

Experience *in Action!*

RSVP Governor's Service Award Nominee:

Volunteer lauded for selfless work

By Daniel Mooney (reprinted with permission from the Kent Reporter)

Even a lifetime of service can sometimes go overlooked, but on Monday, Kent resident Sister Janet Benish's unselfish life was recognized statewide.

Sister Benish, who has been a Catholic nun for 52 years, has committed her life to the service of God and others. She received the Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Service Award Monday for that commitment, an honor given annually by the Washington Commission for National and Community Service.

"It's been wonderful," she said of her life as a devoted nun and volunteer. "Everybody has hard times and good times, but it's been very satisfying. It's just what I'm supposed to do."

The 87-year-old was born in Denver, Colo., but has lived in Kent for most of two decades. All of that time, she has been active in the Kent community and as a member of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, called RSVP.

She has volunteered more

than 10,000 hours with RSVP, crocheting hats and scarves for the homeless for the organization's Knit-It-Alls program.

"Janet has done so much, yet she remains so humble," said Robin Knudson, program coordinator at RSVP. "She has a quiet, selfless nature yet she has made an irreplaceable impact in the community. She truly has a servant's heart."

Benish also volunteers at the Kent Senior Activities Center, the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Partnership and the Pediatric Interim Care Center on a regular basis. She said her favorite is the Pediatric Care Center, often called PICC, where she volunteers as a "cuddler" to comfort the drug-exposed infants.

"I try and comfort the babies and pray that they come through this difficult time, and I also do laundry and empty wastebaskets and whatever else needs to be done," she said of her duties at PICC.



Sister Janet Benish volunteers as a cuddler at the Pediatric Interim Center in Kent. (Photo thanks to the Kent Reporter, photographer Matt Brashears.)

Barbara Drennen, executive director at PICC, said she knows Sister Benish well and called her one of her favorite people.

"Sister Benish is an angel in our eyes," Drennen said. "When she comes down to hold the babies, everyone goes out of their way to give her babies to hold. She's very special to everyone here. We love her."

Benish said she became a nun at the age of 35. Around that time, she was confronted about her faith at a party and decided to seek out what that faith really meant. The search led her to her current life as a nun. She lived in a cloister with other nuns for many years, but she has more recently lived what she calls a "hermit" lifestyle, living alone while still keeping the vows she took years ago.

She said the simple lifestyle she leads has kept her young, and she hopes it will help her continue to do her life's work in the future.

"For me, it's just a way of being of service and at the same time a way of keeping my own health, both physically and mentally," she said. "Early hours, simple food and manual work. It's kept me going all these years."

She thanks RSVP for making it easier for her and other seniors to get involved in volunteer activities.

"RSVP reminds seniors that they have something to contribute," she said. "It may not seem like much, but it makes a difference, and the volunteers say they receive much more than they give."

Seniors interested in volunteering or learning more about RSVP should contact Jennifer Gahagan at jeng@solid-ground.org or 206.957.4779, x122. For information about this story, contact Daniel Mooney at 253.437.6012 or dmooney@reporternewspapers.com. ●

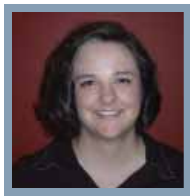
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Speaking Directly

by Jen Gahagan, RSVP Coordinator

Spring has sprung!

It has been an exciting season for RSVP. Our staff and Ambassadors have recently enjoyed participating in more than 15 volunteer celebrations, recognition events, fairs and special awards. Volunteers are our inspiration, so we really love to visit with you, hear your stories and appreciate your contribution to our community. new sites.

RSVP has also been busy spreading the word about all your great work and the benefits

of volunteering. As you know, it is our mission to encourage and support volunteerism for people 55 and older. and we did a lot of encouraging this quarter! Among the celebrations, we attended were six volunteer and health fairs including the Mayor's Healthy Aging Fair for Seattle and the Eastside Volunteer Fair. We have also been busy distributing brochures and newsletters throughout the county. We have had wonderful help for these activities from

our fabulous ambassadors. We extend a special thank you to **Lillian Hayashi, Sandy Howard, Sarah Parkhurst, Mary Harvey, Lucy Young** and **Bill Van Horn.**

In addition to recognizing your service and spreading the word about RSVP, we have been busy developing new partnerships. By knowing key people in over 100 different organizations, we are able to find the right match for volunteers who call us looking for a volunteer job. New partnerships include **Baby Boutique, Communities in Schools, Cultivating Youth, Habitat for Humanity, Multi-faith Network, Providence Hospice of Seattle, Seattle's Union Gospel Mission** and **Washington Wilderness**

Coalition. Check out their volunteer opportunities on the back page.

Finally, I would like to announce that RSVP received the **Excellence in Community Partnership Award** from the **American Red Cross on May 18th** for our "willingness and ability to go above and beyond the call of duty". We are honored to receive the award and take pride in being a good partner in service to our community. Of course we could not do it with out you, our volunteer members. Thank you for all that you do and please enjoy this addition of "Experience in Action" as we look toward summer! ●

Our Redmond Senior Chorus

by: *Otti Naimi, Redmond Senior Chorus member*

Approximately 23 years ago the Redmond Senior Chorus started out in the Log Cabin of the Adair House at Redmond Anderson Park. Betty Simons started out as our piano player and has been the leader and manager of the chorus for the past 20 years. She has not only invested long hours practicing with us all, but she has also taught us to love the music.

Each Thursday at 1:00 pm we come together as a big and happy family. I have been with the chorus now for 4 years and I look forward to every Thursday to practice and learn new songs. My husband Les, who still has a great voice, used to sing with the chorus until he was disabled by Alzheimer's Disease.

We perform at various nursing homes and try to make people happy there by singing old songs like "You Are My Sunshine" while the residents sing along with us. In 2006 we also gave a good performance in the Redmond Senior Center Variety Show. We are now working on a selection of show tunes with our wonderful accompanist Shirley Breitenstein.

Margaret Phillips took over as our director when Betty was ill last year. Now Betty is back but she will retire for good at the end of May and Rosann O'Reilly will take over. Although we will miss Betty and her enthusiasm, we look forward to working with Rosann who has a great knowledge of music. We hope that Betty will come back and sing along with us for many more years. Thank you Betty for the high standard you have set for the chorus. ●



More about singing seniors...

"Young@Heart": a movie review

"Get ready to fall in love with life and music all over again."

Every now and then I will see something that I just want to tell everyone about. There are certain cinematic creations that just stir me up and I want to go around and personally invite everyone to see it. That is most certainly the case with the new documentary from Stephen Walker entitled Young@Heart. Many people I have talked to have heard about this amazing geriatric chorus group from Massachusetts who put their own unique spin on rock and pop but few knew that their story was now on the big screen. Led by music director Bob Cilman and made up of performers who range in age from 72 to 88, the Young at Heart chorus rocks. Simple as that.

What wasn't simple was the creating of this documentary. Stephen Walker's editing style and use of music and real characters allows you to get to know these wonderful men and women while keeping the story and the facts moving at a decent pace.

Many may wonder what is so special about old people singing. They see it every week in their churches and many in their homes. We should not marvel that someone in their 70's can be in a chorus or have a unique gift and hobby. What we can do is use this as a reminder that music touches lives of any age and that just because we reach a certain plateau in life does not mean that we have to stop evolving. The man who said you can never teach old dog new tricks, never encountered one of these feisty singers as they tackle the music Cilman brings to them: The Clash, James Brown, Cold Play, the Flaming Lips and Radiohead. Though songs of this generation they have never been more poignant than when performed by these seasoned singers.

Young@Heart is rated PG for some mild language and thematic elements. This is a movie for every generation and should be viewed by all. You will laugh along with these characters as they struggle through lyrics and deal with songs of angst. You will weep too at the love and emotion that is transformed through their lives and music. Songs you have heard for years will take on new meaning in this context. The lyrics are the same. Nothing has been altered. But when you hear them from these men and women you will hear them as never before. I give Young@Heart a solid 4 out of 5 mosh pits. Get ready to fall in love with life and music all over again. ●

By Matt Mungle (matt@mungleshow.com) 4/16/08; edited and reprinted with permission.



Wit & Wisdom

by author Henry Wiener

Notes to the heart

Sometimes I wonder how different life would be in a world devoid of music.

While there are other sounds that impact us deeply, music seems to have a magic of its own. Without that gift it could feel like eating bread without butter, munching on a bagel with just a smidgen of cream cheese, attending a wedding where “Here Comes the Bride” isn’t heard to herald the start of the ceremony or a Christmas season without “Jingle Bells” filling the air.

The dramatic role of music is highlighted by Hope Wechkin, a physician who is the medical director of a Hospice program and also teaches fourth-year medical students. She is making her debut in a one-woman

show which she wrote and in which she acts, plays the violin and sings, all at the same time – a task not all artists would fiddle around with. Dr. Wechkin feels music can be transformative for those dealing with terminal illness as it can “reach beyond words and beyond medicine.” She has become aware of the healing effect music has on the body’s systems. Because we are so used to its presence in our lives, we may not be fully aware of the curative role music can play.

I often recall the days when a trio of musicians would appear in the courtyard of our apartment building and play as long as the pennies came hurtling down. Our streets were crowded with the music of vendors

hawking frozen “Eskimo Pies,” rides on ponies or a Merry-Go-Round. I had my own experiences with music. A long time ago, when we were young and raising families, we had a special person among us who was a “wizard” with children. We would meet in someone’s home, the children gathered on what she called her “Magic Blanket.” Surrounded by music they were encouraged to participate by banging on pots and pans with kitchen utensils. That concert always was emotionally refreshing and had an enervating effect on all of us.

And at another period in my past I was moved to visit rehab facilities where people I knew were struggling with depression. I would bring my guitar and encourage the residents and visitors to join me in special songs. Often the songfest seemed to have a therapeutic effect on the residents. ●

Henry Wiener is author of the book ‘Wit and Wisdom.’

a three to four inch layer of composted dairy manure laid down in the spring will add tilth as well as some nutrients. Grasses, sedums and some perennials like penstemons or dianthus will benefit from a mulch of washed gravel.

Choosing plants that can exist on less water is a great way to start creating a Waterwise garden. Phormium, Senecio, Gaura, Agapanthus, Salvias, Liatris, Amaryllis belladonna, Artemesias, Lavenders, Euphorbias, Sedums and Sempervirums are just some of the many plants that do very well with little water and they pair well with any of the many grasses that can be used to create a dramatic year-round display.

For those plants that require more water, group them together so that they can be given the moisture they need without over-watering other areas.

Water is a finite resource. By planning carefully and watering wisely, we can achieve lush gardens, even in the driest months. ●

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

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.



Formerly the Fremont Public Association

Solid Ground is dedicated to achieving a just and caring community free from poverty, prejudice and neglect. Our 30 programs give nearly 33,000 families a year the services, resources and support they need to overcome homelessness, hunger, 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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The Garden Lady

by Linda Urbaniak

Waterwise gardens

Creating a Waterwise garden starts with preparation of the soil. Compost, peat moss, gypsum, and other organics can be incorporated into the beds to help improve the soil to hold more water. While clay holds lots of water, when it dries out it is as hard as concrete. Sand on the other hand drains well, but too well. Add a bit at a time try and improve your planting beds to achieve the elusive loam.

When overhead sprinklers are used, over 40% of the water used is lost to evaporation on a hot day. In addition, much of the water will run off or be lost entirely, such as along streets or sidewalks. An additional disadvantage is that sprinklers leave water on leaves of susceptible plants like phlox and roses, creating a great place for fungus and disease to flourish. The only advantage of sprinklers is their low price.

Drip irrigation delivers precise amounts of water to targeted plants. Very little water

is lost to evaporation, and rarely will any be lost to run-off. The disadvantages include initial cost of the special hoses and emitters, the need to redirect the drip if the plant is moved or replaced by one needing more or less water, and the ease of damage to the hoses.

Soaker hoses are a good compromise. They can be laid down either as the garden is installed or added later. They should be looped back and forth at approximately eight-inch separation to completely cover the garden area to be watered. They can be left in place year round, and if they are unsightly to you, covered with up to 4 inches of mulch, which will also help conserve moisture. They are reasonably priced and can be connected to a regular hose with the snap-type couplers.

Mulching your garden will help conserve water as well as making the beds more attractive. For perennial beds, around shrubs or vegetable gardens,

The Mercer Island grocery shopping van

Mercer Island Senior Center *by Peter Langmaid*

One of the many services available to seniors through the Mercer Island Community Center at Mercer View is the Wednesday grocery shopping van. Al Gurevich has been piloting the 14-seat van for 5 years, while his partner, Bob Marlin, has been the 'passenger assistant' for 11 years. (Bob proudly showed me his 10-year RSVP service pin.)

Al and Bob obviously enjoy each other and the task at hand. Asked why they do it, Al says, "I just enjoy the people." Bob adds, "It's a social club, and for most of the people it's the only time they get out of the house each week."

Whereas grocery shopping and brief errands is the purpose of the service, having a good time is as important as the canned goods. Al loves the relationships he's developed and the opportunity to "kid around and have a good time." When Betty Wittenberg asked to stop at the dry cleaners, Al joked that they'd have no trouble "taking her to the cleaners!" And when I asked John Northey, 96, the secret of a long life, he gave me a mischievous smile and said, "Keep breathing!"

While the atmosphere is social

and light, Al and Bob are serious when it comes to safety. The bus doesn't move until everyone's seatbelt is buckled securely, and Bob gets out of the bus to direct Al when backing out of tight or blind places. Additionally, both Al and Bob are trained in first aid and CPR.

A good measure of how much the shoppers enjoy and appreciate this service is the fact that they were all ready and waiting when we pulled into their driveway. And the loading procedure was as efficient and precise as a military drill team: Al puts the van in park and opens the door, Bob jumps out, carefully places a footstool to shorten the high first step onto the bus, and greets each person cheerfully, offering whatever help they need getting situated. A quick check of seatbelts follows, and we're off to our next stop.

Two things I noticed as the bus filled: one, all passengers were nicely dressed and well groomed, underscoring the notion that this is an anticipated event, and two, they were all genuinely glad to see each other. Lively discussions ensued about such things as the high price of food, grandchildren,

places to eat and retirement home living. I just sat back and listened.

First stop was the drug store. Waiting for the shoppers to conduct their business, Bob told me that after retiring he's become an actor in community theater, most

recently appearing in *Romeo and Juliet*. Al, on the other hand, spends time working at Qwest Field and Events Center.

As the shoppers file out of the drug store, Bob helps them back on the bus, helping with their purchases, if necessary. After a seatbelt check we're off to two grocery stores. Bus empty, Bob explains that it usually takes 30-40 minutes for the shopping. Asked what they do during the down time, Bob joked that they "buy a lottery ticket and look around the (grocery) store for free samples."

Each of the shoppers—many in their 90s—lives alone and prides themselves on their independence. To help with their bags is one thing, but to shop for them would undermine their sense of independence.

How do the senior shoppers feel about Al and Bob: "I would



RSVP volunteers Al Gurevich (left) and Bob Malin (right) drive the weekly Mercer Island grocery shopping van.

not be getting around without them." "Only way I'd get something to eat;" "They're the most patient men I've ever met."

Job complete, Al and Bob head back to the community center. I asked them what they get out of this wonderful service they provide each week. "A sandwich," says Al. "Jeanette (Jeanette Eggebrecht, coordinator of this program) gives us a sandwich." "I'm still trying to talk her into a beer, too."

Without RSVP volunteers Al Gurevich and Bob Malin the senior grocery shopping van wouldn't operate. Thanks to them.

For information on the Mercer Island Senior Center contact Robin Knudson at RSVP: 206-957-4779 ext. 116. ●

Hiking to Poo Poo Point

Auburn Senior Activity Center *by Peter Langmaid*

The morning I planned to join hikers from the Auburn Senior Activity Center at the Poo Poo Point trailhead, in Issaquah, the weather was overcast, cool, and drizzly. Perfect hiking weather for me, but reason to cancel for some. However, when the Auburn Senior Activity Center van pulled into the trailhead parking lot, out stepped 13 smiling hikers outfitted in the latest high-tech raingear, each carrying a fat daypack and armed with either one or two adjustable walking poles. I was impressed.

Ranging in age from late 50s to Dick Richards at 83, these hikers are fit, experienced, and determined. Karen, playing the role of 'sweep' (that is, she goes last to make sure everyone's accounted for) told me they have only one rule: "No whining!" They hike year-round with no (almost) days off for bad weather.

Poo Poo Point was named after the sound of a whistle signal used by loggers to communicate with each other in the field. The trail to Poo Poo Point climbs 1,500 feet in 1.7 miles—no easy task

for hikers of any age.

The well-maintained trail is a steady climb with occasional steep spots. I hung back with Karen and learned how well organized the hiking group is. All new hikes (like this one), or hikes that haven't been done for a couple of years, are pre-hiked by members of the scouting committee, who then rate

the hike (2-4) in terms of exertion. Scouting committee members are all volunteers. For safety, the 'lead' and the 'sweeper' have walkie-talkies, each hiker has a whistle, and someone trained in CPR carries a first aid kit.

Karen told me that she's had bypass surgery and her doctor told her she needed to walk five miles a day. On her own she couldn't force herself farther than two miles. The

hiking group has transformed the drudgery of exercise into an exciting, social, and energetic wilderness experience. Karen also identified flowers and small animals for me as we made our way along the trail.





Health Matters

by Mary Harvey, MD

Summer pitfalls: how to avoid or treat

Many people regard Memorial Day as the unofficial start of summer. Unfortunately, there are some pitfalls which can take the joy out of the breakout from the winter doldrums.

Barbecue injury:

The “barbecue grill injury” is familiar to emergency room doctors on Memorial Day weekend. On that weekend, the intrepid dad (yes, this is mainly a man’s injury) pulls out the grill for a much anticipated family barbecue. Dad finds that last year’s lighter fluid is gone, and he or mom forgot to get more at the store. Instead, he grabs the gasoline can in the garage, throws some gas on the grill and tosses in a match. A giant whoosh of flame follows, causing burns on face, chest, arms, and hands.

Treatment of barbecue injuries:

If the burns are mild (light pink skin and no shortness of breath), they can be treated with cold compresses and aloe vera. If the skin is red, blistered, or has open sores (first, second, and third degree burns), or there is a lot of pain, a trip to the ER is necessary. The doctor may want

to treat the patient with pain medicines (no, you won’t get addicted) and rapidly tapering doses of steroids. Unless you are diabetic or have an ulcer, steroids are safe. Some patients, with open areas of skin, may require more intensive treatment such as treatment for fluid loss and infection control and are most often hospitalized.

The moral of this story: Send mom to the store for more charcoal lighter!

Simple Bee stings:

Almost everyone has had a bee sting and knows how painful they can be. Most bee stings are simple injuries without serious effects. A simple bee sting is one which does not cause red rash, swelling of eyes or lips, shortness of breath, wheezing, or loss of consciousness.

Treatment of simple bee stings:

Remove the stinger if present. Pain from the sting can be relieved by mixing water with meat tenderizer to make a paste and applying it to the sting area.

Serious bee stings:

More serious symptoms than those listed above may occur in

persons with multiple stings or those allergic to bee sting venom. These can be fatal and in all cases require a trip to the ER. In the case of breathing problems or loss of consciousness, call 911. Check the unconscious person for a pulse. If none is present, begin CPR.

The moral of this story: Check for bees when you picnic and do not “bee” around bees!

Food poisoning:

Some common types of food poisoning include the following:

Staphylococcus strains can cause non-bloody diarrhea and vomiting. It may be found in poorly refrigerated dairy products, mayonnaise in potato salad, and other sources.

Salmonella bacteria are found in under cooked chicken, eggs and some processed foods. This causes abdominal pain, diarrhea, and fever.

E. coli bacteria causes most cases of “traveler’s” diarrhea (usually non-bloody) which one might get in a foreign country. This diarrhea may be treated with Pepto-Bismol or an antibiotic. Certain strains of E. coli, however, can cause life-threatening illness, especially in children. If present in undercooked ground beef, it causes bloody diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, and may lead to other very serious problems.

Botulinism symptoms are breathing problems and paralysis of arms and legs. These bacteria are found in poorly canned food,

usually home-canned. It can be rapidly fatal.

Treatment for food poisoning:

Treatments exist for all types of food poisoning. The main danger comes from dehydration caused by diarrhea and vomiting. Treat dehydration by changing to a clear liquid diet and drinking plenty of fluids. Athletic drinks are often good as they may contain potassium and glucose. If symptoms last more than 24 hours, there is fever, bloody diarrhea, or shortness of breath, go to the ER.

The moral of this story: Run away from suspicious food lest you have to run away later in the day!

Lacerations:

If they are deep or long, you may need stitches. If you have any doubt, go to the ER. Remember that lacerations can only be sutured in the first 6 hours after the laceration due to the threat of infection. The physician may also use butterfly bandages for some lacerations.

The moral of this story: A stitch in time saves nine.

A last word:

This information is intended to help you prevent some common summer injuries. I want you to be aware, but don’t let it prevent your summer fun.

The moral of this story: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. ●

Mary Harvey is a retired physician and an RSVP ambassador.

Poo Poo Point Hike, *continued from page 4*

The group generally stayed together as we climbed up through the forest. Regular breaks gave everyone a chance to adjust their clothing layers, get a drink and snack, catch their breath, and re-group. Our pace was a comfortable “conversational” pace, and talk is what these people did! I overheard conversations about seasickness, the TV program *Dancing with the Stars*, and wildflowers—which were in full bloom. Difficult stretches of trail were called out, and fellow hikers helped each other through these sections.

The views from Poo Poo Point are reportedly spectacular: Lake Sammamish, Issaquah, and, from a slightly different place, Mt. Rainier.

We could see nothing! Though it wasn’t cold and it didn’t rain, the weather never cleared, and as we neared the top fog and a breeze engulfed us.

We lunched, hoods up, in small groups. Everyone but me had gloves, a wool hat, and extra clothing. With numb hands I scribbled reminder notes for this article. Two days later I can barely read my own handwriting.

Also at lunch I got to know a bit about Dick Richards. Dick started hiking with the group in 1999, and he credits it with

transforming his life. “I have more friends now than I ever had before. My hiking companions are like brothers and sisters,” says Dick. Besides the hiking group, Dick uses the Auburn Senior Activity Center for exercise classes, among other activities.

On the hike down I settled in behind Cheryl, the now retired former director of the Auburn Senior Activity Center, who drove the van and goes on as many hikes as she can. Cheryl explained that there are about 50 active hikers in the club, and only 14 seats on the van. Each person can sign up for two hikes per month (nominal fee and you bring your own lunch) and hang around the other Friday mornings hoping for a cancellation. They try and schedule the hikes within a two-hour drive of the center, but they do go to Mt. Rainier each summer, too. All hikes are rated and described.

Another tradition the group steadfastly observes is stopping for ice cream on the way back to the senior center. Together, they’ve visited every ice cream vendor within their two-hour range. Some were looking forward to a milk shake, while others expressed a preference for vanilla soft ice cream dipped in chocolate.

For information on the Auburn Senior Activity Center, contact Robin Knudson at RSVP: 206-957-4779 ext. 116. ●

Recreating the old fashioned picnic

by Linda Urbaniak

When was the last time you went on an old fashioned picnic? The kind where everybody brought something, and there were contests like egg throwing and three-legged races? And somebody brought the makings for homemade peach ice cream and everybody helped crank the ice cream maker?

The best picnic I can ever remember took place on July 4th, 1947. "The War" was over and everyone we knew was in a good mood and all my parents' friends got together near a lake in northern Idaho. The picnic included every one of the things just mentioned plus "Aunt Min's" famous fried chicken (cold of course); a great potato salad made by my mother's best friend Neva that included that strange ingredient (almost unheard of in 1947), sour cream; Mom's baked beans, held hot in a cast iron pot; pies and cakes and that wonderful peach ice cream that everyone help churn.

After filling our stomachs to almost bursting, the games began. The parents played cards and told fishing tales and the kids threw raw eggs back and forth, getting further and further away from one another. The two boys

who made it the furthest apart won a string of firecrackers. The three-legged race was won by my friend Jeanie and her cousin who managed to figure out how to run with a leg of one tied to the opposite leg of the other.

We ate on blankets on the ground and got sand in our food and were surrounded by teasing and laughter. Later that evening we had a big fire where all the men lit their "punks" to set off the fireworks. It provided the heat for roasted hot dogs for supper and toasted marshmallows that were made into s'mores with melted Hershey bar pieces between graham crackers while we watched the colorful explosions.

My family sometimes goes on picnics even now, but they are few and far between and certainly don't include homemade ice cream. Where could we plug in the ice cream maker? And we usually look for somewhere to barbeque hamburgers or steaks and only rarely include that filled-with-things-bad-for-you standard of yesterday, the hot dog. And somehow, now, we always need a table. But wouldn't it be fun to repeat a picnic of yesterday before everyone forgets how? ●

Save the date!

RSVP "Breakfast for Champions"

October 7th

Emerald Downs Racetrack

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.

Aunt Min's Famous Fried Chicken (for 12)

- Three whole chickens, cut up (or 18 to 24 legs, thighs and breasts)
- 1 pint buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Soak chicken pieces over night in refrigerator in buttermilk, salt and pepper.

- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon marjoram
- 3/4 teaspoon thyme
- 1 ½ teaspoons paprika
- Oil for frying

Drain chicken, but do not pat dry. Mix flour with ¼ teaspoon salt, garlic salt, marjoram, thyme, paprika and pepper to taste. Roll chicken pieces in flour mix and put onto waxed paper or plastic wrap. Let sit 15 minutes. Roll again in flour mix.

Pour 1 ½ inch oil into large frying pan. Heat oil (original recipe called for lard) to 350 degrees. Fry chicken pieces a few at a time until toasty brown, removing to flat baking dish. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Make sure oil returns to 350 degrees before frying each pan load of chicken. When all pieces are fried, place in oven for 15 minutes or until all chicken pieces are cooked through. For cold chicken, chill at least 4 hours.

Neva's Sour Cream Potato Salad (for 12)

- 12 russet potatoes
- 6 eggs
- ¼ cup minced celery
- 1 small Walla Walla onion, minced
- ½ cup chopped bread and butter pickles
- ½ small cucumber, peeled, seeded and chopped fine
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon celery salt
- 2 Tablespoons mustard
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- Paprika (optional)

Boil potatoes with skins on until just tender. Make sure skins do not split. Cook eggs until hard boiled (about 12-15 minutes) then cool in iced water. Cool potatoes under cold water until just cool enough to handle. Dice potatoes while still warm into large bowl. Add celery, onions, pickles celery salt, salt and pepper. Cover and place in refrigerator until cold. Add cucumber, mayonnaise, sour cream and mustard. Check to see if flavorings are correct. If too dry, add mayo and sour cream in equal parts until desired consistency. Just before serving, stir in peeled, chopped eggs. Sprinkle with paprika.

Fresh Peach Ice Cream (8 good servings, 12 small servings) (Genuine heart killer, whole cream, ice cream)

- 6 egg yolks
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 cup sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups heavy (whipping) cream
- 1 teaspoon genuine almond extract
- 2 cups crushed fresh peaches
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice

Crush peaches and add brown sugar and lemon juice. Cover and let sit in refrigerator. Whisk together eggs, milk, sugar and salt in the top of a double boiler. Set top over simmering water (not boiling) and whisk constantly while cooking until thick and fully cooked. Cool, whisking frequently, then add cream and extract. Following directions of your ice-cream freezer, churn until partly frozen. Add peach mixture. Finish freezing.



Aging with Wisdom

by Carol Scott-Kassner

An invitation to play

You may remember the lyrics of the Gershwin song, *Summertime*, from the opera, *Porgy and Bess*. *Summertime, and the livin' is easy. Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high...* That languid melody weaves a kind of image of summer that is laid back and gentle. Certainly, the invitation to be outside and to be with others in more relaxed and playful ways is a part of the delight of summer.

Slowing down and playing are also important for the development of our inner lives. Many of us, raised with a Protestant work ethic, feel guilty if we do not have a long "to do" list to accomplish every day. So the invitation to change pace through play may make us uncomfortable. Yet a little play can reap great benefits for us.

Play that involves physical activity is great to get our blood flowing and our muscles working. It helps to keep our bodies in shape and our blood pressure down. Play can also involve gardening – which has the added benefit of getting us in touch with nature and the earth – things that nourish our spirits. Such play can help reduce stress, build our immune systems, and just let us have fun.

Both playing games with others in a group or playing games alone can help our brains to think strategically. Being with others in social activities such as dancing is not only good for our bodies, but good for our souls, as we connect with others and express our joy through movement. Singing in a church or community choir can also be a regular form of play, which helps increase our lung power and our sense of belonging to something outside ourselves. As we work to follow the music and the words, we are also exercising our brains. And, we are expressing a range of emotions suggested by the music we are singing.

Being with family and friends at picnics or in other communal contexts can be occasions for sharing stories and laughter. These times help us to be in the moment, to reduce our worries and boredom. We can connect with different generations and take delight in the antics of those younger than we are. Laughter helps to make life worth living.

Summer can be a time to re-energize, reconnect and refresh. I hope that you'll find many play-filled moments to share with others. ●

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. They can be contacted at: www.agingwithwisdom.com or agingwithwisdom@msn.com

Member highlights:

Mt. Si Senior Center member **Gretchen Wilson** was featured as Citizen of the Week in the Snoqualmie Valley Record...Kent Senior Center recognized **Jan Koch** as Volunteer of the Year, **Sharon Crain** as the Pete Gomes Citizen of the Year and **Yoshiye Yanagawa** with the Longevity Award for 20+ years of service...**Mary Lou Hall** and **Linda Schick** received a 5th Ruby Pin for 2,500 hours of service at Valley Medical Center and **Anne Goodfellow** received her 11th Honor Guard for 11,500 hours of lifetime service!!...Enumclaw honored 3 volunteers for their "incredible dedication and commitment to senior center programs": **Arlene Bertrand** – Bingo Caller, **Angela Taix** – Glee Club Leader, and **Phil Janosik** – Genealogy Instructor...The Port of Seattle airport volunteer program honored **Jack Papegaay** as their Volunteer of the Year. ●

Signs of life?

In an office:

"After tea break, staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board."



Senior on the Street

by Peter Langmaid

Your favorite picnic memory...

"Sandwiches! I loved the sandwiches."

~John Northey



"When we were building our house (1949). Friends and family would come over to help and eat."

~Ellen Davey



"Riding the elephants in Golden Gate Park"

~Marge Davis



"Penrose Park annual potluck."

~Dick Richards



"I have 45 first cousins, and we used to have cousins' picnics on the 4th of July."

~Louise Wadsworth



"Everyone from Missouri who lived in Spokane would gather for Missouri picnics. I remember being there with my grandmother."

~Donna Reiss



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 Robin Knudson at 206.957.4779 x116. – or visit our website at www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/Volunteer/RSVP for regional volunteer opportunity listings.

Volunteering

Special Summer Opportunities: Summer is a time to be active and get out into the community! If you have some extra time over the summer, consider adding a summer volunteer job with one of the following agencies: City-wide Concierge and Visitors Center, Lettuce Link, Communities in Schools, Fare Start or First Tee of Greater Seattle.

Habitat for Humanity: New Partner Site! Habitat for Humanity builds hope and builds communities by building homes with volunteer labor, sells them at cost with no profit and no interest to working families in Seattle and South King County. Their volunteer needs are construction, retail help at their Home Improvement Outlet, office help and event preparation.

Multifaith Works: New Partner Site! Help support people living in isolation and loneliness due to life-threatening illness, recovery from drugs/alcohol addiction, inmates in local jails/prisons or family members grieving the loss of a loved one. Volunteers provide one-to-one emotional support or work as a member of a Care Team which provides community, friendship and practical support.

Seattle's Union Gospel Mission: New Partner Site! Help low-income seniors and have fun by volunteering at luncheons, events, road trips or summer camp! Other regular volunteer positions include hair stylists, office helpers, food box delivery drivers and more.

Providence Hospice of Seattle: New Partner Site! Hospice volunteers support patients and their families by providing companionship, respite care and light household tasks. Comprehensive training prepares you for this rewarding and meaningful work.

Baby Boutique: New Partner Site! Baby Boutique provides clothing, baby equipment, diapers, infant formula, toys, books and other essential items at no cost to homeless children ages 0-17. As a volunteer, you will provide service to families in a manner consistent with working in a retail store.

Communities in Schools of Seattle: New Partner Site! Helping kids stay in school and prepare for life is what volunteers do through Communities in Schools. This summer help coordinate or sort items for a school supply drive, "Stuff the Bus" or be an event coordinator. In the fall, volunteers will be needed to be reading buddies, math tutors, middle school math coaches, and helping out at events throughout the year!

Taproot Foundation: Work on a team of professionals who volunteer on 5-6 month projects for non-profits. Projects include creating websites, branding strategies, key messages, naming services, visual identities, printed brochures, annual reports, donor databases, human resource programs and strategy management services.

Washington Wilderness Coalition: New Partner Site! Help preserve and restore wild areas in Washington State through citizen empowerment, support for grassroots community groups, advocacy and public education. Volunteer jobs include: office worker, event planner, researcher, business plan developer, historian, librarian, newsletter editor and volunteer coordinator.

In Our Community

What Color is your Parachute Now? : Richard Bolles, highly-regarded motivational speaker and author of top-selling job search and career exploration book *What Color is your Parachute?* will be speaking in Seattle.
When: Wednesday, June 25
Time: 7:00 to 8:30 pm
Where: Town Hall Seattle, 1119 8th Ave., Seattle
Cost: UWAA members, Centerpoint Institute and Next Chapter members - \$9.00, General Admission - \$12.00.

Adult Overnight Opportunities: 1) Overnight Hike, August 25 & 26 at the Olympic Park Institute on the shore of Lake Crescent. 2) Camp Wrinkle Ranch: 3 days and 2 nights (September 9-11) at Falls Creek retreat Center located 35 miles west of Chehalis. Both trips offered through the Auburn Senior Center. Call 253-931-3016 for details.

Summer Solstice Dance: Sunday, June 22 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the North Bellevue Community Center – 4063 148th Ave. NE, Bellevue. Celebrate the Solstice while enjoying the tunes of the Big Band era with the Sounds of Swing. Cost is \$5.00. Call 425-452-7681.

End of Summer Picnic: Wednesday, August 20 from 11:30 to 2:00 pm at the North Bellevue Community Center. Lunch provided by Madison House. We will eat indoors, but there will be outdoor activities. Call 425-452-7681.

Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens Senior Coffee Hour: Thursday, July 17, 10:00 to 11:00 am. Special guest will be Bruce Harrell, Seattle City Council Member. Central Building, 810 3rd Ave., Seattle, 4th floor Boardroom. Call 206-553-3000.

Evergreen Health Care "Bone Appetite": a registered dietitian will explore foods and recipes that can help strengthen bones and slow the affects of osteoporosis. Wednesday, June 25, 10:00 to 11:15 am. Redmond Senior Center. Call 425-556-2314.

Mill Creek Senior Center 50's Sock Hop Lunch Cruise: Thursday, June 26, 10:00 to 3:00 pm. Pull out your poodle skirts, bobby socks, and saddle shoes for a fun-filled time on the Royal Argosy. Cost: \$50.00 members, \$55.00 non-members. Call 425-357-6002.

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: _____
