

The Auburn Food Bank: More than just food

By Peter Langmaid

It all started with a fire. In 1930, a family in Auburn, WA was burned out of their home. Friends and neighbors rummaged through their basements, attics, and garages to gather what was needed to help the family start over. Donations were more than what was needed, so the Auburn Community Chest was formed to distribute the excess to help other families.

Eighty-one years later, The Auburn Food Bank—so renamed in 1994—continues to provide food and other services to the needy in their

community. “Auburn is a generous community in general,” says Debbie Christian, Executive Director. “And it always has been.”

A staff of five paid employees and 105 volunteers accomplish this work. The roster of volunteers ranges from RSVP members to young people working off minor indiscretions with community service. “The volunteers are the backbone of our agency,” states Debbie. “We need them to keep us up and running.” And, she adds, “Their support also tells us that the work we are doing here



Debbie Christian, Executive Director of the Auburn Food Bank
(Photo courtesy of the Auburn Food Bank)

is valuable, ... otherwise they wouldn't be supporting us with their time and talent.”

RSVP volunteer Sandy Masterjohn has been working at the food bank for the past three years and she loves it. She began in reception and now helps hand out the food according to family size. For Sandy, the emotional support she provides families is just as important as the nutritional support. “I enjoy working with clients who are just looking for someone to care, be kind, and listen.” And, she continues, “I love to see children's eyes light up when they see specialty items [such as sweets].” The compensation she gets from her volunteering comes in the form of smiles of gratitude and heartfelt thank yous.

Married for 53 years, Sandy and her husband shared a long history of volunteering through the Lions Club. As a tribute to her late husband, one of her four sons began volunteering with the Lions Club after his father's death. Thus, the spirit of volunteering in the Masterjohn family has been successfully passed from generation to generation. The number of people served by the food bank

is staggering—approximately 150 families per day. Assuming three meals per day per person and four people per family, The Auburn Food Bank is providing 1,800 nutritious meals per day! The July breakdown of recipients was 1,003 seniors, 3,000 adults, 4,079 children, and 400 infants.

And the numbers keep increasing during the economic downturn, says Debbie. About 20 new families per week come to the food bank for help, some of them returnees. “It's hard for people to come in the first place,” says Debbie, “and harder for them to come back. They feel defeated.”

Though the focus of the food bank is local, they reach out to the larger community for support. A model of partnering, the food bank gets its food from Food Lifeline, Northwest Harvest, local grocers, and local farmers. In addition, essential items not donated are purchased. There's always fresh produce and specialty needs items such as low-salt and low-sugar food, baby food, diapers, and wipes. A model of efficiency, nothing goes to waste with spoiled food going to a local pig farmer and cardboard gathered by a local recycler.

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Speaking Directly

by Jen Gahagan, RSVP Coordinator

Volunteering for health

One of the joys of working with RSVP is hearing stories from volunteers and the organizations that you serve. Each time we produce a new EIA newsletter, it gives us the opportunity to collect and share your amazing stories. As we hear the stories and connect the meaning of those stories, reoccurring themes emerge. One of the things we continue to hear from volunteers is that you really care about being healthy and contributing to the health of others. This is proven by the time and energy RSVP volunteers contribute to hospitals, mental health programs, fitness programs, nutrition programs, hospice programs, health screening programs, Meals-on-

Wheels, food banks, community gardens and more. Over the past year, nearly 700 RSVP volunteers have served over 88,000 hours in agencies and programs that promote health in King County. This is an incredible contribution to our community.

In addition to caring about health, you are helping to meet important community needs. The King County Strategic Plan adopted in July 2010 underscores the county's commitment to the physical, emotional and environmental health of all residents. Strategies outlined in the plan include providing education that promotes individual health, and supporting partnerships to deliver integrated and effective services to people

in need.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advocates for the broader use of preventive services by adults aged 50 and older as a key public health strategy to encourage healthy aging and independence among older adults. In accordance with national recommendations, the Healthy Aging Partnership in King County actively promotes prevention and health screenings for senior citizens, including regular blood pressure checks, foot care clinics, and good nutrition. Public Health departments also promote exercise as an effective way to reduce injuries from falls and fight osteoporosis.

Volunteers are essential to many services that meet health-related community needs including hospitals and the emergency food system. A 2010 study of food banks in Western Washington found that 37% of food banks and 36% of meal

programs have no paid staff and rely on volunteers to operate. On average, food banks have two paid staff and 30 volunteers per week.

In honor of your efforts, we dedicate this issue of *Experience in Action* to some of the many aspects of what makes us, and our community, healthy. Peter Langmaid writes about how The Auburn Community Food Bank contributes to community health, Rona Stanton tells us about the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute as a resource for keeping the brain active, and Ruth Morley shares some healthy recipes that she uses in her volunteer work with Hopelink. Featured in the Volunteer Opportunities on page 8 are several of our health-related opportunities.

Thank you for your stories, and please enjoy this issue of *Experience in Action*. ●

Keeping your brain active & healthy

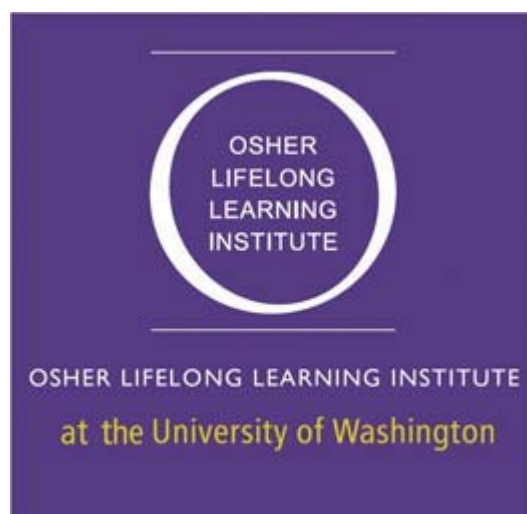
by Rona Stanton

Did you know that adults over the age of 50 can continue learning through taking classes designed for them at the University of Washington? For five years, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Washington (OLLI - UW) has been inviting these mature learners to come together to share intellectual interests and socialize in a lively learning environment. OLLI - UW classes give members the opportunity to explore and discuss a wide variety of thought-provoking subjects and to exchange ideas with others. Courses are offered on the UW campus in Seattle, at Trilogy in Redmond, in Everett, and other locations throughout the Seattle metropolitan area. These noncredit courses are ungraded with no tests and no papers to write. Learning is its own reward! The University maintains its standard of excellence when designing the program. All of the classes are led by current or retired university faculty and community experts.

Today OLLI - UW has approximately 500 members within the Puget Sound area. They enjoy about 50 course offerings each year on a range of topics from history, to physical and natural science, to literature and the arts. The program has evolved into a member-driven organization with active committees involved with course planning, special and social event planning, membership recruitment, course liaison scheduling, and newsletter production.

OLLI - UW relies heavily on its member volunteers to make the program a success. New learning opportunities, to be launched this fall, are currently being planned by and for members. Study Groups will provide in-depth study of a common topic and are structured for members to meet together regularly over a period of time. The groups will be facilitated by a member volunteer. Monthly Lunch &

Learn events will provide interesting speakers over lunchtime. This will give members a chance to gather for lunch and get to know each other better while learning something new. Other new ideas are being discussed by the committees, so it will be exciting to see what's next!



After several years of start-up support, OLLI - UW has recently been awarded an endowment from the Bernard Osher Foundation. The Bernard Osher Foundation was founded by Bernard Osher in 1977, and through the foundation, his philanthropy has benefited a wide range of educational, cultural and other nonprofit organizations. Recognizing that the proportion of older people in the United States is growing rapidly and with it, the demand for lifelong learning programs, the Osher Foundation began to encourage the development of vibrant learning communities of older adults. The Foundation felt that these older students were interested in learning for the joy of learning—without homework or examinations. Today the Foundation is supporting 119 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes on university and college campuses in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Interest from this endowment, along with membership and course fees and University of Washington support, will enable the UW to continue providing these affordable educational experiences on an ongoing basis into the future.

How to become a member

An annual membership fee of \$85 enables you to enroll in an unlimited number of OLLI - UW classes each year, with a fee of \$35 per class. Learn more at www.osher.washington.edu.

To find out about volunteering at Osher, contact RSVP at 206-957-4779 x 122. ●



It Seems to Me...

by Peter Langmaid

Contentedness

I recently attended a college graduation where the keynote speaker was an attorney with a national reputation. Though I admire the speaker immensely and the occasion—my daughter's graduation—was momentous in the history of our family, I was not looking forward to sitting in the blazing California heat listening to platitudes like, "Graduation is not an end, it's a beginning."

Much to my surprise, the speaker, rather than parroting grandiose notions of what lay before them, chose to debunk commonly held myths for the graduating seniors. One such myth: You can be anything you want to be. We all accept this bit of inspirational nonsense without question, even though life quickly teaches us that, due to reasons of talent, opportunity, history, economics, geography, and circumstances, we simply can't be anything we want to be.

There are generally accepted myths around aging, too, my favorite being the description of aging as moving into the "Golden Years." For me, the idea of Golden Years brings up images of a smiling white-haired couple bicycling in the sunshine and holding hands while enjoying a spectacular sunset. This image

would have us believe that we remain effortlessly healthy and carefree forever. The reality of growing older is more like the bumper sticker that reads: "Aging isn't for sissies!"

What's missing from the commercial image of the Golden Years we're sold over the years is the amount of work it takes to keep the tarnish off the gold, to stay active, positive, and engaged as our vitality wanes, our health diminishes, family disperses, friends die, money dwindles, and we can't remember where we left the car keys. The sad irony is that we spend decades looking forward to the Golden Years, and when they arrive all we talk about is how wonderful things used to be!

The real gold in the Golden Years, I believe, is perspective and time—perspective from a lifetime's worth of experience and time to reflect. And the goal of the Golden Years, for me, is a state of being I called 'contentedness.'

The first step towards contentedness is acknowledgment and acceptance of the past—successes, failures, triumphs, and shortcomings. The wonderful thing about the past is that it's over and immutable. The only thing that can change

is our attitude towards the past. Nothing is more agonizing, futile, and debilitating than reliving the past and hoping for a different outcome.

The second step is evaluating the present in terms of 'health'—physical health, mental health, emotional health, spiritual health, and financial health. As humans, we tend to rationalize our shortcomings with denial (I don't really feel lonely), futility (there's nothing I can do about it), or postponement (I'll begin an exercise program next week). Remember, just as inside the word 'can't' is the word 'can,' inside every 'can't do' is a 'can do.'

The third step is planning the future. This involves facing down the present and doing something about it. If you're overweight, take a cooking class and learn about nutrition; if you tend to lay around, get moving; if you watch too much TV (TV does not qualify as mental stimulation), read a book, do crossword puzzles, learn to play bridge; if you're lonely, volunteer (how's that for a great idea?!); if you're always short of money, get a part-time job. The goal is balance and the belief that you have the drive and ability to meet and overcome the challenges of aging. And remember, self-pity can't hit a moving target

You'll know when you're approaching contentedness—no one ever gets all the way there—when, as you fall asleep, you treasure the day you just spent and look forward to tomorrow. ●

the support they have given her since her husband died.

In addition to distributing food, The Auburn Food Bank also serves community dinners twice a week to crowds ranging from 120 to 220 people. Funding for the operation comes from a variety of sources, including United Way and two annual fundraisers. While meeting the needs of those who come to the food bank for help, says Debbie, she would like to reach out to people too shy or embarrassed to ask for help.

For information about volunteering with The Auburn Food Bank, call RSVP at 206-957-4779 x 122. ●

RSVP



The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a nonprofit National Senior Corps program sponsored locally by Solid Ground. RSVP encourages and supports volunteerism in King County for people 55 and older.



Solid Ground is dedicated to achieving a just and caring community free from poverty, prejudice and neglect. Our 35 programs and services give over 64,000 families a year the resources and support they need to overcome homelessness, hunger, racism, domestic violence and other poverty-related traumas.

EIA

Experience in Action! (EIA) is published quarterly by King County RSVP and distributed to 4,000 RSVP volunteers and friends. EIA is dedicated to providing news and information to RSVP volunteers. Articles express writers' opinions which are not necessarily the views of RSVP or EIA. We reserve the right to refuse any material deemed unsuitable. Articles may be edited in accordance with technical and editorial policy guidelines.

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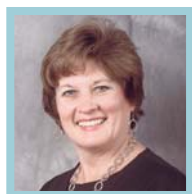
Auburn Food Bank *continued from page 1*

Volunteers support both the needs of the community and their own needs, says Sandy. "Co-workers come from all

walks of life and they function like a family, sharing life stories and looking out for each other." Sandy is especially grateful for



Sandy Masterjohn hard at work at the Auburn Food Bank
(Photo courtesy of the Auburn Food Bank)



Aging with Wisdom

by Carol Scott-Kassner

Rx for spiritual health: Checking your pulse

I don't know about you, but I get busy sometimes—so busy that I forget to slow down and smell the roses. One of the gifts of aging is that we supposedly have more time simply to “be,” but I frequently find myself in the flow of the “doing” current more than the quieter eddies of life. Where are you in that spectrum of doing and being? What is driving you each day to get things done? What do you consider important to do? Are you still focused on accomplishing things on your long list every day? Is being playful a part of what you fit into your schedule? How about watching the sunset or going on a walk? How about playing with a grandchild or spending quality time with a friend or partner? Are you engaged in a creative activity? If you answered “no” to the last four possibilities, it may

be time for a spiritual check-up.

Being spiritually healthy sometimes means shifting your behavior from the ways you've traditionally lived your life. It means attaining more of a balance between your outer and inner life, your time alone and with others, and your work and play. It means consciously thinking about and planning for such balance. It means slowing down and being present to each moment—savoring life on new levels.

The following checklist is offered to help you assess where you are in nourishing a life of balance in which both your body and your spirit have space to flourish. Read it through, checking those things you do regularly. Notice what you would like to do more of or less of. Also notice what is currently missing and consider whether

you would like to add that to your life.

Spiritual Check-Up

- I regularly read spiritual texts that nourish me.
- I pray, meditate, or sit in silence for at least 10 minutes a day.
- I seek spiritual guidance from teachers or spiritual directors.
- I spend time in nature, really noticing the sounds, sights, textures, and smells.
- I nourish my body with healthy foods.
- I limit my use of tobacco and alcohol or other substances that alter my thinking or disposition.
- I contribute time and/or money to causes that I care about.
- I spend quality time with others, including those who are older or younger than I am.
- I exercise regularly at whatever level I'm able.
- I smile and laugh and hug myself and others, sending joyful energy into the world.
- I listen to music, read poetry, and experience art that nourishes me.
- I exercise the 3 E's: energy, enthusiasm, and empathy.
- I play games or engage in other playful activities.

- I surround myself with things that are useful, beautiful, or fun.
- I get rid of things that I no longer need, creating greater simplicity.
- I continue to do my inner work around forgiving myself and others and, in the process, help to heal painful memories.
- At the end of each day, I reflect on what I did that made a positive difference in the world and what I might want to do differently the next day.

My guess is that you could add other things to this list based on your awareness of what nourishes your mind, body, and spirit. Note those things for yourself and engage in them often and with pleasure. May this time of your life be one of spiritual deepening and physical, emotional, and spiritual health. May each day nourish your spirit and bring you joy in living. ●

Carol Scott-Kassner is co-founder with Pat Lewis of Aging with Wisdom. Pat and Carol are available to do workshops on various aspects of the spiritual journey of aging. Carol can be contacted at carolkassner@comcast.net.

Evolve: A leadership program for seniors 50+

by Jennifer Gahagan

As the placement coordinator at RSVP, I have increasingly encountered volunteers who have the energy, drive, and skills to take on major leadership roles but who are struggling with next steps.

Thanks to a grant from the New York Life Foundation, Minnesota-based Vital Aging Network is offering a unique service and leadership opportunity. Evolve is an 8-session, 6-month course that teaches participants about leadership and helps them design a project that fits their passion while meeting community needs. Participants work together to build a network of support to increase their leadership and create meaningful projects.

‘Cathy’ had a successful career in public accounting and had been involved in a variety of community efforts. After she retired, she says, “I wanted to zero in on a passion that would keep me active in my community.” Evolve: Re-igniting Self & Community helped her achieve that goal. “Our class was full of such talented individuals and, in the class, we learned how to give our talent ‘legs.’” Cathy’s project (helping to secure refrigeration for food banks) allowed more than 200 families to have access to more fresh foods.

RSVP is partnering with Northwest Creative Aging, Shoreline Community College, Senior Services, Full Life Care and others to bring this opportunity to Seattle. Several RSVP volunteers are working on the steering committee and have brought good ideas and energy to the project.

John B., a 67-year-old retired university dean, created a reading

project for an elementary school. Recognizing how critical it is to help children develop their skills in the first and second grades, John connected senior center participants and first and second graders.



Evolve Steering Committee: Sorrell Fisher, Jen Gahagan, Tema Nesoff, Rona Stanton & Jan Frederick

(Photo by Jen Gahagan)

The children read to the elders and the elders read to the children. “I have 21 kids calling me Grandpa John. There is nothing like the feeling.”

Kwangja K. expanded culturally competent services for immigrants in a supportive housing program. Services included meals, home chore services, nurse visits, activities, and medication setup to low-income elders.

Jim B. worked for 33 years in electronics but, as the economy turned downward, he took a job in the mortgage industry. “My current career is not my passion; I am a technical person, not a paper pusher,” says Jim. His Evolve project was to create a website with products, services, and information that help people reduce their energy consumption. As a result of the self-discovery done in the class and the focus it brought to his life, Jim has been hired in a new job in an alternative energy company.

Evolve classes will start this January and run through mid-June. Classes will be held at Shoreline Community College one or two Fridays each month. The cost is \$750 dollars. Scholarships may be available. Registration must be made through Shoreline Community College by November 30th. For more information go to www.evolveleaders.org or contact Jan Frederick at the Northwest Center for Creative Aging, 206-382-3789, jan@nwcreativeaging.org. ●

How Respite Care came to the rescue

Featured Site, Auburn Senior Center Respite Care by Nora Tabler

Imagine being happily married for 18 years and looking forward to a full and fun retirement with your husband. Diane Lancaster, now age 51, was doing just that. Her husband, Timm, had a good job at Boeing where he had worked for many years. Suddenly at age 54, Timm was laid off. At age 55, he retired to take advantage of his full retirement benefits.

Stopping work at age 55 had not been part of their plan, and Timm wanted to keep earning money. But, over the next 18 months, Timm cycled through 15-17 jobs. Obviously something was VERY wrong, and Diane was worried. It was all so strange. The tipping point came one night when they were driving to Diane's mother's house for dinner and Timm could not remember how to get there. A doctor visit the next day diagnosed Timm with severe depression and significant memory loss. A second visit to a VA neurologist confirmed that Timm, at age 58, was in the early stages of Alzheimer's Disease.

Diane was devastated, and Timm started going through many stages of confusion, anger, and sadness. He apologized repeatedly to Diane, who being seven years younger and healthy, was now burdened with caring for him. Now in her seventh year of caring for Timm, she told me that his dementia worsens each year and is a slow and unpredictable process.

Soon after Timm's diagnosis, Diane signed up for an Alzheimer support group that met in a facility where she could bring Timm with her so he wasn't alone. A woman in that group told her about the wonderful Auburn Respite Care program where caregivers can get respite or temporary relief from caregiving. These words were like gold to Diane who was exhausted and near the brink of an emotional breakdown herself. The intake staff interviewed

Timm, and his gentle and kind personality resulted in immediate acceptance.

Timm was happy participating in the Auburn Respite Care program where there were 16 volunteers for 16 patients. And the program was a godsend for Diane. She could finally run some errands, see some

friends, get some exercise, clean the house, even read a book.

Diane mourns the loss of the things her wonderful husband can't do and misses him being himself. It is hard to watch him deteriorate and he apologizes so often to her. I asked her if she had any advice for others who may be facing a similar situation. She advises going to support groups and "building up your base of friends." She added that "knowledge is power—learning about the disease and reaching out to others in support groups helps you see that you are not alone." In closing, she said, "It takes a lot of digging to find out what's out there," and the Auburn Respite Care program, is one of the jewels in the garden.

The Auburn Senior Center Respite Care program was founded in 1988. It offers five hours of companionship, music, reminiscing and social interaction in a safe and comfortable environment. Caregivers of the participants are allowed a day of relief while their loved ones are kept busy in the program. Sheila Pankratz, director of the program says, "the respite program has worked for over 20 years because of the dedicated people who have worked hard to make it a success by volunteering as caregivers, Board members, and financial backers."

Volunteers are always welcome. To learn more about volunteering with the Auburn Respite Care program, please contact RSVP at 206-957-4779 x 122. ●



Diane and Timm Lancaster and 'friends'
(Photo courtesy of Diane Lancaster)

Seattle Parks Lifelong Recreation

By Charla Sullivan

I have been a volunteer with the Seattle Parks Lifelong Recreation Advisory Council (LRAC) for the past three years, and I have been the president of the council for the past year. A recent column noted that I was asked to come and sit in on a meeting to see if I was interested, and since I have been taking advantage of the Seattle Parks recreational hikes and trips, it felt right that I should give something back.

Lifelong Recreation programs is a service offered through Seattle Parks and Recreation for people age 50+. Seattle Parks has offered this service for almost 35 years and continues to provide quality programs that focus on physical activity, arts, education,

and social engagement. Over 7,500 people age 50+ participate in Lifelong Recreation programs annually. Lifelong Recreation serves 26 community centers and parks.

Besides physical activities, Lifelong Recreation also provides outreach to underserved groups, including immigrant and refugee communities. The Food and Fitness programs offer meals that are consistent with the varied cultural groups we serve.

Lifelong Recreation has over 40 partnerships with organizations across the city. Partners sponsor activities and bring resources and support for programs for people 50+. One success is the program with HSD/ADS where they hire

and train low-income seniors in 'applied' work skills.

Lifelong Recreation is continuously looking for innovative programs to serve seniors. For example they recently developed a trip/fitness program for people with early onset memory loss, and they have secured a grant to involve seniors in fitness programs to prevent falls.

One very successful program, Sound Steps, offers walking and hiking opportunities each month all across the city.

The Lifelong Recreation Advisory Council works to bring together a diverse mix of members reflecting differences in race, gender, socioeconomic status, interests, and experience. The Council offers advice and counsel on parks and recreation services that meet the needs of

our community.

Some of the LRAC activities include attendance at City Council meetings, mayor's office monthly meetings, and neighborhood meetings. Then at our Council meetings, we exchange feedback and prioritize the needs of the parks to present to the City Council.

As we get older it feels as if we can get lost in becoming a statistic. The members of the LRAC are doing our best to remind the City Council that people over 50 make

use of the services of Seattle Parks and Recreation and we are helping people 50+ in the city work toward healthy and happy lifestyles.

If you would like to explore volunteer opportunities with the Lifelong Recreation programs or the Advisory Council, contact RSVP at 206-957-4779 x 122. ●



Healthy eating: Volunteer favorites!

By Robin Knudson

When we started this issue of the EIA, we wanted to share some of the 'healthy' experiences and expertise of our volunteers. When it came to food, we thought of Ruth Morley, a longtime RSVP volunteer, who now spends her volunteer time with Hopelink, an eastside nonprofit social service agency.

In Ruth's words, "I fix meals for anywhere from 10 to 40 people depending on the day and the event. I feed the food bank volunteers at three food banks, and I also prepare meals for various volunteer training classes during the year. During the Christmas season, I prepare meals for the gift room volunteers at both Bellevue and Kirkland-Northshore. There can be up to 150 volunteers or more during that time, and I make sure that they have breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. I love to cook and I enjoy feeding the volunteers."

Here are a few of her volunteers' favorite recipes. Enjoy!

White Chicken Chili

(Serves 6)

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 T olive oil
- 3 T all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 2 (15.9 oz) cans Great Northern Beans
- 1 (14.5 oz) can chicken broth
- 1 ½ cups finely chopped chicken breast

- 1 (4 oz) can chopped green chilies, drained
- Shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- Sour cream
- Salsa

Directions

1. In large skillet, cook onion in oil for 4 minutes or until transparent.
2. Add chilies, flour, and cumin; cook and stir for 2 minutes.
3. Add beans and chicken broth; bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat; simmer for 10 minutes or until thickened.
5. Add chicken; cook until hot.
6. Garnish with cheese, sour cream, and salsa if desired.

Layered Enchiladas (Serves 4)

Ingredients

- 8 corn tortillas
- 1-2 cans red enchilada sauce (if you have homemade sauce, red or green, that's even better)
- 1 lb ground beef, browned and drained
- ½ large onion, finely chopped
- ½ lb grated cheese (cheddar, jack, or Mexican blend)
- 1 small can diced jalapeno peppers (optional)
- 1 small can sliced black olives (optional)

Directions

1. Pour enchilada sauce in bowl suitable for dipping.
2. Dip corn tortillas, one at a time, in sauce and place one layer (4 tortillas) in 9-inch greased baking pan.
3. Spread ½ of the meat, then ½ each of the onions, peppers, and olives, then 1/3 of the cheese. Repeat.
4. Pour any remaining sauce over the top layer and sprinkle with the remaining cheese.

5. Bake, uncovered, in 350 degree oven approximately 30 minutes, or until bubbly and cheese is melted.
6. Let cool until slightly set.
7. Cut into squares and serve with beans or rice.

May serve with pico de gallo, sour cream, guacamole, and/or hot sauce, if desired.

Spinach Salad with Lemon

Vinaigrette (Serves 4)

Ingredients

- 1 (5 oz pkg) baby spinach leaves
- 1 cup sweet grape tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- 1 ripe avocado, peeled, pitted, and chopped
- 2 T freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 tsp rice vinegar
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 2 T extra virgin olive oil

Directions

1. In large bowl, combine spinach, tomatoes, nuts and avocado; set aside.
2. In small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, vinegar, garlic and lemon zest, then slowly whisk in oil until well combined.
3. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Toss salad with vinaigrette.
5. Serve immediately.

May add cooked, chopped chicken or turkey breast to make it a main dish.

Dairy Free Chocolate Cake

(serves 6-8)

Ingredients

- 1½ cup flour
- 1 cup + 2 T sugar
- 1/3 cup + 1 T cocoa powder
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt

Directions

1. Whisk these dry ingredients together in large bowl until well blended.
2. Add:
 - 1 cup cold water
 - ¼ cup vegetable oil
 - 1 T distilled white vinegar
 - 2 tsp vanilla
3. Whisk all until smooth.
4. Spread batter into greased and floured 8-inch square baking pan.
5. Bake about 30 minutes in 375 degree oven, until cake tester inserted into middle comes out clean.
6. Slide thin knife around cake to detach it from pan.
7. Invert pan to remove cake. Cool cake, right side up, on rack.
8. Serve plain or dusted with powdered sugar.

Moist and delicious! This cake is wonderful for vegan and vegetarian diets. ●

What hunger looks like in Western Washington

by Jennifer Gahagan

More than 45% of the individuals using a food bank, meal program or shelter in Western Washington have some form of post-secondary education. Only 9% are actually homeless. Of those served by Food Lifeline:

- 37% are children.
- 12% are seniors.
- 47% have had to choose between food and paying for heat or utilities.
- 29% have had to choose between food and paying for medicine or medical care.
- 42% have had to choose between paying for food and paying for rent or mortgage.

This information comes from the Food Lifeline website and comes from the source: www.foodlifeline.org/hunger. ●

Garden Lady taking a break

Our 'Garden Lady,' Linda Urbaniak, is taking a break from this issue of the EIA, but she will return in January.

Linda Urbaniak is a docent at the Bellevue Botanical Garden and an RSVP Ambassador. She will gladly take your gardening questions at lindegardenlady@speakeasy.net.

WHAT IS AN RSVP AMBASSADOR?

An RSVP Ambassador is an RSVP Volunteer who is willing to help us spread the word about the benefits of volunteering. Because of our small staff, we have assembled a wonderful group of volunteers who help us share the mission of RSVP with other seniors. If you would be willing to represent RSVP at events around King County, we would like to talk to you.

We do not ask for a specific time commitment, only that you occasionally share your enthusiasm for volunteering and help us encourage others by relating your own experiences and telling about RSVP. We provide a fun, interactive training and give you the opportunity to meet another group of active, enthusiastic people.

To sign up or ask more questions: Contact Robin Knudson, 206-957-4779 x116 or robink@solid-ground.org.

Mind Your Mouth campaign aims to educate seniors about dry mouth

Adapted from Washington Dental Service Foundation materials

Hundreds of prescription and over-the-counter drugs can cause dry mouth, a problem that afflicts one in three seniors. Left untreated, it can lead to tooth decay and gum disease, which is linked to heart disease, diabetes and other serious health conditions.

Yet dry mouth isn't talked about much.

In fact, sufferers may find it difficult to talk at all—or swallow and eat, for that matter. Dry mouth, in addition to its health dangers, can greatly diminish a person's quality of life. But most seniors see it as more of an annoyance than anything to be concerned about.

"If you're not producing enough saliva to neutralize acids, kill fungi and bacteria, and help wash away food, you're more likely to develop infections that can reduce your body's ability to fight off other infections and diseases," says Dr. David Branch, a Washington Dental Service Foundation* trustee. "The mouth is a window to the health of the body," he adds. "That's why maintaining good oral health is one of the smartest things you can do."

Older adults are encouraged to visit the website at www.seniorsoralhealth.org to learn more about dry mouth and oral health. On the website, they can also complete a quick survey and be entered to win a \$50 gift card.

Seniors are particularly prone to dry mouth because they're more likely to be taking multiple medications, including treatments for high blood pressure, pain, asthma and allergies, depression, and anxiety. Dry mouth can also be a side effect of chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and certain health conditions, including diabetes and Parkinson's.

Fortunately, dry mouth can be prevented and treated. The Foundation offers the following tips to help older adults maintain good oral—and overall—health:

- Get regular dental checkups and cleanings. Most adults should see their dentist every six months, more often if they're at risk for oral diseases from tobacco and alcohol use, diabetes, poor oral hygiene, and other factors.
- Floss daily and brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Ask your dentist about fluoride rinses and gels, which may also relieve tooth sensitivity.
- Alert your doctor if your mouth feels dry as a result of a medication. There may be a different drug you can try.
- For a sweet and healthy alternative to candy, chew sugarless gum or suck on sugarless mints, especially those with the natural sweetener xylitol, which protects teeth from decay.
- Brush your teeth after eating or snacking. If that's not possible, rinse your mouth out with water.
- Sip water frequently during the day and limit drinks with caffeine and alcohol, which can dry out the mouth.
- Stop using tobacco products.
- To relieve dry mouth, consider using a saliva substitute and a night-time air humidifier.

For more tips as well as information on reduced-cost dental care in your community, visit the campaign website at www.seniorsoralhealth.org or call 1-888-4ELDERS (1-888-435-3377).

Washington Dental Service (WDS) Foundation is dedicated to significant, long-lasting improvements in the oral health and overall health of Washington's young children and seniors. For more information, visit: deltadentalwa.com/foundation. ●

DELTA DENTAL
Washington Dental Service
Foundation
Community Advocates for Oral Health

*WDSF was the presenting sponsor for the RSVP 2010 Recognition Event.



Senior on the Street

by Peter Langmaid

What one thing do you do to keep healthy?

"I ride a stationary bike and walk outside for 1/2 an hour every day.

-Ruth Moore



"I walk – a lot!"

-Don Cavanaugh



"I take a lot of medicine!"

-Mona Kertes



"I socialize with other people."

-Vicky Hobbs



"I'm 90 and I've been doing water aerobics twice a week for 20 years!"

-Wilma Johnson



"Before I get out of bed I do an exercise for every part of my body, and I keep breathing!"

-Jim Hicks



"I walk every day."

-Helene Walling



Volunteer & Community Opportunities through RSVP

The following are just a few of the volunteer and community opportunities RSVP has to offer. To talk to a real person about opportunities that are just right for you, call Jennifer Gahagan at 206-957-4779 x122 – or visit our website at www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/Volunteer/RSVP for regional volunteer opportunity listings.

Volunteering

AARP: New Initiative! AARP Washington is expanding efforts to ensure financial security of older Americans by joining forces with AARP's ElderWatch Program. In addition to the Fraud Fighter Call Center, a nationally-recognized fraud prevention program, volunteers are needed for a new Medicare outreach project opening this month. Training is scheduled for September 29th. In addition, plans are underway to implement a benefits enrollment project, whereby volunteers will help eligible individuals apply for assistance.

Montlake Elementary School: New Partner Site! This wonderful small neighborhood school has an organized volunteer program and lots of great jobs. They are especially looking for:
1) **ACADEMIC VOLUNTEERS** (different from room parents): Provide direct learning support in classroom (one-on-one, group, math, language arts, or other). Time commitment: weekly or bi-weekly.
2) **JUNIOR GREAT BOOKS:** Lead bi-weekly small group literature discussions of classic tales and fables with students. Training provided by the school librarian. Several other jobs available as well.

KidsQuest Children's Museum: Factoria Mall location. Explore, play, and learn together at this hands-on museum for children and families. Volunteers are needed to do crafts with kids as well as interact with patrons.

Sound Steps: Offered through Seattle Parks Senior Adult Programs. Volunteers are needed to help set up and run walking groups throughout the city. You can start a group in your neighborhood! This is a FREE, year-round program to connect walkers, and give them tools and encouragement to keep exercising while enjoying the outdoors and other great people!

VA Puget Sound Health Care System: Home Respite Care volunteers are needed county-wide! This important volunteer position provides friendship and companionship to homebound veterans while also providing support and respite for caregivers.

Apple Corps: A program of Solid Ground. We need volunteers to present or assist with nutrition and cooking lessons to groups of children at Seattle elementary schools and community centers during the school day and at after-school programs. Volunteers support staff with hands-on education as well as set-up, food preparation, and clean-up.

Evergreen Hospice & Palliative Care: Volunteers work in their own communities to visit hospice and palliative care patients who live near them. Volunteers can provide companionship, respite for the primary caregiver, light household help, run errands, and just be a friendly visitor and additional support. Volunteers are provided a free, comprehensive training so they feel confident in their services to hospice and palliative care patients.

Lifelong AIDS Alliance: Lifelong AIDS Alliance volunteer opportunities currently include kitchen, warehouse, pickup center, food delivery, Thrift Store, Admin, Front Desk, Care to Shop (weekend food drive), bar outreach, bathhouse outreach, community outreach, and special events.

Help students succeed!: Many tutoring opportunities are available for all age groups across the county.

In Our Community

The City of Redmond: The Fitness Challenge kicks off September 17 at the Old Redmond Schoolhouse Community Center. Enjoy:
• Fitness Demonstrations—Spinning, TRX, Zumba, Yoga & Pilates
• Healthy food & wellness vendors
• Face painting & recreational fun for kids
• Sign-up stations for residents who want to sign the fitness lifestyle pledge
For more information, or to be a vendor, email smsandquist@redmond.gov.

Poultry Predictor 4 mile race - November 19th
The five participants closest to their predicted finish time will receive a frozen turkey! There are no timing devices allowed on the course and the only clock will be at the start/finish line. An additional five turkeys will be raffled.
Location: Farrel-McWhirter Farm Park
Date: 11/19/11, 9:00 am
To register, go to www.active.com and search for Redmond Poultry Predictor.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day: Sept. 23 is the 4th annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day. NCOA and the Falls Free© Coalition are building an online tool to capture lessons learned and resources from the 37 states that participated in 2010. Learn what worked and get a list of ideas to help you plan for 2011. Visit www.healthyagingprograms.org/content.asp?sectionid=149.

Promoting Latino Health in a Changing Environment:
October 4: The 6th annual Latino Health Forum will be presented by Sea Mar Community Health Centers in conjunction with Semana Binacional de Salud. The forum will be held from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at South Seattle Community College, Jerry Brockey Student Center.

New Medicare Resources "Just for You": National Council On Aging's My Medicare Matters website has added two new sections to help individuals with Medicare make the most of their benefits. "Just for You" offers information for people who are considering working past 65, those who are under 65 and retired or unemployed, and individuals who are under 65 and disabled. "Take Charge of Your Health" spotlights programs to help people who are coping with chronic conditions. Visit www.mymedicarematters.org/AboutMedicare/JustForYou.

Please call to help me find a volunteer opportunity suited just for me.
 Please send information about RSVP.
 Please note my new address.
Name: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____

Please mail this form to: RSVP, 464 12th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98112