

AGING & independence

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

The Future's Bright: Living Well at 100

By Kim Gallo
Director, Aging & Independence Services

Not everyone is lucky enough to celebrate their 100th birthday, but this past August Beatrice Hestine Henley-Ellis did just that. Born in Cotton Plant, Mississippi in 1920, young Beatrice was not dealt the easiest hand in life. Raised by various relatives, she spent her early childhood working in the cotton fields as a sharecropper. Beatrice didn't have the opportunity to attend school until she was twelve, at which time she was placed in a third-grade class as the "teacher's helper." In a large family, everyone had to help, so Beatrice left school at 15 and used her skills to work as a seamstress, live-in housekeeper, and cook in rooming houses. In essence, she was "the help" in the homes of white families. She married and went on to have seven children, eventually settling in Chicago. She held various jobs, including working at a factory that made children's ride-on ponies.

Fortunately, life got better over time for Beatrice. She tapped into a wellspring of resiliency and refused to let the trauma and lack of opportunities she faced as a young person define her. Instead, she put maximum effort into encouraging her children to have better lives than she did. She emphasized the importance of learning, instructing her children to visit the library if they were bored or to consult the encyclopedia if they had questions about the world around them. Once her children grew up and had families of their own, she was always there to help. Beatrice's youngest daughter, le' Waun, explains, "I had just had my third child and she



Beatrice Hestine Henley-Ellis was all smiles on her 100th birthday.

was a sad baby. I just couldn't take the crying, so I called my mom. She said, 'I will be there in one week.' She gave up her apartment in Chicago, flew all the way to San Diego, and stayed for two years. When I went to work, she would feed the baby and cook. I didn't have to worry about anything. She was amazing."

Beatrice's senior years have by and large been happy. It could be said that Beatrice embodies "successful aging"—that is, living a life that is meaningful and enjoyable, with close social connections, a sense of independence and autonomy, and adequate resources to meet needs, such as housing and health care.

She adopted many healthy behaviors in her adulthood that continued to serve her well during her later years—cultivating rich friendships and social networks, helping her family by caring for the grandkids, and taking care of her physical health. Upon receiving a diagnosis of diabetes, Beatrice carefully controlled her diet. She would still give herself permission to savor her favorite food (grapes) but she limited herself to just five grapes. She also enjoyed walking for exercise. le' Waun recalls, "My mom walked everywhere. She could walk you in the ground! And, she loved hills. I used to hate going any place with her because it would entail lots of walking!"

The recipe for healthy aging requires several ingredients. There is an element of individual responsibility and

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CORONAVIRUS UPDATES:

Visit www.coronavirus-sd.com.



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personal choices, but for many, family, community, and government support systems are equally important. Older adults do best when they have access to high-quality health care services, a robust social service network, affordable housing, and reliable transportation systems. Meaningful opportunities for civic engagement and social connection are essential, too.

In recognition of the commitment individuals, families, communities, and institutions must make to optimize the experience of aging in our region, the County of San Diego developed the Aging Roadmap. This comprehensive framework serves as a guide to help support older adults to live healthy, safe, and thriving lives—just as Beatrice is doing. The Aging Roadmap recognizes that society must take collective responsibility for empowering, involving, and caring for our elders. Older adults have much to teach us and many contributions to make. Recently, Aging & Independence Services provided a one-year update on Aging Roadmap projects (refer to the green box below to learn more).

During Beatrice’s 70s and 80s, she benefited from close family ties and an extensive social network through her church. She gave as much as she received, always lending a hand to help her community. Once in her 90s, Beatrice began to slow down and showed some signs of cognitive decline. Still, she continued to have a fulfilling life. Beatrice lived with one of her daughters in Kentucky and attended an adult day care center. There, she made several friends and taught others how to knit.

When Beatrice turned 95, she moved back to San Diego to live with le’ Waun. Today, despite living with dementia, she is able to live comfortably at home due to the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program. Her granddaughter serves as her caregiver and assists her with meals, grooming, and other activities of daily living. After work,

Beatrice’s Keys to Longevity:

- Pay attention to your physical, mental, financial, and spiritual health.
- Don’t take for granted the blessings and miracles that surround us every day. Be active with your faith.
- Never give up on yourself, love, faith, or in humanity—each is worth fighting for.
- Don’t beat yourself up and hold onto your mistakes. You can learn from and even live with a mistake made for the right reason, but regret is much harder to forget.
- Allow yourself to feel—every emotion has value; and be sure to practice forgiveness of yourself and others.
- Let yourself laugh and enjoy moments in life, especially those that will create memories.

le’ Waun steps in and provides any support she needs. Beatrice continues to enjoy social visits (now with masks and from a distance) and enjoys listening to music.

Beatrice’s 100 years have been full of rich experiences, deep relationships, and impressive resilience. Beatrice, her family, and community have all stepped up to give Beatrice a life she can continue to enjoy, at 100 and beyond. By working together, individuals, families, communities, and social service organizations can make older adults’ later years some of the most satisfying. To learn more about how the County of San Diego is working with the community to make our region a place where older adults can live healthy, safe, and thriving lives through the Aging Roadmap, visit www.livewellsd.org/agingroadmap.

For information on programs and services for older adults and caregivers, visit www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov or call (800) 339-4661.

AGING ROADMAP UPDATE

Launched at the direction of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in September 2019, the Aging Roadmap is the County of San Diego’s regional plan to ensure that the region has programs and communities that support the needs and celebrate the contributions of the growing population of older adults. Over the past year, County staff and community partners have worked on goals outlined in the Roadmap’s ten focus areas and an update was recently shared with the Board of Supervisors. Some accomplishments include: bolstering food resources and food delivery systems during the pandemic, creating a “Ride Well to Age Well” transportation guide, training community members to be “Local Champions” to educate others on dementia-friendly principles, and hosting an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) symposium. To learn more about the Roadmap and recent accomplishments, visit www.livewellsd.org/agingroadmap.

In the COMMUNITY

TECHNOLOGY FAIR FOR 50+

Join San Diego Oasis and the County of San Diego for the 8th annual Technology Fair for Adults 50+ on **Tuesday, October 20-Friday, October 23 from 8:45 a.m.-12 p.m.** daily! This year, the fair is entirely virtual, but there is still plenty to learn. The free tech talks will feature a variety of topics, such as health-related technology, financial technology tools, fun technology, and more. Be sure to catch the welcome address from Qualcomm Founder and CEO Emeritus Irwin Jacobs on Tuesday, October 20 at 8:45 a.m. To register or learn more, visit <https://san-diego.oasisnet.org/technology-fair/>.



GET YOUR FLU SHOT

Influenza (“the flu”) is a contagious illness that can be severe and life-threatening, especially for older adults. The flu can make existing health problems worse and is particularly dangerous for people with chronic health conditions, like heart disease and diabetes. The best way to prevent catching the flu is to get the flu vaccine every year. Getting a flu shot is especially important this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who get a flu shot are helping to preserve health care resources and keep hospital capacity free to serve those who contract COVID-19. The vaccine is now available at many retail pharmacies and physician offices. To find a site for a flu shot, call 2-1-1 or visit www.sdiz.org.

JOIN THE AIS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Aging & Independence Services (AIS) Advisory Council is inviting applications for membership. The Council serves as an advocacy body for older adults and persons with disabilities. Comprised of volunteer members, the Council advises the AIS Director on program and policy matters, and plans toward future needs. Meetings are open to the public and are held at noon on the second Monday of each month. Past meeting materials and other information may be found at www.sandiegocounty.gov/AISAdvisoryCouncil. The Council is particularly looking to add members who are age 60 or older and those who live in South Bay. However, anyone with an interest in senior and disability issues is encouraged to apply. Interested parties may contact Renée Sherrill at renee.sherrill@sdcounty.ca.gov or (858) 495-5858. Or, to submit an application, go to <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/cob/bcac/>.

VOTE SAFER SAN DIEGO

The San Diego County Registrar of Voters is committed to ensuring that voters can exercise their right to vote in a safe, secure, and accessible manner during the 2020 Presidential General Election. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, every registered voter in California will receive a ballot in the mail for the upcoming election. Voters are urged to vote from home.

Voting by mail is simple! A mail-in ballot will be mailed to all registered voters starting Oct. 5. Make voting decisions and mark your ballot comfortably at home. Seal your completed ballot in your postage paid envelope. Be sure to sign it, date it, and return it by mail promptly so it is received well before Election Day. Sign your name like it appears on your driver’s license/ID.

In-Person Voting: If you choose to vote in person, polling places will be open for four days, Oct. 31 through Election Day on Nov. 3. There are fewer polling places than in prior elections, so your polling place has likely changed and lines may be long. Ballots will also be accepted at the Registrar’s office beginning on Monday, October 5. Wear a face mask and plan to maintain social distance. Older adults and those with underlying medical conditions are especially encouraged to vote by mail or through early in-person voting to avoid long lines and crowded polling places. To learn more about the upcoming election or register to vote, visit www.sdvote.com.





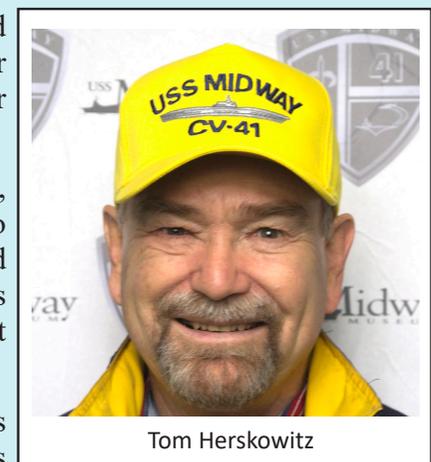
VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Tom Herskowitz, a docent at the USS Midway Museum, is the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Volunteer of the Month for October 2020. He was nominated by Laurie Switzer, the Director of Volunteer Programs at the Midway.

While there are numerous volunteer opportunities on-board the Midway, many of the volunteers who have served in the military (and many who have not) enjoy putting on the iconic “yellow hat” to be guides and history-tellers on-board. Tom is no different. He shares fascinating tales of his days as a Naval Radar Intercept Officer (RIO) with 200 combat missions in Vietnam, as well as his experiences as a Top Gun graduate.

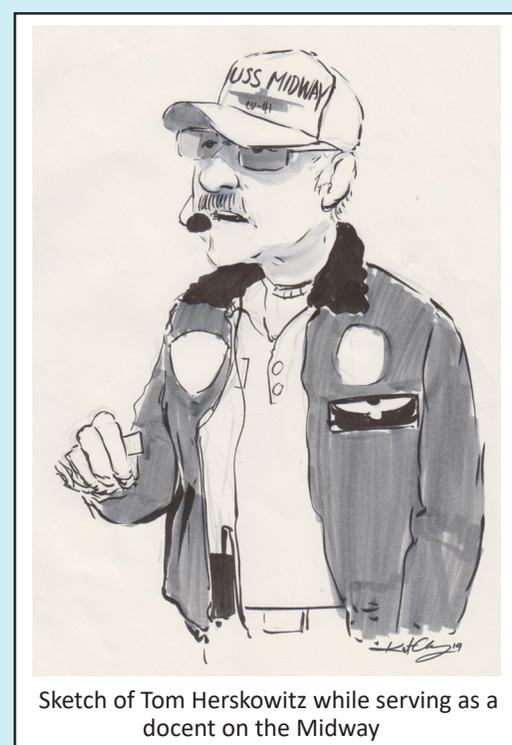
Laurie describes Tom as “giving, proactive, and thoughtful.” Tom stands out because of his ability to see what needs to be done and his willingness to do it! A great example of this is what Tom has been doing during the COVID-19 pandemic. When the museum’s operations were shut down, Tom took it upon himself to make sure the volunteers stayed connected. He figured out a way to keep communication flowing and also to keep providing continuing education for the curators, Library Team, and Docent Corps.

To sustain morale and support for various volunteer teams, Tom has been facilitating Zoom sessions, which he started at the very beginning of the pandemic. These debriefs allow those volunteers who have not yet been able to return to their duty stations the opportunity to remain in contact with their fellow team members. Tom has guided hundreds of volunteers—many of whom are uneasy with technology—in using Zoom for meetings and for socializing. A fellow volunteer, Paul Ward says, “This service, provided



Tom Herskowitz

by Tom, was a key component in volunteers being able to remain supportive of the museum’s continued mission and vision, as well as being a way for the members of the ‘Midway family’ to remain supportive of each other. So many of us plan on and look forward to these scheduled times during our ‘shore leave.’” Many of the volunteers have been seeking camaraderie during the lock-down and Tom has been that conduit on behalf of the Midway.



Sketch of Tom Herskowitz while serving as a docent on the Midway

Throughout his life, Tom has been a true adventurer. A few of his adrenaline-packed adventures include helicopter-skiing Mt. Cook in New Zealand, white water rafting the headwaters of the Nile River in Uganda, and hiking to the summit of Mount Meru in Tanzania with his son. Tom also has a deep-rooted passion for giving back, and served as a missionary in Uganda for two years.

Midway guests love to hear Tom’s amazing life stories and to learn about the USS Midway and our country’s history. Thank you, Tom, for your tremendous contribution to the USS Midway Museum, as well as to the San Diego and beyond!

To learn more about the Senior Volunteer Programs at Aging & Independence Services, call **(858) 505-6448** or email **Armida.Martinez@sdcounty.ca.gov**.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

AT YOUR HOME FAMILYCARE

When At Your Home Familycare (originally At Your Home Services) was established in 1984, Home and Community-Based Care (HCBC) was a relatively new model of in-home care service provision. Unlike Home Health Services which are medical in nature, HCBC is non-medical and based on a model that prioritizes social and other needs. It provides long-term services and supports that keep people living as independently as possible.

At Your Home Familycare was one of the early providers of HCBC in the San Diego area. In 1986, the organization began its partnership with Aging & Independence Services (then known as the County's Area Agency on Aging). Since that time, At Your Home Familycare has served thousands of vulnerable residents through various County, State, and Federal programs. These programs and partnerships have helped to prevent unnecessary institutionalization and have allowed older adults and others to maintain independence and quality of life in the comfort and security of their homes.

As the aging population continues to increase and costs associated with a medical model of long-term care grow, people are looking for new ways to obtain appropriate and cost-effective care. The social model of in-home care continues to gain prominence. At Your Home Familycare provides cost-effective assistance with activities of daily living when individuals' own abilities to address these needs become compromised due to aging, disability, or illness. Services include: homemaking, meal preparation and shopping, bill paying assistance, support with bathing/grooming and toileting, respite care, protective supervision, assistance with ambulation and transfer, door-through-door transportation, and more.

Each month, Aging & Independence Services acknowledges a Live Well San Diego partner—an organization in our community that is committed to the vision of a region that is building better health, living safely, and thriving. To learn more about Live Well San Diego or to become a partner, visit www.livewellsd.org.

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As a Department of Social Services Licensed Home Care Organization with Full Status, At Your Home Familycare personally interviews, hires, vets, trains, and does skill testing on every employee. The organization also ensures competency with regard to proper safety procedures, including masking and gloving--technical details that are especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. At Your Home Familycare employees are also warm, compassionate, and serve from the heart.

At Your Home Familycare has won multiple awards and is honored to have long-term partnerships with key community organizations, including the Veterans Administration. It also welcomes private pay clients. At Your Home Familycare is a proud Live Well partner that makes a difference in the lives of vulnerable community members every day, helping to promote their health, safety, and ability to thrive at home.

Services are provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. All clients have access to an after-hours on-call person. For further information about At Your Home Familycare programs and services and how to access them, please call (858) 625-0406 during business hours weekdays. To learn more, visit www.atyourhomefamilycare.com.



“Throughout the cycles of your life, we care for you with assistive services, wherever you call HOME.”

-Laurie Edwards-Tate, Founder and CEO, At Your Home Familycare

CHECK YOUR MOOD...VIRTUALLY

Good mental health starts with you! Getting screened for depression is an important part of healthcare checkups, much like getting your blood pressure checked or being screened for heart disease or diabetes. Check Your Mood is an annual awareness campaign that takes place throughout the month of October and typically includes community screening events and resource information about depression and mental illness. This year, Check Your Mood resources are all available online. Visit www.LiveWellSD.org/CheckYourMood to take a quick, anonymous self-assessment and learn about available resources.

SUPPORT LOCAL RESTAURANTS BY ENROLLING IN GREAT PLATES

Stay home! Eat well! The Great Plates programs help to keep older adults and adults of all ages with disabilities or health conditions safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Enjoy tasty, home-delivered meals and support local restaurants by joining one of these free programs.



Great Plates Delivered: Home Meals for Seniors

- Serves older adults 65+ and those 60-64 with certain health conditions
- Provides 3 meals per day
- Initiated by Governor Newsom, and supported by FEMA, state, and local funds.

Great Plates 2.0: Dinner Delivered

- Serves adults of all ages (18+) with health conditions or disabilities
- Provides one hearty meal per day
- Initiated by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and supported by local allocation of CARES Act funds.

Following federal guidelines, these temporary programs are intended to fill a gap and serve those who are not eligible for any other federal nutrition benefits, such as CalFresh (income must be between \$24,981-\$74,940 for a single-person household and \$33,821-\$101,460 for a two-person household). To learn more, visit www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov and click on the “Great Plates Programs” button at the top of the page. Or, call **(800) 339-4661** and select option “7.” If you do not qualify for the Great Plates programs, please call 2-1-1 to discuss additional food resources that may be available to you.

FALL PREVENTION AWARENESS

One in four older adults (65+) fall each year. To reduce your risk of falling:

- **Stay active** to improve your strength, flexibility, and balance. Walking, dancing, Tai Chi, and exercise classes are all good ways to improve your health.
- **Talk with your doctor** about health issues such as osteoporosis, your Vitamin D level, medications, difficulty with hearing or vision, or if you feel faint, off-balance, or dizzy. Your doctor or pharmacist can also look at your medications to check for side effects that can affect your coordination.
- **Have your vision checked** at least one time each year by a professional.
- **Make your home safer:** remove things you could trip or slip on, maintain good lighting and night-lights, and install strong grab bars and handrails. Our eyes often need more light as we age.

For more tips, visit: www.SanDiegoFallPrevention.org.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please note: Due to the coronavirus pandemic, all of the classes and events listed below are offered online.

OCTOBER 15, THURSDAY 1-2:15 P.M.

An online class, *An American Journey* (course #586), will be hosted by San Diego Oasis. Take a virtual journey through America, both in time and in place, through an artistic lens. Beginning in New York City at the start of the 20th century and ending in contemporary Los Angeles, there will be a number of stops along the way to analyze what notable artists saw and responded to in their works. Cost: \$10. Visit www.SanDiegoOasis.org to register. For details, call (619) 881-6262.

OCTOBER 20-23, TUES.-FRI. 8:45 A.M.-12 P.M.

San Diego Oasis and the County of San Diego will host the free *Get Connected: Technology Fair for Adults 50+*. Join each day for themed Tech Talk sessions presented by knowledgeable speakers on topics such as smart home tech, healthcare, home security, and fun technology. The event will kick off with a message from Irwin Jacobs, Founding Chairman and CEO of Qualcomm. For more details and to register, visit www.sandiegooasis.org or call (619) 881-6262.

OCTOBER 22, THURSDAY 10-11:30 A.M.

An online webinar, *Healthy Rituals for Well-Being and Health, Including How to Deal with Fear* will be offered by the Carlsbad Senior Center. Keeping healthy rituals for

ourselves is important, especially during stressful times. This session will cover how to maintain our well-being while we confront and manage fears in a healthy way. Free. To register, visit CarlsbadConnect.org or call (760) 602-4650.

OCTOBER 22, THURSDAY 6-7:30 P.M.

An online class, *Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior*, will be hosted by the Alzheimer's Association. Learn to decode behavioral messages, identify common triggers, and learn strategies to help manage some of the most common behavioral challenges of Alzheimer's disease. For details or to register, call (800) 272-3900 or visit <https://bit.ly/32yHICV>.

OCTOBER 24, SATURDAY 1-2:30 P.M.

A webinar, *Working Women of the Waterfront: From the Lighthouse to the Assembly Line*, will be hosted by the San Diego Public Library. You are invited to Zoom in with the Cabrillo National Monument and the Women's Museum of California to this conversation on some of San Diego's notable women who led the way in breaking gender barriers. Visit www.sandiego.gov/public-library and click on "Programs and Events." Email lbrawley@sandiego.gov or call (619) 236-5800 for details.

OCTOBER 28, WEDNESDAY 2-3:15 P.M.

A free, online class, *Google Photos-Essentials* will be offered by the Carlsbad Senior Center. Google Photos is free photo software that can

help you organize, edit, and share your photos. Tune in to learn about many of the helpful features of this software. To register, visit CarlsbadConnect.org or call (760) 602-4650.

OCTOBER 29, THURSDAY 1-2:30 P.M.

Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ+ People Living with Dementia, will be offered by Alzheimer's San Diego in conjunction with Windward Life Care. People in the LGBTQ+ community who have dementia or who are caregivers to friends, family, or chosen family members with dementia, have unique needs. Community members and professionals are invited to learn about local dementia resources and how to provide culturally sensitive care. To register, visit www.alzsd.org or call (858) 492-4400.

NOVEMBER 2, MONDAY ALL DAY

The San Diego Public Library will present a day-long *Share-a-Story* virtual reading event featuring San Diego authors. Enjoy bite-sized portions of fiction, history, poetry, and more served up by talented local authors. Each author will "share a story," reading excerpts from their work. Visit www.sandiego.gov/public-library and click on "Programs and Events." Email kgarcia@sandiego.gov or call (619) 236-5800 for details.

SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

We welcome your contributions to this monthly calendar. Just send items by the 1st of each month preceding the issue date to sarah.jackson@sdcounty.ca.gov.



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- Abused adults
- Those requiring home-based care to prevent institutionalization

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