

# The Good Life

Travel, Leisure & Fun for South Valley Adults 50+

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## Fifty Cities Represented at Inaugural Visalia Senior Games

By Steve Pastis



Runners in the 5K/10K Road Race at the Visalia Senior Games. (Photo courtesy City of Visalia Parks and Recreation Department)

Last month, athletes from 50 California cities competed in the first Senior Games ever held in the Central Valley. A total of 237 athletes participated, including some traveling from as far as Oregon and Texas.

The inaugural Visalia Senior Games started on Wednesday, October 21, with a resource fair and opening ceremonies at Riverway Sports Park, which included a parade of athletes and a tri-tip dinner. Over the following four days, 68 competitions were held in nine sports.

"This event was made possible because of the support we received across the community, from our 30-plus-member planning task force to the number of sponsors who contributed," said Jeannie Greenwood, City of Visalia Parks and Recreation Department recreation manager. "A special thank you to our presenting sponsor, Kaweah Delta Health Care District, for their understanding of the importance of staying

active and healthy.

"We had 103 registered volunteers who worked 560 hours," she added. "They were incredible. For what we did this year, we had enough volunteers, but we need more (for the next Senior Games) because we want to expand."

And plans to expand and improve the next Senior Games are already in the works. The committee received more than

50 emails about what events seniors want to see offered. The most popular suggestion was track and field.

"If we can pull together the facility and the resources, we will have track and field," she said. "If we can at least start off with core events, we can build the event." Those core events would most likely include sprints, a long jump, a triple jump, discus and a shotput.

Another suggestion was swimming, with specific events being 50-meter and 100-meter freestyle, butterfly and backstroke races.

"Women's soccer and women's volleyball were also very popular at the Pasadena and San Diego games this year," said Greenwood.

As is the case with every large event in its inaugural

See Senior Games on page 8

## New Cons and Scams Target Local Seniors

By Steve Pastis

"Right now, the number of cons and scams are very high," said Nicole Burnham, elder abuse victim advocate for the Tulare County District Attorney's office, adding that telephone scams and those attempted through the mail are currently the most common.

Many of these phone scams attempt to collect on a bill that is allegedly unpaid, according to Burnham. "We've seen a lot of utility bill scams. They may threaten to sue you or throw you in jail unless you pay. These things always filter back to 'get out your checkbook.'"

She reminds people that, "You're entitled to a paper bill. I always encourage people (who get these calls) to hang up and find something with a (utility company) phone number you know to be true."

When a would-be utility bill collector insists on a quick payment, that is a red flag, explained Burnham, who turned her attention to IRS telephone scams.

"The IRS doesn't make calls," she said, describing some phony IRS callers as very bold. "I answered the phone 'district attorney's office' and had some guy tell me I was going to get a refund. I asked why and was told it was for paying my taxes online. He said, 'Give me your bank account and I will wire the money to you.'"

Other phone scams include being told that you won a trip or money "and there is a small fee to collect that money," she added.

Elder financial abuse also includes crimes committed in person, sometimes by "someone who helps with the cleaning or the shopping," Burnham said. "It's



Nicole Burnham

an excellent opportunity to have access to everything in the senior's home. They are opportunists when they see that there is weakness."

They may tear a few checks out of the checkbook or intercept the new credit card that came in the mail or help themselves to jewelry or other valuables, she said. "Sometimes what is disappearing is not the jewelry – it's the pain medication."

Other scammers go door-to-door offering to do home repairs that they don't actually plan to do, such as repairing roofs, according to Burnham. "Can the senior get up on the roof and see if they've really done anything?"

Solar salespeople can be especially pushy when they see a senior, whether they are scammers or not, said Burnham, who likes the idea of stopping their sales pitch by saying that you are only renting the house.

"It's unavoidable that we're going to need help when we get older," she said. "If you suspect

See Cons and Scams on page 2



# Calendar of Events

## Around the South Valley

### Thursday, November 19 – 'A Festival of Trees' in Three Rivers

St. Anthony's Retreat and Santa Teresita Youth Conference Center will host this fundraising event to benefit many local nonprofits. The event features wine tasting from local wineries, hors d'oeuvres from the chefs at The Retreat Center, and a no-host cocktail bar. A silent auction with many beautiful and handmade items starts at 6 p.m. Small but beautifully adorned trees will go up for auction beginning at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$25 per person and include a commemorative wine glass. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.stanthonyretreat.org](http://www.stanthonyretreat.org) or call 561-4595.

### Saturday, November 21 – Tulare County Symphony Presents 'Fire and Ice'

This program will feature the music of Sibelius, as well as continue the symphony's Beethoven series, with his 4th Symphony. Danielle Belen will return with her violin. Tickets for the 7:30 p.m. performance are \$30 - \$39.50. For tickets or more information, visit [www.foxvisalia.org](http://www.foxvisalia.org) or call 625-1369.

### Wednesday, November 25 – 'Giving Thanks' Luncheon

The Visalia Senior Center, 310 N. Locust, Visalia, will host this special luncheon with turkey and all the fixings for those 55+. Entertainment begins at 11:30 a.m. The lunch will be 12-1 p.m. Advance tickets are \$5 per person. For tickets or more information, call (559) 713-4381.

### Tuesday, December 1 – 2015 Holiday Boutique

The Tulare Senior Community Center, 201 North F Street, will host this holiday shopping opportunity from 4:30-7:30 p.m. where you can find handmade unique gifts, holiday decorations, seasonal goodies and more. Bring your phone or camera to take a free photo with Santa. Admission is free. For more information, call (559) 685-2330 or visit [www.tulare.ca.gov/department-s/community-development/senior-services/upcoming-events](http://www.tulare.ca.gov/department-s/community-development/senior-services/upcoming-events).

### Saturday, December 5 – Tulare County Symphony Annual Holiday Concert

Two performances (3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.) will showcase the best of Tulare County's talent of all ages. Featuring new music and nearly 300 performers, these popular concerts will put you in the brightest of spirits for the holiday season. Tickets for each show are \$30 - \$39.50. For tickets or more information, visit [www.foxvisalia.org](http://www.foxvisalia.org) or call 625-1369.

### Friday, December 11 – A Merri-Achi Christmas

Artbeat will present this 7:30 p.m. show showcasing the music of José Hernández' Mariachi Sol de Mexico. Tickets are \$25 - \$45. For tickets or more information, visit [www.foxvisalia.org](http://www.foxvisalia.org) or call 625-1369.

### Friday, December 18 – 'Old Fashioned Christmas' Luncheon

A Christmas feast with live holiday music and special guests will be held at the Visalia Senior Center, 310 N. Locust, Visalia, for those 55+. The event features Christmas carols, fun activities and a visit to Santa's Store. Seating is limited. At 11 a.m., the entertainment begins and Santa's Workshop opens. The lunch will be 12-1 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person. For tickets or more information, call (559) 713-4381.

### Friday, December 18 – John Mueller's Winter Dance Party

This official live and authentic re-creation of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper's final tour is the only show endorsed by the Holly,

# Veteran's Corner

My last column covered Service Connected (SC) compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); another benefit available is Non Service Connected (NSC) Pension. NSC Pension provides financial support to wartime veterans with limited income. The amount depends upon the income the veteran and their family members receive from other sources.



Currently, the maximum VA pays for NSC benefits is \$1,072 per month. This amount can change depending on other factors, including family size, disability status, etc. The VA includes monthly income from Social Security when calculating how much in NSC benefits, so if a veteran gets \$800 per month from Social Security, the most that the VA will pay is \$272 dollars, bringing the total income to the baseline level of \$1,072 per month.

(The VA counts some things as household incomes, but not others; due to its complexity, this topic is better addressed individually. Please contact our office regarding questions about your countable income.)

Requirements of qualification

Richardson and Valens estates. Each live concert performance includes over two hours of unbridled, high voltage entertainment featuring the hit songs of the '50s era: "That'll Be The Day," "Peggy Sue," "Oh, Boy," "La Bamba," "Chantilly Lace" and many more. Tickets for the 7:30 p.m. show are \$19 - \$33. For tickets or more information, visit [www.foxvisalia.org](http://www.foxvisalia.org) or call 625-1369.

### Tuesday, January 12 – Diabetes Seminar

Muhammad S. Chaudhri, M.D. will present the first in a series of monthly seminars, "Diabetes – Overview and Affect: Kidneys and the Circulatory System," at 119 S. Locust St., Visalia, at 6:30 p.m. Reservations are required and may be made at (559) 627-0112.

for NSC Pension benefits include the veterans' discharge conditions and wartime service; requirements for veterans that enlisted after September 7, 1980 usually include at least 24 months of service, or the full period for which they were called to active duty, which may include Reservists or National Guard members activated to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan. (Wartime period dates are available in our office; contact us for specifics.) The veteran must also be permanently and totally disabled or over the age of 65. Countable household income and net worth must be less than the VA's established levels.

When a veteran is eligible to receive benefits for both service-connected disabilities and the NSC Pension, the VA is only authorized to pay one benefit; the VA pays the higher benefit.

Please contact our office if you have questions about the NSC Pension or any other benefits. We can help determine your eligibility and submit your application.

*Ken Cruickshank, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Services Officer for Tulare County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 205 N. L St., Tulare, call (559) 684-4960 or email [kcruicks@tularehhsa.org](mailto:kcruicks@tularehhsa.org).*

For more events, go to our website [www.TheGoodLifeSV.com](http://www.TheGoodLifeSV.com)

To submit events to the calendar, mail to Kast & Company Communications, P.O. Box 7173, Visalia, CA 93290, or e-mail to [Editor@TheGoodLifeSV.com](mailto:Editor@TheGoodLifeSV.com). Submissions must be appropriate for The Good Life readership of 50-and-over, and be received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.

## Cons and Scams

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any kind of elder abuse, they key is reporting it," she said. "You do not bear any repercussions if you report elder abuse. We encourage everyone – if you have any suspicions at all, report that, and you can do it anonymously."

To report suspected elder abuse, call 1-877-657-3092. For more information, follow the Elder Abuse links at [www.datulareco.org/seek\\_help.htm](http://www.datulareco.org/seek_help.htm)

# The Good Life

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## CDC Recommends Shingles Vaccine

People age 60 and older should be vaccinated against shingles, or herpes zoster, a condition often marked by debilitating chronic pain, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

CDC recommends a single dose of the zoster vaccine, Zostavax, for adults 60 years of age and older, even if they have had a prior episode of shingles. The new full recommendation replaces a provisional recommendation that the CDC made in 2006, after the vaccine was licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and recommended by the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), a committee of immunization experts who advise CDC on immunization policy.

The recommendation was published in an early release electronic edition of CDC's Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Report (MMWR) Recommendations and Reports. The ACIP recommendation becomes CDC policy once it is published in the MMWR.

Researchers found that, overall, in those ages 60 and above the vaccine reduced the occurrence of shingles by about 50%. For individuals ages 60-69, it reduced occurrence by 64%. The most common side effects in people who received Zostavax were redness, pain and tenderness, swelling at the site of injection, itching and headache.

Over 95% of people are infected by the varicella zoster virus (VZV), during their lifetime. The virus causes the common childhood disease chickenpox and then becomes dormant within the nerves. If it reactivates



later in life, the result can be shingles. Shingles is characterized by clusters of blisters, which develop on one side of the body in a band-like pattern and can cause severe pain that may last for weeks, months or years. About one in three persons will develop shingles during their lifetimes, resulting in about one million cases of shingles per year.

Chickenpox (also called varicella) is usually mild, but it can be serious, especially in young infants and adults. Children who have never had chickenpox should get two doses of chickenpox vaccine starting at 12 months of age. The risk of contracting shingles increases with age starting at around 50, and is highest in the elderly. Half of people living to age 85 have had or will get shingles. The risk of experiencing chronic pain also increases with age.

### Shingles Facts

- Anyone who has had chicken pox can get shingles. That means 95% of adults are at risk.
- Approximately one-third of the U.S. population will get shingles.
- More than half of older adults do not understand the seriousness of shingles and its complications.
- Among those who get shingles, more than one-third will develop serious complications. The risk of complications rises after 60 years of age.

See Shingles on page 7

## Medicare Specialist Advises Seniors to Avoid Medicare Advantage, HMOs

By Steve Pastis

"Medicare insurance is the most confusing thing for a senior to figure out," Susan Hatch told members of the Senior Care Organization at their October meeting at Café 225 in Visalia.

Hatch, a Medicare insurance agent, advocate and specialist, said that ever since Original Medicare started in 1965, every hospital in the country accepts it, along with 97% of all doctors.

"Medicare Advantage is different," she said. "You give up your Original Medicare card and replace it with the HMO card, which requires permission to go to a limited approved list of local hospitals, doctors, labs and skilled nursing facilities.

"In 2003, the insurance companies lobbied to take over Original Medicare with HMO type plans," Hatch explained. "The Medicare Modernization Act was passed and implemented in 2006. How were they going to get people to divorce themselves from Original Medicare? Pretty commercials and big commissions to agents to get people to enroll on Medicare Advantage Plan HMO's.

"The 'advantage' to Medicare Advantage is to insurance companies and agents," she said. "There is no advantage to seniors when it comes to freedom of choice. The Medicare trust fund money goes to Medicare Advantage HMO insurance companies every month, from \$700 to \$7,000 a month per person. They look at seniors like an ATM and then restrict them.



Susan Hatch

"The sad thing about it is that seniors have no idea what they've done," she continued. "They think they have their Original Medicare card, but they don't have it at all. I never realized it was this limited until many seniors called me with tons of complaints and said they got kicked out of their nursing facility too early or they wanted to go to Stanford, etc. I will not enroll any new client in an HMO anymore. Nothing good comes from it when they get very ill and need other options out of their local area.

"Seniors can't leave an HMO anytime, unless they move out of the service area, apply for a Medicare Supplement or a stand-alone Part D Drug Plan during the enrollment period, before December 7th."

Hatch described Medicare's Supplement Plan F as "the best coverage plan in the country." Although it's not free – it has a monthly premium – it offers no co-payments and total freedom. The plan is scheduled to be eliminated in December 2019. She added that anyone with that plan can

See Hatch on page 7

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## Most Americans Don't Feel Safe in Their Own Homes

Home is where the heart is. But home may not always be where Americans feel safest. A new survey from Honeywell found that more than two-thirds of Americans – including 72% of women – do not always feel totally safe in their own homes, though technology may be the security blanket people need to feel connected, comfortable and secure.

And while safety in numbers used to provide peace of mind, today, people living in households with more than one person are actually more likely to feel unsafe in their home versus people living alone (71% vs. 58%), according to the study.

Security is a key driver for at-home connectivity, with 60% of Americans thinking it would be "cool" to have an app that controls locks and doors, followed by lighting (51%), heating and cooling (49%), and a surveillance or security camera (42%).

By 2025, Americans, on average, believe that nearly half (44%) of all of the items in their homes will be connected. This is more than triple the amount of items that Americans estimate are connected in their homes today (14%).

U.S. consumers also rank smart home technology as more useful than other "connected" innovations: more than 7 in 10 (73%) would take a connected home over a driverless vehicle, and 63% think an app that connects their home is more useful than one that tracks their physical activity.

Yet, while nearly 90% of Americans have a desire to automate their homes, 66% say cost is holding them from adding more connected features into their homes, and fewer than two in five Americans (39%) with smart thermostats use them to adjust their homes' temperatures when traveling.

"People want to be comfortable, safe and in control at home; it's what we've heard from our customers for over a century," said Jeremy Eaton, president of Honeywell Connected Home. "Those sentiments aren't likely to change. Our goal is to keep innovating to meet those needs with smart products and services that improve people's lives."

### Automation Nation

From recording favorite TV shows to taking care of pets, Americans see many uses for the connected home.

- More than two in five Americans wish they could control their lights (42%) and make sure their homes are secured (42%) when they are not home, coming in second only to pet owners who would like to feed their pets (48%) while they are away. Programming a DVR came in at 26%.

- Nearly one-third (31%) of Americans would prefer an app that can control their home devices to be voice activated rather than with a touchscreen.

### Forget Me Not

People, particularly millennials, no longer live life on a rigid schedule, and the lack of consistency can leave consumers wondering about their homes when on the road.

- Locking the doors tops the list of things worrying Americans as they head out the door for vacation (39%), followed closely by packing essentials like toothbrushes, underwear and mobile phone chargers (36%).

- Thirty-four percent of consumers with a security system are unsure if they remembered to turn it on before leaving for vacation.

- Forgetting to unplug fire hazards is a more common concern among women than men (30% versus 24%).

### Better Safe than Sorry

Gone are the days of leaning on neighbors to keep an eye out on things when away. For a generation that is accustomed to managing their lives with mobile devices, they are not fully using the available tools.

- Sixty-nine percent of Americans check personal email when traveling, while less than 1 in 5 (19%) take advantage of technology to make sure their home doors are locked and windows are closed.

- Close to three in five (57%) social media users log onto networks like Facebook and Twitter when traveling, far outnumbering those Americans with surveillance cameras who, while away from home, use technology to check their security footage (44%).

- More than a quarter (27%) of millennials do not lock their windows and doors before leaving home for an extended period, whereas only 19% of baby boomers and seniors do the same.

- More than 4 in 10 (41%) Americans admit that they do not arrange for extra precautions when leaving their home for work or personal travel for at least a few days.



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Presented by  
Muhammad S. Chaudhri, M.D.**

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**January 12, 2016**

**Diabetes - Overview and Affect: Kidneys and the Circulatory System**

**February 9, 2016**

**Diabetes - Let's Talk about Stroke and the Nervous System**

**March 8, 2016**

**High Blood Pressure - What is Happening inside Your Body?**

*These seminars will be held in our office the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm.*

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Porterville	1107 W. Poplar
Porterville Dental	1133 W. Poplar
Springville	35800 Hwy. 190
Terra Bella	9416 Road 238
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## Family HealthCare Network Opens its Newest Health Center in Tulare

On October 1, local government leaders, community members, and the board and staff of Family HealthCare Network (FHCN) gathered to celebrate the opening of the organization's newest community health center. FHCN's Tulare Health Center marks the organization's 19th site, and 15th community health center in Tulare and Kings counties.

Joined by Rudy Mendoza, field representative for Congressman Devin Nunes, Assemblyman Devon Mathis and City of Tulare Vice Mayor Carlton Jones, more than 120 people attended the Grand Opening Ceremony,

which included an official ribbon-cutting and guided tours of the new health center. The health center opened to patients on August 31 and offers comprehensive family medicine and dental services.

"We are grateful for our community partners who came out to support Family HealthCare Network and our newest health center in Tulare," said FHCN President and CEO Kerry Hydash. "The new health center provides expanded access to care for residents of West Tulare and we are proud to now be serving our Tulare patients in their own community."



Government and community leaders joined the board and staff of Family HealthCare Network at the opening of its health center in Tulare.

Located at 263 S. West St., the new health center has 16 exam rooms and four dental operatories and provides the west side of Tulare with 8,900 square feet of new health care space. Free transportation is also available to patients of the health center.

Health center hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturdays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. To schedule an appointment with Family HealthCare Network, call 1-877-960-3426 (FHCN) or visit [www.FHCN.org](http://www.FHCN.org) for more information.

## Seniors with Diabetes: Medicare Benefits Can Help Save Your Sight

One in four Americans age 65 or older has diabetes, putting them at increased risk for vision loss and blindness. Diabetes-related vision loss is largely preventable with regular care, but studies have found a majority of Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes do not get the necessary eye exams.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is recognizing November as Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month and reminding older Americans that if they have diabetes, Medicare will cover these critical eye exams each year.

Both type 1 and type 2 diabetes can affect the small blood vessels in the eyes, causing them to leak and grow irregularly. This leads to vision loss if left untreated. This condition is known as

diabetic retinopathy and affects about 30% of people living with diabetes. It can also lead to other blinding ocular complications, such as diabetic macular edema. In this disease, the macula – the part of the eye responsible for detailed vision – swells, damaging vision and leading to blindness. Risk for these complications increases with age and duration of diabetes.

To prevent diabetes-related vision loss, the Academy recommends people with diabetes get a dilated eye exam each year. Getting these exams can help prevent 95% of diabetes-related vision loss. The exams are typically performed by ophthalmologists – physicians who specialize in medical and surgical eye care – and are covered by Medicare. Because Medicare plans vary, people



To prevent diabetes-related vision loss, the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends people with diabetes get a dilated eye exam each year.

with diabetes should talk with their doctor to determine the best process for setting up an eye exam. Those with Medicare Advantage may have different benefits from those with only Medicare Part B, which is traditional Medicare.

Eye exams for people with diabetes are similar to comprehensive eye exams.

They include putting dilating drops into the eyes to help the pupil expand. This allows the ophthalmologist to see the retina – the light-sensitive tissue lining the back of the eye – and look for early signs of diabetic retinopathy. Cameras may also be used to record any disease progression. These cameras combine a microscope with a camera to get close-up images of the retina.

These eye exams allow early detection, monitoring and treatment of diabetic eye disease. This can prevent unnecessary vision loss, enabling people with diabetes to live full and productive lives. Dilated eye exams also allow the ophthalmologist to check for conditions such as glaucoma and cataracts, for which

See Diabetes on page 7

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# Tulare Senior Community Center News

By Lorraine Zorn

## Annual Open Enrollment

Annual Open Enrollment (AEP) is the time of year when consumers can change their Medicare coverage, Part C and/or Part D. They can do this by joining a new Medicare Advantage plan (MA, Part C) or by joining a new stand-alone Prescription Drug Plan (PDP, Part D). Medicare beneficiaries can also return to Original Medicare with or without a Part D plan from a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan. Listed below are three things to keep in mind while deciding on individual Medicare coverage.

1. Open Enrollment Occurs from October 15 to December 7 of Every Year.

- If you enroll in a plan during AEP, coverage starts January 1, 2016.

- In most cases, Fall Open Enrollment is the only time you can pick a new MA or Medicare Part D plan.

- If you have an MA plan, you can also switch back to Original Medicare.

2. Review Current Medicare Health and Drug Coverage.

- If you have a Medicare

Advantage plan or a stand-alone Part D plan, you should receive an Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) and/or Evidence of Coverage (EOC). Review these notices for any changes in the plan's costs, benefits and rules for the upcoming year. If you are dissatisfied with any changes, you can make changes during Fall Open Enrollment.

- If you are satisfied with your current Medicare Advantage or Part D plan, you should still shop around. Check to see if there is another plan in your area that will offer better health and/or drug coverage at a more affordable price.

3. Local Help is Available.

- If you want to join a Part D or review your Medicare Advantage Plan, call and schedule an appointment with the Kings/Tulare Area Agency on Aging HICAP, Medicare Assistance Program. Medicare Counselors from HICAP can help you understand your current coverage and alternate options for changing plans. Kings/Tulare HICAP is at 1-800-434-0222.

- Counselors are not insurance agents and/or brokers.

## 2015 Holiday Boutique

This event will be held on Tuesday, December 1 from 4:30-7:30 p.m. See Calendar on page 2 for more information.

## New Class – Zumba Gold!

This is held most Thursday's, 1-2 p.m. at the Tulare Senior Community Center. Cost is \$2 per senior student (55+) per class or \$6 per month. Cost for a non-senior is \$3 per class or \$10 per month.

What is Zumba? – Zumba is based on quick-paced dance moves, choreographed to Latin and international music. The class can be very intense, and you can expect to burn up to 1,000 calories per one-hour class.

How is Zumba Gold Different? – Zumba Gold is based on the same dance moves used in the original Zumba class. The Gold class, however, is less intense, with dance routines designed for beginners and older adults.

What to Expect – The class consists of a series of easy-to-follow dance moves. Some moves are even designed to be performed on a chair, which makes this class easily adaptable to those in a wheelchair. The class is 60 minutes long and includes a longer warm-up and cool-down than regular Zumba. The moves focus on improving balance, strength and flexibility, while raising your heart rate and improving cardiovascular ability.

What to Take – You should wear comfortable workout clothing, including rubber-soled shoes. Also bring along a bottle of water and a towel.

## Tours & Travel

“Spotlight on Paris” will be March 8-14, 2016. “Colors of New England” will be October 3-10, 2016. For more information about these tours, visit: [www.tulare.ca.gov/departments/community-development/senior-services/travel-opportunities](http://www.tulare.ca.gov/departments/community-development/senior-services/travel-opportunities)

If you have any excursion suggestions for 2017, please let us know!

## Meals on Wheels Volunteers Needed – Help in Our Kitchen!

The Tulare Meals on Wheels Program currently serves over 250 meals per week, which adds up to almost 13,000 meals per year! This program relies on volunteers and donations to keep seniors living independently in their homes.

The Kitchen Volunteer hours would be from 10 am to 1pm. The volunteer tasks would be to help with packing home delivered meals, serving lunch to seniors at the senior center and clean-up. Please call or stop by the Senior Center for more information.

## Donations Received

A donation was received for the Feed a Senior Program from Anonymous.

No donation is too small. We'll send a special card to the individual and/or their family, and publish the names in our monthly newsletter and the senior column.

## Blood Pressure Screening

Free blood pressure screening the first and third Wednesday of each month, 10-11 a.m. Sponsored by Tulare Adult School Nursing Program.

## HICAP - Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program

Free, one-on-one Medicare counseling. Please call 1-800-434-0222 to make an appointment. Visit [www.ktaaa.org](http://www.ktaaa.org) for more information.

## Bingo

The regular Bingo Program is held every Monday and Wednesday, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Cost is 10¢ per game, 25¢ a card. Another great activity for anyone 18 years and older to enjoy socialization and have a wonderful time playing!

## Card Playing

This free activity happens at the Senior Center every Monday, Wednesday and Friday after lunch!

## Friday Night Dances

Visit the Tulare Senior Community Center every Friday night, 7-10 p.m., for live music, dancing, finger foods, socializing and more! Entrance fee is \$8 per person.

The Tulare Senior Community Center is located at 201 North F Street in Tulare. For more information, visit [www.tulareparksandrec.com/community/seniorservices.htm](http://www.tulareparksandrec.com/community/seniorservices.htm) or call 685-2330.

Lorraine Zorn is senior services Administrator for the City of Tulare Recreation, Parks & Library Department. She can be reached at [Lzorn@ci.tulare.ca.us](mailto:Lzorn@ci.tulare.ca.us).

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## Shingles

from page 3

• Appropriate and immediate treatment of herpes zoster can control acute symptoms and reduce the risk of longer-term complications. Starting anti-viral medication within 72 hours of the onset of shingles can reduce the pain and the length of time the outbreak lasts.

The shingles vaccine is offered locally at Walgreens, Walmart Pharmacy, CVS, Target Pharmacy, Medicine Shop Pharmacy, Rite-Aid, Costco Pharmacy, Passport Health Visalia and Kmart Pharmacy. For more information about the vaccine, visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/shingles/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/shingles/default.htm).

## Hatch

from page 3

keep it for life if they sign up before then.

She explained that she is not in business for the money. For those in the insurance business, "there's no money in supplements. I might get \$12 a month. But this is my passion. I'm saving lives and I love it."

Hatch advises those on Medical Advantage HMO or Part D drug plans to stay aware of their drug plan and co-payment changes. "You should never be loyal to one plan every year. They change prices and provider lists. Whatever (plans) you see in the mail, you should throw into the trash. For stand-alone drug plans or a HMO, just contact HICAP or Medicare to go over your options and prices. You can call Medicare 24/7, but don't call during the day, you might be on a long hold. Call at night and you'll get to them very quickly."

They can enroll you over the phone for HMO'S or a drug plan. For Medicare Supplements, you have to use a licensed agent. Medicare cannot enroll a person onto a Medicare Supplement plan.

Seniors often tell her that they can't afford a Medicare supplement plan. "I tell them without it, you're going to face co-payments and huge restrictions," she said, before sharing her response to seniors who dismiss supplement plans because they are in good health. "If my car has 300,000 miles on it, I'm not going to say that it doesn't break down."

For more information, call (559) 307-2287 or visit [MedicareToday.net](http://MedicareToday.net)

## Diabetes

from page 7

people with diabetes are at an increased risk.

"Annual eye exams are critical for anyone living with diabetes," said Purnima Patel, M.D., a clinical spokesperson for the American Academy of Ophthalmology and a retina specialist and assistant professor of ophthalmology at Emory University School of Medicine. "Older Americans may be unaware that Medicare covers these exams for people with diabetes. Skipping these exams, for whatever reason, can put them at risk for a future in the dark."

Traditional Medicare covers 80% of the cost of eye exams for people with diabetes. The remaining 20% is typically paid for by the patient. If this cost is a concern, EyeCare America may be able to help. This is a public service program of the Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology that can help older Americans get a comprehensive eye exam and up to one year of care at no out-of-pocket cost. To learn more, or to see if you or your loved one qualifies, visit [www.eyecareamerica.org](http://www.eyecareamerica.org).



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# Senior Games

from page 1

year, the committee gained valuable insights about how to make the event even better in the future.

"I think we learned about the events to offer," she said. "We scheduled singles tennis thinking it was easier, but most seniors don't play singles. It would have been better had we offered doubles tennis rather than singles. We also had women's tennis and table tennis scheduled for the same day. We will try to move those around."

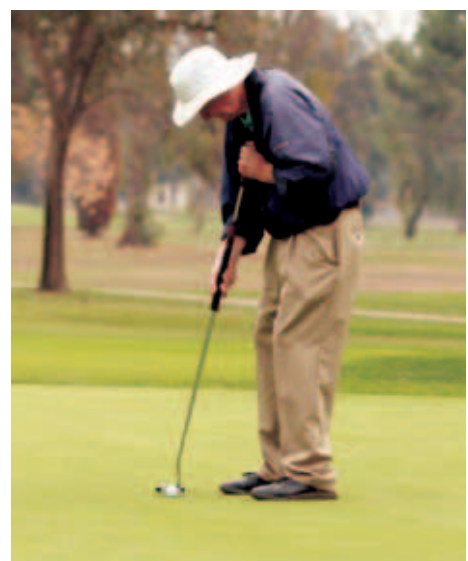
"We scheduled softball on weekdays and a lot of seniors work," she continued, adding that events that have the potential to draw more people would be scheduled on weekends in the future.

The Huntsman World Senior Games in Utah, the national senior games, were held earlier in October, she noted. "We feel that impacted our attendance to some extent."

The Visalia Parks and Recreation Department is considering hosting the next Senior Games over two weekends in April 2017. Senior athletic events will be planned this coming spring as a preview of the next Senior Games.



The archery competition was held at Riverway Sports Park. (Photos courtesy City of Visalia Parks and Recreation Department)



Dave DeLong, Mens Golf, Ages 70-74, overall low score and gold medal winner with a 165 (36 holes)



Planning committee member Dorothy Collins picks up her packet at Opening Ceremonies. She later received a silver medal in the 10K Road Race, Women's Ages 60-64.



Planning committee members and volunteers Don and Peggy Buchanan lead the athletes into the Opening Ceremony during the Athlete's Parade.

"One of the things that we are going to do is a pickleball tournament in the spring to keep some momentum going," said Greenwood.

And there is a consensus that the inaugural Visalia Senior Games were successful enough to create momentum.

"I think what was nice was that everybody was happy to be there," said Greenwood. "We didn't have upset people. They were just happy to have events."

Event standings and photos are online at [www.visaliaseniorgames.com](http://www.visaliaseniorgames.com). For more information, or to be added to the mailing list, contact the Visalia Parks and Recreation Department at (559) 713-4365 or [recreation@visalia.city](mailto:recreation@visalia.city).



Men's Doubles Pickleball, Ages 55-59, medal winners: Gold - Crecelius/McCuen, Silver - Miller/Martinez, and Bronze - Gubler/Mann

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