

AGING & independence

August 2005

Measuring Our Successes

BY PAMELA B. SMITH

DIRECTOR, AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

The woman was desperate. She felt deeply alone, that she could die in her apartment...by her own hand. Instead, contact from Senior Team social worker Charlotte Hajec and Supervisor Nancy Garcia-Drew "made all the difference," she said later. "(They) might have kept me from committing suicide. I would like to share that there are no words to express how much they helped."

In another situation, a daughter's mother was rapidly declining in health. The older woman's wish: to go home from the hospital, not back to the nursing facility. "She said that she didn't want to die in that hospital. I had no idea it would be so soon on losing her," said the daughter. Our care manager Arnold Ashley come to the hospital on his day off and made sure the woman got her wish. "After getting my mother home, she only lived one day," the daughter said, "but we did get her home. I can't thank Arnold enough."

The disabled man stayed in his apartment all day and night. He barely had money for food. APS workers Carol Castillion-Solorio and Vicky Rivero helped the man get Supplemental Security Income and Medi-Cal. And he enjoyed their visits. "I will be thinking of you both and asking



APS SOCIAL WORKER CAROL CASTILLION-SOLORIO TALKS WITH A CLIENT WHO WAS A VICTIM OF ELDER ABUSE.

God to give you the joy and comfort you have so generously given to others," he said.

When people ask, "What does AIS do?" it is a privilege to tell them about people our folks have met and helped. Not only did we help, but we rescued, we made wishes come true, and we provided hope. That's what we do.

When corporations write their annual reports, they point to the bottom line of fiscal savings. As a County department of Health & Human Services Agency, we are also frugal with our \$255 million annual budget, as we taxpayers would want. But our bottom line includes the human benefits for the dollar.

The three clients/families mentioned above were among thousands of people assisted by AIS this

past fiscal year. We received many notes, emails and phone calls this past year, thanking us for exceptional service.

A veteran writes: "I can say without a doubt that Mike (Schuster, with the Vista Veterans Services office) has done more for me in the last two years than I was able to get at my previous Chicago address. The retirement years for my

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wife and I will be better, for which I can thank you and Mike.”

An IHSS client: “After answering many questions about my (disabled) sister and discussing her situation, my stress and feelings of hopelessness were completely taken away by (IHSS social worker) Sara Cooper. Many times we go about our busy day in such a hurry, however some people make an impact and I want you to know that Ms. Cooper is one of those special ones.”

A Feeling Fit Club participant: “Climbing stairs, like a well-fit individual because of the exercises, is a grand result. These professionally conducted classes have brought about the emotional and physical well-being of many senior citizens.”

As we tally our successes for Fiscal Year 2004-05, we might talk about numbers and programs, but we continue to focus on people.

The following are a few highlights from the last 12 months:

- Began construction on the new Edgemoor.
- AIS Call Center received nearly 67,000 calls this year.
- Veterans Services office retained the distinction of being the most productive such program in California, holding this top position for seven straight years.
- Partnered with the District Attorney’s office and to create the first Consumer Protection Day.
- Increased the percentage of IHSS clients served by the federally funded Personal Care Services Program
- PA/PG Personal and Real Property auctions totaled more than \$12 million.
- No more than 10 percent of APS cases with substantiated abuse have been re-referred within six months.
- The Long Term Care Ombudsman program investigated more than 1,873 cases this year and performed assessments on nearly 676 licensed facilities.
- AIS submitted the four-year Area Plan; cited as most comprehensive, integrated service plan in state; incorporated large stakeholder feedback from public hearings.
- Successfully managed the flu hotline, responding to a first-day response of 3,000 calls compared to the historical average of 22 calls; staffing went up from 3 to 12.
- Implemented the Legacy Corps program, pairing of foster youth with active older adults to provide respite services for caregivers.
- More than 2,300 participants attended this year’s Vital Aging Conference and rated it highly.
- The number of RSVP volunteers grew by 30 percent



OMBUDSMAN VOLUNTEERS JUDITH GENETTE, LEFT, AND FRAN NASH JOIN COORDINATOR SUSAN POLLOCK AT THE APRIL RECOGNITION LUNCHEON.

over last fiscal year. They’ve been helped to find opportunities that match their special skills and interests.

· Conducted three annual AIS volunteer recognition events, including the advisory board luncheon (AIS, IHSS, RSVP and Veterans boards); RSVP luncheon for more than 650 volunteers; and the Ombudsman luncheon for more than 200 volunteers.

· Intergenerational Games were held in South Bay and East County. Teams were made up of one student and one active older adult who were partnered for the entire event.

· Awarded 11 Caregiver OTO contracts worth more than \$239,000 for new, innovative caregiver programs.

· Formed the East County Elder Abuse Council with the District Attorney’s office.

· Coordinated, in conjunction with Public Health, the National Public Health Week, “Empowering Ameri-

cans to Live Stronger and Longer” with events held throughout the county.

· AIS Outreach & Education Team members completed more than 200 presentations to the community.

· The Aging Summit report was sent to the Board of Supervisors and regional action networks; held an Aging Summit follow-up event and presented findings.

· Installed the Q system that is being used by contractors and AIS to meet California Department of Aging reporting requirements. ▲

TIME TO ENTER THE SENIOR OLYMPICS

Join hundreds of other older adult athletes for the Senior Olympics to be held Sept. 9 through 25 at various sports venues. There will be 20 different categories of events from the traditional sports seen at the Athens games, such as swimming and track and field, to the more unusual such as billiards and ballroom dancing. There are individual, pair and team events. About half of the competitors are younger than 60 and half are older. Men still outnumber women, but women are catching up.

The early bird registration deadline for this year’s Senior Olympics is Wednesday, Aug. 24; cost is \$35 regardless of the number of sports entered. After this date, the cost goes up to \$50, with a final entry deadline of Sept. 1. For more information about the Senior Olympics, call (619) 226-1324, or check the Web site: www.sdseniorgames.org. ▲

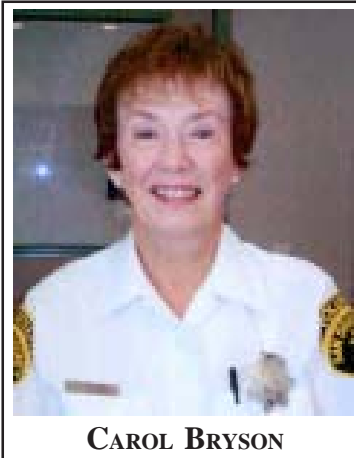
HONORING



RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Carol Bryson, nominated by Don Agostino, Senior Volunteer Patrol Administrator for the San Marcos Sheriff's Station, is our RSVP Volunteer of the Month.



CAROL BRYSON

Carol is the coordinator of the YANA (You Are Not Alone) program for the San Marcos Sheriff's Station. She interviews prospective clients and, if they qualify, enrolls them in the program.

Carol calls the clients to let them know someone is concerned about their welfare. Carol also visits the clients while on patrol, looking for unsafe conditions in their environment. Taking a few minutes to talk with the clients helps provide the social connections they need. Carol knows how to go the extra mile. Recently, she brought a client avocados from her avocado grove.

Congratulations, Carol. Your efforts truly make a difference.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Public, nonprofit and health agencies throughout the county continue to look for volunteers to help meet community needs. Potential volunteers can call RSVP at (858) 505-6399 for more information on these and other recent opportunities:

Out And About Encinitas needs drivers to take seniors to medical appointments and for help with errands. Current CA license, registration and insurance are required.

Neighborhoods For Kids East County is looking for volunteers in their "Way Station" foster homes. The "Way Station" is a homelike environment and safe haven designed to keep at-risk children out of abusive situations while remaining in their neighborhoods and schools. Opportunities include mentoring and transporting children to appointments.

Sharp Hospice Care needs volunteers to provide the following support services to terminally ill patients and their families in their homes and skilled nursing facilities throughout the County of San Diego: family assistance for caregivers, companionship, errands, shopping, outings, emotional support, household assistance, and aid with "End of Life" tasks.

County of San Diego Parks and Recreation needs volunteers adept at hiking, bicycling, or horseback riding to help patrol more than 300 miles of trails throughout the County. Parks that need volunteers include Sweetwater in Bonita, Sycamore Canyon/Goodan Ranch in Poway, Volcan Mountain in Julian, and Mt. Gower in Ramona.

I Love a Clean San Diego needs help with pollution prevention, neighborhood beautification, and beach clean-up and recycling projects.

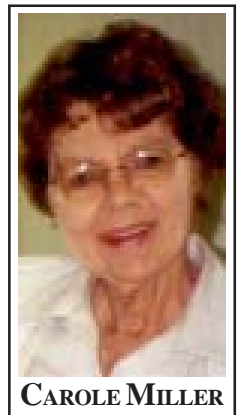
The RSVP office needs volunteers to make birthday phone calls to our volunteers. These areas need help: South Bay and East County (619 area code) and North County (760 and some in 858).

A BIG THANK YOU TO CAROLE!

For nine years, Carole Miller has been the voice of RSVP. Her job duties included answering the phone, handling correspondence, processing applications for new RSVP volunteers, maintaining database records, and assisting with the annual volunteer recognition brunch. Carole knows many of our volunteers, several staff at the RSVP worksites (we call them "stations"), and much of our local RSVP history.

Carole works through the Community Options Senior Community Services Employment Program and has been assigned to RSVP since 1996. To comply with program requirements, Carole must now be transferred to another worksite.

We will miss her enormously and wish her the very best. Her contributions are innumerable and she has really made a difference.



CAROLE MILLER

MORE FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION

Last November, San Diego County voters approved an extension of TransNet, the half-cent tax for transportation projects and services. The extension, which goes into effect in July 2008, includes additional funding for transportation services for seniors. One of the TransNet programs will be a mini-grant program to support specialized senior transportation services in local jurisdictions.

The mini-grant program will yield about \$1 million a year when the program begins in 2008. Over the next several months, SANDAG will be developing a process for allocating this funding. The intent will be to use the mini-grants to supplement resources already provided in various localities. The number of available mini-grants and the maximum level of funding for any one grant has not been determined. Grantees must bring a secure financial and resource commitment to their programs to ensure ongoing success.

If you have questions about the mini-grant program or any of the existing senior transportation programs, contact Lydia Callis of SANDAG at (619) 699-7330. ▲

ASSISTANCE FOR HOMEOWNERS, RENTERS

The filing period for the Homeowner and Renter Assistance programs administered by the State Franchise Tax Board (FTB) began last month and runs through Oct. 15.

The homeowner assistance program allows a once-a-year payment to qualified persons based on part of the property taxes paid on their homes. A "home" is not just a house, but a condo or mobile home. Eligible homeowners may receive up to 139 percent of the property taxes paid in 2004 on the first \$34,000 of the full value of the home.

To qualify, you must be at least age 62 or blind or disabled as of Dec. 31, 2004, and have a maximum total household income of \$39,699 or less. You also must have lived in the home that you owned as of Dec. 31, 2004, and be a U.S. citizen, designated alien or qualified alien when the claim is filed. Only one homeowner from each household is entitled to the assistance each year.

For seniors and disabled persons who don't own a home, the Renters Assistance program provides payments up to \$347.50 each year for eligible persons.

Applicants must be 62, or blind or disabled as of Dec. 31 of last year and pay at least \$50 in monthly rent. They must live in a qualified rented residence and be a U.S. citizen, designated alien or qualified alien when the claim is filed. The amount reimbursed from the State Franchise Tax Board depends on income. Persons with the top eligible household income of \$39,699 would receive the lowest level of assistance, \$15 for the year. Married couples are considered to

be one renter and can file only one claim. But each unmarried qualified renter can file his/her own claim.

Apply through the State Franchise Tax Board by downloading claim forms from www.ftb.ca.gov. You can also order by phone: (800) 868-4171. Processing may take up to 15 weeks from the date you mail your completed claim. ▲

COMMUNITY ACTION IN OUR REGIONS

Community Action Networks in four regions focus on determining needs for older adults and persons with disabilities and taking steps to meet those needs.

East County Action Network for Older Adults & Adults with Disabilities (ECAN) will not meet in August. The next meeting will be from 1 to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 21, at Wells Park Senior Center, 1153 E. Madison, El Cajon. Guest speaker will be Rudy Montemayor, District Manager, El Cajon & La Mesa Social Security Administration regarding the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan and applying for "extra help." Coordinator is Kathy Holmes-Hardy at (619) 401-3994, kathy.holmes@sdcounty.ca.gov.

The North County action network will also not be meeting in August, but will resume in September. The group meets at 2 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Vista Library, 700 Eucalyptus in Vista. Contact Marty Dare at (760) 754-5945, or email to martin.dare@sdcounty.ca.gov, or see the Web site at www.localcommunities.org/lc/atf.

The San Diego Community Action Network meets from 10:30 a.m. to noon the last Tuesday of each month at the Balboa Park War Memorial, north Zoo parking lot. Contact Brian at (858) 505-6305 or brian.rollins@sdcounty.ca.gov.

The South County Action Network (SoCAN) meets from 9 to 10:30 a.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the AIS South Bay office, 780 Bay Blvd., Suite 200, Chula Vista. For more information, contact Anabel Kuykendall at (619) 476-6142 or www.localcommunities.org/lc/socan. ▲

LONG TERM CARE INTEGRATION UPDATE

The next Planning Committee meeting will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 14, at Point Loma Nazarene University's Mission Valley campus, 4007 Camino Del Rio South (room 206), San Diego. The preliminary recommended Acute and Long Term Care Integration (ALTCI) minimum requirements for care management, community and cultural responsiveness, provider network development, education and member services have been revised. Stakeholders are asked to review the recommendations and provide additional feedback to staff by Friday, Sept. 2. See <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/cnty/cntydepts/health/ais/lc/> or contact Evalyn Greb, (858) 495-5428. ▲

SHARE YOUR ACTIVITIES

Send calendar 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. You can also send an email to denise.nelesen@sdcounty.ca.gov

AUG. 9, TUESDAY

9 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

“Planning Ahead: A Legal and Financial Seminar” for families dealing with Alzheimer’s disease will be held at Silverado Senior Living, 335 Saxony Rd., Encinitas. Sponsored by the Foundation of the State Bar of California. Call (760) 753-1245 to register.

AUG. 9, TUESDAY

9:30 A.M.

A disaster preparedness program presented by the La Mesa Fire Department will be held at the La Mesa Adult Enrichment Center, 8450 La Mesa Blvd. RSVP at (619) 464-0505.

AUG. 9, TUESDAY

12:45 P.M.

“Medicare: New Drug Prescription Benefits” will be discussed by a Social Security representative at the College Avenue Senior Center, 4855 College Avenue, San Diego (located inside Beth Jacob Synagogue, near San Diego State University). For information, call Elissa Landsman at (619) 583-3300.

AUG. 17, WEDNESDAY

7 P.M.

“Immunity and Cancer” will be presented by Dr. Thomas Kipp, UCSD

Department of Medicine, at the university’s Garren Auditorium. Offered by the Sam & Rose Stein Institute for Research on Aging. For information on parking, call (858) 534-6299.

AUG. 18, THURSDAY

11 A.M. TO NOON

Do you live with dizziness or imbalance? Learn how to prevent falling during a free program by Sharp physical therapist Nicole Hill being presented at St. Peters by the Sea Lutheran Church, 1371 Sunset Cliffs, San Diego. Registration required; call (800) 827-4277.

AUG. 27, SATURDAY

10:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.

“I’ll Take the Gold Watch and You Can Keep the Rocking Chair,” featuring a discussion about second careers, will be held at the Civic Center Branch Library, 365 F St., Chula Vista. Call (619) 691-9774 for more information.

SEPT. 8, THURSDAY

10:30 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M.

Senior (50+) Employment & Volunteer Fair will be held at Norman Park Center, 270 F St., Chula Vista. For more information, call (619) 420-2782.

SEPT. 10, SATURDAY

7:30 A.M.

Memory Walk ’05, fundraiser for the local Alzheimer’s Association will be held in Balboa Park (corner of Park Boulevard and President’s Way). Registration begins at 6 a.m.; walk begins at 7:30. Bruce Bochy, San Diego Padres manager, is honorary walk chairman. Cost is \$40, sponsorships are suggested. Call (800) 272-3900, or go online: www.alzwalk.kintera.org.

SEPT. 12, MONDAY

9 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

First day of training for Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteers will be held at the County’s Training and Development office, 5201 Ruffin Rd. #G. The training will be held Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays through Oct. 3. Register ahead by calling Regina Bishop toll-free at (800) 640-4661.

SEPT. 12, MONDAY

9:30 A.M. TO 2:30 P.M.

“Balancing the Needs: Caregivers, Patients, Family,” a free seminar for caregivers and professionals will be held at Somerford Place, 1350 S. El Camino Real, Encinitas. Lunch provided. Contact Southern Caregiver Resource Center at (800) 827-1008.

SEPT. 22, THURSDAY

6 P.M.

Reading of the play “Vesta” that examines with warmth and humor a family’s struggle with end-of-life issues will be held at the Joan Kroc Theatre, 6845 El Cajon Blvd., La Mesa. Free admission and parking. Seats are limited. Call (858) 635-1224 to register.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Aging & Independence Services Advisory Council will not be meeting in August, but will resume at noon Monday, Sept. 12, at Aging & Independence Services, 9335 Hazard Way, Kearny Mesa. The meetings are open to the public.

CA SENIOR LEGISLATURE

The San Diego CSL will not meet in August, but will resume at 10 a.m. Sept. 12 at AIS.