

AGING & independence

October 2016

Caregiving: It's a Man's Job, Too

BY ELLEN SCHMEDING

DIRECTOR, AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

“When a man is a caregiver, it means you have run out of women!” Alford Claiborne, 72, says with a laugh. Alford never expected to spend 13 years as his wife Rita’s caregiver. But in 2001, he was “blind-sided” when Rita was diagnosed with an early-onset form of Alzheimer’s disease. Rita, a middle and high school teacher, had always been the glue that held the family together. She was the one to care for the couple’s three children and manage the home front while Alford, an operations specialist during his 28-year career in the Navy, would spend months overseas.

But Rita’s ability to hold everything together started to fray. She had to take a leave of absence from work after misplacing some standardized tests. Medical assessments and a diagnosis soon followed. Alford suddenly found himself with a new title: “caregiver.”

At first, life wasn’t too different. Alford would do meal preparation and a few other tasks, but he was still able to continue his work as a shuttle driver. One day, however, he returned from work to find Rita staring blankly at the television. It wasn’t even turned on. At that moment he



ALFORD CLAIBORNE HOLDING A PICTURE OF HIS LATE WIFE, RITA

realized that Rita was going to require more care.

“I told my boss, ‘I’m done Friday.’ It was my turn to give back to Rita.”

Alford focused on keeping Rita happy and healthy. He would take her to appointments, assist her with medications, and ensure that her morale stayed high. He would encourage her to dance and listen to Motown, her favorite music genre. They traveled in their RV to Sedona, Albuquerque, and other points of interest across the country.

Alford was proactive in seeking information and resources to help him provide the best care for Rita and get the support he needed. Social workers at Alzheimer’s San Diego and Southern Caregiver Resource

Center provided a wealth of information. As the years went on and Rita’s condition deteriorated, he found himself needing a greater amount of outside support. Alford decided to take advantage of a local adult day health care program twice a week. “She needed to get a break from me, and me from her. She was glad to leave and glad to come home.”

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



COUNTY OF

SAN DIEGO

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

CAREGIVER WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

“*Holding a Family Meeting*” will be held on **Wednesday, October 5** from 10-11 a.m. at Southern Caregiver Resource Center, 3675 Ruffin Road, Suite 230, San Diego 92123. Create a care plan involving family members, friends, and providers and learn communication strategies to help you facilitate these discussions. To register, call: **(858) 268-4432**.

“*Home Safety*” will be held on **Friday, October 7** from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Escondido Adult School, 220 W. Crest Street, Escondido 92025. Learn to identify trouble spots in the home and methods to make the home safer for the care receiver. Obtain helpful community resources. To register, call: **(760) 521-9033**.

“*Cuidando al Cuidador/Spanish-Speaking Caregiver Conference*” will be held on **Thursday, October 20**

from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at St. Paul’s Plaza, 1420 East Palomar Street, Chula Vista 91913. Conferencia gratuita diseñada para personas cuidando de adultos con Demencia, Alzheimer’s, o algunas otras condiciones relacionadas. Habrá pláticas, mesas de recursos, clínica de vacunas contra la influenza, desayuno, almuerzo y rifa. Para registrarse llame al: **(800) 827-4277** o visite www.sharp.com/classes.

“*Caregiving at Home, How Do I Do This?*” will be held on Saturday, **October 29** from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Sharp Grossmont Hospital Brier Patch Campus, 9000 Wakarusa, Classroom 13/14, La Mesa 91942. Learn and practice the basics of caring for a loved one at home including transfers, personal care, proper body mechanics, and more from a registered nurse. Registration required. Call **(800) 827-4277** or register online at www.sharp.com/classes.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

Alford also linked with the Legacy Corps volunteer respite program for some much needed breaks. He would use his time to relax, take a trip to Seaport Village, or simply enjoy the ocean. These breaks allowed him to focus more fully on Rita’s needs.

Alford’s dedication to Rita did not go unnoticed. In 2014, he was recognized by the Alzheimer’s Association with the Courage & Hope Award for being a “selfless caregiver and Alzheimer’s Ambassador.”

Sadly, Rita lost her battle with Alzheimer’s disease in 2015.

Caregivers may experience a variety of emotions when their loved one dies. Feelings of pain and sadness are expected, but others such as relief may come as a surprise and perhaps even feel unacceptable. However, this often conflicting mix of emotions is considered to be a normal part of the grieving process.

By the end, Alford admits, “I was really tired. It got to where she couldn’t do a lot to help me help her.”

For the past year, Alford has been doing the important work of healing and reclaiming his own life. Although it has been difficult, he has found meaningful ways to fill his days such as by serving as a peer health coach to a local walking group for older adults. One of the best ways he has found to cope is to share what he has learned on his journey. Twice a month he facilitates a men’s support group through Alzheimer’s San Diego.

“Men don’t ask for help quick enough and don’t do much self-care,” he explains. “Self-care is the biggest thing...start with yourself and end with yourself.”

Looking back at his caregiving journey, Alford is proud of the care he provided his wife and can say with satisfaction, “She was happy for a long time.”

Join Alzheimer’s San Diego at their annual walk to raise awareness and funds for local families impacted by Alzheimer’s disease, as well as critical research for a cure. The San Diego walk will take place on **October 15** at 8 a.m. in Balboa Park and the North County walk on **October 22** at 4 p.m. at the Oceanside Pier. For more information on the walk, or to learn about free, local programs and resources for patients affected by Alzheimer’s disease and their caregivers, visit Alzheimer’s San Diego’s website: www.alzsd.org or call **(858) 492-4400**.

To learn more about free support services for caregivers, contact Southern Caregiver Resource Center at **(858) 268-4432** or www.caregivercenter.org.

Explore the steps the County is taking to support the search for a cure for Alzheimer’s disease, improve clinical care, and provide caregiver support, at www.sdalzheimersproject.org. ♠

BECOME A LEGACY CORPS VOLUNTEER

Legacy Corps is a national service program that provides companionship respite care to veteran and military families. Volunteers are matched with family caregivers and provide a much needed break for caregivers. Volunteers commit to 12 months of service and receive training, support, a stipend, and an educational award upon meeting the 450-hour commitment. For more information on this rewarding opportunity, call **(858) 505-6300** or email Brian.Rollins@sdcounty.ca.gov. ♠

HONORING



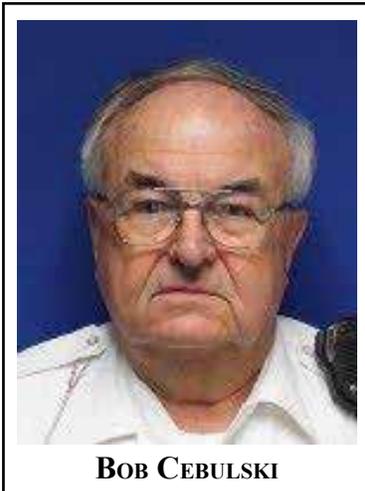
RSVP: RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

SVA: SENIOR VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Dedicated, efficient, and always showing up with a “can do” attitude are descriptions that only begin to capture the essence of this month’s volunteer of the month, Robert “Bob” Cebulski, a volunteer with SD Sheriff, Fallbrook, for 11 years.

Nominated by Sgt. Monica Sanchez and Volunteer Co-Administrator, Cindy Roark, Bob



BOB CEBULSKI

is an exceptional volunteer who knows how to motivate others. He is the lead trainer for new volunteers and compiles monthly patrol deployment schedules for close to 50 volunteers.

Bob’s diverse duties include managing the information technology (IT) training program and he has compiled a training manual to guide others on how to use the department’s Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. Additionally, he serves as the Tactical Team Leader who helps organize the volunteer teams should they be called out on Red Flag warnings or emergencies warranting assistance from patrol volunteers at any hour of the day or night. Bob is responsible for creating an extensive activity tracking system for the department’s YANA (You Are Not Alone) program, an initiative that assists isolated seniors by providing daily reassurance phone calls and weekly visits.

Bob is willing to take any patrol shift and looks out for the welfare of all the volunteers. He is the volunteer that is always there when you need him and has been recognized as Sheriff’s Volunteer of the Year. Besides his dedication to the Senior Volunteer Patrol, he utilizes his exceptional communication skills to teach computer classes at the senior center.

Fallbrook is very fortunate to have Bob as part of the team. Congratulations, Bob, and thank you for all of your valuable service!

HONORING EXCEPTIONAL VOLUNTEERS

Do you know an outstanding RSVP or SVA volunteer? Anyone can submit a nomination for an exceptional volunteer to be honored as Volunteer of the Month. Some of the qualities that are considered in evaluating nominations include: dedication, flexibility, willingness to take on extra responsibility, selflessness, being a team player, excellent communication, reliability, helpfulness, commitment, and contribution to the program.

Nominations go through a selection process and may be chosen for a current or future month. The process to nominate a volunteer is simple; either complete the nomination form or complete your own write-up that includes information on the volunteer site, volunteer’s name, your name and a description of the volunteer’s qualities and achievements. Call the Senior Volunteer Office at **(858) 505-6399** for a nomination form or to ask questions.

NEW VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Senior Volunteers in Action (SVA), Aging & Independence Services’ (AIS) new volunteer program, has added five new volunteer sites that will provide a greater choice of locations and activities for volunteers age 50 and over. These sites have diverse missions and a variety of opportunities to serve the community. Ronald McDonald House, Consumer Advocates for RCFE Reform (CARR), Resounding Joy, San Diego Canyonlands, and Chula Vista Garden Club are the new additions to the volunteer program. For more information, call **(858) 505-6399**.



CHULA VISTA GARDEN CLUB

If you are interested in gardening, Chula

Vista Garden Club is a place you will enjoy making a difference. The Club does many civic beautification projects, some of which include the Blue Star Memorial Garden, Veterans Park, Chula Vista Libraries and the Mosaic Community Garden. Their newest projects are with schools helping children to plant gardens. Call **(858) 505-6399** if you want to try out this adventure.

AGE-FRIENDLY UPDATE

Earlier this year, the County made the commitment to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities as well as focus on dementia friendly efforts. These initiatives involve a multi-year process of assessing needs, implementing a plan, and evaluating results. To build upon the feedback gathered at community forums in the spring, Aging & Independence Services will be conducting additional public feedback sessions throughout November and December. Information on dates and locations will be listed in the next edition of *Aging & Independence*. ♣

CHECK YOUR MOOD

The Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP) and other local organizations are offering free depression screenings and information during Check Your Mood Week, which falls **October 10 to 16**. During this week, county residents over the age of 18 have the opportunity to visit designated sites to receive a free, anonymous depression screening, and learn about the signs and symptoms of depression and other related topics.

Visit the CHIP website: <http://www.sdchip.org/news-events/calendar> for a list of participating sites, or call the Access and Crisis Line at **(888) 724-7240** for sites near you or to be screened over the phone. The Access and Crisis Line is available to provide help all year long, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. ♣

HEALTHIER LIVING AND DIABETES CLASSES

Healthier Living with Chronic Conditions: These interactive and goal-oriented workshops help people self-manage their physical/mental health conditions. The program consists of a workshop that meets 2½ hours per week for six weeks, led by two trained peer educators who use the tools they teach to manage their own health.

Oct. 7-Nov. 11 (Fridays, 1:00-3:30 p.m.) at UPAC/EMASS, 200 North Ash St., #100, Escondido 92027.

Oct. 20-Dec. 1 (Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m.) at the College Avenue Center, 6299 Capri Dr., San Diego 92120.

Clases en Español – Tomando Control de Su Salud:

Oct. 20-Dec. 1 (Jueves, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) at Spring Valley Library, 836 Kempton St., Spring Valley 91977.

The Diabetes Empowerment Education Program (DEEP™) is a six-week workshop, meeting weekly for two hours. This evidence-based workshop is hands-on, fun, and informative. Participants learn to make lasting changes in their lives to manage diabetes, eat well,

exercise, prevent complications and live a healthier life.

Oct. 11 – Nov. 22 (Tuesdays, 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.) at the 4S Ranch Library, 10433 Reserve Dr., San Diego 92127.

New classes are added regularly at locations throughout the county. Visit www.HealthierLivingSD.org, or call: **(858) 495-5500, ext 3**. Please leave a message; your call will be returned. ♣

GET CONNECTED TECHNOLOGY FAIR

The next Get Connected Fair, a free opportunity to learn more about technology and gadgets, will be held from 10 a.m. to p.m. on **Saturday, Oct. 22**, at OASIS, third floor of the Mission Valley Macy's clothing store, 1702 Camino del Rio North, San Diego 92108. Brief "Tech Talk" workshops on a variety of topics will be offered. Attendees will have the opportunity to "Ask the Experts" individual questions. Lunch included. To RSVP, call **(619) 881-6262** or visit www.sandiegooasis.org. ♣

GRANDPARENTS SYMPOSIUM

The South County Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and Relative Caregiver Symposium will be held on **Saturday, October 22** from 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. at Harborside Elementary, 681 Naples St., Chula Vista 91911. Lunch and childcare included with pre-registration. Spanish interpretation available. To register, call **2-1-1** or visit: www.211sandiego.org/grandparents. ♣

JOIN A COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

Four regional Community Action Networks focus on the issues and needs of older adults and persons with disabilities. They welcome your participation.

The San Diego Community Action Network (SanDi-CAN) meets from 10:30 a.m. to noon on the last Tuesday of each month at the War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Dr., San Diego. Contact Brian Rollins: **(858) 505-6305**.

The East County Action Network (ECAN) meets from 1 to 3 p.m. the third Wednesday of each month at the Renette Recreation Center, 935 S. Emerald Ave., El Cajon. Contact Loren Goldstein: **(619) 401-3994**.

The South County Action Network (SoCAN) meets from 1 to 3 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library, 4375 Bonita Rd., Bonita. Contact Anabel Kuykendall: **(619) 731-3140**.

The North County Action Network (NorCAN) meets from 1 to 3 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the San Marcos Senior Center, 111 Richmar Ave., San Marcos. For details: Matt Parcasio: **(858) 505-6435**. ♣

community

C A L E N D A R

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

This monthly calendar welcomes your contributions. Just send items by the 10th of each month preceding the issue date to: Sarah Jackson, editor, Aging & Independence Services, PO Box 23217, San Diego, CA 92193-3217. Or you can e-mail to: sarah.jackson@sdcountry.ca.gov.

OCTOBER 5, WEDNESDAY 9:30-10:30 A.M.

Learn about the signs and symptoms of depression, bipolar disorder, and anxiety disorders at the Grossmont Health Care District Conference Center, 9001 Wakarusa St., La Mesa 91942. RSVP suggested: **(800) 827-4277** or visit www.sharp.com.

OCTOBER 5, WEDNESDAY 3:30-6 P.M.

A series of talks on aging solutions will take place at St. Paul's Villas, 2340 Fourth Ave., San Diego 92101. Topics include: The Healthcare Maze; When Moving Makes Sense; Legal Documents Needed to Maintain Control. RSVP to Lizette at **(619) 239-6900**.

OCTOBER 8, SATURDAY 1-4 P.M.

Join students at Kellogg Elementary for an ice cream social and learn about upcoming events for older adults and grandparents at Kellogg Elementary, 229 E. Naples St. Chula Vista 91911. RSVP to **(619) 641-7020**. Bring a non-perishable food item to donate.

OCTOBER 11, TUESDAY 4:30-7 P.M.

A free, confidential "Check Your Mood" depression screening will be offered at the Crest Library, 105 Juanita Lane, El Cajon 92021. Local mental health resources will also be shared. For details: **(619) 442-7083**.

OCTOBER 13, THURSDAY 1:30-3 P.M.

An Introduction to the iPad/iPhone call will be held at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center, 4126 Executive Dr., La Jolla 92037. Two-session class with the second class on October 20. \$24. RSVP to Melanie Rubin: **(858) 362-1141**.

OCTOBER 15, SATURDAY 6-9 P.M.

"Dancing for Your Health" (Bailando Por Su Salud) will be held at the Loma Verde Recreation Center, 1420 Loma Lane, Chula Vista 91911. Enjoy dancing and light refreshments. RSVP to **(877) 926-8300**. Bring a non-perishable food item for the SD Food Bank.

OCTOBER 18, TUESDAY 5-7 P.M.

St. Paul's Senior Day Program is having its open house at 328 Maple St., San Diego 92103. Learn about the activities provided, meet current participants, and see the benefits. For more information, call **(619) 239-6900** or visit StPaulsSeniors.org.

OCTOBER 19, WEDNESDAY 9:30 A.M.-1 P.M.

A veteran resource fair will be held at Silverado Memory Care Center, 335 Saxony Rd., Encinitas 92024. Healthcare information, VA benefits enrollment, community resources, mu-

sic, and light refreshments. RSVP to **(800) 827-4277** or www.sharp.com.

OCTOBER 21, FRIDAY 9 A.M.-1 P.M.

A senior health and resource fair will be held at the First United Methodist Church Mission Valley, 2111 Camino Del Rio S., San Diego 92108. Workshops on Alzheimer's disease, eye health, and arthritis treatment. Resource tables and free continental breakfast. RSVP to beth.sdcco@gmail.com.

OCTOBER 22, SATURDAY 10 A.M.-3 P.M.

Get Connected Tech Fair, a free opportunity to learn more about tech gadgets and to have your questions answered, will be held at OASIS, 3rd floor of the Mission Valley Macy's clothing store, 1702 Camino del Rio North, San Diego 92108. Lunch included. To RSVP, call **(619) 881-6262** or visit www.sandiegooasis.org.

OCTOBER 26, WEDNESDAY 9 A.M.-2 P.M.

"Planning Ahead...Crucial Conversations" seminar will be held at the Balboa Park Club, 2150 Pan American Rd. West, San Diego 92101. Learn how to make informed health care planning decisions. Find out about the new California End of Life Options Act. Refreshments and light lunch provided. RSVP to **(619) 236-6905**.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon Monday, Oct. 10, at AIS, 5560 Overland Ave., Third Floor, San Diego 92123. These meetings are open to the public.



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:

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