

The Good Life

Travel, Leisure & Fun for South Valley Adults 50+

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How Old is Old?

As the “graying of America” continues in the United States with nearly 84 million Americans expected to reach age 65 or older by 2050, new data from UnitedHealthcare shows that the definition of “old” depends on who you ask.

The 10th annual UnitedHealthcare 100@100 survey finds that 60% of centenarians say they do not feel old – and those who do, say they did not start feeling old until age 87, on average. Ten-year-olds, however, say people start to get old at age 46, on average.

The annual survey polls 100 centenarians each year to examine their attitudes and opinions on health, family, likes and dislikes, and more. This year, to mark the 10th anniversary of the survey, UnitedHealthcare also polled 100 10-year-olds to offer a comparison between younger and older Americans.

When asked what age they truly feel, more than half (52%) of 100-year-olds say they feel younger than their actual age. On average, centenarians report

feeling more than two decades younger at 79 years old. Reflecting back, on average centenarians felt:

- the most attractive at age 31;
- the most energetic at age 34;
- the happiest at age 44;
- the healthiest at age 46;
- the wisest at age 49; and
- the most content at age 56.

Come On, Get Happy

Keeping a positive attitude is the most important factor in staying healthy, according to a quarter of the centenarians surveyed. The next most popular answers are eating healthy (21%), exercising regularly (10%) and keeping busy (9%).

Nearly two-thirds (61%) of 100-year-olds say they see themselves as being very positive people – which makes them more optimistic than the 10-year-olds surveyed. Just 44% of 10-year-olds say they are very positive people, but the younger generation may catch up: nearly half of centenarians (47%) say it gets easier to maintain a positive attitude with age.



“Year after year, we hear from centenarians that there is a correlation between healthy aging and a healthy mindset,” said Rhonda Randall, D.O., chief medical officer of UnitedHealthcare Retiree Solutions. “It’s a good reminder for us all to take care of our mental, emotional and social health -- in addition to our physical health.”

Family is Top Priority for Young and Old

When it comes to fueling positivity, many centenarians and 10-year-olds look no further than their closest connections: 11% of centenarians and 31% of

10-year-olds say their friends and family are key to maintaining a positive attitude. Almost half of centenarians (45%) and 40% of 10-year-olds say they would rather spend time with their family more than anyone else in the world.

Both groups also make sure to keep in touch with family members that live outside their homes, as 83% of centenarians and 84% of 10-year-olds speak with extended family on a daily or weekly basis.

When asked who they thought of as a role model growing up, nearly half of centenarians (46%) chose their parents over other

See *How Old is Old?* on page 3

Pickleball: 'The Fastest Growing Sport in America'

By Steve Partir

Pickleball keeps growing in popularity in the South Valley, with many seniors coming out to play on the pickleball courts at Recreation Park in Visalia on at least a weekly basis. The two courts were opened to the public with a grand opening ceremony and ribbon-cutting on December 13.

“Pickleball has been called ‘the fastest growing sport in America,’ and we are seeing that right here in Visalia,” said Cheryl Waymack, USA Pickleball Association (USAPA) ambassador for the area. “We outgrew the two new courts before they were even finished, and we continue to look for additional space. I



Photo by Paul Serrano of It's About Time Photography

Pickleball is “easy to learn and somewhat senior-based.”

would predict our numbers will more than double in the upcoming year.”

Pickleball, which has been described as “a combination of table tennis, tennis and badminton,” uses a kind of Wiffle Ball and a paddle that

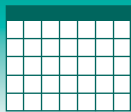
looks like a large table tennis paddle. The rules of pickleball are similar to those of tennis. There are a few differences, however, such as not being allowed close to the net except to return a ball hit there by your opponents.

Three United States Congressmen, Joel Pritchard, William Bell and Barney McCallum, are credited with inventing the sport in 1965 in Bainbridge Island, Washington, as a way to keep their kids occupied that summer. They originally used table tennis paddles and a Wiffle Ball, and lowered the net on their badminton court. Neighbors, friends and others started playing, and the sport grew in popularity.

“It’s easy to learn, and somewhat senior-based,” explained Dan Fox, Visalia parks and recreation pickleball coach. “Seniors can play it and it’s competitive. In one or two evenings, someone can learn it and be competitive.”

See *Pickleball* on page 8

Calendar of Events



Around the South Valley

May 21-23 – 'Beyond Karaoke'

The Encore Theatre Company's production of "Beyond Karaoke" at the Encore Theatre, 324 South N St., Tulare, will conclude with performances on May 21, 22 and 23. For tickets or more information, call 686-1300.

Friday, May 22 – Spring Formal Dance

The Tulare Senior Center, 201 North F Street, Tulare, will host this event. For more information, call 685-2330.

Thursday, May 28 – 'Heroes Breakfast'

Quail Park Retirement Village will host this event to honor all local firemen, policemen, highway patrol, sheriff's department and ambulance personnel. For more information, call 624-3503.

May 29 – June 21 – 'Tribute to the Movie Musical'

This year's fundraising show for the Kings Players of the Temple Theater in Hanford will feature tunes from "The Wizard of Oz" to "West Side Story," and from "Moulin Rouge" to "Chicago." For tickets (\$12), call 584-7241.

Friday, June 5 – Roaring 20s Dance

The Tulare Senior Center, 201 North F Street, Tulare, will host this event. For more information, call 685-2330.

Friday, June 12 – Father's Day Luncheon

The Tulare Senior Center, 201

North F Street, Tulare, will host this event. For more information, call 685-2330.

June 12-28 – 'The Graduate'

The Visalia Players will present "The Graduate," the story of Benjamin Braddock, recent college graduate and prodigal son, who returns home and promptly becomes embroiled in an affair with the wife of his father's business partner, one Mrs. Robinson -- but soon finds himself falling in love with her daughter.

Performances will be at the Ice House Theater, 410 E. Race Ave. (at Santa Fe Street) in Visalia on June 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 and 28. For tickets or more information, call 734-3900.

Friday, June 19 – Father's Day Luncheon

The Visalia Senior Center, 310 N. Locust St., Visalia, will host this event. Tickets are \$3.50 for those 55 years old or older; \$4.50, for those younger. For more information, call 713-4381.

Friday, June 19 – Father's Day Dance

The Tulare Senior Center, 201 North F Street, Tulare, will host this event. For more information, call 685-2330.

Saturday, June 27 – Under the Streetlamp

With their unique style and modern "Rat Pack" persona, Under The Streetlamp offer an electrifying evening with a unique blend of tight harmonies and slick dance moves to doo-wop, Motown and old time rock 'n' roll hits. Composed of recent leading cast members of the Tony Award-winning sensation "Jersey Boys," the group will headline a 7:30 p.m. show at the Visalia Fox Theatre, 308 W. Main St., Visalia. For tickets (\$24-\$49) or more information,

For more events, go to our website 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. Submissions must be appropriate for The Good Life readership of 50-and-over, and be received by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

Single Women Need Different Long Term Care Insurance Plan

Women in their 50s and 60s who are single today or concerned about being alone in the future will greatly benefit from affordable long term care planning, according to an industry advocate.

"There are millions of women over age 50 who are single, divorced or widowed, and most married women will outlive their male spouses making long term care planning essential," said Jesse Slome, director of the American Association for Long-Term Care Insurance. "Planning for women who are alone today or may be tomorrow should be different than planning undertaken by couples. Unfortunately, that's often not the case."

About 70% of nursing home residents are women, and over two-thirds of new long-term care insurance claims are paid to women, mostly for care received at home. However, the long-term care cost is the reason many single women don't consider insurance protection.

"Single women often have lower incomes, less retirement savings and the prospect of

lower Social Security and pension benefits than men, so affordability is a primary and very valid concern," Slome explained.

Many insurance agents merely recommend 50% of the plan they recommend to a married couple, according to Slome. "A married couple, both age 60 will pay \$3,200-per-year for \$400,000 of combined benefits," he said. "A single woman, also age 60, will pay \$2,950 for \$200,000 because single women pay more and don't get discounts offered to couples. For many single women, that's simply not within their available budget."

Single women are advised to compare insurance rates. "Each insurance company sets their own premium costs and there can be sizable differences especially for women buying coverage on their own," Slome said.

The association has six educational guides that can be read online, including a number of educational videos. For more information, call (818) 597-3227 or visit www.aaltci.org.

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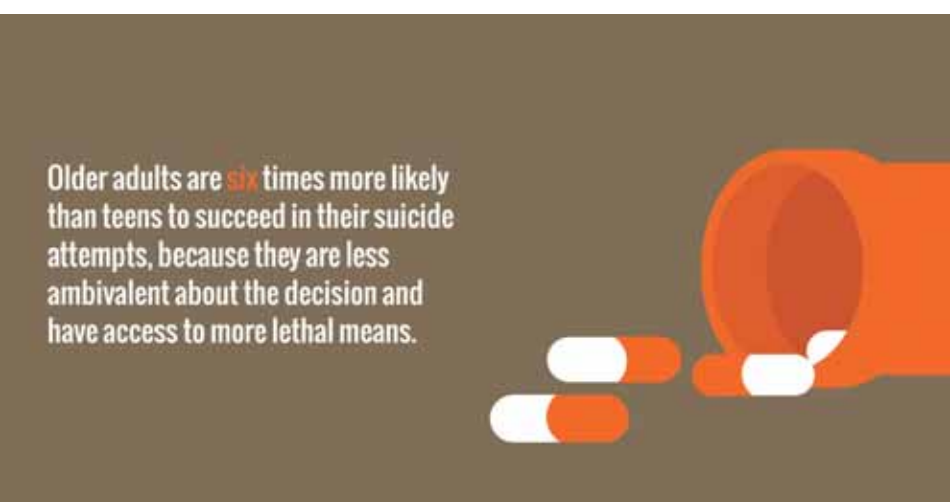
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Nation's Only Accredited Suicide Hotline for Seniors in Jeopardy

After 40 years in existence, the nation's only accredited, 24-hour suicide hotline and warm-line for seniors is in jeopardy, due to state budget cuts in California. The toll-free Friendship Line recently lost two-thirds of its annual funding, leaving a budget gap of \$700,000 per year, and prompting the Institute on Aging to launch a crowdfunding campaign on IndieGoGo.

"Older adults are two to three times more likely than teens to commit suicide, primarily because of loneliness, isolation and undiagnosed depression," said Dr. Patrick Arbore, founder of the Friendship Line, a program of the Institute on Aging. "In addition, seniors are six times more likely to be successful than teens in their suicide attempts, because they are less ambivalent about the decision to take their own lives, and because they have access to more lethal methods."

Friendship Line volunteers and staff make and receive nearly 10,000 phone calls each month to connect with isolated, lonely and potentially suicidal older adults, ensuring that no senior ever has to feel isolated, lonely, or uncared for. The toll-free, anonymous crisis intervention line is open seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and volunteers are trained to recognize depression and suicidal

thinking among older adults.

"We provide a lifeline, whenever they need it," Arbore added. "For many of our clients, the voice on the other end of the Friendship Line is the only human interaction they can count on."

In response to the loss of funding, the Institute on Aging launched the IndieGoGo campaign last month, with the help of the World Champion San Francisco Giants, who donated \$5,000 to the campaign. The Giants also featured the Friendship Line in their Community Clubhouse during a pre-season game against the Oakland Athletics, announced the IndieGoGo campaign on the big screen during the game, and donated authenticated baseballs and a bat bearing autographs from Hunter Pence, Buster Posey, Joe Panik and Madison Bumgarner.

"We are humbled by the quick and generous response from the community," said Arbore. "We believed that once the community knew how common suicide is among seniors, and how effective the Friendship Line is at preventing it, they'd step up to support seniors. So far, they have exceeded our expectations. But we still have a long way to go."

To learn more about suicide among seniors, and how to contribute to this lifesaving effort, visit <http://igg.me/at/friendshipline>.

How Old is Old?

from page 1

family members, friends, teachers and celebrities. Today's 10-year-olds also cite their parents as role models, with 71% placing their parents at the top of the list. Mom is most popular, as each group is twice as likely to name their mother rather than their father as a role model.

For the seventh straight year, centenarians were asked which celebrity or public figure with whom they would most like to have dinner. This year, Betty White is back on top: more than 6 in 10 centenarians (63%) prefer the Golden Girl, who fell behind President Obama last year, and are least likely to invite Taylor Swift and Jennifer Lawrence (9% each), as most centenarians don't know who they are (66% and 75%, respectively). Swift, however, is the most popular dinner guest choice for 10-year-olds, with more than two-thirds (67%) citing her as their top pick.

The survey posed a number of questions on childhood to both centenarians and 10-year-olds, and found some of the

greatest differences between the two groups related to their experiences with money. More than 8 in 10 centenarians (81%) did not have an allowance as a kid, and of those who did, more than half (56%) earned a dollar or less per week. Turns out, pockets are deeper for today's youth, as 48% of 10-year-olds receive a weekly allowance, and three-fourths of them (80%) say they earn between \$5 and \$20. Similarly, going out to eat with family was either a nonexistent or rare occasion for centenarians when they were young (67%), compared to more than half of 10-year-olds (56%) who go out to eat with their family at least once a week.

When it comes to similarities between the two age groups – it turns out going to the dentist is a timeless ordeal for children. Centenarians' greatest dislike as a kid was going to the dentist (24%), and their younger counterparts still feel the same way: 22% of 10-year-olds dislike most going to the dentist today.

For more information, including a video and summary of the survey results, visit www.UHC.com/100.



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Lifestyle

Older Workers Provide More Workplace Value than Job-Hopping Millennials

Seniors and baby boomers are living longer, working harder and challenging negative stereotypes of aging by providing more workplace value than their millennial counterparts.

“The national retirement age of 65 was set 80 years ago, but with the 20th century's greatest gift of 30 years added to longevity, this outdated policy perpetuates negative perceptions of older workers,” said human resources and aging expert William Zinke. “With 109 million Americans including every baby boomer now over 50, this is not just about living longer – it's a wake-up call to recognize their ability to contribute to the nation's economic growth. Older workers deliver productive engagement, and their job tenure is almost four times longer than younger workers. They are key to recalibrating our overburdened Social Security and other entitlement programs.”

Dr. Janice Wassel, associate professor of gerontology at the University of North Carolina Greensboro, talks about the “phenomenal aspects of growing older,” and notes that employers, managers and human resource professionals are taking notice of this important demographic megatrend.

“Research shows that the mind actually gets sharper with age in a number of vital areas including cognitive skills, multi-tasking and managing conflict and compromise,” she said. “Negative emotions such as

sadness, anger and fear become less pronounced than in the drama-filled younger years.”

HR managers, frustrated with the chronic job-hopping of the millennial generation, are becoming wary of hiring, training and then losing employees after one or two-year stints, with little return on investment. The work ethic, strong work commitment and higher motivation of older workers are receiving greater attention in strategic workforce planning.

HR professionals increasingly view older workers as more reliable, dependable and committed to their work. They require less training than younger workers, and also can serve as experienced mentors and coaches. Their lower turnover rates are convincing managers to reallocate recruiting and training budgets away from the 20-24 and 25-34 age groups (who average 1.3 and 3.0 years of job tenure respectively) and more toward the 55-64 age group (whose average tenure is 10.4 years).

With the mission to persuade America that people 50+ are significant contributors, Zinke founded Enrich Life Over 50 (ELO50) in 2014 as a national grassroots movement designed to regenerate millions of people in their extended longevity.

One of the first ELO50 chapters is being formed in Boston, with its inaugural meeting on June 10. For more information, visit www.elo50.com.



SeniorSquirrels.com is the world's first micro job website for seniors.

World's First 'Micro Job' Site for Seniors Launched

Founded after British entrepreneur Matthew Twist realized there was no easy way for his mother to utilize her retirement, SeniorSquirrels.com is the world's first “micro job” platform for the senior generation. Micro jobs are defined as gigs, where the worker is an independent contractor hired for a particular task.

The company's mission is to connect the 50+ population of the United States, United Kingdom and Europe with organizations and individuals who need help to complete skilled micro jobs.

“The retired and semi-retired population of the U.K. is a vast and growing untapped resource of knowledge and experience,” explained Twist. “SeniorSquirrels.com is the first platform in the world that seamlessly connects this

resource with people and businesses who can use it.”

The full launch of the service is scheduled for this summer, but the company is currently signing up “Super Squirrels” on its website.

“(Our) focus is on connecting skilled and experienced people with businesses and individuals who need their help,” said Twist. “It could be a requirement for an expert gardener or a retired accountant, either way we make the connection. The Senior Squirrel generates an extra income from their hobby or expertise, whilst the customers who use the service hire skilled people without the traditional overheads of employment.”

To sign up to become a Senior Squirrel or to register as business or individual who could use skilled and reliable people to complete micro jobs, visit seniorsquirrels.com.

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History

Dusting Off History with Terry Ommen



The Raid on Kingston

The little outpost began as Whitmore's Ferry on the Kings River. It later made a name for itself as a stage stop on Butterfield's Overland mail line in the 1850s. By 1861, when the 2,800-mile St. Louis-to-San Francisco route was abandoned, the little settlement already had a hotel, store, blacksmith shop and a well-established ferry service carrying travelers across the river. And by 1873, the town now called Kingston was being described as "one of the busiest little towns in Fresno County." It had achieved economic success—a fact that did not go unnoticed, especially by one of the most notorious outlaw gangs in California.

Tiburcio Vasquez had a violent history and roamed California at will, leaving crime victims and dead bodies behind as his calling card. He recruited a band of like-minded men, and the notorious Vasquez gang was formed in the 1870s.

Exactly when the plot to attack Kingston was hatched is unclear, but Christmas Eve 1873 will always be remembered as the time the little town became the focus of his criminal rage.

The assault began about 7

p.m. on December 24, 1873, when the Vasquez gang of about 12 to 15 men dismounted their horses on the north side of the Kings River. The gang quietly walked across the bridge that had replaced the ferry, and entered town. A gang member stood guard outside of each business, and other gang members entered the buildings with pre-cut pieces of rope, bound the occupants and stripped them of their valuables.

Ed Douglas, a Visalian staying at the hotel, did not cooperate with the bandits and paid the price. He was pistol whipped and robbed of his watch and money. Within a short time, the streets were deserted and all the men were under siege. With loot in hand, the gang crossed back over the bridge to their waiting horses, but not before several Kingston citizens began shooting at the fleeing bandits. The gang escaped and according to some reports, two of them were wounded.

No one lost their life in the bold attack, and only a few victims were injured. In all, 35 men had been robbed and a total of \$2,500 worth of property had been taken. The takeover of the town was quickly and widely reported and it became known as the



Kingston was once a busy town on the Kings River.

"raid on Kingston." (Kingston no longer exists, but the town and the bold crime are memorialized with a marker near the town of Laton.)

The people of California were nervous over the incident, especially Visalians who lived just a few miles from the little town. On January 4, 1874, just 10 days later, some citizens of Visalia observed suspicious men enter the town and go to the residence of a widow who was bound and robbed of her money. Citizens sounded the alarm yelling "robbers," and armed Visalians headed for the victim's house to confront the men. When the armed force arrived, the outlaws were gone, but they found 60 pieces of pre-cut rope left behind,

presumably for use in securing more victims, just like in Kingston.

The robbers evaded the pursuing citizens of Visalia, but the residents were pleased they had foiled this Kingston-like raid. Were the Visalia robbers part of the Tiburcio Vasquez gang or copycat thieves? Quien sabe? (Who knows?)

Local writer Terry Ommen enjoys learning about the old west, especially the role Tulare County played in creating it. He wrote the books "Then & Now Visalia, Wild Tulare County" and "Christ Lutheran Church, A Gathering Place for Half a Century." His blog, "Historic Happenings", posted at www.visaliahistory.blogspot.com serves as a Visalia historical newsletter.

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Health

Making Sure Your Healthcare Wishes are Known

If you experienced a medical crisis and were unable to make your healthcare wishes known, who would speak for you?

National Healthcare Decisions Day, an initiative created to highlight the importance of healthcare decisions, is a collaborative effort between the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and other national, state and community organizations.

"Everyone, including those who are healthy and in the prime of their life, should think about and document their healthcare preferences before a crisis," said J. Donald Schumacher, PsyD, and NHPCO president and CEO. "National Healthcare Decisions Day is a day focused on educating the public about the importance of advance care planning."

In the survey "International Survey of Older Adults Finds Shortcomings in Access, Coordination, and Patient-Centered Care," the United States was rated the highest with regard to having had a conversation about advanced care planning. The survey concluded that 78% of Americans polled had discussed advance care planning and 67% had named a health care proxy.

"The higher percentage of Americans engaging in advance care planning discussions is promising," said Schumacher. "But we still have work to do to educate and bring awareness to this important issue."

Have a Conversation

Advance care planning starts with talking with loved ones,

healthcare providers and friends. These types of discussions can be difficult for the person initiating the conversation and equally uncomfortable for the person or persons receiving the information.

"Having these conversations will prevent loved ones from having to guess what you would want if you are ever facing a healthcare or medical crisis," said Schumacher. "The conversation helps create an understanding of what healthcare preferences matter most to you."

Complete an Advance Directive

Advance directives allow you to document your end-of-life wishes in the event that you are terminally ill or critically injured, and unable to talk or communicate.

NHPCO's Caring Connections has free, state-specific advance directive forms and information on advance care planning that can be downloaded from www.caringinfo.org/stateaddownload. Each state's advance directive is legally reviewed on an annual basis to meet each state's statutory requirements.

"Most people know they should 'have the talk,' but all too often life gets in the way," said Nathan Kottkamp, JD, NHDD chair and founder. "NHDD reminds us that we need to mark our calendars—no more excuses or procrastinating."

For additional information about National Healthcare Decision Day and efforts throughout the country, visit www.nhdd.org.



Friendship Village resident Anna Hauser puts the pedal to the metal during her first time behind a steering wheel.

Senior Speed Demons Hit the Track

Perhaps some South Valley senior communities should take notice of the latest foray into less-than-traditional senior activities offered by Friendship Village in Schaumburg, Illinois.

The community's new lifestyles program included a recent go-kart outing to Enchanted Castle in nearby Lombard. Two-dozen residents of Friendship Village, as well as some associates of the retirement community, became "fast and furious" as they hit the track in their electric go-karts.

"This event is part of our new lifestyles program here at Friendship Village," said Jessica Enriquez, SeniorFit Program exercise physiologist at Friendship Village. "As a result of proper progression in our integrated program, participants are trained with functional movements and ADL (Activity of Daily Living) exercises to help them prepare for 'extreme' activities such as snow tubing, indoor skydiving, horseback riding and rock climbing. Our team feels that participants can experience new, old and exciting

adventures at any age and not give up their passions and interests."

The go-karting event included three elimination rounds and a final championship race. "Enchanted Castle totally catered to our needs and really helped to make this experience a great success," said Enriquez.

The Friendship Village group had the track to themselves, but made so much noise cheering each other on, they ended up drawing a crowd from other Enchanted Castle attractions.

"That's really what made the event more meaningful because here we are, a senior community, and adolescents and adults were in awe of what we were doing. Everyone had a smile on their face and said, 'Wow, I want to be like them when I get older,'" Enriquez said.

Friendship Village is a Chicago-area retirement community offering a complete continuum of care including independent living garden homes and apartment homes, as well as assisted living, memory support, skilled care, and short and long-term rehabilitation services.



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Think you can wait it out and keep that fescue turf and those coastal redwoods?

Are you ready for a change?

If you are still reading you are probably interested, or at least worried. Those of us who have been planting low-water-use plants for years are not so worried about this drought. Of course, drought is stressful to even low-water-use plants, but

these plants don't have as much trouble staying green and blooming even with water restrictions and conservation goals. But along with the plants, there are some necessary steps we should do to be water-efficient.

The first thing to do is to repair any leaks, and then actually watch your lawn sprinklers to make sure you are not over-watering, causing run-off, or watering concrete. Make adjustments or ask your



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gardener to bring everything up to best possible repair and adjustments.

Wherever possible, convert to the newer efficient sprinklers, often called rotating heads. Planting beds and vegetable gardens should be converted to drip irrigation, which includes everything from true drippers, to low-volume misters.

If you are letting the lawn die (or if it will die because of water restrictions), you will still need to water your mature trees. Mature, older coastal redwoods may not survive this drought. They require high water in the summer to try to compensate for the lack of fog they would receive if planted in their natural habitat in the coastal mountains and hills. But try running a drip line with misters or drip emitters to keep the trees hydrated.

Try cycling your water times if you use a controller, to get more of the water to soak in and not run off or evaporate. That means watering three times for five minutes instead of once for 15 minutes, for example. Each cycle should be at least 30 minutes apart, but longer gaps are better. I think the best time to water landscapes in the Central Valley is in the early morning hours. The soil has had time to cool off, reducing the chance of root and crown rot problems we see in some woody Mediterranean-climate plants, and the evaporation effects of sunlight and wind are reduced or non-existent.

Removing or reducing your fescue lawn? Bermuda grass

hybrids are still a possibility, but there are lots of options. Combine outdoor living areas, pathways, plants and open space. Start small if you are not sure, or seek the advice of a professional.

When replacing plants in your garden, just start using lower-water-use species. Nurseries are scrambling to provide you with more and more choices. Some of my favorites are the California native sages like Cleveland and bee's bliss, sages from the Southwest like the many autumn sage varieties, sun and winter hardy succulents like bulbine and red yucca, and great low-water-shrubs like California coffeeberry and barberry. Ornamental grasses like deer grass and pink muhly provide great accents and look tidy all year.

Most of these plants require once a year trimming and no fertilizer. They are not bothered by insect and disease pests. So they are part of a lower-maintenance garden.

Plants will always be an important part of our lives and our homes. They raise property values and increase the quality of our lives. The answer, even in a drought, is not to stop planting. There are thousands of plants that will work in our great climate and soils. Just jump in and stop worrying!

Peyton Ellas is the owner of Quercus Landscape Design, specializing in California native plant-based gardens, and the owner of Auntie's Home Grown, a small sustainable farm.

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Photo by Steve Pastis

Cheryl Waymack, USA Pickleball Association area ambassador, (center) helped coordinate the May 2nd Pickleball Clinic in Visalia.

Pickleball

from page 1

Visalia Vice Mayor Warren Gubler has been one of the main pickleball proponents in the city. He first became interested when he saw pickleball courts near his parents' home in St. George, Utah, that were "always packed."

"We had friends who were playing pickleball in Fresno, so we started watching videos and decided we wanted to play," said Waymack. "Visalia Rec Department was offering a class, so we took it and began playing."

She was quickly hooked and decided she wanted to be more involved in the sport. "I went to the USAPA website and realized we did not have an ambassador in this area," she said. "I wanted to help promote the sport that I had grown to love so I applied. I have been the USAPA ambassador in this area for approximately two months."

"We have watched pickleball in Visalia grow quickly in the last few months," she continued. "Pickleball Visalia on Facebook now has over 150 members, with new members joining every week."

There is also a Facebook page for Pickleball Tulare.

"We regularly see many players waiting to play on the new courts, with some evenings having more than 15 players in attendance," said Waymack. "I would estimate we have over 60 regular players between Visalia and Tulare combined."

The Visalia Parks and Recreation Department, which built the pickleball courts, has added "Indoor Drop-In Pickleball" and a new "Doubles Pickleball League" to its schedule of summer events. For more information, call 713-4365 or visit www.liveandplayvisalia.com.



Brian Newton makes a return.



Mary Jo Eastes returns a serve.



Photos by Paul Serrano of It's About Time Photography

Participants at the picnic that followed this month's Pickleball Clinic at Recreation Park in Visalia.

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