

Commentary

President's Message

Greetings CASSC Members,

At the time of this writing, we are about 60 days from the conference. If you have not made your reservation, do it today. I know I say it every year, but this really is the best conference I will have attended. There will be some new faces and lots of opportunities for networking. You don't want to miss the outstanding line up of speakers and topics - even if you have to take vacation leave and pay the fees yourself. You won't be sorry.

For those of you sitting on the fence, not sure if you want to serve CASSC by running for office, please leap off the fence. Here is a wonderful opportunity and a chance to learn, grow, and serve. It's rewarding, at times challenging, but satisfying both personally and professionally. Take a moment to contact Nominating Chair, Audrey Calder at 707-469-6673 or acalder@ci.vacaville.ca.us. Your service will be appreciated.

Since this is my farewell as president, I wanted to share what I try to keep foremost in my life ...gratitude. Below are some quotes I hope you will print out and keep by your desk for moments when you need a little help.

"Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom." Marcel Proust

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow." Melody Beattie

"Blessed are those that can give without remembering and receive without forgetting." Author Unknown

"If you concentrate on finding whatever is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul." Rabbi Harold Kushner

"He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has." Epictetus

"There is a calmness to a life lived in gratitude, a quiet joy." Ralph H. Blum (American Author)

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Jane Kibbey
CASSC President

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CASSC Conference
October 18-21, 2009
Asilomar Conference
Grounds, Pacific Grove

CASSC Conference-Exciting Speakers

Conference Sessions Include:

- **Chris Miller & Ann Swanberg:** LifePlays — *Conflict Resolution and Team Building*
- **Jim Bracher**, Founder, Bracher Center for Integrity in Leadership, Director of the Executives in Residence Program at Cal State University Monterey Bay — *Integrity – All the Time*
- **Dr. Patrick Arbore, MA, EdD**, Director of Education and Professional Training, Institute on Aging, San Francisco — *I'm Not the Person I Used to Be: Managing Life Transitions and Storytelling as a Therapeutic Tool*

- **Patricia Alexander and Michael Burgos, MFT**, Authors — *Empower Your Professional Goals*
- **Dr. Manoj Pardasani**, Professor of Social Work, Fordham University — *Senior Centers: Forging a New Path*
- **Carol Sewell**, Program Analyst on Aging, California Commission on Aging – *Making Your Voice Heard: Advocacy at the State and Local Level*
- **Legislative Update**
- **Networking/Best Practices**
- **Annual Meeting and Elections**

Resources & Publications

The Island Where People Live Longer

The island of Icaria could be the newest of the world's so-called blue zones—where residents have unusually long life spans. For more information see: www.npr.org/templates/story.

AARP Doughnut Hole Calculator

This tool is available at www.aarp.org/doughnuthole and guides visitors through their prescription drug options using localized information about their plans and prescriptions to determine if or when they will fall into the coverage gap. In about 15 minutes, visitors can view a graph of their out-of-pocket spending by month, look up lower cost drugs for their conditions, create a Personal Medication Record and print out personalized letters to their doctors to help start a conversation about safely switching prescriptions.

Bill Moyers Journal

Bill Moyers speaks with Lawrence Lightfoot, one of America's leading educators and author of the book *The Third Chapter: Passion, Risk, and Adventure in the 25 Years After 50*.

See more at www.pbs.org/moyers/journal.

Medicare Diabetes Screening Project

This is a national drive to find the undiagnosed and increase awareness of the benefits for diabetes screening that Medicare offers to seniors ages 65 and older. For more information go to www.screenfordiabetes.org/home.

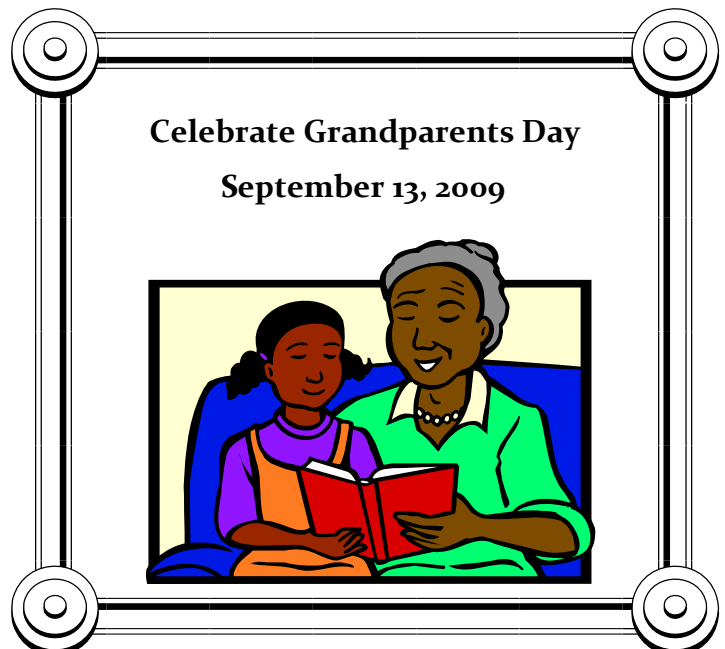
These resources were published in UC Berkeley's "New Resources in Aging" newsletter.

California Health Advocates

This group provides advocacy and information on Medicare benefits through their website: www.cahealthadvocates.org.

They also offer technical information and specialized resources for professionals working directly with California's Medicare beneficiaries.

Educational topics can be found on Medigap coverage, programs for low income individuals, HICAP Medicare counseling, and basic Medicare topics such as: Eligibility, Coverage, Billing & Claims, Appeals, and People with Disabilities.



Focus on You...

Sierra 2 Senior Center

By Mae Denman

Roadwise Review (AAA) Computer Driving Tests

Worried about yourself or a friend's driving skills? The senior center at Sierra 2 arranged for a volunteer to offer the AAA Roadwise Review to seniors.

This 20 minute confidential computer test (guided by a volunteer) reviews the ability to recognize objects in low visibility, physical ability to turn the head, and leg strength for operation of car pedals.

The results do not tell whether you pass or fail, but indicate what you can do to continue driving safely. Seniors signed up for appointments throughout August. Many reported that they thought the test was useful in helping them notice and be aware of the changes in their body affecting their driving.



Acting Against Aging

The senior center welcomes *Acting Against Aging*, a program designed to promote healthy cognitive aging through participation in theater arts. *Acting Against Aging* will be facilitated by Tom Rhatigan (a Teaching Artist, and member of the Actor's Equity Association with 25 years experience in acting and directing) at the senior center at Sierra 2.

The program includes learning principles identified by cognitive researchers, acting experience, and education in arts and gerontology. The four-session workshop explores human choices and possibilities, instills inner strength and self esteem, and encourages pride and self confidence through improved speech and maintaining strong connections with the mind, body, emotions, and spirit.

Mae Denman is a Coordinator at Sierra 2 Senior Center in Sacramento.

Simi Valley Senior Center

Wellness & Information Expo 2009

Spend a day visiting the Simi Valley Senior Center and find out what is available to promote wellness and quality of life at the Expo on Wednesday, September 9 from 9:00am-2:00pm. Investigate the various agencies and programs and discover the services they offer in one convenient location. Take advantage of free health screenings including carotid artery, bone density, hearing, glucose, and blood pressure. Some of the vendors already registered to attend include Senior Concerns, the Housing Rights Center, Health Information Counseling Advocacy Program, Alzheimer Association, Anthem Blue Cross, and Echo Tech Imaging.

Grandparent & Me

Grandparent and Me, for ages 2-5, is a three-week series beginning on Thursday, September 10, and designed to strengthen the bond between grandparents and their grandchildren. This class meets from 10:30am-11:30am, focusing on interactions using

short stories, songs, games, and arts and crafts. All materials are provided. This class is free of charge.

Dream Sketching and Visualization

Join instructor Jane Ivey and put to paper your hopes, wishes, and dreams. Gain insight through an exploration of yourself through sketching. The class meets on Fridays from 10:00am –noon and the fee for the four-week session is \$25.

Music to My Ears

Did you know that as we age our capacity to learn is not diminished. It may take a little longer, but seniors can still develop new talents and perfect the skills they already have. If you have ever played a string instrument or would like to learn to play one, it's not too late. A beginning String Orchestra class is held on Tuesdays from 12-1pm, and the intermediate class is from 11am-12pm. The fee for the six-week course is \$30.

From the monthly newsletter "Senior News" at www.simivalley.org.

Focus on You...

Amador Senior Center

By Laurie Webb

Tai Chi Classes

Mary Hackworth R.N., a long-time yoga and Tai Chi teacher in Amador County, has returned to the Amador Senior Center to offer an "Introduction to Tai Chi" twice a week.

"Tai Chi is one of the best ways to improve your balance, which is a very important component in maintaining one's independence as one ages," said Mary, who has instructed in a variety of yoga classes and has taught Tai Chi on several levels. "Being able to avoid falls and injuries helps insure that elderly people will not become victims of unscrupulous caregivers."

Although Mary teaches a formal class once a week in Sutter Creek, she was eager to return to the senior center. To assess the interest in Tai Chi at the center, she is providing a free, unstructured class twice a week. "It is more like an opportunity to learn about and practice the various Tai Chi exercises," said Laurie Webb, Executive Director. People don't have to sign up; they can just show up and participate for the hour. If there is enough interest, Mary will look into setting up a formal class at the Center and offer it at a nominal cost. Currently participants are simply asked for a donation to cover use of the Center.

Isolated Senior Task Force

The Commission on Aging, spurred by concern about the potential safety of seniors who are physically isolated, just finished the first year of an innovative, collaborative project to reach out to seniors who are isolated by circumstances or by choice and make

them aware of some of the resources and services available.

After several months of discussion and developing a packet of materials including a simple, concise resource guide, the group began to distribute the packets through a network of social service agencies, churches, law enforcement agencies, and community groups. Within the first eight weeks, over 100 packets had been picked up by various agencies.

The resource guide became a much sought after item and the Task Force decided to do another printing of just the guide and to distribute it to a broader segment of the county. Social workers, physicians' offices, law enforcement personnel, and in-home workers all requested copies to use in assisting their clients.

In addition to the packet, another program, the Hidden Key/Emergency Access Project was initiated by the Amador County Sheriff's Office in collaboration with the Commission and Amador Senior Center. This program allows seniors to confidentially register with the Sheriff's office and indicate the location of a hidden house key. If the Sheriff's officers make a welfare check and are unable to gain entry into the home, they can contact the dispatcher and find out if there is a hidden key. This reduces delays in obtaining emergency services if needed. Over 200 enrollment forms have been distributed to date and about 30 have been returned to the Sheriff's office.

Laurie Webb is Executive Director of the Amador County Senior Center.

Pleasant Valley Senior Center

Jane Raab, Recreation Supervisor for the Pleasant Valley Recreation & Park District, sent along their *Senior Sentinel* newsletter to highlight some of their upcoming activities.

A, **Halloween Dance** is planned for Tuesday, October 27 from 12:30-2:30pm, with music being provided by the *Seniors of Note Band*. Seniors are encouraged to wear their favorite Halloween costume.

Scores in the weekly Wii games are being kept and the top four bowlers will represent the senior center at the first **County Wii Bowling Tournament** which will be held from 9:00am-2:00pm in the Community Center Auditorium. The public is welcome to come and watch, and cheer for their bowlers as they challenge individuals from other senior centers around the county. Lunch will be available for a \$3 donation.

Focus on You...

Moorpark Active Adult Center Activities

By Peggy Rothschild

Annual Gourd Arts Exhibit

During October, the Moorpark Active Adult Center will be hosting its 5th Annual Gourd Art Exhibition. Offered in conjunction with Ventura County's Annual Arts Week Celebration, the exhibition spotlights the work of local gourd artists.

Artists in this exciting medium carve, paint, stain, bead, and wood burn incredible creations that amaze the eyes.

Exhibit guests will have a chance to meet and talk with the artists about their work at the exhibit reception on Wednesday, October 7, from 3-7pm. Exhibit and reception will be held at the Moorpark Civic Center.

Senior Games

The Biennial Moorpark Senior Games have arrived! Offering competition for those age 55 and up, the Games run from September 16 through October 9, 2009. Competitions include basketball key shots, bocce ball, bingo, bowling, darts, duplicate bridge, golf,



mah jongg, poker, poker walk, table tennis, and Wii bowling.

The series of tournaments kick-off with an Opening Ceremony and lunch, and close with a special ceremony and medal distribution.

This popular event attracts hundreds of participants from Moorpark and surrounding cities, providing an opportunity for team building, competition, and camaraderie.

Creative Pursuits

Studies show that involvement in a challenging multifaceted arts curriculum has positive effects on longevity and overall health in later life. Creativity benefits self image, critical thinking, and mental agility.

To provide options for creative expression, Moorpark Active Adult Center is beginning a series of creativity programs including Watercolor, Gourd Art, and Music through the Ages classes.

Music through the Ages will meet once a month with each class focusing on a different decade or music from the movies –and stories from “behind the scenes” - as well as provide opportunities for participants to sing.

Visual art classes are offered in 8-week sessions, with four sessions scheduled this fiscal year.

Peggy Rothschild is a Supervisor at the Moorpark Active Adult Center.

Senior Center Survey Receives Unprecedented Response

A survey of California's senior centers and their infrastructure needs is drawing an unprecedented 50% response rate from senior center directors throughout the state.

The survey, which is jointly sponsored by the Congress of California Seniors and the California Commission on Aging, will document current services, facility capacity, preparedness for natural



disasters, energy utilization, telecommunications, accessibility, and maintenance issues.

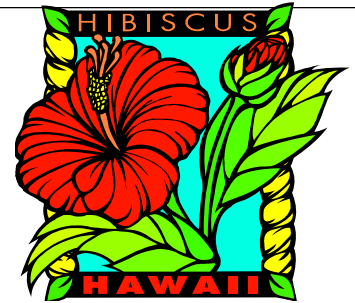
The resulting report will consist of current information on existing needs and will help to project what senior centers need

to do to serve the fast-growing number of seniors in our state. The data will be used to support policy discussions regarding fu-

ture senior center funding needs.

The Senior Center Infrastructure Survey is part of the CCoA's Senior Center Initiative, begun in 2008 as an effort to help Senior Centers prepare for the growing population of aging Baby Boomers. For more information on the initiative, go to www.ccoa.ca.gov. A listing of the state's senior centers is available at www.calseniorcenters.org.

Focus on You...



The photo on the left is a group of Hula Dance class participants at Little House (see Senior Center Profile on next page). In addition to the dance classes, they also offer Ukulele lessons.

Napa Senior Center's Activities

Linda Button Jones, Recreation Coordinator with the City of Napa, Parks & Recreation Services, says that their beginning computer classes are still a hit. They attribute this to the bargain price—\$7 for hourly classes, and also the small group setting of three seniors in each class.

In September they are starting a free Walking Club and have already had lots of interest and inquiries before registration has even begun.

Another new program advertised in the Napa Senior Center Gazette is the Club Cultural de Hispanos which will meet every Thursday from 9:00am-noon. They will start playing Loteria at 9:30am followed by an exercise class, Zumba Suavecito, at 10:30am. This new program is publicized in Spanish and English and encourages Hispanic senior citizens to come meet others and have fun.

Oakland's Senior Centers

Call to Senior Creative Writers

Thanks to generous grant donations, the Downtown Oakland Senior Center, and the West Oakland Senior Center will publish *Stepping Stones: An Anthology of Creative Writings by Seniors*. This professionally edited and published book will feature the poetry, short stories, and essays by seniors. Last year's anthology: *Shifting Landscapes* is available in Bay Area bookstores and at www.amazon.com.

Following publication, there will be a reading and book publishing party in December. The deadline for submissions is Friday, October 2, 2009. Seniors interested in participating, or for a copy of the application and rules please call Jennifer King, the Director of

the Downtown Oakland Senior Center at (510) 238-3284 or e-mail her at jdking@oaklandnet.com. There is a \$10 submission fee that includes a copy of *Stepping Stones*. Sorry, absolutely no e-mail submissions accepted.



Creative Writing Classes

At the Downtown Center, there are three creative writing programs: *Memoir* meets on the 1st & 3rd Fridays, *Short Story* class on Wednesdays; and *Poetry* on Fridays. The West Oakland Senior Center hosts a vibrant creative writing class at 9:30am every Friday.

Submitted by Jennifer King, Director of the Downtown Oakland Senior Center.

Senior Center Profile— Little House: The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center

By Kersti Lannus Delgado

Nestled in a small park in the City of Menlo Park, sits a hidden gem fondly known as “Little House”. Though small in size, Little House: The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center, bustles with conversation and activity.

Established in 1947, an innovative group of women formed Peninsula Volunteers, Inc. and became a pioneer in services for older adults. Peninsula Volunteers, Inc. programs include not only Little House, but also Meals on Wheels, and an adult day care center for individuals with challenges and limitations. Through its sister organization, Peninsula Volunteers Properties, Inc., they operate 82% of the affordable senior housing in Menlo Park.

In 1949, Little House was created with the mission to offer quality programs and services to the older adults within the surrounding community. The facility has the honor of not only being the first suburban senior center, but one of the first four senior centers in the United States. This year, Little House celebrates 60 years of providing top level programming, classes, and community services.

Little House believes that no matter what their age, people have not done all the things they would like to do, met all the people they care to know, contributed all they could to the health and welfare of their community, nor learned all they want to learn.

Imagination alone limits the educational and recreational opportunities to be found at Little House that provides not only stimulating conversation, but enrichment. A small sample of what we offer is listed below:

Movies (recent, classics, culture); lecture series (arts, culture); daily lunch program; fitness, language, music lessons; special events (dinners, dances); art classes (jewelry, painting); games (bridge, pinochle, bingo); beautician services, clubs (stamp, book, current events); computer lab/classroom (MAC, PC); art studio, lapidary, and wood workshop; estate planning/health insurance counseling; community information and referrals; podiatry, acupuncture, massage; travel desk (day, evening, week-long excursions).



Recent additions to Little House programming include informative conferences on a variety of subjects including health, memory research, technology, and crime prevention, fitness and dance classes designed to improve mobility and balance, brain fitness computer classes, as well as a new series of art and language classes,

In addition, Little House is proud to collaborate with many well-known Bay Area institutions, including the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Stanford University, and Sequoia Adult Education.

The Little House staff takes pride in creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. This is especially important to those individuals who have recently lost a loved one or have moved to the area. Friendships are often made quickly here and new loves have been known to blossom.

For many, Little House is like a second home. Many of the members have been participating in the events and programs for more than twenty years. The Little House building is very inviting and there's always something to do...where else can you go where there is a card game going on in one room and a lecture in another.

Kersti Lannus Delgado is the Director of Peninsula Volunteers, Inc.



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR SERVICE CENTERS

Founded in 1977, the California Association of Senior Service Centers (CASSC) is an organization comprised of multi-purpose Senior Centers in order to:

- Foster the diverse nature of Senior Centers.
- Promote collaboration with other state and national aging associations and increase the visibility and understanding of Senior Centers statewide.
- Encourage the development and promotion of standards in the field of Senior Centers, including issues of personnel policies and program development.
- Facilitate the exchange of information, ideas and programs among Senior Centers
- Encourage the passage and implementation of legislation at the local, state and federal levels, which will improve services to seniors.
- Sponsor and promote professional training.
- Promote active participation of all Senior Service Centers.

Next Newsletter Deadline

November 13, 2009

Mail Date: December 1, 2009

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Information by and for the Directors of Senior Centers all around California!

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