

Winter Newsletter 2014



Island
Volunteer
Caregivers



Board and Staff:

Janie Ekberg, President
Karen Conoley,
Vice- President
Eric Cederwall, Treasurer
Peg Nickum, Secretary
Len Beil
Carol White
Beverley Kraus
George Shipe
Marilyn Dearsley
Stella Ley
Cheryl Denton
Marj Masla
Sandy Young
Dick Goff
Deborah Schenk

Rita Elsberry,
Executive Director
Robin Gaphni,
Program Manager

Emeritus Board Members:

Beulah Downing
Joyce Veterane
Marcy Daley
Craig Merrill
Bob Kuebler
Susan Kuebler

In His Own Words

My name is Garrett Little. For the past eleven years I've been locked in a deadly fight with Chronic Lyme Disease, and, at twenty, have begun to walk the yellow brick road of adulthood. At first I was like Dorothy: confused, and following the poor GPS advice of someone I did not know but seemed well respected by their community. Then, through IVC, I met the Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion; all my new friends volunteered their time and effort to help me get to the Emerald City. Some regularly take a day to drive me into Seattle for medical appointments, others help me get to the food bank. We play backgammon, talk about every available topic, and look for shared interests to further our relationship. Many have become friends, and all have my fondest love. Without their generosity and care I never would've gotten where I am today, never would've begun to leave the bed, the wheelchair, the cane, the house and take a walk on Winslow Way. IVC is an incredible volunteer organization, helping many on Bainbridge succeed at the complex and difficult task of living from day to day.

~Garrett Little, Age 20 Bainbridge Island



Meaningful Gifts

As we approach the traditional season of giving, here are some ways you might consider giving a gift that has lasting impact for someone like Garrett:

1. Sign up to be an IVC Volunteer. Your time and companionship are precious gifts to our care receivers and what you receive in return is immeasurable!
2. For those hard to buy for family members and friends, think about making a donation to IVC in their honor.
3. Make a donation through One Call For All, where you can designate which non-profits you want to support and they will also receive a portion of the undesignated funds.
4. Contact us about becoming a monthly donor. Even a small monthly donation can add up to a lot over the course of the year. One of our monthly donors, Michelle, said, "I was writing my monthly check to IVC and my granddaughter wanted to know what it was for. I explained that it is our responsibility to take care of our neighbors, and IVC is an organization that helps many of the elderly and disabled in our community live independently. It was a great teaching moment."
5. Consider including IVC in your estate plan. Several years ago, one of our care receivers, Geraldine Fisher, named IVC and the Senior Center as beneficiaries of her estate. We worked together to maximize the gift for both organizations and when all was said and done, we each received approximately \$160,000. Those funds have been conservatively invested with good returns. Our goal is to continue adding to these funds to create an endowment that will generate income to help support our operations in years to come.

Did You Know??

IVC has had 92 new care receivers so far this year and 65 new volunteers! As of the end of October, volunteers performed more than 1,700 services on behalf of our care receivers!

National Volunteer Caregiving Network Conference



In October, Rita was fortunate to be able to attend the National Volunteer Caregiving Network Conference in North Carolina, which brought together people from all over the country who are involved with programs very similar to IVC. The timing of this conference was perfect, as it provided the opportunity for networking and learning about how other organizations operate, as we prepared for our Strategic Planning process.

There were excellent workshops on a variety of timely topics, including Recruiting, Engaging and Retaining Volunteers, Strategic/Operational Planning for Non-Profits, Managing Volunteers, Accident and Liability Risks, Fundraising Leadership, and Health to Home (partnerships with Home Care Agencies to reduce hospital readmission rates). There were many opportunities to learn about special programs and best practices used by other organizations and it was inspiring to hear about all the great work these programs are doing in their communities and to learn from others.

Rita was also appointed Ambassador for Washington and will be making contact with other volunteer caregiving organizations in the State and updating their information for the National database.

Boundaries Training

On November 6th, IVC offered an informative training on boundaries called: "Setting Healthy Boundaries When Working with IVC Care Receivers." It was led by Brianna McNamara, Social Worker at Helpline House. The session was both instructional and thought-provoking as she asked us to think of the different ways that boundaries present themselves in our lives (and in our roles as volunteers).

Brianna stressed the need for boundaries, stating they are not meant to punish, but rather are there for the well being and protection of both the volunteer and care receiver. Boundaries keep the relationship between care receiver and volunteer healthy and well-defined. She reiterated that volunteers need to remember that they are providing a professional service to the care receiver, even if a genuine friendship has arisen. We had a lively discussion as people shared their own stories when situations have presented themselves and boundary lines have become murky. Brianna said that acting in isolation is often when boundaries are crossed, and things can turn unhealthy. She reminded everyone that the IVC staff is always around to debrief a situation when it's unclear if a boundary has been crossed.

It was obvious that volunteers were eager to talk about boundaries. IVC is grateful to Brianna for her expertise, and will look at other ways to explore this topic in the future.

New Board Member Joins IVC

At our September Board meeting, we were saddened to hear that John Payne, who served as a Director for 30 months and is also one of our most active volunteers, would be resigning from the Board because he will be spending a good portion of the year at their Arizona home with his recently retired wife, Mary Ruth. He did, however, express his intent to continue as a volunteer caregiver/driver whenever he is here in Washington. We are truly grateful for all the wonderful work John has done with the Board, as a volunteer, and for their financial support for IVC. Thank you for your service John, and for another excuse to visit Arizona in the winter!

Tempering the sadness is our joy of electing a new Board member, Deborah Schenk, to fill out John's term. Deborah and her husband moved to Bainbridge from Brooklyn, New York, one year ago to be closer to their children. She is a mostly retired tax attorney, a Professor of Taxation Emerita for New York University School of Law and Editor-in-chief of *Tax Law Review*.

Deborah has also contributed her legal and financial expertise and leadership skills, as well as her heart, to several non-profits, including the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Community Services and Tax Analysts. She has served in many capacities with Grace Church in Brooklyn Heights and now on the Outreach and Development Committee at Grace Church on Bainbridge. She participated in two hurricane relief trips to Mississippi and New Orleans and helped coordinate restoration efforts in New York City after Hurricane Sandy. She has also been a Compassionate Cook and worked with the Brooklyn Heights Interfaith Homeless Shelter.

Deborah is very supportive of the mission of Island Volunteer Caregivers and is excited to be involved and part of a working Board. We feel very fortunate to have her join us. Welcome to this great community!

Strategic Planning Update for Island Volunteer Caregivers (IVC)

As mentioned in our last newsletter, IVC has embarked on a 5-Year Strategic Plan for the organization. So far we have talked with other organizations like ours around the country, held individual interviews with strategic partners and completed our Listening Tour and our Board's Strategic Planning Retreat. We were very grateful to have had 71 participants over the course of 4 Listening Tour sessions throughout the community, which included volunteers, donors, care receivers, Board members, representatives of other agencies and interested community members.

The 3 focus areas of the Listening Tour were:

- Respectful, exceptional service
- Compelling communication with care receivers, volunteers and the community
- Addressing current and future needs



Participants willingly shared inspiring stories of helping and being helped and offered very constructive feedback on the things they valued about IVC and ways to strengthen our services and presence in the community. The listening tour was the very heart of our planning process and has shaped the rest of our work.

Next we came up with a list of critical issues that were addressed by the Board and staff when they met on November 21st and 22nd for the Strategic Planning Retreat. Out of this retreat came refined mission, vision and belief statements and a set of goals and strategies, which will be incorporated into the final plan. Our Board will finalize the plan early next year and the report will then be made available to the public in March of 2015. We are extremely grateful to all of you who participated and shared your ideas with us to guide and inform the future of Island Volunteer Caregivers.

Interview With Robin Nigash-IVC Volunteer

Robin Nigash began volunteering at IVC this past summer, although she and her teenage daughter have been bringing flowers to the Flowers From the Heart program for a couple of years. Like many, Robin volunteered in the schools when her kids were younger, but now that her children are teenagers, she has more time to volunteer with different types of organizations. We are thrilled that she has chosen to donate her time to IVC!

Robin said that volunteering at IVC is a great way to be a part of our community. It offers her the opportunity to interact with so many different types of people whom she might not otherwise meet. She feels like she is doing the work she is meant to do and that working with seniors is very gratifying. You just can't imagine what you will get out of it—the smallest things can mean so much to someone.

Robin volunteers for both transportation and companionship requests. One of her regular IVC gigs involves visiting a 95-year-old care receiver—Doris—on a weekly basis. The two of them quickly discovered a common love of gardening, and Robin found out that Doris joined the Bainbridge Island Garden Club in 1972. Doris tells Robin about the Garden Club of the past, and Robin fills Doris in on the present. It's a win-win for both of them!

Talking with Robin serves as a reminder of just how reciprocal the relationship is between volunteer and care receiver. Yes, the volunteer starts out by answering a call for a ride or a visit. But inevitably they end up getting something intangible from the care receiver. It may not be as measurable as driving a person to a doctor's appointment but it is almost always memorable.

2014 Annual Summer Dinner Auction Sponsors

Platinum



Gold



Todd H. Adams DDS

Silver



**Supporters: New Motion Physical Therapy
Town & Country Market**

Over \$78,800 raised this year!!



Island Volunteer Caregivers

P.O. Box 11253

375 Ericksen Ave. NE, Ste. 212

Bainbridge Island., WA 98110

206-842-4441

www.ivcbainbridge.org

Helping Hands Open Hearts

Support provided in part by:



Lifting Spirits-The IVC Music Club

From Bach to bluegrass, Pavarotti to the Beatles, show tunes to Spanish guitar, and so much more. Each month a number of IVC care receivers and other Madrona House residents avidly savor a wide variety of soul-stirring music - in gatherings of the new IVC-sponsored Music Appreciation Club.

This happens at Madrona House, usually the month's first Thursday, for an hour starting at 10:30 a.m. IVC volunteers provide rides to participants who need them, and often stay to enjoy the music. The program is one aspect of IVC's efforts to enable opportunities for life-enriching experiences for our care receivers.

Most numbers are presented through CD recordings introduced by IVC volunteers Joanie Nichols and Dick Goff; but sometimes guest musicians contribute live performances. (So far, thanks to cellist Taylor Jensen and to pianist Diane Kurzontkowski!) Participants listen, and talk about the songs and memories, feelings and images they inspire, also their own musical experiences and preferences.

Each month's musical menu is diverse, often with renowned artists. Some is very familiar, others less so. Some of many examples: Puccini opera arias, Bach suites, a Mozart violin concerto, a Rachmaninoff piano concerto, a Strauss Polka; an Argentine dance; Broadway Show songs (Rogers & Hammerstein, West Side Story); Dixieland and Big Band jazz; country Music (Mary Chapin Carpenter); rock and soul (Elvis, Fats Domino, Beatles, Aretha Franklin); folk songs (O Sole Mio, Joan Baez; an Irish sea shanty); singing by Edith Piaf, Tony Bennett, Marilyn Horne, Ray Charles and many others.

Participants' appreciation is very visible. There is quiet listening with closed eyes. But for many (and depending on the piece) the music brings out smiles, clapping, singing or humming along, toe tapping, head bobbing, even arm waving.

Perhaps their joy is summed up by Rogers and Hammerstein's line: "My heart will be blessed with the sound of music."

Mission Statement:

Island Volunteer Caregivers connects those wanting to serve with the elderly, disabled or others requiring support so they can maintain their dignity, independence and quality of life.