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Monthly Newsletter - Nov. 2020 Issue 2

Celebrating Ruth Andresen's 100th BDay

By Sharon Piazza

I have contacted Ruth's neighbors, Greg and Christine Higgins. Everything is set—rain or shine—for the drive-by celebration. Ruth is very excited. Greg will have her sitting in the garage to watch the parade of cars.

Suggestion: Everyone meet at ASI. We can car-pool if necessary.

Janet Souza (a book club member) will be handling the following:

1. Janet's granddaughter will video Ruth and the parade, edit the video, and give it to Ruth.
2. Janet and I are making a "Happy Birthday Ruth" sign.
3. Janet will contact KSBW for a possible news story--good exposure for ASI.
4. We need someone to take a few pictures for the ASI website and Facebook page.

We will provide more details about this event in the next newsletter (or two).

We will finalize plans at the December Board Meeting. If you have any questions, you can contact Sharon Piazza at 831-2618087.

A Salute to Our Armed Forces

By Robert Pettit

I come from a family of Veterans. My father, eldest brother, and I served in the Army and two others in the Marines. Our Family Blessing is that all safely returned. For our Country, "We gave some, others gave all."

November is Veterans month. Please thank all the Veterans you may have in your family or those whom you meet for their courageous service.

Always remember that their sacrifices are so crucial in keeping our Country a "Home of the Brave" and a "Land of the free".

ASI Governance—That's You

The ASI By-Laws require an annual Membership meeting in January to elect the Board of Directors. This year we will have different procedures.

The Nominating Committee will post its slate in the first December newsletter, which goes to all Members. At that time, the Committee will also solicit nominations from the Membership, with a cut-off date for additional nominations of Dec. 31.

The Board anticipates (we're still working out details) publishing the nominees in the first January newsletter with instructions and links for an online and mail-in vote by the Membership. Voting could continue, say, through Jan. 15 or until a quorum has cast votes, whichever comes later.

Please continue to check the ASI newsletter and website for updated information on voting procedures this year. Your vote matters. Thank you.

ASI Cares and Shares

Monday Nov. 23, ASI members donated turkeys to the Saint Vincent De Paul organization to help in their efforts to feed the hungry on Thanksgiving.

Pictured left to right are ASI Member Karen Towle, Board Member Sally Pettit, St. Vincent De-Paul Administrator Chuck DeBord, and ASI President Dwight Freeman. In front is Member Robert Pettit. The organization feeds over 100 families monthly.



Why Your ASI Board Election Matters

ASI Board elections may seem perfunctory. Actually, it's pretty easy for ASI because our entire community—Board and Members alike—seems pretty much in alignment regarding what we want for and from ASI, even though our political beliefs may differ.

Nonetheless our small and relatively simple exercise in voting carries a profound significance. First, it gives the general Membership—the ASI populous—ultimate control over the organization. ASI exists to serve and respond to the needs of its Members. ASI has no other function.

Ten Members, in fact, can call for a special meeting and can, with the majority of the votes of a quorum, replace a Board Member or even the entire Board.

The act of voting is a powerful statement and it's no surprise that many ASI Members are dedicated Poll Workers for national elections, as so many of us believe that free and fair elections via secret ballots form the bedrock of our democracy. We work hard to make sure that legacy continues.

Please bear with us while we continue to work at making our small-scale election of the ASI Board adhere to these lofty principles. Please keep checking your newsletter for information about how we will be going about the Board election. Thank you.



Greeter Suzanne du Verrier at ASI polling place

Spotlight on Volunteers—Mary Schapper

Looking for possible exercise, social and mental opportunities brought me to the Active Seniors doorstep in 2010. I began with Chair exercise and was introduced to line dancing through that class. I then joined Sylvia and Sharon's classes for a while and then participated in ballroom dancing lessons with Sara. I have also been attending the Tai Chi classes.

Volunteering has always been a part of my life. Early years living on a farm showed me everyone helping neighbors, picking up corn, cooking for thrashers, counting collections at church and doing whatever needed to be done.

On graduation from high school I enrolled in St. Catherine's School of Nursing in Omaha. It was associated with Creighton University. I worked a couple years then married an Air Force officer who was stationed to Guam.

I spent my overseas time volunteering on military air evac stopover flights from Vietnam, taking care of the soldiers while they were on Guam, giving a break to the flight staff. I worked on Guam as a public health nurse. We worked with the Red Cross first aid response to typhoons.

After his service my husband got a job in Salinas forty years ago and my adventures began in the Salinas Valley with gleaning for AG Against Hunger, volunteering with the Air Show, being involved with the golf tournaments with The Veterans Transition Center and Marathons with Habitat for Humanity.

I worked in nursing at Hartnell College and Natividad Medical Center. I retired from nursing after 50 years, divided between nursing education and nursing administration.

More recently it seems like my volunteering has been centered around food in church settings. Fortunately the big events are scattered throughout the year with Temple Beth El, Madonna Del Sasso, Salvation Army and St. Joseph's Catholic Church. I became involved with the Active Senior monthly luncheons a few years ago with prep and serving.

I am a court appointed special advocate (CASA) where we work with foster children. Additionally I am a Board member for the Monterey County Military Officers Association.

Needless to say I am hoping that 2021 has volunteer opportunities available again. My mother instilled in our family that it is better to give of one's self than give a dollar.



Health Tip #2: Know Your Coronary Calcium Score

By Stanley M. Sokolow, DDS, Retired (stanleysokolow@gmail.com)

The most frequent cause of death in the USA is heart disease, closely followed by cancer, so if you want to live a long healthy life, pay attention to your heart. Heart attacks happen when cholesterol deposits (plaques) in the walls of the coronary arteries (the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart muscle itself) rupture and cause a clot that stops the flow of blood to part of the heart muscle. Sadly, the first symptom of coronary artery plaque in about half of heart attacks is sudden death.

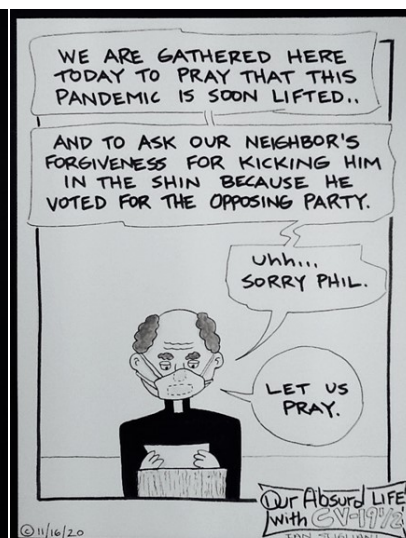
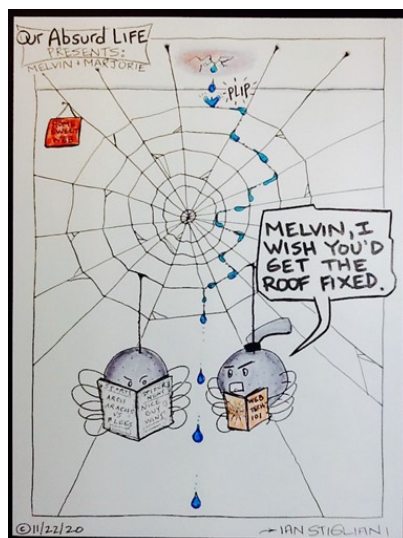
My father died at my age of a sudden heart attack, unobserved while he was gardening at home. With that happening to such a close relative, I was worried that I may have arterial plaques even though I don't have any heart symptoms. At my recent annual wellness checkup, my lab tests showed that my "bad" LDL cholesterol is slightly above normal and my "good" HDL is slightly below normal. This puts me at middle risk for a heart attack, but cholesterol levels are weak indicators and may be misleading for older adults. (More about that in a future article.) A family history of heart attack raises your risk. The heart disease associations now recommend that patients at middle risk have a test called the coronary artery calcium (CAC) scan which lets the radiologist see and measure the extent of plaques in the heart. I had my CAC scan on November 5, 2020. Ask your doctor if you should too.

For reasons not well understood yet, cholesterol can enter from the blood into the wall of an artery and accumulate, which is a plaque. As the plaque ages, the body tries to repair the defect by building a fibrous wall around it and adding calcium deposits to harden the wall. It's difficult to get an image of the soft plaques in the coronary arteries, but a special x-ray scan can see the calcium as bright white images against the gray heart muscle. The scan takes a few seconds in a high-speed CAT scan machine. No dye injection is necessary and you don't have to undress. The [x-ray dose](#) is low, about the same as 2 mammograms. Using a computer, the radiologist will measure the density and volume of the calcium deposits to create an Agatston score, named after [Arthur Agatston](#), the cardiologist who developed the procedure. If there are no deposits, the score is zero. There is no upper limit. From long-term data on many patients, the risk of having a heart attack in the next 10 years can be computed from the CAC score based on age and race. Watch this [movie for a brief explanation](#), or this 1-hour movie called "[The Widowmaker](#)".

Insurance usually doesn't cover the cost of a CAC scan. Neither does Medicare yet. In our area, the [RYAN RANCH CENTER FOR ADVANCED DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING](#) does the CAC scan for \$159.

With your Agatston score, total cholesterol, HDL, and systolic blood pressure, you can use online calculators to compute your effective arterial age and 10-year Coronary Heart Disease risk. Click here: [MESA arterial age calculator](#), [MESA 10-year CHD risk calculator](#).

I'm pleased to know that my risk is low. My arteries are 15 years younger than my calendar age, and I have a 10% risk of an adverse heart event in the next 10 years if nothing changes. I'll repeat the scan in a few years to see how rapidly it is changing. The average is 15% increase per year. If you have a below-average rate of increase, your risk is very much lower than the first score would indicate. The initial score and rate of change would help your doctor decide how aggressively to treat you with drugs, if at all. My goal is to use a heart-healthy diet to stop the increase. I am studying diets and will let you know what I learn.



Library Offers Workshops, First Friday Art Talk

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia Virtual Workshop

Date: Wednesday, December 9, 2020; Time: 10:00 am -11:30 am

Description: Alzheimer's is not normal aging. It's a disease of the brain that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior. Join us to learn about the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia, Alzheimer's disease stages, risk factors, impact and more!

You can join our workshop online or by phone. To register visit <https://tinyurl.com/UADM120920> or call 800.272.3900. Questions? Contact Erica at (831) 647-9890 or elgrant@alz.org

Note: The same program is offered in Spanish on Friday, Dec. 11, from 10:00 to 11:30 am.

Puede atender al taller virtualmente o por teléfono.

Regístrese en línea en <https://tinyurl.com/SBASM121120> o llame al 800-272-3900.

Preguntas? Pongase en contacto con Yuliana al (831) 647-9890 o ymflores@alz.org

First Friday Art Talk

Date: Friday, December 4, 2020; Time: 4:30-5:30 pm

Description: Our First Friday Art Talk is back virtually through Zoom! Come meet different local artists each month and explore the story of their exciting artwork at our free First Friday Art Talk. December's Art Talk will feature Linda Lay, a fiber artist and painter and writer & Sandra Gray, a painter, poet and photographer.

Register online at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0ocuGspzkgEtZuHkLkCL4XWb0r3AbTu0j2>

For more information, please contact Jissella at JissellaD@ci.salinas.ca.us

