

MATTERS



LACERS Well Newsletter | Volume 3, Issue 2



Stay Cool & Stay Green, even in the heat

Summer is here, bringing more daylight, time outside, and warmer weather, prompting many to turn on their air-conditioning units to cool their homes. The resulting electricity bill shows that this modern comfort comes at a pretty hefty price. Running an air conditioning unit is not only expensive, but inefficient, and harsh on the environment. Fortunately, there are some practical steps you can take to reduce air-conditioning usage and still stay cool.

(continued inside)

Device: Hand Fan
Low Tech: 4,000 years old
Power Source: You

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Purposeful Living Recap

We've made it through half of the year and as we look back, we've accomplished a lot! We kicked off our campaign of Living Life to Its Fullest in February through our Winter Newsletter edition of Your Health Matters, where we discussed the importance of purposeful living by being able to: identify one's purpose; stay socially and physically active; maintain financial wellbeing; and connect with one's community. Research has shown that integrating these elements into our lives brings greater satisfaction and health. This is important at any life stage, but seems to carry more weight during the retirement years.

To support the campaign, we held three Living Life to Its Fullest Extravanzas in Pomona, Lakewood, and Downtown Los Angeles in March. Keynote speaker, health and wellness expert and author, Sean Foy, presented on Unlocking Purpose in Retirement, followed by presenters on Removing Clutter, and Getting your Home, Health, and Finances in Order. The feedback we received on these presentations was extremely positive.

At the Extravanzas, we announced that we would be offering a five-part workshop series taking place during the month of April and the response was overwhelming with slots filling up extremely fast!

With so much interest in our workshop series, we were excited to begin. Over five weeks, participants explored their passions and interests to help identify their "why" statement (why am I here?), were given tips on managing their health and finances, and were taught the importance of social connections and giving back through volunteering. As a finale, attendees learned how to put it all together to take meaningful steps towards more purposeful living.

If you couldn't attend the Extravanzas or workshops and feel like you missed out, or maybe you did attend but want to re-live the experience, we have you covered. On our LACERS Well webpage, you can find videos of the Extravanza presentations, as well as audio recordings and handouts from the Purposeful Living workshops. All you have to do is go to our webpage at www.lacers.org/lacerswell, click on the Your Purpose Resource link, and you will be taken to the videos and recordings.

We work hard to provide expert resources and opportunities to enhance your retirement experience and hope that you find it all worthwhile.

LACERS Wellness Survey Results

Earlier this year, randomized LACERS Members were invited to complete a LACERS *Well* program survey, offered as a mailed hardcopy booklet or as an electronic questionnaire. Members provided responses to inquiries on demographics, current health practices, and wellness program awareness/participation. Although the survey was brief, containing under 20 questions, it provided us with valuable insight into our effectiveness at getting the word out about this program, your preferences on how you'd like to receive LACERS *Well* communications, and ways we can serve your health interests better.

Some findings were expected:

- Those that had participated in LACERS *Well* activities reported

an improvement in diet, exercise levels, healthy lifestyle awareness, and motivation to be more active.

- Coordinated visits to local sites of interest (such as museums and botanical gardens) and access to SilverSneakers and Silver & Fit continue to be popular wellness offerings among Members.
- Responders that had not participated in the program reported lack of awareness, transportation, physical ability, and accessibility/convenience.

Some findings, however, surprised us:

- To keep abreast of health-related topics through the LACERS *Well* program, almost half of survey respondents (48%) indicated a preference for electronic

forms of communication, such as eBlasts and email, versus direct mail (39%), and in-person classes/workshops (14%).

- Primary care visits were reported as completed more than three times per year (21.5%), two to three times per year (43.6%) and once per year (27.8%). Less than 10% of the respondents reported seeing their primary care physician less than once per year.

LACERS *Well* is committed to its Members and strives to be the finest, most well-utilized retiree wellness program. Thanks to your feedback, we will continue to improve, evaluate, and develop exceptional programming for the best retirement possible.

Connecting with Others

The average person does most of their socializing at work amongst their coworkers, of whom some become lifelong friends. But, once retired, it can be difficult to maintain these connections and/or create new ones without the structure that the workplace once provided. To prevent feeling isolated in retirement, consider these ways you can cultivate new connections and maintain old ones in the process:

- Have a favorite hobby or interest? Join a social group that shares the same interests and get connected with other like-minded individuals. You can even take up a part-time job or volunteer for a charitable organization, as feeling a part of a larger goal

can add to your sense of purpose while reducing feelings of isolation.

- A big move to a far off place in retirement might seem like a great adventure, and for some it undoubtedly will be; but leaving family and friends behind can lead to feelings of loneliness and it can be especially challenging to those who don't necessarily have an outgoing personality. Instead, perhaps consider moving to a different neighborhood within your current city where you'll be able to make new friends while still having the support of your lifelong friendships.



WELLNESS CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT



Meet Joyce Kawai

We asked Joyce a few questions and here is what she had to say:

Q: What was your job as an employee of the City of Los Angeles?

A: Senior Personnel Analyst for the Los Angeles Fire Department.

Q: How many years did you work for the City?

A: I worked for the City for about 33 years. Out of college, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do at first. I started at the City as a Clerk Typist and worked my way up.

Q: What year did you retire?

A: 2010, it has almost been 10 years!

Q: What is your favorite part of retirement?

A: Not being on a schedule. I really enjoy not having to be somewhere at a specific time every day. Volunteering is something that I always found to be important, and I will be doing more of it in the next phase of my retirement.

Q: Tell me what you do to stay active and healthy as a retiree.

A: Going to yoga regularly has maintained my strength, flexibility, and has fostered a good mental attitude because it gives me confidence to do the things that I enjoy. Journaling and focusing on gratitude added another dimension

to my life, allowing me to focus on things that I wouldn't think about otherwise. Also, participating in the *Feel Like a Million Challenge* has reinforced healthy behaviors and provided additional information, tips, and resources that I find very useful. It's a nice check-off list to follow daily.

Q: I know that you have done many Champion-led events to tour Southern Californian gardens. Tell me what you enjoy most about that.

A: I enjoy leading the garden tours because it is a beautiful place to be and it feels good to be out in nature. Seeing other Members beam with joy when they join the events brings me joy.

Q: What inspired you to become a LACERS Well Champion?

A: I just want to have fun with other people! I enjoy being with a group and I really enjoy the community aspect of the program. I received a postcard in the mail that LACERS was looking for Champions to help coordinate activities and events, and it sparked my interest.

Q: Any hopes for your fellow LACERS Members?

A: I hope that all the retirees, in some way, participate in the LACERS Well program, because there is something for everybody. I would like to see everyone take advantage of what is being offered.

Q: What is one quote that you draw inspiration from?

A: "It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."
- John Wooden

Become a LACERS Well Champion

WE WANT YOU!

Do you have an interest, hobby or activity that you would like to share with others? If so, volunteering to be a Champion provides you an opportunity to have fun with other retirees and receive more program rewards and incentives. To apply or to find out more, log on to www.lacers.org/lacerswell and click "Become a LACERS Well Champion," or call our LACERS Well program manager Tara Miller, at **(213) 978-6843**.

Some Champion-led events near you:

Sundays at 11:30 a.m.

- Online Writer's Workshop led by Champion Eugene Mandelcorn

Mondays at 6 a.m.

- Lakewood Center Mall Walk with Champion Beverly Anderson

Tuesdays at 2 p.m.

- Beginner Line Dancing At Palomares Park Community Center in Pomona with Champions Kathy Hashiguchi and Debbie Newman

Thursdays at 10 a.m.

- Yoga at Highland Park Adult Senior Center in Los Angeles with Champion Ivan Corpeno

For a complete list of events, visit the LACERS Well website at www.lacers.org/lacerswell

Stay Cool & Stay Green, even in the heat

(continued from cover)

Mitigate your living quarters' heat-trapping effects while also helping Mother Nature by:

- Pulling down the shades or tilting the blinds to keep direct sunlight out of your home
- Opening high windows to let hot air vent out
- Grilling food outside to avoid creating heat in your home
- Eating colder foods like salads and sandwiches
- Planting trees and vines strategically to cool and insulate your home

Hopefully these tips will lighten your electricity bill, make the heat more bearable, and keep you purposefully eco-friendly.

City of Los Angeles Cooling Centers

If you need to cool off, the City of Los Angeles offers cooling centers where you can beat the heat. You can call 3-1-1 from within Los Angeles or follow the links below to find out more about cooling center locations and hours of operation:

- To find your nearest recreation center, visit: laparks.org/reccenter
- To find your nearest senior center, visit: laparks.org/scc
- To find your nearest library branch, visit: lapl.org/branches

Live outside the City of Los Angeles? Contact your local recreation center, senior center, or public library to find out what options are available to you.

The Benefits of Tea: “Drink (Tea) to Your Health”

Often taking a back seat to coffee in popularity, tea is finally starting to get its time in the spotlight due to its numerous health and wellness benefits. Check out a few of the many benefits a cup of tea can bring:

- Flavor without the calories: tea is a great alternative to water if you're looking to watch your calorie intake while keeping hydrated. Whether hot or cold, there are so many different flavors of tea to satisfy your ever changing tastes.
- Energy boost without the jitters: green tea contains a small amount of caffeine that can help increase energy. The low caffeine amounts make green tea a good choice for people who may be looking to cut back on their caffeine intake.
- Relax and unwind: many herbal teas offer natural calming effects that can reduce stress and help you unwind after a tough day.
- Digestion aid: Tea helps streamline digestion and can help soothe a variety of issues ranging from nausea and upset stomach to diarrhea. Ginger tea is an herbal tea that has long been used to treat upset stomach worldwide.



Walk the Walk Befittingly



Walking shoes that are comfortable and fit your feet can help prevent injuries. Consider the following when choosing your next pair:

Testing the Fit

Walk down an incline. As you descend, stomp and scuff your feet. Try to get the tips of your toes to touch the front inside of the shoes. If your toes can already touch the front of the shoes when the shoes are new, try on a different pair.

If the shoes pass the downhill test, walk up a few flights of stairs, two stairs at a time. You should check for heel lift. If your heels are consistently lifting off the insoles more than about 1/8 of an inch, this may be a heel blister waiting to happen.

Testing the Support

Pick up a shoe by the heel and toe and bend the toe upward. Does the shoe bend at the ball of the foot or at some random point halfway along the arch? It should bend under the ball of the foot.

Twist the shoe sole from the heel to the toe. Does the sole feel like a wet noodle, or is there some resistance to twisting? As a walker, you want to feel light to moderate resistance.

A Pair with Purpose

Certain footwear retailers offer campaigns to help people in need around the world. When choosing footwear, consider the option of helping yourself while helping others too.

CARRIER HIGHLIGHTS



KAISER PERMANENTE

Do you know about all the (new) ways to connect with Kaiser Permanente? You don't have to visit a facility to receive care. Kaiser Permanente members can access a wide range of options:



Phone appointments are available for scheduled primary and specialty care visits, and wellness coaching.



Video visits are available for routine and urgent primary care, some types of specialty care, and follow-up care.



Email the doctor's office for quick check-ins or questions that don't require an in-person appointment.



• **kp.org and the Kaiser Permanente mobile app:**

- Schedule and change routine appointments
- Check most lab results
- Refill most prescriptions
- Manage a family member's care and more



Looking for an easy-care option? Some Southern California Target stores offer a clinic available to Kaiser Permanente members. More than 85 services are available, including: flu shots, hearing and vision tests, and care for minor illness or injuries. For a list of locations, visit [kptargetclinic.org](https://www.kptargetclinic.org).