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ON THE COVER

Michael Troutman, DMT Imaging
Even sunsets are more beautiful here.

Photos: Randy Tunnell

EDITOR'S NOTE



greetings!

I HOPE your 2018 has been great so far.

I've been enjoying my first year or so of officially being eligible for some senior discounts. They're very cool. I thought after I turned 35 (the minimum age to be president) there was nothing to look forward to in terms of milestones, but that's not true.

At 59-and-a-half, I can take money out of my IRA without penalties. (Maybe I'll finally get that VW bus I've always wanted.) Social Security — if it exists — will be nice, as will whatever Medicare looks like.

I can't get my face on a Smucker's jar on the "Today Show" for at least another few decades, at which point I expect the state of cosmetic surgery to be such that Dr. Sunde or Dr. Morwood will be able to make me look at least as good as Sophia Loren does now.

Honestly, seniors, life here in paradise is great. Seventy is definitely the new 40. In these pages, you'll read about athletes and Greek dancers who prove it. We have advice on handling grief and more on my continuing journey into curmudgeonry.

There's a yummy seafood recipe, and we take a dive into the science of shining the light on arthritic knees.

As always, I hope you enjoy this edition — and that you learn something new

Kind regards,

Elaine Hesser
Editor



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GRIEVING?

*You aren't alone — or at least,
you don't have to be.*

By ELAINE HESSER

WHAT'S THE difference between death and taxes? Answer: Nobody seems to mind talking about taxes.

Death is another issue entirely. Not only don't most folks want to face it, they don't even want to discuss it. However, scientific studies have shown that seniors who are grieving the death of a spouse can have problems with sleep and getting proper nutrition, both of which are essential to good health.

After someone dies, there's a flurry of activity. Food is brought over, people pay condolence calls, there's a funeral to plan, and plenty of legal and bureaucratic details to handle. All of that provides some distraction — for a while.

Often, however, when things return to "normal," the real weight of the loss sets in. While friends fear mentioning the dead will hurt too much, the bereaved person doesn't want to be a burden or a "downer" by bringing it up either.

The older the surviving person is, the fewer friends their own age they're likely to have, too. All of that can lead to a sense of isolation and feeling emotionally "stuck" in the grief process, as if things may never get better.

That's when a couple of local groups can help. The Alliance on Aging, with offices in Monterey and Salinas, offers free counseling to anyone 55 or older on a wide range of issues, grieving among them.

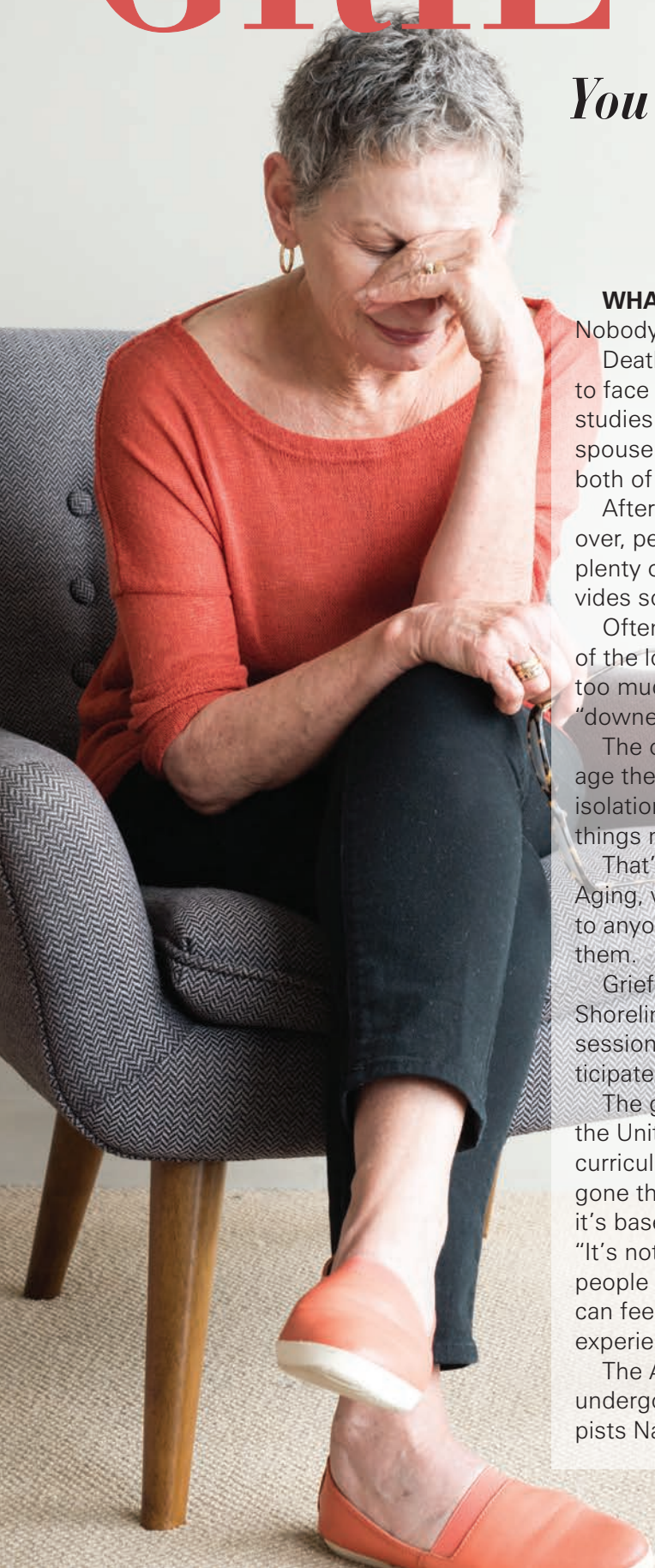
GriefShare, a group for adults led by Terry and Betsy Davis at Shoreline Community Church in Monterey, meets weekly for 13 sessions and is held three times a year. There is no charge to participate, and non-church-members are welcome.

The group — one of many throughout the United States — follows a structured curriculum developed by experts who have gone through loss themselves. Although it's based in Christian beliefs, Betsy said, "It's not a heavy-duty Bible study," and people who are not particularly religious can feel comfortable and benefit from the experience.

The Alliance's volunteer peer counselors undergo training from experienced therapists Nan Heflin and Irene R. Valverde.



Nan Heflin





Betsy and Terry Davis lead a 13-week-long group for grieving adults at Shoreline Community Church.

Valverde, who leads the Spanish-speaking counselors, noted the importance of making a connection appropriate to the person and their background, and said that's often easier with someone their own age.

There's an initial screening by Heflin or Valverde to determine the prospective client's needs and goals, and to make sure there aren't more serious issues that require a referral to a professional. Then the client is paired up with a peer counselor, who can meet with them for up to 10 sessions.

Heflin has been working for more than 25 years with similar counseling programs, both here and in the San Francisco Bay Area. "There's a lot of value in people talking to their peers," she said.

"Just because someone dies, doesn't mean that relationship has ended," Heflin said. While that may sound strange at first blush, think about how many people you know

who still talk to their departed husbands or wives, or visit a grave regularly.

The counselor's job is to listen thoughtfully as clients tell their stories, and as memories and feelings emerge, they can help them talk them through. These can vary widely and can include regrets, the need to forgive the person who's gone or guilt from the past. Valverde called it "trying to find the message in the mess."

The goal is to listen to those messages, resolve any issues when possible and help the person continue to relate to their loved ones through their memories.

Valverde added that it was good to ask someone who is grieving about the person who died. She suggested questions like, "What do you miss most about your wife?" or "What was your husband's favorite meal? Do you still make it?" that show genuine interest in hearing their memories and how they are

doing.

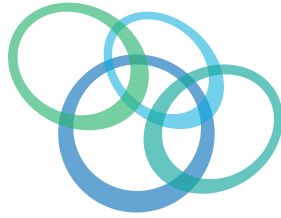
GriefShare takes a group approach, although Shoreline also offers one-on-one counseling to members and non-members alike. Each meeting in GriefShare is usually attended by about 20 people, and has a specific topic, like "Guilt and anger" or "Is this normal during grief?"

There's a professionally-produced video every week, featuring experts, people well-known in the Christian culture, and people from other walks of life, all of whom have lost someone they loved.



Irene Valverde

GRIEVING continued on page 16



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You have to walk *before* you can run

- sometimes for a very long time

By LISA CRAWFORD WATSON

HANSI RIGNEY loves to run outdoors along the coastline. She loves the weather, whatever it's doing, and the ever-changing ocean. She loves the wildlife she encounters — the coyotes, foxes, wild turkeys, and the deer — and she loves the peace of mind that comes while running in such an inspiring setting as the peninsula.

Rigney has been running for 16 years, starting when she was 60. And, in that time, she has completed 104 marathons, often covering the 26.2-mile courses in record time for her age group and finishing among the group's top three members.

Yet, as long as her father was alive, there was no way Rigney was going to take up running. Giulio de Petra didn't condone it — he thought it was too hard on the joints. The world class racewalker of the 1920s and '30s won seven world championships during his reign and qualified for the 1936 Berlin Olympics, but was called to serve in the Italian army and sent to Ethiopia instead.

Her mother, who was German, met de Petra on a train when he was traveling to compete in a race in Berlin. The couple married in 1938, and Rigney came along in 1941. During World War II, the family moved to Berlin from their home in Casoli in Abruzzo, but returned to Italy in 1945 when their house in Germany was bombed.

"Casoli is a beautiful little mountain town, where we lived a simple life," Rigney said. "There were only two cars in the whole town; the local vet owned one, and my uncle, the other. Our German mother took us everywhere on foot, throughout the countryside and into the woods, to pick berries and flowers."

Rigney would sometimes go out with her father on his workouts for a sport called "racewalk." It's a distance sport, and races can range from 1.8 miles to 100 kilometers (62 miles). Olympic distances are 30 kilo-

meters (just over 18 miles) and 50 kilometers (about 31 miles). The longer race is for men only. Rigney said she did enjoy walking alongside her father, even though she and her friends made fun of it, saying it was weird-looking.

"Racewalking is actually difficult to do," she said. "But, if you do it properly, it looks good and is very smooth. There are rules. You must keep one foot on the ground at all times, and keep your knees straight at one point in the stride. Or else, you can be disqualified during a race."

Rigney's family moved to Carmel in 1953, when her father accepted a position as chair of the Italian Language Department at what was the Army Language School — now the Defense Language Institute. She, then 12, attended Sunset School with classmates Sam Farr, Carla Budd, Lucinda Lloyd and Wendy Draper.

Rigney wanted to go on to Carmel High with her brother, but her father sent her to Santa Catalina, to "protect her from boys." She went on to study French and Spanish at what was Dominican College, an all-female school in San Rafael — now Dominican University of California, which became co-ed in 1971.

Rigney's father wanted her to become a teacher. But, after she saw an ad which read, "Do you speak foreign languages? Do you love to travel?" she became a flight attendant for Pan Am and began traveling the world.

She also met Pan Am captain Robert Rigney, whom she married in 1970. After Pan Am went bankrupt and Bob moved on to Delta Airlines in 1992, the family settled in Carmel. Rigney resumed racewalking with her father. She joined the "Monterey Peninsula Walk, Walk, Walk Club," which took off from Quail Lodge.

"My dad, who taught racewalking at MPC and gave lessons on the weekend, would stick his finger in our backs to make us go faster," she said. "He'd say, 'This



is not the Talk, Talk, Talk Club!”

Rigney started traveling the world to race with her father — they were both in the senior division by then — and together they conquered their age category in Thailand, Spain and Poland, among other places.

In 1995, after her father died, Rigney realized that her racewalking speed was enabling her to keep pace with the runners in her age division. She began to wonder what she could do if she ran. She entered and ran the Big Sur Marathon, and her finishing time qualified her to run the Boston Marathon one week later. She was 60. Today, pairing those legendary races

is called the “Boston2Big Sur back-to-back,” which Rigney has since done many more times.

“My plan is to keep going as long as pos-



Hansi Rigney and daughter Katie Dietrich in Boston celebrating Hansi's 100th marathon

WALK continued on page 15

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The Lighter Side

DO YOU SUSPECT YOU'RE NOT SPEAKING THE
SAME LANGUAGE AS YOUR GRANDSON?

you're right.

By ELAINE HESSER

THERE WAS an age when, if you were in a loud room and wanted to know the time, you'd nudge your friend and tap your wrist. Do that in a roomful of youngsters and they'll stare at you blankly. Maybe you should mime pulling out a cell phone instead, although that could mean anything from "Can you take my picture?" to "What's the weather in Duluth?"

Dialing "0" for an operator was a thing once, as was

getting a dial tone. Now the kids wonder why we talk about dialing anything. What is a dial, anyway? My stove may be one of the last bastions of dials. And when was the last time you got a busy signal? I get them now and again, but they're rare.

Hunky actor Ashton Kutcher wrote an essay for Harper's Bazaar called "Has texting killed romance?"

LIGHTER SIDE continued on page 26



WALK continued from page 13

sible. I'm feeling fit and have no aches or pains, except the little things distance runners get," said Rigney, who follows a Mediterranean diet and logs in 50 miles per week, including her 23-mile runs on Mondays.

"I enjoy running, and I enjoy competition," she said. "When I'm training, I stop to admire the setting. When I'm racing, I have competitive spirit, I concentrate. And, when I see someone with white hair up ahead, I go after her. Competing has brought me good results and a good sense of self."

Rigney runs almost every day, and swims 40 laps at the Monterey Sports Center after every run, followed by a sauna.

"I feel very privileged," she said. "I have good genes, and I eat well. My nutrition and my exercise are automatic; it has to become part of your life. As you get older, you lose your fitness faster, so you have to commit to it."

This year, Rigney, whose husband Bob, 84, walks 45 minutes and exercises at the gym daily, is looking forward to running the Boston Marathon in April — No. 105 — followed by Big Sur, Berlin, Chicago and the Sacramento California International Marathon in December. Last year, she broke the record for her age division there by more than 10 minutes. ❧

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Structured conversation around the week's subject is led by Davis and her husband, using a workbook with questions participants can think about beforehand.

They break the group up for smaller discussions so that everyone can be heard, and frequently stay after the meeting to provide additional support to anyone who needs it. Practical advice — like not making any big decisions or major purchases until you've come

to terms with someone's death, and how to deal with all your loved one's possessions — is also given.

One session includes the question of how long grief lasts. Davis, like Heflin and Valverde, emphasized that's an extremely personal question, and that what's "normal" for one person may not be for another. Finding ways to talk with well-meaning friends and family who try to "push you along" is important.

Everyone that Healthy Lifestyles interviewed agreed that having a

group to go to or a peer counselor can help keep someone from getting stuck or feeling alone as they adjust to their new normal. And, it can help keep them physically healthy as well, by making sure they're taking good care of themselves.

Davis said the goal of GriefShare is "to bring people from mourning to joy," and while that may seem like a long journey — maybe even an impossible one at the outset — having a helping hand can make it a little easier. ☞

TEN THINGS NOT TO SAY TO THE FAMILY OF THE DEARLY DEPARTED (*and some things you can*)

Most of us try to talk to grieving friends and family members with good intentions, but you know where that road can lead at times.

This list may seem cringe-worthily obvious to some readers, but believe it or not, these are all things I've heard either at a friend or family member's funeral, or that I've heard complaints about from others who have lost loved ones. Here they are, along with a little editorial commentary.

1. **"I know just how you feel."** No, you don't. Not even the relatives know how the other relatives feel, because each one's relationship with the deceased was unique.
2. **"He's in a better place."** "Better" would be here, healthy and whole.
3. **"It was God's will."** Not everybody believes that, no matter how sure you are it's true.
4. **"You don't remember me, do you?"** Because I live in another state and rarely go back, I heard this about 10 times at my dad's funeral. I barely remembered my own name. Be gracious and say, "I'm Henry, I worked with Millie when she was at XYZ Realty."
5. **"Well, at least she's not suffering anymore."** This is not the time to try to find the bright side.
6. **"Be strong."** Seriously? It's a funeral, not a marathon.
7. **"There's a reason for everything."** Depending on the circumstances, the family's already torturing themselves with "why" questions that may not have answers.
8. **"It was his time."** Not everyone believes that

people have pre-ordained expiration dates.

9. **"At least she had a long life."** It probably wasn't quite long enough for those who are grieving and would give anything for one more day.

10. **And, not in terms of spoken words, but regarding flowers** — if asked to donate to a charity in lieu of sending flowers, do that. Is there anything sadder than wilted funeral flowers a week after the service? Or, someone may have allergies. And a potted plant is just one more thing to take care of when the world is caving in

What can you say? Share a brief, positive memory of the person who has died. "Did you know that Selma always slipped kids candy bars if she knew they didn't have money when they came into her shop?" "Your father was the funniest history teacher I ever had. I'll never forget the day he came to school on a horse, dressed up as Teddy Roosevelt."

Do you have a photo of the person you can have copied and framed? Sometimes old Army buddies or longtime sports teammates have scrapbooks they can offer to sit down and show the family at another time.

Tell them what that person contributed to your life. Or maybe you have a funny story about getting drenched by a wave while gathering driftwood for a bonfire back in the day, or that time you almost got caught rolling pumpkins down Ocean Avenue. If you can't say anything else, "I'm so sorry for your loss," or "she'll be missed" are always fine.



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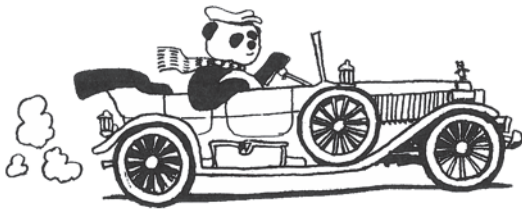


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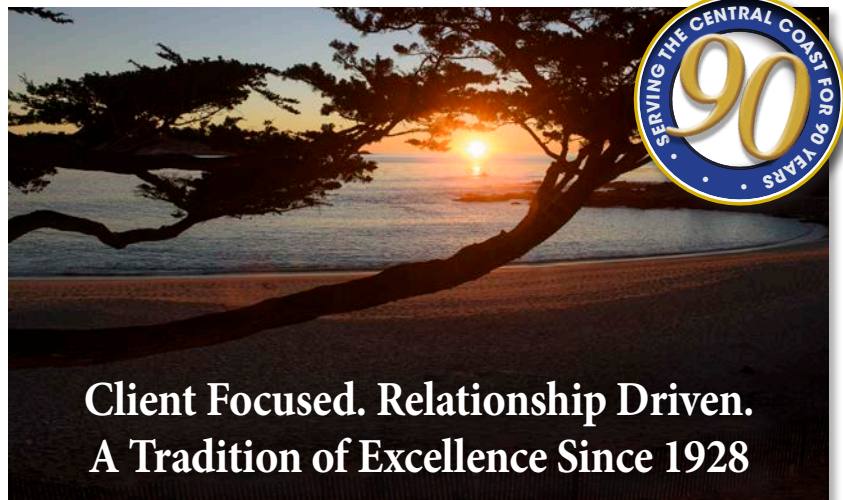
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NO RIDERS, RUNNERS OR WALKERS LEFT BEHIND

- that's what friends are for

By DENNIS TAYLOR

IT ISN'T mandatory to pursue fitness as a member of the Monterey Bay's Fitness and Friendship group. Nor are participants required to make friends. Those are merely fringe benefits.

"We only have one rule in this club," said Bill Ziering. "Nobody dies."

Ziering, a retired physician, is only half joking. At 87, the Carmel Mesa resident is the International Triathlon Union's reigning world champion in the 85-89 age division, an accomplishment he self-effacingly attributes to longevity rather than athleticism. "I have outlived the competition," said the man who calls himself "Pokey Bill."

He also blends seamlessly into a crowd of 368 people who have signed on to Fitness and Friendship's Facebook page, where news is posted regularly about group ac-



The Fitness and Friendship group meets as often for coffee and camaraderie as for exercise.

tivities: bike riding, hiking, jogging, swimming, weightlifting

Just as important, members insist, are regular social gatherings for coffee, or lunch, or "The 12 Days of Christmas," an annual event in which members take turns hosting parties at their homes during the holiday season.

The Fountain of Youth, said the doctor, is about exercising regularly, eating and sleeping properly, having relationships, managing stress, and laughing.

"We have some fairly young people — some, I think, are in their mid-40s — but most of us seem to be middle age and older," said Jim Carwin, 81, a former U.S. Navy submarine commander. "I'm not sure which group I fit into, because middle age is 70 now. I ride my bike anywhere from 75-90 miles a week, and I go to the gym at least twice a week."

Carwin is usually at the front of the pack for the group's bike rides, which leave a parking lot at the Naval Postgraduate School at 8 a.m. every Wednesday — usually with anywhere between 10 and 30 riders

— and nobody gets left behind.

"It's not the least bit intimidating, and it's not about competing," said Ingrid Aquino, 46, a massage therapist and former marathon runner who created Fitness and Friendship 15 years ago. "I'm fortunate to have grown up in a very large, close-knit family, and I wanted to give that same gift to other people. This group isn't about cycling, or running, or swimming — it's about community and belonging."

A fringe benefit, though, seems to be good health. Vera Noghera of Corral de Tierra, a former surgical nurse at Community Hospital of the



Ingrid Aquino, 46, founded Fitness and Friendship 15 years ago, partly as a social group.



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DANCING THE AFTERNOON AWAY FOR FITNESS AND FUN

- and a chance to dress up

By DENNIS TAYLOR

ONE STORY attached to a Greek dance called Tsamiko is that it was originally performed nearly 1,200 years before the birth of Christ around the funeral pyre of Achilles, the hero of the Trojan War and the central character of Homer's Iliad.

"But I can't vouch for that. I wasn't there," joked Darold Skerritt, the 82-year-old instructor emeritus of a Greek dancing class offered free to members of the Carmel Foundation.

Geriatric humor is a comfortable fit with this group of about a dozen lively seniors, who range in age from mid-60s to nearly 90, but move and socialize with youthful exuberance every Tuesday afternoon when they converge to learn and practice dances with names like Pogonisos, Hasapiko, and Miserlou with instructors Lois Lynne and Janet Tezak.

"I think we all know by now that if you want to keep living, you need to keep using your body," said Lynne Powers, 85, who has been folk dancing for years. "What better way to do it than to participate in something that's fun? Dancing is wonderful exercise."

In fact, Greek dancing probably originated as a way to entertain Greek soldiers in camp while keeping them physically fit, said Skerritt, a retired chemistry teacher who has performed with the Monterey Peninsula's Greek Village Dancers since 1979.

"Steps and patterns generally are simple and vigorous, yet very graceful," he said. "The music is rhyth-

mic and tuneful, and we really enjoy the experience of dancing to it."

Most dances are performed in a line, and participants link together with arms draped over their neighbor's shoulders. The troupe naturally arcs into a semicircle or circle, moving left or right together, with cross-steps, kicks, and twirls. When the music stops, they throw their hands skyward and shout, "Opa!" — an emotional expression frequently used at Greek celebrations.

Many of the dancers who practice at the Carmel Foundation also perform in full costume with the Greek Village Dancers at events like First Night Monterey, Greek festivals in Monterey and Santa Cruz, and at convalescent homes.

"We'll dance for about 35-40 minutes when we perform at a festival," said Rick McCarthy, 79. "That includes a teaching class, where we invite people in the audience to join us in a big circle and join in the fun."

DANCING continues on page 30



Many of the Greek Village Dancers you see at local events take lessons at the Carmel Foundation.



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NEW CLINIC COMBINES SERVICES FOR ACTIVE DUTY FAMILIES AND VETERANS

By ELAINE HESSER

IF YOU drive north on Highway 1 now and then — perhaps in search of a Gizdich Ranch pie fix — you’ve probably noticed the new health-care clinic on the former Fort Ord in Marina. Just a stone’s throw away from the shopping center, movie theater and new Dunes housing development, stands the modern, cube-shaped three-story building.

However, if you look closer, you’ll notice that there are two different groups of patients who are treated there. One, obvious from the large Veterans Administration logo on the front of the building, is those who have served in the military.

But the Major General William H. Gourley VA-Department of Defense Outpatient Clinic also sees members of active duty military families from the Presidio of Monterey, the Naval Postgraduate School and other smaller installations.

At a spacious 146,000 square feet, the clinic opened last year and sees roughly 75 adults and 150 kids from active duty families each week, along with 600 to 700 of the area’s estimated 80,000 veterans, all on an appointment-only basis. Because of the local population, said VA public affairs officer Damian McGee, many, if not most of the veterans are in their 60s or beyond.

“Younger people don’t come here to live as often,” he explained. “It’s too expensive for someone



The new military healthcare clinic in Marina is open and welcoming.

just getting out of the service.”

The clinic is a vast improvement over the former veterans’ facility, which had outgrown a much older, smaller space. Specialties available include pediatrics, physical therapy, mental health care and occupational health services, as well as optical services and mammography. There’s a laboratory in-house, and the facility was anticipating the arrival of a new ultrasound machine in late February.

Some specialists travel to the Peninsula from the VA’s parent facility in Palo Alto one or two days a week, while other medical staff work fulltime at the Marina facility. Although it doesn’t seem like that novel of an idea, the clinic is one of only two in the nation run jointly by the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration.

The clinic was designed with patients’ needs and state-of-the-art technology at the forefront. Check-in for appointments is streamlined. Beth Kane, a VA operations specialist who is also a veteran, showed Healthy Lifestyles why the spacious lobby has no waiting room

— and why, oddly, throughout the facility, very few patients were to be seen, although the parking lot was fairly full.

Kane walked up to an electronic kiosk, entered a bit of personal information to log in, and said that if she now pressed an entry that

said she was here for an appointment, someone would come to meet her. She said the average waiting time is “a couple of minutes.”

Interactive maps can also help guide people to their destinations, and there are patient service representatives to assist the less tech-

nically adept. Reference materials are available for those who want to learn more about their care.

The top two floors, where most of the services are provided, are set up for comfort and privacy. With beautiful ocean views and soft palettes of color, they’re a far cry from the rows of grey vinyl-and-steel chairs in front of institutional green or gray walls most military folks remember.

Patient privacy is well protected. Treatment rooms are windowless, but cheerful, with sliding doors that save space in the corridors between them (and avoid hitting people in the face when they’re opened). And type size, whether on public computer screens, maps or door numbers, is large enough to be easily read, even by those with aging eyes.

Kane pictures the center growing into a place where veterans and active duty families can sit and visit — especially once its café opens. The chaplains’ service donated a baby grand piano in the lobby, and Kane said she could imagine future afternoons when people can

mingle outside on the patio and maybe even enjoy a farmer's market or live music.

All of that has become possible in large part because of Major General William Gourley, for whom the facility is named. Gourley, who spent 36 years in the Army including combat tours in Vietnam, retired on the Peninsula in 1989. According to the facility's website, he "was passionate about ensuring healthcare availability for service members and veterans after the Fort Ord closing. He worked tirelessly to convince the Veterans Administration to open a state-of-the-art clinic."

One special piece of Fort Ord has become part of that clinic. Remember that recreational building named for Gen. "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell? It was west of Highway 1 on a cliff, and hosted many a happy evening of entertainment for the military for 50 years. After the post was closed in 1994, and despite a spirited effort to save the structure, it had to be torn down because erosion beneath it threatened to cause it to fall into the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Well, there was a mural over the bar in there, and it was rescued and is now being lovingly restored in one of the hallways. Since one thing Stilwell was known for — besides his acerbic personality — was how well he took care of the troops under his command (he was also known as "Uncle Joe"), it's likely he'd approve. 🍷



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SORTING IT OUT:

Shining this light on your pain might actually help it get better

By ELAINE HESSER

‘YOU SHOULD get lasered,” my friend said, watching me limp along on my arthritic knees.

“I’m sorry, I should get what?” I said. She said, “lasered.” It turned out she was getting treatments during which her medical practitioner shined a laser light on the areas where she had pain, and after just a few weeks, she was feeling much better.

Sounded like a lot of hoey. Placebo effect had to be at work. Then a second friend, more than 80 years old and otherwise in pretty good shape, tried it with similar success for foot pain. She was back hiking the trails in almost no time. Still skeptical, I continued pooh-poohing.

Next, Jose Del Rio, the head athletic trainer and lead therapist at Monterey Peninsula Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Institute, pulled one out and went to work on my knees after a workout during a repeat bout of physical therapy. Del Rio also is the athletic trainer and director of sports medicine at Pacific Grove High School, and has been using laser therapy for about a year and a half.

It felt pleasantly warm; more importantly, it required me to do nothing but sit there for 5-10 minutes and wear protective glasses that looked pretty darn cool, like Neo’s in “The Matrix.” And doggone if it didn’t work. Just a day later, there was improvement. After a couple weeks, well, I wasn’t going to play catcher anytime soon, but things were definitely better.

Del Rio said he uses the laser with other kinds of therapy — as in my case — and has had good outcomes with it.

Now, that’s just three people’s experiences, but it turns out there’s some real science behind this, as well as a bit of controversy. For example, a 2015 study published in the journal of the Osteoarthritis Research Society International found low-level laser therapy — that’s the technical name — was ineffective in treating osteoarthritis. That same year, a different study showed it was effective for relieving back pain.

A 2009 study from the journal of Photomedical and Laser Surgery (photo means

having to do with light, in this case) showed that even if patients with osteoarthritic knees were given no painkillers and had no other therapy, their flexibility increased and pain decreased with the laser treatments.

In 2016, there was an article that showed adding laser therapy to an exercise program for chronic knee osteoarthritis was more effective than exercise alone.

Although the precise way the laser works on the body isn’t thoroughly understood, it’s thought that the key is the penetration of photons (the basic units of light) into the areas where it’s applied. Advocates say that the photons not only warm the area, but enable cells to release specific molecules that improve healing and circulation, and reduce inflammation.

That may leave you asking, “What’s the downside?”

There doesn’t seem to be any, other than the cost of something that may or may not work for you. There are almost no reported side effects. Researchers are looking into using lasers as part of treating traumatic brain injury, stroke and spinal cord injuries — but those studies are in their extremely early phases.

The bottom line is that low-level laser therapy is controversial, but appears to be effective for many patients. It’s FDA-approved, and may be useful for a variety of aches and pains. And that’s always a discussion worth having with your doctor. ☞



Jose Del Rio, trainer and therapist, with a state-of-the-art laser.

Monterey Peninsula, is 35 pounds lighter today, at age 68, than she was in 2006 when she started riding her bike.

"When I started, I couldn't even go five minutes on a treadmill," she said. "Five years ago, I was riding 130 miles on my bicycle in one day. That's how much my fitness changed."

Seaside resident Ralph Wege, 75, recently returned from Pennsylvania, where he went on a 150-mile bike ride with his cousin. "I have two stents in my heart, and this has been tremendous for me," he said. "If I feel down, I go out and ride and I'm feeling great again when I get home."

Indeed, a common claim from Fitness and Friendship members is that the mental health benefits of the group are as beneficial as the physical fitness.

"I think people tend to become close-knit through exertion," said Alex Capelli, 65, of Carmel. "If I didn't do something like this with like-minded people, I don't think I'd be happy."

"I'm here to stay alive, and there's some kind of exercise going on with this crowd every day," said Jim Allen, 80, of Monterey, another former marathoner, who participates with the group in swimming, biking, and hiking.

"I exercise to try to age more gracefully," said Paul Gallup of Seaside. "Is it working? I'll feel a little bit stiff and sore sometimes, but once I start moving, I start feeling great. I think that's pretty common."

One of the great pleasures for Lynn Denley, 65, is running or biking with her 39-year-old daughter, Brianna, and two granddaughters, ages 8 and 5.

Denley said, "One day, Brianna looked at one of my granddaughters and said, 'Eleanor, do you realize how rare it is for grandmothers to run with their granddaughters?' And she said, 'Mom, it isn't that rare!'"

"And, for Eleanor, it isn't, because this group is who she hangs out with."

Fitness and Friendship is open to anybody who would like to participate. More information can be found on the group's Facebook page.

Dennis Taylor is a freelance writer living in Monterey County. Contact him at scribelaureate@gmail.com.



Dr. Bill Ziering, 87, is a world champion triathlete

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Was a rotary-dial phone really sexier?

minutes and would be examined with friends for two weeks. ... That was then."

I thought that was incredibly astute for a young buck like Kutcher. Then I found out that he turned 40 when I wasn't looking.

Remember when you could say, "Oh, I wasn't avoiding you — the cat knocked the phone off the hook?" Fortunately, the cellular world still lets you say "I was out of range" now and again. "Off the hook" now means "really good," in case you were unaware, because TV chef Guy Fieri uses it that way. No one seems to know why.

And let's just say it angrily. Tapping the "end call" icon on your cell phone screen to hang up on someone is not nearly as satisfying as slamming down a handset into a cradle.

Also on the list — ask the teen at that big box store to "ring you up," and she might know what to do, but she won't know why it's called that.

If you use the expression, "We need to fine-tune this," with a teenager, you may have to hope he's (a) a musician or (b) good at gleaning meaning from con-

The phone rang. Hearts pounded. 'Hello?' Followed by a conversation that lasted two hours but felt like two

text. Their digital TVs don't need to have their images sharpened by turning — yep — another dial left and right until waviness gives way to focus. If they've used a radio, it was digital — unless they were riding in old Uncle Joe's 1985 Buick.

Tuning the TV is also how some of us learned the words "horizontal" and "vertical." As in "holds."

I once taught a class where I apologized to a group of 20-somethings for "sounding like a broken record." Had to explain that. I started by asking if any of them owned any vinyl, which used to be the hip word for record albums. After a long, awkward silence, one of them raised a hand and ventured tentatively, "We have a beanbag chair."

That's OK. Every generation has its own lingo. I have no idea how to Snapchat something. I was delighted to figure out Twitter and Facebook, which I think my young niece is on mainly so she knows when to say, "MOM! Take that photo down, please." (Yes, she really says "please" and "thank you.")

Don't even get me started on all the references to typewriters that are still around, even as I write this in Microsoft Word. I can tab, shift (although nothing actually shifts) and even go to my email and cc someone without getting my hands dirty.

Expect to hear this sometime soon, too: "Dad, why do phones make that funny clicking noise when I take a picture?"

And apparently, Gentle Reader, I'm slowly turning into Jerry Gervase. ☹



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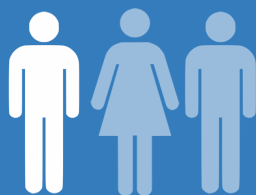
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THE Kitchen

SHRIMP AND CRAB LOUIE

THE COTTAGES of Carmel's Dining Services Director Abel Guzman provided this issue's recipe for an old favorite, jazzed up with some quinoa. The grain has become popular in recent years for its high protein and fiber content as well as its nutty taste. It's a good idea to rinse it before you cook it according to package directions, because the outside can be a little bitter. Quinoa is available in different colors, and while some people claim that they can taste the difference — that red and black taste earthier than the white — it's a pretty subtle thing. It's OK to swap plain brown sugar for the raw sugar, too.

INGREDIENTS

Serves 3-4

3-6 shrimp (peeled and deveined)

8 ounces cooked king crab meat

2-3 cups cooked quinoa, cooled

2 avocados, diced finely

2 medium tomatoes, seeds removed, diced finely

1/2 cucumber, seeds removed, diced finely

2 hard-boiled eggs, diced finely

4 ounces (by weight) arugula or other greens

Dressing:

1/8 teaspoon chili flakes

2 fresh mint leaves, chopped finely

2 fresh basil leaves, chopped finely

Juice and zest of 1 lemon

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon raw brown sugar

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Sear the shrimp in a hot pan until they turn opaque and pink/orange. Remove from heat and set aside.

Whisk the dressing ingredients to combine. In a separate bowl, mix together quinoa, tomato and cucumber. Combine the rest of the ingredients and toss with arugula or your choice of salad greens, along with the dressing, and place on top of the quinoa mixture. If you want to get all fancy like the photo, cut both ends off a small can and for each serving, layer the quinoa mixture, followed by some hard-boiled egg and the crab-and-avocado mixture with the dressing, packing it in gently. Then slip the can off the top and pray the cooking gods are on your side. Top with shrimp.



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ABOUT THE *Chef*



Abel Guzman

CHEF ABEL Guzman calls working as the Director of Dining Services at the Cottages of Carmel a "privilege." He loves making the residents there happy by providing what they tell him is "five-star" dining.

He's paid his dues, working his way up from dishwasher to kitchen manager, starting in Cancun "many years" ago. Guzman said he's worked in places "from five-star restaurants to diners, and even owned a food truck." He continued, "In 2004, I married the love of my life and moved to the Monterey Peninsula where I worked in a variety of restaurants and hotels."

Then, he took a job as a sous chef in a retirement community where he learned about "specified nutrition needs," and discovered that he loved "the challenge of creating an upscale experience for residents." He started working at The Cottages four years ago and finds joy in his work. Perhaps that means for him, it isn't work at all. ☞



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Some of the costumes were stitched four decades ago by a former member. Others have been purchased.

"It's a lot of fun to perform in our costumes," said Lynne. "I dress as the first queen of Greece, so I've got a big, heavy costume — layers of stuff — which is always really hot when we're dancing at the Greek festivals around Labor Day."

Skerritt bought most of his outfit — including white boots, chains, a sash and a hat — in Crete.

Zora Lebaric wears a black vest over a red blouse, with a red apron, and a red scarf.

"You feel a lot heavier when you're dancing in costume, and you need to move and bounce, which takes some energy," she said. "But you have the crowd clapping and cheering you on, and that keeps you going."

Ironically, nobody in the Greek dance class or the Greek Village Dancers troupe has Greek blood. Karen Loullis was married to a Greek for 4 years, but says she's 77 percent Irish. Lily Nimri is married to a Jordanian whose nephew owns Dametra Fresh Mediterranean, a Monterey restaurant. Lebaric, a native of Serbia, might have the closest connection.

"The former Yugoslavia (which included what is now

Serbia) bordered Greece, so a lot of people went there on vacation and became familiar with the music," she said. "And the temperament of Serbian people is similar to the Greeks in the sense that we all get excited when we hear the music. We want to stand up and dance."

Friendships among the Carmel Foundation dancers extend beyond the class. They meet for dinner at Epsilon Greek Restaurant in Monterey on the first Wednesday of every month.

"And when we're done eating, we push all of the tables out of the way and dance. And if anybody in the restaurant wants to participate, we teach them to dance, too," said Robert Turchin, 68 and recently retired, who is joining his wife of 38 years, Barbara Graham (a five-year Greek dancing veteran), as a class member.

"This is a family," he said. "These people all respect each other. We've all become close."

For more information about the Greek dancing class and the Carmel Foundation, call 624-1588 or visit the website at carmelfoundation.org.

Dennis Taylor is a freelance writer in Monterey County. Contact him at scribelaureate@gmail.com. ✉

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