AGING & independence

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

Your Vote is Your Voice...Use it this September!

By Kim Gallo
Director, Aging & Independence Services

Don Conley, 77, doesn't miss the opportunity to cast a ballot each time an election rolls around. As an African American who grew up in a segregated community in Coffeyville, Kansas, Don saw first-hand how elected leaders who were "sympathetic with your cause" could make a difference in everyday life. His mother was a passionate and engaged citizen who worked as both a poll worker and precinct supervisor for many years. She helped Don realize that "voting gives you hope."

Don Conley, a recruitment specialist for the San Diego County Registrar of Voters.

In the 1960s, Don joined the Navy, became an aircraft electrical mechanic, and earned a computer science degree. He settled in Southeast San Diego, got married, and raised two children. After his career as an engineer, he served for many years as a pastor for the Encanto Southern Baptist Church.

But in 2017, Don had the opportunity to serve his community in a different way. He was looking for work—not always an easy task as an older adult—and sought help from the San Diego Workforce Partnership. He learned about an opportunity to work at the San Diego County Registrar of Voters (ROV).

Today, Don works as a recruitment specialist for the ROV, playing an important role in supporting democracy and voting rights in our region, just as his mother did back in Kansas. Don calls people and recruits them to fill various roles, such as site managers, technical inspectors, and precinct inspectors. He also assists with training and solving problems on Election Day, such as sending substitute staff to a site if an election worker becomes sick and can't work.

It is an interesting time in our country's history to support the systems and infrastructure that facilitate citizens' right to vote. The country is arguably more divided than it has been in many generations. However, as an election worker, one needs to embrace the spirit of democracy and be an unbiased representative who encourages people of all different persuasions to voice their opinions. Fortunately, doing so is easy for Don as he is no stranger to differences in political opinion—and he learned to maintain close relationships despite ideological disagreements. "My grandfather was a Lincoln Republican and my father was a New Deal Democrat," he explains. Exposure to diverse points of view helped him learn how to listen carefully to what others have to say, consider different ideas, and, ultimately, how to find common ground and compromise. He believes that carefully considering and drawing from diverse political viewpoints can ultimately yield the strongest policy decisions. He notes, "If we put the good [of each side] together, then it works."

(Continued on page two)

(Continued from page one)

But Don does worry about the deep political divides that currently grip the country and how political divisions can spill over to impact racial relations. "The polarization is going to set us back at least one or two generations," Don says. He holds the hope that "we will be able to erase this divide. That every individual, no matter where they came from, will have access to the benefits of this democracy…life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

He also worries about misinformation and the role social media can play in spreading falsehoods. Don currently limits his time on social media because he finds it discouraging to see how much misinformation is out there. "There can be an outright lie," Don laments, "and people will believe it because incorrect information is being amplified by those with the loudest voices. We who want to be balanced [and factual] need to raise the volume." He believes people should expose themselves to a wide variety of information from diverse sources and that they should take the time to sift through various viewpoints. By becoming a more informed electorate, we won't be as susceptible to the dangers of misinformation.

One thing that does not concern Don is how the County of San Diego handles its elections. "We have a very secure process," he explains. "I really believe that San Diego is doing it right when it comes to election credibility and security. Regardless of who wins, it is a secure win."

While many San Diegans recognize the importance of voting, some residents have historically found it more difficult to vote due to barriers such as speaking another language, not understanding the voting process, or having difficulty making it to polling sites. To help increase participation in our democracy, the County of San Diego works diligently to make voting easy and accessible. In accordance with federal and state regulations, the County provides voting materials in eight languages, in addition to English. The ROV also recruits individuals from diverse backgrounds to work as election workers to assist voters. In addition, staff get the word out about the importance of voting and make registering to vote

easy by attending numerous community gatherings, including those at senior living facilities, food distribution sites, and cultural events, such as Native American powwows or Filipino Independence Day celebrations. Although some in-person outreach activities have been on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ROV is connecting with residents through virtual presentations and social media. Staff are also providing voter education to high school students who are interested in doing their own voting engagement projects with their peers.

Don and all of the staff at the ROV would like to remind San Diegans that "Your vote is your voice!" They encourage all voters to take advantage of the opportunity to take part in the September 14 special election. See page 3 for additional details on this election and how to return your ballot. Visit **sdvote.com** for more information.

If you would like to help empower other people to use their voices, consider becoming an election worker. The Registrar of Voters relies heavily on election workers to ensure our community can exercise their right to vote. Each election, thousands of election workers are needed to assist voters at the polls. If you are interested in learning how you can be a part of democracy by becoming an election worker, contact Poll Worker Recruitment by phone at **(858) 565-5800** or email **pollworker@sdcounty.ca.gov**. Applications are accepted online at **sdvote.com**.

VOTE IN THE SEPTEMBER 14 CALIFORNIA GUBERNATORIAL RECALL ELECTION

Every active registered voter has been sent a ballot in the mail for the upcoming gubernatorial recall election. Voters will have the option to return their ballot by mail or at one of many convenient mail ballot drop-off locations around the county.

Why are we having an election?

California is one of 19 states that allows any elected official to be "recalled". For the first time in nearly 20 years, California will hold an election that asks voters if they want to remove the governor from office.

The ballot will ask two questions:

1) Do you want to recall the governor?

2) If recalled, who do you want to replace him?

A "yes" vote means remove the governor. A "no" vote means keep the current governor. You can vote on either one or both parts of the recall ballot. You can choose to vote for a replacement candidate, even if you voted "no" on the recall in the first question. The questions are counted separately and your response to one question does not affect the other.

Will there be in-person voting locations?

Yes. In-person voting locations will be open across the county for four days, Saturday, September 11 – Tuesday, September 14.

Avoid lines and vote early:

- At the Registrar's office 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- At a voting location near you or the Registrar's office Saturday, September 11 through Monday, September 13, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

All will again be open on Election Day when the voting hours will change to 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Learn more about the upcoming election, including voting locations, at **sdvote.com**.

JOIN THE AIS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council assists AIS staff members on policy and program needs related to its role as the Area Agency on Aging for San Diego County. There are nearly 30 members of the Advisory Council who meet the second Monday of each month at noon. The Council is currently seeking to fill open positions and is particularly seeking representation from those age 60 and older. Individuals from all ages and backgrounds are welcome. For more information on the Advisory Council or to apply to join, contact jana.jordan@sdcounty.ca.gov or call **(858) 495-5858**. To learn more about AIS, visit **www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov**.

VOLUNTEER WITH TIP

Trauma Intervention Programs of San Diego, also known as TIP, is a non-profit volunteer-based program developed to provide support and assistance to those traumatically affected in emergency situations.

When a traumatic event occurs, TIP's partner agencies such as law enforcement, fire, and hospital personnel call for a TIP volunteer to be with survivors to provide much needed emotional and practical support immediately following the crisis. Since trauma and tragedy can happen at any time, TIP volunteers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. TIP volunteers assist in providing support after tragedies such as:

- Natural or unexpected deaths (suicides, overdoses, sudden infant deaths, drowning, etc.)
- Crimes including homicide, sexual assault, robbery, and domestic violence
- Emergency scenes including vehicle accidents, house fires, and community disasters

TIP volunteers are specially trained citizens of all ages and backgrounds who understand the benefit and need of having a compassionate person alongside survivors following a traumatic event. To become a TIP volunteer, there are no special requirements or additional degrees needed; TIP will teach you what you need to know to become a volunteer.

The training program consists of a 39-hour classroom training, plus homework. You will learn all you need to know on how to work within the emergency response system and provide compassionate care to survivors. Volunteers must commit to a 3-month on-site training and once completed, make a year-long commitment to the program.

The next orientation training will be held on Wednesday, September 15 in North County. You can come from anywhere in the county to take the training. Once trained, you will serve in the area in which you live. If you are interested in learning more about this volunteer opportunity, please contact Myles Jonathan Field at **(858) 505-6399** or **myles.field@sdcounty.ca.gov**. Additional information is also available at **www.tipsandiego.org**.

APPLY TO SERVE ON THE RSVP/SVA ADVISORY COUNCIL

Are you dedicated to volunteerism? Are you looking for ways to make a difference in your community? Do you have experience working with volunteers in a non-profit setting? Do you have experience working with seniors? If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, consider submitting an application to be part of the RSVP/SVA Advisory Council! The Council meets once a month (sometimes every other month) to provide support, direction, and active participation with RSVP/SVA programs. Activities include co-sponsoring annual RSVP/SVA volunteer recognition with RSVP/SVA staff, annually assessing RSVP program performance, helping to promote RSVP/SVA in the community, and providing ongoing advice to RSVP/SVA staff. As an added bonus, you will meet other involved community members and become part of an amazing team of people.

For more information on how to apply, please contact Armida Martinez at **(858) 505-6448** or **armida.martinez@sdcounty.ca.gov**. All applications will be reviewed and acceptance into the RSVP/SVA Advisory Council requires a majority vote by current council members. We hope you will join us!

MENTORS FOR YOUTH NEEDED

Are you interested in being a mentor and able to dedicate 1-2 hours per week to participate in online activities with children and youth ages 12-17? You are needed! Metro Community Ministries is a social services agency serving San Diego since 1966 that focuses on working with communities often overlooked and underserved. Their current program, Urban Leaders, is working with 6th through 12th grade students, providing them with mentors and engaging in weekly activities facilitated by a staff and/or volunteer. Activities will be conducted virtually due to COVID-19, but they are continuing to review and revisit as we move forward into the new school year.

Weekly interactions will be facilitated and held in a group setting on Zoom. In addition, Metro Community Ministries is recruiting activity mentors: individuals open to facilitating activities virtually. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out by emailing **mentor@metrocommunityministries.org**.

This is a great opportunity to make a difference in the life of a young person – and in your life too!

TECH FOR SENIORS PROJECT

Volunteers (age 18 and over) are being sought for the Tech for Seniors project to help provide older adults with technology support, education, and social connection. This project is a partnership between Community Congregational Development Corporation, the South County Action Network, Sarsis, and two low-income senior housing complexes in the South Bay. iPads are being given to the older adults and in-person, as well as virtual training, will be provided for six months to improve participants' digital literacy and reduce social isolation. Training is conducted both in groups and one-on-one, following COVID precautions.

If you know a young adult who would be interested in volunteering, please spread the word! And if you are an older adult who is tech savvy and would love to tutor a fellow senior, we would welcome your help! Just volunteering one hour a week to help these older adults practice using their iPads would be very appreciated.

Volunteers who are bilingual English/Spanish are particularly needed. For more information, please contact Lizette Galindo at **lgalindo@stpaulspace.org**.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Get active with La Mesa's Intergenerational Safe Routes to School Team, a volunteer program for active older adults.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) makes it safer and easier for kids to stay active by walking and biking to school. Benefits include better safety around schools and reduced transportation costs for families.

You can make a healthy difference in your community with just a few hours a week. Ask us how and apply today! Contact our SRTS Volunteer Coordinator at **(619) 667-1322** or **recreation@cityoflamesa.us**.

COVID-19 THIRD VACCINE DOSE AND BOOSTER DOSES

If you meet the criteria outlined by the CDC for someone who is immunocompromised, it is recommended that you get a third dose of an mRNA (Pfizer or Moderna) vaccine at least 28 days after your 2nd dose of vaccine. These shots for immunocompromised people are available now. Booster doses for the general public are expected to be available beginning this fall. For those who received the Moderna or Pfizer two-dose series, a booster should be received 8 months from the time of the second dose.

For details on how to receive a vaccine, visit **www.coronavirus-sd.com/vaccine**. For information on 3rd dose shots for immunocompromised people or boosters for the general public, visit **www.cdc.gov/covid19**.

FOCUS ON FALL PREVENTION: AWARENESS AND EVENTS

The coronavirus pandemic has changed a lot of things, but one thing is still the same...falling is NOT a normal part of aging. Aging & Independence Services (AIS) is committed to empowering all older adults in San Diego County to reduce their risk of falls, which are one of the greatest causes of serious injuries and death among people over age 65.

On **September 20 –24**, AIS is partnering with the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to mark Falls Prevention Awareness Week. As part of this national outreach campaign, the San Diego Fall Prevention Task Force is hosting a virtual event to raise awareness about falls and fall prevention strategies among older adults in San Diego County. The event will feature informative webinars led by healthcare providers, as well as live demonstrations of different fall prevention programs that are available to San Diego County residents. To learn more about the event or register, please visit **www.sandiegofallprevention.org**.

To assess your fall risk and receive guidance on how to prevent falls, please visit **www.ncoa.org/FallsFreeCheckUp** where you can complete a short, 12-question survey that will screen for the most common risk factors.

HEALTHIER LIVING CLASSES

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

Healthier Living with Diabetes: **September 22-October 27 (Wednesdays), 2-4:30 p.m.** Hosted by Aging & Independence Services via the Zoom virtual platform. For more details or to register, visit **www.healthierlivingsd.org**, email **healthierliving.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov** or call **(619) 495-7296**.

ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE BEHIND ON RENT OR UTILITY PAYMENTS

Emergency rent and utility assistance is available for those who have been financially impacted by COVID-19 and are behind on rent/utility payments. Apply now for the County's Emergency Rent and Utilities Assistance Program (ERAP). Applications will be accepted until funds are no longer available. The County's ERAP 2021 serves all areas of the San Diego region except for the cities of San Diego and Chula Vista. Residents in those cities must directly apply to the City of San Diego or Chula Vista for assistance. Tenants and landlords throughout the region can visit **www.ERAPsandiego.org** for information about all three programs and to apply. Those seeking rental assistance must have an income of 80% or less of the Area Median Income ($67,900 for a one-person household; $77, 600 for a two-person household). To apply for ERAP, please visit www.SDHCD.org. Applications are available online in several languages. If you do not have internet access and need assistance submitting an application, please call **(858) 694-4801**.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

SEPTEMBER 13, MONDAY 1-3:30 P.M.

Beginning Genealogy will be held at the Mira Mesa Library, 8405 New Salem St., San Diego 92126. Curious about where you come from? Want to know more about your ancestors? Ms. Kathy will help you get started researching your family's history. Learn about available resources and get some tips to make your searches more efficient and enjoyable. For details, call **(858) 538-8165** or email Ina at **igibson@sandiego.gov**.

SEPTEMBER 14, TUESDAY 2-3 P.M.

A free, online course, ***BINGOCIZE***, will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays via Zoom through November 18. This 10-week health promotion program combines the game of bingo with fall prevention exercise. Participants play bingo, meet new people, and win prizes all while learning proven fall prevention strategies. To register, call **(858) 626-6160** or email **colburn-hargis.paige@scrippshealth.org**.

SEPTEMBER 16, THURSDAY 10-11:15 A.M.

A free, online class, ***Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behaviors*** will be offered by the Alzheimer's Association. Learn to decode behavioral messages, identify common behavior triggers, and discover strategies to help intervene with some of the most common behavioral challenges of Alzheimer's disease. To register, visit **www.alz.org/sandiego/events** and click on "Educational Programs" or call **(800) 272-3900**.

SEPTEMBER 22, WEDNESDAY 10 A.M.

An in-person and virtual presentation, ***Aging-The Ultimate Exercise***, will be hosted by the Herrick Community Health Library, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa 91942. Dr. Eric Z. Shapira, a clinical gerontologist and author of *A New Wrinkle,* will present his Eight Sacred Truths to Healthy Aging and also discuss intimacy after 60. Attend in person (masks required for all) or online. For details or to get the Zoom link, email **info@herricklibrary.org** or call **(619) 825-5010**.

SEPTEMBER 22, WEDNESDAY 1 P.M.

An online class, ***Current Events-September*** (course #262), will be offered by San Diego Oasis. Stay abreast of current affairs in this monthly objective analysis and discussion of hot topics. Cost: $12. Visit **www.SanDiegoOasis.org** or call **(619) 881-6262** to RSVP.

SEPTEMBER 24, FRIDAY 9 A.M.

A virtual presentation, ***Hearing Loss and Fall Risk***, will be offered by the San Diego Fall Prevention Task Force, AIS, and Scripps Health. Hearing loss is one of several risk factors for falls. Even a mild degree of hearing loss triples the risk of an accidental fall! Learn from an audiologist about how hearing loss affects balance and what you can do to reduce your risk of falls. RSVP in advance at **www.sandiegofallprevention.org**.

SEPTEMBER 27, MONDAY 6:30-7:30 P.M.

An in-person ***Author Talk: Edie Littlefield Sundby*** will be held at the Point Loma/Hervey Library, 3701 Voltaire St., San Diego 92107. After losing her right lung to stage IV cancer, Edie Littlefield Sundby, author of *The Mission Walker*, became the first person to walk the entire El Camino Real mission trail through the mountain wilderness of Mexico to Northern California. Hear about her journey. For details, email **postaff@sandiego.gov** or call **(619) 531-1539**.

OCTOBER 1, FRIDAY 11 A.M.

An online class, ***Cox Presents: The World of Google, Part 1, Overview, Tools, and Email*** (course #405), will be offered by San Diego Oasis. Learn about Google, a search engine and a source for products that can simplify your journey in this digital world. Cost: $5. Visit **www.SanDiegoOasis.org** or call **(619) 881-6262** to RSVP.

OCTOBER 7, THURSDAY 12-1 P.M.

A free, online class, ***10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's***, will be offered by the Alzheimer's Association. Learn to recognize common signs of the disease, how to approach someone about memory concerns, the importance of early detection, and more! Visit **www.alz.org/sandiego/events** and click on "Educational Programs" or call **(800) 272-3900**.

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

We welcome your contributions to this monthly calendar. Email **sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov**.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
HHSA
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO
LIVEWELLSD.ORG

FIRST CLASS MAIL
PRESORTED
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
SAN DIEGO, CA
PERMIT No. 571

AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES
P.O. Box 23217
San Diego, CA 92193-3217
(800) 339-4661

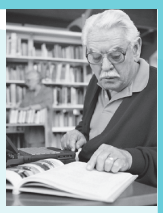
Return Service Requested

▪ INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE ▪ PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY ▪

COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT ▪ HEALTH INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

HOME-BASED SERVICES ▪ INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

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

▪ INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE ▪ PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY ▪

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.

Chief Administrative Officer
Helen Robbins-Meyer

Director, Health & Human Services Agency
Nick Macchione

Director, Aging and Adult Services
Aging & Independence Services
Kimberly Gallo

Editor, Sarah "Sally" Jackson
sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov

Calendar information is welcome and must be submitted before the 1st of the month preceding the issue date. Submit to: Editor *Aging & Independence*, P.O. Box 23217, San Diego, CA 92193. Or, submit by email to: sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov

Special permission is not needed to reproduce any information contained in this publication with credits to *Aging & Independence* ™