

AGING & independence

February 2007

Full Speed Ahead for Our Programs

BY PAMELA B. SMITH

DIRECTOR, AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

We're zooming into the New Year on our great momentum from last year and our new ideas for better serving seniors and disabled persons in San Diego County. We continue to look for new ways to inspire older adults and others to strive for good health, mental stimulation and meaningful engagement in society.

We had barely popped the cork on 2007 when we had a successful kickoff of our Food for Thought program, which is a joint effort with the County Library that includes a col-

laboration with the City of Vista. The Vista library's community room was filled with older adults and others bending and twisting for an hour of yoga, followed by a gourmet boxed lunch. Twice a month (first and third Thursdays), there will be a special program at 11 a.m., followed by lunch and a chance to socialize with others. Using a library for our meal program is new to us, but the kickoff indicated that people enjoy this setting. After the lunch, participants were seen browsing the bookshelves. Libraries have been evolving into community centers, hubs for their neighborhoods, so we will likely expand Food for Thought to more



GETTING A KICK OUT OF THE NEW FOOD FOR THOUGHT PROGRAM

County Library branches this year.

Food for Thought is a wonderful blend of mental, physical and social interaction. The same goes for our Feeling Fit Clubs, which offer functional fitness exercises, many offered at nutrition sites before lunch. We have 25 Feeling Fit Clubs throughout the County.

This year, we are also adding another specialized fitness project, called A Matter of Balance. San Diego is one of five counties in the nation to receive funds from the federal Ad-

ministration on Aging for A Matter of Balance. We are partnering with Silver Age Yoga to offer a series of eight classes to older adults that will focus on strength, coordination and balance, plus fall prevention and other safety information. Not only can people be participants in these classes, they can sign up to be coaches in the program and receive training, probably in March. The classes themselves should be offered beginning in April or May. For more information about A Matter of Balance, call (858) 495-5500.

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Our big health-related event of the year will be our Vital Aging Conference on June 15 at the Town & Country Resort in Mission Valley. For the first time, we will also have a satellite event on the same date in North County. A major focus for Vital Aging this year will be on diabetes as that is a growing concern among older adults. Other topics include obesity, nutrition and fitness. Much of the planning for this event is still in process through our Health Promotions Committee, but we will keep you posted on developments along the way. Just save that date! If you want to learn more or contribute to the Vital Aging Conference in some way, contact Kristen Smith at **(858) 495-5061**.

We are continuing with our successful series of Meet the Pharmacist Days. AARP has been a key partner for these events. The next one is scheduled from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday, Feb. 23, at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center, 6401 Skyline Dr., San Diego. These events give participants a chance to talk one-on-one with a pharmacist and have their medication regimen evaluated. Several pharmacists volunteer their time so that seniors can ask questions they might not ask otherwise. Health talks are also presented and there are information booths. Free Vials of Life are available. To reserve, call **(619) 641-7020** by Feb. 21.

This year we welcome an increased partnership with banks and credit unions to fight financial elder abuse. Employees of financial institutions are now required to report any suspicion of potential financial elder abuse to Adult Protective Services or law enforcement. Bank tellers may ask more questions, but customers should know that those questions are for their protection. Our Outreach & Education Team members will continue to train bank and credit union employees countywide, plus we have information on our Network of Care Web site, www.sandiego.networkofcare.org/aging (Click "Abuse Prevention" button).

Speaking of financial abuse, the third annual Consumer Protection Day is scheduled for Saturday, March 24, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at a new exhibit hall at the Town & Country Resort and Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle North in Mission Valley. County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price and District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis will host the event in partnership with AIS, AARP, Elder Law & Advocacy, the

California Department of Consumer Affairs and Sharp HealthCare. Speakers and exhibitors will give tips on how to avoid being a victim of scams and fraud. Reservations are required through www.sharp.com/seniors or by calling **(800) 827-4277** between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Besides these special events, we're continuing to look for new ways to expand on our intergenerational programs. We see the great value of pairing older adults with youngsters in a variety of meaningful ways. If you are interested in learning more about these opportunities, contact our intergenerational coordinator, Judy Joffe at **(858) 505-6332**.

Our weekly radio show, "In Focus," with host Vickie Velasco, continues to spotlight issues and services that benefit older adults and others in our community. Tune in Saturdays from 10 to 11 a.m. on AM 1700. To hear archived shows, see www.sandiegoeldercare.com. Click "Elder Talk Radio" and go down to "In Focus."

Obviously, our many programs and services depend on the input and involvement of many agencies and individuals in our county. Our Community Action Networks (CANs) are great places to come together and share ideas on needs and take action for solutions to aid older adults and persons with disabilities. Make a resolution to get involved this year:

The San Diego Community Action Network (SanDieCAN) meets from 10:30 a.m. to noon the last Tuesday of each month at the War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Dr., San Diego. For more information, call Brian Rollins at **(858) 505-6305**; www.localcommunities.org/lc/sandican

The East County Action Network meets from 1 to 3 p.m. the third Wednesday of each month at Wells Park, 1153 E. Madison, El Cajon. Call Kathy Holmes-Hardy at **(619) 401-3994**, or see www.EastCountyActionNetwork.org.

The South County Action Network meets from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the San Diego County Library, Bonita-Sunnyside Branch, 4375 Bonita Rd., Bonita. Contact Anabel Kuykendall, **(619) 476-6142**, or see www.localcommunities.org/lc/socan.

The North County Action Network meets from 1 to 3 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1370 San Marcos Blvd., Room 100, in San Marcos. For additional information about this action network, contact My Linh Tran at **(760) 754-5945**; www.localcommunities.org/lc/atf ▲

MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW:
MARCH 24
CONSUMER PROTECTION DAY
TOWN & COUNTRY RESORT HOTEL
SEE WWW.SHARP.COM/SENIORS
OR CALL (800) 827-4277

SAVE THE DATE:
JUNE 15
VITAL AGING CONFERENCE
TOWN & COUNTRY RESORT HOTEL

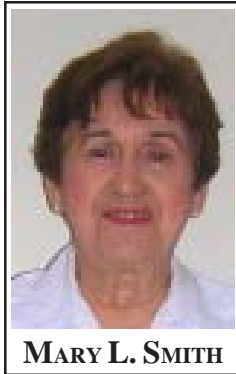
HONORING



RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Mary L. Smith, nominated by Don Agostino, administrator of the San Marcos station of the San Diego Sheriff Senior Volunteer Patrol, is our RSVP Volunteer of the Month. Mary has been a member of the San Marcos SVP for 12 years. When it comes to SVP activities, Mary "does it all." Some of her duties include: administrative assistant, taking monthly meeting notes, coordinating the Saturday patrol, going on weekly patrol, working front counter duty, assisting with scheduling, fingerprinting, coordinating scam presentations, and being a member of the honor guard. Congratulations, Mary. Your efforts truly make a difference in North County.



MARY L. SMITH

NEW SITE HAS MANY VOLUNTEER NEEDS

San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District, 2850 Via Orange Way in Spring Valley, is initiating a new volunteer program. RSVP's newest volunteer station is recruiting



for the following jobs: fire prevention assistant, data entry and program development, accounts receivable, customer service, receptionist. This is an opportunity to be involved on a volunteer basis in the

frontline of community protection and service. If you want a volunteer opportunity that helps to make a difference in East County, call RSVP at (858) 505-6399.

LAW ENFORCEMENT VOLUNTEER EXPO

The San Diego Regional Law Enforcement Volunteer Coordinator Training and Volunteer Expo will be held March 22 and 23 at Marina Village Conference Center in San Diego. Training for coordinators will be March 22 from 8 a.m.

to 4:30 p.m. The Volunteer Expo will be March 23 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Information, registration and maps can be found on website <http://members.cox.net/expo2007>. If you do not have computer access, call Pete Zajda at (619) 531-1507. Registration is limited for both days, so respond as soon as possible.

WOMAN OF THE YEAR IN EDUCATION

Long-time AIS and RSVP volunteer Lois French was among seven women leaders honored last October by San Diego East County Chamber of Commerce. The Fourth Annual Women in Leadership Luncheon paid tribute to dynamic women who have demonstrated exemplary character, integrity, and leadership in the fields of art and culture, business, education, government, healthcare and non-profit. Lois French was the recipient in the education category. We applaud you, Lois. We are also grateful for over 26 years that Lois has given in service to AIS and RSVP.



LOIS FRENCH

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Public, nonprofit and health agencies seek volunteers in their communities. Potential volunteers can call RSVP at (858) 505-6399 for information on these and other opportunities:

O'Farrell Community School in San Diego needs mentors for its "Project Live" program. Mentors will work with middle school students whose parents are incarcerated.

KPBS is recruiting volunteers for its annual membership campaigns. The TV campaigns are held March, June, August and December. The radio campaigns are held February, April and October. Volunteers will have the chance to meet KPBS on-air personalities, and take a short tour.

Meals-on-Wheels Greater San Diego, Inc. needs volunteers to deliver meals to seniors. Deliveries take around two hours and volunteers may serve once or twice a month. Meal pick-up sites are located throughout San Diego County.

VOLUNTEER TO BE AN OMBUDSMAN

Our Long-Term Care Ombudsman program is looking for volunteers to help safeguard the rights of residents in nursing homes and board and care facilities. A free training course for volunteer ombudsmen will begin in March, with an orientation about the program this month.

Ombudsman volunteers advocate for the quality of life and care for long-term care residents. They maintain a regular presence in more than 675 skilled nursing facilities and residential care facilities for the elderly in San Diego County.

Volunteers must successfully complete a 40-hour training course, 10 hours of fieldwork and be available five hours per week to be recommended for state certification as a Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

To learn more, attend an orientation on either Feb. 28 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. or March 1 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Both will be held at AIS, 9335 Hazard Way in Kearny Mesa.

The training will be held on from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays between March 12 and March 27 at the County's Training & Development office, Suite G, 5201 Ruffin Road, San Diego.

For additional information, call (858) 560-2507 or toll-free at (800) 640-4661. ▲

MEDICARE UPDATE

There are some changes to the Medicare benefit for this year, says Jennifer Duncan, director of the local Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP).

Through March 31, Medicare Advantage (HMO) members can review their current health plan and compare with other choices, such as the new Medicare Advantage Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plans now offered locally. There are also two new choices within the Medicare Advantage plans, called "private fee for service" plans and "Medicare Savings Accounts." (HMO members who have Medi-Cal cannot join these new plan options.) As always, HMO members can also consider changing to other HMOs or returning to Original Medicare plans and other options should they determine that another combination would work better for them. This enrollment period will "lock in" your choice for the rest of the year. HMO members cannot make any changes after this period, with rare exceptions.

Medicare has eliminated the 2007 late-enrollment penalty for low-income beneficiaries eligible for Social Security's extra help subsidy for the Part D prescription drug benefit, even if the beneficiary failed to sign up by the program's initial deadline. Those who qualify for the low-income subsidy can join a prescription drug plan any time throughout 2007. If they do not enroll on their own, Medicare will en-

roll them in a prescription drug plan.

Persons who did not receive their Part D plan's notice to advise them of the 2007 changes by the Nov. 15, 2006, due date, may be receiving another letter telling them they have until Feb. 14 to decide whether to stay with their current Part D plan or select another plan.

If you need help with Medicare options, call HICAP toll-free to set up a free appointment: (800) 434-0222. ▲

TRANSPORTATION HEARINGS SCHEDULED

Outreach sessions to hear from the public and agencies about public transit needs for seniors, disabled persons and low-income persons are being coordinated by SANDAG and will begin this month. SANDAG plans to create a coordinated plan on the priorities for transportation funding to assist these populations. Your input is welcome.

Feb. 26: For non-transportation agencies from noon to 2 p.m. at the NCTD Board Room, 810 Mission Ave., Oceanside.

Feb. 27: For non-transportation agencies from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Caltrans, Gallegos Room, 4050 Taylor St., San Diego.

Feb. 27: For public from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at Caltrans.

Feb. 27: For agencies that provide transportation from 3 to 5 p.m. at Caltrans.

Feb. 28: For the public from noon to 2 p.m. at NCTD.

Feb. 28: For transportation agencies from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at NCTD.

March 1: For both the public and all agencies from noon to 2 p.m. at the Julian Library, 2133 Fourth St., Julian.

For more information or to provide your input if you are unable to attend a meeting, contact Danielle Kochman at dko@sandag.org, or call (619) 699-1921. ▲

LONG TERM CARE INTEGRATION UPDATE

The next Planning Committee meeting for the Long Term Care Integration Project is 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 14, at Point Loma Nazarene University Mission Valley, 4007 Camino del Rio South, San Diego. Heather Johnson-LaMarche will discuss the success of the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Massachusetts in supporting the integration of philosophies between the aging and disability communities. Heather's expertise will help further San Diego's ADRC efforts under the new supplemental grant that is held in partnership with the California Department of Aging, Aging & Independence Services and Access to Independence (formerly the Access Center). Public is invited. Lunch will be served; RSVP to Evalyn.Greb@sdcounty.ca.gov or call (858) 495-5428. ▲

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.

FEB. 6, TUESDAY

10 TO 11:30 A.M.

Financial and Legal Wellbeing Workshop is being presented by the Parkinson's Disease Association of San Diego. For more information, including location, call **(858) 273-6763**.

FEB. 8, THURSDAY

11 A.M. TO NOON

"Healthy Eating for One or Two," will be offered at St. Peter's by the Sea Lutheran Church, 1371 Sunset Cliffs, San Diego. A Sharp HealthCare dietitian will provide tips for persons who live alone and don't want to fuss much with meal preparation. Reservations required; **(800) 827-4277**.

FEB. 10, SATURDAY

1 P.M.

A program on how to get your "Letter to the Editor" published will be presented at the next meeting of the Older Woman's League (OWL) to be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4190 Front St. (across from UCSD Medical Center). Anne Hoiberg, president of the National League of American Pen Women, California South, will be the presenter. For more information, call **(619) 645-8575**.

FEB. 15 AND MARCH 1

11 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

The new "Food for Thought" program continues twice a month at the Vista branch of the Country Library, 700 Eucalyptus Ave., Vista. The program, co-sponsored by AIS and the County Library, pairs an hourlong program followed by a gourmet lunch. The Feb. 15 program is an award-winning movie about penguins, and the March 1 program is yoga. Registration required for lunch; call **(760) 726-1340, ext. 1531**.

FEB. 22, THURSDAY

6 P.M.

"Living to 100: Red Wine & Dark Chocolate," a free talk on common misconceptions about heart disease, will be held at the Schaezel Center at Scripps Memorial Hospital, 9888 Genesee Ave., La Jolla. For more information or to register, call **(800) 727-4777**. Parking is free.

FEB. 23, FRIDAY

1 TO 3 P.M.

Meet the Pharmacist Day, sponsored by AIS and AARP, will be held at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center, 6401 Skyline Dr., San Diego. Bring your questions and your medications and talk with a pharmacist, plus enjoy presentations on fall prevention, nutrition and the wise use of medications. Receive a free Vial of Life. Reservations required; call **(619) 641-7020** by Feb. 21.

FEB. 28, WEDNESDAY

1 TO 2:30 P.M.

An orientation for potential Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteers will be held at AIS, 9335 Hazard Way in the Kearny Mesa area. Persons who can-

not make this class can sign up for another one to be held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 1, at the same location. Ombudsman volunteers advocate for residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. For more information, call **(800) 640-4661**.

MARCH 1, THURSDAY

12:45 TO 1:45 P.M.

The Mt. Miguel Covenant Village Men's Chorus will perform at the College Avenue Community Adult Center, 4747 College Ave., San Diego. For more information, call **(619) 582-7222**.

MARCH 15, THURSDAY

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

32nd annual Senior Citizen Talent Show, involving seniors age 50 and older, will be held at the War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Dr. in Balboa Park. Seniors can apply to perform as professional or amateur contestants in different talent categories, such as instrumental, vocal, dance, variety or group performance. For more information or to register, call **(619) 236-6905**. People are also invited to attend the show for free. Lunch will be served at noon. Cost is \$3 if purchased by March 12, or \$5 at the door.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon Monday, Feb. 12, 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.