

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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Salinas CA 93901-3211
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Monthly Newsletter - March 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**

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, 3rd, 6:00-7:00 PM
Knitting/Crocheting, 4th by appt; 1-3PM**

2nd THURSDAY: MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON
Mar. 14, Noon, \$12. Program: Christine Lerable
on the Grand Jury and how it works.
Sign up by 4pm Friday, Mar. 8.

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, 7-9:30 PM, 1st and 3rd, \$8/\$10

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

ASI Closed March 5 for Election

On March 5, 2024, California holds its Presidential Primary Election. For years ASI staff have opened the facility to serve as a polling place for our community and this year is no different. And, just as a heads up, ASI also will be closed Nov. 5 for the General Election.

A cadre of ASI Volunteers staff the polls and donate their stipends to ASI, all in an effort to provide community residents an opportunity to vote in a free, fair, accurate and accessible election. Wherever you vote, be sure and thank your poll workers for their time and dedication to the electoral process and for their work for *your* benefit.

Please be sure to VOTE! When you vote you are making a commitment to your community, your State and your Nation that you care. That you want to see those entities well governed and responsive to the needs and desires of the larger community. That you recognize and respect the basic rights of everyone in the community. And that you are a willing participant in efforts, however small, to make our planet a better place to live.

If you have questions, problems or issues with your ballot, workers at your polling place are there specifically to make sure you can cast a ballot and know it will count.

Just a couple of reminders. If you are not registered you can register and vote right at the polls. If you are registered you most likely got a ballot in the mail, which you will have to account for—*if you come to the polling place to vote, please remember to bring it with you!*

There are several other ways to account for it but the easiest is to simply vote that ballot and deposit it at the polls, the Monterey Co. Elections Dept. or one of several other locations anytime between now and 8:00 PM on March 5.

Thank you for voting and for caring.

New Member Orientation Meeting March 18

By Sera Hirasuna, ASI Activity Coordinator

Are you new to ASI and want to know more about activities offered here? Or maybe you are not exactly newly-joined but now want to seriously get “active” here. In either case, you are invited to a New Member’s Orientation on Monday, March 18 from 2:30-3:30 pm.

New Members should have received an email from ASI. If you did, just RSVP to it. You can also email us at asi@activeseniorsinc.org. Alternatively, you can call and leave your name and phone number with an ASI office volunteer at 831-424-5066. Please RSVP by March 15.

You’ll meet some of the Board Members and activity leaders who make this place run. If you can’t make this meeting, we will be holding at least two more orientations this year, depending on demand. Look for them and thank you for your interest in what happens at ASI.

ASI 2024 Holiday Closures:

MARCH 5 Closed for Election
MARCH 29TH Close at Noon for Good Friday.
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.

Learn About the Rosies

Join us to visit the museum that honors the "We Can Do It" women of World War II. The "Rosies" excelled in riveting and welding and became an inspiration to all generations for their courage and commitment and for blazing the trail that changed the way women were viewed in the workforce.

We'll view a film called "Home Front Heroes" explaining how the "Rosies" helped build Richmond, CA, into a boomtown in the early 1940s. Following the film one or two "Rosies" will share their experiences and answer questions. In the afternoon the film "Blossoms and Thorns" will focus on Richmond's Japanese-American citizens who were incarcerated during World War II. Lunch is at Assemble Restaurant just steps from the Museum.

DATE: Friday, June 14; **TIME:** 8:45 AM-6:30 PM; **COST:** \$106.00 per person—includes transportation, entry to museum, and lunch. We are limited to 30 people due to the age of the "Rosies". Reservations with payment needed by Wed., May 29. See flyer at ASI. For information contact Sharon Piazza, Tour Director, 831-261-8087.



California Driver’s License Renewal Exam Now Online

by Dick Light

For drivers over 70+ years of age, you must renew your driver’s license in person at the DMV every five years. The good news is you can now complete most of the requirements online, including taking the knowledge test. Go to <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/senior-drivers/> for information.

You will have to fill out forms and pay the DMV \$45 via direct bank transfer or credit card. It takes about 15 minutes to fill out the forms and an additional 45 minutes to take the test. The DMV website directs you to “select ‘eLearning’ on your renewal” to take a “20 minute no-fail self-paced exam that you take online from home.” It describes “[eLearning](#)” as “an easy open-book no-fail course.”

To view the eLearning document

1. Complete the online driver’s license application (eDL44).
2. If eligible, you will be invited to participate in the DMV Virtual Test Center.
3. Select “**I want to complete my test through eLearning.**”
4. Follow the application fee payment steps.

Upon successful payment, you will receive a *Virtual Test Center Access* email with a link to the eLearning course and additional information.

You still must go to DMV to have a photo taken and to read the eye chart. After finishing the test, I made an appointment at the Seaside DMV, and was in and out in 20 minutes!

From the Salinas Public Library

Genealogy Basics: Getting Started

When: Wed., March 6, 5:30-7:00 PM; **Where:** Virtual; **Description:** If you're interested in your family history and want to give genealogy a try, this introduction covers the basics. You'll find what resources people use the most, how to gather info from family and friends, making the most of the internet, and more.

To Register: <https://bit.ly/3thtcdt>; **Website Link:** <https://salinaspubliclibrary.org/learn-explore/research-learning/events/virtual-genealogy-basics-getting-started-4>

Healthy Living Series: Be a Match: You Could Save a Life One Day

When: Thurs., March 7, 4:00-6:00 PM;

Where: El Gabilan Library; **Description:**

Every 3-4 minutes, someone in the U.S. is diagnosed with a blood cancer. The good news is anyone could help save a life by becoming a donor and it starts with a simple cheek swab. You can learn more about blood cancers and disorders, how to join the donor registry, and what happens after you donate. You will learn what steps to take if you are a match. Doctors rely on donors in the 18-40 age range nearly 75% of the time, so if you or a family member fits that range, please consider attending. No registration required. Questions? Contact Kate at KathrynB@ci.salinas.ca.us; **Website Link:** <https://salinaspubliclibrary.org/learn-explore/research-learning/events/egl-healthy-living-series-be-match-you-could-save-life-one>



Local Author Talk: Julia Vee

When: Thurs. March 14, 5:00-6:00 PM; **Where:** El Gabilan Library;

Description: Julia Vee loves stories of magic and monsters. Her Asian Studies degree deepened her appreciation for the region's history and lore. Even while working as a lawyer for two decades, she nurtured her creative spark. Her book *Ebony Gate* is a love letter to San Francisco, highlighting one woman's journey to find her place in the world. Vee and co-author Labelle fill *Ebony Gate* with things they love, including Asian myth and monsters, secret societies, and a loveable grandma. Julia will touch on her path to publication and present a Flash Fiction Workshop. She'll walk you through this guided writing session including tips and tricks for tightening up your prose. Learn more about Julia's journey at her in-person author talk.

To Register: <https://forms.office.com/g/ZwRZpJpwcS>; **Website Link:** [EGL | Local Author Talk: Julia Vee | Salinas Public Library](#); Questions? Contact César at CesarP@ci.salinas.ca.us

Genealogy Basics: Using the Census

When: Tues., March 19, 5:30-7:00 PM; **Where:** Virtual; **Description:** Since 1790, the U.S. Census has been a resource both for community planning and genealogists. Once you find a relative, the wealth of information can help establish or confirm details about an ancestor's life. We'll talk about all the Census has and doesn't have for genealogical research including supplementary documents and unexpected notations. **To Register:** <https://bit.ly/3RJCIey>; **Website Link:** [Virtual | Genealogy Basics: Using the Census | Salinas Public Library](#)

March Birthdays

Vivian Aizawa
Judi Akiyoshi
Moises Alcalá
Mercedes Alcantara
Rosie Alvarez
Emmy Ames
Connie Bafford
Helen Baker
Janet Barnes
Anna Camel
Joan Cerna
Candice Chin
Raylene Clough
George Coe
Leticia Crymes
Becky Desmet
Barbara Dormody
Joan Duafala
Henrietta Dursa
Ken Dursa
Kathleen Erickson
John Falby
Haleema Farrar
Victoria Fischer
Gaye Freedman
Pat Fritsche
Leeanna Gattis
Donna Grossen
Roberta Hays
Esperanza Hernandez

Frances Hershberger
Terry Hoffington
Jana Lamarque
Leroy Livingston
Tim Lopez
Joyce Lowe
Margaret Martinez
Molly McCarty
Linda McClure
Steve McShane
Linda Mendoza
Nina Mendoza
George Mills
Patricia Morgan
John Newkirk
Nancy Newkirk
Sandra Ocampo
Sally Pettit
Theresa Riley
Anthony Ryan
David Salinas
Susan Shaw
Kathleen Slattery
Cynthia Stanford
Marsha Stout
Barry Tomasini
Cynthia Tsukamoto
Robin Valentine
Marie Viarengo
Asayo Westerly



A Valentine's Yoga

By Robert Pettit

These students (>>>) attended my Yoga class on Valentine's Day. We celebrated it with a plethora of homemade cookies and coffee (of course, AFTER class) Many wore some red in honor of the Day.



Yoga/Pilates Group Promotes Health through Exercise and Community

by Sera Hirasuna

Robert Pettit who devoted years to the martial arts and physical fitness had been practicing and teaching Hatha Vinyasa Yoga for five years when he met Karen Towle in a singing group. Karen had always been physically active through her life--running, biking, swimming, playing tennis—and was looking for exercise that fit into a hectic family-career schedule.

Why not start a Yoga group at ASI? So in 2010, Robert started teaching Yoga to three seniors at ASI, and it wasn't long until others joined. Robert soon realized he needed to modify his teaching techniques "to give members what they wanted and needed—balance, strength and endurance." It was nicknamed "Combat Yoga," by some of the members as it focused on core and upper body strength. Karen didn't know Yoga, but she was a "quick study," kept at it, lost 35 lbs., gained strength and flexibility, and later helped Robert teach it.

In 2020, all classes were cancelled. Robert and Karen remedied the contact problem, but it required a team effort. Bob McGregor used his phone to video Robert and Karen teaching Yoga, and Dwight Freedman sent it out online to 20+ class members. Many shared the videos with friends and family. These videos were more than mere information; they broke the isolation so many felt, revived people's minds, bodies, and spirits--and kept the community together. Robert says he still runs into people who thank him.

Since the pandemic, members seem more aware and intentional about caring for one another. They openly laugh together in appreciation of a new or difficult move. Robert adds that if anyone is sick or missing, people in the community send cards or call to check on them.

He reassures those who may fear Yoga because of past injury or disability that everyone starts "at all levels of fitness" and his class "offers 'something for everyone' whether it's feeling better or just socializing after class," essential for people who don't have that opportunity.

Students often express their joy in doing Yoga. Janet Street, who has been a loyal Yoga member "from the beginning" is a case in point. Janet describes herself as athletic throughout her life—cheering, running, bowling, dancing. She can get into yoga poses that made this writer gasp (Janet at right, Mary Linzer left in photo). She advises, "Just keep doing it...it's use it or lose it. This class makes me really happy; in fact, it's my favorite class!" Did I mention that Janet is 90 years young?



The teachers group has expanded. Joining Robert and Karen are John Favero, Gerry Reynolds, "Vito" (Witold) Piekarski, Elizabeth Birkeland, and Mary Linzer. Mary added balance exercises at the top of the program 4-5 years ago, and the others substitute when needed. Each offers a different side of Yoga, which now includes Pilates exercises. When Yoga mats unfurl along with yoga blocks, the classroom is full with 35-37 people. Yoga is one of ASI's most popular activities, with an added Saturday class to include "still-working" members.

Karen sums up the group's philosophy: "The most important thing is to just do what you can, as much as you can, for as long as you can." And Robert adds an additional motto, printed on the back of our Yoga T-shirts--And One More--which truly reflects the goal of physical improvement. Indeed, it's a good motto for life!

Last Call for...Memberships

Final membership invoices go out the first week of March. Members who do not respond will soon have ASI memberships terminated. But rest assured you can pay your dues and reinstate your membership any time.

Member Profile—Margaret Neal

By Yole Whitlock

Service: An act of helpful activity. **Volunteer:** A person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task. Put them together and what have you got? Well, you have Margaret Neal's intrepid servers who joyfully and willingly give of their time the second Thursday of every month to ensure YOU get to enjoy your tasty ASI luncheon.

Margaret, like many ASI Members, has a tale to tell how and when she ended up in Salinas. Born in Vermont, her family moved to Ventura, CA. Her education took her from K-high school in Southern California to the lakes and hills of Stevens Women's College in Columbia, MO, and back again to sunny California to finish her degree at UC Santa Barbara.

Graduate school at San Jose State brought her closer to this area and her brother's family in Los Gatos, and, finally, after several moves to other states, she began a teaching career in Gonzalez, and a place in the Curriculum and Staff Development Office at the Monterey Co. Office of Education writing state grants and leading teacher development programs throughout South Monterey Co.

After retiring, she packed up everything but her home in Salinas, which she fortuitously kept, and headed to Santa Fe, NM. She had always wanted to be involved with the art and Indian culture of the area and for seven or eight years, she lived her dream. But the pull of family and friends still in the Monterey area drew her back where her home awaited her.

By 2014, she was encouraged to bring her "grant" skills to the aid of ASI and was instrumental in securing the \$26,000 grant for solar panels for the facility (she is currently working on a technology grant). ASI utility fees are super low thanks to the grant! She joined the ASI Board and found her voice was heard. She has especially appreciated the inclusion of both women and men in this "retired" community as we come together to provide activities that enrich our physical, mental, health and social needs.

During her first years at ASI, Covid raised its ugly head and disrupted our lives, but Margaret, as a Board Member under the Presidency of Dwight Freedman, was determined to get our members back up and running in a timely manner. Working closely with the Monterey Co. Health Dept., the Board set protocols to reopen.

Some of you may remember Margaret taking temperatures and checking vaccine statuses at the door to ensure everyone was safe. She was also instrumental in devising our current "served" lunch format to get food to the table quickly and safely with the added benefit of service by a volunteer who cares about you. All they expect is a "thank you" but they get so much more knowing they can connect with others and be present in the moment.

A few days before the monthly luncheon, Margaret emails her dozen or so volunteers. They gather in Room B an hour before the luncheon and check the schedule, primed for work. They don ASI aprons and latex gloves, seamlessly putting out carafes of water, adding bread baskets, placing the dessert, and finally bringing the meal (prepared by more volunteer hands in the kitchen). Then they return to see what else they can do! They are energetic, excited, and yes, joyful worker bees – all under the direction of Margaret who gets the job done!



Left to right are Loretta Salinas, Sera Hirasuna, Teresa Ortiz, Kathleen Vo, Elizabeth and Brian Birkeland, Debbie Panelli, and Margaret Neal

Valentine Project a Huge Success

All we can say is Thank You! The Alliance on Aging Valentine Project, with the help of many groups including Active Seniors and its Sassy Quilters group (>>>), was a hit for its third year, with we don't know how many extra mostly handmade valentines generated beyond the 3,000 needed. The Alliance saves them for next year.

It's still a lot of work but we know now we can do it. It has almost taken on a life of its own, with card makers looking forward to next year, creating and bringing in cards without even being asked. It's perhaps the most gratifying project many of us have ever worked on.





Diet and Dementia: What Foods Increase/Decrease Alzheimer's Risk?

Thanks to Jim Tripp

In the Blue Zone region of Ikaria, Greece, dementia among people over 85 is rare--over 75% less common than in the United States. (About half of Americans over 85 years old show signs of Alzheimer's disease.)

Depression, cardiovascular disease, and Type 2 diabetes are also rare. Ikarians eat a more austere form of what Americans call the Mediterranean diet, and what we call the plant-slant diet common to all Blue Zone areas: 95 percent of their calories come from plant foods and meat is eaten sparingly.

The [NutritionFacts](#) video below breaks down the science of why dementia is much lower among people who eat a Mediterranean-style diet. Here's a short summary of the video.

Video Summary: There is considerable scientific evidence that healthy dietary patterns such as the Mediterranean diet are associated with lower Alzheimer's risk and slower cognitive decline. The protective components of that diet appear to be to be the **high plant consumption** and the **lower fat consumption**.

China has the lowest fat intake and lowest Alzheimer's rates and the United States has the highest fat intake and highest Alzheimer's rates. Looking closer, the type of fat matters. Harvard researchers found that higher saturated fat intake was associated with a poorer trajectory of cognition and memory. Women with the highest saturated fat intake had 60 to 70 percent greater odds for the worst change on brain function.

Foods high in saturated fat: Beef, lamb, pork, butter, cheese, sausages. These are foods to avoid.

*The [Mediterranean Diet](#) (MeDi) referenced in the studies is characterized by:

High intake of vegetables, legumes, fruits, and cereals

High intake of unsaturated fatty acids (mostly in the form of olive oil)

Low intake of saturated fatty acids

Moderately high intake of fish

Low-to-moderate intake of dairy products (mostly cheese or yogurt); Low intake of meat and poultry

Regular moderate amount of ethanol, primarily wine and generally with meals.