

Fighting Elder Abuse in Facilities

BY PAMELA B. SMITH

DIRECTOR, AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

During a facility visit, a Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteer was talking with a resident who disclosed that she had been molested by a male CNA and had not told anyone. Initially, the resident did not want any action taken, but eventually gave the Ombudsman permission to launch an investigation. The facility administrator, state licensing and the police were all involved. A few weeks ago, the perpetrator pled guilty and will be sentenced to jail.

If that volunteer had not been a familiar and friendly face in the facility, the criminal might have gone unpunished.

And worse, there might have been more victims.

May is Elder Abuse Awareness Month, and Ombudsman staff and volunteers regularly help fight the victimization of older adults. The Ombudsman program focuses on abuse reports that involve residents of nursing homes, board and care homes and other long term care facilities. Adult Protective Services (APS) workers investigate cases of abuse in people's homes or the community at large.

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program recently recognized its volunteers for their commitment to advocating for residents. Nearly 800 elder abuse and neglect allega-



(FROM LEFT) JOSEPH RODRIGUES, STATE LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN; SHARON CORDICE, LOCAL OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM COORDINATOR; HONORED VOLUNTEERS FRAN NASH AND SID SELZER; AND CHUCK MATTHEWS, DIVISION CHIEF FOR AIS.

tions were investigated by San Diego County's Ombudsman office last year. Cases involved financial abuse, as well as physical harm.

One nursing home resident told an Ombudsman that a staff person from her previous board and care facility had visited recently and talked her into writing a large check. Our Ombudsman volunteer encouraged the resident to file a police report and she helped the woman close her bank account and open a new one.

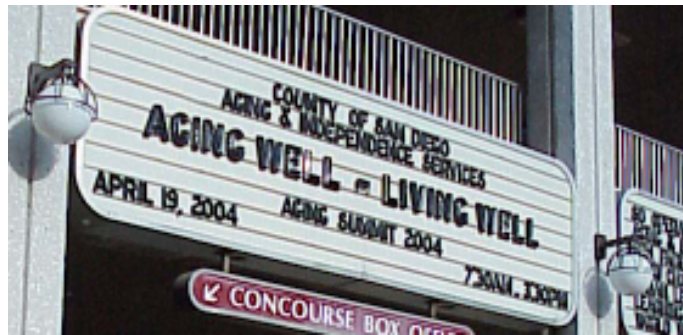
Again the resident had turned to a familiar and friendly face. Someone who asked questions. Someone who lis-

tened to the answers. That's what these folks do best.

They are a dedicated bunch. Among those attending the recognition luncheon last month were Fran Nash who has been an Ombudsman volunteer for 21 years, and Sid Selzer, who is just behind her at 20 years. About 20 percent of the volunteers have been active for at least five years.

Beyond following up on elder abuse reports, the volunteers work with residents, their families and the facilities on a wide range of complaints and needs. They also witness

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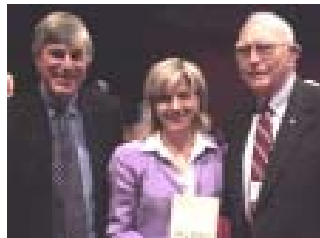


SUCCESSFUL SUMMIT

Agging well is less about reducing wrinkles than appreciating them, so said speakers at Aging Summit 2004, held recently at the San Diego Concourse in downtown San Diego. Some 600 participants heard author and researcher Dr. George Vaillant, communication specialist Marvin Waldman and retirement researcher Dr. Phyllis Moen share what they've learned about aging well and creating a positive approach to aging. During afternoon workshops, people shared their own ideas on these topics. A committee will be forming to help implement action steps under the Aging Well theme.



This was our fourth Aging Summit since 1998, and was spearheaded by Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Dianne Jacob and Vice-Chairwoman Pam Slater-Price. ▲



DR. GEORGE VAILLANT, LEFT, WITH PAM SMITH AND SAN DIEGO RESIDENT DR. HOMER PEABODY, WHO, SINCE 1937, HAS BEEN ONE OF THE SUBJECTS IN THE HARVARD STUDIES ON ADULT DEVELOPMENT THAT DR. VAILLANT NOW SUPERVISES.



We thank our Presenting Sponsor, AARP, with representatives shown at left, Maxine Fischer, Vickie Velasco and Bob Prath; and our Supporting Sponsors: Sharp and SDG&E.

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the signing of advance directives, and participate in resident/family council meetings.

The volunteer efforts of this team can make a significant difference in the lives of people in facilities, many of whom have no other visitors. The residents come to know that these volunteers are not just friendly faces, but people who can take action. And we applaud their hard work.

If you know anyone who has the patience, persistence and diplomacy to make a great advocate for residents, call our Ombudsman office at **(858) 560-2507** or **(800) 640-4661**. ▲

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson has announced that former Virginia Department on Aging Commissioner Ann Y. McGee, Ed.D., will

serve as executive director for the 2005 White House Conference on Aging. The White House Conference on Aging makes policy recommendations to the president and Congress. Dr. McGee will oversee the planning.

“This conference occurs as the first wave of the baby boom generation prepares for retirement, creating an important opportunity to creatively reassess aging in America and improve the lives of older Americans,” Secretary Thompson said.

The White House Conferences on Aging convene every 10 years and have served as catalysts to develop and define aging policy over the past 40 years. The conferences have contributed to the establishment of many of the key aging programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, the Older Americans Act, the Supplemental Security Income program and the National Institute on Aging. The conference will involve a policy committee with 17 members. The president will appoint nine members to the committee, including the chairman, and Congress will appoint the other eight members. ▲

HONORING



RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION EVENT

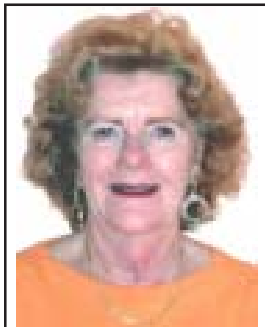
Our grand thank you to volunteers will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, June 9, at the Town and Country in Mission Valley. Invitations will be sent on May 10 to RSVP volunteers for whom we have 50 recorded hours in 2003. As in prior years, other volunteers and guests are welcome to join us, but need to pay \$30.

Exhibit tables will be ready at 9 a.m. when the doors open to the Grand Ballroom. The Moonlight Serenade Orchestra will perform before and during the event. There will be a \$3 parking fee when entering the Town & Country parking lot.

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Barbara Silldorf, nominated by Lois Kelly of Elder Law & Advocacy, is our RSVP Volunteer of the Month.

Barbara's activities include filing, setting up systems for closed files, phoning and sending brochures to support groups, setting up educational seminars, typing labels for mailings, and making copies.



BARBARA SILLDORF

Lois Kelly writes, "Everything Barbara does is done cheerfully and accurately. She is a great help to me and a great addition to our staff."

Congratulations, Barbara, and many thanks. Your efforts truly make a difference in San Diego.

SENIORS AGAINST INVESTMENT FRAUD

The Seniors Against Investment Fraud (SAIF) program provides older Californians information on how to recognize, avoid and report investment fraud. SAIF is the first place to call before purchasing or investing in any type of financial product. Several RSVP volunteers are available to make an SAIF presentation to your organization or community group. Call the RSVP office to request a guest speaker: **(858) 505-6399**.

SAY 'I Do' TO RSVP

We have been presented with an interesting and unique volunteer opportunity. The County Clerk is looking for senior volunteers to be commissioned as Deputy Commissioners of Civil Marriages. These volunteers will be authorized to perform civil marriage ceremonies at selected County Clerk offices. Training, robe, and wedding script will be provided.

A qualified volunteer should have good verbal skills, a pleasant personality, the ability to interact effectively with diverse cultures, be clean and well groomed. The primary need is on Saturdays. Flexible hours can be arranged. Call RSVP at **(858) 505-6399** for more information.

MENTORING OPPORTUNITY

The County's Foster Youth Mentor Program is seeking mentors to provide foster children (ranging in age from 6 to 18 years) with a supportive and enriching one-on-one relationship that will aid in developing self-esteem. Activities may include providing transportation, tutoring, and various social/educational outings. Potential volunteers must have ability to interact and communicate with children. Suggested time is eight hours per month with a one-year commitment. Call **(858) 505-6399**.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around doing nothing; it's when you've had everything to do, and you've done it."

— Margaret Thatcher

RSVP Volunteers Get Things Done!



GUARDIAN ANGELS -- THE COUNTY'S GUARDIAN ANGEL PROGRAM, MANAGED BY THE GEORGE G. GLENNER ALZHEIMER'S FAMILY CENTERS, INC., RECENTLY HELD ITS VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BRUNCH. THE GUARDIAN ANGELS MAKE MORE THAN 600 VISITS EACH YEAR TO RESIDENTS IN SOME 81 FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY. THANKS TO THE ANGELS FOR THEIR DEDICATION. IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE GUARDIAN ANGEL PROGRAM, CALL (619) 543-4707, OR SEE THE WEB SITE: WWW.GUARDIANANGELSD.ORG.

LONG TERM CARE INTEGRATION UPDATE

The next Long Term Integration Project Planning Committee meeting has been changed to 10:30 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, May 4, at 8965 Balboa Ave, first floor conference room. We plan to kick off our Community Education Workgroup, which will support all three LTCIP integration strategies (Network of Care, Physician Strategy, and HSD+ Health Plan Pilots). The goal is to work with consumers, caregivers, physicians and other community-based providers to develop a reliable, broad-based information warehouse, within the Network of Care website, that identifies best practices across health and social services, emphasizing self-care management, disease management protocols, preventive chronic care management and improved education and communication.

The Administrative Action Plan (AAP) for the fully integrated model, Healthy San Diego Plus, has just been released and is available for comment by calling Evalyn Greb (see below) or by downloading it from the LTCIP website.

For more information on any LTCIP activity, call (858) 495-5428, evalyn.greb@sdcounty.ca.gov, or sara.barnett@sdcounty.ca.gov, (858) 694-3252, or visit the Web site at <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/cnty/cntydepts/health/ais/ltc/> ▲

'IN FOCUS' RADIO SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

Tune in to our radio program "In Focus," at 6 p.m. each Monday on KPOP-1360 AM, and stay on top of the news for older adults, disabled persons, caregivers and others. Here are future shows:

May 3: Relationships in Caregiving

May 10: Maintaining Good Mental Health

May 17: Keeping Your Heart Healthy

May 24: Understanding the Diagnosis of Dementia

The program welcomes sponsors. Contact Marie Brown-Mercadel at (858) 495-5769 if your organization or business might be interested in being an "In Focus" sponsor. ▲

FUNDING TO AID CAREGIVERS

The Family Caregiver Support Program recently contracted with 19 different groups that had submitted proposals for one-time-only funding. The proposals included translating caregiver-related material about Alzheimer's disease into Spanish; educating businesses and employees about the needs of caregivers; training mediators to be better versed in geriatric and caregiver issues; creating an online caregiver training module; and more. One-time-only funding does not cover long-term projects; these projects are to be completed by the end of this fiscal year, June 30.

The Family Caregiver Support Program is also in the second year of a three-year contract with the Southern Caregiver Resource Center for respite, care management and other services to aid caregivers; and with Elder Law & Advocacy for legal assistance.

Organizations and persons interested in improving services for family caregivers are invited to attend the monthly meetings of the Caregiver Coalition. The next meeting is May 27. For more information, contact Saman Yaghmaee, Caregiver Coordinator, at (858) 505-6300. ▲

NATIONAL SENIOR CENTER WEEK

The National Council on Aging has declared May 9 through 15 as National Senior Center Week. As a celebration and a way to invite more people to visit their local centers, a few sites around the county are holding special events, such as the following:

May 10 from 9 a.m. to noon: Wells Park in El Cajon, will be the site of a luau-themed one-mile walk, health screenings, prizes and more.

May 14 at 9 a.m.: Both the McClellan Senior Center in Vista and the San Marcos Senior Center will be having walks, plus health fairs. Enjoy! ▲

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

This monthly calendar welcomes your contributions. Just send items by the 10th of each month preceding the issue date to: Denise G. Nelesen, editor, Aging & Independence Services, 9335 Hazard Way, San Diego, CA 92123-1222. Or fax to: (858) 495-5080. Or you can email to denise.nelesen@sdcounty.ca.gov.

MAY 11, TUESDAY

9:30 TO 11:30 A.M.

“Reporting Elder & Dependent Adult Abuse,” a free AIS training, will be held at the Santee City Hall, Building 8, 10601 Magnolia Ave., Santee. The training is for persons who have assumed full or partial responsibility for the needs or care of an elder or dependent adult. Pre-registration is required; call (619) 401-3994.

MAY 12 WEDNESDAY

9 A.M. TO 3 P.M.

“Will Day,” a free service for all seniors ages 60 and older, will be held at the Martin Luther King Memorial Park Recreation Center, 6401 Skyline Dr., San Diego. Attorneys with Elder Law & Advocacy will help seniors make simple wills. Make your appointment by May 6; call (858) 565-1392, ext. 212.

MAY 13, THURSDAY

8:30 A.M. TO 3 P.M.

“Older Adults: Co-Occurring Disorders” will be the topic of a free mental health and substance abuse conference being held at Bahia Resort Hotel, 998 W. Mission Bay Dr., San Diego. CEUs available. For more information and to register, call (858) 573-2600, or email: cmaclaughlin@mhsinc.org.

MAY 15, SATURDAY

8 A.M.

The Parkinson’s Disease Association of San Diego is holding its annual 5K Walk and Fun Run at De Anza Cove in Mission Bay Park. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and the walk/run will start at 9 a.m. Cost is \$20 for adults; \$15 for children age 12 and under. For more information, call (858) 273-6763.

MAY 18, TUESDAY

5:30 TO 7:30 P.M.

An elder abuse public awareness event, combined with a free jazz and blues concert, will be held at the Carlsbad City Library Schulman Auditorium, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad. Deputy District Attorney Paul Greenwood will be the speaker. For more information, call (760) 438-0080.

MAY 20, THURSDAY

9:30 A.M.

Senior Information Fair will be held at the Encinitas Community and Senior Center, 1140 Oakcrest Park Dr. in Encinitas. The free fair will be followed by a dance with live music; there will be a \$2 cover charge for the dance. For more information, call (760) 633-2740.

MAY 21, FRIDAY

8:30 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

“Caring for Those You Care About” will be held at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 1895 Camino Del Rio South, Mission Valley. Carol LeBeau will be the keynote speaker. Cost is \$20 for caregivers; \$50 for professionals (six CEUs available). Conference is sponsored by AIS, AARP and Southern Caregiver Resource Center. Register by May 14; call (800) 827-1008.

MAY 27, THURSDAY

1 P.M.

“Memory and Aging” will be presented by Kathy Greene of Silverado Senior Living at the George G. Glenner Alzheimer’s Family Center in Escondido, 2017 Felicita Rd., Escondido. One free CEU is available. For information, call (760) 480-2282.

JUNE 7, MONDAY

10 A.M.

A benefit card party and luncheon for the South County Regional Service of Meals-On-Wheels will be held at the Community Congregational Church, 276 F St., Chula Vista. Cost is \$12. To attend or donate to this cause, call (619) 420-2782 no later than May 24.

JUNE 7 THROUGH AUG. 5

VARIOUS TIMES

Sharp Chula Vista is sponsoring a swim class for seniors to be held at the Southwest College pool. The class will meet four times a week; all levels of swimmers welcome. Cost is \$18 for the entire session. Registration required; call (619) 482-6565, ext. 3070.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The general meeting of the Aging & Independence Services Advisory Council is scheduled for 1 p.m. Monday, May 10, at Aging & Independence Services, 9335 Hazard Way, Kearny Mesa. Meetings are open to the public.

CA SENIOR LEGISLATURE

The San Diego CSL meets at 10 a.m. on the second Monday of the month at AIS. To confirm, call (760) 749-8311.