

Monthly First Wednesday Outreach to start at Fallbrook Community Center

FALLBROOK – The following 12 groups are on board for the First Wednesday Outreach program at the Fallbrook Community Center, 10 a.m. to noon, each month.

The first event will take place on Sept. 7, and following events will be held the first Wednesday of each month at the same time and place thereafter.

The County of San Diego, and San Diego Parks & Recreation Dept. will provide the facility, and the Friends of the Fallbrook Community Center in concert with the county will spearhead the coordination between these groups to maximize Fallbrook's health and wellness resources in an efficient, one stop program. This outreach is in synergy with the County's "Live Well San Diego" initiative and the Fallbrook Community Center's wellness and recreation goals.

The Fallbrook Community Center is a particularly advantageous site for this offering because it is a large center with many affordable and free health and wellness programs. The community center and nearby Fallbrook Senior Center also offer a host of low-cost recreational programs for balanced living.

The facility also has parking, including handicapped parking and free access to large playgrounds, tennis courts, and volleyball courts to facilitate family use. The center has referral information from many community resources housed there.

Fallbrook Smiles Project and CSUSM Nursing Team will provide free checkups for anyone who would like to participate including: free blood pressure checks, blood sugar screenings, and height/weight/BMI calculations. They also keep a record and send one home with the patient participant, so the patient is empowered with month to month information, providing earlier indicators of health changes so intervention and preventative measures can be taken before serious and costly health issues arise.

They also occasionally bring in other screenings: audiology, bone density, and dental. They also can refer for nutrition counseling and other local health services. This is an amazing resource particularly for those without health insurance, the underinsured and/or unable to afford minimum copays.

Representatives from Veteran Affairs' (VA) San Marcos office will be onsite. The San Marcos' VA office's particular specialty is caring readjustment counseling for veterans of all ages and their families.

The representative can set up one on one or support group counseling, as well as advocate, direct and connect veterans

to the appropriate department duty expert within the larger VA system such as health care, benefits, and/or burial services. The representative will have many of the forms needed by veterans to obtain benefits onsite as well.

The representatives will assess what VA services are of the greatest interest and need within the Fallbrook/Bonsall/Rainbow area so that if a particular need has high demand, an appropriate VA department duty expert can be arranged to come onsite for future "First Wednesday Outreach" dates.

Fallbrook Senior Center will provide healthy, balanced meals as a part of its ongoing Senior Lunch program to promote healthy eating and socialization. The lunches are very affordable and available daily to everyone. There is \$4 suggested donation for seniors 60+, and a \$5 charge for guests accompanied by seniors under 60. The meal portion of the program is available from 11:15 a.m. to noon. Meals must be eaten onsite due to health regulations.

The Senior Center is right next door to the Community Center and has a home meal delivery program for seniors and recreational and health classes that First Wednesday participants can get more information about.

The Foundation for Senior Care will assist seniors faced with challenges in medical care and advocacy, maneuvering social support programs, and finding resources specific to their needs. Their programs include the Care Van and Expanded Rides Transportation Services, Care Advocacy, coordination of services program, the Fallbrook Adult Day Care Center, "The Club," and a Senior Computer Learning Center (help with computer issues and classes). They have scholarships available for the Adult Day Care and they facilitate one-on-one VA appointments at their center.

SDG&E Outreach representatives will provide

information on SDG&E's low cost and assistance programs to help those with low-incomes and medical needs sign up for rate assistance and information on other programs to help the public keep their utility bills low.

The Fallbrook Health Care District is a sponsor of most of these groups that will provide services and will promote and support this type of effective, collaboration for the health of the community.

The Fallbrook Chamber of Commerce will aid in getting the word out and facilitating media promotion with the newspapers, calendars, and social media.

Wade into Fitness teacher Ann Wade is a wellness advocate in the community and expresses it through her classes, working with the Friends of the Fallbrook Community Center and the County of San Diego, as well as coordinating with many wonderful health service providers in Fallbrook. Wade and her husband also spent 24 years as a military family, so she and her family have a special place in their hearts for veterans and their families.

Wade, whose fitness classes include veterans and others seeking stress reduction and healthy living, had heard many of the veterans complain about the lack of services in the Fallbrook/Bonsall/Rainbow area despite the veteran population being quite large. She proposed the First Wednesday Program as a way to combine the benefit of services already being provided with the addition of local VA and other resources to better serve the community.

All of these entities can provide referrals for those affected by food insecurity to the Fallbrook Food Pantry and other resources.

This will be a well-rounded, healthy living First Wednesday Outreach at the Fallbrook Community Center with options for residents to participate in some or all of these free and low priced offerings.