



LOPEZ ISLAND
HOME &
HOSPICE
SUPPORT

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Summer 2021

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Lopez Island
Home & Hospice Support
is a 501(c)(3) non-profit
volunteer organization.
All services are free.

Ways to Donate to Lopez Island Home & Hospice Support

- At www.lihhs.org
- Use smile.amazon.com "Lopez Island Hospice and Home," and .5% of the purchase price will go to LIHHS.
- Donate via check or credit card – we've included an envelope for your convenience.
- Stock donations.

Many thanks for your
continued generosity.

A New Name!

by Nora McCloy

When Lopez Island Hospice & Home Support was established in 1997, the organization's mission was to provide skilled volunteer support at no cost to members of our community experiencing illness, injury, and/or loss.

Our mission has not changed, but by as early as 1999 the LIHHS board realized that leading with the word "hospice" in the name caused some confusion as to the services we offer. In recent years, the board recognized that this confusion was possibly preventing members of our community, and their families, from seeking support, because they are not in a "hospice," end-of-life situation.

It is this last concern that has brought us to finally make a small but important change to our name to better emphasize what we DO! We have officially become **Lopez Island Home & Hospice Support**.

We want any member of our community who seeks to age in place or recover from an injury or illness to reach out to us. Our volunteers are ready to provide short or long term support, and we can

assist in a variety of areas, including help around the home, companionship, or respite for caregivers.

LIHHS does *not* provide medical hospice services, and we are incredibly grateful for Hospice of the Northwest staff's dedication and skill that make it possible for our community to have hospice care at home. Our volunteers *do* provide home support and companionship to clients who are patients of Hospice of the Northwest.

While our name has officially changed, the process will take a bit of time. Our new website just launched, and we will soon have a new brochure and office sign. Also, this newsletter's donation envelope has our previous name, as we had these in stock and value being good stewards of our financial resources and not wasting what is perfectly useable.

The name change is most of all for you, our wonderful community, to not feel constrained from reaching out and asking for help when it is needed. We can all use a little help every now and then. And it is a privilege that LIHHS can offer that help...that home support.

Honoring Lynne Keeley

by Nancy Ewert

In February 2021, LIHHS, as well as the broader Lopez community, lost a beloved friend, Lynne Keeley. As most of you know, Lynne moved to Seattle in the fall of 2020 due to declining health. She was able to spend the last few months of her life living with friends with whom she could laugh and who took good care of her.

Lynne first moved to Lopez Island in 1999. She moved away for a short time in 2008 but quickly recognized that Lopez had become her home and returned in 2009. It was at this time that Lynne found LIHHS and that our organization was fortunate enough to have found her and hire her as our Office Manager.

Lynne fit into LIHHS seamlessly and soon applied her organizational talents as well as her caring presence. For the next 11 years, Lynne became the face of LIHHS as the first contact when anyone phoned or came through the front door. Lynne held high regard for everyone whom she encountered and is fondly remembered by everyone she met. As much as Lynne's competent hand gave to our organization, she was changed by her experience as well. By her report, it was the "best job I ever had."

Lynne had an impact on Lopez beyond her work at LIHHS. Many remember her fondly as Yenta in "Fiddler on the Roof," and she could regularly be found holding court at Isabel's Espresso. She was a talented quilter, writer, and supporter of the arts. She was a good friend to all who were fortunate enough to be in her circle. We miss her wry sense of humor, her familiar quips, and her loyal friendship beyond measure.

As much as LIHHS was fond of Lynne, she reached hearts all over the island. A smattering of words used to describe our dear friend Lynne are: Cheeky irreverence, calmness, wisdom, a steadiness, rock, a forever friend, common sense, a gem, quiet strength, courage and resilience, gracious, an inspiration, and one who never failed to notice life's inevitable absurdities.

With those words in mind, and with our deep gratitude for all that Lynne brought to our community, the LIHHS board and staff are finding ways to honor her memory. One way is a new bench at Isabel's with one of Lynne's famous witty quips. We encourage you to get a cup of coffee, have a seat, and embrace the memories of Lynne.

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A Conversation on Mental Health & Suicide Risk in Vulnerable Adults

In light of the pandemic's impact on mental health, a conversation about suicide risk and prevention was offered for LIHHS volunteers. Discussions with Elizabeth Landrum, Levanne Hendrix, Jonathan Dahl, and Jess Ingman followed an informative presentation by Dr. Landrum. The goals were to help volunteers become more comfortable talking about suicide, more aware of risk factors, and more likely to discuss any concerns with their LIHHS client services manager.

While an increase in various mental health concerns during a pandemic is well known, the actual statistics about suicide during Covid-19 are as yet unclear. Pandemic-related stresses are widely felt, including social isolation, financial pressures, Covid-fatigue, multiple losses, feelings of helplessness, anxiety, and uncertainty about when and how things will change. People who were already experiencing depression, anxiety, grief, substance abuse, loneliness, or despair have become even more vulnerable to hopelessness and suicidal thinking. Increased drug use, abuse, and disruptions in family relationships, along with diminished access to healthcare services, contribute to the ongoing emotional and health consequences of the pandemic, highlighting the need for prevention and treatment.

LIHHS volunteers continue to provide a vital service for vulnerable adults in our community. Support for those living alone is particularly helpful. Simply by being a caring presence and offering regular check-ins and a listening ear, our volunteers make a difference to many individuals on Lopez. Contact is key. Easily accessible support for bereaved individuals is another crucial LIHHS service, and we have connected community members to other essential services (food, rides, equipment, mental health, vaccinations, etc.) during the pandemic.

Suicide risk reduction can start with a willingness to be open, to listen deeply to another with compassion and genuine interest. All LIHHS volunteers are trained in active listening techniques that benefit any relationship and are particularly helpful when someone is privately suffering. Inquiring about what has helped an individual cope with hard times is informative and serves to refocus attention on one's strengths and coping strategies. While LIHHS volunteers are not expected to evaluate suicide risk, asking about suicidal thoughts and understanding the warning signs promote confidence in knowing when to report concerns to someone who can further assess risk and make referrals.

Mental health implications of this ongoing pandemic could last long beyond current rates of infection, yet the resilience of humankind during and after disasters has been remarkable. Positivism and hope, two salient markers of coping, often arise out of collectivism and mutual support. This is, and has been, a crucial time for the invaluable services of LIHHS volunteers and other helping hands.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255) provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals. En Español: 888-628-9454.

Welcome Anne Trench to the Board

LIHHS is excited to welcome Anne Trench as our newest board member.

Anne holds a passion for supporting those who are dealing with health issues, chronic illness, or end of life. She volunteered with Harborview Hospital's "No One Dies Alone" program, and now volunteers with LIHHS, Lopez Meals on Wheels, and Island Rides.

Anne is an incredible asset to our organization and we are thrilled to have her on the board!

Volunteer With LIHHS

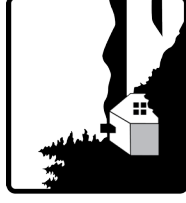
LIHHS is excited to announce that we will be holding a volunteer training this autumn! If you enjoy connecting with others through conversation, gardening, handywork, or help around the home, we would love to have you join the LIHHS volunteer community. Together we support Lopez neighbors who are aging in place or experiencing illness, injury, or loss. The volunteer application is available on our website, and you can contact the office at admin@lihhs.org or 360-468-4446 to learn more.

Visit Our New Website

We invite you to visit us online at www.lihhs.org. Same web address but a whole new look with updated information. Learn about our client services, durable medical equipment, small grants program, and much more. Enjoy past newsletter articles, a bit of LIHHS history, and updates on events and beyond. You can also sign up for our email list and follow us on Facebook. We look forward to connecting with you!

A Jingle Bell Event Is Back

The Jingle Bell Dinner is a longstanding LIHHS tradition. As life transitions toward post-pandemic, we are eager to come together this November in a way that is safe for all. While we do not have details yet, we are hopeful that this year's JBD will be a festive evening of art, music, good cheer, and community. On that note, please save the date: Saturday, November 27, and we look forward to celebrating with YOU!



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LOCAL POSTAL PATRON

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