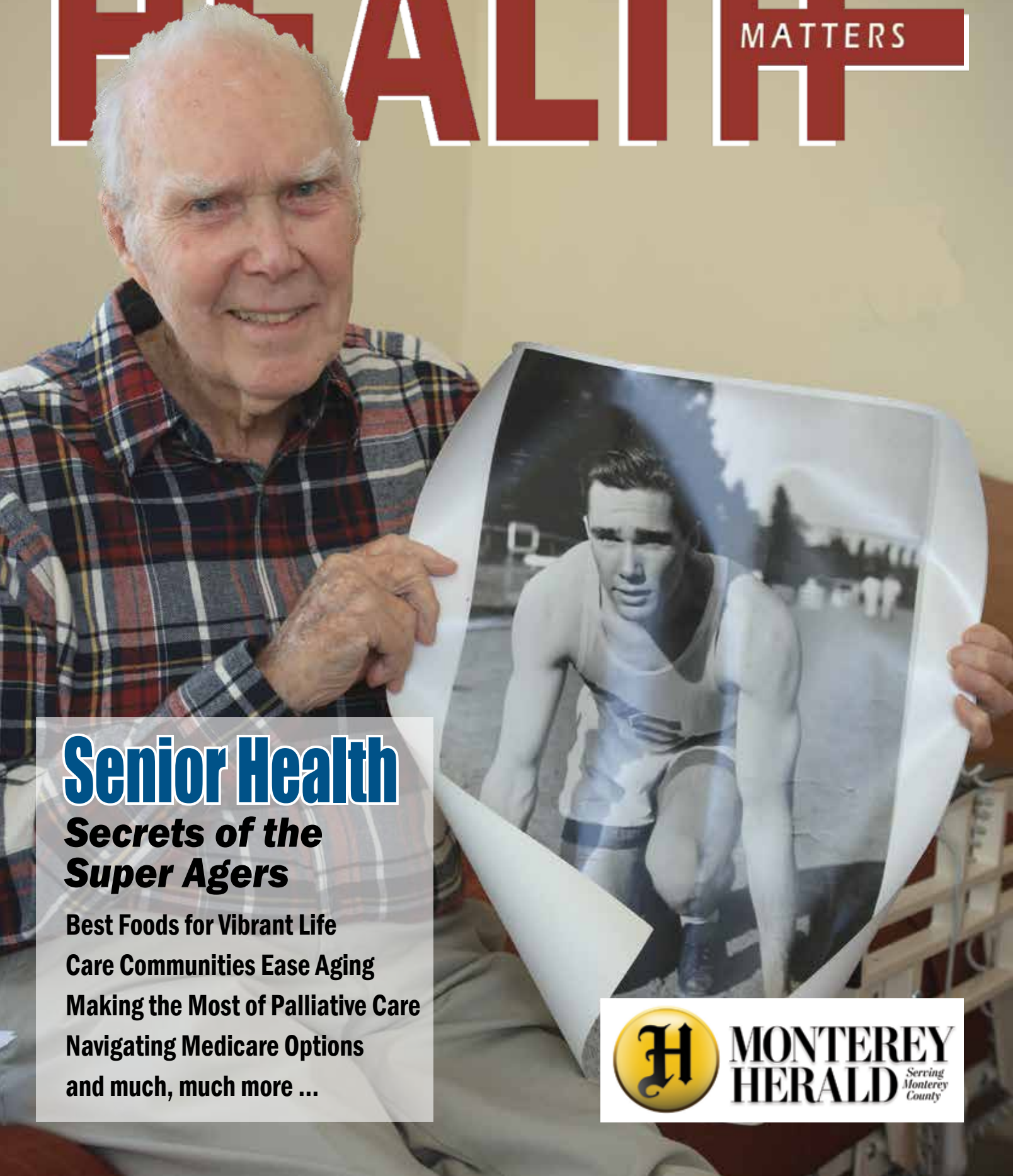


# HEALTH MATTERS



## Senior Health

### Secrets of the Super Agers

Best Foods for Vibrant Life

Care Communities Ease Aging

Making the Most of Palliative Care

Navigating Medicare Options

and much, much more ...



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# Secrets of the Super Agers

**These centenarians stay healthy, active and engaged in life**

BY LISA CRAWFORD WATSON

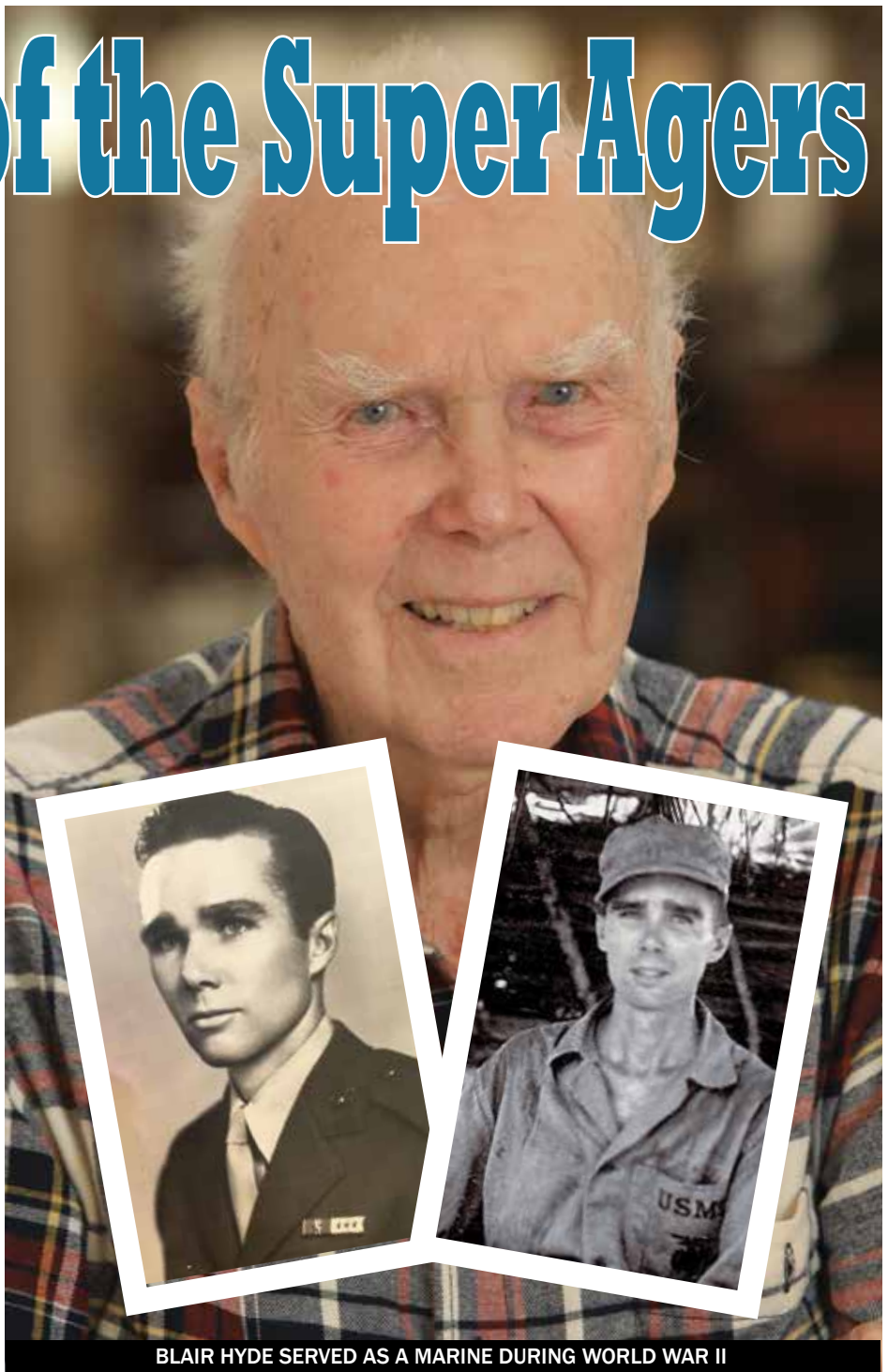
When Blair Hyde graduated from Stanford in 1941, he had his mind set on going into business and his heart set on marrying Marilyn Well. But the world had other plans for him.

Across the sea a war was brewing, and when a Marine Corps recruiter showed up in his dress blues at Hyde's fraternity, Hyde and his pals were impressed.

Hyde had accepted a job with PG&E, but once Pearl Harbor was bombed, he was a Marine, headed into war. Throughout battles at Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Guam and Iwo Jima, Hyde didn't know if he'd survive to see his 30th birthday.

Today, the Carmel resident rises with the sun, has breakfast with Marilyn, his wife of 79 years, takes a constitutional amid the foliage at Carmel Valley Manor, and then sits down in front of his computer to buy, sell and manage his stocks. Sometimes he reads, mostly about the stock market. Plenty of people do. But not at age 104.

In decades past, reaching a 100th birthday was unusual and rare. Today, more



BLAIR HYDE SERVED AS A MARINE DURING WORLD WAR II

than 100,000 Americans can say they've reached that milestone, according to U.S. Census Bureau, with that number expected to quadruple in the next three decades.

Reaching extreme old age depends on multiple factors, including genetics, lifestyle and attitude. In the past century, advances in medicine and public health measures, such as safe water, food and

vaccines, have also been instrumental.

Hyde says he never intended to live so long. His mother died at 76, his father, he says, "checked out" at 93, and his older brother lived to celebrate 87 years. While he may not have considered such longevity, he did invest in it by living what he's always believed to be a healthy life.

"I've always been active," says Hyde. "I



BLAIR AND MARILYN HYDE TODAY, AND BELOW LEFT, ON THEIR WEDDING DAY



ran track, did boxing—at Stanford, I was the lightweight boxing champ—and I played tennis, but not seriously until after retirement. The Marine Corps taught me how to get in shape and stay there.”

Hyde finally retired his tennis racket around his 100th birthday, for which Carmel Valley Athletic Club granted him a

lifetime membership. Four months ago, he gave up his car.

“Living an active life required a strong constitution,” he says, “so I’ve always been a nonsmoker. In the early days, all motion pictures glamorized smoking. And the military gave out free cartons of cigarettes. That hooked a lot of guys for the rest of their lives. My wife never smoked, never had a drink. I’m a light drinker, no more than a beer on a hot day.”

Hyde does well during his advanced years, he believes, because he doesn’t dwell on age. He lives in the present, his primary focus on looking after Marilyn, now 101, plus managing their finances and, at this time of year, preparing his own tax return.

“Mr. Hyde is a good example of the kind of vibrant engagement that fosters longevity,” says Carmel Valley Manor medical director Dr. Pablo Veliz, who also is a primary care physician with Montage Health at The Crossroads Carmel. “Particularly in my geriatric practice, I appreciate the idea of taking away unnecessary medications and focusing instead on lifestyle.

“Manor residents are physically, mentally and emotionally engaged. Mr. Hyde is focused on finance and family, and is

particularly devoted to his wife. He’s always aware of what’s going on around him.”

### Dressing for the Occasion

A Carmel Valley Manor resident since 2007, Sophia Gasser begins her morning by making her bed, with the pearl-encrusted accent pillows angled just so, and then chooses the ensemble she will wear for the day, something elegant, even if no one is coming to call.

She sees it as a gesture of both appreciation and celebration. After all, reaching 105 is quite an achievement and definitely worth celebrating, particularly for someone whose father and mother died at 35 and 36. Gasser grew up believing she’d never grow old.

Adjacent her bed rests a paperback copy of “The Fun Way to Serious Bridge,” half of which she’s read, yet little of which the excellent bridge player needs, particularly after 90 years at the game. Beneath the book lies her Holy Bible, much more of which she’s studied.

“I attribute my longevity to really hard work throughout my life,” says the former medical office worker, “from which I retired at 83. Now 105, I’ve decided to go back to work, in The Rose resale boutique at the Manor. I tried it once to

BY LISA CRAWFORD WATSON

# LIFE IN THE BLUE ZONE

Living longer by following simple rules



SOPHIA GASSER

prove I can handle it and worked almost all day.”

Gasser also credits her health, her stamina and her acuity to a century of eating well, thanks to a chicken coop and a large garden while growing up, and to nutritious food served at The Manor. She eats three healthy meals a day and, at dinner, often enjoys a small glass of white wine.

“Once in a while,” she said, “I don’t. But I like a little sip, and I really like food. I love to sit and chat with fellow diners while eating; it’s good to take an interest in others.”

Gasser, who does her own hair and makeup, recently asked her daughter, Karen Curtis of Salinas, to stop by CVS and pick up a tube of Revlon “Love That Pink” No. 435, so she can put her best face forward.

“A year ago, a lady said, ‘Is it true you’re 104 years old, and you still wear lipstick?’ Yes, it’s true,” said Gasser, “and I’m going to continue to wear it till my dying day.”

*Lisa Crawford Watson lives with her family on the Monterey Peninsula. She specializes in writing about art and architecture, health and lifestyle, and food and wine.*

Tucked into the heart of San Bernardino County’s Loma Linda is a community of some 9,000 Seventh Day Adventists, who make healthy lifestyle choices that seem to be extending their lives at least 10 years longer than the average American lifespan of 79.25 years, says MacroTrend.com.

Loma Linda is a designated “Blue Zone,” one of five in the world and the only one in the United States, which are characterized by lower rates of chronic disease and a longer life expectancy. Among the practices credited for longevity is regular moderate exercise. The world’s longest-living people reportedly are not pumping iron, running marathons, or working out in a gym, but engage in the natural rhythms of movement, such as walking and gardening.

These folks also take a break from the rigors of life to find a sanctuary of time, to focus on family, faith, camaraderie, and nature. They maintain a healthy body mass index—an appropriate body weight for their height. They spend time with like-minded friends, fostering a sense of belonging, and they volunteer to give something back to their community.

They eat an early, light dinner, based on more plants and less meat, and a practice of ending the meal when they feel 80% full. And they get enough restful sleep.

While it seems a logical lifestyle to foster longevity, we know it isn’t a guarantee. Still, it seems to be working for Blue Zone communities.

Carmel Valley Manor is a continuing care residential facility established in 1963 to create a “vibrant commu-



MARTIN ROSEN

nity of engaged elders seeking holistic health, well-being, and purposeful living.” Not unlike the Blue Zone citizens of Loma Linda, the 225 Manor residents are known for living a similar lifestyle, which may lay the foundation for their longevity, including 53 residents age 90 and older, and eight centenarians, the eldest of whom is 105.

“Longevity is both a mentality and a lifestyle, and you can see it among us,” says retired attorney Martin Rosen, 93. “Very few residents are obese; our food is fresh and healthy, and we have a full-time nutritionist. Every Thursday, a dozen Manor residents, members of the ‘Half-Fast Walkers,’ trek through local parks, among them Point Lobos and the Pinnacles. We’re not fair-weather walkers; we head out in all conditions.”

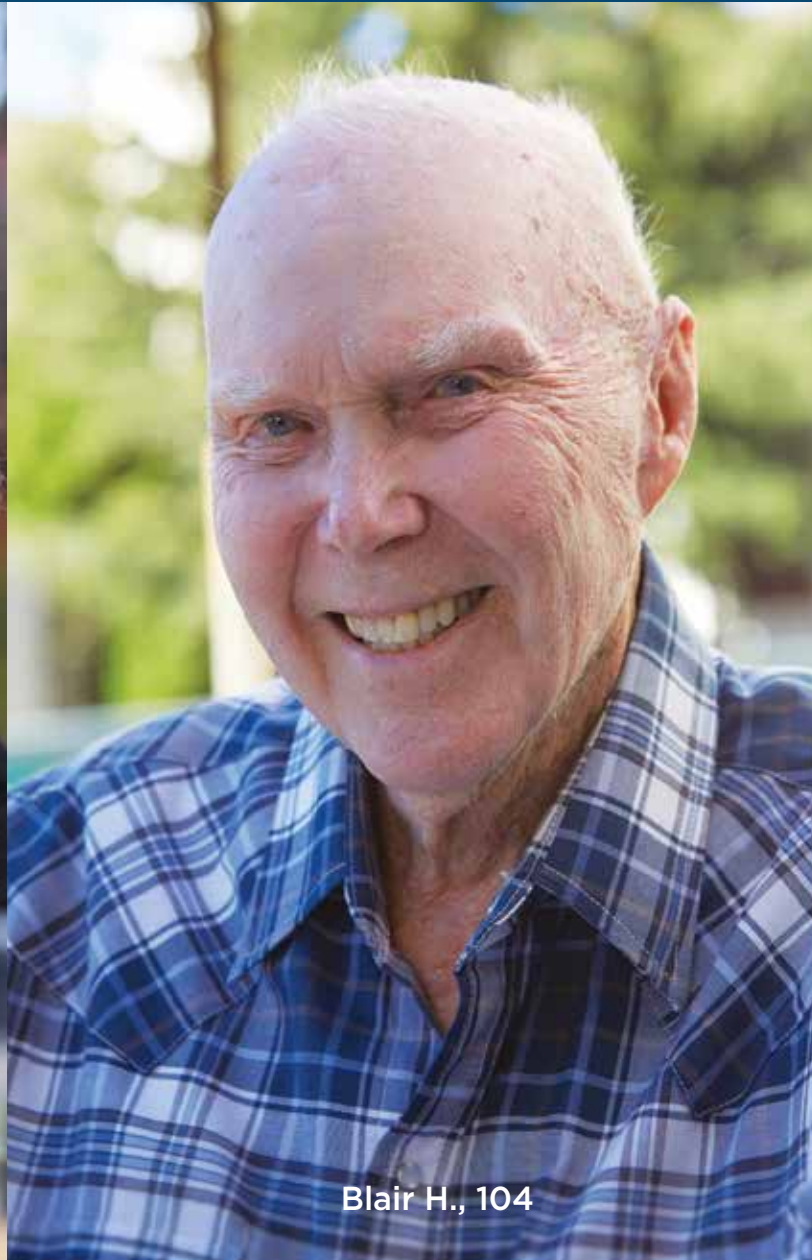
The Manor is also looking out for its employees. In 2021, Carmel Valley

CONTINUE TO PAGE 32

# Is there evidence Blue Zones help you live longer? Meet two of them.



Sophia G., 105



Blair H., 104

Blue Zones help people live better, longer. In addition to being a Certified Blue Zone Community, at Carmel Valley Manor those 65+ can enjoy exceptional healthcare along with impeccable service, three delicious meals a day, acres of manicured gardens with a pool, putting green, even a fitness center. Call Angie Machado (800) 544-5546 to schedule a tour. [cvmanor.org](http://cvmanor.org)



## CARMEL VALLEY MANOR



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CONTINUE FROM PAGE 10

### LIFE IN THE BLUE ZONE

Manor achieved designation as a “Blue Zones Project-Approved Worksite,” as a result of the quality of work environment the Manor has established.

“To get approval, we went through a process to meet the steps of a specific matrix,” said chief operating officer Chris Regan, a registered nurse. “We had to show that we would continue to pursue wellness for our staff and strategize healthy choices, like providing healthy food options, such as our salad bar, and encouraging walking and gardening. And we have a team that meets every two weeks, an employee engagement group, to continue to keep Blue Zones parameters in front of us.”

The Manor has collaborated with Blue Zones Project Monterey County to become a Blue Zones Project Approved Community, showing it is dedicated to promoting a healthy lifestyle for residents through wise eating, meaningful connections, creating opportunities to be active and a positive mindset.

“Our residents at Carmel Valley Manor are known, recognized, greeted and cared for,” Chris Regan says. “They are served fresh, healthy food. They are provided enriching programs that foster natural movement and mental engagement.”

Health, says Rosen, is not that complicated, if you follow a few basic rules, which seem to align with Blue Zone practices. “Watch what you eat and how much. Move. Rest. Socialize. Find your purpose,” he says, “at every age.”

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Dr. Jennell Bockenstedt was raised in Strawberry Point, Iowa before she attended the University of Northern Iowa. At the university she studied Biomedical and worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant. After graduation she attended the Southern California College of Optometry in Fullerton where she received her Doctorate of Optometry degree. She then relocated to the Monterey Peninsula, which she now calls home. Over the past 17 years, Dr. Bockenstedt spends her workweek between their three clinics located in Monterey, Marina, and Salinas. She practices primary care optometry with emphasis in pediatrics, ocular disease and specialty contact lenses. During the weekends she is busy attending her children's, Cole (12) and Jordan (10), numerous sporting activities.

### 3 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

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