



We celebrated Thanksgiving with a special holiday meal across our Community Dining sites in November. In Olympia we celebrated with volunteers from WSECU and musical entertainment by Nordic Spirit!



Brian's View

*A Message From the
Executive Director*

It has been an eventful end to 2024, with the onset of winter storms and important local and national elections. I'm proud of the way our staff and volunteers focused on our mission and avoided the distractions of the news of the day. Looking back, we had a tremendously successful mission year!

Consider that in June this year we went Over the Edge together at Huntamer Park in Lacey! What a crazy and wonderful and enormously popular event that was. Despite many misgivings and fears by participants — understandable when faced with rappelling off the top of a tall building! — every single person had an amazing time and many said they would eagerly do it again. I myself rappelled, alongside my father-in-law, and can't wait for another chance. Good news, we already have the 2025 event on the calendar. Join us next year on Saturday, **June 28th, to go Over The Edge to support seniors in Thurston and Mason counties.**

Not a week goes by without something wonderful happening around here. If you open your eyes and really listen, every day has beautiful moments of kindness, compassion and laughter. One can't help but mark the passage of time through major events, but as the saying goes, life is what happens while you are making other plans. (I've always loved that saying.) So I want to emphasize that **it's the work we do on a daily basis that makes our mission shine!**

In recent memory is our **Fall Gala**, uniformly regarded as our best in many years. That's a high bar, I think, because they've all been good. But something about this year's theme and decorations and flow of speakers hit a sweet spot for people. Particularly memorable was our guest speaker, who described the personal importance of our Brighter Days program to her and her husband. Her words reached everyone in powerful ways, and there were few dry eyes in the audience. We don't hold Galas solely for fundraising purposes; they also serve to gather our community and celebrate the common bonds between us. Yet in terms of dollars raised, the generosity of our people shined through and we had a net of \$114,000. This was our best yet!

Any review of 2024 must include our work on **battling Isolation and Loneliness** in our community. All year, we've raised awareness and taken action to reduce loneliness among seniors, and have pursued partnerships with YMCA, United Way and the Timberland Regional Library System that have created synergy community-wide. We are better together, and will continue this effort going forward.

I hope you enjoy some holiday cheer, however you celebrate this season. Many of us eagerly anticipate the winter solstice on December 22. How can we not celebrate days getting longer? **You helped us make 2024 a fantastic year for our mission.** What great things can we accomplish together in 2025?

Brian Windrope, Executive Director

December Holiday Meals

The Season of Sharing Love Through Food

Goodbye November, Hello December!

December is a time to reflect on the year and to prepare for the coming one. What better way to do so than with our senior friends? Stay cozy, make new friends and fill your belly by visiting us during lunchtime.

In December, Senior Services will feature three special holiday lunches lovingly prepared by our very own Senior Nutrition teams. Please be sure to double check with individual kitchen sites for their special lunch day and with reception on the day of for any menu changes.

Thursday, December 12: Hanukkah

Borscht with Sour Cream and Latkes, Challah Rolls, Apple Compote, Dessert

Wednesday, December 18: Christmas

Holiday Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Veggies, Dessert

Extended Hours for Olympia and Lacey: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Tuesday, December 31: Kwanzaa

Jerk Chicken, Jollof Rice, Collard Greens, Sour Cream Pound Cake, Oranges

Olympia

11:45 am - 12:15 pm
Olympia Senior Center
222 Columbia St NW
Olympia, WA 98501

Lacey

11:45 am - 12:15 pm
Virgil Clarkson Lacey Senior
Center
6757 Pacific Ave SE
Lacey, WA 98503

Tumwater

11:45 am - 12:15 pm
Tumwater Old Town Center
215 North 2nd Ave SW
Tumwater, WA 98512

Tenino

11:30 am - 12:00 pm
Quarry House
319 Park Ave
Tenino, WA 98589

Shelton

11:45 am - 12:15 pm
Shelton United Methodist
Church
1900 King St
Shelton, WA 98584

Rochester

11:00 - 11:30 am
Rochester United Methodist
Church
18206 Corvallis St SW
Rochester, WA 98579



Volunteer Spotlight: Curtis Cushman

By Scott Schoengarth

Curtis Cushman is not your average Senior Services volunteer. Although in his mid-70s, he still works for himself full-time Tuesday thru Saturdays at All American Geotechnical located in Olympia.

Somehow he finds time to volunteer each Monday, teaching three French-speaking classes – Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced – to a total of around 25 students at the Lacey Senior Center.

After college, Curtis spent a few years in West Africa under the Peace Corps program for professional services. Several US geotechnical jobs followed, including drilling for the Los Angeles Subway down Hollywood Boulevard. He eventually came to live in the Johnson Point area in his grandfather's 1940 home. Curtis's grandfather, the creator of Tacoma's coffee-pot-shaped Java Jive, had already retired to this area. His brother still lives in the home next door, and other relatives are nearby.

Many years back, Curtis was driving a food truck as a volunteer for his church and pulled into the Lacey Senior Center. He came into the French class, which apparently didn't really have a teacher. **Eventually, Curtis ended up teaching the class**, and he's been there now "for many years."

Because he works full-time, Curtis rarely has time to volunteer for other activities at the Center, but he is so appreciated for sharing his love of the French language. While not teaching or working, he spends his time writing, and has recently submitted his author's proof for **his first novel!**

Curtis loves to work and teach. He said he would probably go crazy if he quit his job and just sat around the house all day. Expect him to keep working at the Center for as long as they will have him, and as long as members want to learn French, or just touch-up the little French they already speak.

If you have a special skill you would like to share with others, why not contact Volunteer Manager Theresa Ziniewicz at theresaz@southsoundseniors.org or 360-586-6181 ext. 120. Or stop by the receptionist desk in Olympia or Lacey and ask about becoming a volunteer. It really is that simple! And as Curtis would greet you when you show up in his class, Bonjour!

Scott Schoengarth is the coordinator for the Bus Buddy Program of Thurston County, a partnership between Intercity Transit, Catholic Community Services of Western Washington, Volunteer Services and Washington State Department of Transportation. He can be reached at 360.688.8832.

Newsletter December 2024



Celebrating *Diversity* December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 World AIDS Day 	2	3  International Day of Persons with Disabilities	4	5	6	7
8 Bodhi Day 	9	10 Human Rights Day 	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Las Posadas 	18	19	20	21 Yule (- Jan. 1) Winter Solstice 
22	23 Festivus 	24	25 Hanukkah (- Jan. 2) Christmas 	26 Kwanzaa (- Jan. 1) Boxing Day 	27	28
29	30	31				

Monthly Observances:

- Advent (Dec. 1 - 24)
- Universal Human Rights Month
- World AIDS/HIV Awareness Month



For more information and resources, scan here or visit our blog online!

southsoundseniors.org/news

OLYMPIA WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00 to 10:00 am Advanced EnhanceFitness® \$	10:00 to 11:00 Gentle Yoga \$	9:00 am to 10:00 am Advanced EnhanceFitness® \$	10:30 to 11:30 Gentle Yoga	8:30 to 11:00 am Woodcarving
10:30 to 11:30 am Gentle Yoga \$	10:00 to 11:30 am Current Issues	10:00 am to 1:00 pm Tech Help with Adam	12:30 pm Pinochle	9:00 am to 10:00 am Advanced EnhanceFitness® \$
10:30 am to 1:00 pm Tech Help with Melinda	10:00 am to 1:00 pm Tech Help with Adam	10:00 am to 12:00 pm Parkinson's Disease Support Group	12:30 to 2:00 pm Music Mends Minds	10:00 am to 1:00 pm Tech Help with Adam
12:00 to 3:00 pm Table Games	10:30 to 11:30 am Tai Ji Quan \$	10:30 to 11:30 am Gentle Yoga	1:00 to 2:00 pm Adaptive Creative Dance \$	10:30 to 11:30 am Tai Ji Quan \$
12:00 to 4:00 pm Cribbage	12:00 to 4:00 pm Reader's Theater	12:00 to 3:00 pm Table Games	2:00 to 4:00 pm Yarn Magic	12:00 to 3:00 pm Table Games
12:00 to 1:00 pm World Geography: Come Explore!	12:45 to 1:45 pm Drop-In Meditation	1:00 to 4:00 pm Mah Jongg		1:30 to 2:30 pm Beginning EnhanceFitness® \$
1:00 to 3:00 pm Party Bridge	1:00 to 2:00 pm Chair Yoga \$	1:30 to 2:30 pm Beginning EnhanceFitness® \$		
1:30 to 2:30 pm Beginning EnhanceFitness® \$				

BOLD = Senior Services for South Sound membership required to participate

\$ = Class Fee associated with activity. Read full class description on our website at southsoundseniors.org/activities or in the Lifelong Learning Catalog

Dates and times are subject to change, call the appropriate center if you have questions about your activity. Olympia: 360.586.6181 or Lacey: 360.407.3967

See pages 8 & 9 for more activities and events!

LACEY WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30 to 9:30 am EnhanceFitness® \$	8:30 to 11:00 am Woodcarving	8:30 to 9:30 am EnhanceFitness® \$	9:00 to 10:00 am Gentle Yoga \$	8:30 to 9:30 am EnhanceFitness® \$
9:45 to 10:45 am EnhanceFitness® \$	9:30 to 10:15 am Zumba Gold \$	9:00 am to 12:00 pm Double Deck Pinochle	9:30 to 11:00 am Rock Painting	9:00 am to 12:00 pm Pinochle
10:30 to 11:30 am Beginner French Class	10:00 am to 12:00 pm Mother's with Estranged Adult Children Support Group	9:45 to 10:45 am EnhanceFitness® \$	10:00 to 11:30 am Coffee and Conversation	9:15 to 11 am Daytime Bingo
10:30 to 11:30 am Blood Pressure Checks	10:00 to 11:00 am Tech Help with Jeff	9:30 am to 1:15 pm Korean Elders	10:00 am to 12:00 pm Tech Help with Marianne**	9:45 to 10:45 am EnhanceFitness® \$
11:00 am to 12:00 pm Chair Yoga \$	11 am to 12:00 pm Gentle Yoga \$	11:00 to 11:45 am Chair Zumba \$	10:30 to 11:30 Beginner Tai Ji Quan \$	10:00 am to 12:00 pm Memoir Writing Class \$
11:30 am to 12:30 pm Intermediate French Class	12:30 to 3:30 pm Pinochle	12:30 to 3:30 pm Table Games	3:00 to 4:00 pm Advanced Tai Ji Quan \$	12:30 to 1:30 pm Intermediate Line Dancing
12:30 to 2:30 pm Advanced French Class	12:30 to 2:15 pm Needlecraft/Tatting Group	12:45 to 3:00 pm Fly Tying	5:30 to 6:30 pm Zumba After Hours	1:00 to 2:00 pm Sing Along with Brighter Days
12:30 to 1:15 Beginner Line Dancing \$	1:30 to 3:30 pm Dance Socials \$	1:00 to 3:00 pm Chess Essentials	6:30 to 9:00 pm Ukulele Ohana	1:00 to 4:00 pm Mah Jongg
1:00 to 3:00 pm Watercolor Group	2:00 to 3:00 pm Conversaciones en Espanol	1:30 to 3:00 Intermediate Line Dancing \$		
1:15 to 2:15 Beginner Advanced Line Dancing \$	2:00 to 3:30 pm Mixed Media Art			
2:30 to 3:30 pm Beginner Tai Ji Quan \$	5:30 to 6:30 pm Zumba After Hours			
3:30 to 4:30 pm Advanced Tai Ji Quan \$				
5:00 to 6:00 pm Tai Chi				

**10:00 to 11:00 am by appointment only, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm drop-ins welcome!

Senior Services for South Sound

Olympia Monthly Meetings & Classes

Monday, December 2

10:00 am – Mothers with Estranged Adult Children Support Group

Wednesday, December 4

10:00 am – Low Vision Support Group

Tuesday, December 10

11:00 am to 1:00 pm – ALS Support Group

Wednesday, December 11

2:00 to 4:00 pm – Death Café

Thursday, December 12

5:00 pm – Dine Out with the Olympia Senior Center at Octapas, 610 Water St SW

Dine Out isn't just a meal, it's our monthly ritual of camaraderie with friends old and new. Secure your spot by Monday, December 9. Everyone pays for their own meal.

Special Presentation

Friday, December 13 at 1:00 pm
Jay's Holiday & Creature Creations

Jay will share the animatronic and digital creations he has crafted over 40 years, including Santa's elves making candy cane & eggnog treats in their workshop. In Jay's Creature Presentation, he will play some short videos to introduce us to the life-size monsters he sculpted in his Monster Shop. Then he will introduce us to animated videos of Gus the Ogre, Gobbler the Goblin, singing pumpkins, and more. Jay will discuss his muse when working on these entities and show you his creations and other projects he has built in his workshop. His digital creatures not only have full animation, they have personalities as well.

Monday, December 16

10:30 am – Unforgettable Art with Maureen Wells

Thursday, December 19

10:00 am – Senior Reads Book Club

For December, the Senior Reads folks have decided to forego reading a book, but instead will share favorite passages, and share in some snacks of the festive sort! Come and share some wordsmithing that you love, gather ideas for books you may want to read, and have a little cheer with us! January's book for Senior Reads will be *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon.

Olympia Speaker Series

Wednesday, December 4 at 10:00 am
Jennie Beth Banks with Death Dancer

After her successful ON THE EDGE art exhibit and series of events at this Fall's Olympia Arts Walk in October, artist Jennie Beth Banks will showcase some of her art exhibit images, share the background to her creative process and lead a discussion around its theme of 'Perspectives on Death, Dying, Loss & Living'. Through this important work, she hopes to open up the conversation around death and dying and help us delve deeper into something we all will inevitably face.

Wednesday, December 18 at 10:00 am

We invite you to bring your own holiday stories to share. If you have stories of Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or Christmas that you would like to share, whether written or your own spoken story, please come and share. Speakers will be limited to no more than 5 minutes, in order that everyone has a chance to speak.

Newsletter December 2024

Lacey Monthly Meetings & Classes

Monday, December 2

12:30 to 2:00 pm - Dementia Caregivers Support Group

Tuesday, December 3

6:00 to 8:00 pm - Brain Injury Alliance of WA Meeting

Wednesday, December 4

1:30 to 3:00 pm - Owning the Age I Am

Thursday, December 5

1:00 to 3:00 pm - NW Gardening Group

Friday, December 6

12:30 to 2:00 pm - Dementia Caregivers Support Group

Monday, December 9

8:30 am to 3:30 pm - Senior Driving Workshop for Ages 55+ **Public Welcome + Register in-person at the Virgil Clarkson Lacey Senior Center or call the center + \$20 Per Student**

Tuesday, December 10

5:00 pm - Dine Out with the Lacey Senior Center at Pints & Quarts, 1230 College St SE

Join the Virgil Clarkson Lacey Senior Center for an evening at Pints & Quarts! Meet at the restaurant at 5:00 pm where we will dine with good food and better company! Everyone pays for their own meal.

Friday, December 13

2:00 to 3:30 pm - Bereavement Support Group Special Candelight Ceremony

Wednesday, December 18

2:00 to 3:00 pm - Open Book Club

Come join a staff person from Lacey Timberland Library for a group discussion of what attendees have been reading/listening to lately. Bring at least one title to talk about, and leave with a list of recommendations!

Thursday, December 19

11:30 am to 12:50 pm - Death Journaling

Please bring any type of notebook to work on. This can be as simple as an inexpensive three-ring binder or as fancy as an art journal.

1:00 to 3:00 pm - NW Gardening Group

2:00 to 4:00 pm - Death Café

Friday, December 27

12:30 pm - TED Talks Plus

Topic: *Insights to Happiness*. We'll view three TED Talks Plus videos and discuss each of them as a group.

A photograph of three elderly people (two men and one woman) smiling and looking at each other outdoors. They are wearing winter clothing like scarves and hats. The image is part of a promotional banner for a new catalog.

NEW!
**LIFELONG LEARNING
CATALOG OUT NOW**

A square QR code located in the bottom right corner of the banner image, likely linking to the catalog.

About SHIBA

Every month our SHIBA program (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) trained volunteers are available to help you understand the Medicare program.

If you are new to Medicare or have been on Medicare for some time, feel free to contact us at our message line at 360.586.6181 ext. 134 and a volunteer advisor will return your call, usually within two business days, or sooner.



SHIBA presentations in December

(For presentations via Zoom, please register with our office at 360.586.6181 ext. 134)

CLASS	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Welcome to Medicare	December 4	11:00 am	ZOOM
Welcome to Medicare	December 11	11:00 am	Olympia Senior Center
MIPPA Medicare Costs Webinar	December 12	1:00 pm	ZOOM
Welcome to Medicare	December 17	1:00 pm	ZOOM
Welcome to Medicare	December 19	10:00 am	ZOOM
Welcome to Medicare Event	December 19	11:00 am	Mason County Senior Activities Center

Monthly Article of Interest from the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner: Why Does Health Care Cost So Much?

Two factors drive health care costs: The type and number of services people use and the price paid for those services.



Scan to
read the
full article

In the last decade, consumers and businesses have experienced double-digit health insurance rate increases. In 2022, a report commissioned by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) revealed that health care costs in Washington state's commercial health insurance market increased by 13%, nearly double the rate of inflation between 2016-2019. A 2022 survey of 1,300 Washingtonians (www.healthcarevaluehub.org) found that nearly two-thirds had rationed medication, delayed or skipped needed care, or depleted their savings to pay for care or prescriptions. More than 81% worried about affording health care in the future.



Spotlight on the French Riviera

September 4 — 12, 2025

Uncover the chic resorts, sun-soaked beaches and elegant allure that attracts the rich and famous to the exquisite French Riviera!

Unpack for a leisurely multi-night stay, embracing the luxury and breathtaking beauty of the French Riviera, or Côte d'Azur. Spend time in the fairy-tale principality of Monaco. Discover the opulence of Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild and Gardens. Get a glimpse into the lives of the rich and famous in Cannes. Watch artisans create fragrant perfumes. Enjoy leisure time to explore on your own. It's time you lived a little bit of the good life.

\$4,999 double occupancy; \$6,599 single

Includes round-trip air, transfers, baggage handling, 8 nights lodging, 12 meals, sightseeing, tastings, tours, and more!



**Pick up your
copy of the Trips
& Tours
Catalog
today!**



Senior Services for South Sound

UGLY Sweater

BINGO

feat. ELIZABETH LORD

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

VIRGIL CLARKSON LACEY SENIOR CENTER

21+ ONLY // \$25 CASH TO PLAY
DOORS OPEN 6 PM // GAMES AT 7 PM

SNACK BAR // CASH BAR // \$2 SPECIAL GAMES
COSTUME CONTEST // 50/50 RAFFLE // AND MORE!

Senior
Services
FOR SOUTH SOUND



It's not too late to give!



With your support, we can fulfill
our mission of improving the
quality of life of people as they age!

Visit southsoundseniors.org/give, scan the
code, call us or send your check to:
Senior Services for South Sound
222 Columbia Street NW
Olympia, WA 98501

Every gift matters! Thank you to all of our
supporters this year and beyond!



**Centers and
Administrative Offices
will be**

CLOSED
DECEMBER 25 & 26
for the holiday.

Thank you to our Local Partners:



LEWIS-MASON-THURSTON
AREA AGENCY ON AGING



SUBARU

Olympia Subaru