

Protecting Older Adults from Fraud: Spotting and Avoiding Romance Scams This Holiday Season

Carly Larson, Program Coordinator | City of Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation

The holiday season is a time of connection, joy, and giving. Unfortunately, it's also a prime time for scammers to prey on those seeking companionship and meaningful relationships. For older adults, romance scams are a particularly deceptive form of fraud, with scammers leveraging emotions to steal money and personal information. Understanding how these scams work and how to protect yourself is vital, especially during this time of year when scammers are always lurking.



Consumer Protection Washington presented at The Center last month and brought valuable resources on fraud prevention

How Romance Scams Work

Romance scams often begin online, through dating websites, social media, or even email. Scammers craft believable profiles, often using stolen photos and fake identities to pose as charming and trustworthy individuals. They may claim to be working abroad, in the military, or in a high-profile career, making it easier to explain why they can't meet in person.

Once they've gained trust, scammers typically exploit emotions by sharing fabricated stories of hardship. They may claim they need money for medical bills, travel expenses, or emergencies. The urgency of their requests, combined with the emotional connection they've established, can pressure victims into sending money or sharing sensitive information.

Why the Holidays?

The holiday season heightens vulnerability to scams. It's a time when many of us reflect on family, relationships, and companionship, and scammers are quick to exploit these sentiments. They may use festive themes to appear more relatable or generous, such as sending virtual holiday cards, exchanging gifts, or sharing nostalgic holiday stories.

Recognizing the Red Flags

To protect yourself or a friend, watch for these common signs of a romance scam:

1. **Too Good to Be True:** If someone seems too perfect or their interest escalates unusually fast, proceed with caution.
2. **Avoiding In-Person Meetings:** Scammers always have excuses for why they can't meet in person, such as being overseas or in a remote location.
3. **Requests for Money:** Any request for financial assistance, regardless of the reason, is a major warning sign. Scammers may even ask for money via wire transfer, gift cards, or cryptocurrency, making it difficult to trace or recover funds.
4. **Inconsistent Stories:** Scammers often slip up when pressed for details. If their stories don't add up, it's a red flag.
5. **Poor Grammar and Spelling:** While not always the case, many scammers use poorly written messages, which could indicate a lack of familiarity with the language or the rushed nature of their schemes.

Steps to Protect Yourself

6. **Verify Their Identity:** Use reverse image searches to check if their photos appear elsewhere online. Be skeptical if their online presence seems limited or inconsistent.
7. **Limit Sharing Personal Information:** Avoid sharing financial details, addresses,

PROTECTING OLDER ADULTS FROM FRAUD Continued on page 3

The Mystery of Giving

By Robin Bush | ISR Communications

We live in a world that emphasizes self-interest and personal gain as the route to happiness, ignoring the one thing that contributes more to our quality of life than any other: giving without expectation of reciprocation.

For centuries, great thinkers and scientists have speculated about the reasons humans give. Today, scientific research reveals giving as the pathway to lasting happiness. "Human beings have survived as a species because we have evolved the capacities to care for those in need and to cooperate." - Dacher Keltner, Codirector of UC Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center.

When we see a need we wish to help resolve, we give our time or resources which in turn makes us feel good. Those good feelings make us want to engage in other opportunities to help others, producing more good feelings. It's a very positive cycle.

Where do those good feelings come from? When we give our time, talent, and resources to others, that selfless act produces dopamine and oxytocin (the "feel-good" chemicals in our bodies). Through fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) technology, we have learned that giving changes blood flow and neuron activity, activating the same pleasure centers in our brains as food and sex. (National Institute of Health) This may partially explain the giving/feel-good cycle.

When we shift our lives to prioritizing the well-being of others and actively giving our time, energy, and resources, we fuel our sense of purpose, fulfillment, and connection with others. When we give from the heart, we don't expect something in return, yet giving produces great returns for us through benefits to our physical and mental health. Did you know that engaging in giving may reduce your blood pressure, reduce stress, and even boost your immune system, which promotes a positive mindset and reduces depression?

Selfless giving means you don't give for the benefit of yourself or out of a sense of obligation; you give for the benefit of others. The impact it ultimately has on you is the unintended positive consequence. Selfless giving grows from your beliefs and values in the importance of being kind and helpful to others in need and an acknowledgment of what you are grateful for in life. When you feel abundance, it's common to feel compelled to share it with others and connect you more deeply with those around you. Giving doesn't need to be something grand. Even the smallest gift has value. Giving may mean giving your time or money; for some, it may mean coupling your skills and interests with the needs and abilities of others. When we find the right match, the more we give, the more we stand to gain. Rarely is what we receive in the same form or even from the same source; in fact, it may come from surprising sources and unexpected ways. "Helping others may just be the secret to living a life that is not only happier but also healthier, wealthier, more productive, and meaningful." Jenny Santi.



THE MYSTERY OF GIVING Continued on page 6

DID YOU KNOW?

The Oak Harbor Senior Center Foundation provides gifts to low-income and socially isolated older adults in North Whidbey?



See page 4 on how to get involved and bring cheer to a senior in need this holiday season.

Whidbey Weekly
www.whidbeyweekly.com

Whidbey Weekly will be hosting our first Community Meetup on Friday, December 6th, 5-7 p.m. at Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce
All those interested, email: editor@whidbeyweekly.com

Daily Program Schedule

MONDAY

8:45 EnhanceFitness
 9 Billiards
 9 Quilting & Textiles
 10 EnhanceFitness
 Low Impact
 10 Mah Jongg
 11:45 Lunch (ISR)
 12 Ping Pong
 1 Art
 1:45 Clogging
 (no December classes, will resume in January)
 3 EnhanceFitness

TUESDAY

8:45 Yoga
 9 Lapidary
 10 Tai Chi
 10 Walking Club
 (Meets at Windjammer Pavilion)
 11 Mexican Train
 11 Tech Drop-In
 1 Knitting & Crocheting
 1 Line Dance
 1 Party Bridge
 3 Active Chair Yoga
 6 Lapidary (By appt)

WEDNESDAY

8:45 Enhance Fitness
 9 Billiards
 9 Lapidary
 10 EnhanceFitness
 Low Impact
 11 Duplicate Bridge
 12 Ping Pong
 3 EnhanceFitness
 5:30 Mah Jongg

THURSDAY

8:45 Yoga
 9 Billiards
 10 Tai Chi
 10 Walking Club
 (Meets at Windjammer Pavilion)
 10 Wii Bowling
 10 Wire Wrap
 11 Mexican Train
 1 Backgammon
 1 Canasta
 3 Active Chair Yoga

FRIDAY

8:45 EnhanceFitness
 9 Billiards
 9 Quilting & Textiles
 10 EnhanceFitness
 Low Impact
 10:30 85 & Better Club
 11:45 Lunch (ISR)
 12 Pinochle
 1 Line Dance
 3 EnhanceFitness
 7 Social Dance
 (2nd Friday)

CLASSES and EVENTS

CLASSES & PROGRAMS:

85 & Better Club

Fridays | 10:30 AM

Are you 85 or over? Come join our new group that meets at The Center for a time to make new friends, share stories and hobbies, reminisce, play games, and talk about life.

Hand, Foot, & Knee Canasta

Thursdays | 1 PM

Free for Members, \$3 for all others
 Discover the joy of playing Hand, Foot and Knee! Whether you're a beginner or looking to sharpen your skills, join us to learn the rules, strategies, and tricks of this exciting card game.

Gong Meditation/Sound Journey

Saturdays | 12/7, 1/4

6:30 – 7:30 PM

\$10 per session

Lay back, close your eyes and experience the easiest way to meditate! Relax into the sacred sounds of the gong and enjoy its many potential benefits such as reducing stress, depression and inflammation, inducing deep relaxation, and leaving you feeling lighter and rejuvenated. The more comfortable you are, the more you will be able to relax into the experience so be sure to bring whatever cushioning you may need to allow you to lay on the floor for 30+ minutes. We recommend a yoga or thicker mat to lay on, as well as one or two pillows for under the head and knees and a light blanket or sheet for warmth. There are also chairs available for those who do not wish to, or cannot, lay comfortably on the floor. You may also wish to bring an eye mask to block out the light and focus inward, a journal to write down any thoughts after the meditation, and a water bottle to stay hydrated. We look forward to sharing these healing sounds with you!



Learn How to Play Mah Jongg

Wednesdays | 5:30pm

Free for Members, \$3 for all others
 Interested in learning how to play Mah Jongg? Join us to learn the Wright-Patterson rules, strategies, and techniques to play confidently. Experienced players are also welcome.



Line Dance

Tuesdays & Fridays | 1 PM

\$20 month for members, \$30 month for all others

\$7 drop-in for members, \$10 drop-in for all others

Learn this partnerless, choreographed style dance to a variety of songs, old and new.

Social Dance

2nd Friday of the Month | 7PM-9 PM

Free, everyone welcome

Dance to a variety of music including East coast swing, West coast swing, waltz, Cha Cha, night club two step, cowboy two step, line-dancing, or freestyle.

EnhanceFitness

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

8:45 – 9:45 AM

\$25 month for members, \$35 month for all others

\$5 drop-in fee for members, \$10 drop-in fee for all others

An hour-long evidence-based exercise class that includes aerobics, strength training, balance exercises, and stretching.

EnhanceFitness Low Impact

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

10:00 – 11:00 AM

\$25 month for members, \$35 month for all others

CLASSES continued on page 4

OHHS Jazz Band Holiday Performance

Friday, December 20 | 11:20 am

Join us at The Center for a special holiday performance put on by the talented high school Jazz Band.

Membership at City of Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation is available for anyone over the age of 50 and is \$40 a year.

TRAVEL LOG

Travel Activity Level Guide

1. Easy - Minimal walking, mostly flat surfaces, chances to sit and rest.
2. Mild - Modest walking distances, potential for a few stairs, prolonged periods of standing and walking. Some opportunities to sit and rest.
3. Moderate - Substantial walking and standing, possible uneven surfaces and stairs. Limited chances to sit and rest.

HOTEL BELLWETHER HOLIDAY BRUNCH (1)

Sunday, December 1 | 10 AM – 3 PM

\$50 for Center members, \$60 for all others

The Hotel Bellwether, located on the Squalicum Marina in Bellingham, will be decked out in Christmas cheer for our

holiday brunch. We'll have a no-host brunch in the Lighthouse Grill which features a wonderful menu of breakfast and lunch options. If time allows, we will incorporate another festive stop to round out the afternoon.

WILD LANTERNS AT THE WOODLAND PARK ZOO (2)

Wednesday, December 4 | 1:30 PM – 10 PM

\$120 for Center members, \$145 for all others

Experience the zoo like never before at Wild Lanterns, where Woodland Park Zoo comes alive with the glow of thousands of colorful lanterns.

HOLIDAY LIGHT TOUR (1)

Tuesday, December 10

Trip 1: 4:45 – 5:45 PM

Trip 2: 6 – 7 PM

\$10 for Center members, \$15 for all others

Experience the magic of the holiday season on our local Holiday Light Tour around Oak Harbor. Hop aboard as we explore the best-decorated neighborhoods and dazzling displays that bring festive cheer to our community. Bring your holiday spirit and enjoy an evening of holiday lights and hot cocoa as we celebrate the season together! Please note: This trip will meet at The Center. Hot cocoa, coffee, and cookies will be provided.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES:

December 24 & 25 for Christmas

January 1st for New Year's Day



Planning ahead is simple.
 The benefits are immense.

Contact us today to discuss pre-arrangements or transfer of existing arrangements.

WALLIN STUCKY FUNERAL HOME

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 5533 East Harbor Road • Freeland • 360-221-6600
 www.wallinfuneralhome.com



PROTECTING OLDER ADULTS FROM FRAUD Continued from page 1

or other sensitive information early in a relationship.

- Consult with Loved Ones: Talk to trusted friends or family members about your interactions. They may spot red flags you've missed.
- Be Skeptical of Urgent Requests: Scammers often create false emergencies to pressure you into acting quickly. Take a step back and evaluate the situation.
- Stick to Reputable Platforms: Use well-known dating websites that have safety protocols in place. These platforms often monitor suspicious activity.
- Report Suspicious Activity: If you suspect a scam, report it to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) or the dating platform used for contact.

What to Do If You've Been Scammed

If you've fallen victim to a romance scam, know that you're not alone, and it's important to act quickly:

- Stop Contact Immediately: Cease all communication with the scammer.
- Report the Incident: Notify the platform where you met the scammer, and file a report with the FTC at ftc.gov/complaint.
- Alert Your Bank: If you've sent money, contact your bank or financial institution to see if transactions can be reversed.
- Seek Support: Fraud victims often feel shame, but it's important to talk about your experience. Many community organizations and support groups can help you navigate the aftermath.

The Power of Awareness

Fraud prevention starts with awareness. Older adults are often targeted due to perceived vulnerability, but by staying informed and vigilant, you can protect yourself and your loved ones.

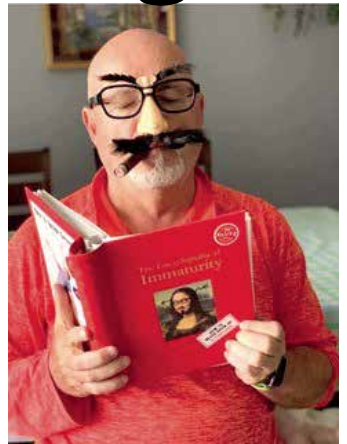
If you're unsure about someone's intentions or suspect a scam, trust your instincts and seek guidance. Recently, we hosted Consumer Protection Washington at The Center who offered an in-depth presentation on fraud prevention and gave us a list of valuable resources. We plan to hold more events like this next year so keep an eye out for future fraud prevention classes.

This holiday season, prioritize your safety and emotional well-being. While companionship and connection are invaluable, ensuring that they're genuine is crucial. Remember, a healthy relationship—whether romantic or platonic—is built on mutual trust, honesty, and respect. Stay alert, stay informed, and enjoy the season with peace of mind.

For more resources on scam prevention or to report suspicious activity, visit ftc.gov/romancescams. Together, we can build a community that's resilient against fraud.

Grandpa Magic

Seasons Greeting Gramps & Grams! Don't know if you are going to have your grandkids around the house this season or not. Looks like I am going to be celebrating without them around the house this year which is a bummer. I have decided to keep fueling their Lego craze by getting them some bigger models. Once the models are built, I have them write their name and date on the bottom of the model. If I'm around, I make sure I put my initials on it. Maybe they will save them, maybe not BUT I know that I still have things that my kids made when they were young. Another item we have in our house are a couple of games that pack small and play big, "Exploding Kittens" and "Unstable Unicorns", send the game to them and keep a game at your home.



My wife and I have a digital frame called NIXPLAY, you can order it on Amazon. It is an ABSOLUTE MUST for grandparents. You and your family members can wirelessly load photos and video, and this nice frame will play then for you. You don't have to worry about going on Facebook to find photos, your kids can send photos right to your frame. Tell your kids that this is what YOU want for Christmas. If you have young readers for grandkids, my new favorite book is "Hocus Pocus Practice Focus, the making of a magician!" by Amy Kimlat. You can find it on Amazon.

OK. You are at the Family Feast, and you want to have some fun? Here's some perfect Grampa Betchas. Announce that you can make your grandkid say "Brown". Then start asking them to name the colors of various object around the room, making sure not to point to anything Brown or Blue. After four objects, quickly ask "What are the colors of the American flag?" When they respond, you say "I win, I told you I could make you say 'blue!'" When they say, "You didn't say 'Blue' you said Brown!" Then say, "You're right, but NOW I win because you just said Brown!" (make sure there is nothing around for them to throw at you). Betcha number two. Double or nothing, I bet you can't count from ten to one BACKWARDS! Kids (and adults) will say "10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1!" You tell them that they lose and give someone else a try. The answer is...1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10! (Again, make sure there are no items for them to throw at you)

Q: "What word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?" - SHORT

Q: "What nail should you ever hit with a hammer?" - Your FINGERNAIL

Please email me with any ideas YOU may have for me to share! Follow me on Facebook at JR Russell for more wisdom!

EXTENDED TRAVEL:

EXTENDED TRAVEL WITH collette

Join us for more information about each trip at the travel presentations held at The Center in Oak Harbor.

French Riviera

Travel Presentation:
Friday, September 27
2:00 PM



May 8-16, 2025

\$4,529 DBL
\$5,529 SGL

Nice, Food Tours, Monaco, Monte Carlo, St. Paul de Vence

Italy

Travel Presentation:
Wednesday, November 13
1:00 PM



Sept. 15-24, 2025

\$5,529 DBL
\$6,529 SGL

Rome, Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica, Florence, Venice

Christmas Markets

Travel Presentation:
Wednesday, December 11
11:00 AM



Dec. 1-8, 2025

\$3,329 DBL
\$3,829 SGL

Innsbruck, Seefeld, Carriage Ride, Salzburg, Munich

51 SE Jerome St., Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Front Desk:

360-279-4580

Passport services available by appointment. Photos available during business hours.

Current Business Hours:
Mon-Fri, 8:30 am - 4 pm
Additional evening and weekend classes and events as scheduled

Yearly Membership Dues: \$40
Available for anyone 50+ years

Liz Lange • 360-279-4581
Recreation Manager
Carly Larson • 360-279-4583
Program Coordinator

Send comments and suggestions to thecenter@oakharbor.org

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HOLIDAY MARKET
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH | 9AM TO 2PM
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Unique gifts, handmade items, and quality products!

Staying Warm and Safe During Power Outages: A Guide for Older Adults

Jessica Sanchez, Recreation Intern | Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation

Winter storms in the Pacific Northwest often lead to power outages, leaving many residents without heat and increasing the risks associated with the cold. For older adults, especially those with mobility issues, chronic health conditions, or limited access to resources, staying warm during a power outage is especially important. With preparation and knowledge, you can stay safe, warm, and comfortable during these challenging times. The first step to staying safe during winter power outages is to make sure you have the right supplies. Stocking up on essentials such as extra blankets, warm clothing, and a battery-operated lantern help provide light when the power goes out. If you rely on medical devices that need electricity, like an oxygen machine or CPAP device, talk to your healthcare provider about backup power options. Additionally, make sure to have a battery-powered radio on hand so you can stay informed about weather updates and emergency alerts.



My kids with their grandma staying warm in front of the fire and using the light from our lantern to play games during a power outage!

When the power goes out, focus on conserving heat. Set your thermostat to at least 68°F before the power goes, so your home can hold onto warmth longer. If the outage lasts for a long time, use blankets, layer your clothing, and huddle in one room to keep body heat. A room with fewer windows preferably on the south side of the house where sunlight can enter can help. Be sure to close off any rooms that are not being used to keep the heat concentrated in one area. You can also seal windows and doors with plastic sheeting, garbage bags, or bubble wrap to prevent drafts. Rolling towels or blankets to block gaps at the bottom of doors or windows can also help. If you have a fireplace or wood stove, use it to heat the room. Just be sure to keep it properly ventilated to avoid carbon monoxide risks. For those without fireplaces or generators, consider alternatives like solar-powered heaters or hand warmers, which are safe options for warming small areas. Flameless LED candles are a safe alternative that can provide light and warmth without the fire risk. It is important to stay informed during power outages. Make sure your phone is charged and consider signing up for outage alerts from Puget Sound Energy. While preparing for the current winter season is important, it is also a good idea to plan for future power outages. Consider investing in a backup generator or a portable heater. Additionally, talk with neighbors, family members, or caregivers about how to support one another during winter weather. Make sure everyone knows where to go for help if needed. Staying warm and safe during a power outage requires planning and awareness. By stocking up on supplies, using safe heating options, and staying informed about available resources, older adults can reduce their risks and stay comfortable during winter storms. Remember, you are not alone, there are resources and support available to help you stay safe and warm. Be proactive, stay connected with our community, and ensure that you are ready to weather the storm.

CLASSES continued from page 2

Tai Chi
Tuesday & Thursday
10:00 – 11:00 AM
\$25 month for members, \$35 month for all others
\$5 drop-in fee for members, \$10 drop-in fee for all others
Tai Chi is a martial art that uses gentle, flowing movements to improve the health of the body and mind. In its most common form in the present day, it is known as moving meditation that improves flexibility, balance, strength, and mental focus as well as decreasing stress. Tai Chi is a low impact exercise that is beneficial for every fitness level and all age groups. In this class you will learn Tai Chi and Qigong forms and flows.

Yoga
Tuesday & Thursday
8:45 – 9:45 AM
\$25 month for members, \$35 month for all others
\$5 drop-in fee for members, \$10 drop-in fee for all others
A gentle yoga class taught by owner of Lotus Tea Bar & Studio, Maria McGee.

Active Chair Yoga
Tuesday & Thursday
3:00 – 3:45 PM
\$25 month for members, \$35 month for all others
\$5 drop-in fee for members, \$10 drop-in fee for all others
A carefully curated program of seated and standing poses for beginners and those with limited mobility. Bring a water bottle, dress in comfortable clothing, no mat needed. Taught by Maria and her instructors from Lotus Yoga Studio.

Free Fitness Classes
The Center is a Silver & Fit and Renew Active/One Pass facility which means if you qualify for these programs through your insurance provider you can participate in Tai Chi, Yoga, and Enhance Fitness at no cost. Please check with a staff member to verify your eligibility.

One Pass™

Renew Active
by UnitedHealthcare®

Silver&Fit®

Gifts of Connection
for Seniors

Bring some holiday cheer to a senior in need

The Wishlist

To access the Wishlist of needed items scan the QR code or go online to: signup.com/go/DgXgafG



Donate Funds

Want to help, but don't have time to shop?
Make a monetary donation by scanning the QR code, or by cash check or card at the front desk.



Holiday LUNCH

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12 | 12 PM
THE CENTER | 51 SE JEROME ST

\$30 Per Person
\$20 for 50+ Members

Enjoy a plated meal of holiday favorites and a program of live holiday music and entertainment.

Register by Monday, December 7





DECEMBER

Contributions to cover cost of meals are appreciated

WEEK 1		
Mon	2	Fish & Chips w/Coleslaw
Wed	4	Turkey & Dumplings
Fri	6	Beef Stew w/Vegetables
WEEK 2		
Mon	9	Sausage Jambalaya
Wed	11	Beef Enchilada Bake
Fri	13	Creamy Tomato Soup & Grilled Cheese
WEEK 3		
Mon	16	Beef & Broccoli
Wed	18	Roasted Pork Loin w/Chutney Sauce
Fri	20	Chicken Noodle Soup w/Veggies
WEEK 4		
Mon	23	Baked Potatoes w/Chili & Fixins
Wed	25	Closed / No Meal Service Happy Holidays
Fri	27	Moroccan Lentil Soup
WEEK 5		
Mon	30	Chicken Picatta

City of Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation and Island Senior Resources

If you have questions regarding senior activities at The Center in Oak Harbor, please contact 360-279-4580. Island Senior Resources does not administer or operate The Center in Oak Harbor.

For questions regarding programs and services to support seniors, services to support seniors and caregivers, and caregivers offered by Island Senior Resources throughout Whidbey and Camano islands, please contact at 360-321-1600.



Join us on Wednesdays from 1:00 - 3:00 for games! Please join other Community Lunch members and members from ISR Connects to play some games! To extend the fun, come to lunch before games, 11:45 - 12:30!



Every Wednesday from 1:00 - 3:00

Bayview Office
14594 SR 525,
Langley WA

Hosted by:
ISR Connects - C3

Every Wednesday of the month!

Join us for a meal

<p>Monday 11:45 - 12:30 The Center in Oak Harbor 51 SE Jerome St. Oak Harbor</p> <p>Camano Center 606 Arrowhead Rd. Camano Island</p> <p>Tuesday 11:45 - 12:30 Island Senior Resources - Bayview 14594 SR 525 Langley Eat-in box lunch</p> <p>Donations accepted to help cover the costs of a meal senior-resources.org/donate</p> <p><small>For information on our Nutrition Programs: senior-resources.org/nutrition-overview</small></p>	<p>Wednesday 11:45 - 12:30 Island Senior Resources - Bayview 14594 SR 525 Langley</p> <p>Coupeville United Methodist Church 608 N. Main St. Coupeville</p> <p>Camano Center 606 Arrowhead Rd, Camano Island</p> <p>Thursday 5:00 - 5:45 Brookhaven 150 4th St. Langley</p> <p>Friday 11:45 - 12:30 Camano Center 606 Arrowhead Rd. Camano Island</p> <p>The Center in Oak Harbor 51 SE Jerome St. Oak Harbor</p>
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Medical Equipment Lending Libraries

Island Senior Resources has free medical equipment lending libraries for medical equipment, assistive devices (wheelchairs, walkers, canes, etc.), and hygiene products/personal care items, including disposable underwear, pads, wipes, bed pads, no water shampoo, body wash, and more.

LOCATIONS

South Whidbey (Bayview). Donations/pick-ups Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1-4 p.m. at **Island Senior Resources (Bayview), 14594 SR 525, Langley.** Follow the signs and arrows to the Evergreen Room entrance. Please make sure donations are fully functional and clean.

North Whidbey (Oak Harbor). Donations/pick-ups Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 12-3 p.m. at **Island Senior Resources (Oak Harbor), 917 E Whidbey Ave, Oak Harbor,** next to the City of Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation. Please make sure donations are fully functional and clean.

Serving Whidbey and Camano islands

Caregiver Support Group

Wednesdays on Zoom and in-person (ISR Bayview) 10 a.m.

Parkinson's Support Group

Tuesdays on Zoom 10 a.m.

Coming Soon (Starting date to be Announced)

Aging on Whidbey Support Group

on Zoom and in-person (ISR Bayview)

For more information
www.senior-resources.org reception@islandseniorservices.org

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THE MYSTERY OF GIVING Continued from page 1

Some thoughts on giving from voices across time from around the world:

- For it is in giving that we receive — Saint Francis of Assisi
- The sole meaning of life is to serve humanity. — Leo Tolstoy
- We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give. — Winston Churchill
- Making money is a happiness; making other people happy is a super happiness. — Nobel Peace Prize recipient Muhammad Yunus
- Giving back is as good for you as it is for those you are helping, because giving gives you purpose. When you have a purpose-driven life, you're a happier person. — Goldie Hawn
- Giving is the most satisfying thing you'll ever do. — Jenny Santi

A book to learn more: "The Giving Way to Happiness: Stories and Science Behind the Life-Changing Power of Giving" by Jenny Santi

LONG-LIFE LEARNING

By Robin Bush | ISR Communications

Life span has increased substantially over the past 100 years in America, raising questions about how we manage the latter third of our lives. Chip Conley, writer, entrepreneur, hotelier, and leader of Modern Elder Academy believes that longevity requires "developing the skill-set to master life's transitions is an essential talent in this topsy-turvy world." We need to learn how to live our best longer lives.

Ageing today requires that we learn to shift our mindset away from negative ageing beliefs so we live a full life that is as deep as it is long. This shift can add as much as seven and half years to life, according to Becca Levy (Yale professor and author of "Breaking the Age Code: How Your Beliefs About Aging Determine How Long and Well You Live") Shifting our mindset means examining our attitudes about aging, our truths, and our ideals, established years ago, and choosing which have value to us now or which new ones we welcome. It means being willing to learn from others or teach yourself how to create your most fulfilling long life.

What questions do you need to ask yourself to foster well-being? Your answers will help you build your resilience and sense of growth for a long and healthy life.

- What will support our personal well-being and a mindset of growth instead of decline?
- Establish purpose. "Purpose may be the second most important variable (after social connection) for helping someone live a long, healthy, and happy life. Research shows that older adults who maintain a sense of purpose experience higher levels of psychological well-being, better brain functioning through neuroplasticity, and more resilience." – Chip Conley
- What can we do to enhance our intergenerational connections? Marc Freedman, CEO of CoGenerate (previously known as Encore) and an expert in the longevity revolution, says, "The real fountain of youth is... the fountain with youth."
- What can you do to maintain warm, authentic, and trusting interpersonal relationships?
- Can you increase your openness to new experiences? Some research shows that as we age, we tend to develop a fixed mindset with less desire to seek new experiences and ideas, partially due to our increasing awareness of mortality (time left) and a reluctance to invest time in something unless it really matters.
- What can you do to create a safety net to catch you if you fall as you leap into unknowns?

Starting in mid-life, we are all susceptible to turning negative stereotypes into guiding beliefs, and it takes paying conscious attention to recognize and resist falling prey to their power and instead seeking opportunities to define what we need to strive for to achieve healthy, optimal aging. That's long-life learning, and the path to rewarding, resilient long-life living.

LEADERSHIP CORNER

by Michele Cato | Executive Director

We at Island Senior Resources (ISR) extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported our mission to enrich the lives of older adults on Whidbey and Camano islands this past year. Your generosity—as volunteers, donors, unpaid caregivers, and advocates—ensures we can deliver essential services and companionship to those in need.

Every act of kindness, from offering daily assistance to medical transportation, meal preparation, caregiver resources, and social activities, makes an incredible difference. The dedication of our volunteers fuels programs that provide safety, comfort, and connection for seniors, and contributions from the community enable us to sustain and expand these vital services.

Together, we are fostering a caring community where we can all age with dignity, independence, and support. Thank you for joining us in this mission and being champions of compassion. Your commitment is truly inspiring, and we look forward to many more years of working together.



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Monthly eNews for seniors,
adult with disabilities, and
those who care for them
360-321-1600

HOW TO REACH ISLAND SENIOR RESOURCES

For all departments and all staff,
call 360-321-1600

Nutrition/Meals on Wheels
Resources and Coaching
Medicaid In-Home Care
Medical Transportation
Benefits Counseling
Support Groups

Medical Equipment Libraries

Senior Thrift
360-331-5701 **Senior Thrift (General)**
360-331-5726 **Senior Thrift (Donations/ Pickups)**

For more information, visit
www.senior-resources.org

OUR LOCATIONS

Weekdays, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Island Senior Resources
(Bayview)

14594 SR 525, Langley, WA 98260

Island Senior Resources
(Oak Harbor)

917 E Whidbey Ave
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

ISLAND SENIOR RESOURCES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Island Senior Resources
is an independent
nonprofit 501(c)(3)
that has been
serving Island County
since 1972. Island
Senior Resources is
the trade name for
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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MEALS ON WHEELS FOOD PACKAGING

Mon., or Wed., or Fri. 8 a.m. - noon
Island Senior Resources - Bayview
14594 SR 525, Langley
Call 360-321-1600



Island Senior Resources' offices will be closed on Wednesday, December 25 and Wednesday, January 1. In an emergency call 9-1-1.

AGING IS A VERB

By Charles LaFond | ISR Senior Director Development

Aging is a tricky topic. I notice that many people dislike discussing it. We live in a culture of hair dyes, face-lifts, and elastic belly girdles.

I heard an advertisement recently for a financial planning company. They asked, "What do you want out of life?" They listed horseback riding, pottery lessons, cooking classes, and travel. Then the announcer said, "We can set you up so you can do them forever!" It sounded attractive until I realized that this was a lie. We will not live forever, no matter how well-funded our retirement may be. The longing for an elixir that assures eternal youth is an old lie.

The word "aging" has become a verb in new ways in my life. Some see aging as a bad thing, refusing to admit to it happening to them or within them. Others embrace aging, loving some of the new things aging brings, such as grandchildren that visit (and then leave!). I like the brain's new fluidity and having a deeper mental reference library of experiences to draw when making better choices while hating increased weakness, night fears, and a tiny bladder.

The photo above is taken of a table by my front door. Lit 24 hours a day, I see it often. On it are things that remind me to slow down.

To the left is a ceramic, beaded skull from a Mexican holiday. It reminds me that death is inevitable, and so embrace its inevitability by living every day to its fullest regardless of whatever weaknesses and vulnerabilities may come with aging. Next to it is a small ceramic bowl of marbles given to me when I left the monastery – friends gave them to me to remind me to enjoy playfulness. And behind that bowl is a photo of me, as a baby, in my sister's arms. It reminds me to think about those who love and cherish me.

Life is full of beauty and loss. Such is its contract. Love it. All of it. The youth, the middle age, and even the aging. All three bring gifts better than any holiday will.




Closed Dec. 24 and 25
Closing at 3 p.m. Dec. 20 for our staff holiday party

Big Sale Dec. 20 and 21
25% off storewide
Happy Holidays!

Medicare Open Enrollment Ends **Dec. 7**

Medicare Open Enrollment continues through December 7th. If you have an advantage plan or a Part D drug plan, you need to review/update your plan. Some 2024 advantage plans and half of the drug plans are not available for 2025. Review your plan's annual notice of change to see if your plan still fits your needs. You may need to find a replacement.

What to look out for: Your medical needs may have changed, and your medical provider may no longer accept your plan. Further, the co-pay/maximum out-of-pocket amounts may have increased, and premiums and benefits may have changed. Drug plans have changed too. Most importantly, if you have "expensive" drugs, there is a \$2,000 cap on Part D covered drugs (not including the plan's premium). Also, if your income is low, "Extra Help" can help pay for your drugs.

How to review available 2025 plans: www.medicare.gov is a good place to start, as is the Insurance Commissioner's website www.insurance.wa.gov.

Insurance companies/agents sell plan(s). Some agents sell all the plans here; others sell only select ones. Agents often receive a sales commission, so they could be "biased."

SHIBA (State Health Insurance Benefits Advisors), a group of local volunteers trained by the Insurance Commissioner's Office, can assist you. They provide a FREE, UNBIASED source of information and are not commissioned. SHIBA volunteers are knowledgeable about all the plans available on Whidbey. They know the drug, advantage, D-SNP, and supplemental plans as well as select retiree plans. They are available for face-to-face, phone, or Zoom appointments. Meetings can occur in Bayview, Coupeville, and Oak Harbor. Call Island Senior Resources (ISR) at 360-321-1600 for an appointment. FYI, SHIBA has classes scheduled to provide information about Medicare 2025. ISR can register you for these classes.

Important: For canceled plans, replace it by December 31 to have it start January 1st. Documentation may be required.

Reminder: Supplemental/Medigap plans are NOT changing. You can change them at any time during the year, effective the next month.

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Coupeville SENIOR HUB Lunch & Learn

AFTER LUNCH PROGRAMS • December
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608 N Main St • Coupeville, WA

December 4 - Sweet Bingo & Tech Support

Everyone wins during sweet bingo. There is no buy-in, and this game is free to play and offers sweet treats for the prizes. Fred Rocha will also be available for technological support.

December 11 - Coupeville Ukus

Come hear the wonderful Coupeville Ukus play their amazing ukeles.

December 18 - Caroling

Let's get into the Christmas spirit by filling the room with our singing of Christmas carols.

December 25- Closed/ Happy Holidays

Lunch 11:45 – 12:30

Menu \$10 Suggested Donation

December 4th Turkey & Dumplings

December 11th Beef Enchilada Bake

December 18th Roasted Pork Loin /w Chutney Sauce

December 25th Closed/ Happy Holidays

SPONSORS



QUESTIONS: Julia Gotch • Coupeville UMC Admin Assistant
staff@coupevilleumc.com • 360.678.4256
Island Senior Resources
reception@islandseniorservices.org • 360.321.1600

CALL FOR A RIDE: Para Transit
360.678.7771
Coupeville United Methodist Church
608 N Main St • Coupeville, WA

Meals and Programs are subject to change without prior notice.



Supporting Island Senior Resources

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CONTACT ISLAND SENIOR RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION: 360-321-1600

