



livewell

SPRING 2016

LIVING FOR LONGEVITY:

Carmen Sellers, 82, is turning back time using Blue Zones 'Power 9 Principles'

'Living Streets' Come Alive

5 **UCLA HEALTH**
Nutrition Tips for Parents

COMMUNITY HEALTH REPORT:

Smoking, Stress and Overweight Declining



Beach Cities
Health District



BEACH CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT IS ONE OF THE LARGEST preventive health agencies in the nation, and has served the communities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach since 1955. It offers an extensive range of dynamic health and wellness programs, with innovative services and facilities to promote health and prevent diseases across the entire lifespan.

Mission

To enhance community health through partnerships, programs and services for people who live and work in Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach.

Vision

A healthy beach community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Feeling Blue?

IT'S OFFICIAL: THE BEACH CITIES HAVE A SERIOUS CASE OF the blues. And that's cause for joy.

According to Gallup, the most acclaimed polling/data collecting organization in the world, our beach community is experiencing dramatic, measurable improvements in overall health and well-being since the implementation of Blue Zones Project® in 2010.

Remarkably, the Beach Cities collectively earned the highest 2015 Well-Being Index score in the U.S. – outpacing all 190 metro areas measured – and individually, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach rank first, second and fifth nationally.

Below are a few key highlights from the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index (more results on page 5).

Daily stress dropped 10 percent. It's important to note that when we brought Blue Zones Project into the community six years ago, stress levels were on par with post-Katrina New Orleans and recession-ravaged Detroit.

Overweight is down. The percentage of overweight residents dropped nine points to 50.8 since 2010. During the same period, the national rate rose four points to 63.7 percent.

Smoking is snuffing out. Just 8.9 percent of Beach Cities residents are smokers, compared to 18.8 nationally and 13.7 percent statewide.

These accomplishments are a direct result of the hard work of our community volunteers, partners and elected officials. You, too, can get involved, get educated and get inspired to help create healthy change in our community by visiting our website at bchd.org.



In health,

Susan M. Burden

Susan Burden
Chief Executive Officer

Life

Programs for every stage of

YOUTH

- Nutrition Education
- School Gardens
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Physical Activity
- Substance Use Prevention
- Fitness Classes
- Walking School Bus
- Toddler Classes



ADULTS

- Blue Zones Project®
- Covered California™
- Low-Cost Fitness Center
- Health Referrals for Underinsured/Uninsured
- Volunteer Opportunities



OLDER ADULTS

- Plans for Successful Aging
- Independent Living Assistance
- Peer Counseling
- MoveWell In-Home Exercise
- Errand Assistance
- Social/Conversational Support
- Health Referrals for Underinsured/Uninsured
- Advanced Care Planning



Volunteer & Get Involved

More than 600 people strong, our network of volunteers form the backbone of Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) and play a critical role in measurably improving community health. Below are just a few of the many ways to get involved.

Conversation Companions

Help curb loneliness and social isolation in the community through routine in-home visits to seniors and disabled adults in need of socialization and conversation.

Administrative Volunteers

Personable and responsible volunteers are needed to help with day-to-day administrative duties at BCHD, including staffing reception desks, clerical work and customer service.

Toddler Town Volunteers

If you enjoy teaching children healthy habits and want to help them discover farm-to-table fun, then Toddler Town at AdventurePlex is for you! Volunteers are needed to maintain play zones and help families play their way to good health.

Blue Zones Project

Make a positive difference in the health of our community by volunteering with Blue Zones Project. Volunteers who are outgoing with a passion for health are needed to help with a variety of local events and outreach.

For more information and to see a complete list of opportunities, please visit bchd.org/volunteer.



In the Blue Zone

After six years spent weaving health into the fabric of public policy, creating more livable streets, optimizing restaurants for nutrition, facilitating community connectedness and supporting healthy school environments, Gallup data shows Blue Zones Project is spurring real, measurable change in the health of Beach Cities residents.



#1 community
well-being score
in the U.S.

72% of residents are thriving
in daily life, up 8 percentage
points from 2010.

10% decline in
significant daily
stress since 2010.

Champions for Change

When Beach Cities Health District launched Blue Zones Project six years ago, a talented group of local leaders stepped forward to champion community change and make the healthy choice the easy choice for people where they live, work, learn and play in the Beach Cities.



City Government

Jeff Duclos, Hermosa Beach City Council

Former Hermosa Beach Mayor and current City Councilman Jeff Duclos was instrumental to the creation and adoption of many Blue Zones Project-endorsed policies in Hermosa Beach – including a comprehensive public smoking ban and a Bicycle Master Plan to support active transportation. As a result, Hermosa Beach became the first community in the country to achieve Blue Zones Community Policy designation, and the first city in the Beach Cities to adopt a Living Streets Policy (ranked second strongest in U.S. that year) ensuring streets are designed for all users, not just automobiles.



Community Engagement

Russ & Charlotte Lesser, Body Glove International

Body Glove International President Russ Lesser and his wife Charlotte Lesser have been Blue Zones Project backers from the beginning – dating back to their outspoken support at the initial town hall meetings. Charlotte, a Los Angeles County Commission for Women appointee, serves on Blue Zones Project's Power 9 Advisory Committee – which guides development and implementation – and was an integral member of the project's Purpose Committee that implemented community workshops attended by 2,500 people. Russ was the first business owner to apply Blue Zones principles in the workplace, enacting Body Glove's "Walk to Lunch Wednesday." And together, the Manhattan Beach pair have been active members of a walking group for more than 20 years.



Business

Marna Smeltzer, Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce

A longstanding Beach Cities Health District partner, Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce President Marna Smeltzer was the first local leader to partner with Blue Zones Project, volunteering her time to educate and encourage local business owners to integrate health policies into the workplace. Marna is also a founding member of Blue Zones Project's Power 9 Advisory Committee, which guides the project's development and implementation.



Policy

Jim Hannon, Beach Cities Cycling Club & South Bay Bicycle Coalition

Jim Hannon, founder/president of the Beach Cities Cycling Club, played an instrumental role in securing funding to design the South Bay Bicycle Master Plan to create bike-and pedestrian-friendly streets, which was later adopted and approved in 2011 by seven South Bay cities, including Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach. As Chair of the Beach Cities Health District Livability Committee, Jim successfully advocated for a host of local livability projects during the past five years, including the Redondo Beach Harbor Gateway Improvement Project.



Schools

Steven Keller, Redondo Beach Unified School District

Under Superintendent Steven Keller's leadership, Redondo Beach Unified School District was among the first to launch Blue Zones Project's "Walking School Bus" program (2011) – which has grown to include 37 walking routes and 14 schools – and the District's eight elementary schools each have gardens and administer nutrition education. Steven pioneered the "RU Living with Purpose" series for high school students, reformed unhealthy school fundraisers, implemented a district-wide work-site wellness program for staff and oversaw the development of a "Blue Zones designated" student cafeteria at Redondo Union High School.

Living for Longevity

By Eric Garner, BCHD Senior Communications Specialist

IF IT WERE UP TO ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD "HERMOSA," every day would be a dog day afternoon spent basking in the sun and napping on the couch. But instead, three times a day, the aging "senior dog" is roused by a coaxing tug on her leash from owner Carmen Sellers, a sprightly 82-year-old with a perpetual gleam in her eye and pep in her step that belies her age.

"Our walks are more of meanders, strolls or lollygags, to be honest. Hermosa hates exercise, so I motivate her along," laughs Carmen, an avid Blue Zones Project backer whose outspoken health advocacy is inspiring countless locals, aside from her impervious four-legged friend, to embrace a "Blue Zones lifestyle."

The project's local poster woman does far more, however, than simply expound healthy advice. She also exemplifies the nine lifestyle behaviors that *New York Times* bestselling author and *National Geographic* explorer and researcher Dan Buettner believes can crack the lock on longevity: Blue Zones Project's "Power 9 Principles." Carmen happened on Buettner's community health improvement project four years ago and discovered she'd been, unwittingly, adhering to a "Blue Zones-style" of living for more than 30 years.

"The running joke is that I'm trying to live until I'm 105 and strapped into a wheelchair," says Carmen with a chuckle. "But I'm after quality of life, not age. And that's what attracted me to the Blue Zones Project."



"Blue Zones" are the areas of the world with the highest rate of centenarians – Ikaria, Greece; Loma Linda, California; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Okinawa, Japan; and Sardinia, Italy. Buettner and his research team spent years in these longevity hotspots and observed nine shared behaviors exhibited by centenarians in each Blue Zone. Buettner's research spawned the creation of Blue Zones Project, a national well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthy choices easier where people live, work, learn and play. Beach Cities Health District (BCHD), one of the largest preventive health agencies in the U.S., successfully launched Blue Zones Project in Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach in 2010.

Living The Power 9 Principles



1. Move Naturally

The world's longest-lived people inhabit environments that constantly nudge them into moving without thinking about it, according to Buettner's research.

It's safe to say exercise also comes second-nature to Carmen, who enjoyed a successful Ultra Cycling career throughout her 50s and 60s, competing in a slew of local, state, regional, national and Senior Olympic events – highlighted by her record-breaking relay performance (65+ age category) in the grueling 3,000-mile Race Across America in 1999.

Today, long retired from racing, the ever-energetic senior bikes 50-75 miles every week; walks her dog for 45-50 minutes (three times daily); lifts weights and takes balance classes (three days a week); stretches and does calisthenics while watching TV; and seizes every opportunity to bend the ear of anyone in the market for healthy advice.

"When people mope or complain about their health, I tell them to start stretching and moving their bodies each morning, right when they wake up, and then keep moving," Carmen says with chipper confidence. "Exercise is a natural way to rid aches and pains and create a healthy, happy state of mind. Trust me, it makes a world of difference."



2. Know your Purpose

The Okinawans call it "ikigai" and the Nicoyans call it "plan de vida" – for both it translates to "why I wake up each morning," according to Buettner's research.

For Carmen, it simply translates to helping others.

During the past 25 years, she's worked one day a week for the City of Redondo Beach, connecting isolated senior citizens to legal, health and social resources in the community. A self-admitted "social butterfly," Carmen's a known fixture at most older adult happenings in Redondo Beach, which range from line dances and bingo to yoga and Tai Chi. "It's incredibly important for seniors to build a social life," she says. "I love my dog and home, but it's healthy to venture out and connect with people. I try to lead by example."

Carmen also serves as an ambassador of sorts for Blue Zones Project, volunteering at a variety of local events, including 10K runs, free fitness initiatives and workshops. Prior to finding the project, she donated 20 years to Beach Cities Health District (BCHD), performing customer service work at its community gym and administering preventive health services to older adults in the community.

"Volunteering is just excellent," says Carmen with youthful enthusiasm. "Helping those in need and serving your community gives your life purpose and meaning, but more importantly, it also gives purpose and meaning to those around you."



3. Down Shift

Although everyone experiences stress, the world's longest-lived people have routines to shed that stress, according to Buettner's research.

Unlike her furry housemate, down-shifting doesn't come naturally to Carmen, whose thoughts, fittingly, have a tendency to race at breakneck speed.

So every Thursday morning, she squeezes her "mental brakes" through mindful meditation at Veterans Park in Redondo Beach. Under the instruction of mindfulness enthusiast and BCHD Social Worker Shiori Lange, she's learned to use controlled breathing exercises and visualization techniques to quiet her thoughts and focus on the present moment.

Although admittedly tedious at times, Carmen emphatically points out the stress-relieving benefits are worth the effort. "I have a really chatty Kathy mind ... and mouth," she says. "I'm always on the go, so it's very healthy for me to take the time to down-shift."



4. 80% Rule



5. Plant Slant

While most Blue Zones dwellers only consume small amounts of meat, all of them eat a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables and rarely eat to excess, according to Buettner's research.

The mere mention of greasy, battered food provokes an audible gag from Carmen. Decades ago, the burgeoning cyclist eagerly swapped deep-fried eats and meat products, save an occasional piece of fish, for raw vegetables and plant-based proteins at the urging of her brother and former racing mentor. It began as a way to build lean muscle and cut fat, but soon developed into a lifestyle.

"I tell people all the time, 'I don't make myself eat this way – I like it,'" asserts Carmen. "I feel better and more energetic when I eat plant-based foods, and guilty and unnatural the few times I don't. And you can forget about deep-fried junk, I won't touch that."



6. Wine @ Five

A glass or two of red wine, especially when combined with a plant-based meal, is a good idea for those who have a healthy relationship with alcohol.

Red wine, specifically Cannonau wine from Sardinia, Italy, contains artery-scrubbing flavonoids and the powerful antioxidant polyphenol. Both nutrients are known to lower the risk of contracting certain diseases, including heart disease and some forms of cancer. Moreover, enjoying wine in moderation (1-2 glasses) while breaking bread with friends and family reduces stress, strengthens social connectivity and aids longevity, according to Buettner's findings.

"I'm a big believer in wine," says Carmen with a sheepish smirk. "I drink a half-glass each night

while preparing dinner and an additional half-glass with my meal. And I just happen to prefer red, so it works out nicely.”



7. Right Tribe

The worlds longest-lived people chose, or were born into, social circles that supported healthy behaviors, according to Buettner's research.

When Carmen and her friends formed a cycling group years ago, the 12 to 15 members were all in their 50s. Together, they rode miles of sundrenched highways and byways throughout the South Bay, only braking for coffee and an occasional pastry along the way. “We all loved to ride, but I think we valued the social aspects more,” she fondly recalls. “We supported and encouraged each other.”

As the years rolled by, time took an inevitable toll on the tightly knit group – friends relocated, injuries and illnesses sidelined some and others passed away – leaving only Carmen and two original members, a husband and wife in their 80s, to pedal through their Golden Years as a unit. Though their rides “needed to evolve a bit” in recent years – the husband-wife



Carmen still bikes 50 to 75 miles each week.

tandem now pilot a bicycle-built-for-two due to health issues – camaraderie and connectedness endure.

“We aren’t riding 60 miles at a time anymore, and we don’t meet as frequently,” says Carmen with a whisper of nostalgia in her voice, “but we still ride two to three times a week. It’s something we all look forward to.”



8. Belong

All but five of the 263 centenarians interviewed in the Blue Zones belonged to some faith-based community, according to Buettner's research.

Carmen’s a big-believer in the changing power of religion, even though she doesn’t attend church or claim any religious affiliation. Nevertheless, 35 years ago, she gratefully watched her older sister completely transform her life for the better after discovering Evangelical Christianity.

“Oh, she was a mess before,” recalls Carmen. “Religion turned her life around in a big way, which was miraculous to see. But, personally, that’s not for me. I consider myself spiritual.”

Not a day passes where Carmen doesn’t spend time appealing to a higher power or the universe – usually while walking along the Greenbelt in Hermosa Beach, her hometown for more than 40 years. “It’s therapeutic to believe in something greater than you,” she says. “I’m totally wowed by the universe.”



9. Loved Ones First

Happy, healthy centenarians in the Blue Zones put their families first. This can take shape in many ways, including investing time and love with their children and grandchildren, according to Buettner's research.

Eight-year-old Tommy is a likely cycling and motocross legend in the making. The spunky up-and-comer routinely secures top finishes in punishing off-road races, much to the chagrin of older competition. Losing never enters the pint-sized pedaller’s mind ... except when grandma rolls into town.

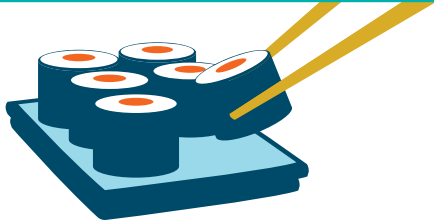
“I can still beat him on flat ground. Tommy’s not used to second place, so it really irks him,” Carmen crows in delight. “He’s ultra-competitive just like his father ... Oh, maybe it runs in the family.”

Carmen, her son, Tom – an accomplished former professional racer in his own right – and grandson unite over a mutual love for extreme sports, but they reinforce their unique family bond through regular phone calls during the week and family outings, laced with intergenerational competition, on weekends.

“Last time we raced, I edged little Tommy out by the nose of my bike tire. My victories are getting narrower and narrower each time, so maybe I’ll just quit while I’m ahead,” says Carmen with a telling twinkle in her blue eyes.

Blue Zones Project: Creating Real Change

RESTAURANTS



More than **100 RESTAURANTS** are dishing up **healthy options**

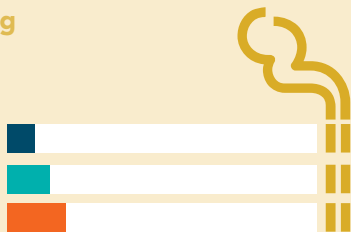
SCHOOLS



37 **Walking School Bus routes** helped hundreds of students walk more than 423,000 miles last school year — enough to circle the globe nearly twice

KEY OUTCOMES

Smoking

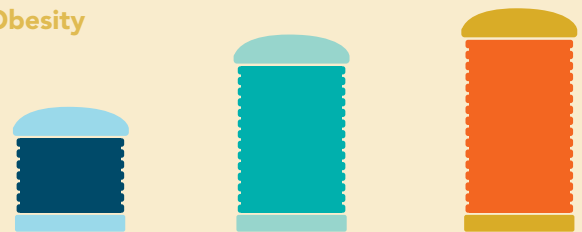


Beach Cities
8.9%

California
13.7%

National
18.8%

Obesity



Beach Cities
12.1%

California
23.8%

National
28.1%

Exercise 30+ Minutes, 3+ Days in Last Week



Beach Cities
68.5%



California
57.7%



National
53.2%

Proud of their Community/Area Where They Live



Beach Cities
78.5%



California
62.5%



National
63.6%

POLICY

\$8.1 MILLION

in transportation funding has been leveraged for livability projects, including the protected bike path on North Harbor Drive

SMOKING
DECREASED BY

28%



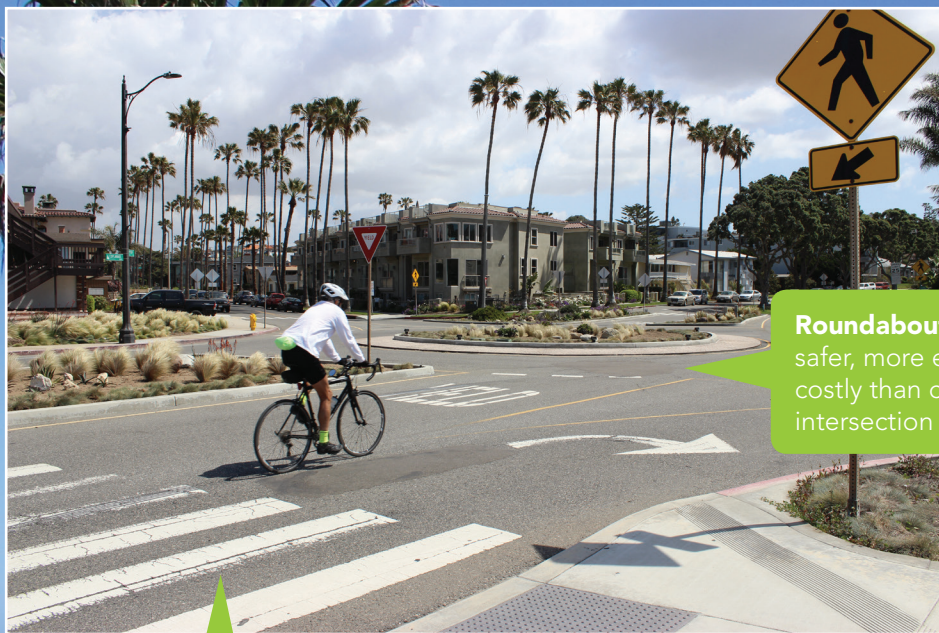
The cities of Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach **adopted living streets policies** to create safe places for all modes of transportation

WORKSITES



14 worksites

help employees be healthy at work



Roundabouts are often safer, more efficient and less costly than conventional intersection designs.

Highly visible **crosswalks** make streets safe and comfortable by guiding pedestrians and alerting drivers.



Transportation options like **bike paths and lanes** help reduce traffic and promote physical activity.

Outdoor dining helps create a **sense of place**, making spaces inviting and building a sense of community.

Smoke-free policies can improve community health, reduce tobacco usage and decrease healthcare costs.





CREATING A LIVABLE BEACH COMMUNITY

Blue Zones Project is working to help reengineer the Beach Cities into an environment that better supports the health and well-being of residents through the implementation of “Livability Principles” where they live, work, learn and play. Research indicates that when communities begin constructing “Living Streets” (people-friendly streets), the following benefits are realized:

- **Increased safety.** As more Living Streets elements are added to roadways, pedestrian crashes decrease.
- **Improved health.** Active commuting that incorporates cycling and walking is associated with an 11% reduction in cardiovascular risk.
- **Economic development.** In the next 25 years, real estate values will increase faster in communities with a mix of residential and commercial elements in pedestrian-friendly configurations.
- **Environmental benefits.** Increasing bicycling from 1% to 1.5% of all trips in the United States would save 462 million gallons of gasoline each year.

To learn more about Blue Zones Project and how you can help create a livable beach community, visit bchd.org/bzp.

Bicycle infrastructure can improve sales at local businesses.

The **preservation of green space** helps protect water quality and makes communities more attractive.

*****ECRWSEDDM****
POSTAL CUSTOMER



By Jason Hove, MD
UCLA Health, Redondo Beach

5 TIPS

to Help Kids Eat Well

BY ENCOURAGING HEALTHY EATING habits at a young age, parents can positively sculpt their child's lifelong relationship with food and help them grow into healthy adults. Below are five easy steps to help get you started.

1. Provide a balanced diet rich in nutrients and minerals. Half of your child's plate should be covered with fruits and vegetables, one quarter should be whole grains and the remaining quarter is reserved for proteins. Be sure to make plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grain snacks and healthy beverages easily accessible to help curb unhealthy snacking and promote healthy choices.

2. Cook more meals at home, schedule meal times and involve your kids. By cooking at home, parents have more control over ingredients, portion sizes and meal/snack times. Additionally, when kids are involved in meal

preparation, they learn the nutritional value of each food and gain important family time.

3. Control portion sizes. Exact food portions vary based on age, gender, weight and height, but the general rule of thumb is: one fist-sized serving of fruits, vegetables, pastas and beans and one palm-sized serving of proteins.

4. Increase physical activity and limit screen time. By reducing time spent in front of the TV/computer, kids can avoid unnecessary empty calories from snacking and be more physically active by playing outside.

5. Support a healthy lifestyle. By teaching kids healthy behaviors at a young age, parents help prevent future health issues like obesity, diabetes and iron-deficient anemia – so always strive to create a healthy home environment for your entire family.

Dr. Hove is a family medicine physician at the UCLA Health office in Redondo Beach, located at 514 N. Prospect Ave., and sees patients of all ages.

FREE

Talk with the Doc

Parents are invited to attend free child health seminars/Q&As, led by physicians from UCLA Health, on the **first Saturday of each month** at AdventurePlex in Manhattan Beach.

9–10 a.m.

Free onsite childcare (ages 1–5)

Visit adventureplex.org for complete information.



A Beach Cities Health District Program

UCLA Health

uclahealth.org/redondobeach
(310) 937-8555