

# AGING & independence

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

## Kinship Families Find Nourishment “Around the Table”

By **Kim Gallo**  
Director, Aging & Independence Services

Food is a lot more than just a means to survive; it can be a source of pleasure, cultural pride, and a way to connect with loved ones. In fast-paced, modern America, however, our relationship with food can get out of whack and become unhealthy. As we hurry from place to place, it is often quicker and sometimes more affordable, to rely on fast food and highly processed products.

As a grandparent who has been the sole guardian of her 12-year-old grandchild, Alex, for the past nine years, Mary Guerin is always looking for ways to model and promote healthy behaviors that will benefit her grandchild.

One day while attending a kinship family support group offered by the YMCA, Mary learned about the “Around the Table: Nourishing Families” healthy cooking and



Mary Guerin (right) attended the Around the Table nutrition class with her grandchild Alex (left).

nutrition class series offered by Aging & Independence Services as part of the CalFresh Healthy Living program. “I didn’t need to learn to cook,” Mary explains, “I had been doing that since age seven, but after the isolation of COVID, I thought it would be fun to cook with a group.” And while Mary was an experienced chef, she enjoyed learning some new approaches, as well as sharing her knowledge. “Some of the joy was sharing some of the things that I already knew,” Mary notes.

Although the class was offered via Zoom, Mary was pleased to still feel a sense of community with other group members. Each week a new topic, such as how to read food labels or how to manage stress using deep breathing, was presented using a workbook curriculum. The group then had the opportunity to discuss the topic, share personal

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Beatriz Gómez (left) with her granddaughters Jennifer (center) and Kiara (right) shared a recipe for a tasty lemon water beverage in the Kinship Family Cookbook.



*(Continued from page one)*

experiences, and practice relaxation techniques. And, the group had a lot of fun. Each week there was light-hearted connection and laughter. Mary recalls, “We used to joke, ‘Chocolate cake is never on the recalled food list...it is always lettuce!’”

One element of the course Mary found to be especially helpful was taking a closer look at food habits that were acquired during one’s youth and how those habits show up in our adult lives. Mary notes, “I grew up in a big family, so I ate really quickly because I was afraid I’d have food stolen off my plate.” Now Mary realizes that this habit leads her to eating more food than she needs. She now makes an effort to slow down. “I actually taste the food better,” she admits. “It sounds kind of elementary, but I was kind of stuck there, despite eating a relatively healthy diet.”

Beatriz Gómez is also a grandparent who is raising her grandchildren, 17-year old Jennifer and 10-year-old Kiara. Beatriz and her family participated in an Around the Table course that was offered in Spanish. Beatriz was motivated to enroll because she felt she needed new information and methods to “nourish the new generation.” Beatriz appreciated learning how to better understand nutrition labels, which oils are healthier to cook with, and the importance of having a “rainbow” of fruits and vegetables.

Originally from the state of Tabasco in Mexico, Beatriz is now finding ways to prepare foods that are traditional to her culture in healthier ways. For instance, now when she makes pozol, a refreshing drink made from fermented corn and cocoa, she adds less sugar than she would have done in the past. Beatriz is discovering ways to teach her granddaughters about their family’s culture and ensure they grow up eating a healthy diet.

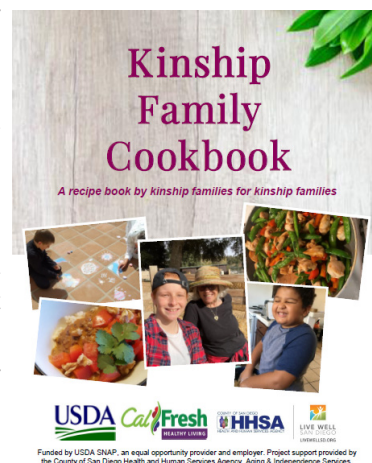
Class participants had the opportunity to cook a variety of delicious recipes, including lettuce wraps, turkey spaghetti sauce, and stir-fry dishes. At the conclusion of the formal nutrition curriculum, participants were given the opportunity to conduct a community change project. The families decided to create a kinship family cookbook that would put at their fingertips healthier food options, from main courses to desserts. Mary contributed several recipes to the cookbook such as “Loaded Morning Oatmeal” and “Irish Soda Bread,” while Alex shared “Alex’s Burrito,” a healthier take on a breakfast burrito. Beatriz and her family contributed “Lemon & Cucumber Water.”

Now that the class is complete, participants are continuing to make use of the skills and knowledge they have gained. Beatriz notes, “Taking the classes brought my attention to what we eat and how we eat. Now I add more colors to meals and make sure to set time aside for my family to eat together rather than at different times.” Beatriz anticipates obstacles before they get in the way. She does prep work in advance so that she can save money and time when days get busy. Both her granddaughters are experts at reading labels. Beatriz notes that there is a saying where she grew up that roughly translates to “stomach full, happy heart.” She is proud to share a new motto for her family: “healthy stomach, happy heart.”

Mary has continued her journey to better health and has lost nearly 20 pounds in the past six months. She involves Alex in meal preparation and decision making. And while she is steadfast in her commitment to making healthy choices for herself and Alex, Mary also takes a balanced approach. “We always watch TV at night. Alex will have dessert and I will have a cup of chamomile tea. I don’t have to eat all of the stuff he is eating. I have the trade-off of having my pants get big on me and having more energy.”

Providing a healthy environment for a growing young person is just one of the many responsibilities that grandparents raising grandchildren, such as Mary, take on. Acknowledging the many joys and challenges, Mary reflects on her role as a kinship caregiver: “It is either keeping me young forever, or it will give me an early death!” she jokes. “There are 60 years between our ages. It is fun to be a tour guide to life.”

Mary, Beatriz, and other program participants are excited to share their cookbook with others. To view a copy of the Kinship Family Cookbook, visit <https://bit.ly/2U8dwHN>. To learn more about the CalFresh Healthy Living Program and the Around the Table course, visit [www.healthierlivingsd.org](http://www.healthierlivingsd.org) or contact Lina Nasr at [Lina.Nasr@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Lina.Nasr@sdcounty.ca.gov).



# In the COMMUNITY

## CARE MANAGEMENT: MULTI-PURPOSE SENIOR SERVICE PROGRAM

Sometimes staying independent in one's home means getting help. That extra help with bill paying, shopping, laundry, and other tasks can keep someone from needing to live in a nursing home. If you or a loved one are age 65+, eligible for Medi-Cal, and need assistance to continue living safely at home, consider applying for the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP).

MSSP care managers work with the client, family members, and medical team to find and coordinate services in the home. Through the timely use of services, MSSP protects frail older adults and helps them live at home for longer.



Care management services include: a comprehensive health and psychosocial assessment; care planning with the client and family; arrangement of services; coordination of care with other community agencies; some limited payment of in-home services; monthly phone contact; quarterly home visits; and ongoing monitoring and phone contacts as needed.

For more information on MSSP or to apply, contact the AIS Call Center at **(800) 339-4661** M-F from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

## LOW-COST AND FREE COUNSELING SERVICES TO COPE WITH GRIEF AND LOSS

As soon as one receives the news that they should explore hospice services, grief may be around the corner. Grief is a strange and often exhausting experience to go through. The intensity of the emotion can be so intense as to be debilitating—often to the surprise of the bereaved. There is very little to do to prepare oneself for it until you come face to face with it.

Hospice of the North Coast's 'Hope Bereavement Center' provides bereavement support to not only the hospice's patients and their families and friends, but the broader community as well. The Center provides one-on-one counseling, family counseling, counseling with minor children, and group counseling. A variety of support interventions and modalities are offered, including expressive arts therapy and EMDR.

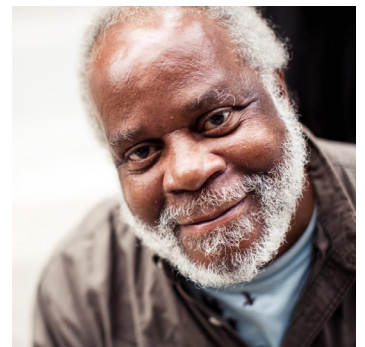
Low-cost individual counseling sessions are available in person and via telehealth to the general public. Offices are located at 2525 Pio Pico Dr. in Carlsbad. Free group sessions are offered via Zoom and will soon also be offered in person. Call **(760) 431-4100** for more information or to set up an appointment.

## IHSS RECIPIENT OR CAREGIVER? JOIN THE IHSS/PUBLIC AUTHORITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Current or past In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) recipients and caregivers (individual providers) are needed to join the IHSS/Public Authority Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and other persons or entities related to the delivery of IHSS services.

Meetings are currently held over Zoom or phone on the 2nd Friday of each month at 12:45 p.m. Members receive a \$50 monthly stipend.

For more information, please contact Julie Lara at **Julie.Lara@sdcounty.ca.gov** or **(858) 495-5047**.

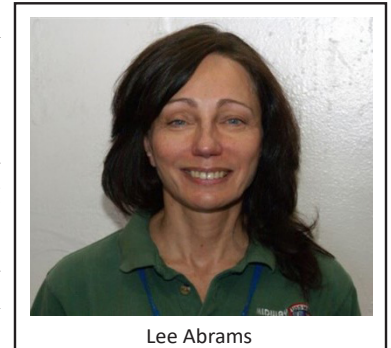




## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Lee Abrams of the USS Midway Museum is the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Volunteer of the Month for March 2022. She was nominated by Laurie C. Switzer, the Director of Volunteer Programs at the Midway.

Lee joined the Midway team in January 2007 after a successful career as a certified public accountant with Paramount Pictures. Lee had no prior experience restoring or maintaining aircraft but has always enjoyed being around airplanes, an interest she discovered while attending Michigan State University. Over her working years, she fed her passion for planes and flying by attending air shows, visiting several air museums in the US and abroad, and witnessing a shuttle launch at Cape Kennedy.



Lee Abrams

After retiring, Lee joined the USS Midway Airwing Restoration team, which works to restore and maintain exhibit aircraft and related items for display on the Midway. She has been involved in a variety of aircraft maintenance tasks and repair projects, including metal work. In addition, she has taken on a leadership role in the Airwing, often conducting the orientations for new Airwing trainees. Her management skills are a great asset to the team.



Lee Abrams helps restore aircraft for the Midway.

Lee is also engaged with the administration of ship-wide volunteer recognition efforts. With close to 1,000 active volunteers, the museum conducts monthly award ceremonies to recognize those who have achieved various levels of service, starting with 1,000 hours. When a volunteer reaches this milestone, they are presented with an authentic Navy flight jacket. Lee assists with producing authentic leather name badges for the jackets, using a special embossing tool. She also handles the tracking and communication tasks associated with these monthly recognition meetings, and most importantly, prepares the awards.

Laurie C. Switzer notes, “The Midway is blessed to have Lee on the team. Lee has been indispensable and a real pleasure working with her all these years. We are grateful to have her sustained support.”

Congratulations, Lee, and thank you for your service to the community!

## VOLUNTEER WITH RESOUNDING JOY

Resounding Joy, a partner of RSVP since 2016, is a non-profit that enhances the human experience with therapeutic applications of music. Resounding Joy uplifts individuals and families with challenging conditions, helping them achieve their goals, and support health and wellness throughout the community.

The organization offers powerful and cost-effective music therapy services, primarily for children with disabilities, military service members and veterans, and a volunteer-driven program to provide outreach to isolated older adults. Resounding Joy has a variety of volunteer opportunities, both in-person and virtual. Some of these include:

- Music-Based: Event performer, sound audio technician, drummer, and more (not all roles require music skills).
- Nuts & Bolts: Marketing/social media assistant, graphic designer, and office assistant.
- Advisory: Government contracting, human resources advisor, marketing and branding, social media strategist
- Interpersonal & Networking: Access and inclusion assistant, appreciation assistant, and music therapy advocate.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, email [Armida.Martinez@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Armida.Martinez@sdcounty.ca.gov) or call (858) 505-6399.





# Age Well San Diego 2.0

## SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK ON AGE WELL 2.0

Age Well San Diego (Age Well) is the County of San Diego's commitment to make our region an even better place for people of all ages to be healthy, safe, and thriving. Age Well launched in 2016 when San Diego County joined the AARP® Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the Dementia Friendly America Network. Through a community engagement process, in 2018 an Action Plan was created that includes five priority areas: health & community support, housing, social participation, transportation, and dementia-friendly.

Over the past several years, the five Age Well teams, comprised of community residents, organizations, County staff, and other stakeholders, worked to implement the Action Plan. We are now looking to the future and have started the process of creating Age Well 2.0.

Age Well 2.0 will continue this important community-driven work while aligning with the Board of Supervisors' Framework for the Future, incorporating new input received from our community, and increasing attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Aging & Independence Services is seeking input from community organizations, residents, and stakeholders on the development of the Age Well 2.0 Action Plan. We invite you to join our priority area virtual input sessions (listed below) to set the vision for the future, explore projects, and determine goals to accomplish together. To attend, please email [Melissa.Hernandez@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Melissa.Hernandez@sdcounty.ca.gov) for meeting details.

**Health & Community Support:** Caregiver support, community villages, technology, health-related resources, safety/preparedness, and access to the outdoors. Input sessions: Fridays | 1-2:30pm | 4/22, 5/27, 6/24

**Housing:** Zoning and design, homelessness, housing stock, opportunities to age in place/community. Input sessions: Thursdays | 1-2:30pm | 5/5, 6/2

**Social Participation & Inclusion:** Intergenerational programming, combating isolation and exclusion, civic and empowerment opportunities, diversity of programs for all ages and abilities. Input sessions: Wednesdays | 9:30-11 am | 4/13, 5/11, 6/8

**Transportation & Community Connections:** Complete communities, public spaces, alternative transportation, pedestrian safety, access to resources. Input sessions: Wednesdays | 1:00-2:30 pm | 4/27, 5/25, 6/22

**Dementia & Brain Health:** Education and awareness, caregiver support, inclusion in community life, and community involvement. Input sessions: Tuesdays | 10:30 am-12 pm | 4/19, 5/17, 6/21

*You are also welcome to submit input via email to [HealthierLiving.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:HealthierLiving.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov).*

## FREE TAI CHI CLASSES

Aging & Independence Services offers several free, in-person tai chi classes in partnership with various sites. Tai Chi Moving for Better Balance and Tai Chi for Arthritis are evidence-based fall prevention programs recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Council on Aging, and U.S. Administration for Community Living. These programs have been shown to reduce falls and improve balance among older adults. All ability levels are welcome. The class can be conducted from a seated or standing position. Classes meet for one hour, two times per week.



**Mid-City Church of the Nazarene**, 4101 University Avenue, San Diego, CA 92105  
Every Monday and Thursday | 12:30 – 1:30 pm

**St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**, 890 Balour Drive, Encinitas, CA 92024 (Grass Lawn)  
Every Tuesday and Thursday | 9 – 10 am

**The Unity Center**, 8999 Activity Road, San Diego, CA 92126  
Every Tuesday and Thursday | 9:30 – 10:30 am

**Allied Gardens Recreation Center**, 5155 Greenbrier Avenue, San Diego, CA 92120  
Every Tuesday and Friday | 3 – 4 pm

For more information on Tai Chi and other classes offered by Aging & Independence Services, visit [www.healthierlivingsd.org](http://www.healthierlivingsd.org), email [HealthierLiving.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:HealthierLiving.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov), or call (858) 495-5500.

## COVID-19 BOOSTER RECOMMENDED FOR ALL ADULTS, EXTRA DOSE AUTHORIZED

Following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the California Department of Public Health's (CDPH) recommendations, the County is urging eligible San Diegans to get a COVID-19 vaccine booster shot. Adults ages 18 and older **should** receive a booster shot. Getting vaccinated will help protect against severe illness from the Omicron variant.

The time frame for getting a first booster depends on which vaccine you received. If you received either the Pfizer or Moderna two-dose vaccine series, you may get a booster five months after you received your second dose (3 months for those who are immunocompromised). If you received the one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine, you may receive a booster two months after the primary dose.

Those who are age 50+ or who are moderately or severely immunocompromised (ages 12+) may receive an **additional** booster shot (4th dose) at least four months after their 3rd dose of Pfizer or Moderna. You can get a booster through your medical provider, a retail pharmacy, or a site operated by the County. For additional details and information on where to obtain a vaccine, visit [www.coronavirus-sd.com](http://www.coronavirus-sd.com) or call 2-1-1.

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Please note:** To ensure a timely and relevant calendar, the online and printed versions of this calendar may vary.

## APRIL 18, MONDAY 10 A.M.

Pick up a free *Grab & Go Adult Craft: Cracked Glass Magnet kit* from the San Marcos Library, 2 Civic Center Dr., San Marcos 92069. Available for pick up from April 19-April 30, or while supplies last. For details, call (760) 891-3000 or email [sanmarcoslibrary@sdcountry.ca.gov](mailto:sanmarcoslibrary@sdcountry.ca.gov).

## APRIL 23, SATURDAY 10 A.M.-1 P.M.

National City will host free *Senior Saturdays* on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month in April and May at Kimball Park, 12th Street and D Avenue, National City 91950. Enjoy activities, educational opportunities, and entertainment. The theme for April 23 is “Trivia & Board Games.” On May 14, it is “Animal Presentation and Dog Therapy.” No RSVP required. For details, call (619) 336-4290 or email [communityservices@nationalcity.ca.gov](mailto:communityservices@nationalcity.ca.gov).

## APRIL 26, TUESDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

Offered online, *Buddha and Jesus-Alignment or Discord?* (course #432), will be offered by San Diego Oasis. What happens when you set these two ancient wisdom teachers alongside one another? Let’s find out. By comparing their origin stories, the process of their transformation into teachers, and the principles and practices of the paths they left for

us, remarkable alignments arise as well as startling contrasts. Cost: \$15. Visit [www.sandiegoasis.org](http://www.sandiegoasis.org) or call (619) 881-6262 to RSVP.

## APRIL 27, WEDNESDAY 2-3 P.M.

A free program, *Wellness Wednesday: A Peek into Prediabetes*, will be offered both in-person and virtually by the Herrick Community Health Library at the Grossmont Healthcare District Auditorium, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa 91942. Go on a fun and interactive journey to the inside of your body to discover what really causes prediabetes and how your diet may be helping or harming your health. For details, call (619) 825-5010 or email [info@herricklibrary.org](mailto:info@herricklibrary.org). To register for the virtual program, visit [www.herricklibrary.org](http://www.herricklibrary.org) and click on “About Herrick Library.”

## APRIL 27, WEDNESDAY 1-2 P.M.

An online class, *Cox Presents: TV Options-A New Way of Viewing* (course #565), will be offered by San Diego Oasis. Discover new ways to see and stream movies and TV series. Explore streaming services and subscriptions (e.g., Hulu, Netflix); devices (e.g., Roku streaming stick, Amazon Fire Stick); and smart TV choices. Watch a connection demonstration and hear binge-worthy program recommendations! Cost: \$5. Visit [www.sandiegoasis.org](http://www.sandiegoasis.org) or call (619) 881-6262 to RSVP.

## APRIL 29, FRIDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

A free webinar, *Long-Distance Caregiving*, will be hosted by

Alzheimer’s San Diego. Caring for someone living with dementia from afar presents its own unique challenges. Hear about ways to stay in touch, stay informed, and be a helpful partner and a support. To RSVP, visit [www.alzsd.org/classes](http://www.alzsd.org/classes) or call (858) 492-4400.

## MAY 6, FRIDAY 1-2 P.M.

An in-person class, *Silver Age Yoga*, will be held at the Carmel Valley Library, 3919 Townsgate Dr., San Diego 92130. This class is designed so that seniors can safely participate in yoga at their level of comfort. Every class utilizes chairs, but you may bring your own exercise mat, if desired. To register, visit [www.sandiego.gov/public-library](http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library) and click on “Events Calendar.” For details, contact (858) 552-1668 or [vastaff@sandiego.gov](mailto:vastaff@sandiego.gov).

## MAY 12, THURSDAY 2-3 P.M.

A free in-person workshop, *Elder Scams in 2022 Class: Be Aware and Not a Victim*, will be held by Sharp Grossmont Hospital at the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Room, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa 91942. Hear from the San Diego County District Attorney’s Economic Crimes Division how to spot and avoid scams. Learn the steps you can take to prevent different forms of financial elder abuse. To register, visit [www.sharp.com/events](http://www.sharp.com/events) or call (800) 827-4277.

### SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

We welcome your contributions to this monthly calendar. Email [sarah.jackson@sdcountry.ca.gov](mailto:sarah.jackson@sdcountry.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 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) 339-4661**  
[www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov](http://www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov)



COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT ▪ HEALTH INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

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