

VOLUME 49 MAY 2025 NUMBER 5



Cinco de Mayo celebration, May 5

BINGO, May 9

VVHA Board Meeting, May 21

Friday Night Social, May 23





SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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ų	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Cinco de Mayo Event				BINGO	
Mother's Day	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
St. Helena Barn Tour			VVHA Board Meeting		Friday Night Social	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Red-VVHA Community Black-Public Observance Green-Local Event Violet-VVHA Event

2025-2026 VVHA OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President, Janet Schmidt
Vice President, Rick Wood
Secretary, Inger Laidley
Treasurer, Henk Brok
Directors:
Eve Breckenridge
Chris Killion
Steve Kinney
Mae VanNett



Committee/Activity Chairs

VVHA Clubhouse Coordinator:
Mae VanNett

Hospitality:
Robin McGuire, Mae VanNett

Memorials and VV Clubhouse Coordinator: Janeen di Rienzo

> Directory: Michael Merriman

*Library:*Joyce Cahill, Rick Wood

Bocce Committee Chair: Rick Wood

VVHA Website: Michael Merriman



Non-Social Resident-formed Groups

Community Education: Grace Kistner

Neighbor Helping Neighbor: Carroll Cotten

If there is a death, call Janeen di Rienzo at 707-294-8307 so she can post it on the bulletin board and arrange for the \$50 donation to the organization you designate. She will explain how to schedule the clubhouse for a memorial.

May Birthdays

- 4 Mike Beatty, Jen Harper, Diana Mauli
- 5 Don Clark, Chris Duffy
- 7 Dennis Hansen
- 9 Jenna Lavignino
- 10 Doris Mosler
- 12 Hans Mauli
- 13 Sharon Slayton
- 14 Polly Keegan, Wendell Laidley
- 15 Ellen Cotten
- 16 Nora O'Neill, Denise Marks
- 17 Janice Dugan, Denise Lloreda
- 20 Pat Baker, Kevin Bradley
- 24 Elizabeth Green, Vic Simpson
- 31 Grace Kistner

VIVA!

VIVA Mission Statement: To provide a periodic newsletter concerning current and upcoming events, VVHA news, activities, neighborly news, and other non-political and local items of interest to all Vineyard Valley residents.

Editor

Francine Freeman

Business Manager Carroll Cotten

> **Advertising** Henk Brok

Contributors

Joyce Armington, Susan Arthur, Ferenc Brunner, Janeen di Rienzo, Mariam Hansen, Steve Kinney, Suzanne James, Robin McGuire

> Photography Staff

VIVA

21 Del Rio Court St. Helena, CA 94574 email: viva.vineyardvalley@gmail.com

The Prez Sez . . . by Janet Schmidt

Hello fellow Vineyard Valley friends. I hope you're all enjoying this lovely spring weather. Our April bingo went well with lots of winners and the new "pick-a-number-between 1 and 75 to win \$20.00 (if it's the first number called) was a hit, especially to our first winner, Steve Kinney. The crowd at our bingo night grows larger every month.

The cancelled Chili Cookoff was disappointment, but I must apologize for that. That event is usually well-attended but choosing the week before Easter, when a lot of you travel to see family, wasn't a good decision. We'll take that into consideration next time. We are looking very forward to our Cinco de Mayo dinner on Monday, May 5th. All the information you need to sign up or help with the event is on the bulletin board at the mailroom. Rick Wood and Ines Chiarello will be in the kitchen, so you know its going to be DE-licious.

Hoping to see a lot of you out and about and at the events.



April Bingo winners

VINEYARD VALLEY HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION MEETING Minutes from April 16, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by President, Janet Schmidt

Present: Rick Wood, Vice-President; Henk Brok, Treasurer; Inger Laidley, Secretary; as well as Directors Mae VanNett, Eve Breckenridge, and Chris Killion.

The minutes from the March 19th meeting were approved as mailed and posted.

Henk Brok gave the Treasurer's report: Checking Account balance \$7,057.44; Savings Account balance \$9,013.28; Viva Account balance \$3,088.87; Bocce Account balance \$4,013.32 for a total of \$24,209.59 (up \$1,000). The officers of VVHA are now registered with Mechanics Bank. We need to be aware of our total balance as our by-laws state we cannot have more than \$25,000 in total. That is why we will be spending money from the bocce account to upgrade the tables and chairs at the court.

Bingo – Mae VanNett reported that there is now a new and unique prize for Bingo. Participants will sign in on a sheet with bingo numbers. Whose ever number on the sheet is first called by the Bingo caller will receive a crisp \$20 bill. There were 43 players on April 11th and dinner was hot dogs, coleslaw and chips. Ines Chiarello and Steve Kinney were the chefs in the kitchen. Bingo made a profit of \$315.

The Chili Cookoff was cancelled due to too few signups. It having been scheduled during Holy Week probably contributed to that in terms of timing.

Janet provided us all with dates for up-coming events:

We will have the monthly Social on the $25^{\hbox{th}}$ and we are encouraged to bring our friends as guests and any new members.

Cinco de Mayo celebration will be held on May $5^{\hbox{th}}$. Ines and Rick will be the cooks. Again, we are all encouraged to bring friends.

June 7^{th} will be our Annual Tea and Fashion Show, chaired by Janet and Eve. The theme is "Around the World in 80 Days".

July 4th we will have our annual Independence Day celebration with a parade, bingo, bocce and a dinner. Rick Wood, and Henk Brok will be in charge again.

July 22nd we will have a Home and Garden Tour – more details to follow from Eve Breck-enridge, who is chairing the event.

OPEN FORUM

Janet opened the floor for an open forum for comments, suggestions and concerns. A lively discussion with many suggestions ensued. The Board will post a list of suggestions received in the last three years that have yet to take place. Anyone who would like to help chairing an activity will be joined by a Board member to make it happen, if possible. Reach out to any one of us.

Grace Kistner mentioned that Mike Thompson would like to hold a Town Hall meeting at Vineyard Valley. Grace will provide further details as they develop.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm

Respectfully submitted, Inger Laidley, Secretary.

Moving In -

Welcome to our Community

Linda Morin and John Pitts 2 San Lucas

Nancy and Marc Kustman 6 San Lucas

PARK MANAGEMENT UPDATE May 2025

PARK PROJECTS

Work continues to reorganize and clean up the corporation yard. Trees were assessed and necessary tree work scheduled. RV parking space locations are being reevaluated; residents who park RVs will be notified of any changes that will affect their vehicle.

The lagoon has been planted with additional flowers and foliage.

A gallery system has been installed in the lanai and the hallway next to the library to feature resident artwork. If residents would like to display their art work, please send a photo of your work, the size and type of art (acrylic, watercolor, oil, pastel, photos, digital art work) to <u>vineyardvalleymhp@gmail.com</u>.

The lanai door to the Redondo side of the clubroom will be replaced with an accessible door. We hope to have this scheduled with the contractor soon.

Landscapers have turned on the irrigation controllers, please report any broken lawn sprinklers to <u>vineyardvalleymhp@gmail.com</u>, so that they can be repaired.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE REMINDERS

Now is a good time to take care of maintenance tasks and harden your home's defensible space. Defensible space is the area around your home that should be kept clear of plant debris and any potentially flammable materials.

- Patios and carports should be clear of any storage items, debris, or potentially flammable items. Carports and patios are not storage areas. Patio furniture and barbecue equipment only are allowed on patios. Carports must always be kept clean.
- Remove leaves and other debris from your yard.
- · Clean gutters and awnings if necessary.
- Weed flower beds and take care of landscaping that may need replacing. Changes to landscaping and fencing must be submitted in advance for approval by management.
- Installing sprinklers? Working in your garden? Planting a tree? You may be digging close to underground utility lines connecting to your home. Contact 811 to have your underground lines marked before the project begins.
- Properly store fuels used for generators and barbecues.

MAY RULES REMINDER

<u>Guests</u> - Guests should be made aware of the Vineyard Valley Rules and Regulations to prevent any embarrassment to the guests. Residents are responsible for the conduct and actions of their guests and any damages done by the guest are the responsibility of the Resident. Guests may not utilize the swimming pool, clubhouse, billiard room or other recreational facilities at the Park unless the Resident hosting such guest is in actual residence. All guests must be accompanied by the Host-Resident to all Park facilities. Guests under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a Resident at all times when using the recreational facilities.

<u>Clubhouse</u> - is open from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. weekdays, and 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. week-ends and holidays and is for the exclusive use of Vineyard Valley Residents. Limit of two guests per homesite at any time.

<u>Billiard Room</u> – is for the exclusive use of Residents and Guests over the age of 18 years who are accompanied by a Resident at all times.

<u>Swimming Pool, Therapy Pool and Sauna</u> - residents are allowed only 2 guests at any one time in the Pool Area. All pool guests must be accompanied by the Host Resident. No one under the age of 18 years is permitted in the therapy pool or sauna at any time.

Gym – is for the exclusive use of Residents, and their guests, only 2 guests at any one time are allowed and must be accompanied by a Resident at all times. No one under 16 years of age is permitted in the gym.

SWIMMING POOL

Rule Reminders for Safe and Enjoyable Fun in the Vineyard Valley Pool

- The pool is for the exclusive use of residents and their guests.
- Guests must be accompanied to the pool by their host resident.
- The guest limit is two persons per household.
- All persons must shower before using the pool.
- Glass containers are not allowed in the pool area.
- Pool toys are not permitted. Pool flotation devices for therapeutic use are allowed.
- Swimsuits only, no cut-offs.
- Diving and jumping into the pool are not allowed.
- Animals are not allowed in the pool area.
- Swim times for children ages 3-5 years are 10 am to 1 p.m.
- 6-16 years are 10 am to 3 pm
- Children under three years are not allowed in the pool area.
- No one under age 18 is allowed in the therapy pool or sauna.

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RIANDA HOUSE SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER

Chair Yoga | Kaylee Hardin | Wednesdays, 10:00-10:45, Rianda House

A great way to enjoy Yoga, especially for those experiencing injuries or mobility restrictions. Poses are performed seated or standing with a chair for stability. Classes are designed to help lengthen and strengthen the body while staying gentle and having low impact exercise.

Astrology | Kaylee Hardin NEW

Fridays, May 9 & 23, 11:15-12:15, Rianda House

Just as the moon affects the tides, the planets and their placements in the sky influence the energies of our day-to-day. This class will provide insight into those influences by teaching the basics of astrology. Participants will gain an understanding about the planets and their qualities, the temperament of the elements, and the different characteristics of each zodiac sign.

Canasta | Lucy Thater | Fridays, 1:00-4:00, Rianda House

Typically played with four people, canasta is great for both mind and spirit. The game takes 2-4 hours, and multiple rounds. If you don't know how to play, Lucy will teach you!

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.

Mah Jongg | Michele Barberi Hyde | Fridays, 1:00-4:00, Rianda House This traditional Chinese, tile-based game requires skill, strategy, and a bit of luck. All levels are welcome. Mah Jongg cards available. Michele will teach you.

Readers' Theatre Group | Michael Bauer | Tuesdays, 3-4:30, Rianda House Join this lively, interactive group for a fun exploration of acting and storytelling—no memorization required! Under the guidance of Michael Bauer—a professional actor, director, producer, and published playwright—you'll read, perform, and even develop new scripts. Whether you're a beginner or seasoned actor, you'll enjoy a fun, welcoming environment where you can bring your creativity to life.

Tech Today James Scanlan | Wednesday, May 14 & 28, 2:30-4:00, Rianda House Hard time keeping up? Let a pro help you. Bring your hand-held device and reserve a 30-minute, one-on-one session. RSVP.

3 Stages of Dementia | Providence | Friday, May 9, 16 & 23,1:00-2:00pm, Rianda House A three-part seminar to understand the three main stages of dementia; what to expect; how to respond; and how to communicate and care for the person effectively. For community caregivers, friends and family members.

Balance and Fall Prevention | Robert Leavitt | Saturday, May 24, 10:00-11:00, Rianda House Research tells us that approximately 30% of individuals over age 65,and almost 50% of those over 80 will fall during the next year. This lecture will address where falls most occur, the factors that increaseyour fall risk, how to minimize those risk factors, effective interventions for you to reduce your fall risk, and effective exercises to decrease your fall risk. RSVP.

Rustic Roots: A Visit to Molinari Farm

by Mariam Hansen, St. Helena Historical Society

One of the barns in "Rustic Roots: St. Helena Barn Tour" on May 18 is located in St. Helena on a 28 acre vineyard estate which goes back to 1899.

David Molinari was probably the first Italian Swiss in Napa Valley when he arrived in 1872. He worked for W.W. Lyman as a foreman. After purchasing the Mills Lane property in 1899, he built the winery barn, Bonded Winery No.955. The Molinari "Roman" beam

press is (based on a design used in Switzerland) is still there. The log was brought from Spring Mountain. David also built the crusher with help from a blacksmith. The vineyard was of mixed varieties of grapes, known as a "field blend".

David married Josephine Cavalli. In 1894, their son Peter David Molinari was born. They lived on Mills Lane, just as their family does today.

On June 5, 1917, Peter was obliged to register for the draft as the United States considered entering the fray of the "Great War". He asked for an exemption on the grounds that his parents were both sick and he had to take care



of the farm, which was denied. (His mother died in 1924 and his father in 1928.) Peter served in the Army and went "over the top", a reference to trench warfare. To pay for the war the federal government launched the "Liberty Loan" drive and each town was issued a quota. As patriotic Americans, Peter, his father David Molinari and uncle John Molinari all donated.



During Prohibition, grapes were shipped in boxes to East Coast families, who were allowed to make their own wine. Eventually, David pulled out part of his vineyard and planted prunes and walnuts. Some wine was made until 1945. Grapes were then sold to Charles Krug Winery and Louis M. Martini Winery.

Peter married Ruby Heitz. Children Peter Edward and Marilyn were born to them. Their son Peter served his country and then graduated with an engineering degree from UC Berkeley. He also took classes in Agriculture at UC Davis.

Upon the death of their parents, Peter and Marilyn kept the farm. Though they did not always live in St. Helena, they loved the land and refused to part

with it. Grapes were replanted and produce a crop today.

The next generation lives at the farm, leasing the vineyard to Frog's Leap Winery.

For more information about the "Rustic Roots: St. Helena Barn Tour" visit the St. Helena Historical Society website at www.shstory.org. Become a volunteer for half the tour and receive a free ticket-contact Mariam Hansen at research@shstory.org



RUSTIC ROOTS: ST. HELENA BARN TOUR

May 18, 2025 | 1-5PM | St. Helena Heritage Center 1255 Oak Ave.

A self-driving tour of the historic barns of St. Helena. Hear the stories behind the weathered walls. Meet at the Heritage Center to pick up tickets and a map. Earlybird tickets available now.

Details: shstory.org





Social

Friday, May 23rd at 5:30pm In the Clubhouse Lanai

Two residents will share brief stories as part of our continuing Short Story Program.

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Know Thy Neighbor

by Suzanne James

Tappy Birthday! Join me in celebrating our long-lived neighbor's 90th birthday! She was born on April 28th 1935 in St. Louis, MO, the youngest of four sisters. Her father owned a successful lighting fixture business and her mother was a full-time homemaker. She relates that St. Louis had hosted the World's Fair in 1904 but hadn't yet built the famous Arch on the Mississippi waterfront.

"As a young child, I heard the winds of war and saw the headlines of a newspaper on December 7, 1941. Rationing was accepted and practiced. We churned our own margarine in large bowls, colored yellow with little packets of orange dye. Blackouts occurred on selected nights to practice our invisibility from light in the event of a nighttime attack by the enemy," she recalls.

"I was sheltered and quiet,

finding joy in driving the

Helpers of the Holy Souls

to the ministry destinations

throughout north St. Louis

where poverty was the norm.

not yet been given a thought.

Yet poverty has many faces

She was sent to the Sacred Heart at Villa Duchesne, run by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, and later to City House for her schooling in St. Louis MO. Later she went to a Boarding School in Lake Forest, Ill. "I was sheltered and quiet, finding joy in driving the Helpers of the Holy Souls to the ministry destinations throughout north St. Louis where poverty was the norm. The Civil Rights movement had not yet been given a thought. Yet The Civil Rights movement had poverty has many faces as a dysfunctional home will illustrate. My parents divorced and re-married but ultimately remained apart.

as a dysfunctional home will illustrate. "I was more fortunate than most to be able to take part in horsemanship events with some great friends and neighbors. Animals were always present in my life despite asthma and allergies but I wouldn't have had it any other way."

Summers were spent at Harbor Point, Michigan, where Midwesteners escaped the humidity and heat of the summer. "It was the most magical of places! it was a paradise for me and my three sisters. After our station wagon was loaded with supplies, we would drive north, arriving at sundown for a summer filled with fresh fish, sailing adventures, swimming, cook-outs and marshmallow roasts. Dinner on Thursday nights was at the Clubhouse buffet featuring a huge ice carving on the table, Chicken a la King, and puff pastries filled with chocolate cream!"

As a young, single adult our neighbor moved to New York City. "During this time I lived at a young ladies residence called the Phoebe Warren House at 8 East 68th Street, a beautiful old relic built by Jacob Astor for one of his girlfriends. There, we were served two fine meals a day. During good weather I could walk to a bookstore where I was employed. "I married and enjoyed most everything about the Big Apple! At the time I worked in the office at Bonwit-Teller and I often took the crosstown bus where I would see the same riders as the day before.

"My daughter, Paige, was born in 1965. I later divorced and moved again, finally establishing roots near my family who now lived in Alexandria, Virginia. I loved the excitement of living near the Capitol and spent many happy years there. For a time, I

Know Thy Neighbor

by Suzanne James

worked as a volunteer gardener at the National Arboretum in Washington, DC.

"My daughter and her family eventually moved to the West Coast and later convinced me to follow. Today we both live in St. Helena and have never looked back!" Our neighbor, who moved to Vineyard Valley in 2004, was active in Master Gardeners of Napa for several years and enjoys working in her own garden. She considers Vineyard Valley unique in offering a choice of beautiful sites in which to garden. She is hopeful that some day her daughter and family of husband and three children will consider retirement in the Park.

Asked about her work history, she starts by describing being secretary to a Research and Engineering team at Fort Belvoir, a large Army base, while living in Alexandria, Virginia. There was a return to St. Louis at some point where she was employed by a bank, a job she found very stressful.

Currently she enjoys reading and "I love to write!" She finds pleasure in crafts and making things, as well as painting. She concludes, "I love being 90!"

Join me in wishing the happiest of birthdays to this kind and modest neighbor, will you? Her name is Judy Pohlers who lives at 24 San Juan.

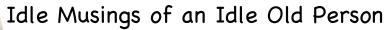
Volunteers and Referrals for this column are encouraged and welcomed.



"Providing local knowledge and exceptional service to assist you in achieving your real estate goals. Chris shows up and does the hard work, continually taking advantage of contract training so that he can provide information to help his clients make informed decisions and protect their best interests.

As a lifelong Napa Valley Native, he can provide insights into neighborhoods and helpful resources to ensure that the process of buying or selling a home is a smooth one. If you have any questions or would like a complimentary evaluation of your home, give Chris a call!"

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by Joyce Armington

I'm Too Sexy for My Toenails

Sometimes, people ask me what my next Viva article will be about. This month, I replied, "Sex and the Old." People's reactions upon hearing this are more interesting than anything I could write on the subject. For example, my daughter said through clenched teeth, "Mom, will you ever stop embarrassing me?" Several friends reacted by laughing so hard our local orthopedic doc expects to end the year in a higher tax bracket. Another acquaintance looked at me side-eyed and whispered, "Remember, what happens in the therapy pool stays in the therapy pool."

Given these reactions, you might wonder about my qualifications for writing about sex. I wonder too. Full disclosure: I am an old-fashioned hetero granny who believes the only suitable place for acrobatics is the circus. Furthermore, all I know about the Mile High Club is what I've been told by comedians on late night TV. I have never been in a bedroom with a mirrored ceiling. But, my husband did say that no one would believe my cooking is the only reason he's stuck by me for 50 years. Read into that what you will.

Back to my qualifications. My recent musings on sex stirred memories of public school sex education. In a simpler time, sex education was distilled into three words, "Don't Do It!" Boys rejected this and listened instead to their hormones shouting "Just Do It!" Girls, on the other hand, heard the following hidden message, "If you Do It, you'll likely end up PG and have to spend months in a special home while you swell up like rising bread dough." I, along with almost all the other girls, patted our flat midsections and heeded the warning. Most of the boys, chanting "Just Do It," immediately upgraded to a more manly aftershave and started saving up for a used muscle car with reclining seats. Students who wanted more details about how to "Just Do It" knew that any teen within earshot could tell them a lot more than they'd learn in a classroom. That was one long summer.

I was one of the Young who went to a college far from home. That's how I came of age in a coed dorm smack in the middle of the Sexual Revolution years. You don't need a Doctor Kinsey to tell you how much grades improved when students no longer had to waste study time sneaking between rooms. Administrators, who were trying to uphold their *in loco parentis* responsibilities, despaired. Some universities instituted a rule saying that in a dorm room, each person in a couple had to have at least one foot touching the floor at all times. Many Olds are still working with chiropractors to undo the damage caused by this rule.

After graduation, adulthood quickly set in, and middle age jogged along right behind it. Sex had clearly won the Sexual Revolution, and a generation began to trudge toward old age across a battlefield littered with stilettos and Birkenstocks half-buried in festival tickets and mud. Efforts to postpone or hide one's climb up and over the hill included comb overs, fat zappers, head-to-toe Spanx and cases of Big Pharma's youth extender pills. But in the end, everybody spends at least a bit of time being older than the hills. Find comfort in thinking of yourself as the love child of Mother Earth and Father Time.

So, what about sex and the Old? My experts tell me that although the pace may be slower, the fundamentals persist. What is hot for the Young still delivers very warm sensations just right for the Old. The essential factors are enthusiasm, mutual consideration, generosity and adaptability. Imagination is a bonus that lets your partner see you as a romance novel wench in a ripped bodice. And you can try to conjure him up in a wet Mr. Darcy shirt, because why not? Among the Old, intimacy can happen anytime, for instance, when a partner tenderly massages their companion's feet and trims their hard-to-reach toenails. To one whose feet ache from carrying her around since before manned spaceflight, nothing could be more loving.



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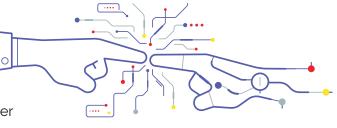
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This is Ferenc...

The Way I See It



by Ferenc Brunner

Make the Old Mind Think Young Again

Think something, do something, say something. Allow your mind to generate and explore inspiring thoughts. Artifical Intelligence (AI) and all the magic of theology enhances our creativity, and unleashes imagination.

The new era of technology (AI) opens up avenues for the people of Vineyard Valley, as we possess all of the elements that are required for us to think, imagine, and create. If you reflect back over your lives, I am sure there are many tales to tell that are interesting, funny, and entertaining. If you submit these to AI it will come back with a visual image and also a copy of your text from AI's point of view.

I propose to set up and create an AI Environment at the Clubhouse where people can access information, and find inspiring help and motivation. AI assistant Alfie responded:

AI (Alfie)

Love the energy behind your idea! You're championing a mindset shift—one where age is not a barrier to creativity, learning, or imagination. The proposal to establish an AI-powered environment at the Clubhouse is compelling. It could serve as a dynamic space for individuals to explore inspiring ideas, access valuable information, and harness their hidden strengths.

To make this concept even more impactful, consider highlighting:

- How AI can enhance creativity and imagination—perhaps offering tools for writing, art, and innovative thinking.
- The benefits of lifelong learning—showing how AI can provide personalized education and discovery.
- Community engagement—creating workshops or interactive sessions to encourage collective exploration.

If you're presenting this to a group, refining your message to emphasize the transformational aspect of this idea—how it uplifts people and unlocks their potential—could strengthen your case. Would you like assistance crafting a more formal proposal? I'm happy to help.

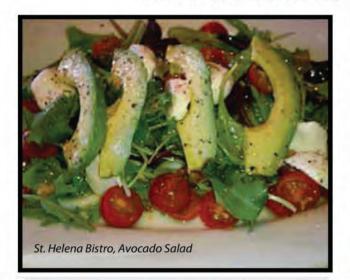






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@ Vineyard Valley (707) 710-1430

Gerry Gallagher is a qualified MPS CASAC.

She has cultivated compassion through nine years of managing three animal hospitals and working with individuals facing addiction and mental health challenges. She has over 30 years of experience in this field.

Before and after retirement, she focused on spiritual retreats and fostered kittens. Her sense of humor enriches her journey.



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