



Bellingham  
At Home

# Newsletter – March 2015

## **Introducing the Bellingham At Home Newsletter**

Welcome to the first edition of the Bellingham At Home (BAH) newsletter! You are receiving this because you have indicated an interest in Bellingham's aging-in-place "village" development, which is currently under way. We hope to publish a quarterly newsletter, with occasional interim updates as needed. We use email to save paper and mailing costs, but people who didn't include an email address when they signed up for our mailing list will receive a printed copy via regular mail. You can invite your friends and neighbors to sign up for updates by filling out and printing our [volunteer form](#) and bringing or mailing it to Bellingham At Home, care of BSAC (see address below in this email). The form is also available on our website. Bellingham At Home is focused on Bellingham for our initial village organization. You are welcome to follow our progress if you live outside Bellingham.

## **Housing Options As We Age Event**

Bellingham At Home volunteers were out in force at a February 25 event at the Bellingham Senior Activity Center. We had an information table at an all-day session titled "Housing Options As We Age," featuring speakers on subjects of interest to seniors who wish to remain as long as possible in their own homes. In an effort to give attendees a better idea of how a "village" like the one we are planning functions, we invited a speaker—Ed Madeiros—from a village in Seattle, the Phinney Neighborhood Association. Listeners heard about how the village was formed and the lessons learned as it developed into a successful, functioning organization. In preparation for the event, our Steering Committee drafted and had printed a tri-fold [brochure](#) that tells about our own plans and how people can become involved as volunteers—and as contributors to the cost of developing our village. Printed copies of the brochure are available at BSAC, and can also be mailed to those sending a request to our email account at [BellinghamAtHome@gmail.com](mailto:BellinghamAtHome@gmail.com).

## **Publicity in the Herald**

Most of you will have seen the wonderful publicity about BAH in the Prime Time section of the Bellingham Herald on March 2. Dean Kahn, editor of the Herald, had heard about our efforts to develop a village for Bellingham and arranged for writer Taimi Gorman to interview Mary Carlson, Executive Director, Whatcom Council on Aging, and Richard Abbott, member of the Planning Committee for BAH. The article makes a strong case for the "aging-in-place" concept that has been so successful in towns and cities across the country. The publicity generated more than two dozen emails and phone calls from local residents wanting to know more about our organization as it develops. To see the article, please go to <http://www.bellinghamherald.com/prime-time/?rh=1>.

## **The Planning Committee Expands!**

With the approval of the Council on Aging, we recently added four new members to the committee charged with planning the development of Bellingham At Home: Elaine Cress, Barb Evans, Carol Dukes and Steve Morris. Together with Nanette Davis and Richard Abbott from the former Planning Committee, the expanded committee of six persons—henceforth "The Steering Committee"—will take over planning functions at least until the end of the year.



**The Steering Committee, from left to right: Steve Morris, Helen Solomons, Dan Moore, Elaine Cress, Nanette Davis and Richard Abbott. (Not present: Caroline Balzer, Carol Dukes, Barb Evans, Martie Olson.)**

A sincere vote of thanks goes to former committee members Caroline Balzer, Helen Solomons, Martie Olson, and Dan Moore who contributed greatly to what we've achieved over the past six months. Those achievements, in addition to the ones mentioned above, include: negotiation of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Whatcom Council on Aging that allows us to use the resources of the Bellingham Senior Activity Center (BSAC), joining the national [Village To Village Network](#) which gives us access to the experience of more than 150 other villages across the country, and carrying out an email survey of 120 local residents on our mailing list to determine the level of interest in a village for Bellingham. More than 90% of those responding said that they would prefer to remain in their homes as they age. And more than 20 respondents said they were willing to volunteer their help to build Bellingham At Home.

### **Task Force Launches BAH Founders Group**

The Founders Group is off to a great start. We have a task force in place, and plan to generate names and strategies that will provide the necessary seed money to launch Bellingham At Home. Our current Founders Task Force is comprised of Nanette Davis, Elaine Cress, Barb Evans, Dan Moore and Steve Morris. We're open to ideas. For comments or further information, contact Nanette at 360-671-1686.

### **BAH Web Pages Renewed**

Come and visit the Bellingham At Home [website](#). We've recently updated the BAH content on the Whatcom Council on Aging website and plan to maintain it regularly. Stop by often, and keep up with our activities and progress!

#### **BAH Contact Information**

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

**Phone:** 360 746-3462

**E-mail:** [BellinghamAtHome@gmail.com](mailto:BellinghamAtHome@gmail.com)

**Website:** <http://BellinghamAtHome.org>

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](#).

### **Volunteer Update**

Volunteers are at the heart of Bellingham At Home. We are in the process of contacting, either by phone or by email, all of the people who have indicated an interest in volunteering. The newly formed Steering Committee is in the process of defining more specifically the tasks to be accomplished during our development year. As we move forward we will need volunteers to help in many areas, including administrative and office help, fund raising, marketing and outreach.

*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 indicated above.*

There is much work ahead of us, both as we develop BAH and after its launch, so please let us hear from you!