MV CENTER FOR LIVING

**Executive Director: Leslie Clapp** lesliec@mvcenter4liivng.org

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Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday, 8:30AM-4:30PM

Staff

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| Executive Director: | Leslie Clapp |
| Administrative Assistant:  Supportive Day Program Supervisor: | Katie Vieira  Mary Holmes |
| Programs Assistant: | Sarah Young |
| SDP Special Assistant:  SDP Special Assistant:  SDP Special Assistant:  SDP Special Assistant:  Meal Program Coordinator:  Meal Program Assistant:  Dementia Family Support Services: | Linda Vancour  Cathy Gallagher  Hermine Hull/Heidi Carter  Carol Searle/Susan Block  Rosie Roberts  Janice Rose  Nancy Langman |

Mission statement

“Martha’s Vineyard Center for Living strives to improve the quality of life for those impacted by issues of aging and impairment.”

The Center for Living is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. A 501c3 non-profit, we are generously supported by all six island towns, and governed by a Board of Directors consisting of 11 members, 1 from each island town, 4 at-large, and one County representative. Current board members are: Risë Terney, President (WT); Jane Keenan, Clerk (Edg); Shirley Dewing, Treasurer (Edg); Sandy Joyce (Edg); Christine Burke, (Tisb); Gail Barmakian, (OB); James Klingensmith (WT); Martina Thornton (Dukes County). We have openings on the board for members from Aquinnah and Chilmark.

As with all of our community, MV Center for Living was negatively affected by the COVID pandemic from March of 2020 through most of 2021. As our doors were closed, we quickly moved to online zoom programming, email, phone calls and socially distanced, short outdoor “drive-by” meeting with our clients. We took advantage of the federal PPP loan program and were generously supported by local funders that kept our employees working, and our services to the community going. In April of 2021, we officially re-opened to a modified in person program schedule and since then have steadily built our programs back up to pre-pandemic levels.

**“a cost effective and affordable alternative to private, in-home care”**

Supportive Day Program

The Supportive Day Program (SDP) is a professionally run social program for individuals

who would be at risk if left alone and may experience the negative effects of stigma and isolation. Our clients are unable to participate independently in community activities

and programs such as those offered at local

Senior Centers.

In 2022, the Supportive Day Program provided approx. 2360 units of service (days). The daily cost of the program is $60, with an additional $10 transportation fee for those who take advantage of this service. The Center is a place for folks who are otherwise isolated, to meet their peers, develop friendships and enjoy the social activity and the company of others. Respite for caregivers is critical aspect of our services. Schedules are arranged according to the individual needs of the participant and their caregivers. By comparison, in-home, private duty care, (if it’s available) is at least $35 per hour. The Supportive Day Program is a cost effective, affordable alternative to private in-home care, and in the long run, more beneficial because of the opportunity for social engagement.

Equally important is the respite we provide for families and caregivers of SDP participants. Many families are juggling the care of a parent or older relative as well as young children and a full-time job. Spouses become 24/7/365 caregivers for a partner who can no longer take care of themselves. Our clients have multiple medical conditions or chronic illnesses, including Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias, Parkinson’s, as well as the decline in hearing and/or sight and mobility that often comes with advanced age, yet most folks wish to live at home, as independently as possible, in the care of their families, and are eager to spend time with peers and friends. The Center is a place where all can engage in their community, regardless of ability, enjoying the company of others in a safe environment free of stigma. The Supportive Day offers companionship and a wide range of engaging activities tailored to individual capacity, including exercise and yoga, music and dancing, arts and crafts, discussion and book groups, history club and more. Most importantly, careful attention is paid to the physical and emotional needs of our clients. We provide a morning snack with coffee and conversation, and a nutritious, home-made noon meal served family style.

Transportation has always been an added feature of the Supportive Day Program, provided for many years solely by the Vineyard Transit Authority. Although some families opt to drive their loved one to and from the Center, most take advantage of the added time and security the VTA Lift service provides. For some clients using wheelchairs or walkers to support mobility, it’s the only safe way for them to get to the Center. In October of 2021, we entered into a partnership agreement with the VTA to lease one of their Lift vans and provide a portion of the Supportive Day transportation through MVCL. We hired a driver and manage the daily scheduling, pickups and drop offs for approximately 2/3 of our SDP clients; the VTA continues to provide service to the other 1/3 of clients. This effort has been generously supported by the MV Community Foundation, with seed money to cover driver, fuel, and insurance costs.

**Shopping Shuttle**

In addition, to make optimal use of the VTA vehicle, a pilot Shopping Shuttle program has been planned, in collaboration with the Oak Bluffs and Tisbury Councils on Aging, Healthy Aging MV, and with additional financial support from the MV Community Foundation. SDP transportation drop-offs and pickups occur from 8:00-9:30am and 2-3:30pm, so the van is available between 10am and 2pm for other trips. One day a week is set aside for each town, when older residents of that town who do not drive will be picked up and taken to the grocery store, Post Office, and other local destinations to do their shopping and errands. After much planning and a search for a driver, we hope to get this program on the road in October 2022.

Dementia Family Support Services (DFS)

* Dementia Caregiver Support Group
* Memory Screenings
* Family Support Services - individualized support, care management, planning and referrals
* Habilitation Therapy / Dementia Coaching

In FY22, we expanded the Dementia Caregiver Support Group to meet weekly, Friday mornings, on zoom. This is one of the few positive outcomes from COVID – we learned that zoom is a great platform for people to meet regularly when health concerns, distance and time constraints are barriers. We have had regular attendance of between 5 and 12 members every week, with caregivers joining us from where they are; MV, Gloucester, New Hampshire, New York, Connecticut, and Georgia, even Canada. Some caregivers live on MV and are caring for a loved one elsewhere; others are long distance caregivers who’s loved one lives on MV.

Habilitation Therapy, or Dementia Coaching. HT helps caregivers create and maintain a positive experience for a person experiencing the effects of a dementia related illness. The objective is to provide education and support to the caregiver and to provide suggestions to modify elements of the environment that may exacerbate the disabilities of the disease. The Dementia Coach is a trained clinician who offers knowledge and expertise to caregivers (and the person with the disease when appropriate) in understanding the disease process, as well as techniques of communication, behavior management, structuring the environment, creating therapeutic activities, and planning for future care needs.

**Memory Café**

In 2022, the Memory & Music Café was re-branded as an “Open House Memory Café” and moved to Friday mornings from 10-11 am at the Center. The primary goal is still to bring elder community members, their caregivers, and adults with developmental and cognitive challenges together to socialize, enjoy familiar music, sing-along, and enjoy the company of their peers. This is a free program, open to the community, and is a great way to introduce MV Center for Living programs and facility to the public. Memory Cafés are a national movement in community-based services for older adults with memory loss, their family members, and caregivers, as well as for older adults with developmental disabilities. There are over 100 Memory Cafés across Massachusetts; places where people can socialize and enjoy the company of others without fear of stigma.

Emergency Food Program

Martha’s Vineyard Center for Living is the sponsoring agency of the Greater Boston Food Bank’s emergency food distribution program Martha’s Vineyard, coordinating four Emergency Food Pantries (three Councils on Aging; Edgartown, Tisbury, and Up-Island), and the Serving Hands Pantry, at the Baptist Church Parish House on Williams St. in Vineyard Haven. Each pantry orders food monthly from the Greater Boston Food Bank, where it is combined into one order. Island Food Products (IFP) provides a truck and driver to pick the food up in Boston, transport it back to the Vineyard and store overnight in their facility. It is delivered on-island the next day to the 4 pantry sites by one of the local highway departments. Steamship Authority costs for these trips are reimbursed to IFP with grant funding and donations. Island Grown Initiative also distributes fresh produce at the emergency pantry sites, through their gleaning program. In 2022, the MV Emergency Food Program served an average of 250 households, including children and elders. This number increases through the winter months, especially around the holidays.

55PLUS Times: Information and Referral

The 55PLUS Times is a comprehensive resource with information pertaining to programs and services available to all 55+ Islanders and their families. It is published in the Martha’s Vineyard Times on the last Thursday of each month. MV Center for Living is responsible for editing and submitting the information published in the 55Plus Times. It is a valuable source of information for the island’s older adults.

Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School Luncheon Program

Martha’s Vineyard Center for Living partners with the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School Culinary Arts Department to offer a three-course gourmet meal for $12 per person once a month, from October through May, in the Culinary Arts dining room at the High School. Under the direction of Chefs Jack O’Malley and Kevin Crowell, the culinary arts students plan, prepare and serve this delicious meal. Students from the Music Department often provide musical entertainment. As many as 28 seniors attended these luncheons each month. Proceeds go to the Culinary Arts Department.

Home Delivered Holiday Meals

Martha’s Vineyard Center for Living coordinates with the Councils on Aging and the Martha’s Vineyard Hospital kitchen to provide a home delivered holiday meal for seniors who are alone or homebound on the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter holidays. The Martha’s Vineyard Hospital food service prepares and packages the meals and the Councils on Aging coordinate volunteers to deliver the meals in their respective towns. For the 2021 Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, 130 and 141 meals, respectively, were delivered; and for Easter 2022, 148 Easter brunch meals were delivered to homebound seniors.

Older Americans Act / Senior Nutrition Program

The Elder Services Nutrition Program, through the Older Americans Act (Meals on Wheels and Senior Dining Centers), is supported financially by the six Vineyard towns through the Martha’s Vineyard Center for Living annual budget. In FY2022, the island towns on contributed a combined total of $36,750 to Elder Services of Cape Cod & the Islands in support of this vital nutrition program.

We are grateful for the generous support, both financial and in spirit, of the town Boards of Selectmen, Finance Committees, Councils on Aging, Dukes County, and the many local grant funders and foundations who believe in our mission. It has a highly valuable and positive impact on the island community.

Respectfully submitted,

**Leslie Clapp, Executive Director**