



Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time. – Ruth Bader Ginsberg

If You Haven't Voted Yet We Can Help!

Remember Car Talk's Russian chauffeur, Picov Andropov? Well, with a fond nod to our old friends Click & Clack, The Tappet Brothers, we can pick up and drop off your ballot at one of Whatcom County's drop-off boxes. Just give us a call as soon as you know you would like this assistance—obviously, before November 3!



Clockwise, from left: Iris Parker demonstrates classic drop-off technique. Kate Birr leans in to avoid yellow paint on fenders. Angela Mercy follows Iris' lead. Joanne Knittel finds a box in a nice open area at Sehome Village. Kevin and Iris prove they are each just mailing one ballot—well done, guys!.

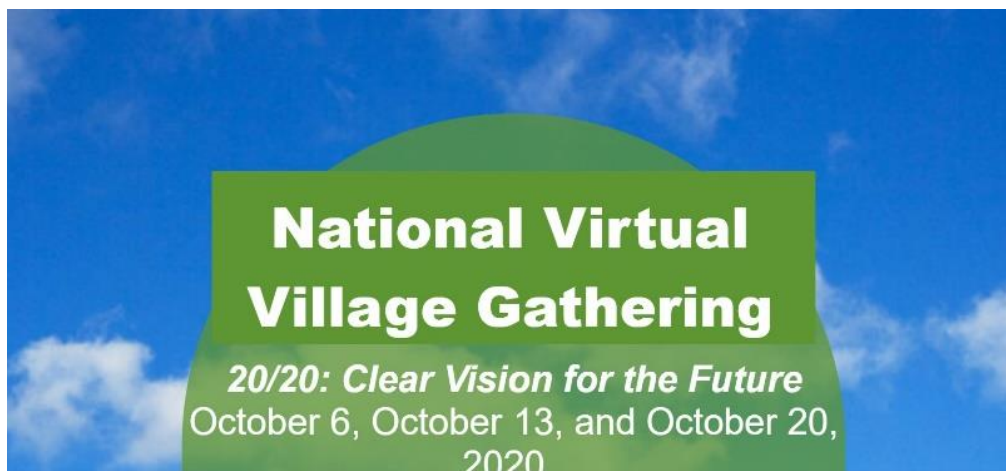
National Village to Village Gathering 2020: Virtual, Diverse, Chock-full of Ideas

By Janet Simpson

Nine Bellingham At Home members and volunteers have been attending the National Village to Village Gathering on Zoom. BellinghamAtHome is a member Village and we regularly receive information and peer support from this national group.

The Gathering is an annual conference that brings people together from the 310 Villages across the country for stimulating talks about many aspects of aging, maintaining villages, and the latest ideas and information to inspire and help us. In the past we've sent a couple of people to actual conferences in different parts of the country. This year's virtual format only encouraged participation; about 600 people are attending.

We had three full-day sessions, each on a Tuesday from 7:45 – 2:00. There were five-plus presentations of some sort each day. Our BAH group also met on Zoom the following day to share impressions and highlights. Among us are brand-new members as well as people who've been here from the start, so it's fun to see what stands out for each one of us. We've already picked out some ideas to follow up on and others to investigate further.



Here are some of the ideas/subjects we've looked at so far:

- Seeing aging as an opportunity rather than a crisis
- The importance of having fun with committees
- Creating an ethics statement around diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Doing projects in the community as a group
- Exploring home-sharing options
- Virtual recruitment and virtual fundraising events
- Ways to make homes safe and livable as we age
- Intergenerational events
- Pen Pals
- Options for membership fees
- Finding more ways to integrate with the Senior Center
- Conference calling events for low-vision members
- Products like Animatronic Pets, phones for those hard of hearing or with vision impairment, and toilet base lifts.

We hope to use some of the energy, enthusiasm, and ideas we've gained to enhance our Village and make it better for all of us.

A Poem for the Ages

I Want to Age like Sea Glass

*I want to age like sea glass.
Smoothed by tides, not broken.
I want to ride the waves, go with the flow and feel the impact of the
surging tides.
When I am caught between the rocks and a hard place, I will rest.
And when I am ready, I will catch a wave and let it carry me where I
belong.
I want to be picked up and held gently by those who delight in my
well-earned patina,
And appreciate the changes I went through to achieve this luster.
I want to enjoy the journey and let my preciousness be, not in spite
of the impacts,
But because of them.
I want to age like sea glass.*



istockphoto.com

--Bernadette Noll
Slowfamilyliving.com

Do You Need a New BAH Password?

Some of us (not naming names!) have lost track of our BAH password, which means logging onto the BAH website is, well, impossible. Never fear – this is easily remedied. Just call the office and say you need a new password. We'll email you a temporary that you can use to get in and reset one of your own liking.

Maybe be slightly less clever in hiding the new one.

Volunteer Vibes

By Angela Mercy

In this age of electronic communication, it often feels like we are inundated with email messages, text messages, social media, and the like. The Volunteer Committee members want to make certain that our volunteers are fully informed—but not overwhelmed. Therefore, we will now publish *Volunteer Vibes* quarterly instead of monthly. We'll greet each new season with news about our collective work, current strategies for engaging BAH members, and opportunities for social involvement.

BAH already sends eblasts as needed: short, weekly email updates reminding us of the latest news and information. Timely volunteer information will be sent this way, too. Additionally, we will continue to include information relevant to volunteer services in *Your Village Voice*, which reaches a larger community of some 500 members, volunteers, and interested parties.

Look for the next edition of *Volunteer Vibes* in December. Stay safe, stay healthy, stay informed.

A Thanksgiving Unlike Any Other Is In Store for Most of Us. Sigh.

By Lauren Phillips

For Kay and Barry Mason, this Thanksgiving won't be all that different from previous ones. Their family lives out of town, so with the exception of an occasional get-together with another couple in the same situation, "we never do anything!"

"We'll talk to our kids on the phone. We're primarily vegetarian so we don't do turkey but I usually make something nice—maybe lobster or crab. But I'll definitely make a pumpkin pie—it's the one traditional thing we do every year."

On the other hand, Marilyn Burlingame was all set to skip the holiday this year, but her sister, who moved to town in January, would have none of it.

"She's going to make some kind of turkey dish in her crockpot and set up her patio table plus a card table on her covered deck. She and I will be at one table and my son and his girlfriend will be socially distanced at the other, and we'll all be dressed warmly."



Do you know these people? We don't either, but we liked the photo.

And if there's a westward-driving rain that day? "No problem, we'll move into the garage."

The CDC recommends planning a small Thanksgiving with the family members that already live in your household or doing a virtual dinner to include more family and friends. One nice suggestion: Make favorite Thanksgiving dishes for nearby extended family and neighbors and find no-contact ways to deliver the meals. For more government guidance, check out <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>.

The FDA does not believe that COVID-19 can be spread by food or food packaging, according to an article on delish.com ([www.delish.com/food-](http://www.delish.com/food-news/a34032598/is-it-safe-to-host-thanksgiving-coronavirus)

[news/a34032598/is-it-safe-to-host-thanksgiving-coronavirus](http://www.delish.com/food-news/a34032598/is-it-safe-to-host-thanksgiving-coronavirus)); it's the shared serving utensils and face-to-face contact when everyone crowds into the kitchen that are the real danger zones.

In that same piece, Dr. Sharon Nachman suggests that if you are planning a holiday meal with others, having everyone quarantine for the two weeks prior is the ideal—and limiting guests to those who normally use precautions like social distancing and masks. If you haven't before, this is the year to introduce a kids table. Also, says Nachman, alter your serving style by plating everyone's meals for them.

The majority of us, however, are probably in the same boat as June Hopkins. (And for heaven's sake, get out of her boat—don't you know there's a pandemic?) June used to go to her daughter's house, where "we'd have a lovely, big groaning board, but not this year; she has two teenage boys who aren't as careful as they should be."

After seven months, June said, "I don't want to screw it up. It's easy to get tired of all this. But we just have to stick to the idea of waiting until it's over, like in a war. I'll make myself dinner, as usual. I may even have a glass of wine."

Wine—what a great idea. Let's all give thanks for wine this year.

Dear Gabby: Pandemic Etiquette

By Elaine Cress



Covid has thrown a whole new set of issues into our sensibilities around etiquette. Remember when crossing to the other side of the street rather than meet someone on the sidewalk was considered rude? Now it is a sign of courtesy!

There are myriad things we have to figure out now, e.g., what do I do if one strap of my mask breaks just as I'm entering a store?

What do I say when approaching three maskless people on a trail

and there is no place to safely step aside? If I invite a couple of friends over for a social distancing chat, should I offer any food and drink?

Gabby does not pretend to have all the answers but will be happy to apply creativity, common sense, and a bit of humor to questions posed. Please send letters (no more than 150 words, please) to Dear Gabby at

deargabby98225@gmail.com; Your Village Voice will publish responses starting in December.

Neighborhood Cluster Gathers for Distant Socializing in Marilyn Glenn's Gorgeous Garden

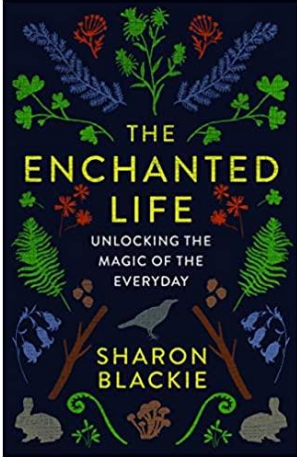


Left to right: Marilyn Glenn, Rena Blauner, Chris Rudolph, Angela Mercy (with 4-footed companion Buddha)

Cookies!

Once again, member Rena Blauner is offering goodies (her homemade cookies!) to BAH members and volunteers in need of a friendly boost. Please contact the office if you are interested, and we will let her know so she can make arrangements with you.

The Book Club Turns Its Attention to *The Enchanted Life*



Taking as her starting point the inspiration and wisdom found in myth, fairy tales, and folk culture, Sharon Blackie offers a set of practical and grounded tools for enchanting our lives and the places we live, leading to a greater sense of meaning and of belonging to the world. (So says the Amazon website.)

A Nautilus Award-winner for her book *If Women Rose Rooted*, Blackie is a psychologist grounded in both neuroscience and narrative and a mythologist with a specialization in Celtic Studies.

Enchantment, for Blackie, is a vivid sense of belongingness to a rich and many-layered world, a profound and whole-hearted participation in the adventure of life. It is a natural, spontaneous human tendency — one we possess as children but lose, through social and cultural pressures, as we grow older. It is an attitude of mind that can be cultivated: the enchanted life is possible for anyone.

Enchantment is intuitive and embraces wonder, but it is also deeply embodied in ecology, rooted in place and community. To live an enchanted life is to be challenged, to be awakened, to be gripped and shaken to the core by the extraordinary which lies at the heart of the ordinary.

Join us on Zoom at 2 pm, November 25, and let's find out what role enchantment plays in our own lives.

Watch Party Blues:

Scener

By Lauren Phillips

If you're a movie fan—a movie *going* fan—you may, like me, be undergoing withdrawal. While not as ghastly as, say, withdrawal from heroin, it's plenty painful. Because while movies are available on an exploding list of streaming services, the experience—of going out, grabbing a popcorn, and sitting in a comfy seat in a nice theater to watch a good film *with other people*—is not anywhere on the horizon in Bellingham.

Which brings us to the exploding list of available “watch party” opportunities, including Zoom, Teleparty (previously Netflix Party), Hulu Watch Party, Amazon Prime Video Watch Party, and Disney+ GroupWatch. Figuring out how to have a watch party can be a bit of a pain, depending on the provider, but providers are working to make it easier. Parties are designed to allow you and another person or persons to watch a movie together on your computers, often chatting via video, audio, or text simultaneously.

As a movie fan(atic), I've decided to try some of these out and report on my experience. These will be cursory reports; the individual services offer their own instructions. Kate Birr and I tried out Scener recently and here's how it went. (Next month, I'll report on Teleparty.)

Like some other watch parties, Scener is available only as a Chrome extension. Now, I haven't used the Chrome browser for years, but it's still sitting on my computer and adding an extension is a simple matter of clicking on the puzzle piece on the top right corner of Chrome and pinning the Scener icon. When you click on the icon, a separate window opens up that invites you to “create a theater” and choose between a private screening, with up to 10 other people, or a public screening, up to a million!

Then you choose your subscription streaming service; Scener currently works with Netflix, HBO Max, Funimation, Disney+, Hulu, Prime Video, and Vimeo. Everyone watching with you must have their own subscription to the streaming service you'll be using and be signed into it and also have a Scener account. Scener is free and creating an account is super easy.



This is Hulu Watch Party, not Scener, but the screen is very similar.

As the host, I chose what looked to be an interesting French movie on Netflix but turned out to be a boring Spanish movie. C'est la vie! (Esa es la vida!) But once I sent Kate an email with the movie link and she opened it up, we had fairly smooth sailing. I controlled the movie and chose to chat with Kate using both a camera and a microphone: we could see each other and talk in a narrow window on the right-hand side of the screen, which was very cool.

However. As with every other service I have looked into or read about, the issue of synchronicity arose in short order.

That is, there was a lag between the movie showing on Kate's screen and the one showing on mine. I believe it was less than a second, but it meant that, because of Kate's open mike, I was hearing each line of dialog twice. The problem was solved by having Kate turn off her mike, but we could no longer talk—we could still see each other and we could text, but the richness of the experience for me dropped a level.

Obviously, watch parties are a work in progress. But I would definitely use Scener again.

Have you had a watch party experience? Let me know, OK?

How to Have a Great Birthday during a Pandemic (One Example)

By Janet Simpson

Step #1: Get a good rest, sleep in, and have a leisurely morning. Check your phone for Birthday messages of any kind.



Step #2: Treat yourself to something special: I had a Sound Chamber Session – a meditative relaxation with surround music – facilitated by a good friend.

Step #3 (optional): Buy yourself a gift if there's something you yearn for.

Step #4: Have lunch with a friend: We went to Boundary Bay Beer Garden. There weren't many people there, they have heaters and cover, and food I hadn't had in a while. Ended with a cake with a candle, courtesy of Boundary Bay.

Step #5: Come home to more phone messages, open a few cards

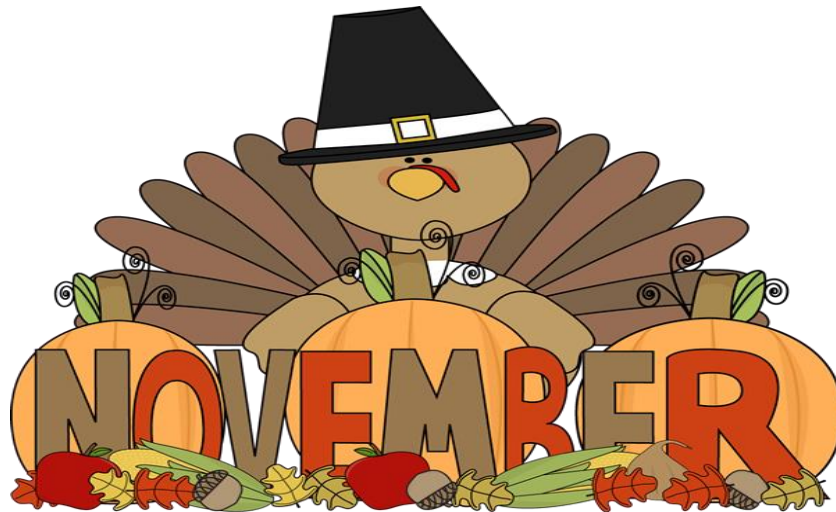
and gifts, and relax a bit.

Step #6: Have a lovely early dinner with friends. I sat at a table in my yard with two fellow BAH friends (and a young buck who wandered by – the four-footed kind), takeout from On Rice we'd each ordered earlier, luscious goodies, flowers, and gifts. (And another candle to blow out.)

Step #7: Join family/friends on a 'Birthday Open House' via Zoom. I relit one of my candles, plopped it in leftover cake, and people sang-- twice, since some joined later.

A lovely day! I ended feeling well-loved and cared for.

And speaking of birthdays, here's a shout-out to our members celebrating a birthday in...



Barb Evans
Nick Waslenko
Jaowanoot Kennedy
Inge Paulus
Sara Montoya

Bellingham At Home Contact Information

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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.