Senior Update

...The Eyes and Ears of Alameda County Seniors

12th Annual Healthy Living Festival
Patricia Nance, United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County

Join us at the 12th Annual Healthy Living Festival (HLF) on Thursday, September 17, 2015. The HLF will be held at the renowned Oakland Zoo. This exciting and fun-filled event promotes health and wellness for 55+ adults through an array of lively activities. Enjoy the day with your friends and family and start it with a walk through the Oakland Zoo. Visit the numerous health and resource exhibitors for invaluable health screenings and information. Move and groove to Tai Chi, Zumba, Line Dancing, and the Bay Area Blues Society Band. Or you can sit back, relax, and enjoy a performance from the Folklorico Dancers. Bring all your expired, unused, or unwanted medication to be properly disposed of by our Take Back Program. Take part in an action for change and learn more about the Countywide Integrated and Comprehensive Plan for Seniors. For more information about the Healthy Living Festival contact USOAC at (510) 729-0852 or email Patricia@usoac.org.
Senator Bob Wieckowski visits the Alameda County Commission on Aging

Bernie Nillo, Commissioner

The Advisory Commission on Aging was honored to have newly elected California State Senator Bob Wieckowski speak at the commission meeting. Senator Wieckowski discussed the bills he introduced to help protect seniors that were passed by Governor Jerry Brown. One bill discussed was AB 2171, this bill, would establish specified rights for residents of privately operated residential care facilities for the elderly, including, the right to be accorded dignity in their personal relationships with staff, to be granted a reasonable level of personal privacy regarding accommodations, medical treatment, personal care and assistance, and to confidential treatment of their records and personal information. The existing law, the Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly Act, provides for the licensure and regulation of residential care facilities for the elderly by the State Department of Social Services. A violation of these provisions is a misdemeanor.
Keeping physically active is key to a healthy lifestyle. But sometimes it’s best to check with your doctor before you start to exercise.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that falls are the leading cause of injury-related death and the most common cause of trauma in hospital admissions among Americans aged 65 and older. For seniors, even minor injuries can have serious consequences.

Doing a few basic exercises to improve balance just might come in handy the next time you step off a curb awkwardly or try to sit down on a moving train or bus. Participating in a balanced fitness program contributes to well-being at every age, but it’s vital for seniors. According to the Mayo Clinic, regular exercise helps control blood pressure, body weight, and cholesterol levels. It reduces the risks of hardening of the arteries, heart attack, and stroke. What’s more, exercise strengthens muscles, tendons, ligaments, and bones to help fight osteoporosis. Keeping your body strong and limber reduces the risk of injury and allows you to continue to enjoy the activities you’ve enjoyed your entire life. Staying healthy will help you maintain your independence.

If you haven’t been active for a while, be sure to take it easy and start slowly. Walking for just 5 or 10 minutes at a time, several days a week is a great way to begin. Once you can walk for 30 minutes at a time, you have built a solid foundation and are ready to add more challenging activities to your regimen. Again, please be sure to check with your doctor before beginning a new exercise regimen. They can help create a workout plan that suits your specific needs and goals.

Any activity that increases your heart rate helps build endurance. It doesn’t take long to make significant changes. After as few as six weeks of consistent exercise, you will notice that you’re more comfortable during exercise and when going about your daily activities. The best aerobics for seniors are low impact such as walking, swimming, water aerobics, cycling, and dance. Other options include yoga, tai chi, line dancing.

Even small changes in overall muscle strength can have a huge impact on your daily activities. Carrying groceries, climbing stairs, and even getting up out of a chair all require muscle. The CDC recommends people over the age of 65 participate in strength-training workouts at least twice a week. Start with small weights like 1- and 2-pound dumbbells. Try to do 10 to 15 repetitions of a variety of exercises such as bicep curls, triceps extensions, and chest presses.

For more information on fitness, please check the source references below and have fun with fitness.

Half a Century of Help with Medicare

Sarah Kim-Lee, Social Security Regional Public Affairs Specialist

On July 30, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Medicare into law with these words: “No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy the savings that they have so carefully put away over a lifetime.”

For 50 years, the Medicare program has provided essential health care services for millions of people who are age 65 or older, disabled, or have debilitating diseases. Without Medicare, many people would not be able to pay for hospital care, doctor’s visits, medical tests, preventive services, or prescription drugs.

Your Medicare card is the most important piece of identification you own as a Medicare beneficiary since medical providers will request it when you seek their services. If you need to replace a lost, stolen, or damaged Medicare card, you can do it online with a my Social Security account at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount. Requesting a replacement card through my Social Security is safe, convenient, and easy.

Going online saves you a trip to your local Social Security office or unproductive time on the phone. Request your replacement Medicare card the easy and convenient way, online, and you’ll get it in the same amount of time as you would if you applied in an office or over the phone, in about 30 days.

Part A is insurance that covers inpatient hospital stays, outpatient care in nursing facilities, hospice, and home health care.

Part B includes medical insurance for doctor services, medical supplies, outpatient care, and preventive services.

Part C is a Medicare advantage plan that allows you to choose your health care coverage through a provider organization. You must have Part A and Part B to enroll in Part C. This usually includes Medicare prescription drug coverage and may include extra benefits and services at an additional cost.

Part D is prescription drug coverage. There is a separate monthly premium for this plan; however, people with low resources and income may qualify for the Extra Help with Medicare prescription drug costs from Social Security. Visit www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp to see if you qualify.

A recent survey to Medicare beneficiaries asked Why do you love Medicare? One person stated, “It gives peace of mind not only for seniors, but for veterans and disabled people as well.” Another satisfied recipient replied, “I most likely wouldn’t be alive today without Medicare.” These are just two of the millions who endorse Medicare’s half-century strong success story.

For more information about Medicare, visit www.medicare.gov.
Save the Date
12th Annual
Healthy Living Festival
at the Oakland Zoo

“Promoting Health and Wellness for Sixty+ Adults”

Thursday, September 17, 2015
8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Fun, Friends, Health Screenings/Resources,
Great Music, Physical Activity, Lunch, Medication
Take Back, The Zoo, & More!

Join us for our Action—A Countywide Integrated
and Comprehensive Plan for Seniors

Contact United Seniors
for more information
about the Festival at (510) 729-0852 or
email Patricia at patricia@usoac.org
or visit www.usoac.org

ORGANIZED BY

USOAC
United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County
Empowering Seniors • Enriching Youth • Enhancing Community
The Benefits of Mindfulness
Maureen Schulz, Social Worker

We all know this, some version of it, and doesn’t it make a running refrain, as we go through our daily lives? We know that we should eat the right kinds of food (of course we know what those are), that we should exercise regularly, that we should do more fun things, lighten up in the face of life’s stresses, but how to do it? In a culture that values initiative and goal-directed action, many of us find ourselves unable to follow through and achieve the goals we are setting for ourselves, in spite of our best intentions. And in the face of economic or personal losses, or perhaps of living with ongoing physical or emotional pain, we find the notion of lasting happiness somewhat elusive.

The practice and cultivation of mindfulness has its roots in the Buddhist tradition, but an attitude of quiet contemplation and rituals of meditation and prayer are found in most religions. In fact, the very definition of the word “religion” favored by scholars such as Joseph Campbell, is based on the Latin prefix “re” (again) and the verb “ligare” (to bind, to connect) i.e. a re-connecting to “source energy,” whether we describe that source as God, love, or as the universal life force.

It is this re-connection then, this process of opening and creating an inner space for quiet reflection or “being” that lies at the heart of mindfulness practices. The present moment, as we experience it in reverence, without judgment but with a willingness to see and to value and appreciate what we see is our point of entry. Slow, deep breaths in and out, in and out, may help to calm and cleanse our system as we prepare to let go of tension.

From here, we may come to see, with an inner knowing, that our body is a sacred space, and that the actions we take in life are our way of expressing that. We may see the obstacles that can get in our way as we deal with daily challenges. We may find areas that need healing and realize that as we recognize this, the healing is already taking place.

What do we need to preserve this very personal connection? Do we need a few minutes every day to refresh ourselves? Do we need a regular ongoing practice of meditation?

Many methods are available but whatever the method, dedicating time toward cultivating mindfulness may make our days a little easier, our interactions with people a little more grounded, and our life’s journey a lot more joyful!
**Senior Information**

Alameda County is developing a plan for seniors and would like to hear from you. If you are 55 years or older, and live in Alameda County, please complete this 10-15 minute survey to help us learn about how Alameda County can be a better place for older adults to live. Your information will be private and will be used to help shape future programs and services for senior adults. You may take the survey online at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/ACOlderAdultSurvey2015](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ACOlderAdultSurvey2015) or call the Area Agency on Aging at (510) 577-1907 and request a paper survey.

**Free Computer Classes for Seniors**
The Center for Accessible Technology is providing free training to seniors on using computers, wireless devices, and tablets. No computer experience is necessary!

Participants get one-on-one help from instructors who can discuss everything from computer basics to joining online communities. Classes are held on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday afternoons on the Ed Roberts campus at 3075 Adeline Street, Suite 220 in Berkeley. For more information call 510-841-3224.

**A Recipe for Summer Muesli**
- 4½ cups Rolled oats
- 1 cup Lowfat milk
- 2 tablespoons Honey
- ½ cup Yogurt
- ½ cup Chopped walnuts
- ¼ cup Sunflower seeds
- 3 cups Fresh cut fruit (apples, pears, bananas, strawberries, blueberries, prunes, pineapple, mango)

Mix all ingredients together. Add yogurt and honey to taste. (Servings: 8)

Source: [www.zorbapaster.org](http://www.zorbapaster.org)

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**Call Information and Assistance at (800) 510-2020 or (510) 577-3530**
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Advisory Commission on Aging
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We're On The Web!
http://www.alamedasocialservices.org/public/services/elders_and_disabled_adults/aaa.cfm

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