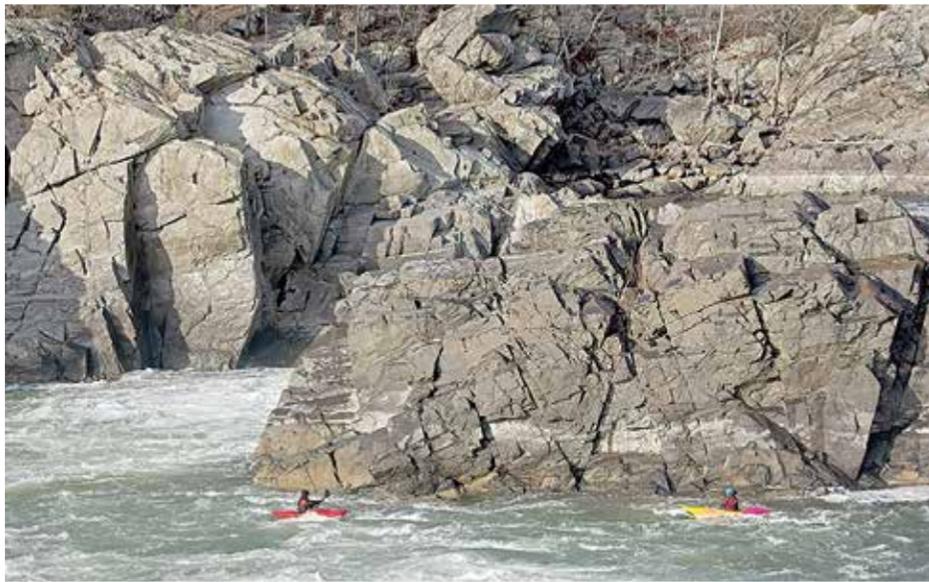


Island Times

Look for Island Times the LAST Thursday of each month
JUNE 2020

MONTHLY NEWSPAPER OF ISLAND SENIOR RESOURCES AND THE CENTER IN OAK HARBOR

Volume 4 • Issue 2



"In life, things happen. On an individual level. And on a societal level. Things happen. And you have to deal with it. And it's hard. But on the other hand, it makes us who we are. You get shaped by your experiences. This is a terrible experience to go through. But, we will manage it, we will handle it, and we will be the better for it."

~Gov. Andrew Cuomo

Things Happen: Perspectives on Resilience

By Christina Baldwin, Board Member, Island Senior Resources

In mid-April, the *Seattle Times* ran a story, about WWII veteran, James Thompson, recounting his recovery from Covid-19, made newsworthy by the fact that, at 96, he is one of the older survivors of the illness (a 104-year-old Portland man, also a veteran, and several women over age 100 are documented survivors). Thompson's comments to *Times* reporter Danny Westneat included saying, "if you think this is bad, it's nothing compared to...the soup lines of the Great Depression. Or, try having a B-29 bomber with your buddies on board get shot down off your right wing-tip, or walking the streets of Hiroshima two weeks after the bomb."

PERSPECTIVES continued on page 12

Phased Re-Opening of The Center

By Liz Lange

Administrator of Senior Services, City of Oak Harbor

Let me start by saying, we miss you all. We are working hard making plans for how and when we can safely start offering our services and programs. We are following the governor's guidelines for a phased approach at re-opening.

As many of you know, Governor Inslee has extended the Stay Home, Stay Healthy order until May 31. While we advance through the stages and reinstate certain programs, please note high-risk populations are to stay home and stay healthy until phase four. Included in the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) high-risk population are those who are over the age of 65:

"Older adults, 65 years and older, are at higher risk for severe illness and death from COVID-19. Although COVID-19 can affect any group, the older you are, the higher your risk of serious disease. Eight out of 10 deaths reported in the U.S. have been in adults 65 years or older; risk of death is highest among those 85 years or older. The immune systems of older adults weaken with age, making it harder to fight off infections."

We recognize this includes many of our members, and the people we serve with our regular programming. We know it is difficult, however, we are asking you to comply with the governor's request

when it comes to participating in programs at The Center. We care about the health and wellbeing of all our patrons and ask that you follow these guidelines to keep yourself and others well. If you are in the high-risk population for any reason, age or underlying health concerns, please do not visit The Center until phase four.

We are now in phase one, which will last a minimum of three weeks, but could be longer based on the measures the state is watching in testing and tracing COVID-19. In phase one, we will continue as we currently are, closed to the public and offering the shopping and delivery services for essential items to those at risk, Tuesday and Thursday book and puzzle table outside from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and virtual classes and programs. Island Senior Resources (ISR) services offered at The Center, including meals-on-wheels delivery, Time Together, Aging and Disability Resources (Cindy) and SHIBA counseling, will continue to operate as they have been for the last month. Meals on Wheels is by delivery, no congregate meals, the in-person Time Together program is currently suspended, and appointments with Cindy and SHIBA are by appointment over the phone.

Phase two (possibility of beginning June 1 at the earliest): Our passport and passport photo services will restart. We are needing to be creative and find ways to

RE-OPENING continued on page 3

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: HOW DO YOU STAY YOUNG-AT-HEART?

Dorothy Michel, 72

Oak Harbor
"Staying busy working in the garden and taking walks at City Beach."

Darcelle Carlson

"Love Tai Chi!"

Joan LaCross, 83

Oak Harbor
"Keep busy all the time! Keep in touch with your friends."

Jennifer Stinton

"Coloring and dancing. I love to color with my kiddos or alone. And dancing makes me happy."

Ashley Olson

"Dance parties! We constantly have dance parties in our kitchen. It helps us have smiles and happiness sprinkled in our day. It usually leads to a lot of silly faces and dance moves!"

Janice Soberanes, 75

Oak Harbor
"Stay busy doing different things all the time."

Maddox Smith-Heacox

"Playing sports reminds me of playing as a kid. Being around my mom really helps. Keeping old toys like my Legos. Even though I don't play with them anymore, just seeing them around makes me smile."

Micheal Murcay, 60

Oak Harbor
"Exercise everyday."

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Ivy Breen, local artist and member of The Center in Oak Harbor



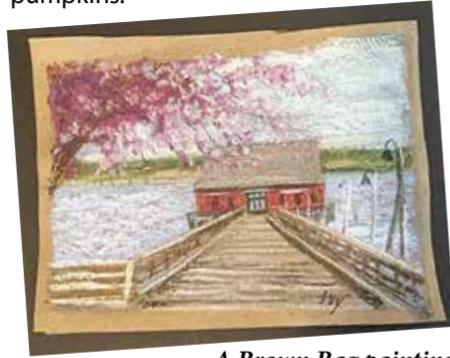
Brown Bag Art

By Ivy Breen
Member & Art Instructor at The Center In Oak Harbor

This pandemic is terrible, awful and hard to live through but as you age, you tend to ride these life storms and look for the good things that CAN happen. One day as I was unloading my groceries from the Prairie Center in Coupeville, I was thinking about how lucky we are that Whidbey grocers have gone above and beyond to keep us all fed even at the risk of their own health and wellbeing. I looked at that common grocery sack and tried to make something meaningful out of it. So I cut it up, ironed the pieces, put a coat of clear gesso on it and started

to paint mini pastel landscapes on the pieces. Because they aren't archival (I'm not either) I thought I would give them away. Every now and then I put them in the Pages on Pennington little free library for some lucky reader to find, take home and enjoy.

Art can have a profound effect on people. My humble little art pieces are my attempt to bring joy in unexpected places during this unexpected time. I have certainly enjoyed making them and plan to continue as long as the Prairie Center uses brown grocery sacks and the pandemic continues. I may be 65 but this makes me feel more like 5 again. Almost as good as painting fine art on pumpkins.



A Brown Bag painting by Ivy Breen



The back of a Brown Bag art piece

CLASSES and EVENTS at The Center in Oak Harbor

WEEKLY ZOOM CALLS

Tuesday, 11 a.m.

The Center will continue to do weekly Zoom check-in calls Tuesdays at 11 a.m. Please contact Program Coordinator, Carly Waymire at cwaymire@oakharbor.org or 360-279-4583 to get the meeting information.



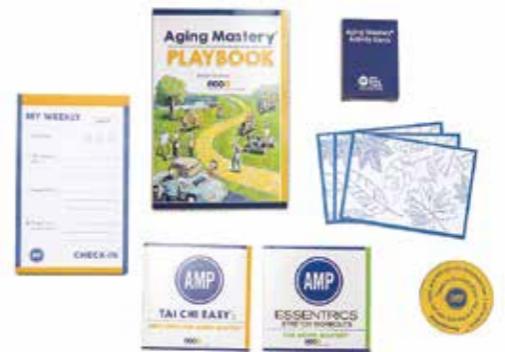
FREE BOOKS & PUZZLES

Tuesdays and Thursday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Center will have their lending book library outside Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Help yourself to free books and puzzles. To maintain social distancing and keep everyone safe, we ask only one household looks at the books at a time. If you see someone is already browsing the table, please wait in your car until they leave. We also ask you to sanitize your hands with the provided sanitizer before and after looking at the books.

AGING MASTERY PROGRAM

We are proud to partner with the National Council on Aging to offer you the Aging Mastery Starter Kit. The Starter Kit will inspire you to take steps toward positive gain across six dimensions and help you build your own playbook for aging well. Each dimension has specific guideposts, or actions, that you are encouraged to incorporate in your daily life.



Each starter kit includes; Aging Mastery Playbook, Activity Cards, Exercise DVD's, notepad, and a magnet. Together, we will work through the Aging Mastery Program (AMP) using the starter kit materials along with weekly Zoom meetings featuring special guest speakers.

AGING MASTERY PROGRAM ZOOM SCHEDULE & TOPICS

Monday, June 22 – Gratitude & Mindfulness

Thursday, June 25 – Health & Wellbeing

Monday, June 29 – Finances & Future Planning

Thursday, July 2 – Connections & Community

Monday, July 6 – Creativity & Learning

Thursday, July 9 – Legacy & Purpose

If you are interested in getting your FREE starter kit or joining the class please contact Program Coordinator, Carly Waymire at 360-279-4583 or cwaymire@oakharbor.org. Class space is limited, please register by June 18.

The Center in Oak Harbor

51 SE Jerome St.,
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Front Desk: 360-279-4580

Normal Business Hours:

Mon-Fri, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Additional evening and weekend classes and events as scheduled

Yearly Membership Dues: \$40

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Liz Lange • 360-279-4581

Senior Services Administrator

Carly Waymire • 360-279-4583

Program Coordinator

Send comments and suggestions to CWaymire@oakharbor.org

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RE-OPENING continued from page 1

adapt and create revenue until we can return to our full programming. One way we plan to do this is rent the center to an individual household on an hourly basis for the use of that household to recreate with options such as ping pong, pool, karaoke, and Wii games. This opportunity will be available to members at a discounted rate, though please note, it is only for one household at a time. We are unable to offer it for groups. These rentals will not interfere with scheduling of our programs as they are added back in phase three and four.

Phase three (possibility of beginning June 22 at the earliest): Limited programming will be reinstated for those who do not fall in the high-risk category. Classes and groups will look a bit different, as we will be practicing social distancing and some groups may not be able to start at this time for that reason. Also, some of the programs previously scheduled times may change as we will need to limit the building capacity to under 50 people at a time. Carly and I will be in contact with our program leads to discuss this further as we get closer to entering phase three.

Phase four (possibility of beginning July 13 at the earliest): Programming will be open and available to all members, including those in the high-risk population, with continued appropriate social distancing measures.

We will continue to keep you apprised to any announcements made by the governor that will impact our planned openings. We have a path forward, however, we do not have a clear timeline as all the

dates are not solid, and will likely change in response to data from testing and tracing Covid-19 in our region.

Thank you for your ongoing support, we truly feel a commitment to serving our members and community. We are

continually looking for ways to replace the revenue that has been lost during the closure, as it is needed to sustain our ongoing expenses. If you have ideas of ways to help in this regard, please reach out. Also, please contact either Carly, or myself, if you have any questions or

comments or need assistance during this strange and difficult time. We find great hope for future days of seeing you all again.

We sincerely hope you are well and staying connected to one another.

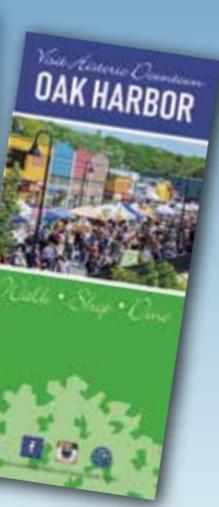
WASHINGTON'S PHASED APPROACH Reopening Business and Modifying Physical Distancing Measures				
	1 Phase 1	2 Phase 2	3 Phase 3	4 Phase 4
High-Risk Populations*	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Resume public interactions, with physical distancing
Recreation	Some outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, golf, boating, hiking)	All outdoor recreation involving fewer than 5 people outside your household (camping, beaches, etc.)	- Outdoor group rec. sports activities (5-50 people) - Recreational facilities at <50% capacity (public pools, etc.)	Resume all recreational activity
Gatherings (social, spiritual)	- None - Drive in spiritual service with one household per vehicle	Gather with no more than 5 people outside your household per week	Allow gatherings with no more than 50 people	Allow gatherings with >50 people
Travel	Only essential travel	Limited non-essential travel within proximity of your home	Resume non-essential travel	Continue non-essential travel
Business/Employers	- Essential businesses open - Existing construction that meet agreed upon criteria - Landscaping - Automobile sales - Retail (curb-side pick-up orders only) - Car washes - Pet walkers	- Remaining manufacturing - New construction - In-home/domestic services (nannies, housecleaning, etc.) - Retail (in-store purchases allowed with restrictions) - Real estate - Professional services/office-based businesses (telework remains strongly encouraged) - Hair and nail salons/Barbers - Housecleaning - Restaurants <50% capacity table size no larger than 5	- Restaurants <75% capacity/ table size no larger than 10 - Bars at <25% capacity - Indoor gyms at <50% capacity - Movie theaters at <50% capacity - Government (telework remains strongly encouraged) - Libraries - Museums - All other business activities not yet listed except for nightclubs and events with greater than 50 people	- Nightclubs - Concert venues - Large sporting events - Resume unrestricted staffing of worksites, but continue to practice physical distancing and good hygiene

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June

ALL PROGRAMMING AND CLASSES ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Hydration Health

By **Debbie Metz**, Nutrition Director & **Jessica Karpilo**, Outreach Associate

In talks of nutrition and health, there is one thing that, despite its critical role, is often overlooked— water. Water is the most important nutrient we can consume. A person in good health can only survive about three days without water but can survive weeks without food. Staying hydrated can prevent hospital stays, reduce falls, improve cognitive thought processes, reduce constipation, and improve digestion. Water carries nutrients to our cells, medicine to where it is needed in the body, and helps remove waste products and toxins. Proper hydration is important for good health, especially as we age. Here are a few tips to help you, and your loved ones of all ages, stay healthy and hydrated:

LEAVE REMINDERS

Set alarms on your cell phone to remind yourself and others and to integrate “water breaks” into your daily schedule. If memory loss keeps your loved one from drinking the necessary amount of water, prompt them to drink frequently throughout the day. Place colorful sticky notes in highly visible areas or call them with frequent reminders.

MAKE IT EASY

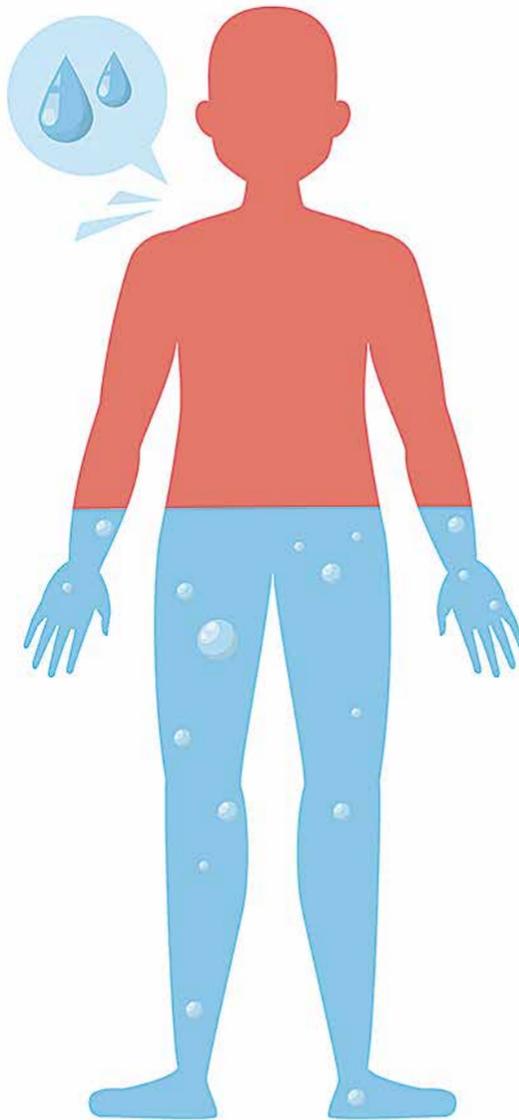
Keep water readily available. Put several water bottles in the refrigerator or fill a small pitcher and place it next to a favorite chair. Offer liquids both with meals and without.

BE CREATIVE

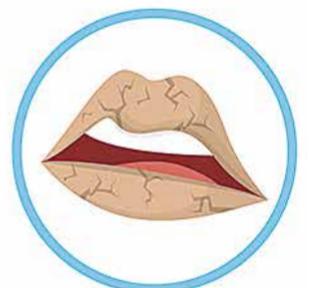
Don't overlook foods with a high water content that can supplement drinking water, such as berries, melons, cucumbers, apples, clear soup, and broths. As it gets warmer, try making homemade popsicles using fruit juice for a fun, hydrating treat.

Remember to pay attention to your loved one's preferences as they can change over time. Many people become more sensitive to temperature, and room temperature water may be preferable over cold. Generally, a person needs about six to eight cups of water each day. You can also try herbal teas, fruit juices, milk, or flavored water for hydration. Now go drink a glass of water!

DEHYDRATION SYMPTOMS



THIRST



DRY MOUTH



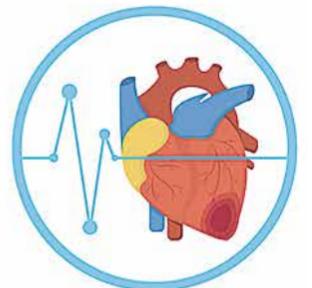
LESS FREQUENT URINATION



DRY SKIN



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2020 Senior Farmer's Market Produce Vouchers Arriving in June!

The Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is a "Win-Win" program, which benefits both low-income seniors and our local farmers. Everyone involved has been absolutely delighted with the outcomes! Local farmers sell more produce, and seniors who otherwise couldn't afford it are able to purchase organic, fresh fruits and vegetables as excellent supplementation to a healthy diet. SFMNP began in 2001 and has been a very successful program each year since then.

If you are 60 years old or older and your income is at or below \$1967 per month for one person or at or below \$2658 per month for two people, you are eligible for the program. Each person receives \$40 worth of vouchers, in which eligible persons can take to participating markets and vendors to choose and purchase the fresh fruits and vegetables they enjoy eating or cooking.

There is a new SFMNP delivery system this year. Please call 360-321-1600, ext "0" to provide your required information, including your mailing address. We will be mailing out the vouchers to you once we have all the necessary information. Vouchers are good through October, depending on the Farmer's Market seasonal time frame. We will be receiving updates on authorized markets soon, so times and locations may vary. We will provide updates when you call to sign up for vouchers.

PARTICIPATING MARKETS:

- Coupeville Farmers Market**
788 NW Alexander (behind Sno-Isle Library)
Saturdays, 10-2 open now to October
- Bayview Famers Market**
Bayview Corner, Hwy 525 and Bayview Rd
Saturdays, 10-2 open now-October
- Whidbey Tilth Market**
Hwy 525 and Thompson Rd
Sunday 11-2 open now-October
- Oak Harbor Farmers Market**
Hwy 20 in field next to Visitor Center
Thursday 4-7 open now- late August
- Langley Famers Market**
Between 1st and 2nd Street
Thursdays, 2-6 open now-September

LOOK FOR THIS SIGN:



Zoom Support Group Meetings

Time Together @ Home with Zoom Support Group
Every Monday, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Parkinson's support group
Every Tuesday, 10–11:30 a.m.

Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregivers Support Group
Every Wednesday, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Parkinson's and friends Singing Group
(for those living with Parkinson's, their caregivers and anyone who loves to have a good old sing-a-long)
Every Thursday, 2:30–3:30 p.m.

Contact mel@islandseniorservices.org to receive information about joining any one of these groups, or to request additional support group meetings.

Turning 65? Have questions about Medicare? We are still here to help!

In the face of the coronavirus outbreak, many of us are trying to navigate important issues while isolated in the solitary confinement of our homes. We may not know where to go for information about important matters, questions needing timely answers, or deadlines that must be met.



Please know volunteers from Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) and Island Senior Resources, remain on the job. We are working remotely and will respond by telephone or email regarding your Medicare concerns about enrollment, costs and benefits, prescription coverage, low-income assistance, and referrals for related services. If you are turning 65 or have questions about coverage for your healthcare needs, we are here to help! Call 360-321-1600 or 360-678-3373, option 0 or email reception@islandseniorservices.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

Once the risks related to COVID-19 have passed, SHIBA will resume in-person consultations in Oak Harbor, Coupeville, and at Island Senior Resources in Bayview.

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Farmers Market

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MEALS ON WHEELS MENU - JUNE		
\$6 Suggested donation for meals		
WEEK 1		
Mon	1	Hawaiian Chicken
Wed	3	Chile Relleno
Fri	5	Chicken Tenders
WEEK 2		
Mon	8	Stuffed Rice Pepper Bake
Wed	10	Tangy Chicken Salad
Fri	12	BBQ Chicken Legs
WEEK 3		
Mon	15	Beef & Spinach Wrap
Wed	17	Southwest Chicken Salad
Fri	19	Crispy Cod & Mac & Cheese
WEEK 4		
Mon	22	Sweet & Sour Meatballs
Wed	24	Cheeseburger Sliders
Fri	26	Chicken Cordon Bleu Bake
WEEK 4		
Mon	29	BLT Salad w/Croutons
Closed Tuesdays and Thursdays		

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Coronavirus Journey and Island Senior Resources

By Cheryn Weiser, Executive Director, Island Senior Resources

Although we can take a few deep breaths after traversing the first two months of the coronavirus journey, at Island Senior Resources, we understand we are in a marathon, not a sprint. We are following and will follow the guidance provided by Governor Inslee in his Safe Start Washington – A Phased Approach to Recovery Plan issued May 4. It is available on the governor’s website at: www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SafeStartWA_4May20_1pm.pdf. The Island County Health Department, a key partner in this journey, is responsible for implementing the governor’s plan for Island County.

What does Safe Start Washington mean for seniors, adults with disabilities, and those who care about them?

The governor’s plan has four phases. Each phase focuses on guidance about:

- High-Risk Populations (Those over 65 and those with chronic conditions, including adults with disabilities, are considered high risk)
- Recreation
- Gatherings
- Travel
- Business and Employers

Individuals considered high risk are expected to stay home and stay healthy until phase four, and, even then, high-risk populations are expected to maintain social distancing.

We are in phase 1 through May 31, with only slight opening of the restrictions. Phase one includes no gatherings, some outdoor recreation, only essential travel, essential businesses like grocery stores and pharmacies being open along with some outdoor businesses re-opening such as landscaping and pet walking.

What will be required to move ahead into less restrictive phases?

First and foremost, Island County needs to demonstrate it has had a decline in COVID-19 cases over a 14-day period. The Health Department also must demonstrate the ability to test, contact trace, and contain any outbreaks. The Health Department is currently in the process of setting up this capacity.

Each phase will last a minimum of three weeks and if the rate of COVID-19 cases goes up again, the governor can elect to move back to an earlier phase to protect the public health.

What does Safe Start Washington mean for Island Senior Resources?

Island Senior Resources continues to offer a robust set of services during the pandemic: Aging & Disability (helps with accessing services and resources), Meals on Wheels, Medical Transportation, Family Caregiver Support, SHIBA Medicare Advising, Time Together At Home, and online support groups. Staff is available M-F 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., call 360-321-1600 or 360-678-3373.

Senior Thrift has a tentative opening date of July 1 for the public to access the retail part of the store. Senior Thrift may be open for donations prior to July 1, pending progress into phase 2.

Phase 4 will be the point at which Island Senior Resources will consider re-opening the Bayview Senior Resource Center, and community meal sites across Island County. Meal sites will be required to maintain a level of social distancing. We are in close collaboration with The Center in Oak Harbor about re-opening.

We at Island Senior Resources urge each of you reading this article to be patient, to stay safe, and to reach out to us if you need help. This unprecedented era is challenging for all of us and especially those members of our community who are high-risk. Our website offers an online help request form, and our main number leads you to professional staff who can assist you with what you are dealing with during this crisis. Please don’t hesitate to call: 360-321-1600 or 360-678-3373 option 0.

For up to date information as things change, check our website: www.senior-resources.org.

We are in this together!

HOW TO REACH ISLAND SENIOR RESOURCES

For all departments and all staff call 360-321-1600 or 360-678-3373

- Nutrition/Meals on Wheels
- Aging & Disability Resources
- Family Caregiver Support
- Time Together Adult Day
- In Home Care
- Case Management
- Medical Transportation/ Volunteer Services

SHIBA

Senior Thrift 360-331-5701

Oak Harbor Aging & Disability Resources 360-675-0311

For more information, visit www.senior-resources.org

OUR LOCATIONS

Island Senior Resources (Oak Harbor)
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Oak Harbor

(in collaboration with... Center)
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Senior Thrift
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... WA 98249
For more information call:
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Please contact Island Senior Resources (360) 321-1600 or (360) 678-3373

Island Senior Resources eNews!

Join our email list and receive our monthly eNews the last Friday of every month. It’s full of updates for the month ahead: sales at Senior Thrift, special events, classes, menus, and links to great articles. Sign up online at www.senior-resources.org.

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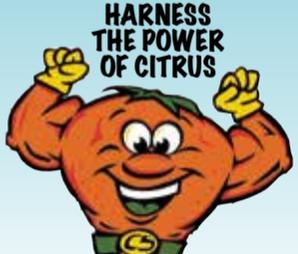
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THE LEATHER AND THE PEBBLE

By Charles LaFond, author, engager, ISR staff member

Disruption can be a good thing. This is well known by shepherds. The reason shepherds are so often referred to in history as having slingshots (i.e. David and Goliath) is because disruption is their primary tool. Most of us think the shepherd's primary tool is the shepherd's crook, but that is simply not true, it just makes for good paintings. The real tool of a shepherd is the slingshot – a small, long, narrow strip of leather in their pocket.

The shepherd watches the sheep. When a sheep or ram gets too close to something dangerous or wanders too far off, the shepherd takes out a slingshot, picks up a stone, and with the accuracy of a sharpshooter, flings the stone to hit the ground an inch away from the sheep's nose, which had been buried happily in green grass, munching. The stone does not hit the sheep. The stone hits the ground by her nose. She is startled by the stone. She stops munching grass. She looks up and then looks around. In this disruption, she sees she is too far from the flock or too close to the cliff, and so she wanders back to the flock or away from the cliff. Shepherds have used slingshots – just a strip of leather and a stone - for thousands of years and still do to this day on much of the planet.

This COVID-19 time has been just such a disruption. It has stopped our normal routines. It has startled a planet of humans and caused us to sit up and look around. It has pushed us out of our busy

accumulation and into a season of helping others. This disruption has startled us, brought us up short, and reminded us of the reality of our mortality.

The word disruption comes from two Medieval words: "dis" (apart) and "rump" (to break). A disruption "breaks us apart" from regular life and, in the silence of the break, allows us to see what is true and not just what is factual. And what is true, is gratitude for what we have.

The marvels of neurological science have shown us, only in the past few years, that the microscopic location in the brain, which activates when we give something away, activates for only one other thing; it activates when we receive a surprise gift. In other words, we humans are designed to get pleasure from giving things away. It is a way our species stays alive in groups. We are wired to give; and then to receive pleasure hormones as a biological reward when we give something away.

In this disruption, many of us have had the chance to stop. Really stop. We have lifted our heads like the sheep. We have looked around. We have seen the danger. And we have seen how very much we have to be grateful for - how much we have. We simmer in gratitude.

People who are generous have one thing in common. It is not religion. It is not wealth. It is not faith. It is not compassion or even empathy. What people who are generous have in common is gratitude. I have seen so much generosity in

the past few months. The disruption has awakened us from a kind of busyness-trance. In our awakened state, we have stopped consuming quite so much, and we have looked around - seen what we have and what others need. We have become aware of our gratitude and become, as a direct result – generous. This is the very essence of silver linings.

Our Island Senior Resources staff members are busy every day providing resources to enhance the emotional, social, and physical well-being of seniors, adults with disabilities, and those who care for them. They are on the front lines of this COVID-19 crisis. Please consider making a gift to the Annual Giving Campaign today.

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May this disruption inspire awareness of all we have. And may that gratitude result in generosity.



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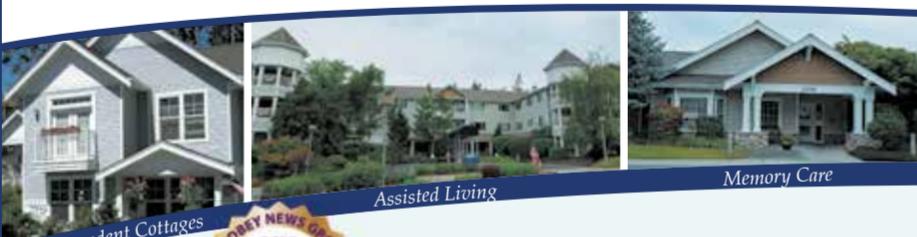
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PERSPECTIVES continued from page 1

Well, I guess that's reassuring. However, the story made me wonder, "What do older people know about resilience that is helping us get through these times? What experiences support us in the ambiguity of the current pandemic? How has life prepared us for the coming societal shifts?"

So, I started asking around.

Jerry Milhon, 79, a leader in the Thriving Communities Initiative, responded, "Born in 1940, I don't remember the War, but I lived in the shadow of those coming home. While there was trauma, as a youngster, I felt most connected to a re-engaged world of people who had done their duty and were making new lives after the challenges of war.

"In the 1950s, there was the polio epidemic, and I carried a lot of fear about the invisible disease. I saw the iron lungs and pictures of children who would be crippled for life. That experience of social isolation stuck deep in the recesses of my mind and reemerged two months ago. Then and now I knew what to do: stay home! For some reason, making that link helped me immensely.

"Throughout my career, I worked within desperate organizations where my primary role was to reconnect people, to develop common purpose, and to act in love with the least amount of judgment. Now, I think my work-life is mirrored in all of society. We have lived through deep recessions, 9/11, and national disasters, but the depth of disparities and needs made visible by the pandemic seems like an energy shift that will play

out for decades. If we can use this disruption to re-evaluate priorities and purpose, society will shift radically for the better. Accompanied by calm and long perspective, I am eager to participate in the 'new normal' that awaits us."

Dr. Marc Agronin, a geriatric psychiatrist at Miami Jewish Health, would not be surprised at Jerry's resilience. He wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* April 19, "... most healthy aging minds are neither depressed nor disabled. Rather, they grow more hopeful and practical with age, and exert considerable effort binding our families and communities together with their wisdom and creativity, especially during times of natural disaster."

In 1991, while still living in Duluth, Minn., Ann Linnea, now 70, and her friend, Paul Treuer, were determined to solo kayak Lake Superior. So at age 42, Linnea became the first woman to successfully paddle the 1,800-mile shoreline of the world's largest inland sea. Looking back, she reflects, "The lake and weather were in charge, not us. We trained for five years, set powerful intention, and launched with tremendous willpower to complete the journey, but every day we had to remain humble in the face of nature. We had to make our decisions based on relationship with larger forces and realistic assessment of our skillset. We were young, strong, and some days dangerously close to having made wrong decisions. Unpredictable storms came up, one time catching us along a 10-mile stretch of high cliffs. There was nothing to do but keep going, push beyond exhaustion, survive. Like what is happening now for healthcare and

essential workers and other frontline responders in the pandemic crisis.

"I'm not taking great risks now in a frontline position, but I understand the necessity of an inner, personal source people must draw on to get through. I learned to be thoughtful in the midst of fear and discouragement and to save my life by never stopping paddling. These are attitudes I apply throughout my life now as I find myself working to encourage four generations—my mother, my peers, my daughter, my grandchildren.

Linnea's 93-year-old mother is currently isolated in a Minnesota nursing home. Ann and her sisters provide multiple daily phone calls, a team of daughters working from across the country, to reach into their mother's room. "I'm trying to help my mother understand how big this is: it's not just her, her home, it's worldwide. I tell her this disruption is a spiritual journey we are on together. I remind her of previous challenges: the Depression, the War, and now the status quo is shaken. Like nature, systems larger than our lives are in charge. Her job is to hold steady, to feel our love and trust."

From her home on Sandy Hook, Midge Billig, 95, admits to getting pretty bored this spring. "I've lived through a lot of things, but nothing that made me so confined as this pandemic. My husband and I were professional gardeners, with degrees in horticulture. In Michigan, we ran a nursery and a flower shop. We always interacted with lots of people. We moved to Whidbey in 1986, and then he died in 1988. So, I'm used to living alone, and that has helped. I have my routines. I keep records of the rainfall. I feed the birds and am committed to the hummingbirds that stay here all year. I have

people who are shopping for my groceries and keeping track of me, so I know there is community around me."

Inside the house, Midge keeps track of current history for organizations she belongs to, archiving materials for WhidbeyHealth, the Garden Club, and her church. When I asked her what she most wants to do as soon as she can get out again, she said, "I need to get to Rite Aid and print photos of nature. I have scrapbook fever. I keep track of current events, making a history as it unfolds."

History unfolding is what we are all tracking right now. As a therapist, Kate Stivers is supporting clients while grappling herself with the uncertainty of these times. She says, "For me, sheltering in place, beyond what we are all doing, is a time for deepening reflections. Within the layers of loss and grief, my touchstones are two questions I ask: "What matters most right now that is in my control? What is not in my control and not helpful for me to dwell upon? This keeps me focused on what I can do to manage my own experience and support others to manage their experiences."

Stability-based, the capacity to hold a broad range of emotion, is another attribute of age Dr. Agronin notes in his article, "Contrary to the stereotype that fragile older minds crumble in the face of stress, the average older person is surprisingly resilient, drawing upon a lifetime of experience, knowledge and social connections."

We don't know what's coming, but after listening to elder voices around me, I feel even better living in a community with 26 percent of my neighbors in this cohort of life experience and wisdom.

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