

MARTHA'S VINEYARD CENTER FOR LIVING

Our Mission:

Martha's Vineyard Center for Living strives to improve the quality of life for those impacted by issues of aging and impairment. Our goal is to create an age friendly environment, promote dignity, reduce stigma, support independence and foster community engagement.

The Center for Living (MVCL) is a 501c3 non-profit, generously supported by all six island towns, and governed by a Board of Directors consisting of members from each island town and one County representative. In FY2022, board members were Risë Terney, President; Shirley Dewing, Treasurer; Jacque Cage; Jane Keenan, Clerk; James Klingensmith; Sandy Joyce; Christine Burke; Martina Thornton (Dukes County).

In 2022, MV Center for Living focused on outreach and expansion of our Supportive Day Program. Two years from the pandemic, we continued to take very seriously the health and well-being of our clients and their caregivers, modifying but continuing basic protocols such as mask wearing, hand washing. As a result, we successfully and safely increased our census with minimal disruption to our schedule or services.

Martha's Vineyard Center for Living Programs & Services:

Supportive Day Program:

The Supportive Day Program (SDP) is a professionally run social program for individuals who are at risk if left alone and unable to participate independently in community activities and programs. Our focus is on providing community-based support and opportunities for social connections to combat isolation and loneliness, the greatest threats to the wellbeing of our clients and their caregivers. The SDP is open Monday-Friday from 9am to 2pm.

The Center for Living is a place where older adults, regardless of ability, can engage with their community, enjoy the company of friends and peers, in a safe environment free of stigma. The Supportive Day program offers companionship, conversation and widely ranging activities tailored to individual capacity, including exercise and yoga, music, singing, dancing, and arts and crafts. Careful attention is paid to the physical and emotional needs of our clients. A morning snack and nutritious, home-made noon meal are prepared on-site and served family style.

Caregiver respite is a critical aspect of the service provided by the Supportive Day program. Many of our clients have multiple medical conditions and chronic illnesses, including Alzheimer's and other dementias. Despite the challenges of long-term caregiving, many families choose to care for their loved ones at home rather than place in a long-term care facility. Caregivers experience increased depression, anxiety, stress, and heart disease, as well as decreased levels of self-care and immune responses. They are routinely faced with psychological, social, physical and often financial hardship. The respite and support they receive by sending their loved one to the Supportive Day Program is critical to their overall well-being and that of their loved one.

In FY2022, 30 clients with the average daily attendance 15-18 clients. were enrolled in the Supportive Day program. The fee is \$60 per day and an additional \$10 per day for transportation. These fees are either paid privately, or for low to moderate income elders, Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands (the regional Home Care Agency) covers some or all of the cost. MVCL also offers a modest donation supported scholarship program.

Transportation

In October 2022, MVCL acquired a Lift Van from the Vineyard Transit Authority and hired a driver to provide daily transportation to and from the Center for approximately two thirds of our SDP clients. We continue to partner with the VTA, as they provide transportation for some of our clients, as well as the training and testing required of Lift drivers.

Shopping Shuttle: With this Lift Van at our disposal, we plan to develop a program focused on assisting community members who are unable to drive, to get out to do their own shopping and errands. For many older adults, this will reduce isolation, promote independence, and provide an opportunity to enjoy the social aspects of being out in the community.

Memory and Music Café:

FY2022, we incorporated the Memory and Music Café into an “open house” format, along with our regular SDP programming on Friday mornings. SDP clients enjoy the Café as part of their SDP schedule, and community members with cognitive loss or other disability join us every week for live music and companionship. There are over 100 Memory Cafés across Massachusetts and are a community engagement model for those experiencing mild to moderate memory loss and/or cognitive impairment and their caregivers.

Dementia Family Support Services:

Dementia Family Support Services is fully funded by grants and donations outside of the town funded MVCL operating budget. It is available to families and caregivers caring for a loved one with memory issues and cognitive decline due to Alzheimer’s or other dementias. Services include a weekly Dementia Caregiver Support Group (on Zoom) and individual family and caregiver counseling.

In 2022 we added Dementia Coaching (Habilitation Therapy) to our service model. Habilitation Therapy supports caregivers to 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. Habilitation Therapists provide knowledge and expertise to caregivers (and the person with the disease when appropriate) in understanding the disease process and pitfalls to avoid, as well as techniques of communication, behavior management, structuring the environment, creating therapeutic activities, and planning for future care needs.

The “Caregiver Tips” page on our website for support and additional referral information. Through Dementia Family Support services, families are connected to the Dementia Caregiver Support Group, the Supportive Day Program, and other agencies including Elder Services of Cape

Cod and the Islands, the MV Community Services CORE program, Dukes County Health Care Access program and the Elder Law program for additional supports and services.

TV for Living:

Begun in 2020, TV for Living is a weekly half hour informational program aired on MV TV Channel 13. Episodes include interviews with Center for Living staff, clients, family members, and community members such as local librarians with information on areas of interest and services available to elders and caregivers on the island. Topics include Healthy Aging, Caregiver 10 Commandments, MV Center for Living programs, live demonstrated Functional Fitness work outs and art projects that can be done at home and much more. There are over 100 episodes archived and a new one produced every month and aired at 11am Wednesday mornings.

MV Community Foundation Utility Support Program 2021-2022

As a response to the pandemic and the resulting widespread loss of income and resources, the MV Community Foundation, with a combination of state funding and generous local philanthropic support, was able to provide significant relief to islanders by funding a Utility and Rental relief assistance program. To administer and distribute these funds the MVCF sought to partner with other island non-profit organizations with experience in these areas. MV Center for Living stepped forward to take applications and distribute the utility portion of this funding. We received referrals from Dukes County Social Services, Councils on Aging, the MVCS CORE program, Morgan Woods, MV Hospital Social Worker for island families in need of assistance with utility bills

FEMA/Emergency Food and Shelter Program 2021-2011

Phase 37 & CARES Act: MV Center for Living received a total of \$11,744 to assist islanders with utility and rent relief.

Phase 38: MV Center for Living received \$5285 for rent and utility relief

Emergency Food Program:

Martha's Vineyard Center for Living is a sponsoring agency of the Greater Boston Food Bank emergency food distribution program on Martha's Vineyard. MVCL coordinates Emergency Food distribution centers including the Edgartown, Tisbury, and Up-Island Senior Centers as well as the Serving Hands Pantry at the Baptist Church Parish House on Williams St. in Vineyard Haven. Each distribution site orders a variety of nutritious foods monthly from the Greater Boston Food Bank in Boston. MVCL coordinates with Island Food Products (IFP) to pick up and deliver these orders for distribution to food insecure islanders of all ages.

The Steamship Authority provides a discounted rate to IFP for these trips and the balance of cost is reimbursed with grant funding and donations. Island Grown Initiative also distributes fresh produce at the emergency distribution sites through their gleaning program. The local Stop & Shop stores have designated the Center for Living Emergency Food Program as the recipient organization for their community foundation give back programs. Cronig's Market regularly donates food directly to the Emergency Food Program.

55PLUS Times: Information and Referral

The 55PLUS Times is published monthly in the MV Times and is a resource for information pertaining to programs and services available to all 55+ Islanders and their families. MV Center for Living is responsible for editing and submitting the information published in the 55Plus Times.

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School Luncheon Program:

Post pandemic, we were finally able to resume this program in the 2021-2022 school year. Once a month between 25 and 40 folks enjoy a delicious meal prepared and served by the MVRHS Culinary Arts department with Jack O'Malley and Kevin Crowell at the helm. It is a wonderful experience for all, diners and students included.

Home Delivered Holiday Meals:

MVCL coordinates with the Councils on Aging and Martha's Vineyard Hospital to provide a home delivered holiday meal to seniors who are alone or homebound on the Thanksgiving, December 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 towns.

Older Americans Act / Senior Nutrition Program:

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

We are grateful for the generous support of all town Boards of Selectmen, Finance Committees, Councils on Aging, other municipal agencies, as well as our non-profit partners and the community at large. This support and generosity make a positive impact on the lives of many islanders and is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Clapp, Executive Director