



Library Details

Resident Spotlight: Joyce DeMartini, AlmaVia of San Rafael

Candy, card games and cheer make life a little sweeter at AlmaVia of San Rafael.

Concerned about a string of recent crimes in her old neighborhood, including a friend's home invasion, Joyce DeMartini decided to quietly start investigating [senior living communities](#) in her area.

Her decision to sell her six-bedroom home in Terra Linda, California came as a surprise to her son and three daughters, who had no idea she was thinking of moving. In fact, one daughter had just bought a house in the next county.

Although she was just starting her search, DeMartini's initial visit to [AlmaVia of San Rafael](#), convinced her it was a place she could call home.

"The people made me feel very welcome; I liked what I saw," she says. "They treat you well and make you feel good—that's important."

Almost immediately after moving to the community in October 2013, DeMartini began [meeting people](#). Now every evening, she and several friends gather to play bridge, poker and other games on the second floor. Other residents often stop by to watch. "It's really a lot of fun," she says.

Every morning, DeMartini fills a basket with candy and leaves it on the ledge outside of her door for AlmaVia residents and staff members. She has a serious

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sweet tooth and likes to bring happiness to others.

“I’m a little different,” she says, laughing. “When I don’t have candy, I will go out at midnight and buy candy.”

Several times a month, DeMartini [volunteers](#) at a local Humane Society thrift shop. She also tries to spend some of her free time with AlmaVia residents who have limited mobility or who are in the hospital. “We try to keep them all entertained,” she says. “We enjoy each other.”

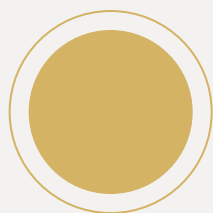
It’s hard to believe that just over a year and a half ago, DeMartini was afraid to open her garage door if an unfamiliar car was parked on the street. Today, she doesn’t lock her door until she goes to bed at night.

“I’m still free to go where I want to go, and I feel very comfortable and protected here,” she says. “I’m very happy with the place I chose.”

Like many residents at AlmaVia of San Rafael, DeMartini has found not only a sense of security, but also a sense of purpose and connection. Safety may have been her initial reason for seeking out a senior living option, but she has received—and given—so much more.

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