



# OASIS

## Adult Day Program

Quarterly Newsletter

## Wandering with Dementia

By Meghan Velasquez  
Program Manager

As the sun begins to show itself and the weather warms up, we are all anxious to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. We are quick to open windows and the front door, welcoming the fresh breeze into our homes.



The majority of us are able to do this without any concern, but for those of us caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia we might have to stop and evaluate the risks.

The majority of people with Alzheimer's/dementia will experience wandering, many in the mid to late stages of their diagnosis.

Wandering tendencies appear for many different reasons. Some individuals are looking for something or someone, or feel the need to fulfill a former responsibility such as picking up the kids from school or going to work, or may express the need or desire to "go home" and some simply just want to get outdoors. Others may wander due to anxiety, boredom, and/or agitation.

Although the exact cause may be unknown, wandering can be very worrisome for the caregiver and dangerous for the individual. There are steps you can take to help prevent wandering and keeping your loved one safe in the case they do wander without your knowledge.

Securing the environment is an important step in ensuring the safety of your loved one in the home:

- Keep locks and alarms on the windows and doors,
- Secure car keys,
- Child proof knob covers, and
- Place a tracking device on their shoe, watch, or something they often wear.

Addressing the psychological component is also key in addressing wandering. Keep your loved one active, ensuring adequate sleep. Maintaining routine and structure throughout the day will also help prevent wandering behavior.

Consider purchasing an identification bracelet to keep on your loved one at all times and try to not leave them unattended. If your loved one does wander away, it is important to take immediate action and notify the police. Alert your neighbors and local businesses, post on social media and call your family to come help you look. Try to note what they are wearing that day to give everyone an accurate description. The goal is to anticipate wandering, plan for it before it happens, and therefore prevent missing incidents.

### WHO WE ARE

We are an innovative day program for individuals in early to mid stages of Alzheimer's disease and/or other related dementias

### STAFF

Program Manager  
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# De-stressing the Hours with Music, Parades and Participation

By Lynne Rayner

Spring seems to have arrived here in the Central Valley once again, amid rain and strong winds that still remind us of Winter. But with the buds on the trees opening and the bulbs popping up everywhere, thoughts turn to spring holidays such as Passover, and Easter, Mother's Day, and Memorial Day, many of which are days when families get together for a celebration. Here are a couple of ideas for how to include your loved one with dementia in the festivities.



A strategy that is often used in working with dementia patients is music, something that could be used as a strategy by itself or as a background with other activities. Although music and its connection to memory is not completely understood, what is known according to Rachael Wonderlin and Dr. Geri M. Lotze is that it "has been found to reduce anxiety, to encourage interaction, to reduce agitation, and to increase cooperation in persons with dementia." So an idea to create calm, which may lead to some brain (memory) activities, is to find and play music that your loved one identifies with. Music certainly doesn't have to tie in with these holidays, but one example that does might be Bing Crosby's "Easter Parade," which could be very popular with a certain age group and make a connection to their past. For any religious holiday there is also traditional religious music, which is timeless.

An activity that exercises the brain and that can be done one-on-one or in a group is what we call a "name poem." In a group you probably will want to use a large piece of paper or a whiteboard if you have one, but a regular sized paper is fine if it's one-on-one. Write the name of the holiday down the side of the paper (vertically) with plenty of room between letters. Then brainstorm words that start with the same letter on each line and write them down. The words do not have to be related to the holiday, but if they are, that is a plus. This can stimulate memories of past holidays and be a conversation starter. It might trigger memories of a holiday that was very special for some reason.

An idea for a more physical activity might be to have your loved one participate in coloring Easter eggs. If he doesn't have physical limitations such as keeping his balance, he could also help hide the eggs. Could s/he help make table decorations or fill baskets with candy and flowers? A fun activity could be threading colored ribbon through baskets. With any activity like these, be sure to have all of the materials necessary ready ahead of time and in a place that is comfortable and safe to work.

During the Jewish festival of Passover, is your loved one able to participate in the prayers and ceremony of the Seder? Perhaps a preview of what you are going to do will help and in the case of actually participating in the ceremony, doing a little rehearsing will help instill confidence.

For holidays like Memorial Day, Flag Day, and Veterans' Day, perhaps take your loved one to a local parade or watch one on television. If she is a veteran, local veterans' groups may have breakfasts or dinners she could attend. Another physical activity is possibly helping to put out flags in your area. All of these depend, of course, on the ability level of your loved one, but it could be an opportunity to try something new.

## Upcoming Events

- **Matt Embry Music Performance**  
Wednesday, April 12th  
3pm-4pm
- **Easter Social**  
Thursday, April 6th  
9am-10am
- **Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Group**  
1st Monday and 3rd Wednesday of every month  
10am-11:30am

### Newsletter Staff

Lynne Rayner  
*Editor*

Meghan Velasquez  
*Editor & Design*

# Have a "Normal" Flight in a "No-normal" Year!

By Lynne Rayner



According to the "The Global Intelligence Letter", travel by air will increase by 30% in 2023, even though hotels and airlines may not be able to keep up with the pace. The term "No-normal" is being used to describe airline travel this year, so if you are travelling with your loved one who has dementia, it is really important to know what facilities and services are available for you.

Your first consideration is to decide whether your loved one can travel alone or needs someone to accompany him. In looking at the various airlines they require a companion if the person

- is unable to comprehend and respond to the safety instructions given,
- has a hearing and/or vision problem so severe that she is unable to establish communication with the flight staff, or
- has a mobility disability so severe that she would be unable to help in her own evacuation.

Another related consideration here is having a safety plan for possible eventualities like a delayed and/or cancelled flight, which can also affect connecting flights. Will someone be available to help either at the origin, layover (for connecting flights) or the destination? Do you need to consider special dietary needs?

Once this decision has been made and plans implemented it's time to look at the airlines. The following eight airlines service Fresno Yosemite Airport (FAT): AeroMexico, Allegiant, Alaska, American, Delta, Southwest, United, and Volaris. Each, along with the airport itself, offers services for the disabled, some for those with cognitive disabilities and some not. This article will attempt to give you an overview of what these services are to help you if you are travelling this year.

Fresno Yosemite Airport offers two amenities: wheelchairs and companion care restrooms for people who need someone with them for travelling. When I called the Airport Information Desk at (559) 621-4500 the agent said the best thing to do was to call the airline and their agent would add the information to the ticket. If you go to <https://flyfresno/traveling-with-disabled/> there is a list of all eight airlines and their contact phone numbers.

Before even getting on the airplane, you have to pass through the screening process, and TSA provides help for disabled people during this process. For detailed information call the TSA Cares Hotline at (855) 787-2227 prior to travelling for any questions you might have.

A rule of thumb for all of the airlines that I looked at is if you have special needs and/or questions, you should try to address those when making the reservations, but no later than between 24 and 48 hours ahead of flight time. The needs can then be added to the ticket notes. All that I looked at will assist with getting on board, deplaning, and moving to a connecting flight.

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The Fresno Bee

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OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE



Valley Caregiver Resource Center provides seniors and their caregivers throughout the Central Valley with a wide array of services. Serving Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, Tulare and Tuolumne counties. VCRC is here to help you navigate the caregiving journey.

visit: <https://www.votebocc.com/>

- Click the link in the post
- Find VCRC under "Services" then Non-Profit
- Vote everyday!

Please vote for us!

Best

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## Tips For Transitioning To a Day Program

Focus on the fun!

Highlight the social aspects and down-play the care aspects. OASIS can be described as a senior community center or a social club.

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Adjust Your Approach

If your loved one is concerned about losing their independence or feel as though they do not need supervision, discuss other aspects of attending: volunteering, helping others, and working on community service projects.

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Be Open and Honest

Ask your loved one to do it for you. OASIS is a great place to be while you go to work, run errands or take some time to yourself. Let them know that them attending the program will allow you to do the things you need to get done with out worrying.

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Call or email Program Manager Meghan Velasquez for more tips or to schedule a tour!

(559)224-9121  
[mvelasquez@valleycrc.org](mailto:mvelasquez@valleycrc.org)

# Have a "Normal" Flight in a "No-normal" Year!

By Lynne Rayner

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## AeroMexico

- When making reservations put "Add special assistance" to the passenger details page.
- For hearing, vision, cognitive and developmental disabilities, request "individual assistance."

## Alaska Airlines

- Request extra service when booking at (800) 503-0101.
- You can download mobile app "Fly for All" for first time flyers, minors travelling alone, and people with cognitive and developmental challenges.
- Also available: "Wings for Autism" is a practice session for travelers, "Sensory Overload" video interacts with the "Autism Project."

## Allegiant Airlines

- Passenger must self-identify at all points of travel.
- Does not address cognitive disabilities specifically, but for any special needs, contact the Reservation Center at (702) 505-8888.

## American Airlines

- When booking or managing your trip on aa.com, "Add special assistance" on passenger details if you have hearing, vision, cognitive, or developmental disability.
- For hearing or speech disability, call (800) 735-2988. For all other disabilities, call (800) 237-7976.
- On-line: <https://www.aa.com/li18n/travel-info/specialassistance/special-assistance.jsp>

## Delta Airlines

- Multi-Sensory Rooms for travelers who may be overcome by the noise, crowded conditions, etc. of a large airport. Available at certain airports – Atlanta (ATZ), New York La Guardia (LGA), Pittsburg (PIT), San Diego (SAN), Seattle-Tacoma (SEA), Birmingham-Shuttlesworth Int'l., UK (BHM), Myrtle Beach (MYR), Dublin, Ireland (DUB), and Portland (PDX).

## Southwest Airlines

- Will introduce passenger to Flight Attendant (FA) for personal contact
- Online look at Southwest Airlines disabled assistance. Under "Accessible Travel Assistance," click on "Cognitive and Developmental Disabilities." They provide a nice, user-friendly menu.

## United Airlines

- For general information at each airport facility, call the Accessibility Desk at (800) 228-2744.
- On certain United aircraft seating 60+ passengers, on board wheelchairs, which fit the aisles and lavatories, are available.

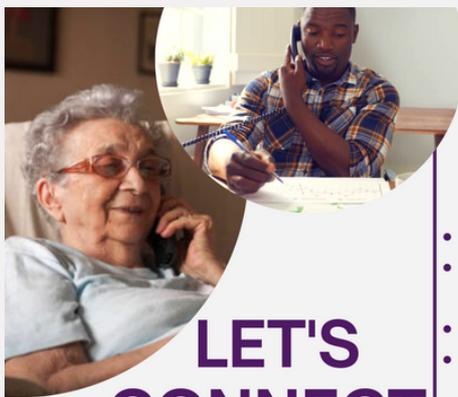
## Volaris

- Contact airline at least 24 hours in advance for special assistance for "Seniors Over 60." However, "if person has an impairment and is not able to be self-sufficient (senile dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or degenerative illnesses)" service is not applicable.
- May request early boarding, will assist with boarding, disembarking, and flight connections.
- Can contact airline for more information at +11 855 (8652747) or at <https://cms.volaris.com/en/travel-info/contact-us/>

This is just an overview, of course, but these are starting places for you to look for information with these airlines, and with the right kind of planning, your trip should be a comfortable experience. Let us know about your trip – we'd like to hear from you!

Sources

Aeromexico. [aeromexico.com/en-us/travel-information/special-services](https://www.aeromexico.com/en-us/travel-information/special-services)  
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 Delta Airlines. [www.delta.com/us/en/accessible-travel-services/cognitive-disability-assistance/](https://www.delta.com/us/en/accessible-travel-services/cognitive-disability-assistance/)  
 Fresno Yosemite International Airport. <https://flyfresno.com/traveling-with-disabilities/>  
 Southwest Airlines. <https://www.southwest.com/help/accessible-travel-assistance/cognitive-disabilities>  
 United Airlines. <https://www.united.com/ual/en/us/fly/travel/special-needs/disabilities/useful-info.html>  
 Volaris. <https://cms.volaris.com/en/travel-info/specialservices/special-assistance-for-people-with-disabilities/>  
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## LET'S CONNECT

Our Care Companions at Valley Caregiver Resource Center want to provide your senior residents an opportunity to stay connected during this time. We will reach out to them by phone on a weekly basis

*All it takes is an authorized referral and we can begin our conversation today!*

### Our phone calls promote:

- Socialization
- Community Connection
- Companionship
- Enhanced Physical & Cognitive Health
- Positivity & Self-Esteem
- Staying Active in their Unique Setting

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Meghan Velasquez  
 559-224-9121  
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## ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP



This group will meet

Every 1st Monday & 3rd Wednesday of the month  
 10am-11:30am  
 5363 N. Fresno St.  
 Fresno, CA 93710

### THIS GROUP OFFERS:

- A chance to freely share your feelings in a safe and secure environment
- Socialize and connect with fellow caregivers
- Gain insight and ideas from others going through similar journeys

**Know that you are not alone!**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RSVP CONTACT

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