

FALL 2025

# Review

AFFORDABLE . . . INNOVATIVE . . . INSPIRING

## CHARTING THE COURSE: THE REDWOODS LOOKS TO THE NEXT 50 YEARS

*A Special Message from the CEO, Kyle Ruth-Islas*

**T**HIS IS AN EXCITING TIME in our industry—rapid enhancement of technology, new research leading to more effective care practices, and creative models of providing services to older adults.

The fact is, we are in the midst of an inflection point in our history, as there are myriad trends occurring across the country that are prompting us to think differently about how we serve our residents.

Among these trends: more individuals coming to The Redwoods later on in life and therefore needing more services; continuing climate-related challenges such as rising sea levels and the threat of wildfires; and workforce-related shifts such as changing workplace expectations and an increasingly technology-enabled workforce.

### Strategic Analysis Underway

As a next step in preparing for the future, The Redwoods is engaging in a critical, organization-wide strategic analysis to help ensure that this unique community not only continues its tradition of excellent care but thrives for the next half-century.

Consistent with our organizational values, we are gathering input from our residents and their family members, staff, volunteers, present and past board leaders, community leaders, and major donors.



**“We are in the midst of an inflection point in our history, as there are trends occurring across the country that are prompting us to think differently about how we serve our residents.”**

### The Path Forward to the Future

Our goal is to complete this analysis and share the results with our internal leadership by the end of November and with the broader community in the near future. While the analysis is underway, our team has begun to address a number of areas of opportunity so that we can continue to uphold the wonderful reputation of this community.

- Enhancing Clinical Services, such as Dementia Care & Education: Following the opening of the new Memory Care Center, The Redwoods is continuing to invest heavily in dementia-care education and resources for the team, ensuring continuous improvement in this specialized area.
- Exploring partnerships to augment existing services.
- Focusing on Technology to enhance the resident experience and operational efficiency: A significant investment is being made on the implementation of LifeLoop, a dynamic resident engagement platform. There is truly much to be excited about as we look forward to the next fifty years! ■

**The Celebration of Service Awards Is Coming Back!** This popular community event will be coming back in spring of 2026. Stay tuned for more information to come!

## Letter from the Board President



**T**HIS YEAR, I will be completing my role as Board President. During my tenure, I have learned about the many ways The Redwoods differs from other senior living communities.

We are a nonprofit, stand-alone model that is not part of a conglomerate. As a nonprofit, all excess revenue is used to serve seniors rather than shareholders. There is no buy-in charge, and we strive to keep rents affordable, ensuring that all members of our community can benefit from our services.

I have also realized to what extent the culture and environment are, in my view, unique. The fact that residents are encouraged to create and lead their own activities, that financial assistance is available

to those in need through the SHARE fund, and that all seniors are served regardless of their income level, speaks to how extraordinary this community is.

With the addition of our Memory Care Center and the thriving Health Care Center, the Redwoods offers a full range of living styles. In providing a vibrant and active community, The Redwoods is a place to thrive, connect, and engage.

I am proud to be part of The Redwoods and deeply grateful for the support of our community. Please consider joining us in furthering this vital service, whether through volunteering or financial support. I can't think of a better way to support this gem.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Hines". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JANET HINES, President, Board of Directors

## THE MEMORY CARE CENTER IS NOW OPEN



Family member **Rebecca Wara** with her father, **Ron**, in the new Memory Care Center.

**E**ARLIER THIS YEAR, we officially opened the Bettye Ferguson Center for Memory Care, and we're thrilled to share that almost all twelve of the apartments are filled. With this additional level of care, we are now better able to support our residents to age in place at The Redwoods.

Our team has been working to add enhancements to the space that make it that even more dynamic and welcoming. These enhancements include textured sensory artwork, utilizing a therapy-based music program, as well as installing a LiquidView virtual window that allows residents to see beautiful vistas from different parts of the world, with more to come.

*"I feel such gratitude to every person in memory care for the way they take care of my dad," reports **Rebecca Wara**. "Every person here, whether it's a nurse, a med tech or someone who's vacuuming, knows who my dad is, knows him by name. It means everything to me. It means I can go home and feel comfortable and at ease."*

## OUR NEW ELDER WISDOM BENCH

WE'RE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE that The Redwoods has installed a new Elder Wisdom Bench on Miller Ave. across from Tam High School.

The Elder Wisdom Bench is designed to encourage young people to sit and have meaningful conversations with older adults. Our goal is to help combat ageism by promoting intergenerational connections, honoring the stories of older adults, and showcasing their valuable life experience.

The concept began as a simple idea in Ontario, Canada and has since grown into an international movement, complete with a podcast and various events to foster respect and understanding across generations.

We are grateful to all the generous donors, including the Enjoy Mill Valley Fund of the Mill Valley Chamber of Commerce, who enabled us to purchase this beautiful addition to our campus

*"I think communication is one of the most important things in life. If we communicated not only with all*



*Sofia and Marti share stories on the Wisdom Bench.*

*ages, but all nationalities and people from all over the world, I think we would have a world without wars. So, I love talking with people of all ages, especially Sophia, because she is such a nice and bright young woman. I hope to know her for a very long time,"* says resident **Marti Sousanis**, pictured with Volunteer Companion **Sophia Castaneda-Richards**. ■

## WELCOMING ELENA DAVIDENKO TO HER NEW ROLE AS COO

WE ARE DELIGHTED to welcome **Elena Davidenko** as our new Chief Operating Officer at The Redwoods! Elena took over the COO role in June 2025.

With nearly 20 years of executive experience in the healthcare continuum, she specializes in senior living administration and oversees assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing, dining services, and Life Enrichment.

### From Siberia to California

Elena was born and raised in Omsk, Siberia and moved to California in 1996, where she discovered her passion for serving older adults and enhancing their quality of life.

*"I originally worked in pharmacy and eventually moved on to become an*

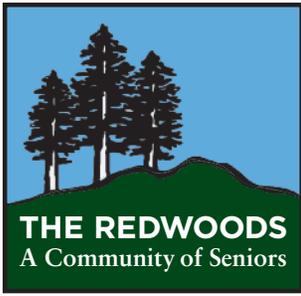


**"I am continually learning from the wisdom of older people and admire their knowledge, history and experience"**

*administrator in a skilled nursing facility,"* says Elena. *"Older people enrich my own personal growth and help me cultivate patience, empathy, and resilience."*

*"I believe that The Redwoods stands out as a very special retirement community with its focus on continuous care, active living, holistic wellness, financial security, and a supporting and safe environment. I am thrilled and proud to be part of The Redwoods."*

A lifelong learner, Elena holds a bachelor's degree in jurisprudence and a master's degree in healthcare administration. She is a licensed nursing home administrator (LNHA) and a certified administrator for a residential care facility for the elderly (RCFE).



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**ABOUT THE REDWOODS:**

A not-for-profit and non-denominational 501c(3) senior community, our mission is to maintain a creative, affordable community that promotes good health, well-being and security for a diverse group of seniors.

Located in Mill Valley, CA, we offer a variety of care and living style options, and an array of innovative programs.

For more information:  
415-383-2741  
[www.theredwoods.org](http://www.theredwoods.org)

## ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN: \$1 MILLION RAISED TO DATE

### First Year Goal Met

IN LATE 2024 we launched our 5-year, \$5 million Endowment Campaign. We set out with a goal to double the size of our Endowment so that we would be able to offer an enhanced level of financial support to our residents at The Redwoods. A key focus area for these funds will be in our assisted living and memory care, where there is currently no government subsidy that is readily available to our residents.

Our fundraising event in October, *An Evening Celebrating Our Community*, raised over \$300,000 for the Endowment. This achievement was made possible through the leadership of our Event Chairs—**Betsey Cutler, Claire McAuliffe, and Vera Meislin**—and the commitment of many dedicated supporters.

*“Thanks to our fundraising team and your donations, we are excited to report that we’ve met our first-year goal of \$1 million!” says **Janet Hines**, Board President.*

Please consider being a partner in this important initiative and help us keep on track to reach our goal of \$5 million in the next four years. For more information, please contact **Christian Mills**, Director of Fund Development at (415)383-1600 x267 or [cmills@theredwoods.org](mailto:cmills@theredwoods.org). Thank you for your support!

*From left to right: Director of Development **Christian Mills**, Co-Chairs **Vera Meislin, Betsey Cutler and Claire McAuliffe**, and CEO **Kyle Ruth-Islas** at the Fall Celebration.*

