



To me, leadership is about encouraging people. It's about stimulating them. It's about enabling them to achieve what they can achieve—and to do that with a purpose. – Christine Lagarde

A Changing of the Guard: We Need You!

By Janet Simpson



Since well before we opened our doors, dedicated volunteers have served on the Leadership Council to put together and maintain the nuts and bolts of Bellingham At Home: membership and volunteer development, policy, procedures, finances, fundraising, and organizing. They chaired committees, made decisions, and created a wonderful organization that is benefiting all of us. Before we hired a part-time manager, they, along with committee members, did all the behind the scenes work! And they've continued to keep us successfully moving forward in more recent months.

A changing of the guard is now upon us. At least four long-time leadership volunteers – Elaine Cress, Barb Evans, Linda Knudsen-McAusland, and Steve Morris—are leaving the council by June. As we search for new LC members, it's a good time to remind everyone that our leadership, like everything else, comes from within. We're a grassroots membership organization with peer and volunteer support, working together and helping each other. And the way some people help is through leadership.

All organizations go through changes as they grow. It's perfectly natural that those who did all the hard work of creating and launching BAH now get to turn it over to others to take the next steps. Most of the basic organizational work is done and we now have the assistance of a manager. The new LC will continue to work toward stabilizing what we've created and finding new ways to grow.

Are you ready for a leadership role in BAH? Give it some thought. In April we're inviting anyone interested to a “mixer” with the current LC to talk about what's involved; no commitment. The mixer is scheduled for Wednesday, April 17, 2-3 p.m., in room 9; we'll send out a reminder in an eblast. If you have questions, please contact any of the LC members. There are also opportunities to lead by joining or chairing a committee or taking on a one-time event or activity as an event ambassador. They're all great ways to contribute to our success, share and expand your skills, and have fun.

We look forward to new leaders stepping up as we aim for new horizons.

BAH Makes Its Video Debut

By Colleen Harper

Are we ready for our close-up? Oh, yeah.

Five WWU students have created a short video for Bellingham At Home as a Community-Based Learning project. Judy Perry orchestrated the introduction to Professor Jennifer Hays, having worked with Hays and her class on projects for the non-profit Our Treehouse. She thought this could be a valuable resource for BAH--and she was correct.

The students did an outstanding job (even though all of their original filming dates were snowed out!). They interviewed Leadership Council members at BSAC, took footage of the inside of our office, and edited everything together beautifully. They managed to capture the unique spirit of Bellingham At Home in seven minutes, weaving together comments from each interview in a way that feels like a casual conversation.



Student editor Autumn Dukich selected our project and organization because it brought together two of her passions: working with video and older adults. Autumn has a busy spring quarter coming up, but she is interested in an ongoing volunteer position with BAH. Lucky us.

All the students expressed how much they enjoyed working with our members on this project. Thank you, Judy, for connecting BAH with this amazing opportunity.

You can view the video on the BAH Facebook page, on YouTube by searching for Bellingham At Home, or through this direct link:

<https://youtu.be/1z5amARgTe8>. We will be adding the video to our webpage soon, too!

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Save the Date

Bellingham At Home will hold its
Third Annual Member Meeting
Wednesday, May 29
in the Squalicum Harbor Boathouse.

Mark your calendar today and watch for more details
in our next newsletter and in coming eblasts.



BAH Ambassador Event

Tour the Bellingham National Exhibit at the Lightcatcher

By Kate Birr

Every other year, the Whatcom Museum hosts a juried exhibition of art from across the US. In 2019, for its third biennial, the theme is “Water’s Edge: Landscapes for Today.” The show is running now until May 19 at the Lightcatcher.



According to the museum website, the exhibit “represents an investigation of contemporary art practices and addresses our understandings of the earth, climate change, and evolving relationships of humanity to nature.” The show was juried by Bruce Guenther, adjunct curator for special exhibitions at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education. Work from 21 states is represented. The top three artists have received cash awards, and a “People’s Choice” award will be given later, based on the public’s vote for their favorite piece.

Please join me for the regularly scheduled docent tour at 1:30 on Thursday, May 2; we’ll meet in the Lightcatcher lobby at 1:15. The entrance fee is \$10 (no charge for museum members) and includes the tour. Our BAH group is limited to 15 people, so please let me or the office know soon, and we’ll reserve a spot for you. The deadline to sign up is April 12.

The 2019 Bellingham National is the featured exhibit but the museum has several others going on. If our group wants to see more, some or all of us can explore together. The last time we did this, several of us wandered over to the Temple Bar to continue our discussion over a glass of wine; who knows what could happen this time?

Call the office or contact Kate at bakerbirr@gmail.com.

Health Partners Committee to Train New Note Takers

The Health Partners Committee will hold a training session for new volunteer note takers on April 9 from 2-4 pm at Nanette Davis' home. You can call her at 360 671-1686 for directions and to let her know you are coming. The training is for BAH volunteers who want to join in the vital work of documenting healthcare transactions for members who request an extra set of eyes and ears at appointments. It will feature role playing, member consent forms, and the committee’s newly revised Note Taking Manual, which covers a number of issues, including:

- ✓ The importance of the note taking role
- ✓ Member confidentiality
- ✓ How to help members prepare for their appointments
- ✓ How to deal with potential problems
- ✓ Note taker responsibilities before, during, and after the appointment

If you have already received general training to be a volunteer for BAH (a prerequisite) and are interested in joining the committee and taking on this important role, please contact Nanette at drnanette@gmail.com.

If you have upcoming appointments or are planning medical, vision, or dental procedures, you can depend on Health Partners to stand by your side. Our motto: Planning is a must to facilitate health and healing.

News from the Volunteer Front

See What We've Done?

In the first two months of the year, BAH volunteers successfully completed 98 assistance requests for members: 58 in January and 40 in February, for a total of 213.66 hours. They've done all the usual things—like giving rides to medical appointment and taking members shopping—and some slightly unusual ones, like investigating woodpecker damage to a member's home.

Big Shout-out to Rena Blauner

Rena loves to bake for friends, among whom, happily, is the BAH community. Members at multiple recent events have relished her wonderful cookies and brownies. Thanks, Rena!



Here's the Volunteer Training Schedule

The next general volunteer training is scheduled for April 10, from 3-5 p.m., in Room 2 at BSAC. Can't make it then? We hold them the second Wednesday of every month. You must be registered for these sessions, so please call the office ahead of time.

Join Us for a Beer!

By Lorraine Barnes

Come help us celebrate the return of spring at Wander Brewing (1807 Dean Avenue) from 4-6 p.m. on April 8. Bellingham micro-breweries have been touted in national magazines. The beer is that good. Not a beer enthusiast? Wander offers cider and non-alcoholic beverages, too. They also have regular food trucks in the parking lot. You can even bring your dogs if they are friendly!



Lorraine Barnes and Elaine Cress did the hard work of checking out Wander Brewing in advance of the upcoming outing.

The recent snow storm, when some members were stuck at home alone with no company or help, highlights the importance of having a connection with other BAH people in our neighborhoods. We need to put more effort into getting to know close-at-hand members who are most likely to be able to provide support in unexpected circumstances. So if you bring a fellow member from your neighborhood, we will treat both of you to a beverage of your choice! (See the next article on how to find your BAH neighbors.)

Along with our meet and greet and sip, we will be distributing the updated BAH members' handbook.

If this proves to be a well-received event, we could venture further and explore other local breweries on monthly, bi-weekly, weekly, or daily outings.....(just kidding about the last).

No need to register for this event; just show up! For directions, more info, or a ride, please call the office. Hope to see you there.

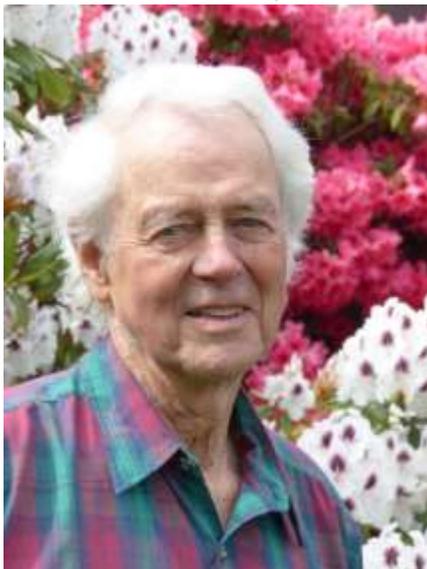
Step-by-Step **How to Find Your BAH Neighbors**

1. Log in to the BAH website (Bellinghamathome.org) by clicking on Member Login in the upper right hand corner.
2. Click on Membership Services and choose "Membership Directory" from the drop-down menu.
3. Under Search Criteria, go to Metro Area and click on your neighborhood from the drop-down menu.
4. Click on Search.
5. Scroll down below the map that will appear and, hey presto, there are your BAH neighbors!

Membership Matters ***Spotlight on Richard Abbott***

By Angela Mercy

Richard Abbott recently entered his ninetieth year and he's still volunteering!



Richard has been part of Bellingham at Home since before the beginning. As someone who has always liked helping people, he was attracted to the virtual Village Movement when he first heard about it in February 2014.

"This seemed like a needed program to help older people. Being one myself and thinking ahead, I thought, I'd like to work on that."

It wasn't always smooth sailing. The first steering committee disbanded after divergent personalities and approaches made it difficult to reach agreement. Undeterred, Richard and a group of like-minded folk began again. He remembers when the BAH office was a shelf in the corridor outside of Mary Carlson's office at WCOA!

Richard was a member of the Founder's Club, the initial steering committee, the first leadership council and, together with his wife, Marijke, was a charter member. Along the way, he did whatever was needed. In addition to serving as liaison to WCOA, he solicited in-kind donations, attended endless meetings, gave financial support, and moved furniture. Richard was among the first group of direct assistance volunteers to be trained.

Shortly after the launch in July 2016, Richard stepped down from the LC to make room for new leaders and stepped up to become an office volunteer one morning a week. He vacated that post recently but still substitutes when needed.

One of the few opportunities BAH offers that Richard has yet to participate in is receiving assistance as a member. After a life of giving and helping other people, he admits that receiving may be the harder part of the equation.

Currently, he is exploring volunteer opportunities with the Men's Shed and reading to children in public schools.

When Richard isn't volunteering, he's singing with the Senior Singers, participating in a conversation group on aging, or meeting a friend for coffee. At home in his 'cave,' he goes from his computer, where he keeps up extensive correspondence with friends and family, to his piano, to the boxes of memorabilia from which he is drawing material for his memoir (currently working on volume 10!).

After returning from a tiring trip to Berkeley this month to visit his daughter, he found that “after a lifetime of traveling and living abroad in my career in international business and consulting, I’m ready to stay home.” Will it be hard to give up travel? “Not really. Fortunately, your desire to do things declines at somewhat the same time as your ability to do them.”

Thank you, Richard, for all you do to make the world better, including being a wonderful model of successful aging.

Do you know a BAH member and/or volunteer you’d like to see us feature in the newsletter? Call the office with your suggestion; we’ll take it from there.

Call for Action

Here are three easy ways to help BAH out in April:

- ✓ Stop by the office and pick up some of our new brochures and take them to your next Neighborhood Association Meeting.
- ✓ Send us pictures from BAH activities that we can use on Facebook and in Your Village Voice—you may have some on your smart phone you’ve forgotten all about!
- ✓ Help us welcome potential BAH members and tell our story at our next public outreach meeting, April 4 from 1-2 pm in Room 16.

Many Happy Returns of the Day

Here’s a shout-out to our members celebrating a birthday in April:

Jill Stanton

Don Phillips

Phyllis Shacter



Bellingham At Home Contact Information

Location: Bellingham Senior Activity Center, Room 14, 315 Halleck Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

Phone: 360 746-3462 E-mail: info@bellinghamathome.org

Website: <http://BellinghamAtHome.org>

Bellingham At Home is a program of the Whatcom Council on Aging, which is a 501(c)(3) organization, and a member of the Village to Village Network.