

# AGING & independence

September 2011

## Paint a New Picture of Your Work Potential

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Don't walk into Ravin Armelin's class called "Skills for the 50+ Jobseeker" saying that no one will hire you because you're too old, or because of your race or because, because, because.... She's heard it all. Although this 73-year-old teacher is sympathetic, she realizes that focusing on work biases only keeps job hunters unemployed.

At one point in her life, Ravin thought she had lost out on a job because of racial prejudice, but she has since realized that she went into the interview angry and sullen, rather than determined to blow away any myths the interviewers might have had about her.

Her students need to leave their anger and excuses at the door and come ready to paint a new picture of their potential, she says. "I like inspiring people, giving them hope."

Ravin is an adjunct professor with the Continuing Education department of the San Diego Community College District. She teaches eight-week classes for older adults who need or want to be in the workforce. She challenges them to take an honest inventory of their abilities, interests and skills. Many of these students must develop new job skills as the needs of employers keep changing. And she helps them market themselves.

Not too long ago, Ravin was a student in the same class she's teaching now.

Her successful career as a sales manager with a national



healthcare organization flipped upside down at age 48 after a bicycle accident left her with a brain injury. For several years, she was depressed and couldn't focus on work. She left the job market, living off her retirement nest egg and later an inheritance from her parents.

With therapeutic help, Ravin pieced herself back together and took time to evaluate "what can I do now and what do I want to do now." She took a long, hard look at her strengths and passions, plus her challenges. During that period of self-reflection she used some of her theatrical training to develop characters and perform one-woman shows in various venues, but she came to realize that she needed steadier work as her money ran thin, even with the help of Social Security payments.

She went to the South Metro Career Center and discovered the Employment and Community Options program that provides employment assistance for older adults over the age of 55 who must return to the workforce because of economic issues. This program is funded through San Diego County and the federal Department of Labor as a result of the Older Americans Act. The number of people served is limited to 55 at any one time, but Ravin was at the right place at the right time to enter the program.

Participants receive training through the Community Col-

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## SAVE THE DATE FOR 'ARTS AND HEARTS'

Edgemoor's art therapy program — Healing Hearts at Edgemoor — has shown that the paintbrush can be mightier than a pill. This facility in Santee is home to many people with broken bodies whose spirits have been lifted by a wonderful opportunity to create art.

The program has group and individual art classes/projects throughout Edgemoor, including helping one man who must paint on his back, "like Michelangelo," says artist/educator Linda Bounds, the spark for the Healing Hearts program.

Edgemoor's medical director, Dr. Rebecca Ferrini has been stunned by the accomplishments in this art therapy program: "I realized I was seeing some kind of miracle. People who could not do much of anything for themselves, who couldn't talk, or move well, or make friends, have been able to paint together and create something transcendent and beautiful."

To help publicize this unique therapy and its benefits, Edgemoor is having an "Arts and Hearts" event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 22, at Edgemoor, 655 Park Center Dr., Santee 92071.

This will be a fun day of art for families and a way to learn more about Healing Hearts and how to support it. Besides artistic opportunities, there will be music by the Cat-illacs, food for sale, and moderately priced gifts specially created by the Healing Hearts artists. This will be a great way to get started on your holiday shopping. All proceeds will be used for art therapy and enrichment programs at Edgemoor.

For more information, visit [www.healingheartsart.org](http://www.healingheartsart.org). ♣

## 'GET CONNECTED!' FAIR IN SAN MARCOS

Would you like to learn more about Facebook? How about trying Skype? Are there tech gadgets that you want to hear more about before you buy?

The Technology & Aging Coalition of San Diego County is coordinating a Get Connected! Internet Fair 50+ from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 29, at the Lake San Marcos Resort Conference Center, 1121 La Bonita Dr., Lake San Marcos 92078. There will be several 20-minute presentations, plus an opportunity to Ask the Experts one-to-one. There will also be technology-related exhibits, handouts and prizes. Sponsors: County's Health and Human Services Agency/Behavioral Health Services; San Diego Futures Foundation and AARP California/Chapter 239.

To learn more, keep your eye on the Technology & Aging Coalition's Web site: [www.agetechsd.org](http://www.agetechsd.org). ♣

## MORE ON THE MENU (MOM) UPDATE

A special fundraising effort for the More on the Menu (MOM) program has received several generous donations recently, including a \$10,000 gift from the Hervey Family Trust. Donations received by the end of the year will be matched by the Gary and Mary West Foundation up to \$50,000. The goal of MOM is to provide fresh fruits and vegetables on a regular basis to homebound seniors on fixed incomes. To find out more, visit [www.GiveToMOM.org](http://www.GiveToMOM.org). ♣

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lege District and are placed in government or nonprofit agencies where they earn \$8 an hour working part-time. Sometimes placements turn into full-time jobs. Because of her experience as a trainer, Ravin was placed in the office of the Employment and Community Options program. She soon became invaluable and was hired by the Community College District to teach these inspirational classes.

"Right from the beginning, Ravin was a natural working with people, communicating and instructing," says Patrick Hines, director of the Employment and Community Options program. "Now as a teacher and a peer, she is really powerful in this journey that she helps people take because she's made this journey herself."

Ravin's next eight-week session of "Skills for the 50+

### FOUR TIPS FOR JOBSEEKERS

- Take a look at your attitude. Are you attracting attention in a positive or a negative way?
- Clarify what work you can and want to do; be specific. Don't say, "I'll take any job."
- Create your own back-to-work team. Since more than 70 percent of jobs come from networking, create a networking team to support you.
- Be persistent. Learn what employers want, decide what you want, know and hone your skills.

-- Ravin Armelin

Jobseeker" classes will be offered twice, starting Sept. 7 and Sept. 8, from 9 a.m. to noon. The free classes will be held at the South Metro Career Center, 4389 Imperial Ave., San Diego 92113. Older adults do not need to be enrolled in the Employment and Community Options program to attend the class. Pre-registration is not required; just attend the first class. For more

information, call (619) 388-1833. Ravin also facilitates a Job Club for her former students so they can continue to learn from and inspire one another.

Ravin is actively involved in the San Diego Mature Workforce Coalition, a community group seeking to expand the awareness among employers of the value of older adult workers. To learn more about the San Diego Mature Workforce Coalition, visit [www.sdmatureworkers.org](http://www.sdmatureworkers.org). ♣

# HONORING



## RSVP: LEAD WITH EXPERIENCE

### VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

Letty Boyer, nominated by Officer Paul Todd with the California Highway Patrol - El Cajon Unit, is our RSVP Volunteer of the Month. She was a member of the Senior Volunteer Program's first graduating class at the El Cajon office in 1995. Letty processes traffic complaints from the public, as well as reviewing and processing traffic citations generated daily by approximately 100 officers.



LETTY BOYER

Letty has received many awards, including a commendation for working the 1996 Republican National Convention. In 2002 and 2005, she received the President's Call to Service Award. In 2003, Letty received a letter of recognition from CHP Commissioner Helmick for contributions to the SVP. In 2004, Letty received a commendation for fingerprinting students at a child safety event. Letty received the Andy McReynolds Memorial Award from the Kiwanis Club of Santee as their Volunteer of the Year. In 2007, Letty was voted CHP's El Cajon Area SVP of the Year.

"Letty Boyer enjoys her service as a California Highway Patrol SVP and wouldn't have it any other way. She wears the SVP uniform proudly, and repeatedly goes above and beyond what is expected. The CHP El Cajon is extremely proud to nominate this outstanding SVP to represent us!" says Officer Todd. Congratulations, Letty. Your dedication to volunteering is making a difference in the East County.

### SPOTLIGHT: THE ARC OF SAN DIEGO

The Arc of San Diego, a private, nonprofit corporation, is one of the region's largest human-service agencies, providing an array of services to people with disabilities in San Diego County. Founded in 1951 by a determined group of people who felt they had to "do something" for children with developmental and intellectual disabilities, The Arc blends a long history of service with a national reputation for success.

Services include: Parent/Infant program, which operates services for young children, from birth to 3, who are "at risk" or whose development has been delayed; Day Training Programs provide support with essential life skills and combine classroom instruction with community integration and vocational development; and the Residential Living Services Program provides around-the-clock support and services in 12 small residences located in typical neighborhoods throughout the county. The Arc also provides Respite Services, Leisure Services, and Employment Services.

The Arc of San Diego counts on volunteers to help make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Volunteers may help with any of the following: teach an art class, assist with front-desk duties and greet the public, or serve as a camp counselor at a weeklong residential camp, as well as participate in a number of other exciting volunteer opportunities. To learn more about the opportunities available at The Arc of San Diego, contact RSVP at **(858) 505-6399**.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Public, nonprofit and health agencies seek volunteers in their communities. Potential volunteers can call RSVP at **(858) 505-6399** for information on the following opportunities:

**Senior Volunteer Patrols** throughout the county need volunteers for their community-based programs.

**AARP** needs volunteers for information referral and helping with community events.

**Reuben H. Fleet Science Center** needs exhibit gallery facilitators, information ambassadors, science center facilitators, and booth attendants.

**Santee Fire Department** needs volunteers for fire safety inspections for 3 hours a day, one day a week. Training and uniform provided.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Diego County** seeks volunteers to mentor youths.

**Senior Gleaners** offers those physically active 55+ the chance to pick fruit that goes to agencies feeding the hungry. Get fresh air, exercise while having fun in backyard gardens and orchards.

**San Marcos Senior Center** needs nutrition aides and administrative support volunteers.

## GOODBYE TO A GOOD FRIEND

We are mourning the loss of Lynn Pankhurst, a longtime member of our AIS Advisory Council and a senator in the California Senior Legislature since 1998. A memorial service has been set for 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 17, at the Country Church, 560 Palomar St., Chula Vista. Our thoughts go out to Lynn's family and friends. ♣

## SIGN UP FOR MEET THE PHARMACIST DAY

Most people don't utilize the knowledge of their local pharmacist. Patients usually pick up their prescriptions, check the box that says "no consultation," and figure they'll just take the new pills together with other medications and hope for the best. However, problems can worsen when medications are not taken properly.

Pharmacists don't just fill prescriptions; they make sure new medications will not cause adverse reactions with certain foods or other drugs. Pharmacists can offer valuable advice – including alternatives for people who have trouble swallowing pills.

To learn more about your medications, sign up for one of four free Meet the Pharmacist Days this month. These events not only have one-to-one sessions with pharmacists, but there will also be speakers, exhibits, health screenings, handouts and more, including food. So sign up today:

**Sept. 13** (Tuesday) from 9 a.m. to noon at the Cameron Family YMCA, 10123 Riverwalk Dr., Santee.

**Sept. 14** (Wednesday) from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Escondido Library, 239 Kalmia St., Escondido.

**Sept. 27** (Tuesday) from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Dr., in Balboa Park.

**Sept. 28** (Wednesday) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Kimball Senior Center, 1221 D Ave., National City.

To register for one of these Meet the Pharmacist Days, call the AARP Reservation Line at **(877) 926-8300**. ♣

## ONLINE ADVICE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

A series of live streaming workshops about caring for loved ones will be offered at noon on the dates specified below. The workshops are sponsored by the Caregiver Coalition. Each interactive seminar is free and will last about half an hour. All you need is Internet access and email.

**Sept. 2:** "Patients' Rights in the World of Nursing Homes" with attorney Lois Kelly from the nonprofit Elder Law & Advocacy.

**Sept. 9:** "The Importance of Making Your Wishes Known" with John Tastad from Sharp HospiceCare.

**Sept. 23:** "Hospice: How Do You Know When It's Time?" with Jennifer Marsh from Elizabeth Hospice.

For more information: [www.caregivercoalitionsd.org](http://www.caregivercoalitionsd.org). ♣

## CARE CAN LOWER ENERGY COSTS

San Diego Gas & Electric manages a state-sponsored program called California Alternative Rates for Energy (CARE) that provides up to a 35 percent discount on monthly energy bills for income-qualified households.

Seniors (and others) living alone or with another person can have a yearly maximum household income of \$31,800 to qualify for CARE this year. The guidelines for a household of three persons is \$37,400 and under. For four persons, the maximum income qualification is \$45,100.

To find out more about CARE and other customer assistance programs: [www.sdge.com](http://www.sdge.com) or call **(800) 411-7343**. ♣

## PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL SELF-DEFENSE

The Senior Expo: Protect Yourself & Your Wallet events, done in partnership with the District Attorney's Office and the County Library, offer physical and financial self-defense classes. Lunch is provided. We thank our sponsors: the Barona and Sycuan Tribal Governments. The next events:

**Oct. 14** (Friday) at the Poway Senior Center, 13094 Civic Center Dr., Poway 92064

**Nov. 4** (Friday) at the Mission Valley Public Library, 2123 Fenton Parkway, San Diego 92108.

The events run from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. with lunch provided. To RSVP, call **(800) 510-2020** and press "4" twice. Leave your name, phone number, and say preferred date. ♣

## SELECT A 'HEALTHIER LIVING' CLASS

The County is coordinating interactive and goal-oriented workshops called "Healthier Living" for people with chronic health conditions. Participants learn positive strategies to cope with complications related to a chronic condition. The workshops are held once a week for six weeks. New classes are scheduled each month. Next classes:

**Sept. 12 to Oct. 17** (Mondays) 1 to 3:30 p.m. at the Scripps Ranch Elder Care Alliance, 1185 Cypress Canyon Rd., San Diego 92131. To register, contact Kathy Randall: **(858) 752-0845**. ♣

**Oct. 11 to Nov. 15** (Tuesdays) 9:30 a.m. to noon at the Gary and Mary West Wellness Center, 1525 Fourth Ave., San Diego 92101. Contact Mary Mazyk: **(619) 487-0617**.

**Oct. 13 to Nov. 17** (Thursdays) 9:30 a.m. to noon at the City Heights Wellness Center, 4440 Wightman St., San Diego 92105. Call Marilyn Hermsillo: **(619) 321-2920**. ♣

## SEND IN YOUR ITEMS

This monthly calendar welcomes your contributions. Just send items by the 10th of each month preceding the issue date to: Denise G. Nelesen, editor, Aging & Independence Services, PO Box 23217, San Diego, CA 92193-3217. Or you can e-mail to: [denise.nelesen@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:denise.nelesen@sdcounty.ca.gov).

### SEPT. 1, THURSDAY

**8:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.**

“Senior of Today” conference, sponsored by the San Diego Council on Aging, will be held at the War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Dr. in Balboa Park. Includes speakers and a variety of information booths. To RSVP, call Kristi Fenick at (619) 235-1169.

### SEPT. 6, TUESDAY

**12:30 TO 2 P.M.**

“Walking with Ease,” walking groups sponsored by the Arthritis Foundation, will be offered on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays each week at the College Avenue Older Adult Center, 4855 College Ave., San Diego 92115.

## JOIN A COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

The East County Action Network meets from 1 to 3 p.m. the third Wednesday of each month at Wells Park, 1153 E. Madison, El Cajon. Call Kathy Holmes-Hardy at (619) 401-3994.

The North County Action Network meets from 1 to 3 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1370 San Marcos Blvd., Room 100, San Marcos. Call Marty Dare at (858) 505-6300.

The San Diego Community Action Network (SanDiCAN) meets from 10:30 a.m. to noon the last Tuesday of each month (but not in September or October) at the War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Dr., San Diego. For additional information, call Brian Rollins at (858) 505-6305.

The South County Action Network meets from 1 to 3 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month (but not in September) at the Bonita-Sunnyside Branch Library, 4375 Bonita Rd., Bonita. Call Anabel Kuykendall, (619) 476-6223. ♣

The Monday and Wednesday groups will walk from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For more information: (858) 637-3270.

### SEPT 12, MONDAY

**1:15 TO 3:15 P.M.**

Presentation by the nonprofit HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program) will be held at Belmont Village, 3535 Manchester Ave., Cardiff by the Sea 92007. Find out about Medicare and HMO options. For more information: (800) 434-0222.

### SEPT. 13, TUESDAY

**1 TO 2 P.M.**

“10 Ways to Stay Healthy As You Age” will be presented by Sharp physician Wendy Stein at the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 4425 Valeta St., San Diego. Registration required; call (800) 827-4277 or online at [www.sharp.com](http://www.sharp.com).

### SEPT. 19 & 26, MONDAYS

**6:30 TO 8 P.M.**

“Healing Meditation,” a free presentation to help with stress reduction, will be held at the Bonita-Sunnyside Li-

brary, 4375 Bonita Rd., 91902. For more information, call (619) 475-4642.

### SEPT. 24, SATURDAY

**5:30 TO 10 P.M.**

Evening to Remember fundraiser, benefiting the Foundation for Senior Care helping seniors in the greater Fallbrook area, will be held at the Vista Valley Country Club, 29354 Vista Valley Dr., Vista 92084. Includes dinner, dancing and a silent auction. Cost: \$75. For more information, contact Dotty Metcalf at (760) 723-7570 or email [dmetcalf@foundationforseniorcare.org](mailto:dmetcalf@foundationforseniorcare.org).

### OCT. 1, SATURDAY

**9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.**

“Caring for Loved Ones with Dementia,” a free conference for caregivers, will be held at Scripps Memorial Hospital Encinitas, Conference Center, 354 Santa Fe Dr., Encinitas 92024. To RSVP, call (800) 727-4777.

### OCT. 5, WEDNESDAY

**10 A.M.**

A free introductory hands-on computer class will be held each Wednesday in October at the Bayside Community Center, 2202 Comstock St., San Diego 92111. Call: (858) 278-0771.

### ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AIS Advisory Council will meet at noon Monday, Sept. 12, at AIS, 5560 Overland Ave., Suite 310, San Diego 92123.

### CA SENIOR LEGISLATURE

The San Diego CSL meets at 10 a.m. on the second Monday of the month at AIS.