



South Whidbey at Home
Staying Active, Connected and In Charge



Summer Newsletter- 2019

Milestones

- It's time to celebrate a birthday! South Whidbey at Home is three years old on July 5. I want to offer a sincere thank you to all who have made this journey from idea to actuality! Together, we are building a strong, resilient organization committed to improving the social, mental, and physical well-being of our members. We take pride in connecting people of all ages in respectful, responsive, and mutually beneficial interactions.
- As we begin our fourth year of service to seniors in the SW community, let's take a quick look back to see where we started. By opening day in July 2016, we had 90 members signed up and nearly as many volunteers ready to take assignments. Many of these people were both members and volunteers and that pattern has held.
- Three years in, we have doubled the membership and continue to add volunteers.
- The Board of Directors recently added three talented new members. We have room for one or two more with specific skill sets. Contact me, or any Board member if you would like to explore the possibility of joining our active Board. It's fun and challenging work to help guide this great organization.
- As always, I, and the Board, welcome your suggestions and feedback on how we may continue to improve.



Marcia Wiley, Board President

Call Managers- the life force of the office



One of the great things about being with our members is the opportunity to make new friends with animals. Whether it's cats like Polar Bear being ferried to the vet, picking up biscuits for a swell pooch, or, one of my favorites, delivering peanuts to Hector, a 39 year old mackaw. I also learned about the wisdom in not trying to hand feed a small peanut to a very large tropical bird with a beak the size of my hand.

Since January our volunteers have spent over 550 hours on 280 services requested by 125 full members of South Whidbey at Home. We also can be grateful for the 55 supporting members, many of whom serve as part of our dedicated group of volunteers. Our motto is Kindness Matters! And it truly does.

I also want to acknowledge the 5 Ambassadors who interview and welcome new members to SW at Home: Corrine Bayley, Larry Durocher, Carol Riffin, Jeanne Strong and Asharaine Machala. They also provide assessments and referrals for members who reach a point where they need more than our organization can provide.

Finally, in the "hub" are those who manage everything on a day-to-day basis in the office in Freeland. Our Call Managers are highly skilled, compassionate, creative, kind and caring. We simply would not be able to exist without their dedication and professionalism. And they are all volunteers. Thanks and kudos to Mary Solt, Claudia Fuller, Jenanne Murphy, Asharaine Machala, Corrine Bayley, Pat Youngman Smith, Sue Bigger, Adele Walimaki, Melissa Lebo, and Barb Ewing.

You are always welcome to stop by the Freeland office for a cup of tea, a chat with one of our Call Managers and a visit with our mascot, the rubber chicken.

Lynne

NEW TO WHIDBEY? Volunteer for South Whidbey at Home.

Helping our Members at South Whidbey at Home is a great way to meet new people, see parts of the island you never knew existed, and make a difference. Over 75 people have found volunteering a rewarding experience. Volunteer orientation sessions are held monthly at our Freeland Office.

Contact the Call Manager at South Whidbey at Home 360-331-1971 for more info and/or to sign up for a volunteer orientation session.

“I’m new to the island, and I love this program! I love this community!”



Volunteer, David LaBrecque

“Reporting in on my visit yesterday. We sat on her deck for two and a half hours talking and it was timeless, conversational art, ageless and authentic. How lucky for me that I get to meet someone like Urashan.”

Volunteer, Kate Poss

“My driver and I were both librarians, so we had a lot to talk about. She was just delightful.”



Member, Nancy Little

Acts of Kindness Really Do Make Us Feel Good.

According to new UK research, that warm glow we feel after helping others is real, with brain scans showing that the reward center in the brain is activated after an act of kindness. The researchers analyzed for the first time what happens in the brain when people are kind because of *genuine altruism* – which is when there’s nothing for them to gain from it – and when they act with strategic kindness – when they hope for something in return. Acts of altruism in which there is no hope of personal gain activates the reward center. Moreover, some brain regions were actually more active during altruistic acts of kindness, suggesting that there is something unique about being kind with no hope of gaining something in return. If after a long day helping a friend move house, they hand you a fiver, you could end up feeling undervalued and less likely to help again. A hug and kind words, however, might spark a warm glow and make you feel appreciated. They found that some brain regions were more active in situations where the motivation is to give to others from an altruistic act of kindness or generosity.

Activities

South Whidbey at Home, in collaboration with Island Senior Resources, offers weekly Lunch and Learn programs for members, volunteers and friends. These are short educational, informational or social events to inspire life-long learners. Held at Island Senior Resources each Tuesday at 12:30 and over by 1:30.

Here's a report from the July 9 meeting...

Eight people gathered for a discussion about books. This wasn't like most book clubs, in which everyone reads and discusses the same book. Instead, we described what kind of readers we are and talked about what we like to read. Some came prepared to give specific recommendations for "I loved this book.....!" Interests ranged in every direction: historical fiction, mysteries, non-fiction, romance, biography and science fiction. We talked about audio books and how the reader can make all the difference. We touched on the program at Freeland Library called "Books2Movies." For those events, people read the book ahead then come join others to see the movie and talk about it. We left with lots of new suggestions for good reading and hope to do this again!

Upcoming Lunch and Learn programs at Island Senior Resources

July 16. Learning Piano Late in Life

Have you ever wanted to learn to play the piano? John Viljoen teaches piano to all. He will give a piano demonstration, talk about piano, keyboard, various music styles, and explain his teaching style.

July 23. Keeping Yourself Safe in Your Home and Community

Lt. Mike Hawley of the Island County Sheriff's Office will present some information on keeping yourself safe in your home, on the roads, and in public places. He'll be able to answer your questions about the Sheriff's Office and address your concerns about public safety in our community.

July 30. Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social

Do you remember ice cream socials? Join members of our community in an ice cream social and gathering in the courtyard in the warmth of summer.

Save the Date

What: Picnic in the Park When: Sunday, August 25 2-4 pm
Castle Park Picnic Shelter (behind the SW High School)
Food, fun, friendship! Watch for details in the August Happenings.