

AGING & independence

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

Advocating Near and Far for Our Older Adults

By Geoff Patnoe
Director, Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs

There are some dates that will be etched in our minds forever. Many older adults recall the first moon landing on July 20, 1969 or the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989. The events on these days changed the course of history. However, sometimes a day in history can bring momentous change of which the impact isn't immediately realized. Such was the case on July 14, 1965. On this day, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Older Americans Act (OAA) into law and created a safety net of services that millions of older adults rely on some fifty years later. Along with Social Security and Medicare, the Older Americans Act is one of the most significant legislative victories for older adults. The Act was recently reauthorized in 2016 and will be up for reauthorization again in 2019.

Barry regularly attends the Salvation Army Senior Nutrition Program in Clairemont for a hot mid-day meal. Without the OAA, seniors in our community, such as Barry, may go hungry. OAA funding provides essential nutrition for thousands of local seniors, both at group dining centers and through home-delivered meals for those who are homebound. But, as Dalelana



The County of San Diego advocates for legislation in Washington D.C. that benefits local older adults.

Mitchell, the Salvation Army Nutrition Program Manager, notes, "Our seniors come in for the meal, but they stay because of the relationships that they build in our dining room. Everybody knows everybody. We are like family." Since coming to the nutrition site, Barry has transformed from someone who felt angry, unhappy and isolated, to someone who is always smiling and involved in activities.

OAA funding helps the County's Aging & Independence Services (AIS) provide over 1 million meals to seniors age 60+ each year and has been a conduit for seniors to receive other services at the nutrition sites. In addition, the OAA funds a variety of health promotion programs, including the Feeling Fit Club, Healthier Living workshops and fall prevention efforts. Other programs and services include the family caregiver support and minor home modification programs.

While Washington may be 2,600 miles away, the OAA is an example of how decisions made there can have a significant impact on the lives of local seniors.

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However, politicians in Washington won't be as likely to prioritize programs for older adults if they don't hear how important these programs are. Someone has to spread the message and this is where the County's Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs comes into play.

When most people think about the functions of County government, things like road maintenance, handling elections or protecting public safety come to mind. Few people have heard of the Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs, the department charged to advocate for legislative positions on behalf of the County of San Diego and our Board of Supervisors. The Office serves as the messenger on the importance of funding older adult programs.

While the most important piece of federal legislation the County advocates for older adults is the OAA, the County also supports legislative and funding efforts related to Alzheimer's disease, which is in alignment with The Alzheimer's Project initiative. At the State level, the County advocated for multiple bills that covered everything from protections for Adult Protective Services social workers to an increase in the availability of Medi-Cal-funded beds at assisted living facilities.

According to Jim Gross, Partner at the advocacy firm Nielsen, Merkasamer, Perinello, Gross and Leoni, "The voice of older adults is critical when legislation and funding are considered in Sacramento. The County of San Diego has made advocacy for this population a priority, which has resulted in the creation of programs and laws that keep older adults safe, healthy and connected to their community."

OAA programs, as well as state-funded programs such as In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), help keep older San Diegans healthy, safe and thriving. In order for the County to continue to provide essential services such as these, it is imperative that we have a seat at the table in both Sacramento and Washington as legislation is proposed.

The OAA continues to be a lifeline for members of our community and it is essential that our legislators understand its essential role in keeping our older residents healthy. Dalelana reflects on many of the seniors she sees in her nutrition program everyday: "This is it...if they don't get their meal here today, they don't get a meal."

October marks the beginning of the federal fiscal year, and the State legislative session just ended August 31st. This is the time of year that the Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs is preparing the County's 2019 Legislative Program, looking ahead at legislation on the horizon and how we can advocate for the residents in San Diego County.

Additionally, the County's Washington DC Representatives and AIS Executives have already been meeting with members of Congress on what the older adults in San Diego will need from the OAA during the next reauthorization. At the State level, we are working with State associations and partners to anticipate legislation that will be introduced in January and how that will impact programs administered by the County. We stand ready to respond to policy and fiscal changes proposed at the State and federal level to ensure the older adults in our region can continue to thrive.

AGE WELL SAN DIEGO UPDATE

Age Well San Diego (Age Well), is the County's plan to help improve the quality of life for older adults in San Diego County. Goals for the region are outlined in the Age Well Action Plan, which grew out of two years of community needs assessments and planning activities. Now, professionals and community members are coming together to work on goals within five "theme teams": Dementia-Friendly, Health &

Community Support, Housing, Social Participation, and Transportation.

All five theme teams have begun to meet and work on Age Well goals. Meetings will continue to take place monthly, and new participants are welcome to join. A new website that will track the progress of Age Well will be ready soon. For details on Age Well or to join a theme team, contact Christy Patch at **(858) 495-5037** or **Christina.Patch@sdcounty.ca.gov**.

In the COMMUNITY

GET YOUR FLU SHOT

Influenza (“the flu”) is a contagious illness that can be severe and life-threatening, especially for older adults. The flu can make existing health problems worse and is particularly dangerous for people with chronic health conditions, like heart disease and diabetes. The best way to prevent catching the flu is to get the flu vaccine every year. The vaccine is now available at many retail pharmacies and physician offices. To find a site for a flu shot, call 2-1-1 or visit www.sdiz.org.

GRANDPARENTS’ SYMPOSIUM

Grandparents raising grandchildren and other kinship caregivers are invited to attend a skill and resource conference on **Saturday, October 20 from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.** at Harborside Elementary, 681 Naples St., Chula Vista 91911. Learn about resources and strategies to help navigate the array of legal, financial, and social challenges you may encounter. The program features a resource fair and workshops on legal guardianship options, dental health, self-care, mental health, tobacco use prevention, and more. Lunch and childcare are provided with advance registration. To RSVP, call 2-1-1 or visit: www.211sandiego.org/Grandparents.

EVENTS ADDRESSING END-OF-LIFE ISSUES

Wednesday, October 24 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.-A free conference, *Planning Ahead...Learn How to Ensure Your Decisions Will Be Honored*, will be held at the Balboa Park Club, 2150 Pan American Rd. West, San Diego 92101. Navigate end-of-life options and better understand the importance of making decisions now! RSVP by Oct. 19 by calling (800) 827-4277 or visiting www.sharp.com/classes.

Saturday, October 27 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.-A presentation on *End-of-Life Planning and Choices* will be held at the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Center, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa 91942. Learn about “Do Not Resuscitate” (DNR), Advance Health Care Directives (AHCD), Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST), hospice, palliative care, and the End of Life Option Act. RSVP by Oct. 25 to eruiz@compassionandchoices.org

INTERGENERATIONAL GAMES

Intergenerational (IG) Games events offer adults and youth the opportunity to connect while having fun participating in noncompetitive fitness and wellness activities such as T-ball, exercise dice, cornhole, and nutrition games. The next IG Games will be held on **Thursday, October 11 from 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.** at the La Mesa Arts Academy, 4200 Parks Ave., La Mesa 91941. Adults 50+ are needed to pair with youth ages 7-12. To learn more or RSVP, call (619) 667-1319 or email Misty at mthompson@ci.la-mesa.ca.us.

TECHNOLOGY FAIR

The Get Connected Fair, a free opportunity to learn more about technology, will be held on **Monday, November 12 from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.** at the Oasis Grossmont Lifelong Learning Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Dr., La Mesa 91942. Brief “tech talk” workshops on a variety of topics will be offered. To RSVP, call (619) 881-6262 or visit www.SanDiegoOasis.org and register for class #80 (non-Oasis members will need to register for a free account). A free shuttle will run from North County. Call (760) 796-6020 for shuttle details.

DANCE FOR YOUR HEALTH

Dance your heart out! Join the South County Community Action Network for the Dancing for Your Health event on **Friday, October 26 from 6-9 p.m.** at the Loma Verde Recreation Center, 1420 Loma Ln., Chula Vista 91911. Dance to a live DJ and enjoy light refreshments, appetizers, and opportunity drawings. The event is free, but attendees are requested to bring a donation of non-expired canned or packaged food items. To RSVP, call (619) 731-3140 or visit: www.bit.ly/D4YHRegister.

PAWS: SUPPORT FOR SENIORS’ PETS

PAWS San Diego, a program of San Diego Humane Society, helps people keep their pets by providing support to low-income pet families. Assistance includes pet food pantry events, discounted vaccinations and spay/neuter services, and referral information to low-cost services. To learn more, visit www.sdhumane.org or call (866) 348-7297.

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Lura Cox is the Volunteer of the Month for October. She was nominated by Tina Matthias, Volunteer and Program Manager of the Living Coast Discovery Center, a nature preserve and education center in Chula Vista on the San Diego Bay.



Lura Cox

Located on the Sweetwater Marsh Wildlife Refuge, the Center is dedicated to inspire care and exploration of the living Earth by connecting people with coastal animals, plants, and habitats.

Lura began volunteering at the Center in 1993 in the aquaria department and gift shop. She was one of their first docents. Today, Lura has many duties, including serving as a volunteer office assistant. She does the scheduling for the volunteers and docents, keeps track of all the volunteer hours, and helps to run the docent trainings and volunteer orientations. In addition, she is in charge of making the entries on the master calendar for the Center, which includes scheduling all of the events, rentals, and outreach activities. She does all of this while also being responsible for answering the phone and addressing guest and volunteer questions.

Lura has a big heart in which she holds dear all the volunteers, docents, staff, and animals of the Living Coast Discovery Center. The staff and Lura's peers at the Center have noted that "Lura is always there for us" and that "her passion radiates into all the volunteers and gets them motivated." She is also known for her attention to detail and eagerness to learn. To date, she has served more than 12,000 lifetime hours.

In addition to all of Lura's contributions to Living Coast, she also sings in her church choir and delivers food to homebound seniors. As a cancer survivor, Lura participates in the American Cancer Society's "Relay for Life" fundraising walk.

Thank you, Lura. You really make a difference!

RSVP/SVA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Applications are still being accepted for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)/Senior Volunteers in Action (SVA) Advisory Council. The Council meets once a month to provide support and direction to the senior volunteer programs. Activities include co-sponsoring volunteer recognition events, annually assessing program performance, and helping to promote RSVP/SVA in the community. Meet other involved community members and join an amazing team of people. Ideal candidates have experience working with seniors and/or working with volunteers in a non-profit setting. All applications will be reviewed by current council members. Acceptance requires a vote. For more information, please contact Armida at **(858) 505-6448** or Armida.Martinez@sdcounty.ca.gov.

VOLUNTEER WITH THE EAST COUNTY CHP

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) in East County is looking for volunteers 55+ to assist CHP officers with their duties. Opportunities include: assisting officers at collisions, directing traffic at special events, helping with office duties, working with local schools, and more. Regardless of your prior career path, there is a place for you! Volunteers must be able to serve for a minimum of 8 hours per week and not have any felony convictions. Contact the senior volunteers program office at **(858) 505-6399** for details.



SENIOR VOLUNTEERS
IN ACTION



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

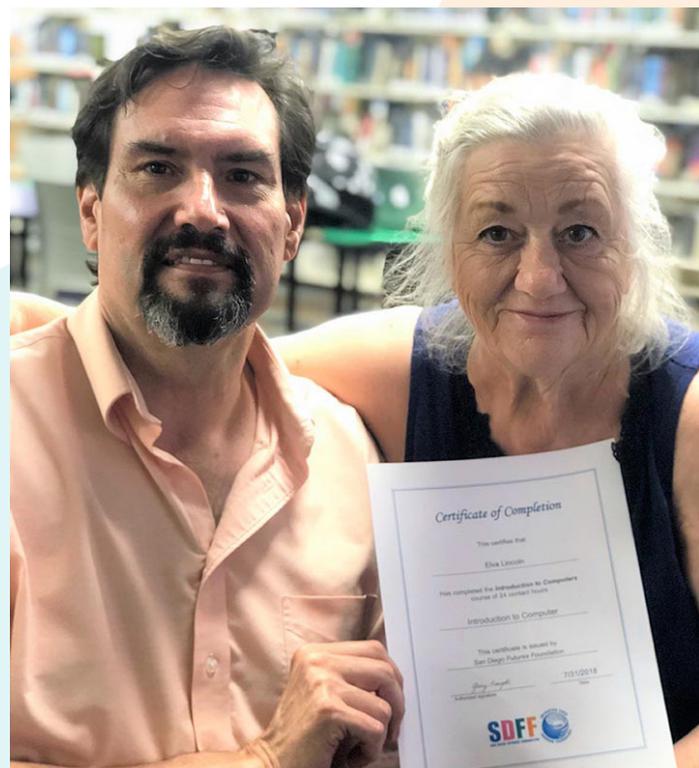
THE SAN DIEGO FUTURES FOUNDATION

The San Diego Futures Foundation (SDFF) works to improve lives in San Diego County by making information technology, such as computers, available to older adults, persons with disabilities, and other underserved populations. Most seniors want to stay connected to family, form new friendships, and engage with the community. Technology can help with these goals, but only if older adults have access to relevant training and equipment.

When SDFF was established in 1999, one of its original purposes was to refurbish County computers that were no longer being used and then provide them at a low cost to individuals who may otherwise have struggled to afford a quality computer. Nearly twenty years later, this important function remains a core part of SDFF's work. To date, over 50,000 refurbished computers have been distributed to individuals and non-profit organizations. Any San Diego resident who is low-income, over the age of 62, a veteran, or disabled may apply to purchase a low-cost desktop or laptop.

However, having a computer at home is of no use if one doesn't learn how to use it! To help seniors increase their comfort and skills with computers, in 2014 SDFF established the Senior Tech Ambassador program. This program provides free classes designed for seniors 62+ who are interested in learning and enhancing their computer skills. The basic computer class meets twice a week for four weeks. Students learn about word processing, file management, internet safety, and email. SDFF also offers periodic workshops throughout the county on topics such as Smartphone 101, Facebook Fundamentals, Skype 101, and online safety tips.

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.



In addition, SDFF serves individuals of all ages who are blind or visually impaired by providing equipment and training through an Adaptive Technology Program. SDFF also offers low-cost computer repair services, as well as e-waste recycling. They accept old computers, monitors, printers, and other electronics for recycling.

Computers are an important tool that can enrich lives and help older adults to remain healthy, safe, and thriving. Two decades since its creation, SDFF continues to transform the lives of thousands of San Diegans by increasing access to quality equipment and instruction.

To learn more about SDFF's programs and services, visit www.sdfutures.org. For information on the Senior Tech Ambassador program, contact Lisbette at (619) 269-1684 x230 or lisbette@sdfutures.org.



CHECK YOUR MOOD

Good mental health starts with you! Getting screened for depression is an important part of healthcare checkups, much like getting your blood pressure checked or being screened for heart disease or diabetes. On **Thursday, October 11** at locations across the county, San Diegans will be able to attend a ***Check Your Mood Day*** event. Participants will be invited to take a free, anonymous mood screening, learn more about depression and other types of mental illness, and get information about local mental health resources.

To learn more about Check Your Mood Day, identify participating community sites, or take a brief online assessment, visit: www.LiveWellSD.org/CheckYourMood.

HEALTHIER LIVING CLASSES

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

Healthier Living with Chronic Pain: October 10-November 14 (Wednesdays), 2-4:30 p.m. at the Herrick Community Health Library, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa 91942 (okay to start on October 17).

Visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org, or call **(858) 495-5500** to leave a message and learn more. If your organization would like to host a Healthier Living workshop, please call: **(858) 505-6953**.

COOL ZONES FOR HOT AUTUMN DAYS

Fall is here, but that doesn't mean hot days are behind us! Air-conditioned Cool Zone sites welcome older adults to beat the heat through the end of the month. Some offer social opportunities, meals, or other resources. The effects of heat can be greater on older adults, but their bodies may not provide the same warning signs as they did at younger ages. Visit www.CoolZones.org or call **(800) 339-4661** and press "6" to locate a site near you.

CAREGIVER WORKSHOPS

Thursday, October 11 from 10-11:30 a.m.-*Caregiver Skills Clinic: Techniques for Daily Care* will be held at Tri-City Wellness & Fitness Center, 6250 El Camino Real, Carlsbad 92009. This workshop provides family caregivers with hands-on training, focusing on practical techniques for assisting with daily care activities and managing resistance to accepting help. Register online at www.alzsd.org or by calling **858-492-4400**.

Friday, October 12 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.-*Adjusting to Life with Dementia* will be held at the South Bay Family YMCA, 1201 Paseo Magda, Chula Vista 91910. This class is open to individuals living with early-stage memory loss and their caregivers. Learn strategies for coping with daily challenges, enhancing safety and well-being, and planning for the future. Register online at www.alzsd.org or by calling **858-492-4400**.

Saturday, October 20 from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.-*Navigating Caregiving for Veterans and Military Families* will be held at the First United Methodist Church San Diego, 2111 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego 92108. Hosted by the Caregiver Coalition of San Diego, this conference will include educational programs, resource booths, giveaways, and more. To RSVP, call **(800) 827-4277** or visit www.sharp.com/classes.

Friday, November 2 from 12:30-2 p.m.-*Memory Loss 101* will be held at the Pine Valley Library, 28804 Old Highway 80, Pine Valley 91962. This overview of memory loss, Alzheimer's, and dementia covers risk factors, symptoms, and resources for help. Register online at www.alzsd.org or by calling **858-492-4400**.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

OCTOBER 13, SATURDAY 9-10:30 A.M.

Medicare Made Easy, a presentation offered by Scripps Health, will be held at the Radisson Hotel San Diego-Rancho Bernardo, 11520 West Bernardo Ct., San Diego 92127. Learn about Medicare eligibility, when to enroll, and different plan options. To RSVP, call (800) 727-4777.

OCTOBER 17, WEDNESDAY 6:30-7:45 P.M.

Calm your mind and find balance at a workshop, *Power of Breath: Meditation*, at the Poway Library, 13137 Poway Rd., Poway 92064. Hear about the science of breath and learn breathing techniques that may help improve your health and well being. For details, call (858) 513-2900.

OCTOBER 18, THURSDAY 1:30-2:30 P.M.

Prevent a Fractured Future: Exercise for Better Bones will be held at the Grossmont Health Care District Conference Center, 9001 Wakarusa St. La Mesa 91942. A physical therapist will discuss osteoporosis, including the benefits of good posture and exercise to improve bone health for a lifetime. To RSVP, call (800) 827-4277 or visit www.sharp.com/classes.

OCTOBER 18, THURSDAY 7 P.M.

Join Safe Place Faith Community Resource Team for a presentation on

Elder Abuse at Ascension Catholic Church, 11292 Clairemont Mesa Blvd., San Diego 92124. Hear from a Deputy District Attorney how to help our most vulnerable neighbors. Refreshments will be served. Contact Angela at angela.elfman@san.rr.com or call (858) 279-2735 for details.

OCTOBER 19, FRIDAY 2-3:30 P.M.

A free workshop, *Understanding Diabetes*, will be held at the Braille Institute, 4555 Executive Dr., San Diego 92121. A presenter from the Scripps Whittier Diabetes Institute will cover prevention, signs, whether diabetes is reversible, and treatment. To RSVP, call (858) 452-1111.

OCTOBER 26, FRIDAY 9:30-11:30 A.M.

A Health and Wellness Event for Older Adults will be held at the College Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120. Over 30 agencies will be in attendance providing free information and health screenings. Flu shots will also be offered. A special luncheon to celebrate the Center's 20th anniversary will follow the event at noon. For more information, email Elissa at elissal@jfssd.org or call (858) 637-3273.

OCTOBER 28, SUNDAY 1 P.M.

Join the San Diego Folk Song Society for an *afternoon of singing and*

music at the Serra Mesa-Kearny Mesa Library, 9005 Aero Dr., San Diego 92123. Come to sing and/or play your own instrument. Adults of all ages and music levels welcome. For details, call (858) 573-1396.

OCTOBER 30, TUESDAY 1-3 P.M.

Join KPBS for a *Preview of Election 2018* at Oasis, 5500 Grossmont Center Dr., #325, La Mesa 91942. General Manager Tom Karlo and KPBS News team members will provide an overview of key races and ballot measures, and review the online Voter Guide. The class is free, but there is a \$20 processing fee per trimester when registering for your first class. Register for class #161. Call (619) 881-6262 or visit www.SanDiegoOasis.org.

NOVEMBER 3, SATURDAY 9 A.M.- 3 P.M.

The *Because I Care Fair* will be held at the San Marcos Community Center, 3 Civic Center Dr., San Marcos 92069. The goal of the fair is to help families learn about available services to enrich their lives as they take care of loved ones. This year's emphasis is on self-care for caregivers, as well as resources for community volunteers providing care to individuals with physical and mental health issues. Learn helpful information, discover resources, receive health screenings, and enjoy complimentary food. For details, call (760) 750-3550.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet on Monday, November 5 at AIS: 5560 Overland Ave., 3rd Floor, 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.

COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT ▪ HEALTH INDEPENDENCE SERVICES ▪ INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE ▪ PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY ▪



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:

- 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**



HOME-BASED SERVICES ▪ INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE



Aging & Independence™ is published monthly by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services. The purpose is to inform and recognize older adults, volunteers, and community partners.

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