

AGING & independence

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
AGING & INDEPENDENCE SERVICES

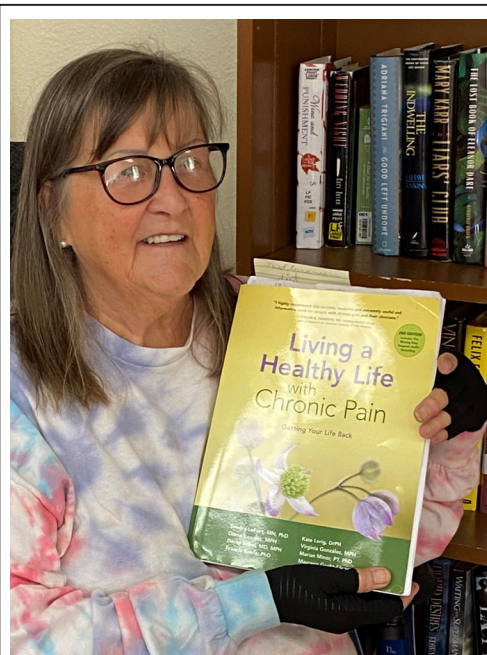
Health Promotion Program is Catalyst for Change

By Naomi Chavez
Acting Director, Aging & Independence Services

When Diana Gribble, 69, attended the first Healthier Living with Chronic Pain workshop at Park De La Cruz Community Center in the City Heights neighborhood of San Diego, she was eager to learn about proven methods and techniques for managing chronic pain. Diana was not used to sitting on the sidelines. She had committed 35 years of her life to making a difference in the lives of children and youth. She served as a teacher's assistant, substitute teacher, and foster grandparent volunteer, roles that required physical and emotional energy. However, as her chronic pain worsened, it became increasingly difficult to find the energy to complete even everyday tasks at home, such as washing dishes and vacuuming.

"I've always had lower back issues, but then I started to develop pain and neuropathy in my feet due to my diabetes," says Diana. Some of her pain has also been attributable to falls. At one point in her health journey, her pain became so debilitating and overwhelming that she even considered euthanasia. "I had immense pain in my whole body. I wasn't depressed, I just didn't want to live a life of pain anymore," Diana explains.

One afternoon, her neighbor shared his recipe for an herbal tea that ultimately provided some relief of her aches and pains. Diana began wondering if there were other solutions or strategies that could help her in the day-to-day management of her chronic pain. This was the beginning of her quest for knowledge, information, and understanding that led her to the Chronic Pain Self-Management Program.



Diana Gribble

The County of San Diego's Aging & Independence Services (AIS) has been implementing the Self-Management Resource Center's programs, known locally as "Healthier Living," for over 10 years. The programs are facilitated by trained peer leaders and staff who have a chronic health condition themselves or know someone whose life has been affected by one.

Diana decided to enroll in the Healthier Living with Chronic Pain program after experiencing pain flare-ups in her fingers. "Staff at the Center told me about the program, and I saw it as a huge opportunity because I wanted to learn more about chronic pain and the tools to help manage it," says Diana. Over the course of six weeks, participants learned techniques to

(Continued on page two)



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HEALTHIER LIVING CLASSES

These free, interactive, and goal-oriented workshops focus on support, skill development, sharing, and building confidence to manage chronic conditions, such as arthritis, depression, heart disease, or diabetes. These programs have been proven to achieve positive health outcomes in a fun and supportive environment. They are led by two trained peer educators, who may also have a chronic condition. For more details, visit www.healthierlivingsd.org.

Healthier Living with Diabetes: March 20-April 24 (Wednesdays), 1-3:30 p.m. at the Imperial Beach Community Clinic, 949 Palm Ave., Imperial Beach 91932. To register, call **(619) 429-3733**.

Healthier Living with Chronic Pain: April 4-May 9 (Thursdays), 1:30-4 p.m. at the Imperial Beach Library, 810 Imperial Beach Blvd., Imperial Beach 91932. To register, call **(619) 424-6981** and press “3.”

Healthier Living with Diabetes: April 17-May 22 (Wednesdays), 9-11:30 a.m. at the San Marcos Senior Activity Center, 111 Richmar Ave., San Marcos 92069. To register, call **(760) 744-5535 x3600**.

(Continued from page one)

deal with symptoms of chronic pain, such as fatigue, sleeplessness, stress, and emotional problems such as depression, anger, fear, and frustration, with an emphasis on cognitive behavioral therapy techniques for managing pain.

In one of the workshops, peer leaders led participants in a discussion about activities they value and a brainstorming exercise where participants identified solutions for how to continue these activities while living with chronic pain. For Diana, cooking has always been an activity she values greatly. “I love cooking with fresh vegetables, but I have difficulty with knives. When I spend too much time cutting vegetables, I pay the price later with pain,” Diana notes. As a result of the brainstorming activity, she was able to identify solutions to try that were realistic and achievable for her, including meal prepping to avoid having to cook every day, cooking soups using frozen chopped vegetables, and pacing herself while cooking.

Diana also enjoyed learning about nutrition “on a deeper level,” including how to use food labels to make better choices at the grocery store. One of her goals during the program was to eat more meals that align with the Mediterranean diet. This diet, along with the DASH diet, is encouraged by the Chronic Pain Self-Management program. She has continued to follow the principles of the Mediterranean diet since the conclusion of the workshop, using herbs and spices to flavor food and prioritizing whole grains

like quinoa, which has anti-inflammatory properties and is a good option for people with chronic pain.

In reflecting on her overall experience with the program, Diana notes that it influenced her to take ownership of managing her chronic pain, which is a main principle of the program. “So much of what I learned was a catalyst for change and moving things forward,” says Diana. “I feel more confident in knowing that there are options and alternatives to try as pain comes up, and I’m more open to trying new things to manage my pain.”

The program also helped Diana draw the connection between pain and other lifestyle factors, like stress. In thinking more critically about the root cause of her pain, she recognized that flare-ups more often occur “at the time of other life stressors,” speaking to the importance of self-care and pacing.

Diana encourages others who are living with chronic pain to be proactive in their healthcare, or what the program refers to as being an active self-manager. She explains, “Have faith and be informed. When you have knowledge, you can be confident and stand in that knowledge. You know what works and doesn’t work for you.”

Diana’s journey continues and while she still has ups and downs, she has the confidence and tools to face whatever tomorrow may bring. Visit www.healthierlivingsd.org for information on Healthier Living workshops or consult the blue box at the top of this page for details on workshops that will be starting soon.

In the COMMUNITY

AREA PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

At the regularly scheduled Aging & Independence Services (AIS) Advisory Council meeting at the County Operations Center, located at 5560 Overland Avenue, 3rd floor, San Diego 92123 on **Monday, March 11, 2024** at 12:00 p.m. (noon), attendees will have the opportunity to give feedback on the proposed Area Plan 2024-2028. The Area Plan contains AIS's goals and objectives for services to support older adults and persons with disabilities. To join by phone, call **(669) 900-9128** (Meeting ID: 824 8650 7295; Meeting password: 162815), or visit www.sandiegocounty.gov/AISadvisorycouncil to join by video conference (Zoom).

Alternate Language Requests: Call **(858) 495-5885** or email ais.getconnected.hhhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov to request an alternate language interpretation. To the extent possible, submit requests for accommodation at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting so that arrangements may be made.

IHSS RECIPIENT OR CAREGIVER? JOIN THE IHSS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Current or past In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) recipients and caregivers (individual providers) are needed to join the IHSS Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and other persons or entities related to the delivery of IHSS services. Meetings are currently held in person or via Zoom on the 2nd Friday of each month at 12:45 p.m. Members receive a \$50 monthly stipend. For more information, please contact Julie Lara at Julie.Lara@sdcounty.ca.gov or **(619) 643-6969**.

SPRING CRAFT FAIR

Celebrate the anticipation of Spring's arrival at the Spring Craft Fair on **Saturday, March 16 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.** at Lindo Lake County Park, 12660 Lindo Lane, Lakeside 92040. Enjoy craft booths, games, a DJ, food trucks, garden stations, and an opportunity drawing. This family-friendly event has activities for all ages and older adults are encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Pam.Plimpton@sdcounty.ca.gov or **(858) 495-5769**.

APPLY FOR MONTHLY NUTRITION (CALFRESH) BENEFITS

Older adults, including those who receive income from SSI/SSP, may be eligible for monthly nutrition benefit assistance through CalFresh! CalFresh recipients receive extra money for nutritious food each month. There are also other benefits, such as reduced cost access to museums, discounted Amazon Prime membership, and more! To learn more about CalFresh, including eligibility, visit www.getcalfresh.org. You may also call **2-1-1** to apply.

Would you like some extra support with completing your application? AIS Outreach & Education staff are available to assist you! Please contact Matthew Parcasio at Matthew.Parcasio@sdcounty.ca.gov or **(858) 505-6435**.

SHARE YOUR BUDGET PRIORITIES WITH THE COUNTY – TAKE SURVEY

We want to hear from you! Fill out a survey at <https://engage.sandiegocounty.gov/countybudget24-26> and tell us which services are most important to you. Your input will be considered in balance with other critical factors. County staff is currently examining data, reviewing community feedback from 2023, and bearing equity in mind when identifying funding priorities. The survey is one of several opportunities for residents to give their input. The survey closes on March 17. A balanced recommended budget for fiscal year 2024-25 will be released to the public on May 2. To review this information in your language, use the survey website's built-in Google Translate function or email engage@sdcounty.ca.gov.



VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER

Carole and Al Hansen are the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program's volunteers of the quarter. Their nomination for this honor came from Laurie Switzer, Director of Volunteer Programs, USS Midway Museum.

On any given day, dozens of volunteers welcome guests to the USS Midway Museum in San Diego. Quite often Carole and Al Hansen are among them, two of the 700 plus members of the Museum's Volunteer Corps, or about a sixth of the more than 4,000 men it took to staff the carrier in its sea going days.

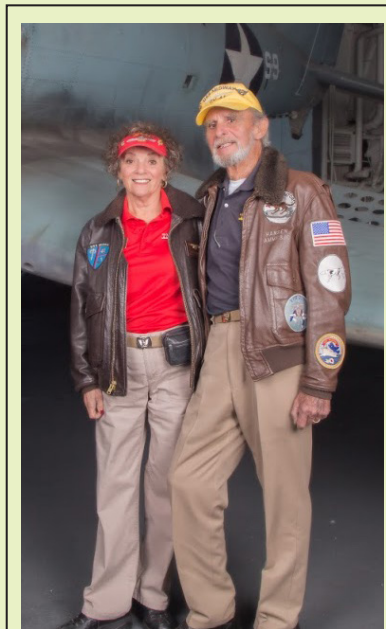
The couple helps the ship come alive for visitors who tour its acres of steel, decks, and ladders. They admit that volunteering on a ship they had never seen wasn't on their radar when they retired from the corporate world over 20 years ago.

But then their son, Leon, who was living in Australia came to visit them in San Marcos. One of the things Leon wanted to do was see the newly opened Midway Museum. "While we had supported it by becoming members in 2004, we had never been aboard. So, we toured the ship together," Al says.

Al was very impressed with the yellow-hatted volunteer who gave the tour high up on the ship's Island. Listening to the talk, he thought to himself, "I'd like to do that."

A couple weeks later the Navy veteran signed up to wear a yellow hat himself and began training for the Midway's docent team (2005). He subsequently joined Docent Class 12. Carole joined him shortly thereafter, choosing a red hat and training for the ship's safety team. Carole is now a Safety Team Lead, a supervisory position. When asked in which branch of the military she served, she proudly answers, "Girl Scouts." They both say, "It's the best job I've ever had!"

Like all on Midway volunteer teams, Carole and Al enjoy a unique camaraderie common to people glad to be helping visitors live the ship's adventure and honor its legacy. Thank you, Carole and Al, for serving your community and helping to keep history alive!



Carole and Al Hansen

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Ronald McDonald House Charities of San Diego provides a "home-away-from-home" for families with children being treated for serious, often life-threatening conditions at local hospitals. They need a volunteer driver to pick up food donations from their partner stores and bring the food back to the house. The shift starts at 6:15am and is typically finished by 10:30am every Wednesday. This small act of kindness will go a long way. If you have a few hours to spare each week and are interested in this volunteer opportunity, please contact Armida Martinez at (858) 699-0508, armida.martinez@sdcounty.ca.gov.



Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
San Diego

You Can Experience Midway Magic!



To learn about the variety of opportunities available on the USS Midway, visit www.midway.org/give-join/volunteers or email volunteers@midway.org.

LOVE YOUR HEART

This past February, the County of San Diego celebrated its thirteenth year of **Love Your Heart**. During this annual event, organizations from across the U.S. and Mexico provide free blood pressure screenings to the public and share cardiovascular health information. Here are a few steps you can take to be heart-healthy.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS: Know your heart health numbers to screen and control for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes. These numbers include your blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and glucose and A1c levels. Talk to your doctor about getting checked. Visit www.heart.org/HBP to learn more about how to “know your numbers.”

GET ACTIVE AND REDUCE STRESS: Perform moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes five days a week (you can also conduct three 10-minute sessions daily)—and make it fun! Try organizing a walking club with your friends and family. Get outside and enjoy the many beautiful trails and parks we have in San Diego County. Visit www.sdparks.org or call (858) 694-3030 for more information.

EAT HEART-HEALTHY FOODS: Eat fresh fruits and vegetables whenever possible – at least 5 servings each day, low-fat or non-fat dairy, and foods high in fiber. Avoid foods high in sodium, saturated and trans fats, and sugar. Visit www.heart.org/nutrition for healthy eating ideas.

AVOID TOBACCO: If you are a smoker, get support to help you quit! Call the California Smokers Helpline at (800) NO BUTTS (800-662-8887) or visit www.smokefreesandiego.org.

Additional information, resources, and tips can be found at the LoveYourHeart@Home section of www.LoveYourHeartSD.org.



Blood Pressure Categories



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120-129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130-139	or	80-89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

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heart.org/bplevels

HEALTH and WELLNESS

CHALLENGE CENTER CLASSES

The Challenge Center (5540 Lake Park Way, La Mesa 91942) offers specialized health and wellness programs and extended physical therapy to older adults and people with disabilities in order to transform quality of life and increase independence. Here are two featured programs.

Age-ility 360-degrees Gravity Management: Improve power and agility and regain the balance to go anywhere! In this class you will learn how to easily rise from the floor, safely and comfortably practice falling techniques, and learn how to maximize the safety of your home and surroundings. Instruction and practice is guided by licensed Physical Therapists. The 4-week class series typically runs on Mondays and Wednesdays with each session lasting 90 minutes. The cost is \$75.

Balance and Conditioning: This 8-week evidence-based class series helps reduce the risk of falls. Led by a certified personal trainer, classes include group stretching, balance and conditioning exercises, cardio workouts, parallel bar exercises, and custom one-on-one balance exercises within the group classes. The weekly class is currently offered Tuesdays from 8:30-9:30 a.m. and Wednesdays from 1-2 p.m. The cost is \$50 for the 8-week session.

For more information on classes, other available services, and financial assistance, contact the Challenge Center at (619) 667-8644 or info@challengecenter.org.



TOOL TO LOCATE QUALITY ASSISTED LIVING

Accepting that a loved one can no longer be safely cared for at home can be difficult. For those who are looking to identify quality assisted living facilities, Choose Well may be able to help. Choose Well is a free, innovative, web-based tool sponsored by the County of San Diego that helps older adults and their families make informed decisions when selecting assisted living facilities. Visit <https://ChooseWellSanDiego.org> to discover specially evaluated assisted living facilities that have voluntarily agreed to be scored on 11 measures of quality.



CARE MANAGEMENT: MULTIPURPOSE SENIOR SERVICE PROGRAM

Sometimes staying independent in one's home means getting help. That extra help with bill paying, shopping, laundry, and other tasks can keep someone from needing to live in a nursing home. If you or a loved one are age 65+, eligible for Medi-Cal, and need assistance to continue living safely at home, consider applying for the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP). MSSP care managers work with the client, family members, and medical team to find and coordinate services in the home. Through the timely use of services, MSSP protects frail older adults and helps them live at home for longer.



Care management services include: a comprehensive health and psychosocial assessment; care planning with the client and family; arrangement of services; coordination of care with other community agencies; some limited payment of in-home services; monthly phone contact; quarterly home visits; and ongoing monitoring/phone contacts as needed.

For more information on MSSP or to apply, contact the AIS Call Center at (800) 339-4661 M-F from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please note: To ensure a timely and relevant calendar, the online and printed versions of this calendar may vary.

MARCH 26, TUESDAY 11 A.M.-12 P.M.

A free webinar, *Women, Alzheimer's, and Dementia* will be presented by the Alzheimer's Association. Almost two-thirds of Americans living with Alzheimer's are women. This program will give an overview of Alzheimer's and dementia, address the impact it has on women, and will share local resources available through the Alzheimer's Association. To RSVP, call (800) 272-3900 or visit www.alz.org/events and click on "Educational Programs."

MARCH 30, SATURDAY 10-11 A.M.

A *Knitting and Crochet Circle* is held most Saturday mornings at the Serra Mesa-Kearny Mesa Library, 9005 Aero Dr., San Diego 92123. Improve your skills in these traditional art forms. Bring your project for social crafting! Free. For details, call (858) 573-1396.

APRIL 2, TUESDAY 6-7:30 P.M.

A free *Haiku Workshop* will be held at the Lakeside Library, 12428 Woodside Avenue, Lakeside 92040. Haiku is an ancient form of Japanese Poetry, typically consisting of 3 lines written with 17 syllables. Haiku can be a cathartic, therapeutic tool for enhancing mindfulness and engaging the community! As part of the Togetherness Tuesday series, this workshop will include a presentation, a photography prompt based on nature and the seasons, and

ample time for participants to reflect to kick-start their Haiku writing journey! To RSVP, visit www.sdcl.org and select "events." For more details, contact (619) 443-1811 or lakesidelibrary@sdcounty.ca.gov.

APRIL 12, FRIDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

A free class, *Living with Memory Loss*, will be hosted by Alzheimer's San Diego at the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library, 10301 Scripps Lake Dr., San Diego 92131. Learn strategies for adapting to daily challenges, enhancing health and well-being, and planning for the future. This class is for individuals living with early-stage memory loss and their care partners. To register, call (858) 492-4400 or visit www.alzsd.org/classes.

APRIL 20, SATURDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

A class, *Using Genetic Genealogy to Find Family (Course #1502)*, will be hosted by San Diego Oasis at the Grossmont Lifelong Learning Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Dr., Ste. 269, La Mesa 91942. This class provides step-by-step guidance on how to use your DNA testing results in your genealogical research. Topics covered include understanding the amount of DNA that relatives share, confirming your relationship to other family members who have tested, verifying the branches of your family tree, and more. Cost: \$15. To RSVP, visit www.SanDiegoOasis.org or call (619) 881-6262.

APRIL 23, TUESDAY 5:30-6:30 P.M.

A free *Healthy Hands-On Cooking*

Class: No Cook Recipes will be held at the Mountain View/Beckwourth Library, 721 San Pasqual St., San Diego 92113. Learn some new recipes (primarily vegetarian) and how to incorporate healthier options into your everyday life without feeling deprived. To RSVP, visit <https://sandiego.librarymarket.com>. For more details, contact Mariana at (619) 527-3404 or GonzalezMG@sandiego.gov.

APRIL 24, WEDNESDAY 3:30-4:45 P.M.

A free *Stress Management Webinar* will be offered by Sharp Rees-Stealy. Turn stress into success with the Coping With Life program presented by a Sharp health educator. Learn how to identify and characterize your sources of stress and discover new, more productive skills for stress management and personal wellbeing. To RSVP, call (800) 827-4277 or visit www.sharp.com/health-classes.

APRIL 25, THURSDAY 1-2:30 P.M.

A class, *Lose the Stuff-and the Stress (Course #2258)*, will be hosted by San Diego Oasis at the Rancho Bernardo Lifelong Learning Center, 17170 Bernardo Center Dr., San Diego 92128. Learn why having too much stuff takes a toll on your physical and mental stress. In this talk, we will cover some coping strategies you can use, as well as practical tips to tackle your to do's and minimize your stress. Cost: \$15. To RSVP, visit www.SanDiegoOasis.org or call (858) 240-2880.

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

We welcome your contributions to this calendar. Email: sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov.



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SAN DIEGO

Aging & Independence™ is published quarterly by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services. The purpose is to inform and recognize older adults, volunteers, and community partners.

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