



The Billy & Spanner



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Ray Storms

Has this happened to you? Check and make sure you are getting what you ordered!

I take several drugs on a regular basis – eight of them, in fact.

In September 2023, I received a new prescription for all eight and had them filled. 90 days later, I refilled them all with no issues. Another 90 days later, on April 5, 2024, I went online to refill them all again and discovered that two of the drugs had been arbitrarily changed from generic to name brands. Each drug would now require a co-pay of \$80.

I immediately called and contacted the pharmacy but got no satisfaction. So I called Tonya, and she got the ball rolling with Carelon Healthcare Services. I have now been in contact with their “fixer” twice. As required, they have checked in with me to make sure I am satisfied with the resolution of the case. I am not. The pharmacy has still not changed the two prescriptions back to the generic drugs. I suppose that would be admitting they arbitrarily changed them.

Despite there being refills remaining on my prescriptions, the pharmacy required that I contact the doctors' offices to request refills. But while I did, I also confirmed with medical assistants at each of the doctors' offices that they had ordered the generic of each drug back in September 2023.

My biggest issue with this episode is not personal. I caught it, and I am resolving it. But I worry about how many more of you this has happened to. Worse, I worry that many of you did not catch it and, instead, just chalked it up to inflation.

Please be sure to check that your prescriptions are properly filled with the drugs your doctors' offices ordered. And, whenever possible, ensure you receive generic drugs to save money.

CALLING ON SURVIVING SPOUSES

By Maria Wardall

With the support, encouragement, and cooperation of our Association of Retired San Jose Police Officers and Firefighters, I'm reaching out to any other surviving spouses who might be interested in meeting and connecting with each other to form new bonds, support, and friendships. At this point, I'm just trying to assess general interest. Most important, you don't have to be a member of the Retirees Association. If you are interested or have questions, please contact me at (650) 922-7222 or Mariabennett3@aol.com

I'M DEAD. NOW WHAT?



The Association continues to give away this book.

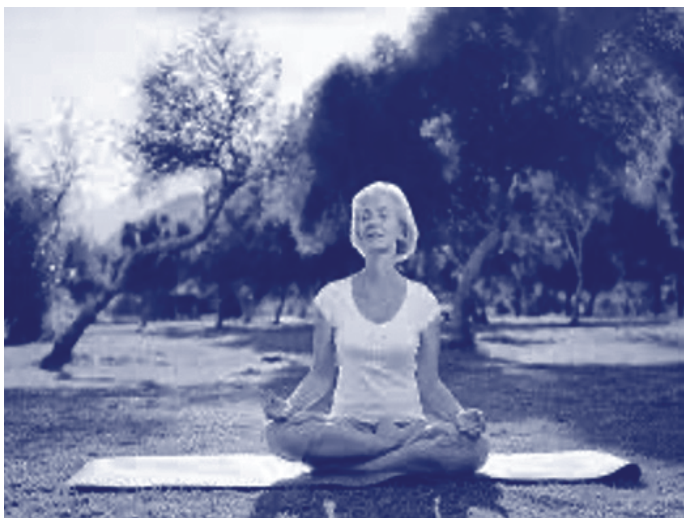
A useful and helpful planner to give you peace of mind. It has important information about your belongings, business affairs, and wishes. It helps organize vital details about contacts, health and financial issues, etc.

Contact Walter Bugna at believe42218@earthlink.net if you want a copy.

Please include your name, current phone and current mailing address in your e-mail.

FIVE WAYS TO EASE PAIN USING THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION

by Heidi Godman, Harvard Medical School • Submitted by Walter Bugna, VP of Fire



I smashed my elbow a few weeks ago. There was no bone break, just a bad bruise after slipping in the kitchen and landing on my arm. But, at times, the pain has been excruciating. I've been following doctor's orders: babying my elbow, icing it, and taking an occasional over-the-counter painkiller. But something else has helped, too: mind-body therapies. These approaches aim to change our awareness of pain and retrain the way we respond to it. The therapies can help us control pain, such as long-lasting back pain, or live with it better. While these techniques won't erase pain, they can help change perception of pain intensity through distraction, relaxation, and reframing our thoughts.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT): This talk therapy teaches people to redirect their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in response to chronic pain. For example, when a pain flare-up strikes, instead of bracing yourself and thinking, "Oh no, here it comes again," tell yourself you've handled this before and focus on your favorite place in the world. Picture it in your mind and feel how happy or relaxed you are when you're there. A CBT-trained therapist can train you to hone your skills.

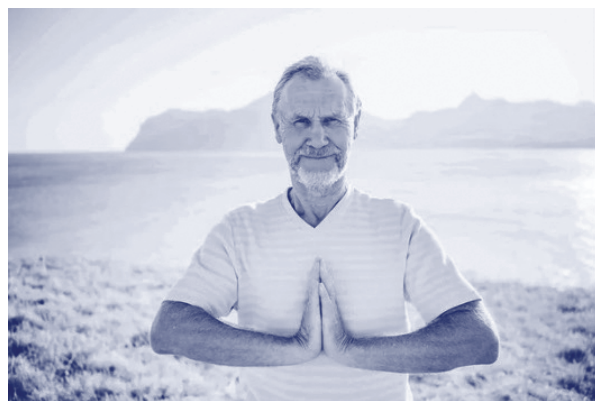
DEEP BREATHING: We typically take short little breaths without noticing our breathing, especially when we're in pain. Focusing on taking deep breaths quiets the mind and induces the relaxation response, a well-studied physiologic response that counteracts the stress response and may lessen chronic pain severity. To practice deep breathing:

- Breathe in slowly through your nose, allowing your chest and lower belly to rise as you fill your lungs completely.
- Now exhale slowly through your mouth or nose.
- Practice deep breathing for several minutes.

MEDITATION: Like deep breathing, meditating triggers the relaxation response and may reduce the perception of pain. You can use many methods to meditate, such as transcendental meditation (repeating a word, phrase, or sound to quiet your thoughts); yoga (a series of strengthening and stretching postures combined with breathing techniques); or mindfulness meditation (focusing objectively on negative thoughts as they move through your mind, so you can achieve a state of calm). One simple way to meditate:

- Close your eyes, and focus on breathing. Say a word like "peace" or "one" each time you exhale.
- Don't worry about thoughts that come to mind; you can come back to them later. Instead, continue to repeat your word and focus on breathing.

(continued on page 3)



PFAS FIREFIGHTER LITIGATION

Taken from Rick Seal, Pritzker Levine LLP

PFAS are toxic chemicals that are commonly used in turnout gear and firefighting foams, and the subject of thousands of lawsuits filed on behalf of firefighters around the country. PFAS are known as “forever chemicals” and have been associated with multiple and serious adverse health effects in humans including certain cancers, high cholesterol, thyroid disease, ulcerative colitis, birth defects and other diseases.

If you are a former firefighter who has been diagnosed with or treated for kidney cancer, testicular cancer, prostate cancer, liver cancer, thyroid cancer, hypothyroidism, thyroid disease, or ulcerative colitis, and would like to learn more about the litigation or discuss a possible claim, please call or email attorney and former SJFD Battalion Chief Rick Seal at (408) 623-3519 or rrs@pritzkerlevine.com.

Rick Seal is associated with the law firm Pritzker Levine LLP, which has taken a leading role in representing firefighters injured as a result of their on-the-job exposure to PFAS chemicals. Pritzker Levine was the first law firm in the country to assert claims on behalf of firefighters across the U.S. against the manufacturers and distributors of the protective clothing worn by firefighters in the line of duty, as well as PFAS chemical and AFFF foam companies.

Please note that there is a limited window of opportunity to file these claims so please do not wait if

FIVE WAYS *(continued from page 2)*

MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION (MBSR): This approach combines mindfulness meditation and yoga to build awareness and acceptance of moment-to-moment experiences, including pain. A 2019 study published in the journal Evidence-Based Mental Health found MBSR was just as effective as CBT at reducing pain and depression, and improving physical functioning compared with usual care or no care. You’ll find MBSR programs at hospitals, universities, and meditation centers, and online videos.

Relaxation techniques, such as progressive muscle relaxation, may also help reduce the perception of pain. To try progressive muscle relaxation, start with your facial muscles and work your way down the body. Tighten each muscle or muscle group for 20 seconds before slowly releasing the contraction. As the muscle relaxes, concentrate on the release of tension and the sensation of relaxation.

SCAN TO UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION



Scan



ASSOCIATION
OF RETIRED SAN JOSE
**POLICE OFFICERS
& FIREFIGHTERS**

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www.retiredsjpoff.org

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ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, May 9, at 11 AM at the SJPOA Hall. Lunch begins at 11 AM, and the business portion of the meeting begins at 11:30 AM. The SJPOA Hall is located at 1151 N. 4th Street, San Jose, CA 95112. The meeting will also be available by Zoom. Check your Association emails for a link to the meeting. The Zoom portion of the meeting will begin at 11:30 AM.

CONDOLENCES

Retired Fire Engineer Ralph J. Dillon passed away March 7, 2024.
Former Sgt. Stan Miller #1314 passed away April 7, 2024.
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Former Sgt. Stan Miller #1314 passed away April 7, 2024.
Retired Sgt. Pete Graves #1099 passed away April 28, 2024.
Retired Officer Margaret Anthony #1650 passed away.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT

Erik C. Hove, Police Sergeant, 26.65* years of service.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Terrence M. Craig, Police
Cristobal R. Dominguez, Police
Robert V. Paul, Police

ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Ray Storms, President	510-507-1136 president@retiredsjpoff.org
John Shuman, VP of Police	vppolice@retiredsjpoff.org
Walter Bugna, VP of Fire	408-799-3004 vpfire@retiredsjpoff.org
Dale Foster, Secretary	secretary@retiredsjpoff.org
Larry Samarron, Jr. Treasurer	treasurer@retiredsjpoff.org

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Don Bartels, Ken Jacksteit, Tim Miller, Jim Spence,
Gary Johnson, Jerry Ellis, Director Emeritus

WIDOWS & ORPHANS OFFICERS

President (COA) Jeremy Wise	831-566-7624
VP (SJA) Maxwell Magnus	650-773-3271
VP (COR) Bill McCluskey	408-985-7563
Secretary (SJR) Luis Chacon	408-642-0385
Treasurer (SJR) Jerry Ellis	408-730-9974

POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President - Ernie Alcantar, Vice President - Curtis Jackson,
Sec-Treasurer - Larry Lundberg, Sgt At Arms - Cindy Bueno