

# Experience *in Action!*

King County RSVP's news for people 55 & older

Volume 29 | Number 1 | Spring 2016

RSVP



## Driving nutrition home

### Meals on Wheels rolls on

By Peter Langmaid

*“You have no idea how much your smiling face brightens up the day for me!”*

-Kent Senior Activities Center  
Meals on Wheels ‘Customer’

In 2015, the King County Meals on Wheels program delivered over 400,000 tasty and nutritious meals from approximately 35 locations scattered around the county. Second only to Seattle, the Kent Senior Activities Center (KSAC) accounted for 34,945 of those deliveries.

The volunteer coordinator for the Kent program is RSVP volunteer Ed DeVange. Operating out of one small office and one small production room, Ed’s program is a model of efficiency, with 17 active volunteers processing and delivering over 700 meals a week.

Participants in the program receive up to 14 frozen meals per week – breakfasts and dinners. Seven breakfast choices range from Cinnamon French Toast to a Breakfast Burrito. Twenty-seven dinner options include Roast Turkey & Gravy,



Ed DeVange, Kent Meals on Wheels Volunteer Coordinator

(Photo by Linda DeVange)

Tuna Casserole, and Vegetarian Spaghetti. The meals come with sides of fruit, vegetables, and rice or potatoes.

For those with special diets, each item is tagged as either low fat, low sodium, or both. Each meal is labelled with cooking instructions for microwave or oven.

The process begins on Friday when two volunteers call all potential customers (Ed prefers the term ‘customers’ over ‘clients, because, he says “lawyers have clients!”), take their orders, and enter them into a computer.

On Monday, Ed prints the order forms and organizes them by driving route (there are seven routes). The meals are delivered to KSAC on Tuesday and warehoused in freezers by route. On Wednesday, six volunteers (the oldest is 95) pack orders in tote bags by customer and route and return them to the freezer. On Thursday, the drivers load up and make their deliveries. And on Friday the process begins again.

Underplaying his own role in the process, Ed says his supervision amounts to a cheerful “Good Morning” to everyone and then getting out of the way.

Ed credits the hard work and organizational skills of his fellow volunteers for the success and productivity of the program.

Melissa Pallanes, Meals on Wheels Volunteer Support

Specialist, may beg to differ. She says, “Ed is an exceptional Volunteer Coordinator for Meals on Wheels. He is not only dedicated to serving our ‘customers’ in Kent, he is remarkable at supporting the other volunteers at the site with his kindness and organizational skills. One of the many thank you notes we received from clients last year said “These volunteers are heroes!” and I could not agree more.”

Born and raised in Eastern Washington, Ed’s family was deeply committed to serving the community they lived in. His father, a lawyer, belonged to every organization in the area while his mother was a den mother and an active member of the PTA. Contributing to the community was a way of life and part of the family DNA.

Ed’s father died suddenly at a young age, and after high school Ed joined the Navy, where he served for six years. When he got out, his mother had remarried a Boeing engineer and moved to Seattle. Ed followed and landed a job at Boeing.

At Boeing, Ed started one grade below the bottom and 36 years later retired as a third level operations manager. Ed and his wife moved all over the country with Boeing, working programs such as the Minuteman missile, the lunar rover, Apollo, and the

*Continued on page 6*

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## Speaking Directly

by Jan Hancock, RSVP Coordinator

### Why volunteer?

Springtime is traditionally when senior centers and many nonprofit organizations let their volunteers know how much they appreciate and value all they do for them. In keeping with that, I recently attended a number of RSVP recognition lunches and ceremonies honoring volunteers for their service.

What struck me as I participated in handing out certificates of volunteer service and in talking to volunteers was not their expectation of thanks and recognition but rather their satisfaction in being able to offer a service and be of help to others.

Time and again I heard, "Oh it is nothing." "I just want to keep doing what I can, where and when I can." "If I wasn't here helping, I would just be wasting

my time at home." "I get more out of this than I give."

Studies confirm what we already sensed – that finding purpose, satisfaction and improved health later in life while giving back to community is a strong reason for volunteering. Making new friends and increasing self-confidence also play a part.

As Peter Langmaid – an RSVP ambassador and feature writer of this newsletter – comments, "For me community service is a fun, exhilarating experience and it makes me feel incredibly good about myself."

Here at RSVP we would like to help you find a volunteer opportunity that will make *you* feel good about yourself. Get in touch with us, and let's talk. ●

### HONORABLE MENTION 2016 GOVERNOR'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

Congratulations are in order for RSVP volunteers Peg Kelly and Lillian Popp. Both were nominated by the organizations they volunteer for to receive this year's Governor's Service Award.

Peg Kelly of Power of One is a longtime volunteer at Echo Lake Elementary School in the Shoreline School District. Her reliability, consistency and humor are especially important qualities in helping to nurture a safe and comfortable environment in the classroom. Her easygoing way attracts students to her while her gentle manner puts them instantly at ease. School is a happier, smarter place because of Peg's time, energy, support and love.

Lillian Popp of the Enumclaw Senior Center loves to cook and volunteers in the kitchen assisting with the lunch program doing whatever is necessary to keep things running smoothly for the seniors being served hot, nutritious meals five days a week. Serving on the Senior Advisory Board, Lillian demonstrates what a dedicated community volunteer is all about... serving, sharing and making the world a better place. ●



## Financial Planning

by Bill Pharr

### It's time to plan ahead

As a CFP® (Certified Financial Planner) with 12 years of experience in the financial services industry working with clients on their financial plans and investments, the one thing I have found is that each individual and family financial situation is unique to their dreams and aspirations.

Even though there is not one correct financial plan for everyone, there is one common thread, and this is the importance of getting the financial planning process started sooner than later.

Individuals and families who start financial planning and do annual financial reviews earlier in life will generally be (far) better off financially when they get to the later years of their lives than individuals who do not put a plan together.

Creating a financial plan and following up with regular reviews of the plan conveniently breaks down to these four steps:

- 1) Getting started and organizing information
- 2) Finding and working with a professional
- 3) Implementing the plan and following the plan
- 4) Adjusting the plan as circumstances dictate

The first step, getting started, is arguably the most important. The initial task in organizing your financial information is budgeting. Capturing the data can be as simple or as complex as you want it to be. The goal is to know how much you earn or how much income you have coming in on a monthly basis, and how much you spend – especially in the larger and more important categories.

In conjunction with setting up a budget system, organize the statements listing what you own and what you owe. If you can organize current statements for taxable brokerage accounts, bank accounts, retirement accounts like IRAs and 401Ks, credit card statements, real estate, and perhaps the last two tax returns, it is really helpful to the financial professional you choose to work with.

Often, the subject of death is not something we want to contemplate. However, it is important to organize information relative to your estate.

Do you have a current will? Have you selected a trustworthy Executor of your estate? Does the Executor know where everything is located? Do the key people in your life know all of your logins and passwords? If the surviving members of your family have your passwords, it makes it much easier to deal with estate issues.

There is much more to it than this, but this will get you started in the gathering process. An overriding benefit of this process is that you end up with a feeling of being in control of your financial situation. You will have a plan to achieve your financial goals, and perhaps equally as important, other life goals like travelling, community work, and spending time with the grandkids.

Next time I will discuss finding and working with a professional. Stay tuned! ●

*Bill Pharr is a retired business owner and financial advisor, RSVP member and regular contributor to the EIA.*





## It Seems to Me...

by Peter Langmaid

### Words I 'hate'

As an avid reader and sometimes writer, I love words – the way they look, the way they sound, their etymology over time, and the way they're put together to form sentences, paragraphs, articles and books. I also subscribe to a word-of-the-day service that delivers a new word, definition, and history to my email box every morning. (It's amazing how many words I don't know!)

Words convey meaning, but they also convey feelings, and sometimes the feelings are so powerful that the words lose their meaning. To my ear, there are six words that are so power packed with feeling that, upon examination, dissolve into meaninglessness: *liar*, *idiot*, *stupid*, *ugly*, *shut up* (two words, actually) and, of course, *hate*.

Where I grew up, you had to have your fists clenched if you called someone a *liar*, because, as the saying goes, "Them's fightin' words." What is meant by accusing someone of being a liar is that they have made a deliberate misrepresentation of facts for nefarious purposes. This is fine, if the facts are specific and indisputable. However, the way the word is used today – especially in political discourse – is not to dispute a specific assertion but to attack someone's entire character. As such, the

word *liar* loses meaning and becomes mere invective.

I have a daughter who is fond of calling anyone who does something that annoys her an *idiot* or who says something she disagrees with *stupid*. While I love my daughter, I cringe when I hear her use the words, because it's not what she means.

Calling someone an idiot or stupid is to insult them in a way that has nothing to do with what was done or said; it is a mere projection of frustration. However, I see nothing wrong with using these words to add color to a description of your own behavior, such as "I'm such an idiot," or "You wouldn't believe the stupid thing I just did."

*Ugly* is a word I use with caution because it is judgmental (often without justification), requires context, and carries the potential to be hurtful. To describe things as ugly – buildings, art, furniture, etc. – is meaningless without the qualifier "I think" and a reason for the judgment. To describe a person as ugly is mean-spirited, demeaning, hurtful and, if delivered in person, a form of bullying. The word ugly is entirely appropriate when clearly used as an opinion, as in "ugly incident" or "ugly wound."

I have a visceral reaction when I hear the expression *shut up*

used – it makes my stomach churn. Shut up is rarely used as a request for silence, and it feels like a slap in the face; it's jarring and it's usually spit rather than spoken. The mere act of enunciating shut up bunches the face up in a sneer. It's hard to imagine a situation where shut up is useful.

Which brings me to the word *hate*. As with all the words on my list, the word hate can carry lots of emotion when used as a verb in a mean or spiteful way. For example, the expression "I hate you" is a bilious attack on the recipient meant not to convey information but to cause harm. It is vacant of meaning (hate what about me?) but full of emotion and a blanket condemnation. When used as an adjective (e.g. hate crime, hate mongering), however, the word hate conveys meaning because it's a judgment and not an attack. Hate can also be used effectively as an exaggeration when referring to yourself, as in "I hate Mondays."

Endless flexibility is the beauty of the English language. Things can be said in many different ways. Be careful that the words you use say what you mean without unintended emotion. •

*Peter Langmaid is a semi-retired businessman, RSVP Ambassador, and longtime EIA contributor.*

# RSVP



The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a nonprofit National Senior Corps program sponsored locally by Solid Ground. RSVP meets critical community needs by encouraging and supporting volunteerism in King County for people 55 and older.



Each year, more than 55,000 King County residents come to Solid Ground to address urgent food and housing needs, and build skills to overcome poverty and thrive. Through 40+ years of innovation, partnership and action, we work to undo racism and other oppressions to change the institutional practices and policies that perpetuate poverty.

# EIA

*Experience in Action!* (EIA) is published by King County RSVP and distributed to 3,500 RSVP members, senior volunteers and friends. EIA is dedicated to providing news, information and opportunities about senior volunteerism. Articles express writers' opinions, which are not necessarily the views of RSVP or EIA. We reserve the right to refuse any material deemed unsuitable. Articles may be edited in accordance with technical and editorial policy guidelines.

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### WHAT IS AN RSVP AMBASSADOR?

An RSVP Ambassador is an RSVP Volunteer who is willing to help us spread the word about the benefits of volunteering. Because of our small staff, we have assembled a wonderful group of volunteers who help us share the mission of RSVP with other seniors. If you would be willing to represent RSVP at events around King County, we would like to talk to you.

We do not ask for a specific time commitment, only that you occasionally share your enthusiasm for volunteering and help us encourage others by relating your own experiences and telling about RSVP. We provide a fun, interactive training and give you the opportunity to meet another group of active, enthusiastic people.

**To sign up or ask more questions, please contact:**  
Jan Hancock, 206.694.6786 or [janh@solid-ground.org](mailto:janh@solid-ground.org).



## Aging with Wisdom

by Carol Scott-Kassner

### A celebration of you!

It is always interesting to note the myriad of reasons that we choose to volunteer. My guess is that those reasons are always complex. Some of them might be as follows.

- We feel called to do something positive in the world.
- We want to get out of the house and stay active.
- We like the satisfaction of helping others.
- We are dedicated to a cause.
- We don't want to be bored in retirement.

I'm sure that you can think of other reasons you choose to volunteer your time and talents.

For most, if not all of us, the act of volunteering is satisfaction in itself. We get our thanks or

rewards from the engagement with the people and projects with whom we work. That is all we need to keep going.

At the same time, it feels good to be recognized and celebrated by our peers and the organizations for which we volunteer. Many of those organizations could not survive without volunteers like you.

*So let me say to you...*

*"Merci"  
"Gracias"  
"Arigato"  
"Thank you!!"*

You make a positive difference in the world. We are grateful for you. You bless the world with who you are and what you do. May you in turn be blessed.



Now is the time to free the heart,  
Let all intentions and worries stop,  
Free the joy inside the self,  
Awaken to the wonder of your life.

Open your eyes and see the friends  
Whose hearts recognize your face as kin,  
Those whose kindness watchful and near,  
Encourages you to live everything here.

~John O'Donohue ●

*Carol Scott-Kassner is the co-founder of Aging with Wisdom and is available to do workshops on various aspects of the spiritual journey of aging. Contact Carol at [carolkassner@comcast.net](mailto:carolkassner@comcast.net).*

### POWER OF ONE 20th year anniversary!

RSVP partner, Power of One, recognized two milestones in a special anniversary celebration. Not only was it their 20th year in operation, but it was volunteer Liz Poitras' 20th year of service with the program, having been with them since their inception. Congratulations all around! ●



Liz Poitras: 20 volunteer years!  
(Photo by Karen Kessinger)

### Volunteers Honored

Mayors Day of Recognition, April 5, 2016

by Jan Hancock



Marty Thompson speaking at the Mayors Recognition Day  
(Photo by Jennifer Gabagan)

Coordinated by the Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS), the Mayors Day of Recognition event provided an opportunity for RSVP ambassadors to talk about what drew them to National Service and the impact it has had on their lives.

Ambassador Sarah Parkhurst has served 13 years with RSVP, volunteering with, to name just a few, the American Red Cross, Bloodworks NW, Communities in Schools, and most recently Wellspring Family Service's Baby Boutique. A dedicated volunteer, Sarah has always maintained that "As we age, we still have much to offer. Finding a satisfying niche in which to use talents and skills adds joy and a tremendous sense of well-being to our lives."

In the six-and-a-half years that Marty Thompson has been a member of RSVP, he has not been idle. An outstanding volunteer, Marty provides assistance with computer skills at the Circle of Friends for Mental Health and at senior retirement communities, and through United Way helps low-income individuals prepare tax returns during tax season. When asked about the 25 hours a week he spends volunteering, Marty says, "I just like to keep busy helping others." ●

### Living longer

Source: AARP Public Policy Institute

RSVP Ambassador, Mary Fogh has gone on a factoid search and come up with some interesting pieces of information from the AARP Public Policy Institute. Did you know, for instance, that you can stretch your lifespan by taking these facts to heart?

- Exercise is key to successful aging. Physical fitness is at the crux of successful aging.
- Working past retirement can keep you alive. Many long-lived professionals keep working after retirement age, even if it's just part time.
- Conscientious people live longer. Being persistent, working hard, and being a little obsessive is the secret to long life.
- A happy marriage can save your life: People living in happy marriages tend to live longer, but getting rid of a troublesome spouse can also have a positive effect on your longevity! ●



# Literacy Source on the move

by Anita Warmflash

Six years ago, I authored an article for this publication about Literacy Source and described how it was enabling a low-income, diverse population to achieve literacy. I described my experiences there as a volunteer. Six seems to be a recurring number. I had come to Seattle six years earlier and now six years later, Literacy Source has recently relocated to Lake City in order to better fulfill its mission and expand its services.

The relocation of Literacy Source provides needed additional space for programs and a geographic location which offers proximity to larger numbers of clients as the general area is home to many immigrants and other lower-income families. I haven't yet had the opportunity to visit there but hope to remedy this soon.

In the six years after I wrote about Literacy Source, I continued to serve as a volunteer tutor, never losing enthusiasm for the work and for the students who have to work so hard to reach their goals. I was hardly aware at the time of the organizational developments behind the scenes, as typically I rushed in to meet up with my current student and afterward had to leave hurriedly for my home and other responsibilities.

I recently had to decide that I would no longer be able to tutor for family reasons. However, when RSVP asked whether I could write again about Literacy Source, I quickly and happily agreed.

I arranged to meet with Caroline Socha, the Volunteer Coordinator at Literacy Source, and also with current volunteer tutor, Linda Becker. We met at a local Starbucks (where else?), as the office was in the throes of packing for their move, to settle in by mid-April when classes would start again. It was an opportunity to learn of changes and developments that had taken place over the years.

The objectives of Literacy Source remains the same: to enable refugees and immigrants to improve their English, achieve literacy and/or Citizenship, and to help those who are native born improve their skills in order to achieve higher educational and vocational goals.

Lynn Livesley joined Literacy Source as Executive Director in 2013. She successfully devoted much of her attention to diversifying funding sources after federal funding was cut by 60% – reducing it from 50% of the budget to just 15%. A substantial effort also went into seeking out partnerships and, at the same time, focusing attention on how services could be improved and expanded.

One of the most significant innovations has been to partner with other organizations to provide a program of classes and individual tutoring for students in order to help more of them reach their goals. As a result, Literacy Source is now operating at offsite locations throughout King County, as well as at their headquarters in Lake City, in order to reach larger numbers of students.

Partnerships have been developed with Seattle Community College and Seattle Central Public Library, where classes and individual tutoring sessions take place. Both locations are easily accessible because of the availability of public transportation.

Partnerships have also been established in various hospitals and correctional facilities in King County, and with Asian Counseling & Referral



## Literacy Source

### A Community Learning Center

Services and at El Centro De la Raza. Other ongoing programs include ESL classes at the Angle Lake Family Resource Center, SeaTac and Tukwila Community Center.

At the Lake City center, ESL (English as a Second Language) classes are designed to help students move from whatever their starting level of proficiency is through all five levels of basic skills. The ABE (Adult Basic Education) program is for students who are seeking to improve their literacy skills and whose goals are to become employed or gain college admission, both of which require higher levels of proficiency. Finally, there is a program of classes and individual tutoring in preparation for application for Citizenship.

Classes are conducted by qualified staff with assistance from volunteers. There is a core of five full-time teaching staff, which includes two AmeriCorps members. The volunteer program relies on 150 members who volunteer primarily as tutors and co-instructors, and in various program support positions.

Volunteers, like the student body, are of diverse backgrounds in all respects including education and vocational experience. They may be actively in the workforce or retired persons, but whatever their situation, they bring exceptional skills.

Linda Becker, the volunteer whom I met and talked with, completed her formal education with an M.A. in French literature and language. Her first employment was instructing ESL for the Berlitz organization followed by a long career in the Public Health field as a data specialist until her recent retirement.

She's been a volunteer tutor with Literacy Source for over a year now and spoke about how deeply she feels about her students who are representative of many different cultures and are working so hard to overcome the obstacles posed by family responsibilities and job pressures in addition to adjusting to a new culture. Many need to work several jobs to sustain themselves and their families but also have to make time to attend classes and tutoring sessions in order to improve their language skills.

Caroline Socha joined Literacy Source as a volunteer ESL instructor six years ago, and became a staff member three years ago. Her experience as a volunteer makes her especially sensitive to the needs that volunteers have for support, training and ongoing backup.

New recruits are always being sought and are essential to fulfilling the mission of Literacy Source! Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer or co-instructor should contact RSVP. ●



Tutor Linda Becker & Student Alem (Photos courtesy of Literacy Source)



Caroline Socha, Literacy Source Volunteer Coordinator



## The Garden Lady

by Linda Urbaniak

# Tending to texture in your garden

Gardens are often thought only as being filled with flowers or vegetables, but one important aspect of a good garden is texture.

If everything in the planting is of the same shape, say, all tall spike-like plants or all low round plants, the patch begins to be pretty boring. By combining the shapes and colors of leaves, the texture of the garden becomes much more alluring.

When you start to gather plants for your plot, don't just think of the flowers. What are the leaves like? If everything is frothy, the eye can't focus. If everything is big, even important plants are lost in the wilderness.

There are many textures to choose from: smooth, rough, fuzzy, soft, firm. The leaves can differ in shape from arrow

shaped to round to ferny. The trick is to choose a few shapes and mix them up to create areas of interest, even when there are few or no flowers. You can use different combinations in different parts of your setting.

Leaves vary greatly in color. Hostas are a prime example. They boast leaves in chartreuse, variegated white and green, variegated white and bluish, dark green, light green, even almost yellow. Plants that need little water often appear almost gray.

Many plants have leaves that are mahogany red to almost purple and indeed, Alternanthera has leaves that are shiny purple and Coleus can have, among other colors, red, reddish brown, hot pink and orange leaves or combinations of colors.

Another plant that has great



Japanese Painted Fern (Photos by Linda Urbaniak)

variation in its leaves is Huchera, with colors of gray, orange, purple, green and chartreuse. Japanese painted fern boasts silvery gray and lavender fronds, and the variety "Ghost" is such a pale green it looks white in the shade garden.

Variegation is another aspect to consider. Too much and everything blends together. Many grasses and shrubs, even trees, as well as other plants have variegation that can add zing to an all green area or, conversely can be even more exciting if solid color foliage is mixed into

the planting.

Another aspect of texture is height. Typically the tall things go toward the back, the medium height in the center and the low things in front so that everything can be seen, but that can be mixed up a bit for a more interesting garden. It is best to keep the low things primarily in front, though, or they may not be seen at all.

Texture includes some things other than plants that add to the garden, such as bird baths, fountains, trellises or statues, too. Mixed among the plants, they can add interest or direct the eye to a certain setting. A fountain will add a further dimension with its bubbling or splashing.

By using different textures, your garden will be much more interesting and will give you great pleasure even when there are few flowers. Finally, even your display pots will be more beautiful if you give them artful combinations of leaf size, texture and height. ●

*After retiring from 13 years as a docent at Bellevue Botanical Garden, Linda now tends her own two large gardens. She is happy to respond to email questions at [lindagardenlady@comcast.net](mailto:lindagardenlady@comcast.net).*



## SEND US YOUR HOURS!

Yes, your hours as an RSVP volunteer are important and need to be reported to us. Your hours are not only tied to federal funding with benefits then provided to you, like the excess accident medical and liability insurance, but they also help the volunteer sites and RSVP reach volunteer hour goals. And just as importantly, it helps us recognize you for your service and highlights the contributions you make to meet community needs when you volunteer.

**If you have questions, please contact:**  
Jennifer Gahagan, 206.694.6785 or [jeng@solid-ground.org](mailto:jeng@solid-ground.org).

## Nutrition *continued from page 1*

hydrofoil boat program. He credits his own drive and the help and mentoring of others as instrumental to his moving up in the ranks.

In 1998 Ed retired – by his own admission – to a life of “playing with my boats and drinking beer.” Unsatisfied and unfulfilled, he soon embarked on a 12-year career as a volunteer GED teacher, where he helped 65 students earn their certificates.

In 2013 Ed's wife (also an RSVP Meals on Wheels volunteer) joined the “Readers' Theater” group at the KSAC. When KSAC Volunteer Program Coordinator Helena Reynolds learned about Ed's background, she told him, “I've got a job for you!”

Besides keeping busy, Ed gets “lots of satisfaction” from his work as volunteer coordinator and he is proud to continue his family's bedrock value of giving back. ●



Meals on Wheels Specialist, Melissa Pallanes (Photo by Jan Hancock)

## Go fly a kite!

by Linda Urbaniak

"Go fly a kite" at the top of the mound at Seattle's Gas Works Park. Or use your body as the gnomon for the sundial there designed by local artists Chuck Greening and Kim Lazare. Or just sit on the grass and enjoy a beautiful view of Seattle and Lake Union and watch all the activity. Maybe a seaplane will take off or land; a canoe or kayak paddle by. Anything from a rowboat to a huge yacht may cruise by or you may hear the duck calls from the amphibious boat tour that drives on land.

You can see paddle boarders balancing on their boards and home owners of the iconic houseboats sunbathing on their roof decks. There are many areas where lawn sports like Frisbee are played. It is one of the premier points in Seattle to watch the July 4th fireworks display over Lake Union when thousands crowd the park for a front row seat on the grassy lawn. There is activity for all at Gas Works.



Gas Works Park (Photos by Linda Urbaniak)

The tall cooking towers are the center point of the nearly 20-acre park that juts into Lake Union. They, and the remaining structures and machines, are considered to be the only standing gas works remaining in the world. One of the structures, which once housed two huge boilers, was converted to a very large covered picnic area. It is adjoined by the converter house that is now the play barn where kids can climb up to look at the brightly painted original pumps and compressors that converted coal, then oil, into gas and byproducts. Their conversion was overseen by designer Richard Haag.

The park opened to the public in 1975. The paths throughout the park are easily traversed by foot or wheel, and there are public restrooms near the picnic area.

The original coal gasification plant was opened in 1906 and operated until 1930 as the Seattle Gas Lighting Company and produced gas, for gas lights primarily, throughout King County. It changed over to oil in 1937 as demand for gas grew and the name was converted to Seattle Gas Company. Two additional generators were added in 1947 as demand grew and the plant operated 24 hours a day until natural gas finally reached Seattle in 1956.

When the land was acquired by the City of Seattle in 1962, it was covered with hazardous waste. Remediation included adding two feet of topsoil to cover the original soil. The first year after adding the topsoil, two unintended plants grew in profusion: tomatoes and marijuana (which was illegal then). I don't remember anyone eating the tomatoes! A groundwater remediation system was installed in 2001. Because of remaining contaminated sediment in the water



## Senior on the Street

by Peter Langmaid

### What's the best thing about spring?

*"Outdoor barbecues. Dog parties."*

~Audrey Shiffmann



*"Baseball. The smell of freshly cut grass."*

~Fred Mednick



*"Long days."*

~Rosalie Frankel



*"Cherry blossoms on Queen Anne's Bigelow Ave."*

~David Marquez



*"Long days, beautiful flowers, outdoor bike rides."*

~Judy Chase



*"It's not winter!"*

~Brad Chase



surrounding the park, no swimming or wading or fishing is allowed. Remediation of the remaining water-covered areas should begin in late 2017. Frequent testing renders the park harmless, a wonderful recapture of a hazardous site.

Gas Works Park is located at 2101 Northlake Way. It is accessible from the Burke-Gilman Trail which runs right past the park. The #26 bus runs from downtown Seattle north on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to about a block from the park. From I-5 take the NE 45<sup>th</sup> St exit going west. Turn south on Meridian, Burke or Wallingford until you reach the park. There is a large parking lot and you should be able to find a parking place except maybe on July 4<sup>th</sup>! ●

# Volunteer & Community Opportunities through RSVP

The following are just a few of the volunteer and community opportunities RSVP has to offer. To talk to a real person about opportunities that are just right for you, call Jan Hancock at 206.694.6786 – or visit our website at [www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/Volunteer/RSVP](http://www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/Volunteer/RSVP) for regional volunteer opportunity listings.

## Volunteering

**AARP Fraud Fighters:** Help the elderly recognize, refuse and report fraud. Volunteer responsibilities are primarily telephone tasks and administrative assistance. Volunteers call individuals delivering information regarding fraud prevention. Victim assistance through referrals and resources is provided to those who have experienced fraud. Clerical support and data entry is needed for ongoing projects.

**American Cancer Society:** Help cancer patients and their families. At our Cancer Resource Centers, which are located within hospitals, our volunteers help connect cancer patients to local programs and services, day-to-day help, and emotional support. Resource Centers at Valley Medical, Highline Medical and Northwest Hospital. If you prefer to help by driving, we are also recruiting for our Road to Recovery patient transportation program.

**Cooking Matters:** A program of Solid Ground designed to teach low-income families how to prepare healthy and tasty meals on a limited budget. Looking for volunteer chefs, nutritionists and assistants for six-week courses as well as volunteers to assist as grocery shoppers and help pick up and deliver groceries to Cooking Matters sites at various Seattle area locations. Training provided.

**CourtWatch:** Interested in learning more about the criminal justice system? Would you like to help improve this process for victims of sexual assault and abuse? CourtWatch is recruiting volunteers to serve as court monitors. Our monitors sit in on court cases, take notes, and report back about what they observe. Volunteer positions are available at the King County Superior Courthouse in Seattle and the Maleng Regional Justice Center in Kent.

**First Place School** needs volunteers for its clothing bank. Sort and wash donations on site and bring children into the bank to fit them with requested items. Help students feel good about clothing they will be receiving and wearing. Or volunteer as a receptionist and answer incoming calls and route them to appropriate staff; take messages when staff is unavailable and perform other support tasks.

**Full Life Care: Adult Day Health Care** needs you. Assist or lead a variety of fun activities for the elderly and disabled in a structured program. Volunteers needed any time 9am – 2pm. **Elderfriends Program** needs volunteers to make regular visits with an older adult two-to-three times a month. Spend time together cooking, talking, or taking walks, or going to movies or appointments.

**Habitat for Humanity** is seeking regular volunteers to help build and repair homes for hard working families in King County. Volunteers also coach families in Habitat's programs, help host volunteer groups, and get the word out about their programs. They have over 30 volunteer roles! Join them for a volunteer orientation session to learn more. Help Habitat provide affordable housing right here in your community!

**Jewish Family Services** is seeking home delivery volunteers. Once a month, pick up groceries at our Capitol Hill food bank and deliver to seniors and adults with disabilities. You deliver to the same clients each month. Weekday or Sunday shifts. Also seeking substitute drivers for home delivery and food bank helpers. May through October, collect produce donations at Broadway Farmers Market two Sunday afternoons a month.

**Lettuce Link**, a Solid Ground program, is looking for volunteers for their summer kids' garden and nutrition education classes at Marra Farm in South Park. Plant gardens, cook healthy snacks, and more! Seeking 1-3 thoughtful, reliable volunteers for each of the

8-10 week summer class sessions to assist educators, engage with students, and share enthusiasm for healthy eating and gardening.

**Mercer Island Parks & Recreation's Senior Social:** Senior Social addresses the need for senior adults who have physical, memory, hearing or vision limitations. It is a social recreation program providing physical and mental activities, music, arts and crafts, dance, exercise, guest speakers and educators. Volunteers work directly with senior participants and help organize and facilitate daily activities and room set up. Bus helpers and drivers also needed. Commercial Drivers License not necessary.

**Multi-Service Center:** Volunteers help adults complete their GED, help students learn English as a second language, help students improve basic reading, writing and math skills or help sort food and clothes in the food and clothing bank. We ask for a three-hour a week commitment (two shifts of 1.5 hours) for a minimum of six months. No teaching experience required.

**The Educurious** virtual mentoring program is in need of volunteers to be a part of the solution to improving education by providing feedback and real world experience to students. By exposing students to a network of professionals and thus to a wide array of career opportunities, this program has the potential of inspiring underrepresented youth to pursue and excel in areas that interest them, providing them with opportunities to future careers.

**UW Medical Center:** Volunteers can put their skills to use in the Health & Information Resource Center by providing information to patients, families and visitors on various health issues as a Surgery Liaison between the Operating Room/PACU and patient families and friends. Or, be a Lobby Ambassador and make a difference by providing the highest level of customer service and support to patients and visitors.

**Volunteer Services of Catholic Community Services (CCS)** welcomes volunteers to enable low-income elders and adults with disabilities to remain independent in their own homes. Volunteers may help the same person or be listed for on-call opportunities depending on their schedule and interests. Requests include transportation, chores, laundry, cooking, yard work, yard tools upkeep and office work. Volunteers receive training, mileage reimbursement and insurance.

**Youth Tutoring Program's** Summer Learning Program aims to serve nearly 120 at-risk students in 1st – 8th grade who live in affordable public housing communities across Seattle. Students come from diverse backgrounds – representing many nationalities, cultures, languages and religions. Students have all participated in YTP's school year program, and are excited to meet new tutors who will inspire them in reading and science over the summer.

Please call to help me find a volunteer opportunity suited just for me.

Please send information about RSVP.

Please note my new address.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail this form to:** RSVP, 1501 N 45th Street, Seattle, WA 98103