

# Island Times

Look for Island Times the LAST Thursday of each month  
**JAN. 2021**

MONTHLY NEWSPAPER OF ISLAND SENIOR RESOURCES AND THE CENTER IN OAK HARBOR Volume 4 • Issue 9



The Isaacson family (left) donating handmade personalized gift tags

## Gifts of Connection for Seniors

By Liz Lange, Administrator of Senior Services, City of Oak Harbor

Opening a gift Christmas morning is a fun experience, whether you are six or 60. Though as we age sometimes the frequency in which we receive gifts at the holidays diminishes. As family moves away, and loved ones are lost, many older adults have found themselves finding ways to celebrate and navigate the holidays in a new, and often hard, way.

The goal of Gifts of Connection for Seniors is to acknowledge older adults who would like to be remembered during this holiday season.

Anyone over the age of 60 and residing north of Libbey road are eligible to be gift recipients. Recipients are invited to list three items they would like to receive, and then our amazing community members go to work, shopping, wrapping, donating and delivering.



Jen of Opportunity Council and daughter Chloe volunteer putting together gift tags

**GIFTS** continued on page 12

## You Are Welcome

By Robin Bush ISR Outreach Director and Nicole Donovan ISR Aging & Disability Resources Director

What does it feel like when you are welcomed somewhere? Where have you experienced being welcomed, and what did it feel like? Most likely you were treated politely, respectfully, and in a friendly manner. It's more than that though. Being Welcomed goes much deeper than just how you were treated; it is how you felt. Being Welcomed means you feel you belong. Belonging is feeling safe, comfortable, cared for, at ease, and most importantly, accepted for who

"No one belongs here more than you."

~ Brené Brown, author of *The Power of Vulnerability*

we are. You feel it when others reach out to know you sincerely and you reach in to know them. You feel understood and believe that you belong not just to a place, but with the people around you.

Think about the difference between

**WELCOME** continued on page 2

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.



YOU ARE SAFE HERE.

YOUR NEEDS ARE IMPORTANT.

### QUESTION OF THE MONTH: **WHAT IS ONE THING YOU LEARNED LAST YEAR?**

<p><b>Charles LaFond</b> Langley <i>"The lived and experienced version of the word 'resilience.'"</i></p>	<p><b>Kathi Phillips</b> Oak Harbor <i>"Patience, its been a year of patience."</i></p>	<p><b>Celeste Fikejs</b> Oak Harbor <i>"The question, 'How are you?' has brought about such different responses, and through those answers, I have become closer to my family and friends."</i></p>	<p><b>Jane Lopez-Santillana</b> <i>"Embrace change, because you have no choice."</i></p>
<p><b>Shirley Yunker</b> Oak Harbor <i>"Patience."</i></p>	<p><b>Mel Watson</b> Langley <i>"People are so kind especially during difficult times. There is a natural virtuous impulse to want to help others."</i></p>	<p><b>Lyn Bankowski</b> Oak Harbor <i>"Ability to learn on the fly."</i></p>	<p><b>Leigh Anderson</b> Seattle <i>"Things that I imagine could go wrong could also go right."</i></p>



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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Cheryn Weiser, Executive Director, Island Senior Resources

My pussy willow tree knows that the light is coming. Each year in December, one or two pussy feet start showing on the long weeping branches of my favorite pussy willow tree. Each time I witness this hint of the New Year to come, I am a bit in awe at nature and its annual routine.

Now, I too join the routine of greeting a New Year. I greet 2021 with the relief that we have shed ourselves of a burdensome 2020. I am eager for the sunlight to return so that we can all emerge from the darkness of winter to join with fresh spring and summer breezes, times in outdoor spaces, and the smells of the earth bursting forth with green.

With January and February before us, we still attend to the precautions that became the norms of the prior year; wear a mask, maintain social distance, wash your hands, and spend more time using electronic means of communication rather than those cherished moments of face-to-face connection that we all long for.

Take heart, take a deep breath, let go of 2020, and enter 2021 with hope. Consider what has been learned from a most difficult time. What are the silver linings? What are the pearls of

insight and wisdom that shine through the dark time? How do the silver linings inform your intentions for the New Year?

One of my deepest appreciations for the year past is the time I have spent making sure I connect with those near and dear. In some cases, I have actually connected more with some dear friends afar than I did during the 'old normal.' I will continue those connections on a more frequent basis. To the extent that the dark time has provided the opportunity for random acts of kindness as an offering to someone in my circle to remind them that there still is goodness amid the dark, I will continue to look for those opportunities. I get a smile on my face each time I surprise someone.

- ☛ May you find new energy from the transition to the New Year.
- ☛ May your heart feel a little lighter.
- ☛ May you smile more.
- ☛ May you worry less.
- ☛ May you uncover the joy around you like the pussy feet in December.

Welcome to 2021!

## WELCOME continued from page 1

belonging to and belonging with. You can belong to a group (that's membership), but belonging with people is a feeling. They welcome you through actions that help you feel you belong with them. You feel confident you can express all of who you are. People you belong with are not acquaintances; these are your sustainers. You sustain each other.

Island Senior Resources welcomes you. Our board and leadership team have invested in examining ourselves, and how we sustain each other and our community. We are committed to continually learning how we can better connect with, and welcome, every member of our communities. We understand that achieving this goes deeper than sharing words of Welcoming; it means embedding welcoming into our all our actions so we cultivate a place where belonging can happen. We are constantly striving to achieve our vision of a community where everyone is valued, heard and seen, cared for and about, afforded respect, treated with dignity, and supported to live their best life.

At Island Senior Resources we know that as we look to our communities to evolve; we must look with equal intensity at ourselves. Our staff is working together on strong relationship building, open communication, and strengthening the resilience we need for growth. We have adopted our Welcoming that is as important to our future as our Mission and Vision. Our Welcoming is:

**You are welcome here. You are safe here. Your needs are important.**

**We at Island Senior Resources value, respect, and support individuals of every race, color, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, age, socio-economic status, religion, non-religion, and national origin, who make up the whole of our community.**

We are committed to continually learning and challenging our own assumptions and biases around inclusion, equity, diversity, and justice.

We invite all members of our community to join us in being informed, active allies, speaking up, acting peacefully, and being in solidarity with diverse communities.

Our goal is to help everyone see themselves at ISR, in everything we do, and to hear themselves at ISR in every conversation. We may not always do this perfectly, but we have challenged ourselves to be aware, improve, and welcome feedback from the community. Resilient communities share a desire to face challenges, dialog openly, listen deeply, process our similarities and differences, and navigate forward toward a future where all feel welcome. We are here to support that and work toward unity and understanding. We welcome you to join with us in creating a community of belonging.

Our doors, although physically closed due to COVID health precautions to support the vulnerable community members we serve, are always open to help you. Our staff is reachable by phone at 360.321.1600 or 360.678.3373. Please share our number with others you know who might benefit from our support and resources. It's not always easy to reach out and ask for assistance, but you will be welcome here when you do.

## 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  
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Case Management  
Medical Transportation/  
Volunteer Services  
SHIBA

Senior Thrift  
360-321-1600  
or 360-678-3373

Oak Harbor Aging &  
Disability Resources  
360-675-0311

For more information, visit  
[www.senior-resources.org](http://www.senior-resources.org)

## OUR LOCATIONS

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The Center  
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5  
Oak Harbor  
(in collaboration with... Center)  
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Senior Thrift  
Standard Ave  
WA 98249  
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Thursday- Saturday  
10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Sunday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Now there will finally be a place for all those items you cleaned out of your closets during quarantine!**

**Donations will be accepted Sundays only 9-11 a.m. or until capacity is reached.**

**360-321-1600 • 360-678-3373**

**Health precautions will be in place, masks will be required, customer flow will be limited, restrooms and dressing rooms will be closed, the store will be sanitized throughout each day, and donated items will be quarantined for 3 days prior to reaching the sales floor.**

**We follow the governor's and county's guidance regarding COVID. Should recommendations change, our hours and open days may change. To see current information, please go to our website at: [www.senior-resources.org/thriftstore](http://www.senior-resources.org/thriftstore) or call us. Our current sales are posted on the website and on the Senior Thrift Facebook page.**

**From all of us at Senior Thrift, we wish you a safe and wonderful New Year!**

## 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](http://www.senior-resources.org).

# Strategies for Well-being: Part 4

## Accessing Behavioral Health Support

By Betsy Griffith, LMHC, Island County Human Services

In a world of self-help, how do we know when we could benefit from professional support? And how do we find it? Let's explore how we can evaluate our needs (or the needs of loved ones) to determine the best level of support.

There are signs that seeking professional behavioral health support would be beneficial:

- If you have been trying to do self-care activities and don't feel any benefit
- If you are feeling persistent sadness or worry, or irritability
- If you notice a significant change in your interests or social behavior
- Significant changes in sleeping or eating
- Increased use of substances
- Thoughts of harm to self or others

If you are questioning whether behavioral health services could be beneficial, it's worth exploring options and finding available resources.

What is help? The main supports in behavioral health are mental health counseling, substance use counseling, and medication management. If you are unsure how to start this process, your primary care physician (PCP) can be an easy starting point—seeing someone who knows you and your health history can be especially beneficial. A second option is counseling. You might seek support from a counselor, social worker, therapist (master's degree), or psychologist (a doctoral degree). These professionals can assess, diagnose, and offer counseling services. Each provider may have areas of specialization. A third option is a psychiatrist (MD) who would typically assess and prescribe medication. Working with a psychiatrist is especially beneficial if there are complex medication needs.

Once you've decided to move forward,

how do you find a mental health professional? You could ask a friend, contact your insurance for a list of providers, ask your PCP for recommendations, check Psychology Today's 'find a therapist' tool, or even google counselors in 'your town.' Additionally, Island County Human Services can help with brief services and referrals.

Of late, many providers are moving to virtual options. Virtual counseling is shown to be as impactful as in-person treatment. Also, in rural areas, we now have access to providers of many specialties.

How do you know which counselor is right for you? The answer is...talk to them. Most counselors are happy to offer a phone consultation. Think about what's important to you in a counselor. What does a typical session consist of? How are treatment goals established? How will you know when treatment is complete? Most importantly, how do you feel in response to this person? Do you feel comfortable opening up to this person? Often the professional relationship is the most significant determinant of progress.

What to expect? There are many different treatment approaches. Some approaches are more evidence-based for specific needs. Your counselor can explain their theoretical orientation and what it means to your treatment.

What if it's not a good fit? It's important to understand that the work can be hard sometimes, so you can expect some discomfort and resistance as part of the process. That said, if you don't feel comfortable in your treatment, you are absolutely able to seek an option that you do feel comfortable with. And above all else, communicate with your counselor. If you don't feel your treatment is meeting your needs, or want to work toward different goals, talk to them. You are the captain of your ship.

## Join the Connection Cafe

Wednesdays, 3pm - 4pm on Zoom or call in on your phone

Connect with others in your community for good conversation. Isolation is a major challenge during these difficult times. Why not reach out and chat with others who may be feeling lonely or isolated. Make new friends, share life experiences, enjoy each other's company.

To get the link or call in phone numbers, go to [www.senior-resources.org/calendar/](http://www.senior-resources.org/calendar/) and select the date you are interested in, or call Island Senior Resources at 360-321-1600 or 360-678-3373.

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# Support Group Meetings now available online

To receive information about joining any one of these groups, or to request additional support group meetings, contact Mel at [mel@islandseniorservices.org](mailto:mel@islandseniorservices.org).

## TIME TOGETHER @ HOME ZOOM SUPPORT GROUP

**Mondays except public holidays  
11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

Facilitated by Time Together director Mel Watson. The program is designed to engage participants with discussions, group puzzles, and games in a friendly and supportive environment. This program is great for those who are isolated and have developmental disabilities or those with cognitive challenges who enjoy being with people and making friends.

Time Together@ Home is an online Zoom event. To register for Time Together @ Home click here to fill out the participation form or email [mel@islandseniorservices.org](mailto:mel@islandseniorservices.org) for further information. Once we receive your completed registration information, we will send you instructions for joining the weekly online events.

## PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

**Tuesdays, 10 – 11:30 a.m.**

Facilitated by Mel Watson. This online Zoom group is for people living with Parkinson's and their family caregivers to share experiences, knowledge, and support. Friendships are formed and connections are made to help those living with this challenging condition.

Contact [mel@islandseniorservices.org](mailto:mel@islandseniorservices.org) to receive Zoom information to join the group.

## ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

**Wednesdays, 10 – 11:30 a.m.**

Facilitated by Mel Watson. This online Zoom group is for people who are caring for someone who has a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, other dementias, or any other challenging condition to share experiences, knowledge and support. Friendships are formed and connections are made to help those who are caring for someone diagnosed with this challenging condition.

Contact [mel@islandseniorservices.org](mailto:mel@islandseniorservices.org) to receive Zoom information to join the group.

## YOGA FOR THOSE LIVING WITH PARKINSON'S, THEIR CAREGIVERS, AND OTHERS WITH COGNITIVE OR MOVEMENT CHALLENGES

**Thursdays, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.**

Facilitated by Renee Levier <https://leverrier.com/> "Living well with Parkinson's" is hosted by Mel Watson. This group is for people who want to improve their physical and mental well-being through yoga. Renee says, "If you can breathe you can do yoga." This is a place to come together and practice techniques to improve movement and balance. Everyone welcome!

To join on Zoom go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/393691440>

## CARE RECEIVER SUPPORT GROUP

**Alternating Thursdays  
11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

Facilitated by Mel Watson. This online Zoom group is for people living with Parkinson's Disease, or any other challenging condition, and who receive support and care from a family caregiver. This is a safe place to discuss challenges and share experiences.



Contact [mel@islandseniorservices.org](mailto:mel@islandseniorservices.org) to receive Zoom information to join the group.

## CONNECTING IN DIFFICULT TIMES

**Hosted by Island County Human Services**

**Thursdays, 11 a.m. – noon**

A place where individuals can feel comfortable about sharing any struggles they are experiencing in response to the Covid-19 safety recommendations. If you are interested please call 360-678-8293 or fill out the form by clicking here.

# Get Virtually Crafty with Sno-Isle Libraries

By Sno-Isle Libraries

Do you want to learn about a new craft or share what you know about one of yours? Sno-Isle Libraries' online Craft and Chat events are a great way to fill some of your coronavirus isolation time.

Craft and Chat is more than just a craft tutorial; it's an online social event. It offers all Sno-Isle Libraries customers of all ages the opportunity to share skills, discover Sno-Isle Libraries' other online and contact-free resources, and make connections with fellow crafters. Craft and Chat sessions let people show what they're creating and find inspiration from other crafters, said Kelley Murdock, one of the Sno-Isle Libraries staff members who helped start Craft and Chat programs in May.

Craft and Chat sessions are 60-90 minutes long and are limited to 15-25 participants. Sessions are held on Zoom, giving people the chance to chat during the session to share ideas and learn techniques. Different craft sessions are held on weekdays, weekends, and evenings, starting as early as 9 a.m. and as late as 9 p.m. Each session is led by a Sno-Isle Libraries staff member who has a skill or interest in a particular craft.

In pre-COVID times, Craft and Chat would have felt like a knitting circle. Of course, there are Craft and Chat knit and crochet sessions, but there's much more. Sessions have covered crochet, bullet journals, sensory jars, sewing, painting, drawing, "upcycling," and more. Take the Sourdough Circle, for example. Before it



went on hiatus in November, Sourdough Circle tackled "all things sourdough" as session leader Andie Boyle shared her lifelong passion for baking and bread-making. Sourdough Circle had a waitlist for its final session.

"I was born with the belief that birthdays are nature's way of telling us to eat more cake," Boyle said. "My interest in bread baking arose in the 1970s when I found a copy of the flour-power

'Tassajara Bread Book' (which is in the Sno-Isle Libraries collection). The Zen-and-the-art-of-bread-baking approach of this book appealed directly to the teenage me, and soon had me needing to know more." Boyle's interest in bread-making intensified after high school. She lived in Paris above a boulangerie (French for a bread bakery). The smells were intoxicating. She visited Europe frequently in her twenties to learn more

cooking and baking techniques. "Sourdough has always been my favorite kind of bread, but the sourdough process always seemed too mysterious, time-consuming, and complicated," Boyle said. "When the first coronavirus lockdown happened, I felt maybe the universe was telling me the time had come to figure this out." She made her first successful sourdough starter in March and named it "My Corona."

One month into the coronavirus quarantine, Sno-Isle Libraries started developing online programs. One was Craft and Chat. "When the call went out for Craft and Chat Ideas, I immediately thought of forming a sourdough circle," Boyle said. Sourdough Circle attracted a core group of devoted attendees and newcomers.

Craft and Chat and other online events let Boyle and her librarian colleagues program events that can draw far more participants than a similar in-person event or series can attract to a single community library. Boyle works in the Marysville Library, but the Sourdough Circle attracted people from as far as Whidbey Island, Mountlake Terrace, and Darrington.

"This program fulfills the Sno-Isle Libraries vision of having every person in the community connected to the library since our participants come from every corner of our district," Boyle said.

To see all upcoming Craft and Chat sessions and contact-free events, go to [sno-isle.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index](https://sno-isle.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index).

**ALL PROGRAMMING AND CLASSES ARE ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

## Free Powerful Tools for Caregivers Class on Zoom

**SIX WEEKS:**  
**Tuesdays • Jan. 21 – Feb. 25 • 10 a.m.–noon**

This class is designed to:

- Help caregivers take care of themselves while caring for a relative or friend
- Develop a wealth of self-care tools to reduce personal stress, prioritize, self-care, manage emotions, increase confidence, and set goals for yourself.

Pre-registration required. Go to [www.senior-resources.org/calendar](http://www.senior-resources.org/calendar) and click on the January 21 to register. For more information contact Finn Lambourn reception@islandseniorservices.org or call 360.321.1600 or 360-678-3373, Ext 0.

Books for the class can be purchased online at [www.powerfultoolsforcaregivers.org/product-category/caregiver-helpbook/](http://www.powerfultoolsforcaregivers.org/product-category/caregiver-helpbook/) or borrowed for the duration of the class from the Bayview Senior Center or the Camano Center. Please call for more information.

## Learn the Basics of Social Security



- How and when to apply for benefits
- Types of benefits you may qualify for
- Your Social Security rights
- Benefits based on earnings, spousal earnings (current and former)
- Survivor benefits for widow(er)s

This Island Senior Resources workshop will be presented via Zoom by Annette Barca who has been conducting pre-retirement seminars for 15 years. Free. Pre-registration required. For more information call 360-321-1600 ext 0.

**Tuesday, Jan. 19, 11 a.m.**  
**Monday, March 15, 1 p.m.**

To pre-register, go to [www.senior-resources.org/calendar](http://www.senior-resources.org/calendar) and click on the date of the event. For more information call 360-321-1600 or 360-678-3373.

## Getting Ready For Medicare!



If you are going on Medicare in the next six months and/or are wanting to know more about Medicare, attend a "Getting Ready for Medicare" seminar on Zoom, offered by SHIBA (State-wide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) volunteers. Counselors will answer brief questions following the seminars. Seminars run 1 -1.5 hours.

- Information will be provided about:
- "Basic" Medicare benefits
  - Changes for 2021 (covered in the Medicare 2021 classes)
  - Options for additional insurance(s)
  - Medicare parts A and B
  - The differences between "Medigap" (supplemental) insurance and Advantage plans
  - Benefits and rates
  - Prescription drug plans. (If you want help with your drug plan, we will tell you how to get it).

**Individual Consultations:** For more in-depth information, advisors are available for individual consultations by phone or zoom; call 360-321-1600 or 360-678-3373 ext 0.

To obtain a Zoom link for any class, go to [www.senior-resources.org/shiba](http://www.senior-resources.org/shiba) and can click on the link for each date/time. Pre-registration is required.

**GETTING READY FOR MEDICARE:**

Friday, Jan. 15 • 1 p.m.      Wednesday, Feb. 17 • 1 p.m.      Tuesday, Mar. 23 • 1 p.m.  
 Thursday, Jan. 28 • 10:30 a.m.      Thursday, Mar. 4 • 10:30 a.m.

*The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) offer unbiased, confidential advising for Medicare benefits and insurance options.*

## MEALS ON WHEELS MENU JANUARY

\$6 Suggested donation for meals

WEEK 1		
Mon	4	Chicken Noodle Soup w/Carrots & Celery
Wed	6	Italian Baked Pork Chop
Fri	7	Barbeque Beef Slider
WEEK 2		
Mon	11	Minestrone Soup & Mini Reuben Wrap
Wed	13	Chicken Picante w/Capers
Fri	15	Crispy Orange Beef & Angel Hair Pasta
WEEK 3		
Mon	18	MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY - CLOSED
Wed	20	Creamy Clam Chowder & Sourdough Roll
Fri	22	Mexican Mac & Cheese w/Ground Beef
WEEK 4		
Mon	25	Honey Glazed Ham & Scalloped Potatoes
Wed	27	Tuna Cheddar Pie w/Onion & Tomatoes
Fri	29	Baked Pork Loin & Sweet Potatoes

**CLOSED TUESDAY AND THURSDAYS**



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# Member Spotlight – Lilia Meserve

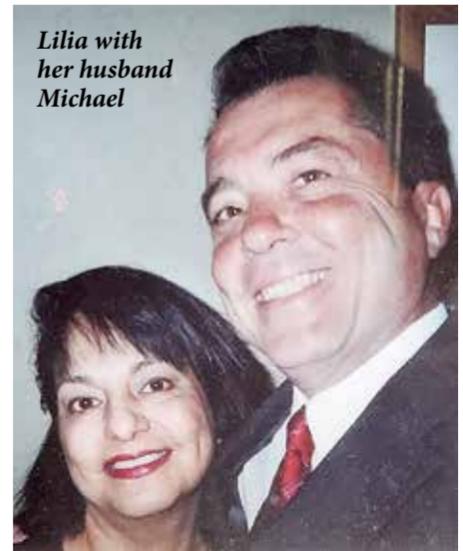
Lilia was born in Mexico while her mother was there visiting but at the time they resided in Texas. She and her three sisters and one brother grew up in East Las Angeles, California. Her mother was from Glendale, Arizona and her father was from Mexico. When Lilia was young her father left the family leaving her mother alone to raise all five children. Her mom was very strict but being a single mom of five she knew that is what it would take to keep their family together. While growing up Lilia remembers that the phone was were you would pay per minute so her mom would put a lock on the phone when she left to work

and take the key with her so the kids didn't rack up the minutes while she was gone. Her mom would tell them that she paid the bills and when they wanted to pay their own bill then they could have their own phone. Her mom worked two jobs and always kept a roof over their head which Lilia explained she admired very much. Lilia has told her mom that without a hardworking, caring mom like she was, they wouldn't have turned out to be such good, independent adults.

While still living in East LA Lilia had her first and only child Victor who she ended up raising by herself after divorcing his father when Victor was just 1 year old. Lilia knew what it took to be a single mom as she had learned from her amazing mom. Lilia got remarried years later to Michael and together they moved to Oak Harbor 24 years ago when he got transferred to Whidbey Island with the Navy. They have a home together here in Oak Harbor and live with their two fur babies, Heidi and Chocolate (pronounced in Spanish). Lilia spent her career working at the Navy Childcare Center as a receptionist where she took care of all the registrations, bills, and

paperwork. She started that job when they moved to Oak Harbor in 1996 and remembers the greatest change during her time there was the advancement in technology. Over the years she had to learn the new electronic bill-pay systems, use the updated computer software programs, and advance with the everchanging times which wasn't always easy.

Last year Lilia heard about the Yoga and EnhanceFitness classes at The Center from a friend, so she decided to stop by The Center one evening to check it out and ever since then she has been a loyal member. Lilia is so dedicated to exercise that she joined both classes and has even continued them virtually through COVID. She rarely misses a class unless she has a prior commitment or appointment! Lilia stated, "I have always exercised, but the classes here (at The Center) have got me in the routine and kept me strong." In addition to taking the classes, she also walks about 3.5 miles everyday unless it is raining out, then on those days she will ride her stationary bike inside. Lilia is a very active person and has also got involved with volunteering



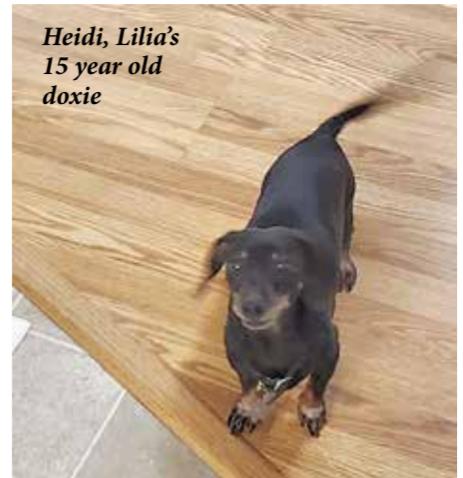
Lilia with her husband Michael

at The Center. Since the front desk shifts were all full, she started on the event committee and helped with just about every large event we had at The Center last year. Lilia is a great volunteer and helps from the very beginning prep work to the very end clean up.

If you have met Lilia you will know her for kind heart, energetic, positive attitude and beautiful smile. What makes her the happiest is seeing her son be a great dad and enjoy raising his kids, this makes her proud. She is always trying to find the positive in any situation and always says, "you can't have a stone heart, life is too short for that." She is a prime example of someone who really lives life to the fullest and appreciates every day.



Lilia (center) with her son, grandsons, and great-grandsons



Heidi, Lilia's 15 year old doxie

## The Center in Oak Harbor

51 SE Jerome St.,  
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

**Front Desk: 360-279-4580**

**TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR IN-PERSON PROGRAMMING**

**Passport services & photos available by appointment**

**Normal Business Hours:**

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

**Yearly Membership Dues: \$40**

Available for anyone 50+ years

**Liz Lange • 360-279-4581**

Senior Services Administrator

**Carly Larson • 360-279-4583**

Program Coordinator

**Send comments and suggestions to [clarson@oakharbor.org](mailto:clarson@oakharbor.org)**

## Whidbey Island Genealogical Searchers (WIGS)

**Tuesday, January 19**  
**1 p.m. on Zoom**

(sign in 10 mins. early)

presents **Linda Duffield, "TRIP TO RURAL RUSSIA"** on Zoom

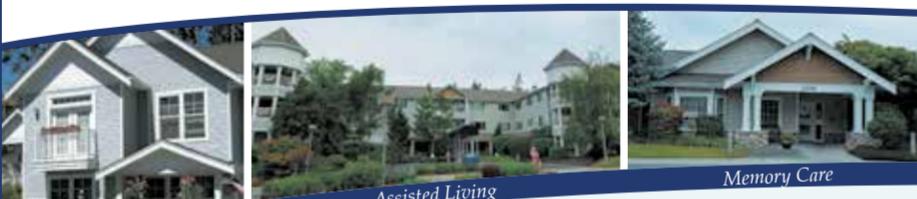
Linda will take us on a trip to rural Russia along the Volga River. Find out why families left Germany in the 1760's to immigrate to Russia and 150 years later, why descendants of these families fled Russia for North and South America and other places of the world.



All are invited to join us. Non-WIGS members wishing to attend should send an email to [whidbeygensearchers.org](mailto:whidbeygensearchers.org) no later than Jan. 16.

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**The Center in Oak Harbor, 360-279-4580**

# CLASSES and EVENTS

## at The Center in Oak Harbor



### BRUNCH BOXES ARE BACK

Due to high demand and many requests, Brunch Boxes are back! The second Thursday of February, March and April, we will have Brunch Boxes available. The cost is \$15 per box for center members and \$20 for non-members. If you pre-order all three boxes before the February box, you receive a discounted rate of \$40. Please pre-order your brunch box by the Friday prior. Brunch Boxes will contain an assortment of commercially prepared items handpicked by Liz and Carly.

Delivery is available within Oak Harbor city limits for a \$5 delivery fee per box.

Pick-up time is 9:30-11 a.m. Call 360-279-4580 to order your brunch boxes!

### FREE BOOK TABLE

Every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., there is a table outside the front door of The Center with free books, magazines and puzzles. Please feel free to take as many as you would like, and feel

free to leave a few when you are finished with them. The book table will continue through the winter but may not be out on days of inclement weather.

### VIRTUAL ENHANCE FITNESS & YOGA CLASS

Virtual EnhanceFitness is offered Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 9:45-10:45 a.m. The cost is \$25 month for members and \$30 for non-members. We are now excepting drop in fees at this time, \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members. Silver & Fit and some Kaiser insurance plans will reimburse the cost. Please inquire with Carly Larson at 360-279-4583 if you believe you have an eligible insurance plan.

We are continuing to offer virtual Yoga with Maria Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m. The cost is \$25 month for members and \$30 for non-members. We are now excepting drop in fees at this time, \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members.

To sign up for either EnhanceFitness or Yoga, please call us at 360-279-4580. We can take payment over the phone, by mail, or arrange a drop off time. Once you have enrolled in the class and signed the waiver, we will email you the login information.

### EnhanceFitness

**Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays**  
9:45 a.m.

Instructor: Bernice Manglona-Charlton

### Yoga

**Tuesdays and Thursdays**  
8:30 a.m.

Instructor: Maria McGee

## Aging Mastery Program (AMP)

We are proud to partner with the National Council on Aging to offer you the Aging Mastery Program. Since we are unable to hold the in-person core curriculum classes, we are doing it virtual style and each participant will receive a starter kit which will inspire you to take steps toward positive aging 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 week will have a virtual meeting with the group and a guest speaker to discuss the chapter and apply what we have learned. You can join the meeting by either calling in or using a device to connect to the video chat. If you do not wish to participate in the weekly meetings you can still receive a starter kit and work through it at your own pace.



The May/June AMP class participating in group discussion with guest speaker Jeffery Pleet

### SCHEDULE OF VIRTUAL GROUP DISCUSSIONS:

- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| March 9 - Welcome & Introduction      | April 6 - Connections & Community |
| March 16 - Gratitude & Mindfulness    | April 13 - Creativity & Learning  |
| March 23 - Health & Well-being        | April 20 - Legacy & Purpose       |
| March 30 - Finances & Future Planning |                                   |

If you are interested in joining the free program, please contact Carly Larson at 360-279-4583 or [clarson@oakharbor.org](mailto:clarson@oakharbor.org) to arrange getting your kit and the meeting information. **Please Note:** If you would like a starter kit you are not required to attend the group discussions.

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# Call Me Nona

**Sonney Wolfe**, Utilities Cashier, City of Oak Harbor

The last year has been a round of firsts: a household move across state lines with just my children, a new home with only me on the title, a round of holidays as a single parent, and for all of us – a pandemic that has redefined our everyday lives.

I did, however, have one more first, a bit of a guardian angel, really, who reminded me not only of the importance of family and friends, but of the significance each of us holds when it comes to touching the lives of others.

My very first grandson arrived, born to my oldest daughter, Ashley, and her husband, Micah. He debuted on November 9th, what would have been my 25th wedding anniversary, and he shares my late husband's name – J.D. We've taken to calling him Baby Jay, and his tiny presence has sparked in this family countless eruptions of joy, and also a change in title, new names for all of us, new roles.

"Mom," Ashley said while handing Baby Jay to me, "Have you settled on a grandma name?"

"I have," I said as I cradled his tiny head, situated his blanket, straightened his booties. His blue eyes are still learning to focus. He investigates people like a blind puppy does -- all nose and mouth -- sniffing, searching for food, stretching his neck, creasing his eyebrows with curiosity.

He has no idea of his importance, no awareness of the impact he's provided our entire family. My two teens, Lizzy and Riley, are smiling more, giggling at Baby Jay's infant noises and calling themselves Aunt and Uncle. Great grandmas and extended family have called to check in, sent care packages and connected through social media.

I am cooking more, humming holiday tunes, trying to provide relief for some very tired parents and itching at any chance to bounce a baby boy in my arms. Of course, Ashley is mothering, Micah is fathering, navigating their new world of parenting with more strength and patience than I ever had.

All this joy, the result of one tiny person. Every little coo, every small interaction Baby Jay has with someone, every moment since November 9th – this little boy has made the world a better place, and it's reminded me of the significance of each and every one of us.

We forget how uplifting a smile can be (even through a mask), how meaningful it is to say hello, open a door, offer a lending hand, especially in times like these. Good friends, family, and those individual moments we have with others are what make the spirits bright.

The first time I held my grandson, he grasped onto my finger with his little hand, and I leaned in and kissed his forehead.

"I, am your grandma," I smiled, swaying and bouncing. "But you can call me Nona."



*Lyn Bankowski, Councilwoman Millie Goebel, and Carly Larson packing gifts for delivery*

## GIFTS continued from page 1

In prior years, Island Senior Resources oversaw the adopt-a-senior holiday gift program, and when their program ended in 2019, the North Whidbey Coalition on Vital Aging took on the project for the north end of Whidbey. In 2019, 40 seniors were provided with gifts of their request. This year the group served 70 individuals.

Members of the North Whidbey Coalition on Vital Aging include staff from local agencies including CADA, Sno-Isle Library, The Center in Oak Harbor, Island Senior Resources, Alaska USA, RE/MAX Acorn Properties, Adult Protective Services, Opportunity Council, The Oak Harbor Senior Center Foundation and community members.

The magic truly started happening as community members got involved. Community members were invited to participate by selecting gifts to donate and purchase from the online wishlist. Day after day smiling faces brought gift after gift into the doors of The Center in Oak Harbor for the Gifts of Connection participants. It didn't stop there. When bringing a gift the Isaacson family felt inspired to make personalized tree ornaments for each of the 70 recipients, making each gift personal. The Bankowski's donated popcorn cones as an extra treat for each gift.

While some recipients opted to pick up their gifts at The Center, most gifts were delivered to the homes of each person. Our volunteer drivers happily shared their experiences of very grateful recipients. The list of gifts asked for and delivered was varied and included a ham, a bread machine, bath sets, battery operated lights, bedding, winter coats and a cat tower. Also popular were gift cards for local hairstylists and restaurants.

We are so grateful for the support of our members and community. While the gifts blessed the receivers by meeting their temporal needs, it was apparent it meant much more, it was a true gift of connection.

"For it is in giving that we receive."



*Kathi Philip & Mark Brown loading up gifts and checking the list for delivery*



*Cindy Miller celebrating with Charlie Brower his gift of a new warm sweater*



*A kind thank you note from a recipient*



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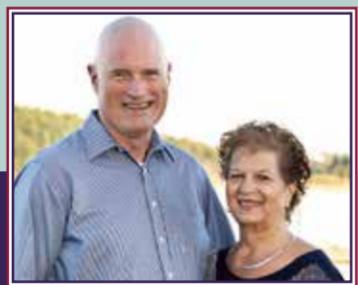
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**Volume 4  
Issue 9**

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