



California Commission on Aging

AGEWATCH

... as a citizen's voice in government...

CDA Director Connolly receives Rosalynn Carter Institute Leadership in Caregiving Award

The 2014 Rosalynn Carter Leadership in Caregiving Award – the highest award given in the caregiving field – was presented by Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter to Lora Connolly, Director of the California Department of Aging and Susan Howland, Director of Education for the Alzheimer's Association, California Southland Chapter. The award was in recognition of the partnership between these two organizations as well as the community-based agencies that brought the "Savvy Caregiver" program to an ethnically diverse population of family caregivers in California. Savvy Caregiver is an evidenced-based, psycho-educational program that has been proven to strengthen caregiver skills, knowledge and confidence; decrease burden, emotional enmeshment and depression; improve caregiver ability to manage challenging behaviors and improve their willingness to use community services.



(L-R) CDA Director Lora Connolly, former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, and Susan Howland

"Through this award, we recognize and help sustain proven effective caregiver support programs," said Leisa Easom, Ph.D., executive director of the RCI.

"Susan Howland and I were so honored to be selected for the 2014 Rosalynn Carter Leadership in Caregiving Award," said CDA Director Connolly. "Recognition truly belongs to the whole cross-county team involved in transforming the Savvy Caregiver program into one that serves Spanish speaking families impacted by Alzheimer's disease. Our team included Dr. Ken Hepburn at Emery University, Dr. Lilliana Oakes at the University of Texas, and the Alzheimer's Association California Southland Chapter. But none of this would have been possible without our federal grant funding from the federal Administration on Aging. We are so appreciative of this award, which will help make this program available to more families in California who are caring for a loved one with dementia."

Johnson & Johnson generously sponsors this award each year with a \$20,000 stipend and a statuette designed by renowned sculptor Frank Eliscu, designer of the Heisman Trophy.

Excerpted from a Georgia Southwestern State University News Release, November 6, 2014.

AGEWATCH is an occasional publication of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) intended to inform, educate, and advocate. The CCoA is an independent state agency established in 1973 to serve as the principal state advocate on behalf of older Californians. The CCoA office is located at 1300 National Drive, Suite 173, Sacramento, CA 95834.

Commission on Aging elects officers for 2015



Virgie P. Walker
CCoA Chair

The California Commission last month on Aging re-elected Virgie P. Walker to her second term as chair of the Commission's Executive Committee. Walker, who is President and CEO of People Coordinated Services of Southern California, was appointed to the Commission in 2009 by Assembly Speaker Karen Bass. Walker is a resident of Carson.

CCoA's November 19 meeting in Los Angeles also saw the re-election of Vice Chair Marian Last of Rossmore, Paul Downey of San Diego as Legislative Advocacy Committee Chair and Gail Nickerson of Granite Bay as Operational Procedures & Bylaws Committee Chair. Commission members elected Donna Benton (Los Angeles), Lucy Fisher (San Francisco), and Ed Walsh (Rancho Mirage) as Executive Committee members-at-large.

CCoA meets five times annually across the state.

Members are appointed by the Governor and Legislature, and serve up to two three-year terms as volunteers. For members' biographies and the Commission's meeting schedule, visit www.ccoa.ca.gov.



Marian Last, Vice Chair

More than Half a Million Older Californians Fell Repeatedly in the Past Year

A new report from the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research highlights the continued threat of falls to the elderly. As summarized in the brief by author Steven P. Wallace, PhD:

"Falls are the leading injury-related cause of death and of medical care use among Californians ages 65 and over. In 2012, there were 1,819 deaths due to falls among older Californians. More than 72,000 hospitalizations were caused by fall injuries among older adults during that year, along with more than 185,000 emergency department (ED) visits. The medical costs alone of falls in the state have been estimated to be over \$2 billion annually.² Those who have fallen more than once are at the highest risk of injury and further falls. Data from the 2011-12 California Health Interview Survey show that 12.6 percent of older Californians, or 556,000 individuals, had fallen more than once during the past year. Fewer than half of those experiencing multiple falls discussed how to reduce their risk with a health professional. This policy brief details the characteristics of older Californians who have repeated falls, their health care use, and the actions they can take to reduce the risk of future falls. It also provides policy suggestions for reducing the risk of falls among older Californians and decreasing the costs to the medical care system."

To read the new brief, visit:

<http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/publications/search/pages/detail.aspx?PubID=1349>

Information from UCLA Center for Health Policy Research Policy Brief,
Author: [Steven P. Wallace, PhD](#), November 20, 2014

"Approximately 40% of elders who sought care for a fall said they did not discuss how to avoid future falls with their provider."

California experts well-represented at national roundtable on elder financial abuse

The National Center for Victims of Crime hosted an unprecedented Roundtable on Elder Financial Exploitation November 18 and 19. The event was supported by a generous grant from the Huguette Clark Family Fund for Protection of Elders, a Donor-Advised Fund of the New York Community Trust, and brought together more than 30 **of the nation's leaders from a diverse group of stakeholders to address the issue and provide innovative solutions** to prevent and combat elder financial abuse.

The Roundtable included presentations on best practices, shared innovative programs serving elder victims of financial abuse and explored opportunities for increased collaboration. Working groups were established to develop long-term strategies and victim-centered projects in the areas of policy, justice and services. The Roundtable was designed to produce tangible outcomes to be acted upon and implemented in the near future.

“The purpose of the Roundtable is to elevate the issue of elder financial exploitation. As our population ages, more and more people are being targeted. This type of crime receives far less attention than violent crime, however it can be equally as devastating. Our goal is to facilitate increased collaboration in this area to better serve victims,” commented Mai Fernandez, Executive Director of the National Center for Victims of Crime. The initial gathering of experts provided the foundation for effective partnerships, encouraged additional dialogue on the issue and emphasized the importance of research-based practice and multidisciplinary approaches to combat elder financial exploitation.

Roundtable attendees included representatives from the financial services industry, government agencies, **elder victims' rights organizations, academics, and civil attorneys among others. California participants included** Judge Julie Conger (California Commission on Aging), Lisa Nerenberg (California Elder Justice Coalition), Laura Mosqueda and Julie Schoen (National Center on Elder Abuse at USC), Molly Davies (California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association), Betty Malks (Enhancing the Capacity of a Diverse Faith Community in Addressing Elder Abuse) and Carol Sewell (CCoA). Additional information and resources on this issue, including *Taking Action: An Advocates Guide to Assisting Victims of Financial Fraud*, are available on the National Center for Victims of Crime website <http://www.victimsofcrime.org>.

Information from the National Center for Victims of Crime press release, November 20, 2014.

AGEWATCH

December 2014

“If we left, they wouldn't have nobody.”



The decision to stay and care for elderly residents when an RCFE closed and the owner and care staff abandoned the remaining residents, was a “no-brainer” for two employees at the Valley Springs Manor in 2013. Their conversation about the decision was recorded for National Public Radio’s “StoryCorps” and can be heard at <http://storycorps.org/locations/california/>

Miguel Alvarez (L) and Maurice Rowland (R) remember caring for residents at an assisted living home, where they were a janitor and a cook, when it closed suddenly, leaving many elderly residents abandoned.

Recorded in **Hayward, California**

California Commission on Aging

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Vice Chair,
Rossmoor

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Rita Saenz,
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San Francisco

Jean Schuldberg,
Chico

Ed Walsh,
Rancho Mirage

Senator Carol Liu reports on work of the Senate Select Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care

Senator Carol Liu, Chair of the Senate Select Committee on Aging & Long-Term Care, met with the Commission on Aging in November to preview the forthcoming report from her Committee's year-long effort. Senator Liu reviewed the Committee's work plan and highlighted the need to prioritize aging and long-term care issues at the Legislature, as well as to consolidate and better coordinate the state agencies delivering the spectrum of aging services. The Committee's 2014 report, due out in December, will address the issues of long-term care and its financing, family caregiving, transitional care, Alzheimer's disease, and wellness and mental health, among other issues. The Committee will also pursue reinstatement for the coming year, with a goal of seeing a standing Committee on Aging established by Senate leadership.

Senator Carol Liu (center, front), with commissioners (front row, L-R) Jane Rozanski, Marian Last, Virgie Walker, Bert Bettis, (2nd row) Lucy Fisher, Donna Benton, David Sanchez, Barbara Mitchell, Ed Walsh, Stuart Greenbaum, Jean Schuldberg, (3rd row) Steve Castle, Paul Downey, Gail Nickerson, and Bob Petty.



AGEWATCH

December 2014

Upcoming Events

December 1, 2014 -- California Legislature Reconvenes.

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/legsite.html>

December 2-3, 2014 -- Triple-A Council of California. Vagabond Inn, Sacramento. Agenda and information at www.4TACC.org.

January 20 - 21, 2015 -- California Commission on Aging. Sheraton Downtown, Sacramento. www.ccoa.ca.gov for agenda and information.

February 9--11, 2014 -- LeadingAge California Policy & Leadership Summit, Sacramento. <http://policysummit15.com/> for information.

California Commission on Aging staff:
Sandra Fitzpatrick, M.A., Executive Director
Carol Sewell, MAG, Program Analyst on Aging
Marcella Lopez, Administrative Assistant