeopardized.

FROM VALORIE DAVIS, MULTIPLE ROLES

I joined the A1AA team in 2012 when the Humboldt Senior Resource Center turned over the duties of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to A1AA. The Administrative Assistant position was half-time, but fortunately the Volunteer Driver Program (then part of RSVP) had room for me as well and I became a Volunteer Specialist. Soon the VDP position became a full-time position.

I left for a couple of years to become a caregiver for a family member but returned to Volunteer Driver in 2016. During that time, I added a part-time Administrative Assistant position for the new Redwood Coast Village, helped with Gold Star Move Management, and became an Administrative Assistant for RSVP. Volunteer Driver was growing by leaps and bounds, and soon became part of Information and Assistance. I joined I&A full time until I took early retirement in 2019.



A Thank You to Our Intern: Miranda Dimiceli

I'm honored to be spotlighted by Area 1 Agency on Aging as a Master of Social Work (MSW) intern. My time here has been deeply rewarding, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to make a meaningful impact on the lives of older adults in our community. Through my work in Fall Risk Assessments and the Homemaker Program, I've seen firsthand how empathy, advocacy, and even small interventions can be transformative.

My internship has focused on identifying and mitigating fall risks among older adults, while also supporting them through essential homemaker services. I've approached this work with a compassionate presence and a deep commitment to understanding the systems that shape aging experiences.

I've seen how a single phone call, a resource referral, or a moment of empathy can dramatically shift an older adult's experience. Social work isn't always about grand gestures; it's about being consistently present, listening deeply, and responding with care.

This experience has also revealed the emotional labor involved in supporting older adults through isolation, grief, and life transitions. One of the biggest surprises has been how emotionally taxing it can be to witness systemic gaps, especially when resources are limited. But even in those moments, I've learned that small, thoughtful actions can make a world of difference. I am grateful for the insight I've gained. This journey has reaffirmed that meaningful change begins with empathy, and that every connection, no matter how small, can be a catalyst for dignity and hope.

We have moved to a new Facebook Page!



Area 1 Agency on Aging has transitioned to a new Facebook Page, and we don't want you to miss a thing! To stay updated on our latest programs, services, and community events, please follow us at: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61566601734464>

We appreciate your support and look forward to connecting with you on our new page!

Thank you for being a part of our community!

HICAP Appointment Reminder System Upgrade



We're excited to announce that **HICAP has upgraded our appointment reminder system!**

You will now receive **automated reminders** via **text message or voicemail** approximately **24 hours before your scheduled appointment.**

This improvement is designed to make it easier for you to stay informed and prepared for your appointment.

If you have questions or need to update your contact preferences, please contact our office (**707-444-3000** OR **800-434-0222**)



Tips and Tools for Family Caregivers

If you are planning to run a marathon, you'd train continuously. You'd keep yourself in tiptop shape. You'd eat right, get plenty of sleep, and exercise regularly. You'd keep abreast of your healthcare and share your running challenges with others.

Caregiving is the longest marathon most of us can conceive. And we have to train in the midst of the marathon. How successful we are depends on how well we train.

How important is this? Evidence shows that most caregivers are ill-prepared for their role and provide care with little or no support, according to Alexis Glidewell, LCSW of the Redwood Caregiver Resource Center.

Caregiving by nature evokes guilt and grief, says Glidewell: guilt about not being able to do more for their loved one, and sometimes wishing to be free of the obligation, about taking time for one; and grief about the continual decline of their loved one despite the caregiver's best efforts. Sometimes a simple living arrangement evolves into a caregiving role the caregiver didn't expect to take on. To cope with these feelings is important not just for the loved one's health but for the caregiver's as well.

There are three essentials for caregivers to remember:

Get in Touch with Good Information

Make sure you have a medical diagnosis for your loved one, so you will know what they are able to do and how that may change with time. "Having this knowledge doesn't make caregiving less sad or less frustrating, but it makes it less personal," says Glidewell. If your loved one has forgotten how to tie his shoes, it's not because you have been doing it for him. Use this information to put a plan in place for future care, or even the eventuality of not being able to continue the care yourself.

Get in touch with Support Early On

Grief is inevitable in caregiving, as your loved one's health deteriorates. You may see no way out of your dilemma, no room to address your own needs. "You can go to every class in the world, read every book, watch every training video, but in the end you have to have the energy to keep on despite the grief. Self-care has to be paramount," says Glidewell.

"The caregivers we support at the Redwood Caregiver Resource Center really want to do the best job they can, but if they are emotionally exhausted and have unrealistic expectations for themselves, they can't do a good job," she says. Coping with caregiver-related stress is not something you should tough out on your own. Talking to others in support groups or counseling can make a huge difference.

Focus on Self Care

This means taking care of your own health: getting a good night's sleep, getting some exercise, keeping in touch with friends and family, and having some time off for yourself.

Redwood Caregiver Resource Center offers support to family caregivers living in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. We offer in-person and online support groups in English and an online support group in Spanish, respite care, monthly online caregiver education and training opportunities, counseling and ongoing support. To connect with Redwood Caregiver Resource Center by phone call (707) 582-8967 or (707) 542-0282. You may register yourself by creating an account in CareNav, which can be found on our website: Redwoodcrc.org.

November is National Family Caregiver Month. If you are a caregiver, take a little time to review your self-care options. If you are not a caregiver, reach out to someone you know who is to offer to prepare a meal, provide respite or transportation, or just provide a listening ear if needed.



MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT 2026

If you are a Medicare beneficiary and unable to receive assistance from HICAP to review your coverage for 2026, or attend one of our scheduled webinars, “USING MEDICARE.GOV PLAN FINDER FOR OPEN ENROLLMENT”, you still have options to review and update your current coverage:

Call Medicare

1-800-633-4227

or

Visit our website:

<https://a1aa.org/openenrollment/> to find step-by-step guidance on using the Medicare.gov plan finder

It's not too late!

Sign up today to participate in one of our upcoming webinars scheduled for October 22, 2025, and November 19, 2025.

Register here: <https://a1aa.org/openenrollment/>



Navigating Medicare

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Why Shared Housing? To Benefit You!



Shared housing can take many forms. Northcoast Homeshare's comprehensive intake process helps us learn about YOU, to help YOU find a compatible match. Once the match is made, we stay in touch in case you need additional support.

Read on to find out what a recent arrangement looks like, as reported by Dan, the home provider (full article in Senior News magazine, 9/2025).

When my gas furnace died one winter, I limped through with firewood and expensive space heaters until I had solar panels and heat pumps installed. This new reliable warmth came with... a new mortgage. Eager to share my 1925 cozy home, I searched for a compatible housemate. Four unsuccessful tries later, I felt discouraged.

Then a neighbor suggested Northcoast Homeshare. After one false start, they matched me with a single dad and his toddler. I'd hoped to make the house feel alive again—and got just that! The quick patter of little feet, the smells of real cooking, the warmth of easy conversation—what a change in energy.

I eat better, laugh more (the toddler antics!), and sometimes feel a small hand slip into mine. It has truly been an unexpected blessing.

Contact Northcoast Homeshare to find the right fit for YOU and embark on a supported journey of mutually beneficial partnership.

707-442-3763 x213 | homeshare@a1aa.org | www.a1aa.org/homesharing



Daniel Carmell of Eureka (left) enjoys chats in the kitchen with housemate James



HOMESHARE

INFO SESSION

707-442-3763
homeshare@a1aa.org

WED. OCTOBER 22, 2025
2:00-4:30PM
Main Library, Downstairs Room
1313 Third Street, Eureka

No need to sign up

A chance to discuss all things shared housing!

Save the Date!
10/22/25

Become a Volunteer Driver with Area 1 Agency on Aging: Every Mile Matters

FROM TESS MARTIN, SOCIAL SERVICES SUPERVISOR

At A1AA, we are dedicated to improving the lives of our older adult community members. We are looking for committed and caring individuals to join our Volunteer Driver Program. This program is designed to help older adults overcome transportation challenges by providing them with assistance to attend medical appointments and access groceries, thereby enabling them to maintain their independence.

Our volunteers are essential to this mission, offering crucial rides to those who might otherwise struggle to meet their basic needs. Rick Knapp, a valued volunteer since 2012, shared his motivation: "I started volunteering in October 2012 after reading about the program in the Northcoast Journal. At the time, A1AA had only about 12 volunteers. The flexibility to choose my own schedule and the opportunity to contribute to an underserved program drew me in."

One of the greatest benefits of our Volunteer Driver Program is its flexibility. You can decide when and how often you volunteer, making it easy to fit this rewarding role into your schedule. Whether you can dedicate a



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7 "BECOME A VOLUNTEER DRIVER WITH A1AA"

few hours each week or just a few days each month, your time will make a significant difference in someone's life. For those we serve, the impact is profound. Ann Greenwater, a client of the program, expressed her appreciation: "As an elder with few friends and recent health issues, I'm incredibly grateful for the Volunteer Driver Program. The drivers are not only punctual and helpful but also provide much-needed companionship. My heartfelt thanks to all of you." Every ride is an opportunity to brighten someone's day. We invite you to join our dedicated team of volunteers and make a meaningful impact in our community. Contact us today to learn more about the A1AA Volunteer Driver Program and how you can get involved. Each mile you drive helps someone get closer to the care they need.

Know Your Rights: Don't Believe the "No Long-Term Care Beds" Myth

FROM ANDREA CAMERA, LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN MANAGER

Every October, long-term care advocates nationwide observe Resident Rights Month, celebrating the dignity and rights of residents. This year's theme, "Stand with Me," highlights the importance of supporting residents who speak up for their rights.

In the spirit of Resident Rights Month, I want to shed light on a myth families often hear from skilled nursing facilities. They may be told that while "short-term rehabilitation beds" are available, there are "no long-term care beds." This is misleading and may be illegal payor source discrimination.

What you should know:

- Medicare covers up to 100 days of rehabilitation in a skilled nursing facility after a hospital stay.
- After 100 days, residents needing ongoing care may rely on Medi-Cal, which reimburses facilities at a lower rate.
- Some facilities may discourage or deny admission to residents with Medi-Cal by claiming there are no "long-term care beds."
- Residents who have used their 100 Medicare days may be told they must leave even if they still need care. These residents have the right to apply for Medi-Cal, and federal and state laws protect against inappropriate or untimely discharges.

The truth is: a bed is a bed. California's SB 1354 prohibits facilities that accept Medi-Cal from treating residents differently based on how they pay. Facilities must provide the same scope, level, and quality of care to all residents, including admissions, room assignments, services, and meals.

How long someone stays in long-term care should be determined by the resident and their healthcare team—not insurance type. If you or your loved one is denied admission or pressured to leave due to payment source, contact the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program of Humboldt and Del Norte Counties at (707) 269-1330 for support.

Planning Ahead: Long Term Care

While it's natural to want to remain independent for as long as possible, it's important to think about what kind of help you may need as you get older.

The best time to think about long-term care is before you need it. Planning for the possibility of long-term care gives you and your family time to learn about services available in your community and what they cost. It also allows you to make important decisions while you are still able.

Begin by thinking about what would happen if you became seriously ill or disabled. Talk with your family, friends, and lawyer about who would provide care if you needed help for a long time and what kind of care you would want.

Most people prefer to stay in their own home for as long as they can. Often, in-home services are provided by unpaid caregivers (family members or friends). But living at home as you age requires careful consideration and planning. There may come a time when it's no longer safe or comfortable to live alone. Be realistic and plan to revisit the decision as your needs change over time.

Talking with an older adult about residential care

Deciding whether and when an older adult should move from their home is often difficult and emotional. Some people choose to move to a long-term facility because they can't or don't want to manage their home any longer. Others may not want to move but find that they need more assistance and hands-on care.

To start the conversation, find out about the available housing options so you can discuss them together. Some families and caregivers find that a meeting or conference call is a good way to talk through the pros and cons of each option. The goal is to come up with a plan that works for everyone, especially the older person.

Paying for long-term care

Long-term care can be expensive. How people pay for care depends on their financial situation, their eligibility for assistance programs, and the kinds of services they use. People often rely on a variety of payment sources, including:

- Personal funds, including savings, a pension or other retirement fund, income from investments, or proceeds from the sale of a home.
- Federal and state government programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).
- Private financing, including long-term care insurance, reverse mortgages, certain life insurance policies, annuities, and trusts.

The earlier you plan for long-term care, the more options you'll have. Researching options and factoring these into your financial planning can save you money and help you understand what type of care is best for your health needs.

Upcoming Events

WE'LL SEE YOU THERE!

OCTOBER 2025

- 10/22/2025 Medicare.gov Webinar** 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Register [HERE](#)
- Homeshare Meet & Greet** 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM
Eureka Library
- 10/25/2025 Growing Community: Rraninou'waduk The Center at McKinleyville Open House** 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM
1615 Heartwood Dr, McKinleyville
- Bear River Rancheria Elder Luncheon and Tabling** 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
266 Keisner, Loleta
- 10/28/2025 A1AA Board of Directors Meeting** 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM
Check the website events calendar for details!

NOVEMBER 2025

- 11/11/2025 Veteran's Day** OFFICE CLOSED
- 11/18/2025 A1AA Board of Directors Meeting** 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM
Check the website events calendar for details!
- 11/19/2025 Medicare.gov Webinar** 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Register [HERE](#)
- 11/27/2025 Thanksgiving Day** OFFICE CLOSED
- 11/28/2025 Day after Thanksgiving Day** OFFICE CLOSED

DECEMBER 2025

- | | |
|---|---|
| 12/24/2025 Christmas Eve OFFICE CLOSED | 12/31/2025 New Years Eve OFFICE CLOSED |
| 12/25/2025 Christmas Day OFFICE CLOSED | 01/01/2026 New Years Day OFFICE CLOSED |
| 12/26/2025 Day after Christmas OFFICE CLOSED | 01/02/2026 Day after New Years Day OFFICE CLOSED |

