

Sonoma Valley Authors Festival 2024

GINNY AND DAVID FREEMAN HAD A DREAM INSPIRED BY THEIR MOTHERS

By Melissa Dowling

After retiring from their corporate careers, Ginny and David Freeman wanted to do something positive together that was different.

Together, David and Ginny had attended many authors' festivals, including the Sun Valley Writers' Conference, the Pebble Beach Authors & Ideas Festival, and the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival. They were inspired to create an authors and ideas festival in Sonoma Valley in honor of their mothers, who had inspired their love of books. David's mother was an avid reader who lived to 98, and Ginny's mother was a lifelong teacher and librarian who lived to 101.

"The name would have been too long if we had incorporated 'ideas,' so we named it the Sonoma Valley Authors Festival, yet knew we would include speakers who would make presentations on science, technology, and medicine," Ginny explained.

The Freemans ran the idea by Elaine Petrocelli, who founded Book Passage in 1976 and has hosted thousands of author events over the years. Petrocelli thought it was a great idea and offered to help the Freemans start planning and finding authors, introducing them to a speakers' agent and a nonprofit involved in student literacy.

The project came to life, and the Freemans

held the first festival at The Lodge, a Sonoma hotel, in May 2018, which included 35 presentations by authors such as Isabel Allende, Dave Barry, and Walter Isaacson.

Since that first event, the Freemans have brought in more than 150 world-class authors and speakers, exposed more than 9,700 students to award-winning writers and thought leaders, and given away 15,000 books written by the presenting authors to Sonoma Valley students — all paid for with private funds.

The most impactful part of the annual festival are the free Authors on the Plaza events and engagement with Sonoma Valley schools. This year, Authors on the Plaza, free and open to the public, will be held on Saturday, April 27, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., under the trees on the lawn of the historic Sonoma Plaza. The event will feature authors David Grann, Amy Tan, and Colm Tóibín.

The Sonoma Valley Authors Festival is made possible through

the generous support of individual donors, committed volunteers, and other supporters throughout Sonoma and the Bay Area. Ginny and David Freeman have dedicated time and a personal financial commitment to ensure the success of the nonprofit organization. For more information, visit www.svauthorsfest.org.



Photo by Bob Stender

David and Ginny Freeman, founders of the Sonoma Valley Authors Festival.

Pets Lifeline to offer pet clinics

Pets Lifeline, in collaboration with Homeless Action Sonoma and La Luz, will offer two Mobile Community Pet Clinics focused on providing essential veterinary services to pets and families in need in Sonoma Valley. The first mobile wellness clinic will be hosted by Homeless Action Sonoma on April 16, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. La Luz will host the second clinic on April 23, 2024, from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Both clinics will have the capacity to service 15 pets on a first-come, first-served basis.

Scheduled appointments and walk-ins are available. The mobile wellness clinics will offer a range of vital services including vaccinations, wellness checks, flea and tick prevention, microchipping, and referrals for further care. Additionally, Pets Lifeline will have educational handouts on topics such as parasite control on hand.

The professional staff overseeing these clinics are committed to delivering high-quality care. Leading the

team is Veterinarian Dr. Tiffany Newman, supported by Registered Veterinary Technician Denise Asaro, along with Pets Lifeline staff members Amy Mertens and Christina Leport.

A Spanish translator will be available to ensure effective communication with all attendees. Fees for these services will enable accessibility for all members of the community, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder access to vital veterinary care for beloved pets.

For Community Clinic scheduling: April 16 at Homeless Action Sonoma at The Home & Safe Village 18820 Highway 12, Sonoma visit: <https://19686.wufoo.com/forms/m1dj8oxg1yaz10i/>. For appointments at La Luz 17560 Greger Street Sonoma, visit: <https://19686.wufoo.com/forms/mirzeaz1yvwh9w/>.



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Tailwags

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to benefit Pets Lifeline**

April 26, 2024
11:00 am - 2:00 pm

Buena Vista Winery

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petslifeline.org/tailwags2024

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