



Bellingham  
At Home

## Your Village Voice – September 2019

*I made a chocolate cake with white chocolate. Then I took it to a potluck. I stood in line for some cake. They said, "Do you want white cake or chocolate cake?" I said, "yes." -- Steven Wright*

### Our Annual Potluck Is Just Around the Corner

Sue Moyer, our LC scribe, has graciously arranged for BAH to use the charming clubhouse at the Cedar Grove modular home park, where she lives, for our potluck on Saturday, September 7, from 1-4 pm. Cedar Grove clubhouse has plates, glasses and utensils. BAH will provide chicken, coffee, and tea. Please bring your favorite dish for sharing (appetizers, mains, sides, salads, desserts, beverages), along with your good spirits.

We're including a map, below, on how to get there, with parking availability shown in red. People are encouraged to carpool and park in either the Clubhouse Parking Lot or in the various marked "visitor parking" spaces located throughout the park.

If you need a ride, the BAH office will be glad to arrange one. (And/or ask another member in your area to come with you!)

If you have ideas for entertainment, call the office or Janet Simpson (360 671-9713).



Here's how to get to the Cedar Grove clubhouse. Parking locations are shown in red. Please carpool if possible!

## Three Great Ways BSAC Can Help Reduce Your Risk of Falling Right Now

September 23 is Falls Prevention Awareness Day, according to the National Council on Aging. In recognition, during September, BSAC will focus on raising awareness of the risk of falling. Here are three helpful actions you can take:

1. Get the fall risk questionnaire at the BSAC front desk and make an appointment for an individual fall risk assessment.
2. Attend a presentation on fall prevention strategies by Elaine Cress on Monday, Sept. 23 at 11 a.m., in Room 16.
3. Sign up for BSAC's Enhance Fitness class, an exercise program that has been shown to reduce fall risk and use of emergency medical facilities. The class is offered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings at 9:30 in the auditorium.

Please call the Senior Center or stop by the front desk for more information about these programs.



For more about fall prevention, visit the CDC website (<https://www.cdc.gov/steady/about.html>) for all sorts of useful information to help older adults reduce their risk.

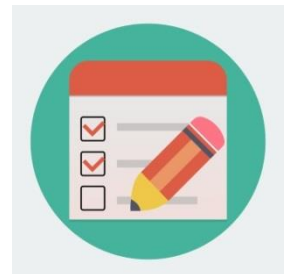
Or check out this NPR story by Luisa Torres on simple ways to prevent falls: <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/07/14/741310765/simple-ways-to-prevent-falls-in-older-adults>

## We Asked What You Thought about BAH. Here's What You Said

If you were with us at BAH's annual meeting in May, you'll remember that we passed out a simple paper survey asking what you thought about the organization. Eighteen members completed the survey and we thought you would find their answers as interesting as we did.

When asked **"What attracts you about BAH,"** people selected these factors:

Volunteering to help others, 15  
Supporting a new vision of aging, 15  
Insurance for future needs, 9  
The assistance, 7



When asked **how they have benefited from BAH**, many people talked about making friends:

"I have made lots of good friends."  
"I am meeting very interesting age mates."  
"Friendship & fun"  
Other comments:  
"I have received incredible support."  
"Helping others"  
"Becoming more familiar with Bellingham as a newcomer"  
"Sense of purpose"

**Suggestions for improvement** included:

"More social activities"  
"More connections"  
"A stronger profile in Bellingham community"  
"More activities in isolated individuals' homes"

Happily almost everyone reads the newsletter and seems to like it!

## Dispatches from the Volunteer Front



### **Office Volunteers Needed**

We need to fill some office shifts! If you have any interest in becoming an office volunteer either on a regular basis (one 3 ½- hour shift per week) or as a substitute (fill-in as needed), please contact Angela Mercy at 360-603-0064 or [angela.mercy@bellinghamathome.org](mailto:angela.mercy@bellinghamathome.org). We'll provide one-on-one training.

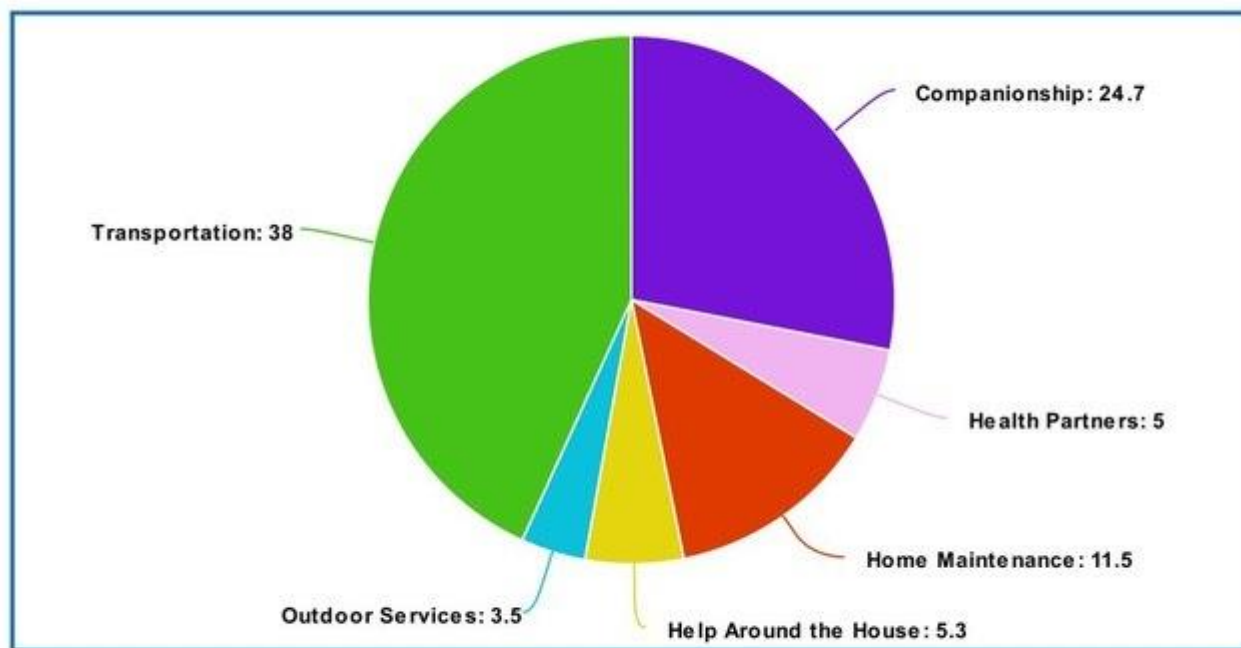
### **Volunteer Social scheduled for September 19**

See you at 3 pm in Room 16. (Please note that this is a change from the date previously announced.) The theme for this event is *Meet the LC*. There will be a brief presentation to explain how the governance of Bellingham at Home works, an introduction of the LC members/committee chairs, and a snapshot of what the committees are up to, plus volunteer opportunities. You can count on refreshments and an opportunity to mingle and share stories.

### **Next Volunteer Training on September 11**

We're sticking to our schedule of holding general trainings on the second Wednesday of every month, from 3-5 p.m. Just a reminder that you must be registered for these sessions, so please call the office ahead of time.

Volunteer Assistance Hours July 2019 88 Total Hours



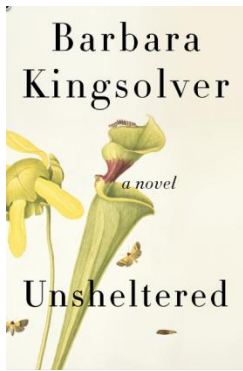
Companionship    Health Partners    Home Maintenance  
Help Around the House    Outdoor Services    Transportation

meta-chart.com

Note: The pie chart doesn't include hours for office and committee volunteers.

## Book Group Changes Days Following Summer Hiatus

The BAH Book Group is looking for readers to share the joy of good books. A number of BAH members indicated their interest for any day of the week—except Friday. So we're changing to the fourth Wednesday of the month, starting with September 25.



We'll be reading another Barbara Kingsolver saga, "Unsheltered." The odds of it being a rewarding book are strong, as "there is no one quite like Barbara Kingsolver in contemporary literature," according to critics. She is known for her "magical lyricism," for being "a crackerjack storyteller" and for writing "literary fiction that conveys an urgent social message."

You won't want to miss this one! See you at Nanette's house at 2 p.m. on September 25. Call Nanette at 360-671-1686 for directions –and to let her know if you're planning to come so there are enough snacks to go around.

### **BAH People on the Go**

## **John Lawler Knows What You Didn't Learn in English Class And Will Fill in the Blanks This October**



John Lawler believes that linguistics is the best-kept secret in America—despite his dogged determination to let the secret out. For 37 years he taught linguistics at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, retiring in 2009 to Bellingham. He put all his publications and class notes on his website (<http://www.umich.edu/~jlawler>), but his evangelical enthusiasm as a teacher has hardly flagged since he retired. Among other things, he still teaches the odd course here and there, and continues to teach online in the *English Language and User Stack Exchange*, where he has produced more than a thousand answers to people's questions about English grammar, usage and etymology (<https://english.stackexchange.com/users/15299/john-lawler?tab=answers>). All this in an effort to "ameliorate the anxious cluelessness about language that is the end product of modern Anglophone education."

In WWU's Academy for Lifelong Learning this fall, John will teach another odd course, "What You Didn't Learn in English Class" – or, as he prefers, "What Didn't You Learn in English Class?" -- on Tuesdays, October 15, 22, and 29, from 1-3:30 p.m. at the Bellingham Cruise Terminal. (You can see the complete course catalog and register for this and other courses at <https://ee.wvu.edu/academy-lifelong-learning-bellingham>. You can also pick up an ALL catalog in the coffee lounge at BSAC.

"Most people are kind of fuzzy about the details of Modern English grammar, but a lot of us are still curious about them. My class will attempt to allay that curiosity in three lectures on American English pronunciation, Modern English grammar, and English words and meanings."

John and his partner, Kate Birr, are charter members of BAH. When they're not traveling (hello Amsterdam, Quebec, the Sunshine Coast), you can often find him at our monthly brewery gatherings the second Monday of the month, where he stands out for the twinkle in his eye, his dry sense of humor, and his ability to work linguistics into almost any conversation.

**NOTE:** To find out more about ALL's fall classes, attend the preview on Thursday, September 5, 1-3 p.m. at the cruise terminal.



## Next Stop on the Slow-Mo Brewery Crawl

Monday, September 9, 4-6 pm, at Twin Sisters Brewing Co., 500 Carolina Street. Some of us have been adding dinner to our monthly get-togethers, taking advantage of food trucks, ordering in pizza, or heading to a nearby restaurant to continue the fun. Happily, Twin Sisters has an extensive food menu, everything from sliders and fish and chips to cheese curds, cinnamon pretzel bites, and Caesar salad. Join us, and bring a friend!

### Lunch Bunch Is Still a Good Way to Make and See Friends



**BAH Lunch Bunch** meets on the 3rd Tuesday of most months. Check the calendar and watch for e-blasts with details. Go with another member or bring a friend. Call the office if you need a ride.

## Volunteer Spotlight

### Joanne Knittel, Lead Office Volunteer

*By Angela Mercy*

Joanne Knittel first heard about BAH from Elaine Cress when they were on one of their Tuesday hikes with their hiking club, Hiker Chicks. About to retire from a career as a manager at IBM, much of it in financial roles, she found that her zeal for the virtual village concept and her newly available free time made for a perfect fit, and she began volunteering with BAH in June 2016.

What Joanne remembers most from those early days was all the paper—there was a form for requests for volunteer assistance, a form for completed assignments, a form for member comments, and a form for volunteer comments—and the lack of structure.



“We were making it up as we went along. Each of us had opinions on how to proceed, so there might be eight different opinions.” Written procedures were developed over time and implementation of Club Express eliminated much of the paper.

Now that BAH is once again an all-volunteer organization, Joanne’s experience and know-how made her a natural for the position of lead office volunteer, the go-to person for her colleagues’ questions and concerns. Judith Koontz is her back-up. She also personally fills many member requests. Her sunny personality and can-do attitude serve her well in both capacities. She’s often willing to juggle her schedule to fill an open shift or complete an unfilled request.

“I love the feeling of helping others. I need to feel I’m accomplishing something. I feel good about what I’m doing and I feel appreciated for what I do.”

Besides volunteering for BAH, Joanne volunteers for the Bellingham public schools and the League of Women Voters. She has a passion for social justice and participates in local actions, and she manages the website for her hiking/walking group. She has declined offers from both the League and BAH to be part of their leadership teams.

“I want this part of my life to be different from my professional life. I love playing with numbers, creating spreadsheets and anything technical. I’m not interested in on-going management responsibilities. On the other hand, while I love being retired I want to feel like my life is about more than just playing. Don’t get me wrong, I love playing, but I miss the structure that comes with responsibility for something besides home and family stuff.”

When Joanne isn’t volunteering, she fills her time with travel, family, and friends. Being active and being outdoors are high priorities. She hikes with the Hiker Chicks every Tuesday, and walks most other days—and she’s thinking about taking up pickle ball. She’s in a weekly knitting group that is so much fun it attracts non-knitters.

“Visiting my grandchildren or having them visit is the best. I’m just enjoying life. I believe I’ve earned the right to do exactly what I want to do.”

Anything left on Joanne’s bucket list has to do with travel. She wants to continue to do international travel, but also wants get to all the national parks.

“My biggest fear is what happens when I can’t hike any more. I guess I will just stay at lower altitudes and go a little slower.”

## **A Big Shout out to All Our Office Volunteers**

Our transition back to being an all-volunteer organization has been a bit stressful and challenging for all of us. Marilyn Burlingame, Alice Counts, Leila Coyne, Kathleen Hicks, Joanne Knittel, Judith Koontz, Cat McIntyre, Janet Simpson, Maria Thurston, and Conny Vlaicu have been remarkable in their ability to roll with the changes, step-up to take on more responsibility, attend more meetings—and do it all with good cheer. Thank you!

## WCOA Boosting BAH's Profile as a Member Program

WCOA's executive director Chris Orr is working to raise the profile of BAH as an equal program partner with BSAC and Meals on Wheels & More; the council's home page now showcases all three organizations with links to their individual websites and BAH is now a distinct option on their phone menu.

Toward the same end, the Senior Center's Bulletin will feature our new, lower member fees in their September Bulletin—a lot of Center members don't know that we lowered our rates this summer. (In case you missed it, full memberships are now \$365 per year, plus \$50 for an additional household member.)

Also, Darcie Romero, formerly in charge of the now-discontinued BSAC tours program and now Orr's part-time administrative assistant, will work for BAH five hours a week for a while—welcome, Darcie!

*Here's a shout-out to our members celebrating a birthday in...*



Milt Krieger  
Joan Dow  
Alannah LaMothe  
Margaret Miller  
Alice Ellingson

*And...*



### **New Members**

Joan Dow  
Betsy Wilson

*And finally...*



Thanks, Colleen! We're especially grateful for your willingness to see us through the transition to an all-volunteer organization. Colleen's last day as BAH's program manager was August 19.

**Bellingham At Home Contact Information**

Location: Bellingham Senior Activity Center, Room 14, 315 Halleck Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

Phone: 360 746-3462 E-mail: [info@bellinghamathome.org](mailto:info@bellinghamathome.org)

Website: <http://BellinghamAtHome.org>

Bellingham At Home is a program of the Whatcom Council on Aging, which is a 501(c)(3) organization, and a member of the Village to Village Network.