

SENIOR JOURNAL

MEMORY ACADEMY OUT FOR A STROLL



ARIC CRABB — Staff photos

SENIORS FROM THE MEMORY ACADEMY (above and below) walk along the Equestrian Trail in San Leandro's Marina Park. The Memory Academy helps seniors fight the forgetfulness and immobility that often come with old age or illness. Sessions start again in September. Until then, exercise outings will temporarily replace academy class sessions.



Classes help combat common old-age trials

By Aaron Morrison
STAFF WRITER

If you ask Pat Davis of San Lorenzo what she would do without The Memory Academy, she probably would say she's not even considering it an option.

Now that Davis, 77, is no longer working as a columnist or librarian for The Daily Review, she's found other ways to occupy her time, namely relying on her fellow academy classmates for support because their classes won't reconvene until September.

She and several of her peers now venture out on walks in San Leandro Marina Park at 10 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays to keep their bodies strong, their brains sharp and their hearts content.

This self-motivated activity has replaced their semiweekly sessions of The Memory Academy, a nine- or 13-week program offered through the Hayward Adult School during which Diana Nohr, creator and instructor, helps seniors fight the forgetfulness and immobility that often come with age or illness.

The walkers will keep it up until classes resume in the fall.

"We can't separate from each other; we can't quit," Davis said of the commitment she and her

Please see **SENIOR**, Local 2

Memory Academy seniors stay sharp

► **SENIOR**, from Local 1

classmates have to the academy during its hiatus. "We each have shared so much with each other."

Davis has "severe" arthritis and counts on the physical and social activity to keep her mobile and to sustain her ability to remember the small things.

While other people her age get in the habit of watching the "boob tube," which can easily happen during breaks from normal routine, Davis says this activity keeps her out of her house more often.

Memory Academy student Marian Kolm, 68, of Hayward says she and her husband, David, 70, are regular walkers. They thought it would be a great idea to form the walking group during the break from classes.

Groups as small as six or as large as 14 gather at the Heron area of Marina Park.

"It gives us an opportunity to get some vitamin D and vitamin A," Kolm said. "It's a way for us to stretch our legs. Everybody walks at their own pace."

After their walks, the group members share snacks, talk about current events and play some of the memory games they have learned in the academy, Kolm said.

Through Nohr's instruction, students in their 60s, 70s and 80s participate in varied activities that stimulate what Davis referred to as the regeneration of brain

cells.

The class started in January of this year and has since expanded to sessions in San Leandro and Castro Valley.

"She puts us in a circle and teaches us ways to remember names," Davis said. "To us, she's Diana Banana."

"Recently, we tried naming states or countries that begin with a certain letter," Kolm said of their activities in class and in the park.

Other memory activities include recalling numbers, remembering license plates and committing medical and Social Security numbers to memory. Regular classes also have included up to an hour of physical activity, Davis said.

Like Davis and Kolm, Beth Kane, 80, found that the class gives her purpose and a sense of accomplishment.

"We all have bonded," Kane said of the friendships she has built within the academy. "Most of us have grown spiritually, mentally, and we all look younger than our age numbers."

The Memory Academy reconvenes on Sept. 5 at the Matt Jimenez Community Center in Hayward and Aug. 29 at the Adult Education Center in San Leandro. Visit www.thememoryacademy.com for class fees, times and registration information.

On Saturdays, Senior Journal spotlights remarkable local seniors, issues important to

them, organizations there to help, or activities they enjoy. If you know of an interesting Hayward area senior, important issue or effective organization, please e-mail ksantos@dailyreviewonline.com; call 293-2468; write us at 22533 Foothill Blvd., Hayward, 94541; or send a fax to (510) 293-2490.



Hayward-based Spectrum Community Services serves a complete lunch weekdays for a suggested minimum donation of \$3.25. For information and dining room locations, call (510) 881-0300. Here's next week's menu:

July 30 to Aug. 3

► Monday: Hearty vegetable soup; beef tamale with homemade sauce; Spanish rice; black beans, corn and sweet-pepper salad; honeydew melon. Hamburger or veggie burger available.

► Tuesday: Romaine lettuce with tomatoes and homemade dressing; spaghetti and meatballs with marinara; buttered green beans with carrots; fruit turnovers.

► Wednesday: Baked chicken quarter with tropical fruit sauce; Yukon gold potatoes; green peas and pimientos; fresh whole-wheat roll; Jell-O with diced pineapple.

► Thursday: Tomato and rice soup; low-sodium ham and cheese on rye with condiments; carrots and raisin salad; banana. Hamburger or veggie burger available.

► Friday: Romaine salad with red onions, olives and ranch dressing; chicken pot pie with vegetables, sauce and biscuit topping; sauteed spinach; juice; pear cup.