Reintroducing Patty Acuna & Jennifer Leuning

With the retirement last May of Jane Winston-Doman, Patty Acuña has stepped into the role of Senior Recreation Supervisor and will oversee Senior Adult programming. Patty has worked for the City of Beverly Hills for over 19 years and 14 of those years have been at Roxbury Community Center. She has been responsible for a variety of programs including the adult class offerings both here and at La Cienega Community Center. She also works with the Fine Art Commission as a staff liaison working to bring International artists artwork to Beverly Hills. In her new role, she will be responsible for senior program class offerings, the Beverly Hills Active Adult Club, and the oversight of the Roxbury Community Center facility. Her hope is to continue offering a well-balanced program for the senior adult community to enjoy. Stay tune for new class offerings, interesting workshops and exciting excursions.

Jennifer Leuning, was recently promoted to Recreation Supervisor and has embraced her new role at the Roxbury Community Center. She joined the team in 2015 and has been an integral part of our growth. Jennifer will be responsible for overseeing the Senior Nutrition Program along with Recreation Specialist, Ebba Berlinsky. She also is responsible for teen programs as well as the City’s Volunteer Program that places qualified volunteers in various programs such as Senior Nutrition and special events.

Both Patty and Jennifer look forward to getting to know each and every one of you and are excited for the future of Roxbury Community Center. In addition, we look forward to another new full-time staff member of the Roxbury Community Center Team to soon join us and lend support to the team’s other responsibilities. Recreation Services Manager Teri Angel will continue to have an office on site to oversee the City’s Recreation Division.
A Selection of Light Verse
By Edie Landau

**Let’s Go Shopping**
I took advantage of Macy’s Easter sale, and when my shopping spree was completed,
All of my credit cards were totally depleted!
But I am not complaining – I bought everything I craved.
And I keep reminding myself how much money I saved!

**Unforgettable**
If you know that you have met before,
On two occasions – maybe more.
It’s humiliating when they say, as they greet you,
“How very nice it is to meet you.”

**Ha Choo!**
The wads of Kleenex that gather on the dining table, make me cranky.
Am I the only person in the world, who still uses a hanky?

**Mais Oui**
Geriatric experts advise learning a language that’s new,
Spanish, French, Italian to name a few,
So I’ve decided in which foreign tongue I will dabble,
I’m determined to learn it…it’s called Digital babble.

**Tivo**
My Universal Remote can perform almost any task.
But there’s one function I fervently wish it could do.  
Can it be programmed to re-wind the calendar a year or two?

**Where, Oh Where, Have My Playmates Gone?**
I thought my Grandkid’s dedication to playing Scrabble with me was strong.
I WAS WRONG!!!

**Oy Vay!**
I remind my friends, as our Senior years unfold,
We groan and kvetch because we’ve gotten old.
I always knew that my physical and mental powers would not last.
But I never dreamed that the years would go so fast!

**My Mother’s Day Lunch**
Their 10-year old son cheerfully greeted us at the door,
He told us, “I’m Christian.  Introducing guests is my Mother’s Day chore.”
He pointed.  “The woman in the red dress is my father’s new wife.
It’s shocking but I like her, she’s sharp as a knife.
The girl in the mini-skirt is my mom’s husband’s daughter.
But that awful outfit she’s wearing her birth father bought her.
The guy at the piano is my stepbrother, cause he is my father’s wife’s son,
But we’ve never spoken to each other, one-on-one.”
I interrupted him, “I don’t want you to think that I’m a poop,
But it’s time for us to join the group.”
So we moved in to hug Christian’s stepmom, who happens to be my ex-husband’s ex-sister-in-law.
She stood next to an elderly gentleman.  “This is Henry.  He’s Christian’s new step grandpa.”

In case you’re judging us and think our family suffers a tragic flaw,
Please know that we are today’s typical “family bourgeois.”

**TA DAH!**
The Attack of the Wild Baboon
By Bernard Koire

Two of my greatest pleasures are traveling and visiting hospitals all over the world to see how medicine is practiced in foreign places. Happily, I could combine the two by taking tours designed for doctors that gave me continuing medical education credits and satisfied my desire to learn about other countries and cultures.

In the winter of 1993, I traveled to Tanzania and Kenya with a group of physicians from all over the United States. Our group met in Nairobi, Kenya at the Nairobi Hilton Hotel where, on the following morning, about thirty-five of us, doctors and families, boarded a luxury air-conditioned bus to commence a fascinating and enlightening tour of the national parks of East Africa.

Kenya and Tanzania have an incredible variety of geological and geographical surprises. There are endless plains like the Great Rift Valley that was formed by a great earthquake in ancient times. There are snow-covered mountains at the equator like Mount Kilimanjaro where a glacier still stands. There are lakes and rivers that nourish a multitude of species, including the “big five”: elephants, lions, buffalo, rhinos and leopards. There are huge herds of zebras and gnus grazing on the grassy plains of the Serengeti and groups of giraffes nibbling on the acacia trees in the Masai Mara. And birds, there are thousands upon thousands of them from the beautiful, pink flamingos to the ever ravenous vultures feasting on carrion left by carnivorous predators.

It was the 30th of December when the attack occurred. It was lunchtime and our tour bus had stopped on a bluff overlooking the Mara River, which forms part of the boundary between Kenya and Tanzania. The tour company had packed box lunches for our group. We all looked forward to a picnic lunch overlooking a widening of the river, which swarmed with more than one hundred crocodiles. This was a perfect spot for the crocodiles to snare a zebra or a wildebeest as it crossed the Mara.

Jan and I decided to have our lunch a little apart from the group. As we were finishing our lunch, I noticed a troop of about twenty-five baboons crossing the road about fifty yards away from where we were sitting. Jan, after seeing the baboons, decided to go back to the bus. I wasn’t ready to leave this ideal spot and pulled out the dessert from the lunch box - a large juicy navel orange. I held it up in the air, admiring its size when I heard a chattering and shrieking. I looked up and saw a huge male baboon with greyish-brown fur rumbling, tumbling and charging toward me. He must have been the leader of the troop because the others had stayed behind, and he was the largest of them all. He raced toward me on all fours with his tail held high in the air, slobbering and flashing his two large, pointed canine teeth.

When he was almost upon me, I instinctively rolled onto my side in a fetal position with the orange still clutched in my hand. Then I felt him. It felt like a truck running over me as he snatched the orange from my hand and sped away into the trees followed by his troop. Then it was over. My heart was pounding rapidly and loudly. I felt scratches on my side and stomach, but other than that I was all right.

When I returned to the bus, some of the other doctors checked me over and decided that I would only need to take antibiotics to prevent any infection caused by the scratches. I had already taken a tetanus booster before I had left on the trip.

Later in the day, as I mulled over my frightening experience of the afternoon I thought, “What a great story to tell my grandkids.”
Running a Fool’s Errand

By Ilse Nusbaum

I spend hours in the Roxbury library’s attic carrels to learn obscure details about holidays. Last week I focused on April Fools’ Day, thinking that it should be easy to ferret out why people chose the first day of April to trick one another. Historians tell us that it predates Queen Esther in Persia. Nowadays, it’s practiced worldwide, except in China where it was banned last year. Theories about the holiday’s origins and purpose are abundant, but they remain theories.

Greek mythology is a good place to start. A favorite is the myth of Hades, Persephone, Demeter, and the pomegranate seeds. It includes kidnapping, trickery, deception, bawdy behavior, and the attempts of a grieving mother to find her daughter. The kidnapper was Hades, the god of the underworld. The mother was Demeter, goddess of grain. The daughter was Persephone. The pomegranate seeds were forbidden fruit.

After her daughter’s abduction, Demeter neglected her job as the goddess of agriculture, embarking on what can be called a fool’s errand. Earth went barren while she mourned. Disguising her identity, a depressed Demeter found shelter in a king’s palace. There she met Baubo (also known as Iambe), whose parents were a nymph, Echo, and the Greek god Pan. Echo tricked Hera and was punished. Her daughters, though they were children of a god, were demoted. One turned into a bird; Baubo worked as a servant. Not an ordinary mortal, she had the gift of jesting. Her rowdy jokes and bawdy behavior restored Demeter’s vitality. She convinced Zeus to end her fruitless quest. He wanted her back at work, so he let her find her daughter.

Greek myths don’t often end happily. Persephone wasn’t supposed to eat in the underworld, but Hades tricked her with pomegranate seeds. Because of that transgression, she was released for only part of each year. Her happy ascent signaled spring. How does that relate to April foolery? I don’t know. The historians didn’t connect the dots.

I rummaged through the poetry stacks for an answer. In Chaucer’s tale (1392) of an April pilgrimage, a rooster is tricked by a fox, and the fox is tricked by the rooster. The French poet Eloy d’Amerval (1508) refers to a poisson d’avril (April fish). A poem by Flemish writer Eduard de Dene (1561) is about a nobleman who sends his servant back and forth on senseless errands on April 1. The servant knows he’s being tricked.

Last and least, a popular legend involves calendars. The Julian calendar began the year on January 1. In 567 it was abolished as a holiday because it smacked of paganism. When the Roman abbot Dionysius chose March 25 as the new year, it was to be celebrated on April 1.

After about a thousand years, miscalculated Julian leap years threatened to push Easter into summer. Pope Gregory VIII’s calendar reform of 1582 lopped off ten days (from October 4 to October 15) and restored New Year’s Day to January 1. Protestant nations, like Great Britain and its Colonies, retained the Julian calendar until 1752, skipping eleven days in September.

The story goes that tricksters confused their neighbors into thinking New Year’s Day was still April 1. Folks who fell for the hoax were labeled April fools. Now bear in mind that a poem written in 1561 talks about an April prank before the Gregorian calendar was introduced. Who’s the fool?

Some of what you read here is factual. Some is malarkey. Take it with a grain of salt, play your pranks, tell your jokes, and holler,
Life in an Internment Center

By Tak Nakae

President Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 of February 19, 1942, suddenly and rudely uprooted 120,000 Americans, my family among them, from our homes and interned us in ten centers. Our only crime was being of Japanese descent. We were unjustly and falsely suspected as being possible enemies. Although my time in a center was limited, how can I forget that experience?

Our family was among the small group exempted from the initial forced removal during the early months of 1942. The road bisecting our orchard was the border of the restricted area. Luckily, our home and orchard operation center were on the unrestricted side of that road.

Although we were restricted from accessing most of the businesses essential for our living and the operation of the orchard, we found other sources and learned to survive. To continue my engineering education, I applied to many schools in the Midwest. Only the University of Nebraska accepted me, indicating I could start as a sophomore in the fall semester. With trepidation of facing the unknown, I began making plans to be there.

In July 1942, the military dropped the other shoe and ordered our small exempt group into internment centers to join our ethnic peers already there. I felt betrayed, frustrated and angry. I was already disappointed that I was no longer considered to be an American. Previously, the military had changed my draft classification to 4C (essentially an Enemy Alien). I felt betrayed because we were led to believe our exemption was permanent. Frustrated that our successful efforts to live within the imposed restrictions were in vain. Angry that my life was unnecessarily interrupted again.

When I arrived at Tule Lake Center, my negative feelings were amplified. My family’s life styles were completely upset. We were family only when in our living quarter, a 20 x 20 foot room of a tarpaper-covered wooden barrack with unfinished interiors. It contained a small coal stove, a single light bulb hanging from the rafters, and five army cots with straw-filled canvas mattresses. We arranged the cots to achieve limited privacy for mom, three younger siblings, a brother, two sisters, and me.

We were no longer a family, only members of a commune with no personal freedom or privacy. We ate our common meals during designated periods in a mess hall. A central building contained the toilets, sinks, and showers, without any privacy provisions. Facilities for males and females were on the opposite ends, separated by a laundry area with tubs and washboards. We lost our family closeness and the joy of living together.

My initial emotions were as if I had been sentenced to a remote prison. Because radios and outside newspapers were prohibited, I felt completely isolated from the outside world. I had no knowledge of what was happening – such as the war’s status. The nearby Mt. Shasta was my security object, à la Charlie Brown’s blanket. Each morning I would look for it. If I could see its snow-capped peak, I knew that the real world still existed and someday I would rejoin it. It was always there to maintain my hopes for the future.

I soon noticed that others already there seemed to have a different attitude. I eventually realized that they were exercising their cultural characteristic of Shita Ga Nai, (“There is no hope”) to accept the realities of their situation and do their best to overcome and endure it. The more creative had gathered rocks to build rock gardens to decorate the entry to their barrack rooms. Others had built simple furniture from scrap lumber.

Various classes, clubs and athletic activities had been organized by the inhabitants to occupy their newly found leisure time and improve their lives. A small convenience store selling personal necessities was operating. A jazz band with would-be singers provided entertainment. Getting into the spirit, I joined a music appreciation class and volunteered as an assistant scoutmaster for a new Boy Scout troop. Later, I got job on a farm equipment maintenance service truck. It paid $16.00 per month, my spending money.

In late September 1942, as I was becoming acclimated to my new life style, I was released to attend the University of Nebraska. My faith in my security blanket had paid off. Now I would face the new challenges of living independently in yet another different environment, one as a restored American.

ONCE AN INTERNEE
LOST FREEDOM AND PRIVACY
BUT I REGAINED THEM

NOTICE: Some of the activities I described are depicted at the Japanese American National Museum in downtown Los Angeles.
Heaven is a Chair with Arms

Heaven is a chair with arms,
let me speak of some of its charms.
Without such a chair
I’m stuck at home.
And at this time of life
who wants to be alone?
If you provide me such a chair,
I can lift myself up and into the air.
There I can walk among the flowers and trees,
seek out friends, free as I please.
My walker and I are an independent pair,
as long as there’s someplace safe for my derrière.
I lack the strength to pull from my core,
and when I try I fall to the floor.
So when on an outing I am quite circumspect,
I have to treat this weakened body with much respect.
So before I book a restaurant or even a class,
there are certain questions I’m bound to ask.
Might you have a chair with arms?
The answer yes, is key to this qualm.
For it will allow me to further partake,
in food, or class, or social situate.
I think of the millions who struggle to be free,
liberated by wood sawed from a tree.
Pieces cut, lacquered, and sealed to a chair,
to me now representing freedom from despair.
No more hours spent crying on the floor,
now I push off the arms and I’m out of the door.
Handicapped has become handicap-able,
a heavenly chair with arms has made me stable.
Thank you lord for the wonderful tree,
all the woodcutters, and factories.
For the wonderful chairs that are made with arms,
that hand us our freedom and keep us from harm.

-Rita Mizrahi Shamie

Sound

Will I once again hear the coo of a dove
Or the hoot of the owl as he sits in my treetop guarding
Will I hear the soft raindrops when the storm ceases
The caress of the wind within the trees
Will I hear the crow of song
From my grand-baby learning to create sound
The ocean ebbing as it finally comes to the ground
Will I hear the overture, the back-story, the dialogue
As it exists in space and falls forward for me to grasp
Or will the world of silence still remain
Today hope stands before me
Technology embraces me, and offers me
Another chance at rebirth in the world of hearing
I grab it with both hands
Perhaps I will hear you now

-Rita Mizrahi Shamie

Comma Quandary

Oh dear! What a quandary
To use or not to use the comma,
When and how
That is the question.
And what about the rule
Never use after the word “and”
Does that still apply?
Then there is the dreaded Oxford comma,
One more comma to worry about
Is there also a Cambridge comma?
There probably is, but no one has heard about it.
My head is in a spin,
A headache looms in the near future
And if I don’t stop right now
I will end up in a coma.

-Betty Berger
Weep No More, My Gibson
By Marsha Miller

A while back, George Harrison of the Beatles wrote a beautiful ballad called “While My Guitar Gently Weeps.” Why is his guitar weeping? Well, because, when it looks at the world around it or maybe reads the N.Y. Times, the guitar becomes sad. And supposedly, it tears up.

Okay, now wait just a darn minute here!

Guitars, when dropped, crack. Guitars, when strummed, vibrate. Guitars, when disharmonic … I don’t know … they do something. But weep? How is that possible? After all, a guitar is an inanimate object. And inanimate objects do not take on animate characteristics, let alone animate emotions. Except for portraits of Christ and the Virgin Mother, which are reported occasionally to shed tears. And willow trees, alive but not sentient, some varieties are weepers. But never mind.

These things I thought until this very morning.

See, I once played the guitar. But I don’t play it any more, so it just stands in the corner of my closet. I must admit that I pretty much forgot all about it until 3:05 a.m. when I thought I heard some strange ramblings coming from behind my closet door.

As I cautiously opened that door, I was both amazed and saddened by what I heard in a conversation between my maple and mahogany Gibson guitar and my red Stilettos. They spoke in a language called Usedta. As in “I usedta be,” “I usedta have,” “I usedta do.”

The guitar spoke wistfully of how I used to take him to hootenannies in the ‘60s. Sometimes I’d go by myself, but usually my husband and my three small children accompanied me. My boys would play drums or tambourine; my little girl would play the spoons. I would sing a Seeger, a Guthrie, or a Baez tune – sometimes with a group, other times solo.

The Stilettos were happy to listen as the Gibson spoke, but to her, the ‘60s were before she came on the scene, before my kids were grown and hootenannies were no more. So when it was her turn, she spoke longingly about sexy gams in rhinestone-seamed hosiery. She elaborated upon her part in fulfilling my life’s dream of nightclub singing – cabaret.

Upon hearing these two wax melancholic, I slipped into my Stilettos, picked up my guitar, sang and strummed a chorus of “All the Good Times Are Past and Gone,” making us both weep. My guitar and me.

On Santa Monica Boulevard

Loud talking on cell phones
congestion…blaring music …
people watching… day dreaming
…traffic moving at snail’s pace.

Crawling past the Mormon temple,
I saw on top the angel was still there
blowing his horn.
Wished I could make a U-turn to listen.

At Westwood Boulevard I was struck
by a sight not unusual …
handcuffs being placed on the wrists
of an old black man.

He smiled at his shopping cart
overflowing with all his things.
He glanced down at his feet,
his shoulders drooped.

I felt his hopelessness and loss of care.
The cop had no trouble
cuffing the old man’s hands,
they had no life no need to fight.

Nothing I could do to aid.
My heart was sad,
eyes brimmed with tears,
I looked helplessly on.

The light turned green.
Sighing, I continued west
on Santa Monica Boulevard.

- Catherine M. Cummings
Aging and Traits
A Blitz Poem

My wrinkles multiply
They tell me I am aging
Aging is good
Aging means I am alive
Alive to pursue more knowledge
Alive to see my granddaughters grow up
Up, up and away
Up to the heights
Heights from where we can see the world
Heights that show us what is possible
Possible for the future of man
Possible for us to achieve
Achieve and expand
Achieve another dimension
Dimension is a measure
Dimension is the outer ring
Ring in the New Year
Ring around the collar
Collar that bum
Collar on the shirt for work
Work is a necessity for the benefit of the soul
Work is not a negative
Negative is how some people are
Negative is the other half of positive
Positive is a good way to live
Positive is a mathematical concept
Concept is ideas
Concept is a philosophical thought
Thought helps you decide what to do
Thought is necessary if you are intelligent
Intelligent may be a measured quantity
Intelligent is what you need to survive
Survive is what we all strive to do
Survive includes more than day to day existence
Existence is an essential of life
Existence is basic
Basic equals the moorings of life
Basic is what recipes call for
For the future
For the eternal
Eternal is a vast unknown
Eternal means something to some people
People are different
People exude individualistic traits
Traits can make for a common good
Traits are what individuals develop
Develop as a unique being
Being
Develop

The Garden
By Gary Youngman

1962, New York’s Times Square is alive with raucous crowds. Slowly I work my way through them, push open a stage door, and enter Madison Square Garden with a small documentary film crew close behind. We were duly cautioned to only stay for fifteen minutes to get our footage of its vast expanse.

The silence of the large arena was disturbed only by the heavy panting breaths coming from over fifteen large German Shepherds leading a team of conservatively dressed Secret Service men. Their movements were slow and deliberate, lifting each and every seat in the many rows of the arena, allowing a careful inspection of the area where the audience would soon be seated. It was very eerie to watch and listen, as not a single dog gave out even a mild bark.

After we finished filming and returned to our homes, only by watching the late news did we learn what event was going on that night. That evening was made historic by the singing of “Happy Birthday Mr. President” by Marilyn Monroe. My film crew and I wished that we could have been allowed to stay for that incredible happening with JFK.
An Essential Tool
By Madeleine Isenberg

About an inch in diameter and a tiny bit over a half-inch in height, my little made-in-
Germany metal pencil sharpener is one of my essential cosmetic tools. It has two sizes of
holes in its sides to accommodate either a regular sized pencil or a fatter one. Each hole has
a sharpened blade positioned and screwed in tightly, right above the hole. The other side of
the blade is raised so that your fingers wouldn’t get cut during the sharpening process. We
women have pencils in various colors depending on whether the pencils are for lip colors or
eye colors. Since these pencils are for use on skin, they are much softer and creamier than
those for use on paper.

But in my childhood and teen years, and for boys as well, a pencil sharpener was an
essential school tool. So much of our work was done in pencil and if the graphite point wore
down or broke – you had better have a sharpener to fix the problem with quick handiwork.

As a righty, I would hold the sharpener in my left hand and with the right insert the
writing tip into the sharpener’s regular size hole, with the blade situated above it. As I turned
the pencil to the right, a curl of fragrant cedar wood began to emerge alongside the blade. If the pencil had hexagonal
sides rather than being smooth cylindrical-shaped, then the curl produced a pretty, often yellow-colored zig-zag edge. Not
so pretty would be the left index finger that might get blackened by the powdered graphite that was a by-product of the
sharpening process. It would probably remain grimy until it could be washed off at recess.

Sometimes instead of achieving a nice sharp writing point, it would break and the process would have to be repeated.
And remember how sometimes the broken piece might get stuck at the top of the blade and you just couldn’t sharpen until
you managed to force that bit out? Sometimes a handy paper clip pushed at the other end of the blade could dislodge it. A
slight crunching sound might accompany the sharpening but it was so commonplace that it hardly registered as a disturbance
to interrupt the lessons.

Often, the sharpener sat on the edge of a desk within easy reach. Such mortification if the metallic sharpener accidentally
fell on the floor with a clang! A leg stretched out to retrieve it and a quick downward crunch and arm reach was the only
recourse.

Such were our daily, yet minor, concerns as conscientious students. I hope you were sharp enough to get my point!

Valentine’s Day Dance & Dessert Event was a Success!

Over 150 members of the Beverly Hills Active Adults Club enjoyed the Valentine’s Day Dance and Dessert event held on Monday, February 13th at the Roxbury Community Center. Hosted by the Beverly Hills Police Officers’ Association, members danced to the music of the Mar Vista Swing Band and enjoyed desserts and coffee provided and served by Beverly Hills Police Officers.
Couple of Swells

By Ron Abrams

After singing at Every Woman’s Village, I became a regular at the Thursday evening sessions. With Marci’s guidance and Charlie Harrison’s piano, all the members of our group made terrific strides during the next four months. At our June 15th session Marci told us she was moving to Seattle in the middle of July. She had made arrangements for Bob Keane to take over the class. Naturally we were all disappointed, but she assured us that Bob was a very experienced teacher and would be especially helpful with our styling. It turned out that Bob was an excellent teacher.

A few months later I was home alone on one Saturday afternoon. I turned on the television and there was a segment from “That’s Entertainment.” It was Fred Astaire and Judy Garland doing a song and dance routine from the film, “Easter Parade.” It was called “A Couple of Swells.” They were dressed in shabby eveningwear complete with top hats and worn out spats. The opening lines were

We’re A Couple of Swells
We stop at the best hotels
But we prefer the country
Far away from the city smells

I had an immediate reaction. “I can do that,” I said out loud.

The next thing I did was to pick up the phone and dial Francie La Rue. She had been a professional dancer and was a member of our vocal group. I told her what I had just seen and that it would be a perfect number for us to do together. She said she thought it was a great idea and she’d love to do it with me. I hung up the phone and went straight to Tower Records to get the videocassette of “Easter Parade.” When I got home I called Francie back and told her that I had the film.

Since we both lived in the same area, it was easy to get together to watch the film. We met on Sunday morning at Francie’s house and watched “Couple of Swells” at least twenty times. Since Francie had been a dancer she offered to do the choreography, which required me to leave the cassette with her until we were ready for several rehearsals together.

At Thursday’s workshop with Bob Keane, he had a surprise for us. He said that the group had made enough progress that it was time to show the public what we could do. He had booked a ninety-nine seat equity-waiver theater in a small shopping center in North Hollywood that was equipped with separate men’s and women’s dressing rooms. The scheduled show date was October 15th and provided for weekly rehearsal times. The music was to be provided by Charlie Harrison.

At eight o’clock on the 15th the house lights went down. Charlie played an intro and Francie and I pranced on stage and did our “Couple of Swells” routine. When we were done the audience erupted with applause and I heard someone shout, ‘IT’S A SHOW STOPPER!”
Happy Feet
By Cynthia Harper

“You put your right foot in, you put your right foot out, you do the hokey pokey and you shake it all about... that’s what it’s all about!” I think they got it right in this children’s song—moving IS what it’s all about.

The human foot is made of 26 bones and approximately 100 muscles, tendons, and ligaments and over time can take a beating. It is also the part of the body that bears the most weight, so it is very important to care for our feet and avoid painful foot problems. We generally don’t think about our feet until we have pain or an injury and any dysfunction can lead to serious issues including knee and back pain by creating an imbalance in musculature which limits full range of motion. When it comes to maintaining and improving mobility simple foot and ankle exercises garner major benefits and just like the rest of the body the feet need specific exercise. Good foot strength will help stabilize the ankle, help restore lower leg muscles, help whole body balance, and influence proper foot mechanics and gait patterns.

It all starts from the ground up. Your feet might not seem like significant contributors to your overall health but it’s all connected. When it comes to the external aspects of your body, there is no harder working part then your feet. They keep us moving, and if we take proper care of them, our feet will prevent back, knee and hip pain. Try these simple exercises to increase foot strength.

Spreading the toes
Place feet flat on the floor. Spread the toes as far as they will go and then return them together. Repeat this 10 times, rest and the perform a further 2 sets of 10 repetitions. Aim to repeat this exercise 3 times a day.

Calf raise (to strengthen the feet and the calves and improve balance): Stand near a counter or a doorway and hold on lightly for balance. Balance on one foot and rise up onto your toes. Hold for 10 seconds, then lower. Repeat 10 times on each foot.

Calf stretch (to keep the Achilles tendons and the plantar fasciae from getting tight): Sit with one leg stretched out in front of you and wrap a towel around the ball of the foot. Pull the towel back gently until you feel a stretch in the arch of the foot and the calf. Hold for 10 seconds; release. Repeat five times on each leg.

Pencil lifting
Pick up a pencil in the toes. Hold for count of 6, repeat 10 times. Aim to perform this exercise 3 times a day. An alternative version of this is to repeatedly scrunch up a towel in the toes.

Walking on the toes/Walking on the heels
Simply walk about on tip toe or heels. HOLD ONTO A RAIL FOR SAFETY
Do not wear shoes but perform the exercise barefoot. Aim for 8 sets of 15 to 20 seconds with 20 seconds rest between. Complete the exercise 2 times a day. Progress by increasing the duration of the walks.

Once you’ve finished these exercises, reward your hardworking feet with a frozen-golf-ball massage. Simply pop a ball in the freezer for a few hours, then roll under each foot while sitting down. The icy, textured ball can get into the tiny muscles of the foot and give you a deep massage.
Comings & Goings

Upcoming events:

• BINGO
Come join the fun every second Friday of the month from 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. at the Roxbury Park Community Center. Cost is 25 cents per card.

Guided Tours of the Japanese Gardens at the Huntington Library
Thursday, May 25th | 9:30am - 5:00pm
Bus departs and returns to the La Cienega Tennis Center.
Cost: $39 BHAAC Members | $49 Non-Members
Price includes transportation, guided tour of the Japanese Gardens, trip chaperone, and complimentary parking at the Tennis Center. Lunch is NOT included. There are dining options at the site.

- SAVE THE DATE -
Titanic Exhibit at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Thursday, June 22nd, 2017
More details to come.

In Loving Memory

Long-time Beverly Hills Active Adult Club member Selene Walter Lamm passed away at the age of 92 on January 24, 2017. Selene’s fascinating life was featured in the Fall, 2012 RoxViews edition.

Beverly Hills Active Adult Club member Leo Kaye passed away in February. Leo served as the Club’s Sergeant of Arms and for many years led the Club in the Pledge of Allegiance and God Bless America at the beginning of the Monday meetings. He will be missed.