

AGING & independence

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

Nourishing San Diegans in Need

By Rick Wanne
Director, HHSA Eligibility Operations

Nothing is more worrisome than wondering where your next meal is going to come from. Sadly, many of our neighbors—as many as one in six people—have little or no food available at home, a situation known as “food insecurity.” In our region, this amounts to nearly 500,000 residents.

Fortunately, our community has a critical safety net in the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank, which serves more than 370,000 people per month through partnerships with 400 nonprofit community partners. This amounts to 26 million pounds of food annually. Food is distributed through a few different ways. Monthly neighborhood food distribution events take place at 183 sites countywide, with the majority of food distributed consisting of fresh fruits and vegetables. These events are open to the public.



Alla is one of the more than 370,000 San Diegans that the San Diego Food Bank assists each month.

Supplemental Food Program, which provides older adults 60 and over who have limited incomes with a monthly 30-pound supplemental food box that includes staples such as cereal, powdered milk, pasta, beans, peanut butter, and cheese. Currently, 11,700 seniors receive supplemental food each month.

Older adults such as Alla, 65, make up over half of the clients served by the Food Bank each month. Alla started experiencing financial difficulties after being laid off from her job as a house painter in 2009. She struggled to find another job in the construction industry, which she attributes to her age and gender. She became an independent contractor and would do odd jobs. Ultimately, Alla decided to retire and take Social Security before full retirement age, to make ends meet. Today, she is grateful to be able to access healthy foods such as

oranges, apples, plums, carrots, broccoli, lettuce, and kale through the monthly food distribution events: “The Food Bank provides us with fresh, healthy produce that I could not afford,” Alla explains.

The Food Bank also plays a crucial role in connecting residents to another important tool in the fight against food insecurity—CalFresh. The County of San Diego

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The Food Bank also operates two federal programs—the Emergency Food Assistance Program, which provides emergency food boxes to those in need who meet income guidelines, and the Commodity



(Continued from page one)

Health and Human Services Agency manages the CalFresh program and relies on the Food Bank to provide outreach assistance, as well as hands-on enrollment help for individuals who request it.

For an individual, CalFresh benefits can range from \$15 to \$192 per month, depending on income and other factors. Even if someone may qualify for just the minimum benefit level, Food Bank staff encourage individuals to apply: “We ask people, ‘Would you pass up a \$15 coupon?’ We let them know that benefits roll over from one month to the next, so they can save them up for bigger purchases,” says Elizabeth Hall, CalFresh Outreach Supervisor for the Food Bank.

CalFresh helps to promote healthy eating habits in our community, too. “Studies show that families that receive CalFresh do increase their intake of fruits and vegetables,” notes Elizabeth.

However, older adults who have prided themselves on being hard working and self-sufficient may be reluctant to receive food assistance or benefits such as CalFresh. Some will even go so far as to cut needed medications in half so that they can continue to afford to buy food. Shelly Parks, Director of Programs at the Food Bank, explains, “People think that they are taking a benefit away from someone else. We all pay into this program with taxes, year after year. Nobody else is getting denied because you accept the assistance.” Although they may feel afraid or nervous, most older adults who decide to visit a food distribution site are glad they did. “People are so grateful that we are there for them,” Shelly says. “Our staff will warmly greet them and help



Thousands of volunteers help the Food Bank fulfill its mission to provide nutritious food to people in need.

them through the process. They leave realizing there is this whole system of support.”

Helping to meet the needs of hungry San Diegans is a collaborative effort that involves numerous organizations and partners. However, individuals play a crucial role, too. Each year, over 25,000 volunteers provide about 60,000 hours of support, helping to sort through donated food items, as well as assist with food distribution activities. Residents can also donate non-perishable food items at many local supermarkets. Shelly notes that “while one in six people are experiencing food insecurity, that means that five out of six people can do something about it.” For more information on the San Diego Food Bank or ways you can help, call **(866) 350-3663** or visit **www.sandiegofoodbank.org**.

To apply for CalFresh, call **2-1-1** or visit **www.getCalFresh.org**.

To locate a senior dining site in your community, a place to enjoy the company of others over a hot, balanced meal, call **(800) 510-2020**.

FREE NUTRITION ASSISTANCE

Apply for CalFresh! You could get extra money for nutritious food each month. If you qualify, you will receive a card just like an ATM card to use at grocery stores and some restaurants. You can own a home, car, have income, and still may qualify!

Income Qualifications:

You could qualify if you have low or fixed income and do not receive SSI/SSP. For a household of one, gross monthly income must be less than \$2,010; for a household of two, it must be less than \$2,708.

How to Apply:

Step 1: Call **2-1-1** or visit **www.GetCalFresh.org**.

Step 2: You will be scheduled for a brief interview over the phone or in person, your choice!

Step 3: Submit supporting documents. The most common documents needed are: identification, residency verification, income verification (if any), and noncitizen verification (if relevant).



In the COMMUNITY

RADIO READING SERVICE

The KPBS Radio Reading Service broadcasts readings of books, magazines, and local newspapers, including the San Diego Union-Tribune and LA Times. Eligible listeners, such as those with macular degeneration or other sight impairments, can listen 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, over a private audio channel using a specialized radio, or online via webstream. Broadcasts are provided by more than 100 local volunteers.

Although this service is free, a one-time \$150 donation is requested to help cover costs. No one will be denied the service due to financial hardship. To learn more, or to apply to obtain a specialized receiver, call **(619) 594-8170** or visit www.kpbs.org/radio/reading-service.

FILM FESTIVAL CELEBRATES OLDER ADULTS

Sponsored by the Museum of Photographic Arts, the Coming of Age Film Festival is dedicated to promoting, reinforcing, and celebrating the process and power of aging. The five-film series will run weekly on Fridays, from April 27 to May 25 at the Museum of Photographic Arts in Balboa Park (across from the lily pond), 1649 El Prado, San Diego 92101. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for 6 p.m. screenings. The screenings are free, but seating and tickets are on a first-come basis. For more details, call **(619) 238-7559** or visit www.mopa.org/events to see a list of the featured films.

JOIN A COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

Community Action Networks focus on issues affecting older adults and persons with disabilities. They welcome the participation of professionals and members of the public.

The **East County Action Network (ECAN)** meets from 1-3 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the El Cajon Library, 201 E. Douglas Ave., El Cajon 92020. Contact Hazel Quinones: **(619) 401-3994** or Hazel.Quinones@sdcounty.ca.gov.

The **North County Action Network (NorCAN)** meets from 1-3 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at The Foundation for Senior Well-Being, Panorama Building, 131 Richmar Ave., San Marcos 92069. Contact: Matthew Parcasio: **(858) 505-6435** or Matthew.Parcasio@sdcounty.ca.gov.

The **San Diego Community Action Network (SanDiCAN)** meets from 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. on the last Tuesday of each month at the War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Dr., San Diego 92101. Contact Brian Rollins: **(858) 505-6305** or Brain.Rollins@sdcounty.ca.gov.

The **South County Action Network (SoCAN)** meets from 1-3 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library, 4375 Bonita Rd., Bonita 91902. Contact Anabel Kuykendall: **(619) 731-3140** or Anabel.Kuykendall@sdcounty.ca.gov.

SAVE THE DATE: AGING SUMMIT 2018

Since 1998, Aging & Independence Services has hosted a biennial Aging Summit to bring professionals, older adults, and service providers together for a day of education and discussion on timely issues in the field of aging. Aging Summit 2018 will be held on **Thursday, June 28** at two locations: the Town and Country Convention Center in Mission Valley, and the California Center for the Arts, Escondido.

Registration details will be available in the next edition of Aging & Independence, and will also be posted on www.AISEvents.org starting in late April.

FREE SMOKE ALARMS FOR SENIORS 62+

Smoke alarms save lives. National safety statistics show that adults age 65 and older are two times more likely to perish in a home fire than any other segment of the population. Local non-profit, the Burn Institute, wants to keep our seniors safe. If you are a homeowner over the age of 62, they will install free smoke alarms in your residence that adhere to the California Health and Safety Code. These free smoke alarms are equipped with 10-year lithium batteries. Don't get up on a ladder and risk falling—let trained professionals do it for you at no cost. Email mdelveaux@burninstitute.org or call **(858) 541-2277** to schedule your free smoke alarm installation today.

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Jack Porath was nominated for Volunteer of the Month by Officer Mariam Sadri of the San Diego Police Department's Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP). Jack has a wide variety of duties at the Northern Division's RSVP station, including being a patrol person as well as the RSVP Administrator.



Jack Porath

An RSVP Administrator is the first-line supervisor to his troops out in the field, thus trust and reliability are essential qualities, traits for which Jack is known. His organizational skills and attention to detail are also assets. Jack is known for being hardworking, dedicated, and enthusiastic about his volunteer job and the organization's mission. He always goes above and beyond what is expected of him. Jack also loves to share his knowledge about the RSVP program with new volunteers. Playing an integral part in the recruitment of new volunteers, Jack recently led two 3-day training sessions.

In addition to RSVP, Jack volunteers in other capacities, including at his local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post. Thank you, Jack, for all that you do and for making our community a safer place in which to live!

HOME START VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Volunteers are needed for Home Start, Inc.'s 46th Annual Blue Ribbon Gala on Saturday, April 21st, 2018! In recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, the Blue Ribbon Gala raises much-needed funds for Home Start's programs, which provide critical assistance to San Diego County's most vulnerable children and families. For more information on this event, visit: <https://home-start.org/gala-volunteer-opportunities/>. For a complete list of Home Start's volunteer opportunities, visit: <https://home-start.org/volunteer>. For details, contact Luiza Campos at (619) 692-0727 x 103 or lcampos@home-start.org.

SENIOR VOLUNTEER PATROLLERS SOUGHT

The communities of Rancho Peñasquitos, Carmel Mountain Ranch, and Sabre Springs are looking for new members for their Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol. You don't have to live within these areas to join. If you're retired and at least 50 years of age, you are eligible. Volunteers visit people enrolled in the You Are Not Alone (YANA) program, which helps older adults living alone by providing regular welfare checks. In addition, they perform security checks on residents' homes, assist the police with traffic control, and various other duties. Volunteers serve 3 days a month for 7-8 hour shifts. If you are interested in learning more, or would like to go on a "ride-along," contact Mary Brown at mnbrown42@gmail.com or (858) 538-1987.



VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENTS

Just a reminder that the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and Senior Volunteers in Action (SVA) annual recognition events will once again take place in May. All RSVP/SVA volunteers who served volunteer hours should have received an invitation. If you did not receive one, please contact Mary Anne Briggs at MaryAnne.Briggs@sdcounty.ca.gov or (858) 495-5039. Remember to RSVP for the event no later than April 16th. We hope to see you there!



Give. Grow. Volunteer.

Are you looking for a flexible volunteer opportunity to feed your mind, body, and spirit while serving the community? Aging & Independence Services can help! Through Senior Volunteers in Action (SVA) and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), you can make an impact in rewarding fields such as law enforcement, senior services, youth mentorship, museums and the arts, and more. Contact the Senior Volunteer Programs office today at (858) 505-6399.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

SERVING SENIORS: SUPPORTING HEALTHY AGING BY PROVIDING MEALS AND HOMES

SERVING SENIORS

Serving Seniors is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping seniors in poverty live healthy and fulfilling

lives. The organization operates via an innovative, coordinated wellness model, addressing many senior challenges under one roof, such as providing meals, senior-friendly housing, support for homeless seniors, and much more. This comprehensive approach to services facilitates healthy, independent aging, enabling seniors to thrive. It also helps to keep seniors out of emergency rooms, and delays or eliminates the need for long-term care.

According to the Elder Index, developed by UCLA's Center for Health Policy Research, a single senior in San Diego County needs an income of \$1,974/month to afford basic rent, food, health costs, and transportation.



By this calculation, 41% of the region's seniors do not have sufficient income to cover basic annual living expenses. With a population of 202,413 adults age 62 and above, the City of San Diego

is home to nearly 83,000 seniors who have to choose between rent and food every day.

With limited access to nutritious food, most seniors initially arrive at Serving Seniors suffering from malnourishment or chronic health conditions related to poor nutrition, including heart disease and diabetes. These health issues reduce seniors' quality of life and drive already-poor seniors even deeper into poverty, increasing their reliance on community programs, as most are single or widowed with little or no familial support.

Fortunately, many of the chronic diseases older adults face are preventable through healthy eating. Since its founding in 1970, Serving Seniors has served more than 11 million nutritious meals, optimized for the nutritional needs of older adults, and has seen first-hand the beneficial effects of reliable access to healthy food. Between nine congregate dining sites and delivering daily meals to 500 homebound seniors, the organization

Each month, Aging & Independence Services acknowledges a Live Well San Diego partner-an organization in our community that is committed to the vision of a region that is building better health, living safely, and thriving. To learn more about Live Well San Diego or to become a partner, visit www.livewellsd.org.

serves nearly 2,000 meals a day, every day of the year.



In addition to providing much-needed meals, Serving Seniors works to address the severe housing shortage in San Diego, which especially impacts older adults. Each year, more and more seniors are being forced into homelessness by skyrocketing rent prices and a severe shortage of elder-friendly housing. In many situations, the timeline is accelerated by catastrophic illness or events. Homeless seniors currently comprise 30% of the city's total homeless population.

In a region where the vacancy rate is below 3%, thousands of affordable rental units are demolished every year to make way for more profitable projects. To try to replace some of those rental units, Serving Seniors built, and owns, 350 units of affordable senior housing across two properties. This spring, construction is scheduled to begin on a third senior housing property.

To learn more about Serving Seniors, including volunteer opportunities and other ways you can help seniors or to receive assistance, visit www.servingseniors.org or call (619) 235-6572.

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HEALTHIER LIVING CLASSES

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

Healthier Living with Diabetes: April 9–May 14 (Mondays), 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Poway Library, 13137 Poway Rd., Poway 92064. Ok to start during second week (April 16).

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.

FALL PREVENTION RESOURCES

One in four older adults (65+) fall each year. Falls can cause serious injury and even death. Learn about resources that are available in San Diego at www.sandiegofallprevention.org. Find information on what you can do to prevent a fall, such as home modifications, medication management, and balance exercises.

If you are associated with an organization that is interested in hosting a fall prevention speaker, contact Katie Zahm, at Katie.Zahm@sdcounty.ca.gov.



The Feeling Fit Club brings fitness, fun, and friendship to communities all across San Diego.

FEELING FIT CLUB

The Feeling Fit Club is a free functional fitness program for older adults focusing on aerobic endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance.

With more than 30 locations across San Diego County, there is sure to be one near you. For class schedules and locations, visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org or call: (858) 495-5500.

CAREGIVER WORKSHOPS

Wednesday, April 18 from 1-2 p.m.-*Healthy Living for Your Brain & Body: Tips from the Latest Research* will be held at the Escondido Public Library, 239 S. Kalmia St., Escondido 92025. Learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity, and social engagement. Includes light refreshments. RSVP to (800) 272-3900. For questions, email Rebecca Turman at rturman@alz.org.

Thursday, April 19 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.-*Support and Discussion Group Leader Training* will be held at Alzheimer's San Diego, 6632 Convoy Ct., San Diego 92111. If you are interested in facilitating an Alzheimer's San Diego Caregiver Support and Discussion group, or want information and training on how to lead and create your own support group, attend this in-depth all day facilitator training. For more information, contact Rebecca De Campos at (858) 966-3303 or rdecampos@alzsd.org.

Friday, April 20 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.-*Caring for the Caregiver* will be held at the Logan Heights Library, 567 S. 28th St., San Diego 92113. Learn ways to improve your ability to communicate and acquire new techniques that will help you maintain better health. Refreshments, opportunity drawings, and more. RSVP to (800) 827-1008. For details, email srcrc@caregivercenter.org.

Monday, April 30 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m.-*Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior* will be held at the Alzheimer's Association, 5075 Shoreham Place, Ste. 240, San Diego 92122. Learn to decode behavioral messages, identify common behavior triggers, and learn strategies to help intervene with some of the most common behavioral challenges of Alzheimer's disease. Light lunch provided. RSVP to (800) 272-3900. For questions, email Rebecca Turman at rturman@alz.org.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

APRIL 14, SATURDAY 10 A.M.- 2 P.M.

Join the UC San Diego American Medical Student Association for its **9th Annual Health Fair** at Montgomery-Waller Community Park, 3020 Coronado Ave., San Diego 92154. Learn about current health issues, receive free non-invasive medical services, and enjoy food, entertainment, and prizes. For details, email Jadzia Nguyen-Khoa at jnguygenk@ucsd.edu.

APRIL 15, SUNDAY 1:30-3:30 P.M.

A showing of the film **The Event** will be held at the Rancho Bernardo Library, 17110 Bernardo Center Dr., San Diego 92128. This film explores the dilemma faced by a Manhattan prosecutor who is charged with investigating the untimely death of a terminally ill musician. A discussion will follow. For details, call (619) 233-8814 or visit www.hemlocksocietysandiego.org.

APRIL 17, TUESDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

A free **Health Care Decision-Planning Seminar** will be held at San Diego Oasis Lifelong Learning Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Dr., Ste. 325, La Mesa 91942. Advance care planning helps you assess your personal beliefs, values, and health care goals so that you can make important decisions with comfort

and ease. Get communication tools and tips to start the conversation with loved ones. RSVP to (800) 827-4277 or www.sharp.com/classes.

APRIL 19, THURSDAY 12:45 P.M.

Finding Happiness in an Uncertain World, will be held at the College Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120. Therapist Gail Braverman will share tools to help us have a more fulfilling and happy life, despite the difficulties of the world. For details, call (858) 637-3273 or email elissal@jfssd.org.

APRIL 25, WEDNESDAY 9 A.M.-2:30 P.M.

A free **Ageing Conference: Healthy and Safe Ageing**, will be held at the Point Loma Community Presbyterian Church, 2128 Chatsworth Blvd., San Diego 92107. Learn how to plan for a healthy, safe, and mindful future. Continental breakfast and lunch provided. RSVP to (800) 827-4277 or www.sharp.com/classes.

APRIL 25, WEDNESDAY 5-6:30 P.M.

Free **Dementia screening** will be offered at Somerford Place, 1350 S. El Camino Real, Encinitas 92024. Learn about risk factors, symptoms, and more from Dr. Enoch Wang, MD, of Rancho Santa Fe Physician Consultants, Inc. For details, contact Carrie at (760) 479-1818, ext. 210.

APRIL 27, FRIDAY 10:30-11:30 A.M.

A workshop, **Do You Own Your Stuff, or Does Your Stuff Own You?**, will be held at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, 4126 Executive Dr., La Jolla 92037 (UTC area). Are you overwhelmed by what to do with your unused belongings? Learn tips on purging and organizing. Price: \$6; RSVP to Melanie Rubin, (858) 362-1141 by April 20.

MAY 6, SUNDAY 8 A.M.-2 P.M.

Friends of the Braille Institute San Diego will host the **3rd Annual Car & Bike Show Fundraiser** at Pal Joey's, 5147 Waring Rd., San Diego CA 92120. Free to the public and open to all years, makes, and models of cars, trucks, and bikes. Enjoy music, trophies, opportunity drawings, and more. To register, visit www.FriendsofBrailleInstituteSD.org. For details, call (858) 452-1111.

MAY 10, THURSDAY 1:30-3:30 P.M.

Using Your iPhone/iPad Camera will be held at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, 4126 Executive Dr., La Jolla 92037 (UTC area). Learn all about your device's camera, how to take photos, upload them to social media, organize them, and more. Price: \$16; RSVP to Melanie Rubin, (858) 362-1141, one week prior to class start date.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon Monday, April 9 at Jewish Family Service, Turk Family Ctr., 8804 Balboa Ave., San Diego 92123.

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

This monthly calendar welcomes your contributions. Just send items by the 1st of each month preceding the issue date to: sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov.

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When You Don't Know Where To Turn Turn To Us!



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

- Seniors
- Disabled adults
- Abused adults
- Those requiring home-based care to prevent institutionalization

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.



Call Toll Free: **(800) 510-2020**
www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov

If calling from an area code out of San Diego County, call: **(800) 339-4661**



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