



**Woodmen Hall**

# Lopez Island Senior Signal



**December 2020**

## **A Note from Senior Services**

**Happy Holidays!**

As we go to print on this newsletter the governor has just requested that we go into another lockdown because of the renewed surge in Covid-19 cases. Just before Thanksgiving. Again we have to ask ourselves what to do. Do we decide to gather with friends and family because we are so tired of being isolated? Do we spend more time at home alone? It is a hard situation to be in, isn't it? So many of you haven't been able to meet new grandchildren. There are new babies born on the island that are six months old already that I haven't met. We are used to sharing in the joy of a new Lopezian.

What I try to do is think of all of the doctors, nurses, and caregivers who are putting their lives on the line for us every day. They have been working all of this time trying to save lives while worrying about their own lives and the lives of their families. Besides the fact that some of their own co-workers have contacted the virus and passed away. For their sake, and ours, let's continue to do what we can.

**Merry Christmas!**



*Roni Becker-Wilkie*  
Senior Services Specialist  
360-468-2421; ronib@sanjuanco.com

## **Thank you Volunteers!**

The picture below demonstrates that it takes teamwork to get some things done. That is the way it is with many of the programs and services we offer—they take a TEAM of dedicated people to make them happen. THANK YOU to ALL our volunteers who help us help our island seniors through services such as Meals on Wheels and our transportation program. We appreciate your dedication and love working with you! Merry Christmas to All!



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**Lopez Island Senior Center**

Lopez Island Senior Center  
 4102 Fisherman Bay Rd (PO Box 154)  
 Lopez Island, WA 98261  
 Phone: 360-468-2421  
 Fax: 360-468-3021  
 Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9am- 3:30pm  
 Email: ronib@sanjuanco.com

**Senior Services Staff**

Barbara LaBrash, Human Services Manager  
 Roni Becker Wilkie, Senior Services  
 Specialist, 360-468-2421  
 Gail Leschine-Seitz, Aging & Family Case  
 Coordinator, 360-370-7528  
 Ken Lloyd, Cook

**Nonprofit Status**

The Lopez Island Senior Services Operations  
 Committee operates as a 501(c)3 so  
 donations are deductible within the limits of  
 the law.

**Operations Committee**

Carl Bender - Chairman  
 Vacant - Vice Chairman, Operations  
 Carol Jones, Treasurer  
 Carl Bender - Water  
 Karin Gandini - Member at Large  
 Barbara Andrews - Member at Large  
 Mel Gaddis - Member at Large  
 Holly Lovejoy-Secretary  
 Barbara Jennings-Friends of Woodmen Hall

**Operations Committee Meeting**

Lopez Island Senior Services Advisory  
 Committee meets the first Tuesday each  
 month (unless changed due to holiday) at  
 10am at Woodmen Hall. Meetings are open  
 to the public. Consider attending one or more  
 meetings to find out what is happening with  
 Senior Services. Bring ideas, suggestions  
 and concerns. You are welcome!

**Newsletter**

The *Senior Signal* is published by Lopez  
 Island Senior Services and distributed free at  
 the Senior Center and by mail.

Mail submissions to PO Box 154 or email to  
 ronib@sanjuanco.com by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each  
 month for the following month's issue. The  
 newsletter is also available at

**Respite Care**

A reminder to those of you who are unpaid care  
 givers of a friend or family member. Respite care is  
 available for up to 13 days a month at Hamlet  
 House in Lopez Village if space is available, or on  
 the mainland. The rate paid is based on the  
 monthly income of the person receiving care. It is a  
 sliding scale, and Northwest Regional Council pays  
 the difference from the Respite grant they receive  
 from the State of Washington. This program allows  
 the caregiver to have a break from caregiving,  
 which is necessary for them to remain in good  
 emotional and physical health. If this sounds like  
 something you would benefit from please call  
 Senior Services at 360-468-2421.

**Meal Service - Lunch**

**Home Delivered Meals only at this time.**  
 Wednesdays and Fridays. \$5 suggested donation  
 for seniors 60 and over, \$7 for those under 60.  
 Home delivered meals to homebound seniors on  
 lunch days. Delivery time depends on the number  
 of persons on the route that day.

**Durable Medical Equipment**

Lopez Island Hospice & Home Support provides  
 walkers, wheelchairs and other durable medical  
 equipment free of charge. Contact the office, 178  
 Weeks Road, between 10am-12noon and 1-3pm  
 Monday through Thursday; 360-468-4446.

**Free Taxi to Island Hospital and Clinics**

Island Hospital has contracted with Mert's Taxi  
 (360) 299-0609 in Anacortes to transport people  
 (round trip) from the ferry in Anacortes to Island  
 Hospital and, or one of their clinics. Call Mert's the  
 day before your appointment and you will be met at  
 the ferry. Be sure to check with your clinic and  
 make sure they subscribe to this service. Call Is-  
 land Rides for Transportation to Peace Island  
 Health Hospital in Friday Harbor at 360-298-6108.

**Renting Woodmen Hall - Pending Phased**

**Opening.** If you are interested in renting Woodmen  
 Hall please call the building rental phone number  
 360-468-3092 and leave a message. The voice  
 mail is checked daily. You may also email A.J.  
 Kocak at Woodmenhall20@gmail.com.

**Foot Clinic - Postponed at this time.**

Is managed by individual providing the service and  
 not affiliated with the Senior Center programs.  
 Contact Rose at 360-317-3123. First Monday of the  
 Month. By appointment only.

## Message from Lopez Operations Committee

I had thought we would be able to resume congregate meals sometime in the spring, but it is now looking like it will be later in the summer. Those responsible for putting together budgets are projecting many more days of home delivered meals. There are so many ifs and buts it is difficult for us to put together a budget for the senior center. We do know that Woodmen hall will remain closed for events until sometime in the summer. We have had an individual step up and agree to match any funds we can raise, so we are putting together a Christmas mailing asking for more support. Speaking of Christmas, it falls on a Friday this year, so there will be no delivered meals. However, there will be delivered meals on the Wednesday before Christmas.

We are still attempting to clean up a few odd jobs during this shut-in period. We are taking delivery of wood to redo the ramp behind the kitchen. The outdoor carpet is worn out and since we are replacing it, we will make the ramp match the other ramps we have. The limbs overhanging the parking lot have been taken down. Other minor jobs include a downspout on the pump house, hose hangers and general clean up around the other ramps.

As I indicated, we are working on our budget for next year and it is difficult not being able to schedule in any fundraising events. We are still working on a nutrition agreement with the Whatcom County on Aging, and our own county. We almost have it done. I believe we now have a transportation agreement and we are following it. Finally, although this is a very different Christmas season we would like to say, "take good care of yourselves and every one have a very Merry Christmas!"

Carl Bender, Chairman  
Lopez Operations Committee

## Online Events You Can Join!

Check out these Bellingham Senior Activity Center virtual programs available to San Juan County seniors. They offer a variety of programs such as yoga, strength training, Zumba, Tai Chi QiGong, trivia and TED talks. If you are interested in attending some of these online classes/events, visit their website <https://whatcomcoa.org/upcoming-events/> to sign up for the weekly email updates with info and links to programs.



## IslandRides (formerly Roundtowner)

SJI Shuttle System (aka IslandRides) provides free or donation- fare transportation to those in need. Drivers follow COVID-19 safety protocols and riders are required to wear a mask. To schedule a ride call (360)-317-3107 email [islandrides@gmail.com](mailto:islandrides@gmail.com) or visit our website at [www.islandrides.org](http://www.islandrides.org).

National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) is pleased to announce that it is awarding a grant of \$24,724.00 to San Juan Islands Shuttle System (**IslandRides**) to develop program innovations for increasing accessible transportation. The Federal Transit Administration(FTA) funded *Innovations in Accessible Mobility* competitive grants in ten states to expand mobility opportunities for older adults and people with disabilities. San Juan Islands Shuttle System was selected from among twenty-four proposals from applicants in nineteen states for the six-month award.

Local public transportation is the critical link to enable older adults and people with disabilities to access employment, health care and other needed community services, yet for many, those services are unavailable, inadequate or under-utilized. Transportation counters social isolation, facilitating engagement in life enhancing activities and connections to family, friends and the community at large. NADTC's community grants target areas with high need and limited resources and create practical, accessible solutions that are long-lasting as well as adaptable by other communities.

**IslandRides** grant funding will expand daily availability of shuttle hours and no-contact home deliveries to the vulnerable population on San Juan Island, making earlier and later trips available daily. For more information about this exciting project or to contribute you may contact Curt VanHyning, Board Member, at [cvanhyning@gmail.com](mailto:cvanhyning@gmail.com).

## Important COVID-19 Information

Remember to visit San Juan County's COVID-19 webpage—[www.sjccovid.com](http://www.sjccovid.com)—and the Health & Community Services Facebook page [www.facebook.com/SJCPUBLICHEALTH](http://www.facebook.com/SJCPUBLICHEALTH) — for information and resources related to the pandemic. Stay safe and healthy everyone!

**Sign-up now for the Upcoming Class Series  
Powerful Tools for Caregivers**

**Six Wednesdays @ 1:30-3pm via Zoom  
January 20<sup>th</sup> to February 24<sup>th</sup>**

If you are an unpaid, family or friend caregiver, please join us for this **FREE** six-week class series that will provide you with tools and strategies to better handle the unique caregiver challenges you face. Due to COVID-19, the classes will be held online via Zoom; the benefit is that anyone from any island can join and you can stay home with your care receiver. If you don't have access to a computer with a camera or are unfamiliar with online meetings but want to participate, give us a call and we can discuss options with you.

To register on Lopez, please contact Roni Becker Wilkie at 360-468-2421 or ronib@sanjuanico.com, or Gail Leschine at 360-370-7528 or gail@sanjuanico.com. Can't make these dates? Contact us anyway to be added to the waitlist for future classes. If you are a caregiver, this class series is a great gift to give yourself.



**Hospice Service Concerns**

*Contributed by Lynnette Wood,  
Chair, Orcas Senior Center District Committee*

For decades, Hospice of the Northwest has been a vital resource in our county. Their dedicated staff and volunteers commit to providing exceptional care to people with life-limiting illnesses, their families, and circles of support. That care is now under threat. Two Skagit County public healthcare districts, which own Hospice of the Northwest, are in discussions to sell the non-profit to a private equity-owned organization called Bristol Hospice. Such sales have increased recently. The risk is that companies boost profits by cutting staff, increasing caseloads, and limiting home health care. Services may also be reduced, especially to areas where it is more expensive to operate, such as San Juan County. If this concerns you and you would like to see the non-profit Hospice of the Northwest continue to provide the high quality of care it does, please make your voice heard by sending a letter to pbrowning@skagitregionalhealth.org.



**SAFE**  
- San Juans -

**SAFE San Juans**

SAFE San Juans (SAFE) is not always thought of as a resource for seniors and caregivers, but the agency is well equipped to provide thoughtful solutions to difficult relationship and caregiving situations. Created in 1997 to help survivors of domestic violence (DV) and sexual abuse (SA), SAFE has offices on Orcas, Lopez and San Juan Island; each office is staffed with highly trained professional counselors and advocates. According to SAFE's Executive Director, Dave Dunaway, DV and SA are associated with control and power dynamics that are not respectful of age; because of that, SAFE provides support to people across the age spectrum.

SAFE has a 24/7 crisis line (360-468-4567 on Lopez Island), provides safety planning, offers emergency shelter for adults and their children who are fleeing violent situations, and offers advocacy support (including legal, medical and financial). One of the interesting services offered by SAFE is professional mental health counseling for those who are dealing with the impact of previous sexual abuse or domestic violence. SAFE has two professional counselors on staff to provide that support.

"One of the most helpful things we can do is to assist someone in thinking through their options," said Dunaway. People tend to think that all a person needs to do is leave when they wind up in an abusive or violent relationship – or when they have to live with the threat/fear of violence. But, victims of violence or abuse are dealing with impossible choices, and those are especially difficult when the relationship is between a senior and their caregiver. Advances in age can lead to declines in cognitive and physical abilities, and those can easily contribute to feelings of less control. They impact relationships, and either party can be the one suffering.

All of the services provided by SAFE San Juans are free. To talk with someone from SAFE San Juans, call the Lopez office at 360-468-3788 or visit their website (SAFEsj.org).

## Featured Staff: Driver-Jerry Manion



I have been driving for the Senior Center for about 6 1/2 years. One time last summer one of my little ladies asked me how far I have driven. I told her about 20 miles so far today. She then asked "I mean how far since you started driving for the Center?" I did some calculating and determined that between Meals on Wheels and on and off island senior transports over these years it was between 25,000-30,000 miles! I was shocked myself. Time flies.

As you know I also volunteer at the LIFRC, Lopez Fresh, Lopez Fit and IslandRides. It keeps me busy and frankly, I really enjoy every time I am helping someone out. Once I was asked why I volunteer so much. Simply, it is an extension of my chosen career. Which for many is just the way we see the world and we don't want to change just because we have reached retirement. Whatever your option of law enforcement, the motto of my department was "To Protect and Serve". I am glad to say that most, not all, but most of the officers I had the good fortune to work with over the years really felt that way. I know I still do and volunteering is a way to continue to protect and serve.

My brothers bought a "vacation home" on Lopez back in 2003. I retired to our home on Lopez Sound Rd in 2014. I worked 38 years in law enforcement in New York and Texas. I retired in 2013 from the Dallas Probation Dept after 20 years with them. I have also worked as a detention officer, a public safety officer and spent 10 years with the Rochester Police Dept in a domestic violence and mental health unit. All good, never was seriously injured nor had to seriously hurt anyone. All said, these days, and for that matter, anytime, happy to be on Lopez... the family joke is that Jerry doesn't know how to tell a "short story".

## Washington Listens Help Line

Washington has launched **Washington Listens**, a support program and phone line to help people manage elevated levels of stress due to the pandemic. [1-833-681-0211](tel:1-833-681-0211). 9am-9pm M-F, 9am-6pm Sat/Sun. Speak with a specialist and get connected to community resources in your area. The program is anonymous.

## Tuition-free Classes for Senior WA Residents

Are you thinking you that might like to take an online class this coming winter? Age 60+ WA residents can register for classes, with a full or partial tuition waiver, at any WA state university or college! Just contact the institution of your choice, via phone (registrar's office) or online and start the process as a nonmatriculated (non-enrolled) student. You can also search under "senior tuition waiver".

With the Covid situation, plan on the class of your choice most likely being offered online only and pending space availability. You can choose any school in the state. It doesn't necessarily need to be in your vicinity.

Research shows that new learning is good for the brain and this is especially important as we age. Keep it stimulated and healthy!

For further info: WA state legislative web site, law: rcw28b.15.540

*Submitted by: Janice Olson, Retired Teacher*

## Dementia TV



I recently learned about a fantastic resource for people with dementia that I wished I had known about for my husband when he was in hospice. It's **ZinniaTV.com**, a site with beautiful videos that don't have any dialog that both ill people and caregivers can enjoy. There is a selection of video clips about things like horses, golf, travel, waterfalls, flowers, cooking. Once you choose one video to start, it goes to continuous play if you don't stop and choose another video, so it doesn't need to be monitored by the caregiver. It requires either a computer or a smart TV. ~ Beth Helstien, SJI Library



## Emergency Planning

*Susy Hymas, Meals on Wheels and More*

Whether we like it or not, winter is approaching in our corner of the Northwest. We never know exactly what winter will bring, but we do know there will be rain, some cold and possibly even snow or wind events. The Northwest can also experience earthquakes. If the weather gets bad, you can hopefully stay bundled up in your home. Are you prepared in case the power goes out, or you cannot get out due to snow or ice? Having emergency supplies for weather events or other disasters is always a good idea.

Covid-19 could complicate things more this year. We all hope that we do not face another lockdown, but extra supplies may be needed to prepare for this possibility. What should you have on hand to keep you safe and nourished in case of emergency? The American Red Cross recommends that we have **two weeks of supplies**. Everyone's situation is different, but here are some suggestions to help you and your family prepare:

- Keep enough water on hand for at least 3 days. Recommendation is one gallon per person per day.
- Consider your medications. Talk to your pharmacist about stockpiling an emergency supply of your essential medications. Include some over the counter pain medications in your emergency supplies. Be sure to check expiration dates.
- Flashlight and some extra batteries.
- Transistor radio and extra batteries.
- If you have pets, make sure you have some emergency food and water for them as well.
- Other supplies to have on hand include: a whistle, some cash (ATMs may not be working), and an emergency blanket.
- Emergency food supply for those times when you cannot cook or get out of the house to get supplies. Stock up on non-perishable foods that you like; rotate and use when they are nearing the expiration date. Keep in mind you might not have the ability to heat or cook foods. Crackers, cereal, canned pastas and vegetables are some foods that can be eaten without heating and cooking.
- In addition to food, your emergency supplies should include a can opener, knife, scissors, paper towels, hand wipes, eating utensils, and paper plates.

It is always a good idea to have an out of area contact that you can call in an emergency to let know that you are safe. Sometimes local lines get busy and it is easier to call out of area folks. With a little preparation you will be ready for any emergency this winter might bring.



## Month #12 Emergency Preparations

This is our final month of emergency preparation calendar reminders. Hopefully you are well on your way to having a good stock of water, food and other supplies on hand to ease stress and discomfort when an emergency situation occurs. Check in with extended family, friends and neighbors to remind them to prepare as well.

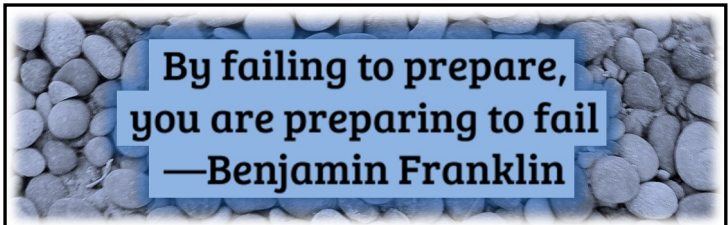
### PURCHASE:

- Purchase paper plates, napkins, eating utensils and paper cups; water supply may be extremely limited for washing dishes
- Purchase a large bag of rice (10lb.+); check periodically for spoilage
- Add an additional 3 days of water supply/person in your household and for pets
- Continue expanding your food supply

### ACTIVITIES:

- Replace prescription medicines as required by expiration dates
- Check to see if your stored food and water needs to be replaced; many dry good foods have relatively short expiration dates so rotate often as you purchase new supplies for regular use
- Make a note to take a first aid/CPR class once COVID-19 restrictions ease and in-person classes are offered again

For more information on preparing for an emergency and/or a copy of the preparation calendar, please visit [www.sanjuandem.net](http://www.sanjuandem.net) or call 360-370-7612.



### Sign up for San Juan County Emergency Alerts

Sign up to receive emergency alerts and severe weather warnings that could directly impact you and your family. You have the ability to opt out at any time. Sign up at: <https://public.alertsense.com/SignUp/?regionid=1213>.

## Community Services and References



### Home Delivered Meal Service

Due to COVID-19, we are only delivering meals to those in need. No lunches are served at Woodmen Hall/Senior Center at this time. Please contact San Juan County Senior Services Specialist Roni Becker Wilkie at 360-468-2421; ronib@sanjuanco.com if you are in need of home delivered meals right now or know someone who may need them. Meals are delivered Wednesdays and Fridays.

### Caregiver Support Group

We will meet online via Zoom on Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, from 1:30-2:45pm

Contact Gail Leschine-Seitz, San Juan County Aging & Family Case Coordinator, at 360-378-2677 or gaill@sanjuanco.com for more information.



#### Tell Us What You Think...

Senior Services has a feedback survey for you to fill out to let us know how we are doing. We take your comments seriously and continually strive to better serve the citizens of this community. The surveys are available at the Lopez Senior Center—Woodmen Hall, or you may contact Roni Becker at 360-468-2421 or ronib@sanjuanco.com to request a copy.

### Some of these services may not be available at this time due to COVID-19.

**Lopez Island Hospice and Home Support referrals.** Trained volunteers to help support members of the Lopez Island community that are dealing with temporary, chronic or terminal illness. Also a resource for medical equipment. Call Senior Services (360)468-2421 or Lopez Island Hospice and Home Support (360)468-4446.

**Information & Assists:** This program will help you find needed information about services, community resources and issues of concern to older adults.

**Case Management:** Referrals to Medicaid, Island Hospital Home Health and Lopez Island Hospice and Home Support case management are available to assess and offer options for those in need.

**Respite:** Please call the Senior Services Office at 360-468-2421 for more information. Up to 13 days a month subsidized time off for family care givers.

#### **Island Hearing:**

Please call for appointment Stacie Nordrum 360-378-2330 or islandhearing@gmail.com

**SAFE San Juans:** Provides domestic violence and sexual assault services to survivors and their loved ones; (360) 468-3788. SAFE San Juans also has a 24-hour crisis line on each island. On Lopez call 360-468-4567.

## HELP IS JUST A CALL AWAY

**IslandRides:** 360-317-3107 or islandrideslopez@gmail.com for low cost/free transportation on the island

**Life-line—Emergency Monitoring Service:** Telephone monitoring gets you help within three minutes when you need it. **1-800-543-3546**

**Lopez Island Hospice and Home Support:** (360) 468-4446 In home support by trained volunteers. Also medical equipment such as walkers, toilet raisers, and more.

**SHIBA:** Medicare and health insurance questions. Call Mac Langford at (360) 468-4015

**DSHS:** Low income assistance (360) 378-6504

**Weatherization and Basic Food Program Assistance:** Family Resource Center (360) 468-4117

**Social Security:** 1-800-772-1213

**Medicare:** 1-800-633-4227

**Veteran's Administration:** (360) 370-7470 or

**San Juan County Veteran's Assistance Program:** veterans@sanjuanco.com

**Family Caregivers Support Group:** Third Thursday from 1:30-3:00 at Woodmen Hall (360)-468-2421

**Loss Support Group:** Call Hospice and Home Support Office (360) 468-4446 for meeting time.

**Hamlet House :** Adult Family Home in Lopez Village (360) 468-3800

**Suicide Hotline for Veterans:** 1-800-273-8255

**Community Wellness Program:** Offers mental health service to seniors Family Resource Center

**LHEAP Program:** energy assistance program (360) 468-4117 Family Resource Center

**Crisis Hotline: 24 hr. 800-584-3578 WA Relay:** 800-833-6384 www.imhurting.org

**Lopez Family Resource Center:** (360) 468-4117



**CENTS**  
CONSUMER EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING SERVICES

## Watch Out for Social Media Scams

*Contributed by Tony Leahy*

The Federal Trade Commission has reported a surge in scams that start on social media platforms like Facebook. Think of all the ads you see on social media sites offering all kinds of things like a job, a love interest, or a good deal on something you want to buy. These things can all be faked.

A current scam is an imposter posing as a friend and giving information about COVID-19 relief grants. It fools people on two levels: it appears to come from a friend and people are vaguely familiar with COVID assistance and think this offer might be part of it. Unfortunately, the programs the scammers send out aren't real. Anyone can create a Facebook ad and it's easy to make it look like it's a reputable source.

As we approach the holidays, watch for scams that have too good to be true deals and be wary of unfamiliar sites. You can check their ratings and reviews, but even those can be faked. If you pay with a credit card, you can contact your credit card company to dispute the charges if a seller has scammed you. You should change your credit card at that point too.

As it gets colder, threats to cut off heat or other utility services will start happening. These may start out as a phone call or text and remember that Caller ID numbers can be faked. If you're not sure if it's legitimate, gather information and contact the utility or company involved directly through contact information you know is correct. Don't just rely on the contact information the scammer provides.

Whether you are scammed or not and you want to help stop a scam, report it at the [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](http://ReportFraud.ftc.gov) website. If you are scammed, contact your local police department and whatever financial institution was used in the scam, such as your bank or credit card company.



**SENIOR MONEY PROJECT**  
A financial education program for senior citizens

Or Current Resident

Bulk Rate  
Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #15  
Lopez Island, WA  
98261

Phone: 360-468-2421  
FAX: 360-468-3021  
Location: 4102 Fisherman Bay Road  
E-mail: [ronib@sanjuanco.com](mailto:ronib@sanjuanco.com)  
Issue: December 2020

P O Box 154  
Lopez Island, WA 98261

SENIOR SERVICES COUNCIL  
OF SAN JUAN COUNTY