

THE CAREGIVER UPDATE

+810-239-7671

VALLEYAREAAGING.ORG

ISSUE 03/ JULY 2026

MI VIRTUAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS



Below are three virtual support group options (General, Dementia, and Kinship) for you to join. These support groups will discuss issues, challenges, and concerns that caregivers face. See topics below.

These groups are informal and provide dialogue along with peer support. Participants will be able to reflect and connect with others in a similar situation.

Zoom Meeting Link:
Meeting ID: 876 5118 1524
or
Dial by Phone: 1.312.626.6799
Scan the QR
Codes to join
the Zoom link.

DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

First Wednesday of the month
from 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.



RELATIVES RAISING RELATIVE'S CHILDREN - (KINSHIP) CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Second Thursday of the month
from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.



GENERAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

First Monday of the month from
5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.



SUPPORT GROUP TOPICS:

- **January:** Setting Healthy Boundaries
- **February:** Understanding Grief and Loss
- **March:** Caregiver Burnout/Compassion Fatigue
- **April:** Effective Communication
- **May:** Dealing with Family Issues
- **June:** Helpful Tools and Technology
- **July:** Asking for Help
- **August:** How to Cope with Lack of Sleep
- **September:** Home Safety/Fall Prevention
- **October:** In-Home Help
- **November:** Caregiving During the Holidays
- **December:** Self-Care

Project is supported in part by the Caregiver Resource Center grant.



UPCOMING EVENTS

A Matter of Balance Workshop

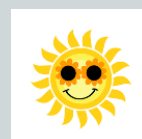
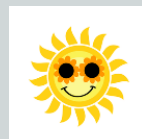
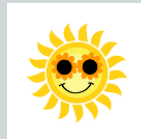
Swartz Creek Area Senior
Center - 8095 Civic Dr. #2
Swartz Creek, MI 48473
8/14/26 - 9/25/26
Time: 1pm - 2:30pm
Register at: 810-635-4122

Diabetes PATH Class

Eastside Senior Center
3065 N Genesee Rd.
Flint, MI 48506
8/20/26 - 9/17/26 1pm-3pm
Register at: 810-250-5000

A Message for Caregivers

Summer often brings longer days, family gatherings, vacation, and increased responsibilities. While caring for a loved one can be rewarding, it can also be physically and emotionally demanding. This newsletter will focus on caregiver wellness, sleep health, social connection, & home safety.



**“Self-care is NOT selfish! It’s an act of
LOVE towards yourself.”**

Caregivers often put their own needs last. However, taking care of yourself is one of the best ways to provide quality care to others. There are 5 core types of self-care to benefit you:

1. Physical - exercise, nutritious meals/snacks, staying hydrated, prioritizing sleep.
2. Mental - learning something new, journal for 10min, say “no” when necessary.

3. Social - reach out to friends, family, senior centers or a local/virtual support group.
4. Emotional - process your feelings, create a “gratitude” journal, enjoy activities that bring you joy.
5. Spiritual - engaging in prayer, taking 10min to read daily devotions, standing barefoot in the grass to ground with Mother Nature, star gazing and deep breathing.



There are only four kinds of people in the world - those who have been caregivers, those who are caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who will need caregivers.

— Rosalynn Carter —

AZ QUOTES

Outdoor Summer Activities for Seniors



Fresh air and sunshine offer real benefits, from vitamin D to better mood. The trick is timing and shade. Outdoor summer activities for seniors are safest in the cooler morning and evening hours. Always plan around the weather and keep water close by. The goal is enjoyment, not exhaustion.

Consider these gentle outdoor ideas:

- **Morning garden walks:** A slow stroll before the heat builds supports balance and circulation.
- **Container gardening:** Raised beds and pots bring planting to a comfortable height.
- **Shaded picnics:** A park bench under a tree makes lunch a social event.
- **Birdwatching:** A shaded porch and a pair of binoculars offer calm, low-effort joy.
- **Outdoor games:** Lawn bowling or gentle ring toss adds light, friendly motion.

Caregiver Wellness Challenge

This month, commit to one wellness goal:

- ~ Take a daily walk
- ~ Drink 8 glasses of water each day
- ~ Call a friend once a week
- ~ Schedule a health appointment for yourself
- ~ Practice 5 minutes of mindfulness daily

Small steps can lead to meaningful improvements in your health and happiness.

F I A Flint Institute of Arts
MUSEUM + ART SCHOOL

CREATIVE AGING **55** + BETTER

Workshops + Events

Sketching in the Galleries

1:30p | Lobby | Free

Take inspiration from artworks around you and enjoy supportive feedback from a local artist. All materials provided, no experience necessary! Pre-registration is preferred.

May 27 - Charles Stewart Mott Gallery Wing

June 24 - Hurand Sculpture Garden

July 22 - Spirit of Independence Bicentennial Portfolio

Aug 26 - M.C. Escher: Infinite Variations

Register at
[FlintArts.org](https://flintarts.org)



Sketching in the Gardens

Applewood Estate
1:30p - 2:30p Thursdays in June

A special four-week series in the Gardens of Applewood Estate. Two weeks focus on sketching inspired by blooming flowers and garden details, followed by two weeks of watercolor exploration. Open to all skill levels.

All materials are provided; advance registration is required.

Art Chats

1:30p | Lobby | Free

May 13 & 27, June 10 & 24,

July 8 & 22,

August 12 & 26

Join a friendly docent-led conversation that invites you to slow down and deeply connect with select works in the galleries that connect with the Films from our Art ala Carte series. Meet in the lobby at 1:30 pm. Pre-registration is preferred.

1120 E Kearsley St. Flint, MI

Jennifer Ciddings-Essenmacher | jessenmacher@flintarts.org | 810-339-6022

GARDENING TOGETHER WITH DEMENTIA

Let's dig into something great!



AUGUST 27, 2026
SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
10am - Noon

Edible Flint Educational Farm
 1628 Beach St.
 Flint, MI 48503

Join fellow gardeners and caregivers for a morning of learning, food gardening, and cultivating community.

Caregivers must attend with person living with Dementia



Register online at edibleflint.org or call below

Abbie Mars, Valley Area Agency on Aging
 810-239-7671 Ext 213
marsa@valleyaaa.org



Save the Dates! Gardening with Dementia!

The Valley Area Agency on Aging is pleased to invite caregivers and individuals living with dementia to participate in Gardening Together with Dementia, a unique program designed to foster meaningful engagement, learning, and social connection through gardening.

Participants will join fellow caregivers and gardening enthusiasts for a morning of hands-on food gardening activities, educational opportunities, and community building at Edible Flint Educational Farm.

This free program offers a welcoming and supportive environment where caregivers and the individuals they support can learn together while enjoying the therapeutic benefits of gardening and outdoor activity.

Please Note: Caregivers must attend with the individual living with dementia.

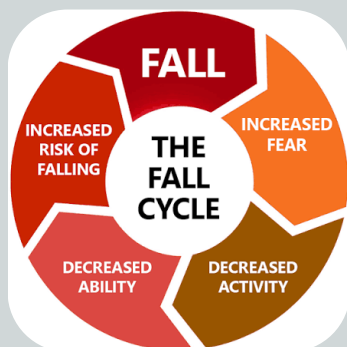
To register, please visit www.edibleflint.org or click the link to register:
<https://form.jotform.com/261906178933163>

Home Safety & Fall Prevention

Falls are one of the leading causes of injury among older adults. Summer is a great time to review home safety and reduce fall risks.

Indoor Safety Checklist:

- Remove loose rugs & clutter from walkways
- Ensure adequate lighting in all areas of the home
- Install grab bars in bathrooms
- Keep frequently used items within easy reach
- Check that handrails are secure on all stairways



Six Tips To Help Prevent Falls

More than one in four people age 65 years or older fall each year, yet many falls can be prevented.



Learn more about reducing your risk of falling at www.nia.nih.gov/falls-prevention.



Outdoor Safety Checklist:

- Repair uneven sidewalks or walkways
- Remove garden hoses & other tripping hazards
- Keep decks & patios free of clutter
- Use non-slip footwear when outdoors
- Ensure outdoor areas are well-lit for evening use

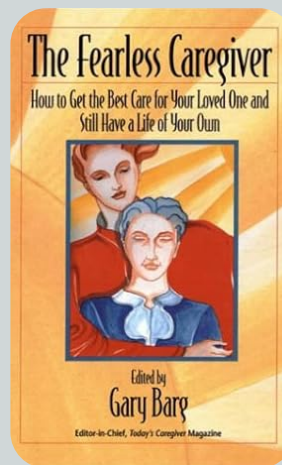
VAAA
Valley Area
Agency On Aging
 Answers, Action & Advocacy
 for **All Things Senior**

In Home Services 	• Personal Care • Medication Management • Respite • Emergency Response Units • Home Delivered Meals • Telephonic Wellness Checks
Health Access Information 	• Information & Assistance • MI Choice Waiver Program • Nursing Home -Transition • Care Management Services
Wellness Programs 	• Matter of Balance • Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program • Art Therapy • Creating Confident Caregivers • Dementia Caregiver Series • Diabetes PATH • Drums Alive Golden Beats • SilverSneakers and Silver& Fit Exercise Classes

Valley Area Agency on Aging is a non-profit agency serving persons 60 and older and/or disabled individuals of Genesee, Lapeer and Shiawassee Counties. If you are living with disabilities or concerned about the well-being of an older adult please contact us for more information on our programs and services.

810-239-7671
www.valleyareaaging.org

Information for this newsletter came from Alzheimer.org, Dementia Caregiving Series and the National Institute on Aging. If you have additional questions, please reach out to Abbie Mars, Health and Wellness Program Manager at marasa@valleyaaa.org or 810-239-7671.



"The Fearless Caregiver arms you with all the knowledge and skills you need for deciding if your loved one's care is appropriate or if something more is needed, and, more importantly, the ability to do something about it. But what about you? Who cares about the caregiver? These experts do. They show you how to overcome the depression, guilt and fear often associated with people who spend their time caring for others, and not themselves. They give you advice for finding help when you need a vacation, or just a break. They even help you make holidays joyous again."

Get Involved!



AmeriCorps
Seniors

RSVP

RSVP shows you how you can apply the skills and wisdom you've acquired throughout your life to make a positive difference in the lives of others. A part of AmeriCorps Seniors, RSVP is America's largest volunteer network for people 55 and over, with more than 200,000 volunteers tackling tough issues in communities nationwide. You choose how and where you want to serve, how much time you want to give, and whether you want to share skills you have or develop new ones.

If you are interested in volunteering call VAAA at (810) 239-7671.

**Follow us on Social Media &
 Join our Caregiver Corner
 Facebook Group!**



YouTube



LinkedIn

