

# RIANDA HOUSE

increasing life expectations



# We Play

# Play

## It might just save the day

People tend to think play is just for kids. Once we grow up we only play to escape being an adult. But play can be more than escape. It can be a way to engage our crazy world without losing our minds.

Some people look at the distressing problems in our world and conclude that the only thing to do is check out. Others ride the roller coaster of social media and the 24-hour news cycle, holding on with a death grip. Rather than check out, they freak out.

Play offers an alternative. When we play, we are engaged. Think of an athlete *playing* a sport, or a musician



*playing* an instrument. It's is the furthest thing from apathy. When we play, we're all-in. But at the same time, there is a levity, a wider perspective that allows us to engage with joy.

Those who cannot play together cannot work together. Every job should begin with a game of Red Rover. Playing would ground the team in their common humanity. Then they could really get things done.

I'm not suggesting that we stop advocating for the things we believe in. I'm just saying that we will be more effective when we stop trading blows and start poking fun. Lightening up not only makes our lives feel less heavy. It also illuminates them.



Children and older adults are the best at play; kids, because they have not yet plunged into the drama of grownup soap operas; older adults, because they know how little the soap operas matter and that the joy of life is playing together, not winning the game.

If the world is getting you down, drop by Rianda House. We can't fix all the world's problems but can help you find a joyful perspective that will free you to embrace your life and play.



### Welcome to Rianda House!

*On the House* is the monthly newsletter of Rianda House. We welcome ideas and submissions. Email [info@riandahouse.org](mailto:info@riandahouse.org).

Rianda House is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 - 5:00. We offer a full slate of activities and services. We hope to meet you soon!

### Our Mission

We increase life expectations by providing programs and activities that help older adults remain **strong** in mind, body, and spirit, **connected** in meaningful relationships, and **giving** from the abundance of their lives.

In this way, we make elderhood life's best chapter.

### RIANDA HOUSE TEAM

Executive Director : Maury Robertson

Programs Director: Amanda Cole, Program Manager: Tessa Lorraine, Program Coordinator: Cassie Kisiel

Rianda House Board Members: Carroll Cotten - Board Chair, John Muhlner - Treasurer, Frank Mueller - Secretary

Julie Garvey, Meg Scrofani, Richard Walloch, Newsletter and Travel Program: Robin McGuire



# Getting to Know You

Each month, Rianda House is pleased to highlight a new person from our growing community.

## Ben Hill

### What brought you to the Rianda House?

Older adults are my passion. My background has been primarily in health care, strategic planning, marketing, finance; I've dabbled in human resources. I also participated in the monthly Healthy Aging Population Initiative Zoom call. One day after a meeting I contacted Maury and said I'd be interested in helping Rianda House. I started a program called "Visit Me Today" where we visit older adults in places where they live, bringing music and storytelling. I suggested we could collaborate. I also thought maybe I could help find funding for Rianda House.

### What does your job here involve?

Right now I'm finding sponsorships for the 2025 Car Show. I'm working with John Muhler and the Car Show committee to educate our business community about the opportunity to support UpValley elders. Rianda House has really been growing. With more funding, we can keep the momentum going. I also continue to lead Visit Me Today. We have been able to visit Rosehaven and Silverado Orchards and the Veteran's Home in Yountville.

### Of all the things you've done, what was your best job and worst job?

I love working at Rianda House. I think my worst job was just out of grad school. I went to work for a land developer who proved to be unscrupulous. He didn't pay his bills. At one time I met with a banker in town who said, "Do you know you work for the most hated man in the county?" I don't regret it, I had a lot of good memories, but it was the worst job.



### What do you know now that you didn't know when you were 20?

When I was 20, I did not know about active nonjudgemental listening. What I know now is that if you're an elder, if you're a teenager, what you deeply hope for is someone who will actively listen to you, put their phone down and listen to you.

### If you were an animal, which would it be?

I love animals and my favorite animal of all time was a buckskin pony I bought for my daughter when she was 6 years old. Of all the pets I've ever had, that pony was better than any dog or cat. The seller told me she didn't like men, so I decided to make friends with her, see if I could build trust. It took about two years, but she became the love of my life. So I would be a pony.

### What are your favorite foods? What's always in your fridge?

I cook a little; probably the best thing I'm good at making is split pea soup. Always in my fridge? Beer.

### Are you a traveler?

Absolutely! I love to travel. My longest flight was 16 hours and 40 minutes from Singapore to San Francisco. I visited Singapore last year as a delegate for the Rotary International Conference and had an amazing time—especially enjoying the street food!

If I had a round-trip ticket to anywhere, I'd choose Bavaria, specifically Munich. I've never been, and it's high on my list!

### You mentioned you like orchids?

I rehabilitate orchids; I love orchids. I guess that's kind of a hobby. I have six or seven in my kitchen window that I'm rehabbing. I don't have a deep green thumb, but maybe a light green one.

*Interview by Susan McWilliams*



# Special Events

To register for special events call (707) 963-8555 x 101

## Mozart & Beaumarchais' Opera The Marriage of Figaro

Laura Prichard

Thursday, April 10, 1:00-2:00

Rianda House

THE MET LIVE presents The Marriage of Figaro in theaters on April 26! Its author, Beaumarchais, was an early supporter of American independence, secretly aiding the rebels and spreading misinformation as a French spy. Join NY Philharmonic Dramaturg Dr. Laura Prichard for a musical exploration of Mozart's brilliant score for this iconic play.

Scores will be provided. Perfect for classical music lovers, history buffs, and singers of all ages! *Coming to the Cameo April 7th.* **RSVP**



## Michael Tilson Tomas & The Tomashevskys

Laura Prichard

Thursday, April 10, 2:15-3:15

Rianda House

Michael Tilson Thomas, renowned conductor, pianist, and composer, will celebrate his 80th birthday with a special SF Symphony concert on April 26. Laura will discuss his impact as a global music leader and cherished San Francisco icon. He also recently launched a website honoring the musical legacy of his grandparents, The Tomashevskys, legendary stars of New York's Yiddish Theater.

**RSVP**



## Cha-Cha

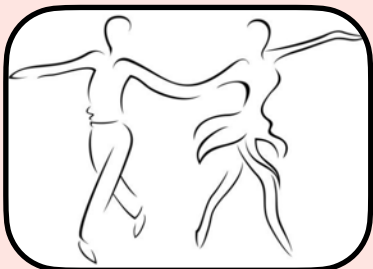
Susan Gai

Fridays, April 4, 11 & 18,  
4:00-4:50pm

Rianda House

**New  
Class**

The Cha-Cha is a lively, fun and playful Latin dance that originated in Cuba in the 1940's and is known for its vibrant energy. And it's easy to learn! **RSVP**



## Waltz

Susan Gai

Fridays, April 4, 11 & 18,  
3:00-3:50pm

Rianda House

**New  
Class**

Learn to dance the elegant and beautiful Waltz with its lovely rise and fall gliding movement. It originated as a folk dance during the 16th century and is a great dance for weddings and other dance venues. **RSVP**



## Classic Car Show and Wine Tasting

Father's Day, 11:00-3:00

Sunday, June 15

Adams St. @ Library Lane



Mark your calendars! We're back and better than ever.

Got a car to show? Sign up at [riandahouse.org](http://riandahouse.org)!



# Special Events

To register for special events call (707) 963-8555 x 101

## Italian Cooking with Francesca

Francesca Pittalugo

**Saturday, April 12, 11:00-1:00**

**Rianda House**

Join us for a special cooking event where Francesca will share her secret family Bolognese recipe, passed down through generations. As we cook together, we'll celebrate the joy of food, storytelling, and community. This is more than just a meal—it's a chance to connect, reminisce, and savor the flavors of Italian tradition.

Come hungry for good company and a taste of something truly special! **RSVP - 8 person maximum**

See Francesca's website at <https://www.ciaopappy.com/>



## Beginner Strength & Core Workshop

Kerry Brackett

**Tuesday, April 15, 9:30-10:45**

**American Legion Hall**

As we age, we lose muscle—mostly from lack of use! Strength training helps maintain muscle, improve bone density, balance, and coordination, reducing fall risk. It's never too late to build strength and enhance your quality of life! Join instructor Kerry Brackett for a strength and core training workshop using light weights and resistance tubing. Exercises will be done standing or seated. Bring weights if you have them; RH will provide extras. Kerry will supply the tubing. As a Certified Health Coach, Kerry will also share wellness tips to keep you feeling your best!

**RSVP - 15 person maximum**



## Advanced Strength & Core Workshop

Kerry Brackett

**Tuesday, April 29, 9:30-10:45**

**American Legion Hall**

Join Kerry for an advanced workshop on strength and core training - this class will involve getting down on the floor so please make sure that is comfortable for you. Bring a mat and weights - if you don't have weights they will be provided, and Kerry will supply the exercise tubing. Health coach

tips will also be included in this class!  
**RSVP - 15 person maximum**



## Rianda House Tripsters Upcoming Adventures

Fall 2025

Spring 2026



Don't miss out! Seats are filling fast!



### Charleston, Savannah & Jekyll Island

Sept. 29-Oct 5, 2025

More info: <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1321139> or (800) 581-8942 refer to booking #1315547

### Croatia, Slovenia & the Adriatic Coast

May 7th-May 20th, 2026

More info: <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1315547> or (800) 581-8942 refer to booking #1315547



# Classes & Activities



All Classes are no-cost and there is no need to register unless specified in the description.  
For more detailed descriptions and to register go to [riandahouse.org](http://riandahouse.org)

**Access Bars** **NEW!** Kaylee Hardin  
**Tuesdays, 12:30-2:00, American Legion**  
Access Bars® gently clears mental clutter—like hitting delete on a busy mind. Light touch on specific head points helps release stuck thoughts, negative patterns, and stress. Ideal for easing brain fog, anxiety, or simply unwinding, it leaves you feeling calmer and refreshed. **RSVP: 1 on 1 - 30 minute session.**

**Balance and Stretch** Jennifer Duncan & Kerry Brackett  
**Mondays, 10:00-10:45, Rianda House, or Zoom (hybrid)**  
**Thursdays, 11:15-11:45, American Legion Hall**  
As we age, we may find our balance isn't as steady, but with regular exercises and stretching for flexibility, we can improve.

**Breathe it Away with Ray** Ray Chandra  
**Monday, April 14 & 28, 1:00-2:00pm, American Legion Hall**  
Conscious breathing techniques improve physical, mental and emotional well-being by reducing stress, anxiety, and tension.

**Improve Your Bridge Game** Tammy McDonald  
**Fridays, 10:00-12:00, Rianda House**  
Learn and have fun while playing cards, including bidding and defending.

**Canasta** Lucy Thater  
**Fridays, 1:00-4:00, Rianda House**  
Great for both mind and spirit. The game takes 2-4 hours, and multiple rounds. Lucy will teach you!

**Chair Aerobics** Kerry Brackett  
**Thursdays, 10:40-11:10, American Legion Hall**  
Enjoy a fun, energetic 30-minute class while seated in a chair, all set to upbeat music! No experience needed.

**Chair Yoga** Kaylee Hardin  
**Wednesdays, 10:00-10:45, Rianda House**  
Chair Yoga is gentle - good for injuries or mobility restrictions; low impact-designed to help lengthen and strengthen the body.

**Dementia Family Caregiver's Support Group**  
**Thursday, April 3 & 17, Zoom, 3-4:30**  
This support group provides a comforting setting for care partners. Contact Melissa Gerard, Providence Adult Day Health, 707-815-6258; [melissa.gerard@providence.org](mailto:melissa.gerard@providence.org).

**Duplicate Bridge** Tammy McDonald  
**Mondays, 12:30-4:00, Rianda House**  
Bridge is a fun, social and competitive card game. Bring a partner or we will help you find one.

**Ejercicio y Actividades (no class April 8)** Juana Torres  
**Tuesdays, 10:30-11:30 (no class 4/8), Rianda House**  
Join Juana for stretching, balancing, coordination and other exercise activities. **NEW!**  
Únase a Juana para realizar actividades de estiramiento, equilibrio, coordinación y otros ejercicios.

**ESL (English Second Language)** Lorraine Ruston  
**Tuesdays, 9:00-10:15, Rianda House**  
Basic English vocabulary and conversational practice.

**ESL (Ingles Segundo Idioma)** Lorraine Ruston  
**Los martes, 9:00-10:15, Rianda House**  
El énfasis de la clase será vocabulario básico de inglés y la práctica de conversaciones.

**French Club** Sue & Skip Hopgood  
**Mondays, 9:30-11:00, Rianda House**  
Share personal experiences and cultural history through conversational French. Some knowledge of French is necessary, skills vary.

**Genealogy** Kelly Wheaton  
**Friday, April 4 & 18, 10-12:00, Rianda House**  
Explore topics from DNA to genealogical research to family history writing. Drop-ins welcome.

**Gents & A Cuppa Joe** Carroll Cotten  
**Thursdays, 8:30-9:30, Rianda House**  
Share a Cuppa Joe, discuss local issues, and swap stories with friends and neighbors. Always fun and informative!

**Heart of the Matter** Lorne Glaim  
**Monday, April 7 & 21, 1:00, Rianda House**  
Share ideas on local and world events in a respectful setting.

**Imagery and Poetry** Dr. Lisa Hinz  
**Friday, April 4 & 18, 1:00, Zoom**  
Create a visual collage as the foundation for writing poetry.

**Ladies & A Cuppa Tea** Ellen Cotten  
**Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30, Rianda House**  
Join us for friendship and a cup of tea. A warm, inviting atmosphere encourages fun and engaging discussions.

**Line Dancing** Becky Jo Peterson  
**Mondays, 11:30-12:30, American Legion Hall**  
Kick up your heels to lively music and learn five new dances each session. Beginners and drop-ins welcome.



Canasta and Mah Jongg every Friday at 1:00

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## ¡Lotería! **NEW!**

Lorraine Ruston

**Tuesdays, 11:30-12:00, Rianda House (no class April 8)**

Lotería is a traditional Mexican board game of chance, similar to bingo, but played with a deck of cards instead of numbered balls. We will play in Spanish and English. Conversational practice included and encouraged!

La lotería es un juego de mesa tradicional mexicano de azar, similar al bingo, pero que se juega con una baraja de cartas en lugar de bolas numeradas. Jugaremos en español e inglés. ¡Se incluye y fomenta la práctica de conversación!

## Mah Jongg

Michele Barberi Hyde

**Fridays, 1:00-4:00, Rianda House**

Traditional Chinese tile-based game requiring skill, strategy and a bit of luck. All levels welcome - cards available.

## MasterMinds (New Session, April 30)

Verona Ladd

**Wednesdays, April 30 June 4, 10:00-11:30, Rianda House**

This new Brain Health & Wellness Program is designed to help understand memory and learn to improve it. **RSVP 15 Max.**

## Men's Fitness

Evan Massaro

**Tuesdays, 8:00-9:00, American Legion Hall**

Improve balance, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness with a splash of dad jokes! All levels are welcome. Bring a mat.

## Music with Ric

Ric Morgan

**Wednesdays, 1:00-2:00, Rianda House**

This sing along program will rekindle nostalgia of songs from the 1930s to the 1960s. All are welcomed.

## Needlers' Club

Julie Bolander

**Thursdays, 1:00-3:00, Rianda House**

Relax and work at your own pace as you socialize with other craftspeople. All levels are welcome.

## 2nd Tuesday Page Turner Book Club

Lorraine Ruston

**Tuesday, April 8, 7:00-9:00pm, Rianda House**

Each month a member chooses a book, leads discussion and provides refreshments. Call to be on the **WAIT LIST**

## Sound Bowl Meditation

Kaylee Hardin

**Wednesdays, 9:00-9:45, Rianda House**

Calming breathing exercises, a short guided meditation, and the soothing sounds of crystal singing bowls.

## Introduction to Spanish

Lorraine Ruston

**Tuesday, 1:00-2:30, Apr. 1-June 17, Rianda House**

This course provides learners with the ability to speak and understand beginning Spanish. Vocabulary and grammar from Sections 1 and 2 of Duolingo.

## Intermediate Spanish

Lorraine Ruston

**Thursdays, 1:00-2:30, Apr. 17-July 3, Rianda House**

This course is for learners who have studied Spanish in the past. Conversational practice will be based on grammar and vocabulary that is introduced in Duolingo's Sections 3 and 4.

## Advanced Spanish

Lorraine Ruston

**Wednesdays, 2:15-3:45, Apr. 16-July 2, Rianda House**

A twelve-week course for students to practice Spanish conversation at an advanced level. Vocabulary and grammar will come from Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 of Duolingo.

## Strength Training

Kathy Carrick

**Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7:30-8:30am, Presbyterian Church**

Enhance muscle strength and tone. An excellent workout! All levels welcome. 1428 Spring Street.

## Tai Chi

Joseph Nase

**Tuesdays, April 8 & 22, 9:00-10:00, American Legion Hall**

This practice involves gentle movements and physical postures, a meditative state of mind and controlled breathing.

## Tai Chi & Qi Gong

Joseph Nase

**Thursdays, 9:00-10:00, Rianda House**

Optimize energy within the body, mind and spirit to improve overall health with focused breathwork, meditation and slow, gentle movement.

## Tech Today **RSVP**

James Scanlan

**Wednesday, Apr. 9 & 23, 2:30-4:00, Rianda House**

Hard time keeping up with tech? Let a pro help you. Reserve a 30 minute 1-on-1 session and bring your handheld device.

## Yoga: Stretch and Flow

Kaylee Hardin

**Tuesdays, 11:15-12:15, American Legion Hall**

Combining deep stretches and gentle movements. Suitable for all levels. Bring a mat. Chair modifications available.

## Vineyard Walk

Brad Skibbins & Carmen Benavides

**Friday, April 18, 9:30-10:30, Rianda House**

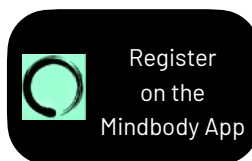
Make new friends and improve your health with a scenic, flat 1.5-mile vineyard walk (about 45 minutes), starting at Rianda House. Join Carmen Benavidez from the Alzheimer's Association to explore the connection between brain and body and how smart lifestyle choices support healthy aging.

## Zumba Gold

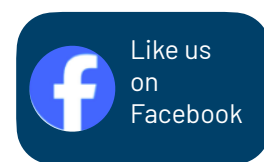
Becky Jo Peterson

**Mondays & Thursdays, 9:30-10:30, American Legion Hall**

Move to music and have fun! Get your heart pumping while you improve balance, stamina and tone important muscles.



or go to the Mindbody website:  
<https://www.mindbodyonline.com/>



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## Angwin **RSVP**

**Lunch and Learn** Rianda House, Providence  
**Wed, April 2, 11:00-1:00, Pacific Union College  
Fireside Room, 10 Angwin Avenue**

Join us to learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement, and use hands-on tools to help you incorporate these recommendations into a plan for healthy aging.



**Stretch and Flow** Kaylee Hardin  
**Thursdays, 11:00-12:00, Fireside Room, PUC**  
Combining deep stretches and gentle movements to create more mobility and fluidity. Suitable for all levels. Bring a mat. Chair modifications available.

## Calistoga **RSVP**

**Calistoga Loop Walk** Julie Spencer, Bobbie Casey  
**Friday, Apr. 4, 9:30-10:30, Calistoga Community Center**  
The walk is approximately 3 miles through residential streets. It is a 1-1.5 hour walk at a moderate to brisk pace.

**Lunch & Learn** Rianda House, UVFC, Calistoga Parks & Rec.  
**Wednesday, April 16, 11-1:00, Calistoga Community Center, 1307 Washington St.**  
Focused on enhancing community connections and providing informational resources and a variety of topics. April's topic: Community Health Initiative: Medi-Cal for Older Adults. Free lunch is provided.

**Tai Chi** Diane Latorre  
**Saturday, Apr. 5 & 19, 9-9:45, Pioneer Park, 1308 Cedar**  
A gently-moving meditation suitable for various fitness levels. Outdoor only.

## Readers Theatre

Mike Bauer  
**Tuesdays, 3-4:30pm**  
Rianda House



### Introducing Mike Bauer

Join us as the Readers Theater Group kicks off under the guidance of Michael Bauer—a professional actor, director, producer, and published playwright. With an MFA from UCLA and experience acting,

directing, and producing for theater and TV (including shows on Amazon Prime), Michael brings a wealth of knowledge and a passion for storytelling. This class is open to both beginners and seasoned actors, focusing on a new theme each month—from comedy and Shakespeare to poetry and original scenes. When ready, participants will also have the opportunity to perform in staged presentations. Most importantly, Michael aims to bring fun, ease, and the art of expressive storytelling to every session. Join us and bring your creativity to life!

## Need Help?

### Resources are available through our partners

Call Rianda House at (707) 963-8555 x 101. We will either help you ourselves or direct you to one of our many partners who serve UpValley older adults.

#### Resource Expert

Karen connects seniors with the essential information, resources, and services needed to maintain independence and support quality of life. Whether you need support with housing, caregiving, transportation, or food access, Karen can help. Call Karen Lustig (707) 989-0219.



Karen Lustig

#### Victim Services Advocate Counselor

If you or someone you know is a victim of a crime, scam, abuse, eviction, or in a crisis situation, call Irma for immediate assistance or to book a counseling session (707) 299-1411.



Irma Luna

(Courtesy of Providence Community Health)



# RIANDA HOUSE

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St. Helena, CA 94574  
707-963-8555

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Please support UpValley older adults.

[riandahouse.org](http://riandahouse.org)



If you would like to be removed from our mailing list call 707-963-8555 x101 or or email [info@riandahouse.org](mailto:info@riandahouse.org).



## Save the Dates!

### Tug McGraw Softball

Amanda Cole

**Sunday, May 18, 10:30-12:00pm**

**Veterans Home Cleve Borman Field**

**Cheer on the Veterans as they take on Leadership Napa Valley!**

The Mixed Nutts Softball Program, part of the Tug McGraw Foundation's wellness initiative, helps Yountville Veterans Home residents enhance their physical, cognitive, social, and spiritual health through softball. Played on historic Cleve Borman Field (est. 1800s), it's more than a game—it's a Field of Dreams!

### Mixed Nutts 2025 Season

May 18, 10:30am vs. Leadership Napa Valley  
May 31, 8:30am vs. Veterans Organization  
June 14, 10:30am vs. Delta Softball Organization  
June 21, 8:30am vs TBD



[tugmcgraw.org/about-us](http://tugmcgraw.org/about-us)

