



NBRC Senior Companion Program
 2351 Mendocino Ave
 Santa Rosa CA 95403

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NBRC Senior Companion News

When Do We Return To Volunteering?

It's the number one question on everyone's mind and heart: When do we return and what will volunteering look like during a pandemic? As an essential business, North Bay Regional Center has continued operating during the Shelter-In-Place orders because we provide essential services to the area's most vulnerable population. However, we have curtailed all but the most critical in-person work. Volunteers have not been allowed to serve as Senior Companions since early March and have been waiting and hoping for the best. Management has continued working remotely with the help of virtual technologies, and are brainstorming new approaches to meet client needs now and in the future.

Obviously, when we do return, it will be with an abundance of caution and as an organized effort on the part of everyone involved. Training classes and tools are being evaluated for person-to-person volunteering; some of which may be done using screen technologies on tablets, computers or phones instead of in person, at least for the time being. If our volunteers have any special talents they'd like to share, be sure to let us know in an email or phone call, so we can add that to our growing list of ideas.

New Members Elected to the SCP Advisory Council

Oversight and support of our program comes from several sources. The Department of Development Services (DDS) is the official grant recipient of funding from (CNCS) Corporation for National and Community Service to support Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs in California. Our sponsoring agency is North Bay Regional Center, which receives and administrates our grant funds. We also have an Advisory Council comprised of community members, NBRC staff and SCP volunteers.

During our most recent meeting of the Advisory Council on June 4, **Roderick Paton** (SCP Volunteer) and **Laurie Warren** (Behavior Analyst from NBRC) were nominated and later confirmed to serve on the SCP Advisory Council. We welcome Roderick and Laurie and thank them in advance for their service and leadership. Other members of the Advisory Council include: January Crane, Training Manager NBRC; Ana Horta, SCP Specialist NBRC; David and Povi Wagner, Kaleidoscope Day Program; and Donata Mikulik, Elder Justice Coordinator (Ombudsman Program). If you are connected to the Senior Companion Program and have an interest in serving on the Advisory Council, please contact Program Specialist, Ana Horta. Anah@nbrc.net



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Living During A Pandemic

Living during a pandemic is hard, scary and lonely. So it's normal to feel stressed. We all need to take care of our mental health just like we are trying to protect our physical health.

Some daily ways to reduce stress include:

- Limit your intake of news and TV.
- Take daily walks with a friend (masked).
- Eat healthy food and limit sugar (too much sugar can make us feel more anxious).
- Keep a daily journal, being sure to include both the positive and negative things happening in your life. Reminisce your past successes.
- Watch funny movies that make you laugh.
- Send a card or note to someone in the mail to share a happy memory.
- Learn to meditate.
- Try a new project you've been putting off.

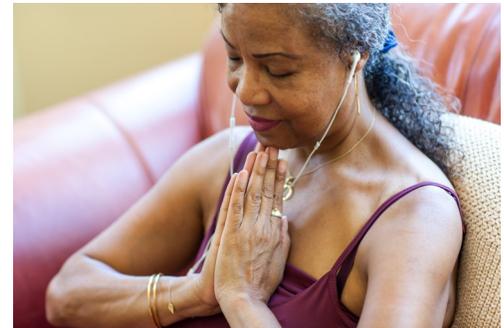
- Most importantly, ask for help when you need it.

If you are having difficulty sleeping, eating, or unable to stop fears from taking over your thoughts,

call **Sonoma County Mental Health**

Access 24 hours a day · 7 days a week:

707.565.6900



Puzzle Time Help, We're Bored!

SUDOKU Puzzles

If you haven't played this type of puzzle yet, you are in for some fun. You can play for hours without realizing it. Sounds like a good fit for the current stuck-at-home times.

Sudoku puzzles are logic based number puzzles. The goal is to fill in the missing numbers in each ROW, BLOCK and COLUMN so each includes the numbers 1-9 only once.

Look at the **top** ROW of this puzzle. There are three blank cells. The missing numbers between 1-9 are: 1, 3, and 7. You cannot put a 1 in the first open cell in the top row because there is already a 1 in that BLOCK. The second BLOCK has no open spaces in the top row (and it already has a 1). The last BLOCK, looking DOWN, there are 1s in the last two ROWS. That means you write a number 1 in the first open cell in the top third BLOCK. If you cannot determine where a number goes, move on to the next block or number. Eventually you will be able to fill in all the missing numbers.

5	6		4	9	8			2
	4		1		2	6	5	
		1					8	4
		4	6		9	2	1	5
	2		3					8
8	9			1		3	4	6
	8	3	7	5			2	
		2	9			8		1
	1					5		



VOLUNTEER CLOSE-UP — Roderick Paton

Your first impression of Roderick is that he is a smart and dapper gentleman who cares deeply and laughs easily. From Wales in his youth, to England and later to America in 1976, Roderick brings and easy humor and purposefulness.

He sees the Senior Companion Program as an essential service for the people he works with who are intellectually disabled, and he believes in a coherent and focused plan to meet their needs as respected individuals. He feels strongly that they benefit from the face to face and one-on-one presence of the volunteers. As Senior Companion volunteers, their role is to be gracious and kind as they develop friendships with the participants. These interactions benefit both the clients and volunteers, because they make each other's lives more important.

Roderick enjoys gardening, reading, writing, and helping within the community, and has been doing more since the quarantine. He transitioned recently, after serving ten years at the Sonoma State Developmental Center, where he had an immensely rewarding assignment as a Foster Grandparent. Now he serves as a Senior Companion Volunteer in Santa Rosa. His community service has been inspired by both President Barrack Obama, who advocated community involvement at large; and by Martin Luther King who asked, "What are you doing for others." This is not a rhetorical question for Roderick, who adds, "Volunteering should always be motivated by one's heart and not by financial gain."

While in San Francisco, Roderick worked as a tutor with Refugee Transitions as a two-year commitment teaching English as a second language. Several of his pupils graduated thus achieving their dream of becoming citizens of the United States. He's also been a special education teacher within the Sonoma School District.

What brings him back again and again are the facial expressions and emotional reactions of the clients when he interacts through reading, singing or playing games with them.

Volunteer Close-up Laurie Warren

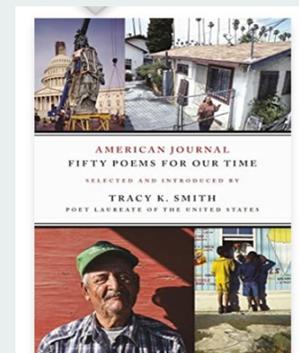
We asked Laurie to share a little about herself as a new member of the SCP Advisory Council and here's what she had to say:

"I am delighted to serve on the Advisory Council and greatly appreciate the work of Senior Companions! I work as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst at North Bay Regional Center with the Enhanced Behavior Support Homes and the Clinical Consulting Team. I derive great satisfaction from my work, and my joy in life comes from working together with others engaged in making a difference in our world — as do the Senior Companions!

"Given my professional background I have many tools to use to stay calm during this challenging time. My three "go-to" tools are: 1) Daily early-morning walks; 2) "Mindfulness" practice; and 3) Focus on gratitude: thinking of what I have to be grateful for, from before I get out of bed to the time I go to sleep.

"Currently, I am reading an anthology of poetry, *American Journal: Fifty Poems of Our Time*, Selected and Introduced by Tracy K. Smith, Poet Laureate of the United States. The 50 poems represent a great cross-section of people's perspectives and experiences. It offers the reader a greater understanding and compassion for a wide range of people that comprise these United States — and possibly, a better understanding of the present time."

We are so fortunate to have these passionate people who've chosen to contribute to our Program. Welcome!





The Book Shelf

Browse our bookshelf and see if you find any interesting summer reading.

In this section of our newsletter we share books by a diverse group of writers. The first suggested reading is: **The Woman Warrior**:

Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts.

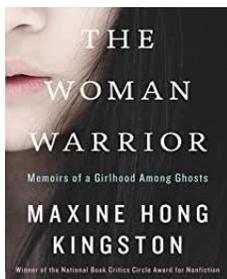
Here's a brief about the book. "Acclaimed author Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* broke new ground when it was first published 35 years ago, weaving autobiography, history, folklore, and fantasy in to a candid and revelatory story about the daughter of Chinese immigrants in mid-20th century California.

Now in audio for the first time, *The Woman Warrior* is read by television and movie star Ming-Na (ER, *Mulan*) in a performance that captures the book's amazing spectrum of hope, longing, fear, and strength.

Kingston, winner of the National Book Award and National Humanities Medal, beautifully mixes reality and fantasy in relating her experience

growing up a stranger in America and an outsider to her family's history in China. Thanks to the author's unique storytelling style and voice, this book remains one of the most commonly taught college texts in America. Hear it performed for the first time

It is available on Audible for those who like to listen. You may also request it from your local library for pick-up or download if using one of the library apps, such as Overdrive. Or you can purchase from a bookstore. It is also available online at Amazon for \$11.99 on Kindle or \$12.19 in paperback.

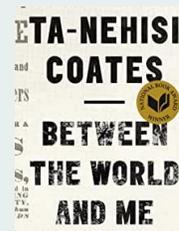


More Books

Our second suggestion is: **Between the World and Me**, by Ta-Nehisi Coates, number one bestseller and finalist for the National Book Award. Coates is a recipient of the Genius Grant, received the National Magazine award, Hillman Prize for Opinion and Analysis in Journalism, and the George Polk Award for an Atlantic cover story "The Case for Reparations."

In *Between the World and Me*, Goodreads offers the following review—a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son, Ta-Nehisi Coates offers a powerful new framework for understanding our nation's history and current crisis. Americans have built an empire on the idea of "race," a falsehood that damages us all but falls most heavily on the bodies of black women and men—bodies exploited through slavery and segregation, and, today, threatened, locked up, and murdered out of all proportion. What is it like to inhabit a black body and find a way to live within it? And how can we all honestly reckon with this fraught history and free ourselves from its burden?

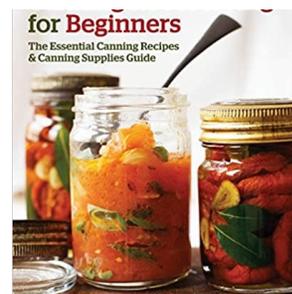
Available from most book sellers in stores or online, 152 pages, published July 14, 2015.



More At-Home Reading/Doing:

Lots of people are making breads and canning fruits and vegetables during isolation. It's a positive activity that has real-life benefits.

If you're interested in canning but haven't done this before, you might want to try **Canning and Preserving for Beginners: The Essential Canning Recipes and Canning Supplies Guide**. Priced at \$7.99 paperback or Kindle, or spiral bound for \$13.99.



Poetry Corner

Gentleness

by Godfrey Morris

The price to be gentle is sometimes steep
And at times it even makes you weep
Some try to use, others abuse
Which make you bereft and then bemused
And like sudden rain on a public fair
Chagrin's dark cloud reappears
Being gentle is soft they say
Yet strength there lies in so tender ways
Unrelenting restraint against all odds
Cathartic redemption, in it stands
Gentleness, a gift, a priceless gem from natures glow
The fountain where nobility flows
Its virtue, is a diamond to behold
Hidden in an opaque and dusty earth, pure and bold
Forever seeking, never deceiving
Helping those, who are desperately needing



Meditation and Yoga

What can we do to keep ourselves sane and fit in isolation? Experts suggest that we exercise and make time to meditate daily. In my own experience, it has helped me tremendously.

If you have never tried Yoga, start with beginner videos that use the terms, Yoga for Beginners or Restorative Yoga. You can buy videos or watch online for free, using YouTube.

Gentle stretching, breathing and keeping a schedule will make it much easier to form a habit.

The 21/90 rule states that it takes 21 days to make a habit and 90 days to make it a permanent lifestyle change. Commit to your goal for 21 days and it will become a habit. Commit to your goal for 90 days and it will become a part of your lifestyle.

You don't need to buy expensive equipment. If you don't have a yoga mat you can exercise on carpet or outside on the

grass; wherever it is comfortable and you have enough room to move freely. Below are several YouTube links to get your started.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c56tAJ9KiRg>
Restorative Yoga w/Jessica Richburg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6eKvjA8ER4>
Gentle Yoga for beginners – The Mat Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ts01MC2mIo>
Chair Yoga for Seniors with Adriene

Two highly recommended meditation apps from the New York Times **Wirecutter** are:

- **Headspace**
- **Calm**

Visit this web link for more information: <https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-meditation-apps/>

