

# Experience *in* Action!

King County RSVP's news for people 55 & older

Volume 29 | Number 3 | Fall/Winter 2015

RSVP



## Well organized, indeed! Indispensable Mary Evans

by Peter Langmaid

Measured by the number of programs, classes, and services offered, the Northshore Senior Center (NSC) is the largest senior center in Washington state and the second largest in the entire country. With 3,000 members and only a combined part- and full-time staff of 62 (a staggering 50:1 ratio!), the center relies on its member-driven philosophy (i.e., no resources wasted on programs or services members aren't interested in) and 300-500 volunteers to make it happen. Quite an accomplishment. The overflowing parking lot is a

testament to their success.

Volunteer Coordinator Rubbina Mamdani's limitless praise for her volunteers speaks volumes: "Volunteers are the backbone of Northshore Senior Center. Without the enthusiasm, dedication and commitment of our volunteers, we would not be able to accomplish much at all. They are involved in every aspect of our work, starting with the board members to the instructors, front desk receptionists, office assistants, coffee bar baristas, kitchen helpers, gardening volunteers,



Mary Evans (Photo by Peter Langmaid)

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and so many other areas of our daily operation."

The high esteem and regard Rubbina holds her volunteers in is evident. "Together, each and every volunteer helps the center accomplish its mission of promoting healthy aging and well-being in our community through programs, services, resources and civic engagement."

One such indispensable volunteer is Mary Evans. Moving to Seattle from Tombstone, AZ (how romantic is that?) in 2012 to be near her grown son and daughter and her 5-year-old granddaughter and 13 1/2-month-old grandson, Mary is a lifetime volunteer because, she says, "I always wanted to be part of things."

Mary comes from a family of volunteers. Born and raised in Pennsylvania, her mother taught school for 50 years and tutored on the side. Her father, a foreman in the steel industry, was the neighborhood fix-it man. "No sitting still and taking it easy when there are things to be done in the community" was the family ethic. And, she has passed the volunteer gene along to her children, her son active with the Boy Scouts and her daughter

with fund raising.

By her own admission, Mary is "well organized and persistent." And she is exactly what every senior center needs: someone with the skills, savvy and interest to raise the profile of the organization in the community through publicity and outreach.

She has developed a media contacts workbook for all media in the area, including such publications as the Everett Herald and the Woodinville Weekly. She feeds them information for activities at the Northshore Senior Center, Health & Wellness Center, and senior centers in Kenmore and Mill Creek. Mary enjoys her outreach and publicity role "because it's interesting to meet people and get positive feedback." A measure of her success is the nearly doubling of revenue from the Northshore Senior Center Ransacked Attic Sale.

When I introduced myself to Mary in the senior center gift shop where she prices items and clerks, she handed me a neatly typed sheet of paper listing her volunteer activities at the center (well organized, indeed!).

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## Speaking Directly

by Jen Gahagan, RSVP Director

# Share your volunteer experience with a friend

As we approach the end of 2015 and look forward to the beginning of a new year, many of us reflect on our life, give thanks, set goals, and give back to the community through volunteering. After all, these pursuits can give us meaning and purpose.

We are excited to bring you this issue of *Experience in Action* as our writers highlight many of these meaningful areas.

Whether volunteering in a tutoring program, a food bank, a senior center meal program, an adult literacy program or in another capacity, RSVP members are making a difference in our community.

We appreciate the experience and a wide range of knowledge and skills RSVP volunteers bring to their volunteer work. Over the past year, RSVP volunteers have contributed over 100,000 hours

of services. Thank you, RSVP volunteers, for your wonderful contribution.

If you are already actively volunteering in your community, please consider sharing your volunteer spirit this season by telling a friend about your volunteer work and inviting them to get involved. More volunteers are needed to meet critical community needs, and RSVP has set its sites high by hoping to recruit more than 300 volunteers in key, needed areas over the next year.

One of the single biggest determinants of people's willingness to volunteer is simply whether they are asked, and one of the most consistently reported means by which they learn about volunteer opportunities is through a family member or friend. There are hundreds of opportunities to choose from, and the staff at RSVP would love to help more people find a great place to volunteer.

Whether you tend to slow down this time of year and reflect, assess and set goals, charge ahead with activity and purpose, or take time out to celebrate with loved ones, there is something for everyone in this issue of *Experience in Action*. I invite you to sit back with a warm beverage of your choice and take a few moments to reflect and enjoy this issue.

*Warm wishes from RSVP this holiday season and a happy new year! ●*

## WINTER SOCK DRIVE!

### Did you know one of the most requested items at Solid Ground's front desk is socks?

A fresh pair of socks can make a world of difference for our walk-in clients experiencing homelessness – especially as the rainy, cold weather sets in.

Consider contributing to the Sock Drive by donating a pair of new socks. Packaging is not necessary, so one pair from a multi-pack is fine.

There is a greater need for outdoor and athletic socks in larger sizes, but any size, color and material will be accepted.

You can drop your socks off or mail them to Solid Ground at:  
1501 N 45 St, Seattle, WA 98103.

***Thank you for your help!***



## 'Passport to Volunteering' a success! by Jan Hancock

Enthusiastic and wholehearted thanks go out to Premera Blue Cross for partnering with RSVP to sponsor a successful volunteer recruitment event in the South Seattle/South King County areas. RSVP and Premera members 55 and older were invited to meet and mingle with 23 different public and nonprofit RSVP partner agencies. Taking place this fall at the Embassy

Suites Hotel, over 200 potential volunteers came to hear about the different ways in which they could help meet community needs through placements in volunteer jobs.

With a theme of travel prominent throughout the event, participants were encouraged to collect "passport stamps" at agency tables as they learned about the services they provide to clients and how volunteers can be utilized in the organization. Door prizes were awarded throughout the day with light refreshments and a filling lunch for "travelers" provided.

Connections were made between agencies and those attending the "Passport" event, and most importantly, participants were placed in volunteer jobs. Sandy Lallier is just one example of those

volunteers. Following up on a contact made that day with the Auburn Food Bank, Sandy is now volunteering there and finds that it has been an eye-opening experience for her to see the many needs of people in her own area.

Sandy says, "Being able to provide a service, no matter how small, has been very rewarding for me, and it is wonderful to be a part of a community that has a common goal of helping others. It has made me all the more grateful not just for what I have but for the opportunity to volunteer at the food bank."

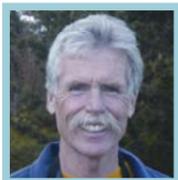
At RSVP, we can let you in on lots of other possibilities for volunteering at nonprofits that can use your skills while carefully considering your interests and schedule. If you are not quite certain what you

would like to do but like to travel (around Seattle and King County that is), we especially need volunteers to assist promoting the independence of older adults and those with disabilities by providing them with companionship and transportation. Another unmet need is supporting our veterans at the VA Medical Center through transportation, respite and navigation services.

We can connect you to nearly 60 agencies we partner with that have approximately 100 different types of volunteer jobs. With lots of options and possibilities, whether you would like to stay close to home to volunteer or venture further afar, why wait until after the holidays?

Contact us anytime at 206.694.6786 or [janh@solid-ground.org](mailto:janh@solid-ground.org) and let's talk! ●





## It Seems to Me...

by Peter Langmaid

### Empathy

I recently flew to California on family business. Not to burden anyone with picking me up and driving me around, I rented a car at a very favorable rate through a website I have used many times before.

The flight departed on time, the ride was smooth, the pretzels were predictably meager and stale, and we arrived ahead of schedule. Great, I thought, a chance to get to my destination early and relax.

The car rental center was a short distance from the terminal and buses regularly shuttled travelers and baggage to and fro. At first glance, the many car rental agencies appeared open with short lines of customers. Perfect, I thought, I'll be out of here and on my way in no time.

Then, with horror, I saw the never-ending serpentine line at my rental desk (a well-known company that will go unnamed). Working my way to the back of the line, I kept asking people if I was in the right line. There were – no exaggeration – at least 50 people in line in front of me!

In addition to the hideously long line, I noted that only two of the six stations processing customers had agents. What are these people doing? I asked myself. My mood quickly swung from I'll-be-out-of-here-in-no-time to I'm-going-to-spend-the-

rest-of-my-life-here!

I have a pathological aversion to inconvenience. I first become frustrated, which quickly mutates to anger followed by anxiety. This has been a lifelong affliction that I've been unable to overcome.

As a retired person living in Seattle, I run my schedule around traffic. When I do get caught in traffic, I simply can't keep my cool. I try to think about something pleasant and positive and I turn the radio to soothing music, but nothing works: I fume. So, this experience in line for my rental car was going to challenge my sanity.

Taking my place at the back of the line, I slowly began to cool off by getting to know my line mates and telling stupid jokes like: "With a line like this, they should be serving lunch and cocktails."

With evolutionary slowness, I gradually worked my way towards the front of the line. Maybe, I thought, I'll get out of here before I grow a beard!

Finally, with only a few customers ahead of me, an old man shuffled up to the counter. He was a classic: wild, Einstein-like white hair, flannel shirt, faded jeans with the cuffs rolled up, white socks, and what can only be described as old-person shoes (I have a pair, too!).

Watching him interact with the rental agent, it was clear he was not a frequent car renter and that he was struggling with the process (with little help from the agent). At this point the young woman behind me in line (my joking buddy) rolled her eyeballs in exasperation, as if to say, 'What's wrong with this old guy?'

Then it hit me like a Muhammad Ali uppercut, and all the resentment and anger I felt for the gross inconvenience of this situation dissolved into empathy: This guy is me in 10 years (except for the outfit), and there's nothing funny or aggravating about someone struggling with something you don't quite understand.

I thought about the frustration my daughters exhibit when they try to teach me a new feature on my cell phone, and how it makes me feel stupid and incompetent, though I try to cover up my embarrassment by joking. But it's not funny, and much of the contemporary world is baffling to those of us who grew up in a different era.

So, rather than become impatient, we should project ourselves into their world – and feel empathy. Because if you're lucky, someday you'll be old, too. ●

*Peter Langmaid is a semi-retired businessman, RSVP Ambassador, and longtime EIA contributor.*

### Mary Evans *continued from page 1*

In addition to her outreach/publicity and gift shop work, she also chairs the Outreach Committee, is a member of the committee that nominates Board members, creates and supervises the distribution of flyers highlighting events and programs, helps out at fund raisers, and stands ready as a backup receptionist. She is truly a one-person volunteer force.

Mary's formidable education includes a BS in Nutrition and School Food Service (minor in Science), a Master's in Business Administration, a Dietetics Internship, and graduate credits in gerontology, social work, and ethics. During her 40-year working career, Mary

has put her education to work as a teacher and administrator.

When not volunteering at the senior center, Mary enjoys time with her children and grandchildren, reads (mysteries and biographies), sews (when we met, she was making a Halloween wedding dress for her granddaughter), and roots for the Seahawks and Huskies.

Asked what she gets out of her volunteering, Mary was quick to say, "Friends and an ongoing connection

to the community at large." She then thought for moment and added, as a sort of summary: "Purpose." ●



# RSVP



The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a nonprofit National Senior Corps program sponsored locally by Solid Ground. RSVP meets critical community needs by encouraging and supporting volunteerism in King County for people 55 and older.



Each year, more than 55,000 King County residents come to Solid Ground to address urgent food and housing needs, and build skills to overcome poverty and thrive. Through 40+ years of innovation, partnership and action, we work to undo racism and other oppressions to change the institutional practices and policies that perpetuate poverty.

## EIA

*Experience in Action!* (EIA) is published by King County RSVP and distributed to 3,500 RSVP members, senior volunteers and friends. EIA is dedicated to providing news, information and opportunities about senior volunteerism. 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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## Aging with Wisdom

by Carol Scott-Kassner

### Giving thanks

Take time this season to notice the coloring and falling of the leaves and the cooling of the air. Notice the presence of the rain that is a welcome salve to the drought. Notice the abundance of pumpkins, pinecones and winter squashes piled in front of grocery stores and in fields. Notice other gourds, corn, tomatoes, grains and apples; a cornucopia of riches. It is the season of harvest and abundance, and we have much to be grateful for.

Next, turn your noticing inward. What are you harvesting as you age? Reflect on the story of your life. What have been times of abundance in your life? Remember how it felt to experience those times. As you think about them, give thanks for what they meant to you then and what they mean to you now.

Reflect on times of challenge or difficulty in your life. Name what you've learned from those times. If you are still struggling with those memories, hold them gently and with a sense of compassion. If there were gifts from those struggles, give thanks for them. Learning from challenges may have helped you to become who you are today.

As we age, we are invited to review our lives and to gather together the lessons we've learned from living this long. Out of that harvesting and the process of coming to terms with our life can emerge the gift of wisdom.

We've learned from both the blessings and the challenges of our lives and we've gained great insight into the nature of what it means to be human.

Finally, reflect on what you are

grateful for at this point in your life.

**Notice what is influencing you externally and answer the following questions for yourself:**

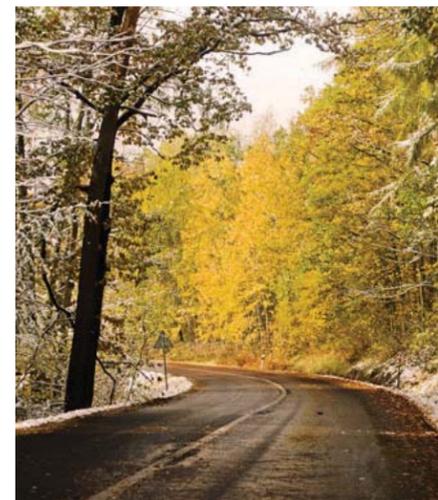
- Who or what has inspired you?
- Who or what is challenging you?
- Who or what is surprising you?
- Who or what is touching you or moving you?
- Silently express gratitude for these people and forces in your life.

**Now reflect on what is happening internally for you and answer the following questions for yourself:**

- What is strengthening within my nature?
- What is softening within my nature?
- What is opening within my nature?
- What is deepening within my nature?

Silently express gratitude for the opportunity to continue to grow as you age.

Think of developing a gratitude practice that you can implement each day through prayer or journaling. May such a practice lift your spirits and create joy for you. May it lead to greater health and inner peace. ●



*Carol Scott-Kassner is immediate Past-President of Sage-ing® International, an organization dedicated to helping people age with grace and wisdom. Carol also works one-on-one with individuals. Find out more at [www.sage-ing.org](http://www.sage-ing.org) or contact her at [carolkassner@comcast.net](mailto:carolkassner@comcast.net).*

### Cooking Matters takes a tour... in the grocery store by Megan Wiebelhaus

Feed a family of four on \$10: This was the challenge thrown down to RSVP members at a local grocery store this fall by staff of Solid Ground's Cooking Matters program.

Fanning out over the store on a frugal scavenger hunt, RSVP members tried to make \$10 stretch over at least three food groups. Writing down their chosen items, results ranged from chicken stir-fry to fajitas. One participant even managed to work in a healthy desert (grapes, for the kids) though some did joke that they'd spend their entire budget on doughnuts.

Instead of pastry sprees, every member came in – even if it was by just a few cents – under \$10, each with three food groups. Each member seemed proud and a little surprised that they'd been able to eke out a meal on so little money.

This grocery tour gave those participating in the exercise a private glimpse into the Cooking Matters at the Store lesson, where educators walk shoppers getting by on low incomes through a local grocery store, demonstrating healthy food shopping on a budget. The goal was to familiarize RSVP members with the program, so they could volunteer for and promote it.

The Cooking Matters in the Store trainers rotated through the store, leading discussions on fruit and vegetable options, like how to buy in season and when it is more nutritious to buy frozen. In the bread aisle, they described the pros and cons of whole grains, fiber and high fructose corn syrup. In the meat section they revealed tips like the little known fact that most butcher's departments will cut up a whole chicken for free, saving the buyer money over packs of pre-

cut chicken.

According to Cooking Matters Coordinator, Sandra Williams, the challenges food shoppers on a budget face can include not having a kitchen, or having only a microwave or a hot plate. When she leads grocery store groups, she likes to teach collaboratively, Sandra says, asking what restrictions and needs are represented in the group, and incorporating that into her instruction.

Run under the auspices of Solid Ground, a nonprofit agency

in Wallingford, Cooking Matters' goal is to provide food education to individuals living on low incomes in the Seattle area, providing classes on how to cook and shop on tight budgets, tight schedules and in tight living situations.

Cooking Matters teaches six-week hands-on course series. Loading up a mobile kitchen in boxes including portable burners, pots and pans, a box of knives and other essential cooking preparation items – to take to community centers, housing sites and other local organizations – this program is constantly on the go. A testament to the success rate of the classes is the impressive 81% graduation rate.

Cooking Matters serves 55 locations throughout the Seattle area. They are looking for volunteers for both their classroom- and grocery store-based courses. Combining good health, good food, and good education are just part of what make the RSVP and Cooking Matters partnership so delicious.

Find out how to volunteer by contacting RSVP at 206.694.6786 or [janh@solid-ground.org](mailto:janh@solid-ground.org). ●



Enthusiastic 'shoppers' with Cooking Matters trainer (at center), Nicole Dufva (Photo by Megan Wiebelhaus)

## Living the Full Life *by Mary Fogh*

Imagine helping thousands of individuals preserve their dignity and avoid living in a nursing home or in isolation. Full Life, a nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of others and supporting caregivers, has been doing just that by relying on a vast volunteer network since its inception in the 1970s.

Volunteering in Day Health centers, Memory Care homes and through the ElderFriends program, this network of over 400 volunteers gives close to 30,000 hours of service each year, enriching program activities, assisting in operations, and contributing to the development of the organization.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Full Life's **Adult Day Health** program provides respite for caregivers while fostering the well-being and independence of a loved one while preventing premature or unnecessary placement in a nursing home. Volunteers in adult day health centers provide companionship by assisting with recreational activities, exercise, and lunch service and commit to a weekly schedule for a minimum of three months. Shifts are available weekdays at locations in North Seattle (Ravenna), South Seattle (Columbia City), Everett and Kent.

**Get Active Program (GAP)** is a day health program for adults (18 to 80 and above) with developmental disabilities such as Down's syndrome and autism. Volunteers work directly with participants by assisting with fun activities and helping staff with mealtimes and exercise. The programs operate in Kent, Everett and North Seattle.

**ElderFriends** is a volunteer-based program that provides companionship, outreach and advocacy to isolated older adults throughout Seattle and King County. The goals are to relieve isolation and loneliness among older adults. Volunteers help to ensure that elders receive needed social and emotional support and improve their knowledge and access to community resources and services they might not have previously been aware of.

Through regular visits (2-3 per month) for a minimum of one year, an ElderFriends volunteer meets one-on-one with the same older adult. Scheduling is flexible. Volunteers are trained and the matching is done by Full Life staff to ensure that a successful pairing takes place. In addition, there are gatherings where the volunteer and elder participate in social events such as picnics, potlucks, ice cream socials and holiday parties.

It is not unusual for meaningful friendships to develop through the ElderFriends program and this tends to happen often when an older volunteer companion is paired with an elder adult because of the commonalities in their age.

While all areas of King County have a need for volunteer involvement at Full Life, there is an especially high need for volunteers in Kent and Federal Way. RSVP member Coreen Jones helps meet this need at the Adult Day Health Center in Kent by assisting those in the Get Active Program. Coreen started last spring



Coreen Jones, Kent Adult Day Health Center Volunteer  
(Photo by Jan Hancock)



Lindsey Ismailova & Ginger Seybold (Photo by Jan Hancock)

after learning about the opportunity through a presentation at an RSVP meeting, and she now looks forward to going in on a regular basis.

She recently missed a week due to a cold she did not want her clients exposed to. When she returned the following week, they were overjoyed to see her, letting her know how worried they were that she might have been seriously ill, hurt or had quit. Coreen was taken aback and humbled by their response saying, "It is a blessing to be there to brighten their day." Encouraging those assigned to her to play games, sing songs, participate in exercises, (yes, she does them too!), Coreen firmly believes in giving back and putting a smile on the faces of those she interacts with. "This is where I am supposed to be and I truly enjoy working with my clients. They bring much more to me than I do to them. I am so very grateful for not only all I have in my life but especially for this experience."

Bottom line, if you have a talent to share, a willingness to work with frail, disabled or isolated individuals, Full Life can find a way for you to get involved. You will be supported and trained by an exceptional staff. In return you will find a rich opportunity to develop mutually rewarding friendships, build a broader perspective from sharing life experiences, and gain a greater connection to your local community.

Longtime Full Life volunteer and board member Nancy Worssam can attest to the strength of that statement. "At the Adult Day Health center, there is an atmosphere of fun, love and attention. The staff welcomes me as a volunteer, and we have a wonderful relationship where I feel wanted and needed."

### The Exceptional Staff at Full Life

With a combined 25 years of embracing Full Life's mission and vision, Ginger Seybold, Director, and Lindsey Ismailova, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, are pros at what they do. They spend their days recruiting, orienting, training, placing and recognizing the value of their volunteers and somehow manage to make it all look effortless.

Jan Hancock, RSVP Program Coordinator, and I met with Ginger and Lindsey on a lovely fall day. Their passion for the work they do was impressive. Ginger has a strong interest in the service of working toward the betterment of older adults. She enjoys the human connection that comes to her each day and believes, "Volunteers enhance the value of the services that we provide. You may not see dramatic results on a day-to-day basis, but the changes add up, making an extraordinary impact on lives. They really do work small miracles."

Lindsey's passion for doing this work stems from a strong interest in working with people with Alzheimer's and, like Ginger, a commitment to older adults. They were both easy to relate to and it was apparent that they both love the work that they do. If you choose to become an RSVP volunteer at Full Life, you will most certainly be in good hands. ●



## The Garden Lady

by Linda Urbaniak

### Split personality

Squash is a plant with two personalities. The summer squashes are quick to mature, thin skinned, and have tender meat that is best served lightly cooked or raw. Winter squash is slow to mature, thicker skinned, and is best served cooked through, roasted, steamed or used for tempura.

Although the time for growing squash has passed, the fruit of the winter varieties remain firm for tasty meals. The plant springs readily from the seed and grows rapidly when planted after the last frost in the spring. The yellow flowers are large enough to be used in their own right as stuffed squash blossoms or as squash blossom fritters. The fruits grow into sizes as tiny as the single serving Sweet Dumpling, or two-person Acorn, to the huge pumpkins ranging in the thousands of pounds.

No matter what the size, they require sunlight, warmth and rich soil. They are ready when they are completely colored on all sides.

Squash is a fall and winter food, loved for its ability to be stored and for the rich taste it adds to a meal. The color alone is a welcome highlight to a meal on a stormy night, and the many ways of fixing it add great tasting variety.

They can be served simply cut in half or in large pieces, cleaned of seeds and inner fibers, and roasted or steamed with or

without butter and seasonings. The puree can be used in many ways.

*Below are a couple of my favorite recipes:*

#### Winter Squash Soup

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Jalapeño pepper, chopped fine, according to taste
- 1 2-inch piece of fresh ginger, chopped fine
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1½ pounds winter squash, cut into 1-inch squares
- 2 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 14-ounce can thick coconut milk
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Juice of 1 lime, divided
- 1 tablespoon Thai fish sauce
- 2 small tomatoes cut into wedges
- 3 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- Chopped peanuts and toasted non-sweetened coconut to taste

Sauté first four ingredients in oil over medium heat until onion is translucent and just beginning to brown.

Transfer to soup pot. Add squash, broth, coconut milk, salt, half the lime juice and fish sauce.

Cook over medium heat until squash is cooked but still firm.

Add tomato wedges, the



Farm store winter squash (Photos by Linda Urbaniak)

rest of the lime juice and 2 tablespoons cilantro. Cook only until tomatoes are warm.

If you prefer a puréed soup, cook the squash a little longer until quite soft. You can purée in food processor or blender at this point. Blend in the rest of the lime juice just before serving.

Serve with chopped peanuts, remaining cilantro and/or toasted coconut as garnish.

*For something a little different, try these cookies my children loved:*

#### Breakfast Squash Cookies

- ½ cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup cooked, puréed squash
- ½ cup undiluted evaporated milk
- ½ cup dry milk powder
- ¼ cup soy flour
- 1 cup flour + ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 2 cups quick oats
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Cream butter and sugar together. Add egg and beat until fluffy. Sift flours, spices, salt, baking soda and baking powder together.

Mix in oatmeal and dry milk powder. Mix squash and milk together. Add flour mix alternately with squash mix. Stir in raisins and walnuts.

Drop by mounded teaspoonful onto a greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for about 15 minutes or until golden brown.

No matter how you like your winter squash, this vitamin filled veggie can be part of your healthy winter menu. Let me know if you try the recipes! ●

*After retiring from 13 years as a docent at Bellevue Botanical Garden, Linda now tends her own two large gardens. She is happy to respond to email questions at [lindagardenlady@comcast.net](mailto:lindagardenlady@comcast.net).*

### WHAT IS AN RSVP AMBASSADOR?

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

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

**To sign up or ask more questions, please contact:**  
Jan Hancock, 206.694.6786 or [janh@solid-ground.org](mailto:janh@solid-ground.org).



## Winter wanderings *by Linda Urbaniak*

Marymoor Park in Redmond is big enough to find a place for any outdoor activity. Do you like to do something simple like stroll along a quiet path through the woods or along the Sammamish Slough, or something more strenuous like rock climbing? From concerts in the park to a game of cricket, from bike racing to model airplane flying, or gardening in the community garden, it is available at Marymoor Park in Redmond.

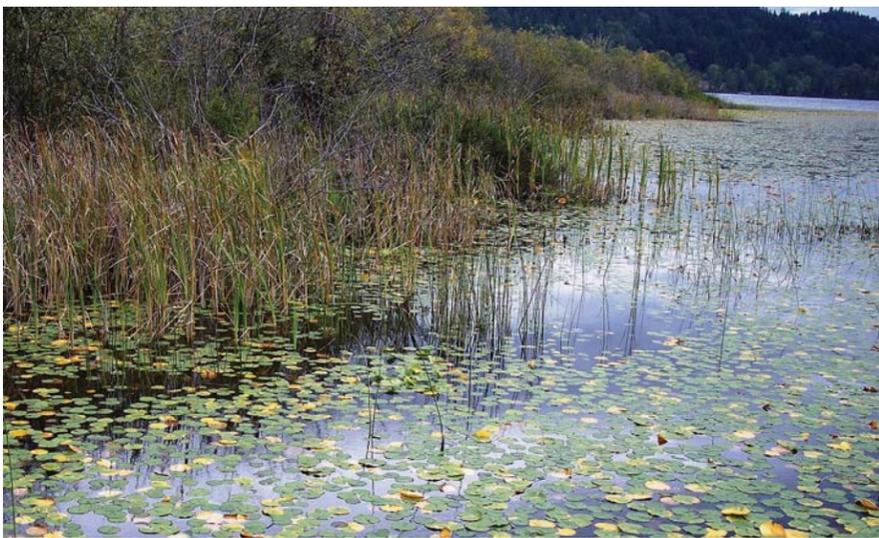
The park has several prominent features. There is a 40-acre off-leash dog park along the Sammamish Slough with several places for dogs to play in the water. So that you can bring home a clean dog, there is a dog wash conveniently located nearby and a pet reflection garden with the cremated remains of beloved pets.

The Audubon Bird Trail leads along the Sammamish Slough on a well-maintained gravel path on the edge of the dog park. Where the dog park ends, the trail continues on a dirt path through the fallen leaves of the willows and alders that grow there, and leads to a dock into Lake Sammamish with a peaceful view of the lake, rushes and water lilies. The path back and many others are handicap accessible.

The Velodrome, the only one in the state, holds races on Friday nights throughout the summer, which you can watch for a \$5 fee. Marymoor also has several bike and foot trails within the park. There are lighted sports courts including tennis, baseball and soccer. On weekends the many fields are filled with games, and it is fun to watch the little kids competing with all the intensity of professionals.

Marymoor is also the site of many concerts from June to September. You can access the schedule and performing groups as well as procure tickets at [www.marymoorconcerts.com](http://www.marymoorconcerts.com). There are shelters for picnics or events as well as open picnic areas that can be reserved. Movies in the Park are presented during the summer, Cirque du Soleil has performed at the park, there has been an Oktoberfest, and there are scheduled events throughout the year.

The entrance to the park is highlighted by a beautiful totem pole on the road leading to many large parking lots. There is a \$1 parking fee that may be higher for special events. The park is at 6046 West Lake Sammamish Parkway NE, Redmond and is open from 8am to dusk. Whatever you like to do outdoors, you will find a place for it at Marymoor Park. ●



Reeds and water lilies at Marymoor Park (Photo by Linda Urbaniak)



## Senior on the Street

by Peter Langmaid

# What do you plan to do next year that you did not do this year?

*"Visit my daughter who lives in Germany."*

-Carol Roecks



*"Take my wife to France."*

-Terry Perdue



*"Bike around the Olympic Peninsula."*

-Robert Jackson



*"Get more involved in Northshore Senior Center."*

-Linda Jeffords



*"Perfect the chicken run in my backyard."*

-Deborah Locken



*"Win the lottery."*

-Peggy Hoierman



*"Find a boyfriend."*

-Elizabeth Tanner



## SEND US YOUR HOURS!

Yes, your hours as an RSVP volunteer are important and need to be reported to us. Your hours are not only tied to federal funding with benefits then provided to you, like the excess accident medical and liability insurance, but they also help the volunteer sites and RSVP reach volunteer hour goals. And just as importantly, it helps us recognize you for your service and highlights the contributions you make to meet community needs when you volunteer.

***If you have questions, please contact:***

Jennifer Gahagan, 206.694.6785 or [jeng@solid-ground.org](mailto:jeng@solid-ground.org).

# 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 Jan Hancock at 206.694.6786 – or visit our website at [www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/Volunteer/RSVP](http://www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/Volunteer/RSVP) for regional volunteer opportunity listings.

**AARP Fraud Fighters:** Volunteer responsibilities can include telephone tasks, administrative tasks and fraud presentations to the community. Volunteers call individuals delivering information about resources to protect personal information and assets and provide victim support to those who have been defrauded. Clerical support and data entry are often needed for projects. Those who are interested in public speaking receive training to perform presentations.

**Auburn Medical Center:** Share your gift of hospitality with patients, families and visitors! Volunteers needed for our Information Desk, Surgery Waiting Room and similar positions in which volunteers provide directions and help to those at the hospital. Our greatest need is Monday – Friday between 8am – 3pm and most shifts last 4 hours.

**Bloodworks Northwest:** Be a vital link in a critical life-saving chain! Whether you are registering donors at our donor centers or at a blood drive in your community, caring for donors after they've given blood, phoning donors to thank them or remind them of their appointments, delivering blood to labs, or a whole host of other positions, we can use your talents, skills, passion and willingness to help. We have multiple locations where you can serve.

**Circle of Friends for Mental Health:** Help make someone's day by empowering them through creative self-expression! Volunteers needed to facilitate weekly, 1 – 2 hour art classes for individuals struggling with mental illness, addiction and/or homelessness. Classes take place Monday – Saturday afternoons in various locations around Seattle, but we're hoping to expand to other areas of King County as well. Don't fret if you're no modern-day Picasso or Broadway actress, just bring your creativity, encouragement and smiles!

**First Place Scholars** needs volunteers for its clothing bank. Sort and wash donations as needed, (washer/dryer on site) and bring students into the bank to fit them with requested items. Help students feel good about the clothing they receive by assisting them in choosing clothing that will fit them. Volunteer 1 – 4 hours per week (usually in the mornings) any two days of the week.

**Jewish Family Service:** The food bank program needs home delivery volunteers. Once a month, provide two bags of groceries to five or six elderly or disabled clients who are unable to get to the food bank. Other volunteer roles include being a substitute driver for home delivery, picking up food donations, or helping with tasks in our Capitol Hill food bank. Our food bank serves clients in five Seattle zip codes and on the eastside. Chinese and Russian speaking volunteers are always needed.

**Lifelong's Chicken Soup Brigade:** For most people living with chronic illnesses, a nourishing meal can make a huge difference in the struggle for wellness. You can be part of our team of volunteers preparing and delivering nourishing meals and grocery bags to homebound seniors and those living with chronic illnesses. Most of our volunteer opportunities take place at our meal production center in the Georgetown neighborhood.

**Literacy Source** is a community-based organization in Fremont working towards improving the lives of adults in King County by providing small classes and one-on-one tutoring in reading, writing, math, GED prep, ESL, citizenship and computers. Tutor adults in ESL or Beginning Literacy. Tutors work 2 x 1.5 hours a week, training is provided and hours are flexible, Mondays – Thursday, 9am – 8:30pm. New Volunteer Orientations are held first Wednesdays of every month at 1pm and 7pm.

**Mt. Si Senior Center** serves seniors in the Snoqualmie Valley by providing a community dining program, health, social, recreational and educational programs, and housing and transportation services. They currently need volunteers, especially in the thrift store, reception, dining and landscaping.

**North Helpline Food Bank:** Many opportunities for volunteers to help out in the food bank including sorting and food distribution. Assist with client check-in, line direction, assisting clients with carts, and stocking and distributing food. Help with the sorting process by bagging fruit and vegetables and assisting with bagging bulk items like rice, dog food and potatoes. Meet some interesting people!

**Pacific Science Center:** Do you have a lively curiosity and love science and math? The Pacific Science Center seeks you to volunteer to inspire lifelong learning in science, math and technology with our guests, both young and old. We have many opportunities from horticulture to science interpretation to our maker space.

**Puget Sound Labor Agency (PSLA):** Make a positive impact on the less-fortunate living in downtown Seattle by volunteering with the PSLA Food Bank at the historic Labor Temple in Belltown. Volunteers are needed for data entry, delivery pickup, driver, food distribution, customer greeter and food bank journalist positions. Also available are opportunities for retired builders to help wheelchair users access their homes through the RAMP program. Volunteer shifts vary from 2 – 4 hours in length.

**Reading Partners** is actively seeking volunteers to support young readers at elementary schools in North, West and South Seattle. Tutor a child and make a lifelong impact in as little as one hour each week! Reading Partners is a national nonprofit literacy organization that works to expand life opportunities for elementary school children by empowering them with strong literacy skills

**Southeast Seattle Senior Center:** Help serve home cooked lunch at our vibrant, friendly daytime activities center where our seniors greet old friends, make new ones, and learn about classes and resources. You will be helping at the very center of our center. OR work one day a week, 10am – 2pm, at our Cheap Chickadee thrift store, raising money for the center's programs, and selling useful items and treasures in a cute yellow house.

**United Way of King County:** Join our Free Tax Campaign – a program that helps struggling families and individuals prepare their taxes, gives them access to savings opportunities, and connects them to public benefits. No tax experience needed – we'll train you! Sign up today to join a talented team and help reach the people who need it most.

Please call to help me find a volunteer opportunity suited just for me.

Please send information about RSVP.

Please note my new address.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail this form to:** RSVP, 1501 N 45th Street, Seattle, WA 98103