

## Small Groups at our Sunday Stroll & Memory Café

### Garden Etiquette

Please note the following guidelines to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment of the gardens.

- I. Please stay on the trails or lawns.
- II. Please leave undisturbed: flowers, rocks, plants, trees, fish, birds, and wildlife.
- III. Enjoy a picnic at one of our sitting areas (we don't advise sitting on the lawn). Please carry-out what you carry-in, including trash. Please leave at your home: alcohol and BBQs.
- IV. Required dress includes shoes + shirt and pants or shorts or skirt. Additionally, recommended dress includes: calf-high or knee-high socks, long pants, sun hat, and sun screen. We encourage guests to check for ticks after visiting the gardens & wilderness.
- V. Help maintain an atmosphere of peace and love. Please use mobile phones and cameras with consideration for the peace and privacy preferences of others. Please take care to ensure all persons photographed are comfortable with the use of their image post the garden visit. Please leave at your home: recreation & sports equipment (i.e. balls, kites, skateboards), and radios. Musical instruments are welcome if you are participating in a facilitated therapeutic musical group, otherwise, please refrain from playing music in the gardens.
- VI. Please do not smoke on our property (buildings, outhouses, or gardens).
- VII. Trained service dogs are welcome to accompany owners with special needs. Please keep pets at your home.

*Visit us online:*

*[rest-stop-ranch.com/memory-cafe/](http://rest-stop-ranch.com/memory-cafe/)*

Rest.Stop.Ranch Respite Retreat Center ~ Accessible Gardens >

## **Memory Café in Topsfield**

**Mary E. MacDonald and Karl R. Ackerman, hosts**

**We are recruiting all interested volunteers age 14+**

*We serve an interfaith community and strive to be inclusive and accessible to all.*

*This inclusive Memory Café is 1 of 13 funded in part by the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services in 2016.*

*In 2015, We served 3 dementia-care assisted living facilities, small groups.*

*We served 2 NE-ARC group homes, small groups.*

*We served 72 guests, April - October.*

### **Recommendations for Small Group Leaders:**

- *We serve small groups coming from dementia-care assisted living facilities, skilled-nursing facilities, and developmental disability group homes.*
- *We are able to accommodate up to two small groups (two vans) on Sunday Stroll & Memory Café event dates.*
- *We are not able to accommodate small groups on other dates.*
- *We welcome dementia-care duos and trios (-partners and -receivers) to schedule a private garden tour with Mary on dates in addition to the Memory Café event dates.*
- *When scheduling a small group visit, we recommended 3:1 residents:staff ratio and a max 9:3 group size for groups consisting of 100% ambulatory residents. Our gardens are optimized for wheelchair-access, and are also easy to ambulate. We've observed that our guests using canes, walkers, and wheelchairs often need a one-on-one care-partner to assist with the walking and wheeling of the trail. Walkers with an all-wheels + seat design glide easily over the trail. Walkers with tennis balls or skies (which help walkers to glide on indoor floors) are less successful on the crushed-stone trail. All guests find the frequent sitting areas along the trail helpful.*
- *To schedule a small group visit on a Memory Café date, please reserve with Mary, at least 1-week prior to your visit.*

**Thanks for your interest! We look forward to your visit.**

**~ Mary & Karl, garden creators & caretakers**

## Small Groups at our Sunday Stroll & Memory Café

*Our Sunday Stroll & Memory Café mission is to:*

- *support informal/family dementia-care-partners who are beginning a dementia-care journey, are providing 24/7 dementia-care at-home, or are experiencing stages of grief, loss, recovery and renewal, during or after dementia-care.*
- *provide dignity, beauty, respite, and recreation to independent wheelchair-users, people who consider themselves home-bound, and people affected by degenerative disease, developmental disability with dementia, or terminal illness.*

### **Risks & Mitigation Plans**

#### **I. Falls**

- A. Considering that people living with degenerative disease are at-risk of falling, we recommend that at least one familiar and trained staff is with small group participants *at all times*. For people who qualify as “high fall risk,” we recommend one-on-one supervision by familiar and trained staff.

#### **II. Wandering off-the-trail or away from the group**

- A. A small group size (3-4-5-6) helps maintain group togetherness.
- B. Recommended resident: staff ratio is 3:1, max group size no more than 9 with 3 staff and 2 volunteers, + facilitator. As needs increase within the group, so must staff.
- C. For people who may wander, we recommend one-on-one supervision by familiar and trained staff.

#### **III. Fatigue**

- A. Several optional garden experiences are available for people with diverse abilities and interests.
- B. Honest assessment (self or staff) of physical ability helps users walking/wheeling the trail to choose a “doable” distance.
- C. Walk or wheel without added weight (i.e. a backpack or basket filled with “*My Favorite Things*”).

#### **IV. Non-participation, Isolation, and Apathy**

- A. We recommend at least one familiar and trained staff to sit with and engage people who opt-out and people who feel “bored.”

#### **V. Unsafe Behaviors**

- A. For people who may behave unsafely, we recommend one-on-one supervision by familiar and trained staff.

## Rest.Stop.Ranch Respite Retreat Center ~ Accessible Gardens >

### **Hosting Small Groups with Special Needs since 2011**

#### **Opportunities**

##### **I. Wheelchair-accessible Gardens**

- A. The MargFMac Front Garden Loop (0.1 mile), access: Cut Flowers, Roses & Kitchen Garden, Orchard Ave., Ornamental Trees & Shrubs, Raspberry Patch, Cedar Grove & Tunnel, and Koi Pond.
- B. Several optional garden experiences are available for people with diverse abilities and interests.
- C. Accessibility features include: many trail-side sitting surfaces and areas, clearly marked trails and activity areas, and wheelchairs-on-hand if needed.
- D. Intimate garden-spaces offer close connections and conversations with flowers, rocks, plants, trees, fish, birds, wildlife, friends and family.
- E. Experience holistic benefits of horticultural therapy.

##### **II. Dementia-friendly, Failure-free Activities**

- A. Flower Fun: make take-home flower arrangements.
- B. Bird Tales: observe & appreciate birds, tell short tales.
- C. Fish Tales: observe & appreciate fish, tell tall tales.
- D. Drums & Dancing: play music, dance & sing.
- E. Experience holistic benefits of horticultural, art, music & movement therapies.

##### **III. Picnicking (Carry-in, Carry-out)**

- A. Many duos and groups enjoy a pre-packed picnic (i.e. sandwiches, chips, cookies, drinks, napkins, plates, cups). All groups carry-out their trash.

##### **IV. Photos**

- A. Group photos in the gardens are encouraged.

##### **V. Memory-making with Family Members**

- A. Family care-partners are encouraged to attend.

##### **VI. Care-partner Respite, Information & Networking**

- A. Social Justice & Information Table offers a first point of contact and referrals to MA/NH Alz. Assoc., 1-800-AGE-INFO, ADRCs, COAs, MLRC and Respite Resources, Memory Café Network...

##### **VII. Palliative Care & Psycho-Spiritual Healing**

- A. Mary, Chaplain/Spiritual Care Provider
- B. Mary & Karl, Survivors as Hospitality Hosts
- C. Volunteers, Survivors as Hospitality Helpers
- D. 15 Stations, 6-ways: 1. Self-Care, 2. Christ's Passion, 3. Dementia-Care to Death, 4. Christ's Resurrection, 5. Life After Dementia-Care, 6. Universal Meaning & Purpose Life Stations