



South Whidbey at Home

Staying Active, Connected and In Charge



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SUMMER 2017 NEWS

The President's Report



We had a great time celebrating our first year with members and volunteers at the Roaming Radish recently, because they're making SW@Home a real success. We're on track to have fulfilled **more than 900 member requests** by July 5, the date we opened in 2016. Since then we've **vetted and trained more than 125 volunteers**, who are now performing an average of **15 services a week**.

We're already achieving our purpose of helping people stay in their homes and connected to their communities every day with services small and large—a short visit, a ride to get groceries, help with new technology, a fix-it job that seems minor but makes a big difference in safety or peace of mind. It's lovely to see the new friendships that have formed as a result.

Hats off to our five most active volunteers to date: **Polly Primm** (40 service requests filled), **Larry Durocher** (32), **Jillian Hershberger** (27), **John Henderson** (26), and **Kate Poss** (24). Also to **David Demorest** and **Judy Martin** who called a member daily for months at a time, and **Yvonne Werttemberger** who's been texting a member three times a week for six months now to make sure she's okay.

So thank you all for being patient with us through the inefficiencies and mistakes of our first year. This is an effort with a lot of moving parts, and it's not always easy to keep them moving in sync. Hopefully, like all of us, the organization will keep getting better with age.

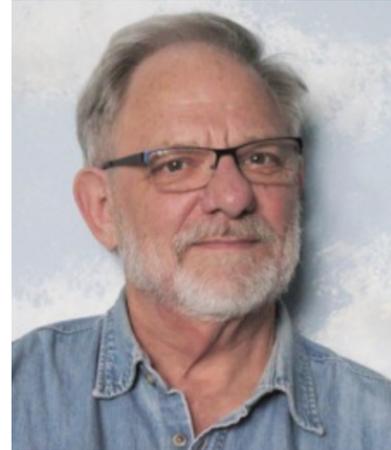
Because so many memberships first took effect when we opened in July, many full and supporting members are now receiving their

renewal notices. [We hope you'll continue with us](#) because you agree that the organization is filling a true need in a heartfelt way.

Thanks to all these amazing people, this organization is *working*.
-Lynn Willeford

Meet a Call Manager

Board member **Alan Ament** also works the phones as a Call Manager, fielding questions and requests. Retired from his work as an attorney and a university administrator, Alan says that most of the calls he gets at the SW@Home office are requests for rides, or lawn cutting, or ladder-climbing house repairs.



But once in a while... there's something quite different. Like the woman who requested a volunteer with a gun to come to her house and shoot a raccoon. Alan redirected her to WAIF so they could come capture and move the critter.

What People Say About SW@Home

"I want to be part of the solution before I'm part of the problem."—
A volunteer

"I am in a daze of disbelief! All these things are now fixed and it changes my life and my mood! My every day will be so much easier. SW@Home just hit a home run with me!"

— A Full Member

"My first two service requests came from people I actually knew who needed help with minor home repairs. Without SW@Home I wouldn't have known they needed a hand."

— A Supporting Member/Volunteer

Recent Goings On

A GATHERING TO CELEBRATE



Human beings have always come together to mark milestones they've reached, sharing food and drink in celebration. In this tradition, members and volunteers of SW@Home gathered in the beautiful Roaming Radish restaurant on a **Sunday in June** to celebrate all we've accomplished in our first year.

Delicious hors d'oeuvres and drinks in hand, attendees listened to brief talks about SW@Home. **Lynn Willeford** recounted the progression from her idea of bringing the "village" concept to South Whidbey, to all the work of great volunteers who have created today's effective, useful organization. Full Member **Joanna Cruse** described the enormous difference SW@Home's volunteer services have made in her life. Volunteer **Polly Primm** talked about her experiences as a volunteer, and **Melissa Lebo** described the challenges and satisfactions of being a Call Manager.

Their words were powerful reminders that community is everything and that supporting one another means we all flourish. Thanks so much to the Roaming Radish and to all the wonderful volunteers who make SW@Home work.

TALKING ABOUT TRAVELING THE WORLD



In June nonagenarian world traveler **Trudy Martin** regaled members with tales of her ongoing adventures - traveling to 52 countries in the last three decades, with no plans to stop.

She described growing up in a town so small there were only two shelves of books in the library; she read the ones on travel and they set her on a lifetime course.

A member of the Friendship Force, she told tales of North Korea, of China, Algeria, Uzbekistan, and all points between here and there, saying, "We take our safety for granted, here in the U.S.," as she described dangers she's dealt with abroad.

ENTREPRENEURING ON WHIDBEY AND IN CHINA



In May, entrepreneur **Maureen Murphy** talked to a group of members about growing her Bayview business from a small operation to the thriving garden center it now is, despite competition from "big box" stores.



An expert on healthy plants, she warned that some offerings may look good but have been sprayed to retard their growth so they're easier to pack and ship. Gardeners buy such plants, which may never recover from those sprayings of toxic chemicals, and then blame themselves when their garden doesn't thrive.

So if you think you have a black thumb, maybe you don't! Those keeled-over plants were off to a bad start before you even got them. Murphy always checks and never brings in such doomed plants.

Murphy frequently does consults in China, where nurseries for private citizens are just beginning to appear, and works with the government there to re-forest areas that have been stripped of trees.

AND HOW'S YOUR BRAIN WORKING THESE DAYS?



In April members and volunteers came to the old Bayview School to hear **Kathleen Landel** talk about brain health. Known as "The Caregiver Coach," Kathleen gave attendees a pop quiz to provide a baseline



measurement of their own brain health. She then provided some guidelines on what signs mean you need to be concerned, plus tips for keeping the old noodle functioning in fine fashion. A question and answer session followed, focused on attendees' own suggestions and concerns.

Save the Date!



A closed-circuit broadcast/interview with Atul Gawande that was cancelled due to a winter snowstorm in Boston will now be done on **September 26**. South Whidbey at Home members will be invited to watch at a location to be determined. Watch your inbox for details on time and place.

Dr. Gawande is the author of *Being Mortal*, a study of the way the medical world deals with the changes that aging brings to our lives. His September talk will be on "The Value of Community and Choice as We Grow Older." An early proponent of the "village movement" that South Whidbey at Home is part of, he'll talk about living with purpose as we age, and how we as a nation can transform the possibilities for the late chapters of everyone's lives.

**Full Members:
You can always ask for a ride to an event.
Call 331-1971.**



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