

# Senior Signal

December 2013

## 10 Powerful Benefits of Change

by: Marla Johns, Orcas Senior Services Coordinator

*“If you do not create change, change will create you.” ~ Unknown*

We are often resistant to change, and we don't realize that change itself is constant. Even if you resist or avoid it, it will enter your life just the same. When you initiate the change yourself, it's pretty easy to adapt to it, since it's a wanted one. But are the unplanned and unexpected changes bad? What if all changes were good by default?

At first it is a bit difficult and annoying, but after a while you get used to the change so much that if it doesn't come for a while, you end up moving the furniture at home in order to feel something changing.

People usually avoid changes and prefer to stay in their comfort zones, but I am a true believer that once you get the courage and take the first step to change, your life will become much better.

Below are just a few benefits of change:

1. **Personal Growth**
2. **Flexibility**
3. **Improvements**
4. **Life values**
5. **The snowball effect**
6. **Strength**
7. **Progress**
8. **Opportunities**
9. **New Beginnings**
10. **Routine**

Remember the movie *Stranger than Fiction*? The main character, Harold Crick, does the same things in exactly the same time for years. He leads a completely dull, extremely predictable, and uninteresting life. That is how your life would be without changes.

I encourage you to look toward 2014 with a new and renewed vigor to try new things. Maybe you have never come to a senior lunch . . . now is a good chance to give it a try! Pick your favorite menu item and set a date. Perhaps you think, “yoga? I'm too old to try yoga now.” How would you know if you have never given it a try? Or you may find yourself with a few extra hours each week. This could be the time to jump in and become a regular volunteer!

Next time you get the temptation to avoid or resist the change, aim instead to initiate the ones that will lead you to where you want to be. And remember – if there were no change, there would be no butterflies.

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## **Airlift Northwest & Island Air**

### **What Seniors Need to Know**

by: Marla Johns

If you have been on Orcas Island and have been breathing the past couple of months, you have probably heard the Airlift vs. Island Air debate. I have been approached by a significant number of seniors with questions on the Aircare/Island Air membership discussion. In order to answer your questions and provide you with reliable information, I have attended all of the local meetings as well as had private conversations regarding Aircare and Island Air memberships with local insurance experts. I have learned some interesting facts for seniors which I will share with you.

Airlift Northwest and Island Air serve the San Juan Islands. Airlift Northwest operates a helicopter and Island Air operates a fixed wing airplane. Airlift is affiliated with the University of Washington and Island Air is affiliated with San Juan EMS system. On Orcas Island, Dr. Michael Sullivan functions as the medical director for Orcas Island Fire and Rescue. For every call involving Orcas aid units, they contact Dr. Sullivan regarding the disposition of the patient. After consultation with Dr. Sullivan, there will be a recommendation for whether or not the patient should be flown off island and by what method. Dr. Sullivan reports that he makes his decision first on safety, next on the medical necessity and time to definitive care. He then looks to utilization of all resources, impact to local EMS response and finally to the financial implications.

Both Airlift Northwest and Island Air offer membership programs. The memberships allow for both companies to accept your insurance reimbursement as payment in full without billing you, the patient, for additional costs.

As I set out on my quest for information, I looked to get the answer to one question: *If you have Medicare and a supplement, do you even need Aircare or Island Air memberships?* I found an insurance specialist on San Juan Island who has done a great deal of research into the air membership situation (he wishes to remain anonymous due to the sensitive nature of the issue). His answer, no. Both air carriers will bill Medicare and then if you have a Medicare secondary plan, they will bill your secondary for the \$3,400 out of pocket deductible. Medicare pays to either group the Medicare allowable fees and the deductible is picked up by the secondary even if you don't have a membership

*What if the Medicare patient does not have a secondary?* The most you will pay out of pocket is \$3,400 deductible. You are going to pay this amount to SOMEONE – the air ambulance service, the hospital, the physician, the radiologist, or the laboratory. If you are flown off island and hospitalized, you will have to pay your deductible whether you have the air membership or not. If you have the air membership you'll be paying your deductible to another medical provider, if you do not have the air membership and they are first in line for billing, you'll be paying your deductible to them.

The insurance specialist I spoke with went further by saying, "My own mother is in her 70's and it is my business to make sure that people are well insured. My mother has Medicare and a Medicare Advantage Plan as a secondary and I do not buy either Aircare or Island Air memberships for her."

It is not my position to recommend the purchase of one, both, or none of the air ambulance memberships; but simply to keep you all informed and get answers to the questions you are asking.

**The Orcas Senior Center is accepting donations through the Community Foundation in the holiday gift giving catalog.**

**Please visit [www.oicf.us](http://www.oicf.us) to purchase a gift for the**

**Senior Center meal program or  
Hearts & Hands program.**

**We appreciate your generosity, both during the holidays  
and throughout the year.**

# What's Happening

## **Mono-print Gift Card Class**

**December 6 & 13**

**1:00pm**

**FREE**

Join Sue Lamb as she teaches you to make beautiful and unique mono-print gift cards. Use them for some last minute holiday cards, give the set as a gift, or keep them for use year round. You'll be able to take home a set by the end of week two. These cards are easy to make, beautiful, and unique.

## **Art Journaling – class 5 of 6**

**Thursday December 12<sup>th</sup>**

**1:00pm-3:00pm**

**FREE**

This is the fifth of six classes open to returning students. Don't forget to bring your ephemera choices, painted pages, scissors or exacto knife, and some newspapers to cover the tables. **\*\*Note: BEGINNIGN IN JANUARY THIS CLASS WILL BE OPEN TO EVERYONE EACH MONTH. THERE WILL BE A NOMINAL FEE TO COVER SUPPLIES.\*\***

## **The Nutcracker Ballet – Live**

**SUNDAY December 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Meet at the Senior Center by 7:45am**

**Depart 8:50am ferry – Return 6:25pm ferry**

**\$35**

Travel with friends to see this timeless Christmas classic, live at the Mt. Baker Theatre in Bellingham. We will stop for lunch before going to the theatre for the 2:00pm showing. (Please make sure you pack a little extra money for lunch and dinner.) \$35 fee includes bus ride, ferry passes, and tickets to the show. Pre-registration is required for this trip. Sign up at the front desk.

## **Potluck Lunch**

**December 18<sup>th</sup>**

**12:00pm-1:00pm**

Bring your favorite potluck dish to share and enjoy lunch with friends.

## **Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long**

**December 18<sup>th</sup>**

**1:00pm**

**FREE**

Join us around the piano for a cozy Christmas Sing-A-Long. Mary Meyer will accompany us on piano as we join in singing some old favorite Christmas Carols.

## **Mainland Shopping**

**December 19th**

**Depart 8:50am ferry – Return 3:50pm ferry**

**Cost: \$10**

## **Library Focus Group**

**December 27<sup>th</sup>**

**1:00pm**

Tom Fiscus, one of the Library Trustees, would like to set up a focus group of senior to talk about their ideas about the library, including a possible building expansion. Please join Tom after lunch to offer your suggestions and join in the planning process.

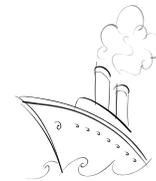
## **SAVE THE DATE:**

**May 16, 17 & 18**

**Train trip and cruise ship!**

**Cost: \$250 per person**

We will depart Friday afternoon and head to Seattle for an overnight stay in a hotel. In the morning, we will board the Cascade Train for a scenic train trip to Vancouver, BC. Upon arrival, we'll board the sky train over to Canada Place where we will board our overnight cruise onboard the *Grand Princess*. The Grand Princess will take you in style back to Seattle. On the trip enjoy a health spa, casino, sparkling pools, numerous dining options and Broadway-style entertainment. Pre-register at the front desk. Payment is due by January 15<sup>th</sup>.



**Did You Know . . .**  
**We now have cable TV in**  
**the lounge! Come on by**  
**and try it out.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 10am: TML	<b>3</b> 10am: Photo Club  12pm: Lunch  1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	<b>4</b> 10am-11am: Chair Yoga FREE	<b>5</b> 10am: TML	<b>6</b> 11am: Yoga. FREE  12pm: lunch  1pm: Monoprint gift cards class. FREE  4pm: Strength training	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 10am: TML	<b>10</b> 10am: Photo Club  12pm: Lunch  1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	<b>11</b> 10am-11am: Chair yoga FREE  2pm: Afternoon Tea  4pm: Advisory Committee Meeting	<b>12</b> 10am: TML  1pm-3pm: Art Journaling Class. FREE	<b>13</b> 11am: Yoga. FREE  12pm: lunch  1pm: Monoprint gift cards part 2. FREE  4pm: Strength training	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <b>OUTING:</b> Nutcracker Ballet Live at the Mt. Baker Theatre in Bellingham, WA. Depart 8:50am ferry and return on the 6:25pm ferry. \$35	<b>16</b> 10am: TML	<b>17</b> 10am: Photo Club  12pm: Lunch  1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal  1pm: Parkinson's support group	<b>18</b> 10am-11am: Chair yoga. FREE  11am: Watercolor painting group  12pm: Potluck  1pm: Christmas carol sing-a-long	<b>19</b> 10am: TML  Mainland shopping. Depart 8:50am ferry. \$10	<b>20</b> 11am: Yoga. FREE  12pm: lunch  1pm: crafty afternoon  4pm: Strength training	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <b>Don't forget to donate to the Senior Center at <a href="http://www.oicf.us">www.oicf.us</a>. Click on the gift giving catalog link!</b>	<b>23</b> 10am: TML	<b>24</b> CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE	<b>25</b> CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY  	<b>26</b> 10am: TML	<b>27</b> 11am: Yoga. FREE  12pm: lunch  1pm: Senior focus group regarding library planning.  4pm: Strength training	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 10am: TML	<b>31</b> 10am: Photo Club  12pm: Lunch  1pm: Songbirds Rehearsal	<h1>December</h1>			

# December Menu

MON	TUESDAY	WED	THU	FRIDAY
2	3 Shrimp Salad Oatmeal Bread Fresh Fruit	4	5	6 Cheeseburger w/Lettuce & tomato Sweet Potato Tots Potato Salad Raspberry Sherbet
9	10 Chicken Primavera Penne Pasta Baby Carrot Broccoli Bacon Salad Fresh Apple	11	12	13 Lemon Pepper Fish Potato Wedges Broccoli Florets Coleslaw Fruit
16	17 Ginger Beef over Brown Rice Broccoli Florets Sesame Coleslaw Mandarin Oranges Fortune Cookie	18	19	20 Turkey Cranberry Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Nantucket Vegetables Fresh Baked Roll Gingerbread Cake
23	24 Closed for Christmas Eve	25 Merry Christmas	26	27 Salmon Filet Baked Potato Green Beans Garden Salad Fruit
30	31 <b>Birthday Celebration</b> Roasted Pork Loin Mashed Potatoes & Gravy Broccoli Normandy Spinach Salad Applesauce	Happy New Year!		**menu subject to change without notice

## Winter Holidays and the Smell of Cinnamon

By Carol Simmer, RD/CD

We can list many sweet and savory foods that cinnamon enhances with its flavor and aroma. But did you know that cinnamon once had a reputation as a cure for the common cold? The current research into the health benefits of cinnamon ranges from its antioxidant activity to its antimicrobial properties and treatment of type 2 diabetes and insulin sensitivity. Cinnamon can also aid in the preservation of certain foods. Other exciting research is being done in the areas of colorectal carcinogens and melanomas.

Cinnamon was once regarded as a gift fit for kings and gods! The source of cinnamon was kept secret for centuries by those in the Mediterranean who handled the spice trade. Cinnamon is native to Sri Lanka (now Ceylon). It was imported to Egypt as early as 2000 BC. Perfumes and other aromatics were tossed in the flames of funeral pyres in ancient Rome. Aromatic cinnamon was considered too expensive to be used for that purpose. However, the emperor, Nero, burned a year's supply of cinnamon on the funeral pyre for his wife in A.D. 65.

Portuguese traders landed in Ceylon at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and dominated the production and market of cinnamon for 100 years. Then came the Dutch. The Dutch East India Company overhauled the methods of harvesting cinnamon in the wild and began to cultivate its own trees. Eventually the Dutch established the largest cinnamon estate in Asia, an island in the district of Kerala. The British took control of the island estate in 1795. By this time, the monopoly of Ceylon in the cinnamon trade was waning because of the spreading cultivation of the cinnamon tree. Coffee, tea, sugar, and chocolate also began to outstrip the popularity of traditional spices.

Take a deep breath this holiday season and enjoy the fragrance and taste of cinnamon in your cookies, pumpkin bread, yams and pumpkin pie and know that you are using a delicious and healthy spice!

Comments or questions? Contact Carol at [csimmer@wcoa.org](mailto:csimmer@wcoa.org)

## Life Narratives

By: Stephen Bentley

Recently my mother (age 93), her four children and our spouses enjoyed a dinner together. It was a rare occurrence. My family, like many others, is scattered around the country. The evening was very enjoyable; we told and retold family stories long into the evening. Ultimately someone in our party realized that the restaurant staff was patiently waiting for us to leave. Hours had passed, the other diners had long since departed.

Reminiscing about the “good old days” is too often disregarded as almost a sign of senility; an indication that an older person isn’t adapting to today’s world but instead clinging to bygone days. Yet research shows that telling stories about one’s life, particularly through a formal practice known as life narratives has many benefits for seniors.

A number of studies, over the past decade, have shown that reviewing one’s life can:

- Ease transition into old age.
- Further personal growth and promote self-discovery.
- Increase acceptance and sometimes satisfaction with one’s life.
- Improve self-esteem.
- Lower or prevent depression.
- Socially engage people who have dementia.
- End isolation by promoting social interaction, either with others in a class or with interviewers.
- Reduce chronic pain.
- Improve cognitive function.
- Help staff in nursing homes, hospitals, etc. to view client/patient as a complex individual with a lifetime of experiences—both good and bad.

- Give the opportunity to review accomplishments and remember life’s joys and challenges.
- Provide a bigger picture of an individual’s life and place in the world.
- Help older adults create a permanent historical record about their lives as well pass on their wisdom and values to future generations.

Life narratives are a natural outgrowth of the phase of life between our 60s and 80s when we look back and assess our lives, seeing our mistakes and our accomplishments, determining what we learned. It’s also a natural impulse to want to pass on the lessons we’ve learned to family, friends and future generations.

For the very elderly, life reviews become more of an imperative. Hospitals, senior centers, hospices and other settings for dying or very ill patients are using this practice, coined dignity therapy or reminiscence therapy, to bring closure to lives.

One researcher, Dr. James Birren, of the University of Southern California, School of Gerontology, found that dying individuals were most frightened by the idea of not existing after death and were comforted by the idea of creating a document that would outlast them. Hospice workers and other caretakers are being trained to interview the dying, which can ease anxiety and depression at the end of life.

### What to Write About

There are many ways to write a life review. One is to use a simple form that lists the facts and opens the door to deeper storytelling:

- Date and place of birth
- Names of parents

- Childhood: siblings, stories, schools, friends
- Marriage(s): date, place, name of spouse
- Education: school, college, university and other
- Designations, awards and other recognitions
- Employment: jobs, activities, stories, colleagues, promotions
- Places of residence
- Hobbies, sports, interests, activities
- Charitable, religious, fraternal, political and other affiliations
- Achievements
- Disappointments
- Individual attributes, such as a sense of humor

Another way is to answer more thought-provoking questions, such as “What did you want to be when you grew up?”

For some people, the most important action is passing on what they’ve learned to another generation. Some want future generations to know what life was like before electricity or television, while others want to rid themselves of painful memories. Others “rewrite” history to come to terms with sometimes painful facts. For others, it’s not the big events in life that are important but the smaller memories, like walking in the woods with dad.

Each person may have a different reason or style, but what’s important is the telling and listening that helps create a sense of peace or relief.

## Forms of Life Review

Life review techniques can be formal or informal. Individuals can write (or record) their own life stories, perhaps prompted by online templates or suggested questions (see sidebar).

To jog your memory, use old photos, either from your life or the times you lived through. Go back in family history with online genealogy programs. Family members or professionals can serve as interviewers. Classes, both online and locally taught (through senior centers or other organizations), can provide the advantage of sharing stories with others. Life Narrative classes have been held at the Orcas Island Senior Center. Check our monthly calendar for similar classes in the future

### **Questions to Get You Started**

Sometimes open-ended questions about your life can bring up memories that will prove fertile for writing a life review. Here are some examples:

- How would you describe your mother to someone who had never met her?
- What is a key lesson you learned from your father?
- Describe your childhood home, inside and outside.
- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- What were your most memorable experiences from high school?
- Have you found true love? Describe what true love means to you.
- What is the hardest part of being a parent?
- What is the greatest invention that has come along in your lifetime so far? Why was this invention important to you?
- What does it take to succeed in life?
- What was the best time of your life? Why?
- It’s been said that, “The best things in life are free.” Is this true?

# Christmas Fun

W E Q G Q S K I I K F D K B N S A M T S I R H C E M R M J Y  
 D Q N Z N R E F L U F N E U C C F F E M H K K O O C H A E B  
 V U W A I I N I O G H A T C H H F A M I L Y K X T K X K T O  
 K D F N C N T R K J F C M G O M E X J D Q K E M E E R O V S  
 V P G K K Y N E Y O R R B A T R W S A R G C S K L U S V H C  
 X L P H L A D W E A O Y Y X V N A F T B M E I K T D X K K G  
 E L F S M Z I N C R P C S I R K X T V N V X W Y S Y X O T P  
 W C B E E Y C K A Q G B H I P E C P I L U X E Q I S O P H N  
 Z J N O S L E I A C Q U N G C H P L E O I T I K M J P O A D  
 G T W E D R Y E N E L B A T S M Q K A K N Y S S Y K Q T N T  
 R H S J L E N Q T N L R T C I B J Y X M V S R T A K Q B U V  
 F U M E N Z C D S R A W J M Z W F K N V Q E Z Y T O A R K T  
 Q C C M A R L Q L E N M M G T P G D U O Q X C H I L C V K R  
 I V Y Q G M D Q E E O V O I P H B R R J R J O G Y S Z X A E  
 O H C B U P L L D D Q P C N M Z F J S N E T R A E G S O H E  
 G P T J J W O G D N F V X K N A M W O N S I H J G C B Y V L  
 X A Z F J P S A I I X W R A P P I N G S N Z A N G E L D F G  
 N S U S H Y S Q N E X W D X Y S Q C Q C C J Z G N V S M I X  
 Z P P T O Q W B G R P O P W Y R A L H R P L F J O Y P G W S  
 R I R Z N E C W O G Q N I G D R J C H S I A H I G X P F O L  
 P O O Q A N D G P Z H D F H D I L Q P T Z T M S D G V G W G  
 N P D D A U E G C F F E P D D K J O L Z O N W C Q N N Z Y V  
 Y U G W B U G V L D H R A F C U R N I D F A W C A A N J C L  
 N C C F C X E T O F E L E I H D K L A S X S Q H Z P S Q L D  
 U S P N A B W J Y D M A H A M M O P S R T E Z H W F D Q E E  
 L D Y L C W T H Y F E N X U U W X Q S W E H W M M I D T L T  
 A U G B X V E N E I A D G F Y Y S U A K D R G P Z T N O C S  
 G I N G E R B R E A D Q Y J O N F W W L A Q B I P Q P T Q Q  
 K R P F U N B V A X C G S T N E S E R P L W U Z L Z A B E A  
 N A T I V I T Y K L X K B M K J T S S O E R N O D D J R J R

- christmas
- Hanukkah
- tree
- ornament
- turkey
- presents
- family
- winter
- wonderland
- greeting card
- santa
- kris kingle
- eggnog
- snowman
- elves
- reindeer
- candycane
- Grinch
- nutcracker
- mistletoe
- northpole
- wrappings
- star
- angel
- eggnog
- gingerbread
- cookies
- stable
- gumdrops
- nativity
- chestnuts
- cinnamon
- decorations
- sledding
- wassail
- lights
- wise men
- north pole

### SERVICES WE PROVIDE

**Lunch** is served twice weekly on *Tuesday's and Friday's* at noon. Suggested donation is \$5; however, no senior will be denied a meal due to inability to pay.

**Home delivered meals** are provided each lunch day from your Senior Center. Please call 376-2677.

**Lunch transportation** is available. Call the front desk at 376-2677 by 10:00am on lunch days to schedule.

**Transportation to mainland medical/legal appointments** is available. Please schedule appointments on Wednesdays as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday to Anacortes, Mt. Vernon & Burlington (suggested donation \$20)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday to Seattle and surrounding area (suggested donation \$25)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday to Bellingham and surrounding area (suggested donation \$25)

Call Marla at 376-2677 to schedule.

**Foot care nurses** are available every Tuesday and some Thursdays/Fridays for routine foot care. Reservations are required by calling 376-2677. Cost is \$25.

**Case Management services** are available. To discuss needs and schedule an appointment call Marla at 376-2677.

**Orcas CARES:** Emergency response service and partnership with local island agencies including Lahari, Orcas Fire and Rescue, Hearts & Hands, Medical Foundation and San Juan County Sheriff's Office.

### HELP IS JUST A CALL AWAY

**Mobility Equipment** is available for loan, maintained by the Lions Club, at the Senior Center. Preferred Pick up Wednesday & Friday from 10am-11am.

**Special Needs Fund** has limited emergency assistance when no other funds are available. Call Marla for information at 376-2677

**Merts Taxi** offers free transportation to and from the ferry terminal for all Island Hospital and Island Hospital affiliated appointments. Call 360-293-0201 to schedule.

**Weatherization Assistance** 1-800-290-3857

**SHIBA** volunteers are available at the Medical Center Tuesday's and Fridays by appointment. Call 376-2561

**P.A.L.** offers assistance with electrical costs. Call OPALCO at 376-3552 for eligibility requirements and to apply.

**Social Security** 1-800-633-4227

**Hearts & Hands** offers trained volunteers to provide 1-2 hours per week of practical assistance such as respite, errands, housework, meal preparation, shopping and companionships. Call Betsy Louton at 376-7723 for information.

**Veterans Administration** 1-800-827-1000



Senior Services of San Juan County  
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## **ORCAS SENIOR CENTER**

### **NON PROFIT STATUS**

The Senior Services Council of San Juan County, Orcas Island Branch, operates as a 501(c)3 corporation. Donations are tax deductible within the limits of the law.

### **NEWSLETTER**

The newsletter is published by San Juan County Senior Services with a grant from the Northwest Regional Council. The Senior Signal is distributed free at the Senior Center and by mail. It is also available on our website.

Mail submissions to: PO Box 18, Eastsound, WA 98245

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## **Orcas Advisory Committee**

Chair: Stephen Bentley  
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 Jack Titus  
 Magdalena Verhasselt  
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Jane Heisinger, Asst. to Advisory Committee

Betsy Louton, Hearts and Hands Coordinator

