



## February 2016 Update

**Where are we now?** We've begun training key people on the multidimensional software program designed for Villages like ours. Our website will be ready to go up in early March, which will allow people to learn more about our all-volunteer organization and even apply online to be a member or a volunteer. Vetting of volunteers will start in the early spring, as will training of the volunteer call managers who will staff our First Call service connecting members to the resources they need. We are also closing in on an office space—more on that soon.

**Trusted businesses.** One of the benefits of membership in SW@Home is access to a list of trusted professionals who will do the job right through our First Call program. A sampling of the offers we've secured to date from local businesses: discounted landscaping including a "Crew Day," consisting of 4 hours of garden clean up; 50% off first two visits with a fitness expert; a handyman discounting his hourly rate per job on a sliding scale.

**When's our next public meeting?** **2:00 on Saturday, April 2** in the Parish Hall of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church at 5217 Honeymoon Bay Road in Freeland. We'll show a brief video that illustrates how a Village works. Board members will be there to answer all your questions, and applications for volunteers and members will be available.

**What do we need?** We are looking for a few more volunteers in the following areas. Please contact us at [southwhidbeyathome@whidbey.net](mailto:southwhidbeyathome@whidbey.net) if you're interested:

--Call managers to respond to requests from members and volunteers via phone or computer half day a week (or more). A number of people have already volunteered for this position, but we could use a few more.

--Program planners. Do you like coming up with cool activities and seeing that they go well? Then this is the committee for you.

--Ambassadors. Intake volunteers will visit each new full member of SW@Home to collect additional information about their needs and preferences directly from them. If

you have nursing or social work experience, this might be a good spot for you. You will often be the first face of SW@Home that people meet.



**Recap: What is SW@Home?** South Whidbey at Home is a member-based nonprofit dedicated to helping older South Whidbey residents stay in their own homes and active in the community as they age.

Full members must be 55 and over and live in the South Whidbey School District. Supporting members and volunteers can be any age and live anywhere.

Benefits for full members include access to a list of trusted businesses (and any specials they offer to SW@Home), social events and group activities, and services from volunteers such as on-island transportation, minor home repairs, help with technology, friendly visits or phone check-ins, errands, and more.

Members can ask for what they need when they need it, and our First Call volunteers will fill that need with professional or volunteer help depending on the type of help required and the availability of a volunteer to fill it.

Supporting members can access the list of reliable businesses through First Call and enjoy social and educational events, but do not get volunteer services except in emergencies.

Annual cost per household for both full and supporting members is \$240; supporting members can count \$200 of that fee as a tax-deductible donation.

Our volunteers will be able to specify when they are available and the kinds of help they would like to offer. They might think of useful chores we hadn't even considered! If SW@Home is like other Villages, most members will also volunteer as they can.

**How do I join?** Volunteer and member applications will start to be available online as soon as our website goes up. Printed copies of the applications will be available at our public meetings and neighborhood discussions starting this spring.

**Who's on the SW@Home board?** Board members Lynn Willeford, Allan Ament, Miriam Raabe, Paul Goldfinger, Sharon Emerson, Marcia Wiley, Helen Taylor, and Sue Van Etten meet twice a month as a board and generally once a month with their committees. There are also dozens of people working on committees focused on eight work areas.

