



How does one keep from "growing old inside"? Surely only in community.
The only way to make friends with time is to stay friends with people." –Robert McAfee Brown

A Snapshot of the Village Movement in 2016

In the 15 years since the village movement was launched by a group of neighbors on Boston's Beacon Hill, more than 200 villages have sprung up across the country; 150+ more are currently in development. It was high time, leaders of the Village to Village Network decided, to take a good look at what people are seeking and finding in these virtual communities, so they decided to do a survey. Here are a few of their interesting findings.

The average village has 146 members; collectively, villages are serving almost 25,000 older adults with social events, transportation services, classes and educational events, companionship, technology assistance, shopping, information and referral to outside services, home repair or maintenance, and health promotion programs, in that order.

Among members:

- ❖ 59% are 75 or older
- ❖ 72% are female
- ❖ 86% say they are in good or excellent health
- ❖ 46% volunteered for their village in the past year

Eighty percent of villages have paid staff with a ratio of 80 members to each paid staff person. The average number of volunteers is 82, with a typical ratio of 1.9 to 1 volunteers to members.

Since 2012, villages are more likely to have formal collaborations with other organizations, including social service agencies, hospitals and other health services, religious institutions, government agencies, and senior living organizations.

More than 60% of villages do some advocacy work to help or impact the larger community, such as advocating for changes in public policies and services for older adults, conducting public awareness campaigns on the needs of older adults, and pushing for greater accessibility to the physical environment.

Over half of all members say the Village has given them an increased sense of connection to other people and an increased ability to count on others.

Stats! Hot Stats! Get Your Stats Right Here!

114	Number of individual members
91	Number of households, including 2 new households in January (welcome!)
2	Number of associate members
163	Service requests since July, including 23 in January

Potluck and Entertainment Demonstrate BAH's Many Talents



Cat McIntyre as Sister Mary Catherine

Our Valentine Potluck and Talent show drew about 42 members and friends, lots of tasty dishes and plenty of talent. WECU's Education Building provided the venue and our Events task force the organizing effort, with everybody else pitching in to make the event a success. After eating, attendees sat back and enjoyed the evening's entertainment. First on was a troupe of student improv actors from the Upfront Theater. We put them through their paces with random sentences generated by the audience; they in turn generated laughs.

After the improv actors came BAH's own entertainers, led by Sister Mary Catherine (aka Cat McIntyre) in her nun's habit, interpreting a poem called An Old Nun's Prayer. Joan Dow used a word scramble to demonstrate how we all understand grammar, whether we know it or not. Storytellers Guild members Linda Tiffany and Shirley Dunwoody regaled us with tales--"A Story About Love" and "Horace the Mule." Musicians Burl Harmon (guitar) and Bob Sanders (keyboard) provided music.

Best of all, a video camera captured the talent show. We'll let you know when it's available for general viewing.

Volunteer Perks Program: You Could Be the Next Winner

Did you know that BSAC's Perks program gives out some swell tokens of appreciation to three randomly selected volunteers every month? Volunteers with any WCCOA program—including BAH—are eligible to win every month they report at least 12 hours of service. In fact, if you qualify you're entered automatically.

The winners in January included BAH's Marilyn Burlingame, who received a \$10 Woods Coffee gift card; Doe Tibben, who won a \$10 Haggen gift card; and Larrian Egan, who won a 20-minute chair massage donated by Tovah Rainsong. The prizes will change every month (although we know Tovah has donated 11 more massages ;-). If you'd like to contribute to the prize pool, please let them know at the BSAC front desk.

Now you have an extra reason to report your volunteer hours every month—by the first of the following month, please; the drawing takes place around the 8th.



(Volunteer) Help Wanted

- **Specialist Assistance Needed: Social Media Manager**

If you have experience with setting up and maintaining a social media presence, including but not limited to Facebook Twitter, Google+, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram, and more, we could use your help. Bellingham At Home's Leadership Council wants to expand the presence of Bellingham At Home into social media. We are seeking volunteer(s) to serve in an advisory and leadership capacity on matters relating to social media. Specifically, we want immediate assistance developing and maintaining an active presence on social media. If this sounds like something that you could contribute to, then please email Elaine Cress for more information (elaine.cress@bellinghamathome.org).

- **Web Assistance Needed: Club Express Club/Village Software Management System Engineer**

Club Express is a web-based club operations management software system that is used by the majority of villages to manage their public web sites (front office) as well as their operations and membership (back office) and that is available to members and operations personnel only. If you have web design/implementation

experience, are feeling philanthropic, and have some spare time, please join us in helping to maintain our front office web site and our operations back office web-based management system. HTML and CSS knowledge are not necessary but could be a plus. Please contact Bob Baker (Bob.Baker@bellinghamathome.org) if you might be interested.

Time to Let out Your Inner Celt for a Good Cause

Meals on Wheels & More, one of our WCOA sister programs, is having a fundraiser to celebrate some obscure holiday this month. Can you guess what it is from these clues? (Duh)

- ❖ Saturday, March 11, 6-9 pm, Ferry Terminal
- ❖ Irish Dinner (corned beef and cabbage) and Silent Auction
- ❖ Local craft beers, including Aslan, Kulshan, Melvin, Boundary Bay, and Wander
- ❖ Live music by Maggie's Fury, "packed to the kilt with Celtic mayhem"

Got it? Then get going! You can purchase your tickets (\$35) at BSAC, Village Books, Community Food Co-Op, and BrownPaperTickets.com.



Membership Matters: *Spotlight on Cat McIntyre*

It was while fighting the second plague of locusts in Mali that Cat McIntyre decided it might be time to slow down. As a foreign service officer with USAID (Agency for International Development), she had been moving around a lot for eight years—to Haiti and then Lesotho in Southern Africa before Mali—as a rural development officer, agricultural office supervisor, and environmental officer, not to mention her time in Nepal with the Peace Corps before that.

“I was in charge of coordinating with the UN and the other donor nations to minimize the damage from the locusts, which meant a lot of meetings and then time in the field talking with farmers to see what was and wasn’t working and trying to get them the equipment they need, like sprayers and shovels and slingshots (!). That was really the straw that broke the camel’s back.” (You have to understand that the whole time Cat is explaining all this, she’s laughing—a really bubbly, infectious laugh.)

Cat took a leave of absence in Bellingham in 1994, fell in love with the pace of small town living, and quit the Foreign Service. She worked for the Opportunity Council, then for St. Joseph Hospital, and finally as a social worker for Whatcom Hospice. Six years later she finally retired, but, it becomes clear, only from the getting paid part. She tutored for the Whatcom Literacy Council. She joined the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship (“a great match for me because it’s very inclusive and they’re into a lot of social action stuff”), working with Community Night Dinners, Black Lives Matter, and Community to Community. She also volunteers for the Pickford (“I love movies”) and can often be found at the library (“I read probably six books a week”).

And, of course, she volunteers for Bellingham At Home. She works in the office, as a driver, and doing home visits. “There’s a woman in a skilled nursing facility who’s going to be stuck there for a while and she asked if people would please come visit her, so that’s fun.” Cat joined BAH, she says, for the same reason she liked working for hospice: “So it will be there when I need it. I live alone, except for my cats, and I like my home; I’d like to stay there.”



Cat McIntyre and her English class in Laos

When Cat was working on a PhD in anthropology, she realized that she didn't want to be an academic, she just wanted to travel. "Anthropologists were the only people I knew who traveled." So naturally, she still travels, two months a year: one month "doing something good for the world" and one month just exploring. Most recently, she taught English as a foreign language to 9-12 year olds in Laos (photo left). "It's quite different from tutoring adults. They're right up there with the locusts, totally out of control, but they were really cute and I enjoyed that. Then I took an apartment in Hanoi for a month and just hung out." Next year, her plan is to

go to southern India and work in a program to teach English and budgeting skills to women, "which sounds way cool to me."

You know what's really cool? Cat McIntyre

On-Call Referrals: Service Providers 1.0

We currently have just a handful of certified service providers (CSPs) who have been fully vetted, but this is not a problem, says Steve Morris, head of the Strategic Partners and Service Partners Taskforce and member of the Leadership Council. Because we also have a list of 106 member-recommended providers in 58 categories that we use for making on-call referrals—everything from accountants to yard workers and including massage therapists, locksmiths, pressure washers, seamstresses, podiatrists, and tree removal professionals.

Actually, Steve explains, "we're waiting for BAH to gain more name recognition in the business community before trying to vet any more providers right now. Without it, we've found that providers aren't interested in going through the vetting process or offering our members a discount. Also, we want to get a handle on what kind of professional help members want and need; we're tracking their phone calls and we've added a question about this to the new member orientation interview."

Among villages at large, the top categories of requests are for home modifications or home safety assessments, home care, and care coordination or social services. What's on your wish list?

Travel Talk: Calling All Photographers, Birders, Travelers, and Curious People



Patagonia panorama

Ham Hayes, a seasoned traveler, birder, and photographer, has understandably sought destinations where he can take pictures of birds. In recent years, however, he's broadened his horizon—and, as you can see, his portfolio—to include man-made and natural wonders. On Friday, March 10, he'll share his experiences and images of the history and beauty of two spectacular spots: Chile's Easter Island and Patagonia's Torres del Paine National Park. He'll also share some tips for taking high quality nature photographs. BSAC Room 16, 10:30-noon.

5 Good Reasons to Join “Simply Lunch”

Every month, BAH folks get together for lunch in the BSAC cafeteria. This month it’s Tuesday, March 7, at 12 noon. We call it Simply Lunch because, well, it’s lunch and it’s simple—no reservations, no extra cost, no muss, no fuss, no cuss. Just look for the BAH sign in a small side room off the BSAC cafeteria and join us. Why?

- ❖ Good food
- ❖ Good price (\$5 donation)
- ❖ Good company
- ❖ Good opportunity to catch up on BAH goings on/gossip
- ❖ Good time to make some new friends
- ❖ Good chance to relax in a welcoming environment

Oh wait, that’s six reasons isn’t it? Oh well...

Anniversary Webinar to Be Rescheduled

Watch this space for a new date for the Beacon Hill Village Anniversary Webinar, which fell victim to the winter storm that pounded New England in February. Dr. Gawande has promised to participate at a later date, probably in the summer (hopefully before the worst of the hurricane season).

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.