

AGING & independence

Saluting Older Americans, Healthy Options

BY PAMELA B. SMITH

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For 44 years, our nation has paused to honor older Americans during May. During this special month, the ongoing contributions of older citizens are highlighted with a national proclamation, plus activities and events planned in communities across the U.S.

AIS is joining again with the County Library this month to salute older Americans. Each of the branch libraries will be presenting separate programs and materials that honor our elders, plus provide opportunities for them to continue to contribute to and enjoy their communities.

Some branches will have computer classes for seniors, others will offer yoga and other exercises, still others will have special talks or events.

An example will be a "Health Matters!" program to be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Thursday, May 17, at the El Cajon Ronald Reagan Community Center and El Cajon Branch Library, 198 E. Douglas Ave., El Cajon. This program will include workshops on fall prevention, nutrition and diabetes, plus balance classes and health screenings. The free event will also include healthy snacks. No RSVP required.

Coincidentally, the theme for Older Americans Month 2007 is "Older Americans: Making Choices for a Healthier Future." Besides tying in so well with some of the special



programs at the libraries, this theme ties in well with many AIS programs, including our June 15 Vital Aging Conference, our biggest event this year. Each Vital Aging Conference focuses on promoting healthy choices as we get older, ways that individuals can positively affect their own quality of life.

This year, the Vital Aging Conference is targeting nutrition and fitness and their impact on obesity and diabetes. The incidence of obesity among older adults is increasing, just as it is with children. Obesity is strongly linked with diabetes, which can severely

impact one's health and daily functioning.

Sadly, 21 percent of all persons over age 60 have diabetes. And Mexican-Americans are almost twice as likely to have diabetes as non-Hispanic whites. Our keynote speaker for this year's Vital Aging Conference is Edward James Olmos, a prominent actor and humanitarian who is the national spokesperson for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation.

The Vital Aging Conference will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday, June 15, at two locations: Town & Country Hotel in San Diego and the California Center for the Arts, Escondido. Edward James Olmos's speech will be presented

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live at the Town & Country and simulcast to North County. Each site will have exhibitors and speakers on nutrition, fitness, obesity and diabetes. Limited transportation available.

Both sites are making a special appeal to family caregivers to attend the conference. Respite care is available for caregivers; indicate the need for this aid when registering.

Reservations are required for the Vital Aging Conference. Cost for San Diego is \$15, plus \$5 if you plan to park at the Town & Country. For North County, the cost for the conference is \$5, with no charge to park. The cost includes lunch and a light breakfast. For reservations; call (800) 827-4277 or see www.sharp.com/seniors.

If you are interested in finding out about the special Older Americans Month programs at the County Library branches, see www.sdcl.org and look under "Calendar of Events" for May, or call (858) 694-2415 to get the phone number for the branch nearest you. Here's a partial listing:

ALPINE BRANCH LIBRARY:

Elderhostel: A non-profit travel organization for those ages 55 and older offers in-depth learning adventures for every interest and ability. *Thursday, May 10, 6 p.m.*

BONITA-SUNNYSIDE BRANCH

Elderhostel: Pre-registration is required; contact the branch. *Friday, May 18, 2007, 2 p.m.*

CARDIFF-BY-THE-SEA BRANCH

Gentle Yoga for Seniors: *Wednesdays, 3 p.m.*

Storytime with Harlynn Geisler: A program for families, "Wise, Witty, or Wacky: Folktales about Seniors." *Saturday, May 19, 10:30 a.m.*

CASA DE ORO BRANCH LIBRARY

Coffee and Conversation Book Discussion: Contact branch for topic, (619) 463-3236. *Friday, May 3, 10:30 a.m.*

DEL MAR BRANCH LIBRARY

Scam Prevention: My Linh Tran from AIS will talk on preventing fraud. Registration recommended; contact the branch. *Thursday, May 24, 11 a.m.-noon*

DESCANSO BRANCH LIBRARY

Walking Group: Starts from the Library. *Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays, 9 a.m.*

Fraud Awareness Presentation for Seniors: *Wednesday, May 9, 11 a.m.*

EL CAJON BRANCH LIBRARY

Health Matters!: Workshops on fall prevention, nutrition and diabetes, as well as yoga, plus an information fair, library tours. Ronald Reagan Community Center and the El Cajon Library Community Room. *Thursday, May 17, 1-4 p.m.*

FALLBROOK BRANCH LIBRARY

Grandparents and Books: Grandpa Larry reads to children. *Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-noon.*

FLETCHER HILLS BRANCH LIBRARY

Elder Abuse: Kathy Holmes-Hardy from AIS talks on elder abuse. *Tuesday, May 8, 4 p.m.*

Grow Bolder – Not Older: Gordon Shields, 88-year-old champion of the "World Senior Games Hall of Fame" talks about cycling and his career. *Saturday, May 5, at 3 p.m.*

Storytime with Harlynn Geisler: "Wise, Witty, or Wacky: Folktales about Seniors." *Saturday, May 19, 3 p.m.*

IMPERIAL BEACH

Computing for Seniors: *Monday, May 21, 10:30 a.m.*

JACUMBA

Computer Classes for Seniors: Structured specifically for those ages 55 and older.

Senior Get Together!: Seniors and retirees meet to socialize. *Wednesdays, 10 a.m.*

Crime Prevention: Paula Dickenson from the Sheriff's Department talks about safety. *Thursday, May 10, 1 p.m.*

Exercise and Meditation for Seniors: gentle, calming exercises and meditation. *Thursday, May 17, 2 p.m.*

JULIAN BRANCH LIBRARY

Fitness in a Chair: Exercises done in a chair or using one for balance. In the Community Room. *Fridays, 9 a.m.*

LA MESA BRANCH LIBRARY

Services for Seniors: Kathy Holmes-Hardy of Aging & Independence Services talks about social and nutritional services for older adults. *Tuesday, May 15, 10:30 a.m.*

Looking Good at Any Age: Makeup artist shows how women over 50 can use makeup to enhance their beauty. *Tuesday, May 22, 10:30-11:30 a.m.*

How to Find Lasting Love ... at Any Age: Dating/relationship coach Annie Ory talks about the dating process. *Saturday, May 26, 10:30 a.m.*

LAKESIDE BRANCH LIBRARY

Introduction to the Internet for Seniors: Register at the Reference Desk; requires a San Diego County Library Card and PIN. *Thursdays, May 3, 17 & 31, 9:15-10 a.m.*

Movies to Enjoy with Grandchildren: Grandparents and grandchildren are invited. Popcorn provided. *May 9 & 16, 6 p.m.; and May 12 & 19, 1 p.m.*

LEMON GROVE BRANCH LIBRARY

Genealogy Classes: Susie Pentico teaches beginner and intermediate genealogy. *Wednesdays, May 2 & 16, 6 p.m.*

PINE VALLEY BRANCH LIBRARY

Adult Scrapbooking: *Saturday, May 5, 9 a.m.-noon.*

Maximize Your Memory: Presented by the Alzheimer's Association. *Saturday, May 5.* Check with branch for time.

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HONORING



RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Natale Balistreri, nominated by Bill Gunter, administrator of the Alpine Sheriff's Senior Volunteer Patrol, is our RSVP Volunteer of the Month. Natale has served with the Volunteer Patrol for more than nine years and has contributed 6,000 hours. He works three six-hour shifts per week and is always the first to volunteer for extra duty, such as traffic control for parades. He is very dedicated and truly an asset to this group. Congratulations, Natale. Your efforts make a huge difference in East County.



NATALE BALISTRERI

RSVP BRUNCH NEWS

RSVP members with more than 50 reported volunteer hours during 2006 will receive an invitation to be our guest for a beef tenderloin meal at the Town & Country Grand Exhibit Hall on May 17, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Those invited may bring a guest for a \$35 fee to cover the cost of the meal. Watch your mailbox for your personal invitation and send in your reservation card by the due date of May 4. We are eager to thank you for your many hours of service.

LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLES ON DISPLAY

San Diego Automotive Museum in Balboa Park is one of our RSVP workstations for volunteers. Through May 27, the museum is hosting a show on law enforcement vehicles of the last century.

Included in the exhibit are a vintage paddy wagon, a 1941 cruiser from the Oceanside Police Department, a military police vehicle, and the Gotham City Police Car (1950 Studebaker) from the movie "Batman Forever."

Memorabilia related to law enforcement will be included in the show, as well as annals from the entertainment industry ("Car 54, Where Are You?" and "CHiPS").

Regular hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Adults are \$8, seniors \$6, and children under 6 are free. The museum is located at 2080 Pan American Plaza, Balboa Park. The phone number is (619) 231-2886, and the website is www.sdautomuseum.org.

AIS VOLUNTEER EXTRAORDINAIRE

Each year, the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors pays tribute to volunteers from various county departments. Vickie Velasco was honored last month as the Aging & Independence Services Volunteer of the Year.

Since her retirement in 2003, Vickie has continued to give back to the community by volunteering 25 to 30 hours a week in various capacities, as a mentor and life-skills coach for foster youth, Feeling Fit exercise program instructor for seniors, and cooking instructor for at-risk youth.

Vickie's tireless dedication to serving others has undoubtedly improved the quality of life for those she serves, including all generations in the broad San Diego Community.



KUDOS TO AIS'S TOP VOLUNTEER -- VICKIE VELASCO (WITH CERTIFICATE) IS SURROUNDED BY SUPERVISORS DIANNE JACOB, BILL HORN, CHAIRMAN RON ROBERTS, AIS DIRECTOR PAM SMITH, RSVP COORDINATOR SANDY LAWRENSEN AND SUPERVISOR GREG COX.

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POWAY BRANCH LIBRARY

Grandparents and Books: Grandparents read to children. *Grandpa Bob, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-noon; Grandpa Marty, Thursdays, 11 a.m.-noon*

RAMONA BRANCH LIBRARY

Grandparents and Books: Grandparents read to children. *Thursdays, 11 a.m.-noon*

RANCHO SAN DIEGO BRANCH LIBRARY

Senior Theatre of San Diego presents Dr. Jim Soules: In the Community Room. For mature audiences. *Friday, May 4, 2:30-4:30 p.m.*

Seniors' Chat: Seniors discuss current events, books, or anything else. In the Seminar Room. *Fridays, May 11 & 24, 10:30-11:30 a.m.*

Financial Advice: Ways to prevent financial abuse. Community Room. *Wednesday, May 23, 10:30-11:15 a.m.*

RANCHO SANTA FE BRANCH

Ginny's Knitting Club: *May 7 & 21, 10-11 a.m.*

SAN MARCOS BRANCH LIBRARY

Chair Yoga: *Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.*

Alzheimer's Disease Awareness: A series from the Alzheimer's Association. *10:30-11:30 a.m.* Maximize Your Memory, *May 10*; Understanding Alzheimer's, *May 17*; Living a Brain-Healthy Lifestyle, *May 24*

SANTEE BRANCH LIBRARY

Memory Maximization: Tips and tricks to increase memory power. *Thursday, May 17, 6-7:30 p.m.*

SOLANA BEACH BRANCH LIBRARY

Senior Connections: *Thursday, May 31, 1 p.m.*

SPRING VALLEY BRANCH LIBRARY

Scrapbooking: Capture memories with scrapbooking. *Thursday, May 3, 11 a.m.-noon*

AIS Community Programs and Resources: *Tuesday, May 8, 11 a.m.-noon*

VALLEY CENTER BRANCH LIBRARY

Yoga for Beginners: *Tuesdays & Thursdays, 5 p.m.*

Web Wise Seniors: This weekly course instructs on basic Internet searches. *Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.*

Life's an Adventure, What's Next for You?: A talk on post-retirement options. *Thursday, May 17, 4 p.m.*

Coffee and Conversation: A pharmacist will teach "everything you wanted to know about prescription drugs, but were afraid to ask." *Saturday, May 19, 11 a.m.*

VISTA BRANCH LIBRARY

Genealogy Classes: Learn to trace your family tree. Beginners welcome. *Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m. (No class on Wednesday, May 23).* How and Where to Gather Information, *May 2*; Your Personal Ancestral File, *May 9*; Online Methods, *May 16*; Online Methods Continued, *May 30*

Food for Thought: A special program, plus a gourmet boxed lunch 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Lunch is a suggested \$3 donation for seniors and \$5 for others; reservations required: (760) 726-1340, ext. 1531. *Thursday, May 3: Elder Law & Advocacy; Thursday, May 17, Gentle Yoga.* ♣

PUBLIC TRANSIT ISSUES? LET US KNOW

The American Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that public transit systems be accessible to people with functional impairments. Both the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) and the North County Transit District (NCTD) monitor the accessibility of their services.

AIS participates in an ongoing review and examination of the transit system's ability to accommodate older consumers. We are interested in learning about public transportation barriers encountered by older adults in accessing buses, trolleys or trains.

If you are an older adult and have had a specific issue with public transit, mail details in writing to: Floyd Willis, AIS, 9335 Hazard Way, San Diego, CA 92123. ♣

JOIN A COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

There are four regional Community Action Networks throughout the County that focus on the issues and needs of older adults and persons with disabilities. Join in!

The San Diego Community Action Network (SanDi-CAN) 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 will not meet in May, but normally 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 to 3 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. Contact My Linh Tran at (760) 754-5945; www.localcommunities.org/lc/atf. ♣

LONG TERM CARE PROJECT UPDATE

The Long Term Care Integration Project will have its next Planning Committee meeting from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, May 9, at Point Loma Nazarene University, Mission Valley, 4007 Camino Del Rio S., San Diego, 92108. The discussion will focus on the Physician Strategy.

Call Evalyn Greb at (858) 495-5428 for more information, or log onto www.sdltcip.org. ♣

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 3, THURSDAY

8:30 A.M. TO 2:15 P.M.

“Aging: Planning and Coping Skills” will be held at the Point Loma Community Presbyterian Church Family Life Center, 2128 Chatsworth Blvd., San Diego. This free conference for family caregivers will discuss legal and other practical matters for families caring for older adults. Reservations required; call **(800) 827-4277**.

MAY 11, FRIDAY

10 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

Senior Health Fair will be held at the Santee Trolley Square, 9850 Mission Gorge Rd., Santee. There will be health screenings, resource information, entertainment and prizes. For more information, call **(619) 740-4214**.

MAY 16, WEDNESDAY

5:30 TO 6:30 P.M.

“Stroke Is a Brain Attack” will be held at the Grossmont HealthCare District Conference Center, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa. Neurologist Sherry Braheny will discuss emergency treatment for stroke and ways to prevent a stroke. Registration required; call **(800) 827-4277**.

MAY 17, THURSDAY

11 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

The Food for Thought program at the Vista Library, 700 Eucalyptus Ave. in Vista, will feature “Gentle Yoga” by Sherry Zak Morris of Yoga Vista. Yoga will also be the featured program for June 7. Both hourlong programs will be followed by lunch. Cost for the lunch is a suggested donation. Registration is required for the lunch; call **(760) 726-1340, ext. 1531**.

MAY 18, FRIDAY

10 A.M. TO NOON

Introduction to Computers class will be held at the Norman Park Center, 270 F St., Chula Vista. This class is for people with no computer experience. Registration required; **(619) 691-5086**.

MAY 24, THURSDAY

11 A.M. TO NOON

“Arthritis: Take Control” will be held at St. Peter’s by the Sea Lutheran Church, 1371 Sunset Cliffs, San Diego. Sandra Hayhurst with the Arthritis Foundation will talk about arthritis basics and how it can be treated and managed. Registration required; call **(800) 827-4277**.

MAY 24, THURSDAY

6 P.M.

“Do Women Need Different Care than Men?” will be presented at the Scripps Memorial Hospital Schaezel Center, 9888 Genesee Ave., La Jolla. Physicians will discuss women’s health care needs. To register, call **(800) 727-4777**.

JUNE 15, FRIDAY

9 A.M. TO 2 P.M.

Vital Aging Conference will be held at two sites: the Town & Country Resort Hotel, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego; and the California Center for the Arts, Escondido, 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido. Cost is \$15 in San Diego; \$5 in North County. Respite available for family caregivers. Reservations required; call **(800) 827-4277** or see www.sharp.com/seniors.

INTERGENERATIONAL GAMES MAY 30

The first Intergenerational Games for Central San Diego will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, May 30, at O’Farrell Community School, 6136 Skyline Dr., San Diego.

As with the previous Intergenerational Games in East County and South Bay, active older adults will be paired with students for a day of physical and educational games, including

basketball shoot, Frisbee golf and trivia.

What’s unique about these games is that the youngsters will be middle school students from Project Live, a program that provides special assistance to children whose parents are incarcerated.

To participate or for more information, contact Judy Joffe at **(858) 505-6332**, or send an email message to: judith.joffe@sdcounty.ca.gov. ▲

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon Monday, May 14, 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.