

OFFICE HOURS

9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Monday through Friday
asi@activeseniorsinc.org
831-424-5066



ACTIVE SENIORS INC.

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Monthly Newsletter - April 2024

DAILY ACTIVITIES

MONDAY: Zumba, 9-10:15 AM* + Instr. Donation
Hula, 10:30-11:30* + Instr. Donation
Ukulele, Noon-2 PM** singalong/beginners/basic
Mahjong 12:30 to 3:00 PM**
Yoga/Pilates 2:45-4:00 PM

TUESDAY: Legal Services for Seniors, 9-11:30 AM
Call for required appointment
Line Dancing 10 to 11:30 AM**
Bridge# noon-3:30 PM**, Newcomers welcome.
Beginning Ballroom Lesson 6-7 PM
Social Dancing 7 to 8:00 PM
Fee \$9.00 (\$10.00 non-members)

WEDNESDAY: Yoga/Balance 8:45 to 10:00AM*
Cribbage, 10:00 AM-12:00 noon**
Book Club 10:30 AM to 11:30*
Karaoke 1st, 3rd, noon-1:00 PM*
Beginning Guitar, 2nd, 4th, 11:45-1:00*
Tai Chi 1:30 to 3:00 PM**
Chair Yoga, 3:15-4:00 PM*
Line Dancing 6:30-8:30 PM** + \$1 for instructor

THURSDAY:
Magic, 4:30-6:00 PM**
Quilting, 1st & 3rd, 9:30-11:30 AM**
Tech Assistance, 3rd, 1-3 PM**
Nar Anon family support group, 6:00-7:00 PM
Knitting/Crocheting, 4th by appt; 1-3PM**

2nd THURSDAY: MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON
Apr. 11, Noon, \$12. Program: Michael Ipson on
China Then and Now.
Sign up by 4pm Friday, Apr. 5.

FRIDAY: Yoga/Balance/Pilates 8:45-10:00 AM*
Zumba 10:15-11:15 AM* + Instr. donation
Bridge# 11:45 AM to 3:30 PM**
Western Dance, 1st and 3rd, 7-9:30 PM, \$8/\$10

SATURDAY: 1st, 3rd: Bridge# 11:30 AM-3:30 PM**
1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th; Zumba, 9-10 AM *Limit 40.*
4th, 5th: Hula, 10:30-11:30* + Instr. Donation

SATURDAY-2nd: Yoga/balance/pilates, 8:45-10 AM
(mat, block required); *max 30 participants**
Zumba, 10:15-11:15 AM; *max 40 participants**
Tai Chi, 11:30AM-1:00PM; *max 40 participants***

* \$1 Fee for members, \$2 for non-members;

** \$2 for members, \$4 for non-members

Call 831-424-5066, a week prior to reserve Bridge seat.
Office closed Sat. Bring exact change, arrive prior to start.

What Is a Civil Grand Jury?

By Yole Whitlock

(Ed. Note: How many of us know anything about a Civil Grand Jury? Given the March ASI Luncheon program I thought the April Newsletter would offer a good opportunity to educate us about it. Of course one of the first facts I learned was that Grand Jurors are sworn to work in complete secrecy except for the Jury's final published reports, which in part explains why so few of us know about the Jury's work. I hope this article helps. I might add that the Monterey County Superior Court, which creates and oversees a Civil Grand Jury annually, is currently advertising (in the Monterey County Weekly) to recruit citizens willing to serve on the Civil Grand Jury for 2024-2025.)

I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States of America and of the State of California.... Just like that, 30 members of our Monterey community volunteer each year to serve on the Civil Grand Jury for a period of one year to primarily investigate and provide reports on the operations of our local governments--Monterey County and the cities of Monterey, Salinas, Marina, Seaside, Chualar, Gonzalez, Soledad, and King City plus numerous Special Districts (e.g. Salinas Valley Memorial Health Care).

All interested and qualified applicants participate in an interview process and the superior court judges select 30 nominees from the pool of willing and able citizen volunteers. A random drawing produces a list of 19 new Civil Grand Jury members to be sworn in, with the other 11 members serving as alternates in the event a sworn juror can no longer fulfill his/her duties. A Foreperson is chosen by the Presiding Judge and after two days of training the new jurors begin their service on July 1 of the year, continuing to June 30 of the following year.

So, how did the creation of a Civil Grand Jury

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Civil Grand Jury (continued from P. 1)

evolve? What is the purpose of the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury? Why would anyone be willing to serve?

This call for a group of citizen volunteers who will be a sworn body of people convened to hear evidence, make findings, and render an impartial verdict, became a “jury” in records as old as 500 BC from the annals of Athens, Greece. The modern trial, with the use of a jury, evolved from early Germanic tribes where men of “good standing” gathered to investigate crimes and judge the accused. By the Middle Ages these juries of 6-12 men were commonplace. Eventually the idea of a “Grand” jury took hold to become a much larger jury (hence “GRAND”) investigating government misconduct or neglect.

The creation of a Grand Jury in California was mandated by the state's first Constitution, written right here in Monterey by 48 delegates who in 37 days declared that all 58 counties of the newly formed state would require that a grand jury “be drawn and summoned at least once a year in each county”.

The primary purpose of the Civil Grand Jury of Monterey (it is NOT a criminal Grand Jury and all crimes are to be referred to the DA’s office) is to examine all aspects of local government and become the watchdog of public monies to ensure honest dealings are the hallmark of our community. Jurors may examine issues suggested by the previous Civil Grand Jury; or, after meeting and identifying issues raised by newly sworn jurors, may elect to pursue those avenues; or, lastly, they may investigate a citizen’s complaint. The jurors then select an arena of concern. They investigate, they call witnesses, and provide a written report of their findings. Usually, three to five topics are tackled each year.

At the March ASI luncheon, we had the pleasure of having two current members of the Monterey Civil Grand Jury share their experiences. Christine Lerable, the current Foreperson, and Tom Mastre outlined what they do and described their responsibilities. Jurors are sworn to secrecy until their collective reports are published. When asked about her motives, Christine said she was looking for something that involved a mental challenge and she wanted to do volunteer work that had substance!

The reasons for applying to be a juror certainly vary, but it is safe to say volunteers are like-minded individuals of all ages, from many educational backgrounds, ethnically diverse, and from different socio-economic groups --all willing to devote many hours of work to ensure our \$1.9 billion county budget and multimillion dollar budgets for each city and some named Special Districts are funds well spent.

The Civil Grand Jury is always looking for volunteers who are open minded, interested in our community, live in Monterey County, have at least some knowledge of how our local governments work, and are willing to examine, analyze, and “follow the money” then report on their findings in a coherent manner.

So YOU want to be a juror! Apply online at civilgrandjuryinfo@monterey.courts.ca.gov or by calling (831) 775-5400, ext.2081. You must be a citizen of the United States and 18 years or older. You must be a resident of the State and of the County for one year immediately before being eligible to be selected. You must be in possession of your natural faculties, of ordinary intelligence, of sound judgement, and of fair character. You must possess sufficient knowledge of the English language.

My Year with the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury: By Michael Beck as told to Sera Hirasuna

I volunteered for the Grand Jury due to my commitment to civic duty--why I have volunteered as a poll worker each election since 2014 and why I was a census taker in 2000.

I know it is hard to find volunteers for the MCCGJ—on average the work requires 25-30 hrs./wk. what with getting organized, fleshing out complaints left over or submitted/re-submitted, and establishing investigation committees to do the grunt work. The editorial process drains hours away in March-April, when the Jury is under the gun to finish by April 15. So, even though the term is June to June, it seems August to April takes the bulk of the work time, nine months to finished product!

I figured I’d learn about local government, and I did--correctional facilities, schools, etched out service districts, city government, county government and spattering of state dealings. I learned robust oversight and found glaring fiefdoms that would likely never change. I learned the imbalance in how property taxes are meted out and how the state has its hand in everything, which makes change harder still.

As the elected Foreperson pro-tem, I involved myself in all committees but chaired only one, the continuity

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Civil Grand Jury (continued from P. 2)

committee, which follows through on previous CGJ reports, reviews mandatory answers (some never completed) and chides agencies that do not respond. Our committee report exemplified the paper-thin force the CGJ carries in enforcement.

Volunteers need to remember there is no "I" in TEAM. It takes a majority of the entire CGJ to act in any official capacity. Egos need to be checked at the door. The CGJ is investigative work and reporting follows a tried-and-true format. And the term is NOT one year long, but rather shortened to nine months. The key is agreeing on a format from the get-go and getting computer issues settled in July, not in December or January.

As an intimately involved veteran of the process I'd love to join another panel. But my wife threatens to divorce me if I do (due to the time commitment in March and April).

I learned SO MUCH! I met people my age, committed to the cause as much as I was, and built a few "friendships" along the way. A retiree has only so many places to meet new people. If one rules out church and saloon, volunteerism still rules supreme.

My Experience with the Monterey County Superior Court: By Vivian Aizawa as told to Sera Hirasuna

When I retired in June 2016, I received an invitation from the Monterey County Superior Court recruiting volunteers for Monterey County Civil Grand Jury (MCCGJ). I noticed there were no Chinese or Japanese named as jurors in the past 10 years, so I decided to apply just to put in an Asian name on the panel. In 2017, I went through the application, interview and selection process and I was in. But with my husband's illness and later death in Nov. 2020 I was unable to serve until 2021, when the MCCGJ came back to mind. I submitted a new application, went through the process--and got selected once again.

I found that it took a lot of time to research, sift through material, analyze data, and verify evidence and facts. It is hard to quantify hours for this kind of work. It also took time to carefully prepare for an interview too since there were specific guidelines to follow. Writing reports, going over the reports, re-writing, discussing, editing, re-editing until approved by the County Counsel and the Court can be draining. For example, each site visit can take half a day, sometimes a whole day. I would say it was a full-time job.

But I learned so much! I learned about the local governments. I learned that teamwork is the key to success. I learned that everybody has strengths and weaknesses. I learned it is wise to magnify the value of people.

Our committee wrote these reports: [Monterey County's Response to Public Safety At What Cost](#); [Monterey County Sheriff's Response to Public Safety At What Cost](#)

In a nutshell what you should know before applying is that MCGJ is a group of total strangers (19) put in one room, charged with a mission no one really knows how to do. There was a lot of learning, figuring things out, adjusting, accepting, forgiving, team working, creating. On top of that, there was a lot of reading, thinking, analyzing, searching, collecting data. We spent much time meeting, sharing, discussing, debating, agreeing, and disagreeing. Then, there were reports to write, rewrite, and edit. Those who have strong people skills and data handling skills will find this task enjoyable.

It was quite challenging for 19 adults who come from different backgrounds, with different family/work cultures, value systems, and belief systems to work together as a team toward one goal. How are we going to establish trust? I learned that the most important thing in the process is knowing each other and understanding where all of us are coming from. It is only then that we understand how and why matters are perceived and treated in their particular ways. Also, every member has to accept the responsibility to create and maintain a safe work environment because we will make mistakes.

The social component is very important in this regard. With well-designed social activities, the jurors get to know each other as people as opposed to simply fellow jurors. I thoroughly enjoyed the work, and I appreciated the opportunity to serve.

ASI 2024 Holiday Closures:

MAY 27th Closed for Memorial Day
JULY 4th & 5th Closed for Independence Day
SEPTEMBER 2nd Closed for Labor Day
NOVEMBER 5 Closed for Election
NOVEMBER 11th Closed for Veterans Day
NOVEMBER 28th & 29th Closed for Thanksgiving
DECEMBER 23rd through January 1st, 2025
Closed for Christmas, New Year's Eve
and New Year's Day. We will open January 2.

Volunteer Help Needed

By Sera Hirasuna, ASI's very active Activity Director

April is National Volunteer month in the [United States](#). The month is dedicated to honoring all the volunteers in our communities. Active Seniors, Inc. is completely VOLUNTEER driven. There is a "special magic" operating at ASI. Pat yourself--and the person next to you--on the back...as we salute and thank YOU!

ASI needs a few people to work the office on a half-day shifts. The office is the nerve center for the whole organization. You'll be trained in procedures that help ASI run smoothly and help our Members. Lead: Karen.

Second Thursday luncheons. *Kitchen*: Need help 9 am Wed. prior to luncheon; at 10 am Thursday for food setup; and for continuous minor cleaning Thurs. *Dining room*: Need two-three men to set up tables before 9 am Thurs. so we can set tablecloths, silverware, table decorations. Also need take-down help. Lead: Lionel.

Servers: We need back-up servers if regular server absent. A good chance to hear interesting presentations. If you want the meal, you need to register and buy it. Lead: Margaret.

You may leave phone messages addressed to team leads at ASI, 831- 424-5066. Or email Sera at sera_hirasuna@yahoo.com to volunteer or ask questions.

The Western Stage Needs Theater Worker Housing

By John Bridges, TWS Company Manager

The Western Stage is celebrating its 50th anniversary. We use our great local talent for TWS productions but we also bring in talent from out of the area and TWS helps find housing for them. Our need is great this season. A typical stay is 4-6 weeks for directors/designers, 8-10 weeks for actors/technicians. If you have a spare room or an in-law cottage (with access to bathroom, laundry and kitchen), please contact John Bridges at jbridges@hartnell.edu.

April Luncheon Speaker

By Donna Elder-Holifield

Since 1979, when China opened its doors to visitors, the many changes in this vast country have created new challenges and opportunities for China and the existing world order. Our luncheon speaker, Michael Ipson, will offer insight into the dynamics of a new China driven by the Chinese Communist Party.

Mr. Ipson began his engagement with China as an exchange student at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. At the University he met and married his wife, Gloria Dan Yuk-Sill in 1966. After graduate studies in Chinese and Vietnamese history, he began his career in banking. His banking career included 21 years in Hong Kong and seven years in China. His last post was Country Manager for China and Mongolia with International Finance Corporation, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group. He served in this post from 2007-2009. Finally, Mr. Ipson served as a board director for three Chinese financial institutions until 2019. After hearing about the very recent additional crack downs and heavy restrictions China has made on Hong Kong's freedoms, I am very happy that Mike and his family are here with us.

Luncheon Menu: Take Me Out to the Ball Game—Hamburgers/Hot Dogs, Potato Salad, Ballpark snacks and—Ice Cream Bar.

Great Food Distribution

Thanks to volunteers who made the March food distribution a tremendous success. We distributed 250+ bags of food. Next month's distribution is Thurs. April 25.

April Birthdays

Kenneth Allen	Bonnie Low
Josie Avila	Patty Marlow
Sue Brockett	Carol Marquez
Mary Bumgarner	Diana Martella
Kathleen Callahan	Josie Matsumoto
Jayne Carolan	Margaret Neal
Steven Cepin	Neva Petersen
Bernard Cleyet	Kevin Philbin
Willam Clune	Carla Plymesser
Veronica Cordoba	Connie Reader
Warren Denbow	Cindi Reeve
Renee Fowler	Susan Riddoch
Karen Gervais	Connie Sapien
Rory Gomez-Aarons	David Schott
Crispina Gonzalvo	Michaele Serasio
Linda Hall	Sondra Singh
Lucy Hansen	Arline Soares
Marie Haro	Jim Storm
Corinne Hernandez	Suzanne Stormon
Sera Hirasuna	Mary A. Surber
Lonnie Hoffington	Maggie Torres
Daniel Ipson	Lila Vezzolo
Pat Kinn	Beverly Williams
Elaine Koppany	Leslie Wolfson
Roselyn Lambert	Noriko Yamaguchi
Anita Leffel	



Health Tip #30: An Important Blood Test Your Doctor Hasn't Done

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

I'm writing this article on March 24, the day that the [Family Heart Foundation](#) has declared "Lipoprotein(a) Awareness Day". In spite of all the concern about heart attacks and strokes, with emphasis on testing and treating "high cholesterol" carried by LDL particles in the blood, there's a different cause of cardiovascular disease that is almost completely overlooked by doctors but which is gaining attention.

It is an altered LDL particle called lipoprotein "little a" or Lp(a) or "L P little a". Experts estimate about 20% of people have this genetic defect but it is only tested in as few as 1%, of the general public. European and Canadian medical experts say everyone should be tested for it at least once in their lifetime, but the US medical guidelines haven't come around that far yet. Because the concentration of Lp(a) remains roughly constant from age five on, repeated testing isn't normally necessary, at least until treatment to lower it is available. If you have high Lp(a), your children should be tested because it is caused by a gene that is inherited by offspring.

Lp(a) is an LDL particle to which is attached a long molecule, like the tail on a kite. This "(a)" tail has a portion which blocks the normal anti-clotting mechanism that removes tiny clots when they form inside arteries in the normal wear-and-tear of the artery lining. Lp(a) also contributes to the formation of plaques within the artery walls.

When plaques get big and rupture, a large blood clot forms which can block blood flow. Therefore a high concentration of Lp(a) is a risk factor for heart attacks, ischemic strokes, and deep vein thromboses. The usual lipids tests don't measure Lp(a), in fact they lump it in with the LDL, but it's easy for your doctor to order the Lp(a) test, and it's not very expensive even if not covered by insurance.

Lp(a) measurements are reported either by weight density (mg/dL) or by particle-count density (nmol/L). The latter is preferred because the (a) tail occurs in varying lengths among individuals, so the weight of the particle varies. The number of particles per unit volume is a more uniform way to compare test results with population norms. Lp(a) is usually considered high when above 50 mg/dL or above 125 nmol/L, but some authorities say above 100 nmol/L and others say above 150 nmol/L. In addition to Lp(a) being a causal factor in heart attacks and strokes, it also causes the aortic valve of the heart to stiffen from calcium deposits, which results in the failure of the valve to completely close off back-flow of blood from the aorta into the heart after every heartbeat. This is called calcific aortic stenosis, and it leads to heart failure if not corrected.

The study "[Lp\(a\) Lipoprotein, Vascular Disease, and Mortality in the Elderly](#)" found men over age 65 with Lp(a) below 50 mg/dL (not considered high) have increased risk of stroke. Concentrations of 8.2-47.5 mg/dL associate with triple the risk vs. Lp(a) less than 1.2 mg/dL, and concentrations of 1.2-8.1 had double the risk of stroke. For unknown reasons, women didn't have an increased risk. But the story is different for much higher levels.

Although Lp(a) was discovered in 1963, doctors have paid very little attention to it until recently. Perhaps this was because there is no good drug yet to treat it. Statins for lowering cholesterol don't lower Lp(a) and may even worsen it. Drug makers are testing several chemicals to either block the production of the (a) molecule in the liver, or to neutralize it. No doubt, when these drugs have been approved, they are going to be very expensive and probably only used on patients with the highest levels of Lp(a) at first.

Meanwhile, if you have Lp(a), there are some things you can do to reduce risk: stop smoking or vaping, keep a normal body weight and blood pressure, do moderate exercise, avoid excessive carbohydrates that cause insulin resistance and diabetes, sleep well. Low-dose (81 mg) baby aspirin inhibits blood clotting, so if your Lp(a) is very high, aspirin may reduce your risk of stroke and heart attack more than increasing your risk of excessive bleeding.

Normally aspirin is not recommended for primary prevention of heart attacks, but this could be an exception where benefit exceeds risk. For extremely high Lp(a), there is a procedure called apheresis, similar to dialysis, where your blood is passed through a machine for three hours every two weeks to filter out the Lp(a) and LDL particles. As always, discuss all of this with your doctor.

Consider Karaoke

Karaoke singing, in particular, offers a holistic mental workout that **promotes overall brain health and creativity**. Studies have shown that singing can improve your memory and even increase your IQ over time. Join us for karaoke at ASI every first and third Wednesday from 12-1.



ACTIVE SENIORS, INC.
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100 Harvest St.
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Ready, Set, Let's Go! Traveling With ASI in 2024

By Sharon Piazza, Tours Director

Your ASI Tour Directors are busy planning 2024 trips. Fliers will be available at ASI or on our website once we have finalized pricing. For further information call or text Sharon at 831-261-8087. Here's a tentative list of activities and tours being arranged:

May 4 (Saturday): Kentucky Derby Day at Golden Gate Fields in Berkeley (last time).

June 14 (Friday): Rosie the Riveter Museum on "Rosie Friday" in Richmond.

July TBA: Exploratorium in San Francisco.

August TBA: Mystery Trip.

October 12 (Saturday): Fleet Week in San Francisco.

Plays in San Jose or San Francisco as available.

From the Salinas Public Library

Genealogy Basics: Land Records. **When:** Thurs. April 18, 5:30-7:00 PM. **Where:** Virtual. **Description:** Availability of land was a prime attraction for immigrants to the United States. Land was also used as a reward for those who served in the Revolution and other early conflicts. The sale or bestowing of land brings documentation with it, and offers both solid data and clues for further research. We'll cover the various records, where to find them, and where to look for supporting evidence as you research your ancestors. **To Register:** <https://bit.ly/3RIQ9zR>; **Website Link:** [Virtual | Genealogy Basics: Land Records | Salinas Public Library](#)

Virtual Genealogy Work Group. **When:** Tues., April 23, 6:00-7:00 PM. **Where:** Online Virtual. **Description:** Researching family history can be exciting, as well as challenging. Working groups are a chance to share ideas, resources, and support. We'll use Zoom to meet; all experience levels welcome. For info, contact Cathy: CathleenA@ci.salinas.ca.us. **Cost:** Free. **Website Link:** [Virtual | Genealogy Work Group | Salinas Public Library](#).