

AGING & independence

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

A Voyage Cut Short by the Flu

By Wilma J. Wooten, M.D., M.P.H.
Public Health Officer and Director, Public Health Services

Richard “Rich” Goben was most at home on the water. Sailing was his passion and he crafted an impressive and rewarding career that spanned nearly four decades. Rich taught sailing while attending the University of California, San Diego and participated in the 1983 America’s Cup. He ran classic sail and passenger vessels for many years, was a Merchant Marine Captain licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard, and served as port captain for Hornblower Cruises for 25 years. In 1998, Captain Rich became the Master of the Star of India, the oldest active sailing ship in the world. He served as the Star’s captain until her last sail in 2013. Rich also served on numerous safety committees and earned several awards.

Rich even met his wife, Carolyn, while on the water working for Invader Cruises, a harbor and dinner cruise company. The couple got married in 1987 and spent the next two and a half decades enjoying adventures together at sea, as well as on dry land. They settled in the quiet community of Descanso, and enjoyed outdoor activities, such as camping with friends. Rich was an avid birder and a skilled musician. Carolyn notes, “He played anything with a string. His favorite was a guitar that he made.”



Captain Rich Goben at the Helm.

But, in December of 2015, at the age of 62, Rich took to the helm for the very last time. A severe strain of the flu had been going around. First Carolyn became sick, but her illness was relatively mild, likely due in part to the flu vaccine that she had received earlier in the season. Rich, however, wasn’t so lucky. Just a few days before Christmas, he became extremely ill. His fever hit 103 and he had severe coughing. Carolyn asked if Rich wanted to go into urgent care. “He immediately got up. I knew he was feeling bad.”

Carolyn took Rich to urgent care the day after Christmas. The doctor was alarmed to find that his oxygen saturation was in the 70s. He was put on oxygen and they called an ambulance. Doctors determined that Rich’s flu had turned into double lung pneumonia. Unfortunately, Rich had not received the flu vaccine that year.

The next month was a nightmare. Rich was moved to the hospital’s intensive care unit. His condition continued to deteriorate and he was put on a respirator along with a special machine that constantly rotated him from side to side so that his lungs could better absorb oxygen. Rich’s condition declined further, and he required

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dialysis and a tracheotomy, a procedure that creates an opening in the front of the neck to allow oxygen to be delivered through a tube. Just a month after contracting the flu, Rich took his final breath.

Carolyn was left in shock and grief. With the support of family and friends, she started the long process of adjusting and healing. One thing that gave her great comfort was seeing how many lives Rich had touched. At his celebration of life event, held aboard the Berkeley ferry boat, nearly 275 people came to pay their respects.

However, Carolyn discovered that the process of grieving is not always linear. “This past year has been harder than the first,” she explains. Retiring from her job at the San Diego Maritime Museum and turning 60 were both milestones that she wished Rich could have shared with her.

Today, Carolyn is working on creating a “new normal” for herself. She also focuses on keeping Rich’s memory alive. “I have his instruments out, his pictures on the wall, and I talk with friends about him. So many of us still can’t believe he is gone.”

But, if there is one thing that Carolyn does believe, it is that everyone should get a flu shot.

Carolyn says, “I totally believe that it helps... I would really encourage people to get flu shots. I really feel that it wouldn’t have been so hard for Rich if he had been vaccinated.”



Carolyn and Rich Goblen

While Rich’s journey was cut tragically short, he lived a full and exemplary life. In addition to his many accomplishments and talents, what stands out most to Carolyn was his heart: “He was such a kind soul. He was so very considerate.”

Rich touched many lives, at sea and on land. His legacy and spirit of kindness lives on, as does his story. Carolyn hopes that others will be inspired to protect themselves by getting the flu vaccine each year—and to urge their loved ones to do the same.

GET AHEAD OF FLU SEASON!

San Diego County experienced a very severe flu season last year. Almost 21,000 cases of the flu were reported to the public health department, and 30% of those cases were in people over 65 years of age. Of those cases, 342 people died. Eighty-seven percent of those who died were age 65 or older.

The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone over 6 months of age, every year. The vaccine is effective at preventing severe cases and hospitalizations. While it is important for people of all ages to get vaccinated, it is especially important for people over the age of 50, as well as those with chronic health conditions. Even if conditions such as diabetes and heart disease are being managed and under control, people with

conditions such as these may have worse outcomes with the flu.

WHERE TO GET VACCINATED

Flu vaccine typically becomes available in mid-late September each year. To find a clinic, pharmacy, public health center, or other site for a flu shot, including low- or no-cost options, call **2-1-1** or visit **www.sdiz.org**.

In addition to the flu vaccine, older adults should get the new shingles vaccine—even if they have previously had shingles. Two doses of pneumococcal vaccine are also recommended. Speak with your doctor about other vaccines that may be recommended for you based on your medical conditions and risk factors.

In the COMMUNITY

NEW NORTH COUNTY VILLAGE

Over 55 years old and living in Carlsbad or Encinitas? Join the new North County Village! Villages are a non-profit, membership-based, grassroots solution that allow older adults to live independently for longer. North County Village members who have a problem, need, or questions, can contact the “one-call-does-it-all” phone number: **(760) 456-9040**. The village service allows members to talk to one person about all of their needs, such as transportation, health and wellness services, home repairs, or social and educational activities.

The North County Village launched in early spring and is looking for volunteers that can assist with marketing and events. Visit www.ncvillage.org or contact Liam Dunfey at liam@ncvillage.org for details.

COOL ZONES FOR HOT DAYS

Each summer, older adults and others are encouraged to beat the heat by visiting Cool Zones throughout the county. These air-conditioned sites welcome seniors and persons with disabilities free of charge. Some offer social opportunities, meals, or 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 find a Cool Zone near you.

TOOL TO LOCATE QUALITY ASSISTED LIVING

Accepting that a loved one can no longer be safely cared for at home can be difficult. For those who are looking to identify quality assisted living facilities, Choose Well may be able to help.

Choose Well is a free, innovative, web-based program sponsored by the County of San Diego that helps older adults and their families make informed decisions when selecting assisted living facilities. Visit www.choosewellsandiego.org to discover specially evaluated Choose Well facilities that have voluntarily agreed to be scored on 11 measures of quality. Call **(619) 795-2165** or email choosewellsandiego@gmail.com for more information.

JOIN AN AGE WELL THEME TEAM

Age Well San Diego is our region’s plan to make San Diego County an even better place in which to grow older. Professionals and interested community members are invited to join one of five “Theme Teams” to work on goals within five focal areas: Dementia-Friendly, Health & Community Support, Housing, Social Participation, and Transportation. Theme Teams began meeting this summer and will continue work over the next couple of years. Email Christina.Patch@sdcounty.ca.gov to learn about Age Well San Diego or join a Theme Team.

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 Thursday 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 Brian.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.

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Peter Kohl is the September, 2018 Volunteer of the Month. He works with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, North Coastal Command Station. Peter has been a member of their Senior Volunteer Patrol for the past 10 years, serving as the station administrator for the past four years. He is currently an active member of the patrol and the scheduling coordinator.



Peter Kohl

Peter has really made a difference through his role as a volunteer. He was instrumental in bringing new methods and forms for documenting patrol activity that allowed for less writing and more time patrolling. In addition, after taking on the scheduling responsibility at the station, he streamlined the process and how the schedule was communicated. This has resulted in more accurate schedules and fewer corrections.

Peter is a natural leader. He has excellent management skills and has the ability to motivate, effectively work with, and recognize team members. He is able to bring inclusion and humor into the workplace to accomplish the important tasks of the organization. Peter's character is demonstrated by his consistent hard work and dedication. His favorite part of volunteering is interfacing with his fellow team members, as well as the department and the community.

The Captain of the North Coastal Station said to Peter: "I have been the Captain of this station for a good part of your tenure as administrator, and have observed the smooth operation of the Senior Volunteer Patrol and the harmonious interaction of the volunteers with the sworn staff. Under your leadership, the Senior Volunteer Patrol has flourished and members of the community notice and appreciate that service as well."

Thank you, Peter, for all that you do and all that you give back to your community!

SAN DIEGO ELECTRIC RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

RAILROAD ENTHUSIASTS NEEDED

Have you ever wanted to learn about San Diego's railroad history? Have you ever wanted to help out at a historic train museum, or become a museum docent? Have you ever wanted to "turn wrenches" on old railroad equipment and help to preserve it for the future?

If so, you might like to check out the San Diego Electric Railway Association (SDERA), located in the historic Santa Fe train station in National City. SDERA has an extensive collection of railroad memorabilia, as well as seven streetcars, two of which ran in San Diego. The museum also houses a large model train layout.

SDERA needs docents to help with visitors who come to the museum for tours. The group also welcomes those who would like to help with cataloging the collections or maintaining the streetcars.

More information is available at www.sdera.org or by calling the Senior Volunteer Programs Office at **(858) 505-6399**. Are trains not your thing? Contact the Office for many more volunteer opportunities. There is sure to be something that will meet your needs.



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 SENIOR GAMES ASSOCIATION



Every athlete has a story, from a blind swimmer to a runner with Parkinson’s to a basketball player with a knee replacement. For 31 years, the non-profit San Diego Senior Games Association (SDSGA) has been helping these stories to unfold.

While there are many outstanding local organizations that serve people who have reached their half-century milestone, SDSGA brings a unique focus; the organization seeks to inspire those looking to maintain or rediscover their own physical strength. SDSGA’s mission is to “encourage senior adults...to carry on vigorous lives by developing and maintaining high levels of physical activity and mental fitness through regular participation in sports, fitness, and health education activities.” SDSGA conducts the annual San Diego Senior Games event in September, a multi-sport, Olympic-style competition in which athletes compete in age categories of five-year increments.

The first San Diego Senior Olympics event took place in 1988, and included a strong turn-out of 143 athletes who competed in nine different sports. Today, the San Diego Senior Games event offers over 25 sports and nearly 2,000 athletes participate each year. Athletes of all abilities can compete in a variety of sports and games, including: basketball, golf, paddleball, power walking, softball, track & field, and more! And while September may be the “main event,” SDSGA continues to enrich the lives of participants for the 11 other months out of the year with lectures and sport and social activities.

The media has taken notice of SDSGA and provides regular exposure, highlighting not only the achievements of athletes, but also the steady improvement athletics brings to their lives. A video of the San Diego Splash, an 85+ women’s basketball team, received 25 million

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.



views on Facebook and YouTube. The team also won the “Inspiration of the Year” award by ESPNwomen. The women of Splash demonstrated how coming together to play sports results in more than a good time—members of the team created lifelong bonds and gained an extended family of fellow athletes that brings friendship, accountability, and purpose. Sports become a means to live life as fully as possible. Even with the loss of a loved one, the SDSGA’s support system can help through the toughest of times.

By providing social and physical outlets, the SDSGA works to redefine what it means to be a senior. Just one look at a bustling basketball game, swift soccer match or a #trending team photo can inspire anyone to go join in on the fun. Interested? It’s never too late to try a new sport or get involved with one you enjoyed in your younger years! All skill levels are welcome. Athletes and volunteers are invited to participate in the San Diego Senior Games from September 7-30. For details, visit www.SDSeniorGames.org or call (858) 292-5812.



SPOTLIGHT ON FALL PREVENTION

One in three older adults (65+) falls each year. The good news is that many falls are preventable and you can reduce your risk of falling:

- **Stay active** to improve your strength, flexibility, and balance. Walking, dancing, Tai Chi, and exercise classes are all good ways to improve your health.
- **Talk with your doctor** about health issues such as osteoporosis, your Vitamin D level, medications, difficulty with hearing or vision, or if you feel faint, off-balance, or dizzy. Your doctor or pharmacist can also look at your medications to check for side effects that can affect your coordination.
- **Have your vision checked** at least one time each year by a professional.
- **Make your home safer:** remove things you could trip or slip on, maintain good lighting and night-lights, and install strong grab bars and handrails. Our eyes often need more light as we age.
- For more tips, visit: www.SanDiegoFallPrevention.org. If you would like to schedule a fall prevention presentation for your organization, email Carolyn.Proskow@sdcounty.ca.gov or call **(858) 495-5998**.

HEALTHIER LIVING CLASSES

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

Tomando Control de Su Salud (Healthier Living in Spanish): September 14-October 19 (Fridays), 5:30-8 p.m. at the Fallbrook Regional Health District, 1636 E. Mission Rd., Fallbrook 92028.

Healthier Living with Chronic Conditions: September 21-October 26 (Fridays), 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. at Paradise Village, 2700 E. 4th St., National City 91950.

Visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org, or call **(858) 495-5500** to leave a message and learn more.

CAREGIVER WORKSHOPS

Thursday, September 6 from 10-11:30 a.m.-*Driving and Memory Loss* will be held at Tri-City Wellness & Fitness Center, 6250 El Camino Real, Carlsbad 92009. Dementia causes memory and visual changes that impact the ability to drive safely. Learn about methods for evaluating driver safety, transportation resources, and tips for having conversations about driving. To RSVP, call **(858) 492-4400** or visit www.alzsd.org.

Saturday, September 8 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.-*Date With a Cure: A Free Alzheimer's Research Forum* will be held at the University of San Diego, Shiley Theatre, 5998 Alcalá Park, San Diego 92110. Hear about the latest breakthroughs in Alzheimer's research. Learn about opportunities to participate in local research at the Clinical Trials Expo at 9 a.m. Program begins at 10 a.m. To RSVP, call **(858) 492-4400** or visit www.alzsd.org.

Thursday, September 13 from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.-*Caregiver Conference-Caring for Someone with Dementia* will be held at the La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Dr., La Mesa 91942. Educational programs, community resources, free lunch, and more. To RSVP, call **(800) 827-4277** or visit www.sharp.com/classes.

Wednesday, September 19 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.-*Understanding & Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors* will be held at St. Luke Catholic Church, 1980 Hillsdale Rd., El Cajon 92019. Learn to identify common triggers for behaviors associated with dementia and use a four-step process to intervene with behaviors. RSVP to the Alzheimer's Association at **(800) 272-3900**.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 8, SATURDAY 9:30 A.M.

The *Seniors Computer Group of San Diego* meets every Saturday in Wesley Palms retirement community, 2404 Loring St., San Diego 92109. Learn how to use computers and technology, such as smart phones, effectively and safely. Open to all ages. Free to visitors. For details, call Tom at (858) 459-9065 or visit www.scgsd.org.

SEPTEMBER 13, THURSDAY 12:45 P.M.

Strategies for Successful Aging will be held at the College Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120. Jewish Family Service clinician Dr. Bruce Sachs will discuss 8 essential strategies for bringing about successful aging. Learn how maintaining a positive attitude, preserving/expanding purpose in one's life, increasing pleasure, managing stress, and focusing on self-care can produce healthy aging. Contact Elissa at (858) 637-3273 or elissal@jfssd.org for details.

SEPTEMBER 14, FRIDAY 1-2 P.M.

How to Talk to Your Health Care Provider will be held at the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Center, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa 91942. Learn strategies for choosing a provider, good communication skills during office visits, and the importance of pre-planning. This free presentation includes an advance directive for health care

document and the Vial of Life health record. To RSVP, visit www.sharp.com/classes or call (800) 827-4277.

SEPTEMBER 15, SATURDAY 9:30 A.M.

A *knitting circle* will convene at the Serra Mesa-Kearny Mesa Library, 9005 Aero Drive, San Diego 92123. Join in for a fun and social knitting experience. Bring your knitting and share stories and knitting tips. For details and to learn of other scheduled meetings, call (858) 573-1396.

SEPTEMBER 17, MONDAY 1-3 P.M.

Stepping On, a fall prevention workshop, will be held at Tri-City Medical Center, 4002 Vista Way, Assembly Rooms, Oceanside 92056. This effective program has been proven to reduce falls in older adults. Learn strategies to keep you upright and active. For details, contact Tracy Park at (760) 940-3617.

SEPTEMBER 20, THURSDAY 1 P.M.

A presentation on *Habitat for Humanity's Homeowner Repair programs* will be held during the *East County Action Network* at the El Cajon Library, 201 E. Douglas Ave., El Cajon 92020. Learn about programs for those residing in the communities of El Cajon and Logan Heights and veterans that cover critical household repairs to roofs, windows, fences,

plumbing, and more. Contact Jasmine at 619-283-4663 x152 or jasmine.habis@sandiegohabitat.org.

SEPTEMBER 23, SUNDAY 8:30 A.M..

A *Walk to End Alzheimer's* will be held at Crown Point Park in Mission Bay, 3700 Crown Point Dr., San Diego 92109. Join the Alzheimer's Association in the fight for Alzheimer's first survivor! There is no fee to participate, but donations are encouraged. To register for the 5K walk, visit www.act.alz.org/sandiego.

SEPTEMBER 26, THURSDAY 11 A.M.-12:30 P.M.

A *Home Safety Workshop* will be held at St. Paul's PACE, 1306 Broadway El Cajon, CA 92020. Accidents and injury can impact seniors' ability to live independently. Join us to learn the common causes of injury and ways to help prevent them. RSVP by September 20th to Lizette Galindo at (619) 677-3838 or lgalindo@stpaulseniors.org.

SEPTEMBER 29, SATURDAY 12-4 P.M.

The *Wheelchair Dancers 10-year celebration and fundraiser event* will be held at the Balboa Park Club, 2150 Pan American Rd. West, San Diego 92101. Enjoy an all-ability dance showcase, prizes, opportunity drawings, and gourmet food. Free. Visit www.wheelchairdancers.org or call (858) 573-1571 for details and to RSVP.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon on Monday, September 10 at AIS: 5560 Overland Ave., 3rd Floor, San Diego 92123. The public is welcome.



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

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www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov

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

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