

AGING & independence

February 2018

The Place to Go to Love Your Heart

BY KIMBERLY GALLO

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Sometimes what you don't know can hurt you. That's why this year on February 14, the YMCA of San Diego County, the County of San Diego, and dozens of other community partners are urging older adults and people of all ages to "know their numbers" and take charge of their own heart health. Love Your Heart is a one-day, annual event during which organizations from across the United States and Mexico join together to provide free blood pressure screenings (visit www.LoveYourHeartSD.org for locations). In 2017, 20,062 screenings were conducted across San Diego at 149 sites.

High blood pressure is a silent killer. According to the American Heart Association, nearly half of American adults have it, but many do not even know it. Left uncontrolled, high blood pressure can lead to heart attack, stroke, heart failure, kidney disease, and vision loss, among other problems. Fortunately, lifestyle changes can make a big difference in addressing high blood pressure and ensuring heart health. The YMCA, a *Live Well San Diego* Recognized Partner, is perfectly poised to help older adults make the changes they need to enjoy good health for a lifetime.

"The formula for healthy aging is 'move it or lose it.' You've got to keep mobile," explained Jason Milosh,



BASKETBALL STAR BILL WALTON PARTICIPATED IN A LOVE YOUR HEART BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING AT THE YMCA LAST YEAR.

Associate Executive Director for the Dan McKinney Family YMCA in La Jolla. "Sometimes that's rehabilitating to get out of a wheelchair. Sometimes just showing up [at the Y] is a huge effort. But when people do, they have the benefits of movement and social interactions...getting to smile with other people and laugh."

In East County, the YMCA has been an instrumental community partner and advocate for older adult and family wellness. As with other locations countywide, the East County Family YMCA has a robust Y Active Adults program. With everything from chair yoga to low-motion water fitness to social activities including book and bowling clubs, older adults have numerous opportunities

to meet their health goals while nurturing social connections. Staff members bear witness every day to the transformative powers of movement. Amelia Knezevich, Active Adults Coordinator for the East County Family YMCA, noted she has seen members make dramatic health improvements: "We have members who have minimized their need for medications. Some no longer have to go in for knee or hip surgery; they have lost weight and strengthened their muscles."

The East County YMCA has been a major supporter

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COUNTY OF

SAN DIEGO

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

CAREGIVER WORKSHOPS

A variety of caregiver classes are being held this month: **Friday, February 16 from 1-2:30 p.m.-Driving and Memory Loss** will be held at the Peninsula Family YMCA, 4390 Valeta St., San Diego 92107. Learn about methods for evaluating a driver's safety, transportation resources, and tips for having difficult conversations about driving. For details or to register, visit www.alzsd.org/services/education/ or call (858) 492-4400.

Thursday, February 22 from 2-3 p.m.-Memory Loss 101 will be held at the San Marcos Senior Activity Center, 111 Richmar Ave., San Marcos 92069. A comprehensive overview about memory loss, Alzheimer's disease, and other dementias. Learn about risk factors, the common signs and symptoms, and steps you can take if you're concerned. For details or to register, visit www.alzsd.org/services/education/ or call (858) 492-4400. Free on-site respite will be offered by the San Marcos Senior Activity Center; call (858) 492-4400 to pre-register.

Friday, February 23 from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.-Caring for the Caregiver will be held at the East Region Live Well Center, 367 N. Magnolia Ave., El Cajon 92020. Speakers, community resources, refreshments, and more. For details, call (800) 827-1008 or to register online visit <http://bit.ly/CareEastRegion>. ♠

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of Love Your Heart activities. Last year, each of the three locations screened nearly 100 people. A few had to be sent straight to the emergency department as their blood pressure readings were so high. Their lives may have been saved. Many others reported learning that their numbers were elevated, going to their doctors, and getting on track with an appropriate program to better manage their blood pressure.

In addition to physical activity, good nutrition is an essential component of a heart-healthy lifestyle. Buying healthy food doesn't have to be difficult. The CalFresh Program can help to provide better food for better living. (Call 2-1-1 to find out if you are eligible). But another essential element of healthy living is social support, something the YMCA takes very seriously. "Isolation is one of the key concerns for seniors in our community and being a part of the Y provides so many options for social interaction as well as group exercise opportunities," explained Amelia. When not planning for and offering enriching programming, staff from the East County YMCA are busy supporting important community initiatives and planning events for the public. Every year for more than a decade, the East County Family

AIS BULLETIN GETTING A NEW LOOK

Coming soon! The *Aging & Independence* monthly bulletin is going to have a fresh new look! There will be a full-color layout along with new features, such as profiles of partner organizations that are doing great things for older adults in our community. ♠

AGE WELL SAN DIEGO UPDATE

During December and January, professionals and community members came together to work on building a 5-year plan that will help make San Diego County a better place for people of all ages. Participants committed to focusing on four theme areas: housing, transportation, social participation, and health/community services. There will be one more planning meeting as we work to finalize the plan.

Wednesday, February 14 (1-3:30 p.m.) at the County Operations Center Chambers, 5520 Overland Ave., San Diego 92123.

Visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/AWSDRSVP to RSVP. For details on Age Well, call (858) 505-6332. ♠

YMCA has hosted a health fair for older adults. They also support the East County Intergenerational Games, a day of fun and fitness for older adults and youth to get to know each other better.

It is deeply rewarding for Y Active Adult program staff to work with older members to meet their health and fitness goals. One of the most exciting parts of the job is witnessing the growth and joy that come from people of all ages meeting their goals and trying new things. Amelia recalled the experience of one woman in her sixties who attended the annual summer kick-off party at the Cameron Family YMCA in Santee. She went down a water slide for the very first time, something that had been on her "bucket list." "I've never done this in my whole life and now I have!" the woman beamed.

What better place to go to care for your heart than one where you can feed your soul?

To learn more about the YMCA of San Diego County and to find the location nearest you, visit: www.ymca.org or call (858) 292-9622. Special membership rates are available for those 65 and older, and scholarships may be available for people of all ages who are living on a limited income.

To locate a blood pressure screening location near you, visit LoveYourHeartSD.org.

HONORING



RSVP: RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM SVA: SENIOR VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Lauren Pickard, the RSVP/SVA Volunteer of the month for February, 2018 was nominated by Michelle North, Program Manager, at San Pasqual Academy Neighbors. San Pasqual is a dynamic living facility for foster



LAUREN PICKARD

youth that provides a beautiful living environment, quality schooling, and career and job placement. Perhaps most importantly, the foster youth are able to experience and enjoy a family atmosphere, thanks to the help of the volunteer “grandparents” who reside on the campus to mentor the students.

Lauren has lived at San Pasqual Academy as a foster grandparent for the past 10 years. He regularly exceeds the number of required volunteer hours and embodies the definition of an active senior. Much of Lauren’s volunteer time revolves around athletics and group activities with the students. He plays cards with the youth and assists the recreation staff on outings, which range from kayaking to mountain biking to deep sea fishing.

Recently, after reading up on robotics and virtual reality, Lauren took some of the youth to a museum in Balboa Park to learn more about these subjects. As a result, everyone’s interest was sparked and Lauren is now trying to set up a virtual reality room at San Pasqual that would allow the kids a chance to be more active and engaged with gaming.

“Lauren is such a progressive grandparent,” Michelle explained. “He is so forward thinking, energetic, positive, and so well liked.”

Congratulations, Lauren! Thank you for all that you do and for setting such a great example for our foster youth!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you want to get involved and give back to the community? The Poway Sheriff’s Senior Volunteers are looking for new members, and you do not need to live in Poway to join! The Senior Volunteers patrol once a week for a 6-hour shift. With a partner, they make rounds in different areas of the city, acting as the eyes and ears for the Sheriff Deputies. In addition to visiting people in the You Are Not Alone (YANA) program, the volunteers perform security checks on residents’ homes while they are on vacation, and assist deputies with traffic control. This volunteer opportunity is a very interesting and rewarding way to serve the community, as well as a way to make new friends. If you would like to learn more, please contact the RSVP & SVA Senior Volunteer Office at **(858) 505-6399** or maryanne.briggs@sdcounty.ca.gov.



Heaven’s Windows is a community resource network and charitable organization based in San Diego’s East County that assists families, seniors, homeless individuals, and children with emergency food. The organization also provides summer lunches and after school snacks to children, delivers hot meals to homebound seniors, and offers other food-related services to the community.



Heaven’s Windows needs volunteers for the following:

- Warehouse operations: Tues.-Fri. 7 a.m.-1p.m. (salvaging, packaging, loading and unloading food)
- Serving meals to the community: Wed. 5 p.m.-7 p.m.
- Child nutrition program: Tues.-Fri. 8 a.m.-1p.m. (processing/packaging meals for delivery)
- Community food distribution: Every 4th Tuesday 8 a.m.-12 p.m. (New Seasons Church, 2300 Bancroft Dr., Spring Valley, CA 91977).

If you would like to volunteer and serve your community, please contact our Senior Volunteer Office at **(858) 505-6399** or email maryanne.briggs@sdcounty.ca.gov.

INTERGENERATIONAL COUNCILS

The North County and East County Intergenerational Councils focus on the collective role that youth and older adults can play in making our community healthy for all ages. Organizations and individuals are invited to join the conversation. The next meetings will be held:

East County: Wed., February 7 from 2-3:30 p.m. at the La Mesa Adult Enrichment Center, 8450 La Mesa Blvd., La Mesa 91942. For details, call **(858) 573-7319**.

North County: Wed., March 14 from 1-2:30 p.m. at the San Marcos Senior Center, 111 W. Richmar Ave., San Marcos 92069. For details, call **(760) 740-3043**. ♣

BECOME A SENIOR LEGISLATOR

If you are passionate about issues facing older Californians and their families, you may want to consider running for the California Senior Legislature (CSL). The volunteer CSL recommends legislation that would benefit older adults. Eight legislators are elected in San Diego County for six Assembly and two Senate seats.

To be eligible, the candidate must be age 60 or older on election day (May 14 this year), be registered to vote, and reside in San Diego County.

Interested persons can call **(858) 495-5251** to have a nomination petition package mailed to them. Applications are also available online at <http://4csl.org/members/forms/> under the “Candidates for Election to the CSL” section. The election will be held at the AIS Advisory Council meeting on May 14. ♣

FEELING FIT FROM HOME

Enjoy the benefits of exercise from your own home! The Feeling Fit Club is a functional fitness program for older adults focusing on aerobic endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance.

We are excited to announce the launch of our fourth edition of the Feeling Fit Club for in-home exercise. You can watch three times daily: 8:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. on your local government access channel: Cox: Channel 19 or 24; Spectrum (formerly Time Warner): Channel 85; Uverse: Channel 99.

If you do not have cable you can call **(858) 495-5500** to request a free DVD. Or, go online and visit www.countynewscenter.com/time-to-get-fit-with-feeling-fit-club/ to access all five new Feeling Fit Club episodes.

If you prefer the energy and support that comes with attending an in-person, group exercise program, visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org or call: **(858) 495-5500** to locate a free class near you. ♣

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST THE FLU

For most people, the flu means a fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, and fatigue. However, for those who are 65 or older, the flu can lead to serious complications, including pneumonia. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), 90% of flu-related deaths and over half of flu-related hospitalizations occur in people age 65 and older.

This year, there is an increased number of flu cases among older adults in San Diego. The County is reminding seniors to get the flu vaccine, which is a benefit covered by Medicare. In addition to getting a flu shot, it's important to practice healthy habits, such as covering coughs, washing hands often, and avoiding people who are sick. Learn more about how to protect yourself by visiting www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/65over.htm. For local flu information, call 2-1-1 or visit sdiz.org. ♣

HEALTHIER LIVING CLASSES

These interactive and goal-oriented workshops help people self-manage their health conditions.

Healthier Living with Diabetes:

Feb. 18 – March 25 (Sundays), **2 – 4:30 p.m.** at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library, 4375 Bonita Rd., Bonita 91902.

Healthier Living with Chronic Conditions:

March 7 – April 11 (Wednesdays), **12:30 – 3 p.m.** at GlenBrook Health Center, 1950 Calle Barcelona, Carlsbad 92025.

New class dates and locations are added regularly. Visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org, or call **(858) 495-5500**. Leave a message; your call will be returned. ♣

FILMS HIGHLIGHTING END-OF-LIFE TOPICS

Films and structured discussion sessions can help make end-of-life topics more accessible:

Sunday, February 18 from 1:30-3:30 p.m.-Showing of the film *Eyewitness* and an episode of a recent TV program about an emergency room doctor who helps terminally-ill patients end their lives, will be held at the Mission Valley Public Library, 2123 Fenton Parkway, San Diego 92108. A lively discussion will follow.

Sunday, March 4 from 1-3 p.m.-Showing of the brief documentary film *Speaking of Dying* will be held at the La Jolla Riford Library, 7555 Draper Ave., La Jolla 92037. A discussion will follow on how to complete an advance directive and prepare for end-of-life concerns.

This film series is sponsored by the Hemlock Society of San Diego. Visit www.hemlocksocietysandiego.org or call **(619) 233-4418** for details. ♣

community

C A L E N D A R

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

This monthly calendar welcomes your contributions. Send items by the 10th of each month preceeding the issue date to: Sarah "Sally" Jackson at: sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov.

FEBRUARY 11, SUNDAY 2 P.M.

A Writers' Group will be held at the Oceanside Library Mission Branch, 3861-B Mission Ave., Oceanside 92058. For all levels! Bring your writing and confidence and be prepared to read and critique. For details, call (760) 435-5600.

FEBRUARY 15, THURSDAY 1 P.M.

The East County Action Network (ECAN) will hold an open meeting with a presentation by Supervisor Dianne Jacob at the El Cajon Library, 201 E. Douglas Ave., El Cajon 92020. Hear about the Supervisor's initiatives to enhance the quality of life for seniors in East County! For details, call (619) 401-3994 or email Hazel.Quinones@sdcounty.ca.gov.

FEBRUARY 15, THURSDAY 5:30-6:30 P.M.

Learn to crochet or practice your skills at the *Crochet for a Cause* gathering each Thursday evening at the Otay Ranch Library, 2015 Birch Rd., Chula Vista 91915. Make hats that will be donated to premature babies. For details, call (619) 397-5740.

FEBRUARY 20, TUESDAY 12:45 P.M.

A presentation on *Women and Heart Health* will be held at the College

Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120. Sponsored by Women Heart, a non-profit that shares the journeys of heart attack survivors who are now empowered women living healthy lives. For details, call (858) 637-3273.

FEBRUARY 21, WEDNESDAY 12-1 P.M.

A class on *Heart Failure* will be offered by the Sharp Senior Heath Center at the Point Loma Community Presbyterian Church, 2128 Chatsworth Blvd., San Diego 92107. Learn about risk factors, warning signs, and how to manage heart failure. To register, call (800) 827-4277 or visit www.sharp.com.

FEBRUARY 21, WEDNESDAY 6-7:30 P.M.

Healthy Gut, Healthy Body, Healthy Mind will be offered by Palomar Health at the Pomerado Outpatient Pavilion, 15611 Pomerado Rd., Poway 92064. Learn how GI health impacts immune health, hormones, and mood, and how to heal the gut. To register, call (800) 628-2880 or visit www.palomarhealth.org.

FEBRUARY 22, THURSDAY 11 A.M.-1 P.M.

Attend a memoir writing workshop, *Remembering So They Won't Forget You*, at St. Paul's Manor, 2635 Second Ave., San Diego 92103. Learn how to leave a lasting legacy by writing your memoir in 28 days. Bring a favorite photo to jump-start an enjoyable journey into your past. Refreshments provided. RSVP by Feb. 19 to Lizette at (619) 239-6900 or lgalindo@stpaulseniors.org.

FEBRUARY 22, THURSDAY 1:30-3:30 P.M.

Essential Apps for the iPhone and iPad will be held at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, 4126 Executive Dr., La Jolla (UTC) 92037. Learn how to use everyday apps for maps, sleep enhancement, news, weather, and more. See how these apps can enrich your life. Price: \$16; RSVP to Melanie at (858) 362-1141 by Feb. 15.

FEBRUARY 26, MONDAY 1-3 P.M.

Join in a conversation where participants will share thoughts and feelings about end-of-life concerns at the *Death Café* discussion group at the Mission Valley Library, 2123 Fenton Parkway, San Diego 92108. Discuss these topics over some tasty treats in safe, agenda-free space. To RSVP, visit www.deathcafe.com or call the library at (858) 573-5007.

FEBRUARY 26, MONDAY 12:45 P.M.

SDSU Professor Dr. Asselin will present the lecture *Why Vietnam Still Matters* at the the College Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120. Learn about the war's impact on today's population, the global economy, and world relations. For details, call (858) 637-3273 or email elissal@jfssd.org.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon on Monday, March 12 at AIS, 5560 Overland Ave., Third Floor, San Diego 92123. These meetings are open to the public.



WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN, TURN TO US.



Whether the need is for assessment, service referrals, or follow-up, with just one phone call, you or a loved one can receive help for:

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As a public agency, we provide comprehensive information and impartial assistance free of charge to county residents. Since 1974, people have been turning to us at Aging & Independence Services. You can too.



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Calendar information is welcome and must be submitted before the 10th of the month preceding the issue date. Submit to: Editor,

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