



Bellingham
At Home

Your Village Voice – December 2015

New Name, Same Newsletter

Because we're a virtual village, we decided to incorporate "Village" into our title. Calling our newsletter *Your Village Voice* associates us with the national movement. We're a voice for community involvement. Join us!

National Village Gathering in Seattle Inspires Attendees



Seven Bellingham At Home members were energized by their experience at the national meeting of "villages" in Seattle in October. Village representatives were there to share ideas and to learn from each other and from the knowledgeable professionals who presented during the two and a half day conference.

Left: Attendees from Bellingham At Home at Seattle conference: Elaine Cress, Mary Carlson, Richard Abbott, Barb Evans, Marci Haskell and Kate Birr. (Not pictured: Steve Morris.)

The Village to Village Network, of which Bellingham At Home is a member, is a national peer-to-peer network formed to help establish and continuously improve management of member villages. Today, the VtoV Network has 190 villages delivering services and 185 more in development. Details are at the [Village to Village website](#).

We came away from the conference inspired by the idea that this is a movement away from isolation and toward a culture that connects with neighbors, engages in local community and invests in creating sustainable living as we age. "Aging is ultimately a team sport" fit the spirit of the conference and the Village movement.

From established villages we were inundated with practical, tested suggestions for doing tasks like recruiting and vetting service providers and volunteers, managing member service requests and developing the web-based tools for running the organization. Our membership in the VtoV Network provides us with access to support to launch our organization and to keep it running in the future.

We learned of several Villages in the Pacific Northwest, some in operation and others, like us, still in development. Out of this connection grew the notion of a regional network to support each other to develop and grow.

Inspired by the conference, we are digging in to pre-launch activities with renewed enthusiasm. If you wish to join in this effort, or if you have questions, please write to us at info@Bellinghamathome.org.

Pre-launch Activity Ramps Up

In December, individuals who have expressed an interest in helping to launch Bellingham At Home will get a chance to find out more about the work we're planning. A lot of organizing is needed to get ready to deliver services in 2016. A meeting at the Bellingham Senior Activity Center will spotlight the tasks that our leadership council has identified to get us to the starting line. Among other things, the pre-launch team will reach out to community groups, provide publicity, screen and train service volunteers, etc. etc. The December meeting will be an opportunity for prospective volunteers to match their skills and interests with the jobs that need doing. Are *you* interested? Want to be in on the ground floor of this vital new community organization? Please contact Barb Evans for details about the pre-launch volunteer meeting.

Service Volunteer Opportunities—You Can Help!

Are you interested in delivering services as a Bellingham At Home volunteer? Watch for an announcement of an informational meeting in early 2016. You'll meet our village leaders, learn about the services we plan to deliver, and have a chance to sign up to provide day-to-day support to help others remain independent. On this social occasion, you'll also get acquainted with others in our community who share your interest.

If you would like to offer your services, please let us know. You can [fill out this form](#), print it and mail it to us, or simply email us your contact information (name and email address) and areas of interest.

If you are receiving this newsletter by regular mail, please fill out the enclosed form and mail it to the address at the bottom of this newsletter.

FAQ #3 (...the 3rd in our series)

Are there other "villages" in America like Bellingham At Home?

Across North America, there are more than 375 villages like ours. 190 are already in operation, with 185 more in development. To learn more about the movement, please visit the [Village to Village Network website](#). Read elsewhere in this newsletter about the annual meeting of village members that was held in October in Seattle.

Life After Driving

What happens when a seasoned driver gives up the keys? Listen to this [recent story on NPR](#). Transportation is a service that Bellingham At Home will offer after we launch.

Thank you, Sooner Sue!

We asked for help with taking notes at our bi-weekly Steering Committee meetings, and Sue Moyers ("Sooner Sue") has stepped up to the task. It's a challenging job, and we are grateful for Sue's diligence and dedication.

For more about us...

Come and visit the Bellingham At Home [website](#). Stop by often, and keep up with our activities and progress!

Bellingham At Home Contact Information

Currently at: Bellingham Senior Activity Center, 315 Halleck Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

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Bellingham At Home ("BAH") 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](#).