

Spring Newsletter 2015



Island
Volunteer
Caregivers



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Kitsap Great Give® Every Dollar Goes Further on May 5th!

Last May, IVC participated in the first annual Kitsap Great Give. This online day of giving, which will be held this year on May 5th from Midnight to 11:59:59 pm, raised more than \$540,000 for Kitsap County non-profits last year!

The Kitsap Community Foundation, along with Presenting Partner United Way of Kitsap County, is sponsoring this event and we are very excited to participate again. Last year IVC received nearly \$7,000 in this one day campaign!

On May 5th, you can make donations online at www.kitsapgreatgive.org and we will receive a bonus match that will increase your impact. There will also be incentive awards such as \$1,000 for the non-profit with the highest donation total before 9 a.m. (come on you early birds!), awards for the most donors by the end of the day, and a 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. hourly Golden Ticket where a randomly selected donation earns that non-profit an additional \$250.

A large percentage of the people who participated last year said they had never done online giving before but would definitely considering doing it again. It's a very easy, secure process and you can easily designate several different organizations to support.



Our goal this year is to raise \$10,000 through this event, so please share this information with your friends and family. We sincerely ask for your support so we can continue to provide essential services to allow our neighbors to age in place, as well as activities that bring joy and meaning to both care receivers and volunteers.

Thank you for all you do!

Grief Support Groups

Island Volunteer Caregivers offers Grief Support Groups for those who have experienced profound losses in their lives. Our support groups provide a safe place where people can feel comfortable with their emotions in a confidential and secure environment, and meet others who are also experiencing grief and loss.

IVC offers a Drop-in Grief Support Group that meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of every month. In January, we started offering a 12 month Closed-ended Grief Support Group using the text *Understanding your Grief: Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing your Heart* by Alan Wolfelt. Cook Family Funeral Home has graciously donated the texts to the group. We anticipate starting another closed-ended group in the summer/fall. For more info about these groups please contact Robin Gaphni-robin@ivcbainbridge.org.

One Call For All

IVC received its first distribution from One Call For All at the end of January in the amount of \$ 18,944. This is over \$1,000 more than what we received last year. We are filled with gratitude for everyone who contributed to this campaign.



Strategic Plan Update for Island Volunteer Caregivers (IVC)

We are very pleased to announce that IVC has completed our 5 Year Strategic Plan, which is now available for viewing on our website at www.ivcbainbridge.org.

From input we received during our Listening Sessions, at a Board and staff retreat, and through strategic partner interviews and research on best practices of similar organizations, we identified 6 main goals in the areas of community engagement and collaboration, program development, volunteer recruitment and retention, expansion, and Board and organizational development. Each of the goals has a number of strategies and actions for achieving them and now that the plan is complete, we are moving into the implementation phase. We are now looking at the timing of specific initiatives and forming committees when appropriate to help carry those out.

In developing this plan, we learned a great deal about IVC as an organization, about ourselves and about our community. We refined our Mission Statement and established a statement of values and beliefs. One that speaks very strongly to me is: *We are called to be caring people who give help, hope, kindness and compassion to others in need; and, by so doing, we experience joy, enrichment and essential meaning in our own lives.*

A huge thank you to John and Judy McKenzie, our pro bono consultants, who continue to provide us with their amazing expertise and dedication.

It Takes a Village

On February 28th, about 70 people from all over Bainbridge gathered at the Waterfront Park Community Center to explore the burgeoning Village concept. This included representatives from several local non-profits, the City of Bainbridge, healthcare providers, the Bainbridge Island Police Department, Kitsap Transit, and many interested citizens. The Village is a coordinated network of volunteer and reduced cost professional services that enable residents to age in place in their communities. It is a national movement that started in Boston in 2002, and has now grown to over 135 Villages nationwide, and over 150 in development.

It was a very informative and productive day, as people came together to explore the possibilities of creating a Village on Bainbridge Island. Ken Pyburn, the keynote speaker for the event, said that Bainbridge is ahead of the curve in many ways already, in part because of the services that local non-profits like IVC are already providing. IVC's mission of assisting our seniors and disabled citizens so that they maintain their dignity, independence and quality of life ties in beautifully with the concept of a Village. We will continue to be involved in discussions and learning more about the concept and whether there might be a collaborative role for IVC in providing some of these services.

If you are interested in learning more about the Village concept, please go to the newly created Bainbridge Island Village website: www.bivillage.org. Right now they need people who are interested in moving this forward with their ideas and energy.

New Focus: Life-Enrichment

For many years, IVC has provided much needed core services to our care receivers, such as transportation to medical and therapy appointments and to pick up groceries or prescriptions.

We are now realizing more and more that life-enrichment opportunities can be equally as important to a person's overall health and well-being. Research has clearly identified the connection between social isolation and loneliness with increased health risks in a number of areas.

As part of one of the goals identified in our new Strategic Plan, a Life Enrichment Committee has been established to address this need. The first meeting was held last week and there was lots of brainstorming and sharing of great ideas. The first step is to identify what life-enrichment means to our care receivers. For some it may be simply having someone to come and spend time with them and provide companionship. For others, it may be the opportunity to attend a cultural event with a volunteer, such as a concert or performance they can no longer drive to. And for another it might be taking a spin through the Bloedel Reserve and enjoying the beauty and serenity of the surroundings.

Some of these activities are already happening on a limited basis but in the months ahead, we will be looking for volunteers who are interested in being a part of more life enrichment opportunities.



Last week I had the pleasure of meeting one of our care receivers and one of our volunteers for coffee at Blackbird Bakery. It was a joy to sit and talk about their experiences with IVC and what it means to them. What struck me the most during our conversation is just how reciprocal the relationship is between volunteer and care receiver.

Natalie has been with IVC as a care receiver since 2010. She has MS and has relied on IVC for rides to appointments and life enriching events, such as a weekly knitting class at Church Mouse. As she put it, having a disability can leave you feeling very lonely and adrift. IVC volunteers have stepped into her life and helped fill a void, and they are doing it out of

love, caring and compassion. After she was diagnosed, her MS Support Group Leader told her that MS is going to weed your garden, and you are going to see kindness bloom. Natalie said she has witnessed this blooming effect in so many ways over the years as she has worked with IVC volunteers.

Ray is a relatively new volunteer who came to us via the IVC Grief Support Group. As Ray put it, a major part of his life's purpose was taking care of his family. Following the death of his wife almost three years ago, and with his son and daughter grown, he found himself feeling empty and unmoored. He moved to Bainbridge a little over a year ago, and started attending the IVC Grief Support Group. After a few months, he saw an article in the Bainbridge Islander about IVC. He felt that he was ready to step in and give it a try. Ray has found that volunteering with care receivers this past year has given him a purpose in life, and a reason to get out of bed. He has stepped up in numerous ways-from driving care receivers to appointments to a weekly companionship visit with a 95-year-old woman. As he puts it, the empty is starting to fill.

Sitting with Ray and Natalie I was struck by how important the connection is between care receiver and volunteer. It goes beyond just providing transportation or assistance to someone in need. Instead, it enables both the care receiver and the volunteer to experience meaning in their lives. As both Ray and Natalie said at different points in the conversation it goes both ways.

IVC Welcomes New "Behind the Scenes" Volunteers

We all know that IVC would not exist without its wonderful volunteers. Providing volunteer services to our care receivers is central to our mission, and we are grateful for each and every request that gets filled. But we also have some other volunteers who are helping us behind the scenes, and we want to give a shout out to them!

Thank you to Catheryn and Eric who have taken on the task of writing and sending out birthday cards to our care receivers. There's something very special about receiving a handwritten note on your birthday, especially in this era of the internet. The cards we send are handmade and donated to us by Stephens House, and they are beautiful works of art.

We also want to thank Sally who comes in monthly to enter all of those volunteer hours and miles driven into our database. These statistics are becoming increasingly important as we apply for grants, and we are so grateful to Sally for getting them into our system in such a timely manner.

We also have a volunteer-Daneq who comes in once a week and makes a personal check-in phone call to our care receivers. Most of our care receivers do not have e-mail, so this is a great way for us to touch base with them. Daneq has a wonderful manner, and connects easily with the care receivers. They are delighted to hear from her.

Finally, we have a new volunteer from the Bainbridge Island School District Adult Living Program who comes in once a week and helps us with the very important tasks of shredding documents, recycling and alphabetizing. We are so pleased he has joined the IVC cadre of volunteers.

Leave a Legacy! Have you considered a gift to Island Volunteer Caregivers in your will or estate plan?



Island Volunteer Caregivers

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Helping Hands Open Hearts

Support provided in part by:



SAVE THE DATE!

IVC Summer Dinner Auction
Thursday, July 30th, 2015
Kiana Lodge

Thank you to our 2014 sponsors:

Platinum



Todd H. Adams DDS

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Supporting:

Town & Country Markets

New Motion Physical Therapy

Our Mission:

Island Volunteer Caregivers works within community to support life-enriching connections between caring people and the elderly and persons with disabilities to enable their independence, dignity, health, and well-being. (Revised 2015)

Our Vision:

A world of compassionate communities where people of all ages value and care for the elderly, persons with disabilities and others in need.