

Experience *in Action!*

King County RSVP's news for people 55 & older

Volume 36 | Number 3 | Fall 2021



AmeriCorps
Seniors



Medical benefits detective, Don Berg: Helping people solve the mystery of Medicare

by Jennifer Gahagan

An avid reader, Don Berg enjoys a good mystery novel, especially the ones that he cannot easily solve. He jokes that he needs to be careful about not giving away the answer too early when watching a mystery series with his wife.

Don grew up and went to school in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota. After graduating with a Master's degree in Business, he moved to Los Angeles, California in 1984, joining the Aerospace

industry. Soon after, he met his wife while they were serving on a jury. He assures me that he and his wife waited until after the trial to begin seeing each other. Don was transferred to Sacramento for work, where he and his wife lived until Don retired.

After retirement, Don and his wife moved to Bellevue, Washington, where they have lived for the last 16 years. During his retirement, Don has enjoyed being able to read a lot and



SHIBA volunteer Don Berg

explore the area, taking day trips.

One day 11½ years ago, while reading the Wall Street Journal, he came across an article that piqued his interest. It was about Medicare fraud and the Medicare trust fund. The article directed people to contact their state insurance office to learn more.

After contacting the Washington state Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC), Don was connected to the SHIBA (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisers) program – and he's been assisting people to better understand Medicare and health benefits ever since.

A public service offered by OIC, statewide SHIBA volunteers provide people in their communities with free, impartial, and confidential Medicare counseling, education about Medicare health plans, prescription drug access, programs to help pay for Medicare, fraud and abuse, and more.

Don shares that many people are confused about the medical benefits options as well as when to sign up. He really enjoys meeting with people face-to-face, answering questions, providing information, and helping people move through the process of understanding their options to make the best decisions for themselves and their unique situations and preferences.

Sometimes people have complicated issues that need further research and multiple meetings. While SHIBA volunteers never provide recommendations,

they can explain the difference between Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans, help people figure out which plans cover their prescriptions, compare the cost of plans, and see if they qualify for additional savings. Often SHIBA volunteers will even help people enroll in the plan of their choosing.

Don also enjoys giving presentations to groups. Topics include Open Enrollment, Welcome to Medicare, and information to help avoid Medicare fraud. He shares that it's very satisfying when someone comes up after a presentation, letting him know that they now understand their options.

Among Don's most memorable volunteer experiences is assisting people with disabilities to find health insurance. In 2013, he received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society in the Washington state for his work in counseling people referred through their network.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is not the only group that appreciates Don for his incredible volunteer service through SHIBA. In 2019, Sound Generations awarded Don the Stellar Volunteer Award.

And Sarah Clark from the Insurance Commissioner's office shares that "Don is an exceptional SHIBA volunteer – his humble demeanor belies the fact he's one of our top of Medicare advisors and one of our most sought-after public presenters."

Continued on page 3

**Solid Ground's King County RSVP
(Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)**
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EiA Inside This Issue...

A gentle reopening

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Speaking Directly

by Megan Wildhood, RSVP Coordinator

Reopening... Sort of?

The RSVP team usually starts brainstorming themes for each *Experience in Action (EIA)* newsletter a couple of weeks before we reach out to our writers and the site partners we'd like to feature. Given all the uncertainty in the world, the last several issues have been especially difficult to plan for – and the issue you're now reading has proven to be the most challenging so far.

We waited as long as we could to pick a theme, because we knew reopening plans at the state level would be announced – and entities from counties to universities to individual businesses were waiting for Governor Inslee's directions.

What we didn't and couldn't know was what the reopening policies would be or how long they would last. Inslee lifted all restrictions related to the COVID-19 outbreak on June 30, so when we started planning in August, we thought "reopening" would be a good theme to acknowledge the sigh of relief (albeit tentative) that many Washingtonians breathed as we got excited to enjoy our summers.



As we have seen though may not have anticipated, this enjoyment has been short-lived, and many institutions and organizations – including Solid Ground – have decided to delay or revise plans to reopen their offices to the public, while others are continuing with their original fall reopening plans.

Statewide mandates are back in place. (You can find details about the mask mandate, including the exceptions and exemptions, in the Washington state Department of Health's Order of the Secretary of Health, [Amending Order 20-03.5 on Face Coverings](#) document.)

There are many reasons to be careful during these times and many things of which to be careful. It is not Solid Ground's place to give medical advice, especially given the complexity of the issues.

We want to acknowledge the challenge and confusion in these times, compounded by the ongoing nature of this situation.

We also want to remember that there is good in our world – and for RSVP, our volunteers and site partners are shining examples of it. You have continued to serve your communities, giving your time and talents to causes and people you believe in.

***As temperatures cool
and fall colors arrive ...
while some places reopen ...
while some stay closed ...
while some crack their doors ...
we want to thank you for your
continued service and care for
our community. ●***

Home Helpers Needed!

We need YOU to help elder neighbors remain independent in their homes! Join RSVP for a discussion with Catholic Community Services (CCS) on...

**Wednesday, October 20, 2021
11am – 12:15pm @ VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM!**

You'll learn about...

- ▶ Critical needs of low-income, isolated seniors in your area.
- ▶ What's being done to assist them – and the impacts volunteers are making.
- ▶ How you can provide companionship, support, transportation, etc.
- ▶ Virtual and/or socially distant volunteer opportunities available.

All are welcome! Register at...

tinyurl.com/RSVP-HomeHelpers-10-20-21

Calling all Volunteers 55 & Older!

Passionate about making a difference? Share your experience and skills to help meet critical community needs! Solid Ground and RSVP invite you to a discussion on...

**Wednesday, October 27, 2021
11am – 12:15pm @ VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM!**

You'll learn about...

- ▶ Critical needs of families, youth, and seniors in your community.
- ▶ What's being done to assist them – and the impacts volunteers are making.
- ▶ How you can provide support, services, and encouragement.
- ▶ Virtual and/or socially distant volunteer opportunities available.

All are welcome! Register at...

tinyurl.com/RSVP-Vols-10-27-21





It Seems to Me...

by Peter Langmaid

It ain't over till it's over*

Two stories combine to illustrate my thoughts about the whole COVID-19 experience and the risks of reopening too soon.

The first is a vivid memory from my childhood. It was a sunny weekend day sometime in the mid-1950s, and I was in a long line of children my age that snaked through the playground of our local elementary school. We were there to suck on a sugar cube infused with a measure of polio vaccine.

Polio is a horrible, crippling disease that was essentially eradicated in this country by the vaccine. Today, all children, with few exceptions, get vaccinated against polio as a normal part of their standard vaccination regimen. The virtual elimination of polio in this country is attributed to the power of science. I believe in science.

The second story is from when I was a teenager. One morning I woke up with the worst sore throat of my life. When I swallowed, it felt like razor blades sliding down my throat. I went to the doctor immediately and was diagnosed with tonsillitis and given a prescription for antibiotics with instruction to take all the pills.

Two days later the pain was gone, and I stopped taking the pills. One week later the pain returned, and I was back in the doctor's office. He asked if I had taken all the pills and I said no, because I felt better in

a couple of days. He gave me another prescription with the admonishment to take all the pills. I did and today my tonsils still lay quietly in my throat. The painful lesson for me was to follow the advice of medical experts.

Applying these two experiences to today's pandemic has brought me to several realizations. First, I got vaccinated as soon as I was eligible. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Breakthrough infections are somewhat rare – though highly publicized – and the vaccine is believed to mitigate the severity of reinfection. No vaccine is 100% effective for everyone as evidenced by the small number of people who get flu shots and still get the flu.

Second, the pace of reopening is troubling. Just because infections, hospitalization, and deaths are down in our area, it doesn't mean the battle with COVID is over. We all want to return to our normal lives and desperately want our children back in school, but we must be careful not to declare victory too soon or relax our commitment to the behaviors that keep us safe.

The virus is mutating rapidly, becoming more virulent and threatening younger children. The recommendations to stay healthy are simple but demonstrably effective. They



include: 1) wear masks when and where appropriate, 2) avoid large indoor gatherings, 3) socialize outside, and 4) practice social distancing with strangers.

This brings me to the question around the intersection of masks and freedom. Many people believe that mask-wearing is a personal decision and that mask mandates are an attack on personal freedom. I prefer to think of masks and mask-mandates not as diminution of personal freedom but as an affirmation of our responsibility to each other. Furthermore, more and more businesses, large and small, are not taking any chances so require masks for entry.

Lastly, I have a few simple strategies to help you stay safe: 1) grocery shop in off hours, 2) avoid crowded aisles until they clear, 3) patronize restaurants that offer outside dining, 4) wash your hands thoroughly and regularly, and 5) don't believe everything you read. ●

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

*Attributed to baseball legend Yogi Berra, 1973.

RSVP



AmeriCorps Seniors

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



At Solid Ground, we believe poverty is solvable. Our approach combines direct services with community-based advocacy. We support individuals while working to undo racism and other oppressions that create barriers – so everyone can achieve their full potential.

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 to meet technical and editorial policy guidelines.

EIA EDITORS

Jennifer Gahagan, Lily King, Liz Reed Hawk, Sam Stones, and Megan Wildhood

EIA NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Peter Langmaid, Bill Pharr, and David Thornbrugh

PHONE

206.694.6786

EMAIL

RSVP@solid-ground.org

MAILING ADDRESS

1501 N 45th St, Seattle, WA 98103

WEB

www.solid-ground.org/RSVP

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Navigating Medicare, continued from page 1

If you are like Don and enjoy learning, figuring things out, and assisting others, becoming a SHIBA volunteer might be just the volunteer opportunity you're seeking. Initially, there is a lot to learn.

Volunteers receive 10 hours of basic training, 10-30 hours of mentoring from an experienced SHIBA volunteer, and monthly training with ongoing support throughout their tenure. While mentally challenging, Don says he really appreciates that it keeps him on his toes. He's always learning, thinking, and staying mentally active as a SHIBA volunteer.

Not only does volunteering with SHIBA keep Don mentally sharp, but he also works with an amazing, committed group of volunteers who support one another to provide accurate, clear, health benefits information to people from all backgrounds. ●



To learn more about becoming a SHIBA volunteer, please contact Megan Wildhood at meganw@solid-ground.org or 206.694.6786.



Financial Planning

by Bill Pharr

Book Review: *If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now*

by Christopher Ingraham

"Where would you move if you wanted to move out of Seattle?" This hypothetical question came up recently with a group of friends during a discussion of issues facing Seattle and King County. It so happens I had just finished reading Christopher Ingraham's *If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now*. It's a very timely, at times humorous, and insightful book which produces poignant thoughts and stories pertaining to the question above.

Chris is a Data Reporter for The Washington Post. His wife, Briana, had a high-level job with the Social Security Department. Both worked in D.C. in 2015, which is when this story starts. At the time, their twin boys were almost two years old. Chris and Briana were analyzing their increasingly stressful lives.

They both worked full time, Chris's commute was 31 days a year in total time, and they could barely afford to buy a row house with one bathroom in Baltimore for \$245,000. They weren't saving any money – and they didn't spend much time with their twin boys.

One day in his work, Chris found a 1990s Department of Agriculture study which quantified 3,000 counties in America. The study's purpose was to "quantify the physical characteristics that enhance the location as a place to live."

It turns out that Red Lake County, Minnesota finished dead last in the study. Chris wrote a 42-word snarky article (his words), published in The Post.

His life with Briana and the boys started to take a dramatic turn, they just didn't know it then. Early in the book, the author shares a Pew Research study that shows 54% of Americans say they would prefer to live in a small town or rural area while, actually, 80% live in cities ... go figure.

The citizens of Red Lake Falls issued him a challenge to visit them. He accepted the challenge. I won't spoil the book for you – I encourage you to read it yourself – but in a nutshell, after his visit, his family moved lock, stock, and barrel to Red Lake Falls. Their experience in moving there teaches and reinforces many life concepts worth knowing, a few of which I mention below.

A common thread throughout the book is this: Be careful of forming preconceived notions of people before taking the time to know them.

Upon moving there, the townsfolk welcomed the Ingrahams with open arms, helped them move their furniture, found numerous volunteer opportunities for Brianna, and brought them food (much of which was pickled). As Chris shares his story, he challenges several other common stereotypes about rural dwellers.

One interesting fact that comes out of the book is the incredible support the people of Red Lake Falls provide to each other. If the community needs money for something, everyone just chips in what they can. "Need a ride to the doctor's office 16 miles away? Sure, I'll be right over." "Your mower broke down? Just borrow mine. The shed is never locked, and the gas can is next to it. Just help yourself."

Red Lake Falls is a community wherein everyone is on the same page, and everyone works together. When they purchased their new house, they didn't have their checkbook, so one of the realtors put down the down payment for them, saying, "Just pay me back later." (Full disclosure: The coffee is terrible, and the pizza might be worse.)

One takeaway for me is the way Chris and Briana evaluate their lives and then take action. If you have read my articles, you know I'm a big proponent of knowing how much you spend every month and year. I am also a proponent of learning work skills in multiple fields when you are young.

They knew they were killing themselves working two jobs and not saving, so they moved to a community where they saved \$4,000 per month just on mortgage and childcare alone, and another \$500 a month in metro fares, gas, and meals. And they no longer had to commute. Chris's blood pressure went down 30 points!!!

Chris could work from home. Briana could spend more time with the kids, and she substituted the joy she received from her previous work with volunteer opportunities – and then she was elected to the City Council. They have job skills that are universal and transferrable.

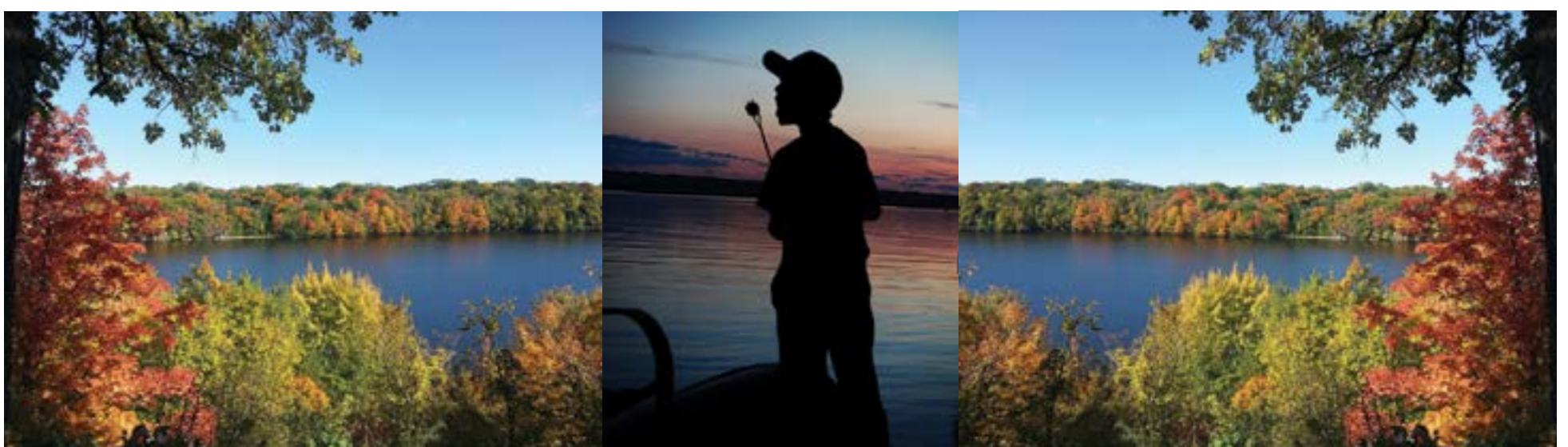
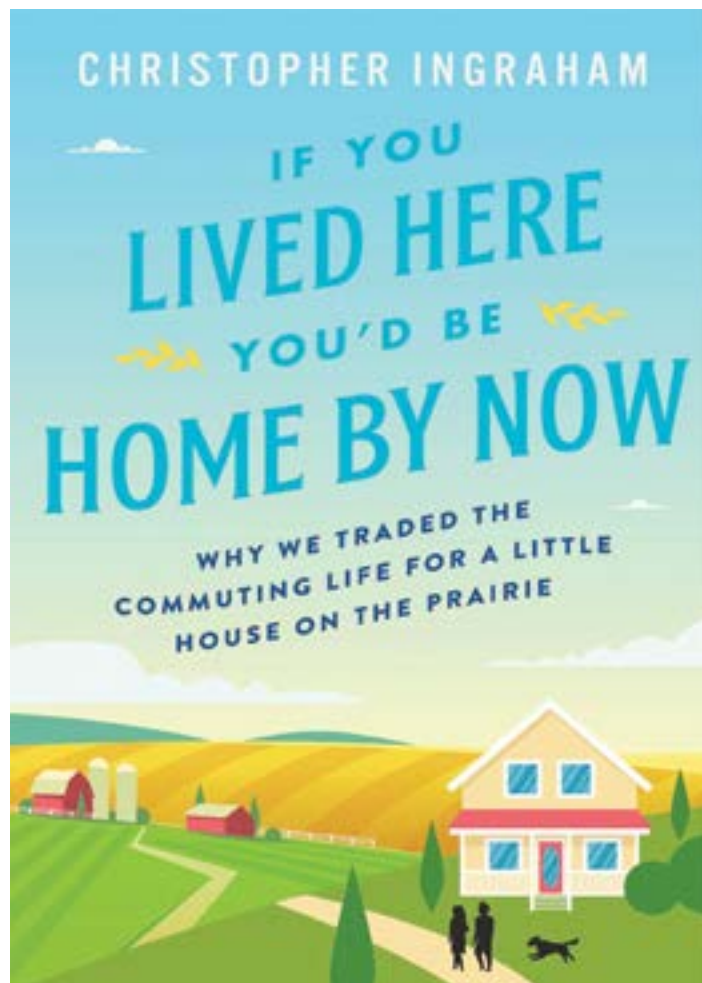
The book is also about the tale of two Americas: the Midwest and the center of the country. One point the author makes throughout the book is that the people of Red Lake Falls are not any different than anyone else in America. They watch the same TV shows, root for their favorite teams, hope for a bright future for their kids, enjoy going to the park, and love

spending time with friends.

"If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now" is a fun read. It has serious moments, and some seriously funny stories. The author has no trouble making fun of himself.

The community of Red Lake Falls reminds me of the small town I lived in when I was young in the 1950s: Everyone knows everyone, and everyone pulls together to make the community a great place to live. It's a light but educational read that I highly recommend. ●

Bill Pharr is a retired business owner and financial advisor, RSVP member, and regular contributor to the EIA. (Photos below, free from [pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com), depict Minnesota – but not specifically Red Lake Falls!)



Site Partner Spotlight: Multi-Service Center (MSC)

by David Thornbrugh

Fifty years ago on August 15, 1971, a small group of people – including five volunteer Head Start parents – founded a new organization dedicated to fighting poverty and homelessness among the underserved population of South King County.

From that simple beginning, the Multi-Service Center (MSC) has gone from a single office building with a volunteer staff to three offices – one each in Federal Way, Burien, and Kent – with more than 90 full-time employees and over 600 volunteers.

“We couldn’t do what we do without volunteers,” says MSC Chief Executive Officer Robin Corak. “Our oldest is one hundred!” A number of seniors, though, are retiring from volunteering, and the agency always has a need for helping hands. “We try to match people according to their experience and skills.”

Currently, the food bank and the Ombudsman programs are the two most in need of volunteers.

The food bank, which MSC runs to support individuals and families who live in the Federal Way School District, is currently open for drive-through pickup, though the clothing store remains shut down. Some volunteers stay involved in boxing up and packaging food, while others deliver.



The agency’s statewide Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) consists entirely of volunteer advocates for care residents who are trained by MSC staff.

But those are not the only opportunities. Corak says, “If someone is interested in volunteering and has a specific skill or interest that is not reflected in existing volunteer opportunities, feel free to reach out to us as there might be an opportunity to create a volunteer position that is of mutual benefit.”

The agency’s mission statement reads: “MSC is building a future without poverty by creating pathways to help, hope, and dignity for our neighbors.” It puts a strong emphasis on offering tools to combat poverty and homelessness. These include short-term, emergency shelters for families with at least one child under the age of 18 as well as longer-term residents in the 650-plus housing units that MSC owns in South King and Pierce Counties.

Corak has been with MSC for 20 years and became its CEO 10 years ago. In the wake of the upheaval caused by the shutdown in response to the pandemic, she is pleased by the staff’s agility. She says they “were very flexible and were able to pivot quickly to meet the needs of our customers while still maintaining high safety standards for



Dedicated MSC food bank volunteers stay involved despite pandemic adjustments.

all staff, volunteers, and guests who were onsite. They have done a fantastic job working remotely, working with our clients.”

Reflecting the agency’s name, MSC offers multiple programs for those experiencing or threatened with homelessness. The agency’s HEART program provides afterschool support with caring adults, while the agency’s extensive education and employment programs are aimed at longer-term solutions to the often systemic obstacles posed by homelessness.

On a personal level, Corak copes with the isolation imposed by COVID protocols by getting out in nature as much as she can and meditating. And, somewhat to her own surprise, she has discovered a new outlet for her artistic side: “I’ve taken up paint-by-numbers for adults. It’s very relaxing.”

MSC remains committed to serving our community despite these incredibly challenging times. As Corak sums it up, “To fulfill our mission of building a future without poverty, we must take a comprehensive approach, which includes providing individual and family services as well as addressing systemic issues.

“The latter includes external actions such as advocating with legislators for needed systems and policy changes, collaborating with grassroots community organizations, educating the community on systemic issues contributing to poverty, and providing outreach to traditionally marginalized communities.

“We also work on addressing systemic issues internally, such as reviewing our policies and protocol using a diversity, equity, and inclusivity lens.” ●

For more information about MSC, please contact Megan Wildhood at meganw@solid-ground.org or 206.694.6786.



SHIBA comes to King County: Helping our community navigate the challenges of Medicare *by Neal Simpson*

Solid Ground is proud to partner with the Washington state Office of the Insurance Commissioner as the new King County sponsor for the **Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA)**, a free, unbiased, and confidential counseling service that helps consumers understand their Medicare rights and options.

Solid Ground's **SHIBA** volunteers are now available to provide this service to help people understand Medicare plan options – including Medigap (Medicare Supplement), Medicare Advantage, and prescription drug plans – as well as programs to help pay for Medicare, employment-related health benefits, fraud and abuse, and much more.

Our volunteers are specially trained to answer questions, make referrals, help evaluate and compare health insurance policies, as well as make public presentations on various Medicare topics. They also help screen people for low-income qualification for programs that can save them money on Medicare coverage.

SHIBA services are...

- ▶ **Completely FREE.**
- ▶ **Confidential:** We keep your personal information safe and private.
- ▶ **Accessible:** Some of our volunteers and hotline operators speak languages other than English.
- ▶ **Objective and unbiased:** We don't sell or endorse anything.



“Navigating the complications of Medicare can be difficult even for people who have worked inside the health care system. For people in marginalized and underserved communities, it can be almost impossible,” says Shalimar Gonzales, CEO of Solid Ground.

“Our organization has a long history of leveraging the power of volunteerism to improve lives, so we're thrilled to be able to partner with the Washington state Office of the Insurance Commissioner and dozens of dedicated volunteers to make sure everyone in King County is able to access the Medicare programs available to them.”

SHIBA is the newest program of Solid Ground's **Volunteer Services**, which also operates **RSVP** in partnership with AmeriCorps Seniors. In 2020, Solid Ground partnered with 566 RSVP volunteers and 447 community volunteers, who together logged more than 35,300 hours despite the challenges of the global pandemic.

To get FREE, UNBIASED help from a SHIBA volunteer, call **206.753.4806** or **1.800.562.6900** or email shiba@solid-ground.org. You can also learn more about **SHIBA** on Solid Ground's **Health Care and Public Benefits** webpage. ●

To learn more about becoming a SHIBA volunteer, please contact Megan Wildhood at meganw@solid-ground.org or **206.694.6786**.

It's Medicare Open Enrollment Time! October 15 – December 7, 2021



The Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) can help you with the following:

- ▶ **Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan** (and vice versa).
- ▶ **If you have Original Medicare:** Join, drop, or switch to a Part D prescription drug plan.
- ▶ **If you have a Medicare Advantage plan:** Switch to a different Medicare Advantage plan.

SHIBA offers free, unbiased Medicare education and assistance through the Washington state Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

For help, contact us at **206.753.4806**, **1.800.562.6900**, or shiba@solid-ground.org. To learn more about SHIBA, visit www.insurance.wa.gov/shiba.

STOP Medicare Fraud!

Tips to keep you safe

- ▶ **Protect your Medicare number** located on your red, white, and blue Medicare card.
- ▶ **Treat it like a credit card** and don't carry it with you unless you need to use it.
- ▶ **Do not give out your Social Security, Medicare, and bank account numbers** over the phone or in person, unless you made the contact and you trust the person.
- ▶ **Remember that nothing is ever “free.”** Don't accept offers of money or gifts for free medical care.
- ▶ **Ask questions.** You have a right to know everything about your medical care, including the costs billed to Medicare.
- ▶ **Use a calendar to record all your medical appointments** and any tests or x-rays you get. Check it against your Medicare statements to make sure your statements are accurate.
- ▶ **Be wary of medical providers who tell you the item or service isn't usually covered**, but they “know how to bill Medicare” so Medicare will pay.
- ▶ **Be cautious if a company requests you pay for premiums in cash**, pay a year's premium in advance, or pressures you to buy right away because “it's your last chance.”
- ▶ **Check with the Office of Insurance Commissioner** to make sure an insurance company or agent is allowed to do business in Washington state.

If you suspect fraud or have questions, call SHIBA's Insurance Consumer Hotline: **1.800.562.6900**. We can help you prevent, detect, and report Medicare and Medicaid fraud and abuse.



Aging with Wisdom

by Carol Scott-Kassner

Living with paradox & uncertainty

Reopening is something we've all longed for since February/March of 2020. We had glimpses of that possibility this summer when the masks came off along with the sunshine, and we hoped that we were seeing the end of the worst of the coronavirus. Then came the delta variant, and we are back into our places of uncertainty, perhaps tinged by fear, even if we've been vaccinated.

What I've come to call "COVID times" has asked a lot of each of us. We've had to practice self-care and care for those around us. We've had to wear masks in public places, keeping us from seeing each other's smiles.

We've had to practice patience in ways we've been rarely called to do. We've coped by streaming movies, giving away things we no longer need, attending meetings on Zoom, and reaching out to children, grandchildren, and friends virtually.

Some of us have found solace in being out-of-doors away from others where we can be nurtured by the beauty of nature. Some of us have started to travel and venture out further, counting on our vaccinations to protect us, but still feeling hesitant about the possibility of catching a breakthrough infection and transmitting it to a child. We are continuing to step into our futures with uncertainty. Will we really be able to "open" safely? What will that look like? What will that mean?

Perhaps the most important questions I've been asking myself during this time are, "Who do I need to be once things open again? How can I be a force for good in a world that continues to dissemble around me? Am I going to be a person of fear or of hope? What will be most helpful at this time of continuing confusion and uncertainty?"

Happily, I came across the following readings that are helping me determine how to step into the kind of future I would like to see and be a force for positive change:

From writer and spiritual teacher Marianne Williamson: "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us. ..."

"In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In



every heart, there is the power to do it.

"Love is what we were born with. Fear is what we learned here. We can always choose to perceive things differently. You can focus on what's wrong in your life, or you can focus on what's right.

"Maturity includes the recognition that no one is going to see anything in us that we don't see in ourselves. Stop waiting for a producer. Produce yourself. If I choose to bless another person, I will always end up feeling more blessed."

From Bishop Charleston: "You are the love that some other heart seeks. You are the healing some wounded life needs. You are the hope for some broken spirit. You are peace for some frantic mind.

"We are each the answer to some prayer, some need, some

longing. We do not have to be heroic or wise to fulfill this role. We only have to be ourselves. We only have to be faithful.

"Take the chance to be your calling, share who you are, and watch the light flow into the world around you."

May these inspiring words fill each of us with the hope and belief that we are each enough to return to the world in ways that help healing to happen.

May we find the strength to be a source of light to others.

May we touch the world with that light. Blessings and Peace to you. ●

Carol is a spiritual director and a Certified Sage-ing Leader in Sage-ing International. To find out more about what Sage-ing offers, go to: www.sage-ing.org.



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 RSVP's mission 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 relate your own experiences with RSVP to encourage others to join. We provide a fun, interactive training and give you the chance to meet other active, enthusiastic people.

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 – such as 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.



To sign up, send hours, or ask more questions, please contact: Megan Wildhood, 206.694.6785 | meganw@solid-ground.org.

VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH RSVP

The following are just a few of the opportunities RSVP has to offer. To talk to a real person about opportunities that are just right for you, call Megan Wildhood at 206.694.6786 – or visit our website at www.solid-ground.org/RSVP for volunteer opportunity listings organized by region.

VOLUNTEERING...

Auburn Community Food Bank: Lend a hand and help others access food. The Auburn Food Bank is a volunteer-directed organization that provides food, referrals, and emergency assistance to those in need. Volunteer opportunities include: counter person, door person, bagger, vegetable/bread attendant, and van helper (loading and unloading food donations). ~South King County

Jewish Family Services helps vulnerable individuals and families in the Puget Sound region achieve well-being, health, and stability. Volunteer opportunities include: food bank shifts, food bank home delivery, market and farm gleaning, virtual friendly visitors for older adults, remote data support, and supporting resettled refugees. ~South King County

Catholic Community Services (CCS) welcomes volunteers to enable elders living on low incomes and adults with disabilities to remain independent in their own homes. Volunteers may help one person regularly or be on-call depending on schedules and interests. Volunteers receive training, mileage reimbursement and insurance. Requests include: grocery, medication, and/or meal delivery; rides to medical appointments; yardwork; and phone buddies. ~Countywide

Lifelong: For more than 30 years, Lifelong's volunteers, who are the heart and soul of the organization, have played a vital role in helping provide quality care and services to clients. The food program Chicken Soup Brigade lies at the heart of their commitment to easing the lives of people living with or at risk of serious illnesses. We would love to have you join us in this effort! Volunteer opportunities include: Repacking food donations, prepping food, packaging meals, delivering nutritious food, and assembling health care kits. ~South Seattle

FareStart helps people break the cycle of poverty by teaching work and lifeskills people need to succeed in the food service industry – and in life. FareStart seeks drivers to deliver supplies to remote culinary class students. Remote opportunities include: 1) write and decorate letters for meal kits for local homeless shelters, nonprofits, senior facilities, and schools, and 2) make masks for essential kitchen staff! Volunteers are reimbursed for materials. ~Central Seattle

North Helpline Emergency Services & Food Bank: There are many opportunities for volunteers to help in the food bank with sorting and food distribution. Requests include: food delivery and pickup drivers, food bank helpers, and hygiene kit assemblers. ~North Seattle

Franciscan Hospice & Palliative Care (FHPC): Affirming every life, FHPC invites you to be part of a team of professionals and volunteers who meet the unique needs of hospice patients and their families. Volunteers provide both practical companionship and emotional support by making friendly phone calls to patients, enhancing FHPC's compassionate care. ~South King County

Port of Seattle: Do you love to travel and enjoy being in airports? Join a dynamic group of volunteers to assist travelers at Sea-Tac Airport. Help travelers find their way around the airport, give out information about the Seattle-Tacoma-Everett area, or provide service to those in distress or needing assistance in changing planes. ~South King County

Food Lifeline: Be one of more than 10,000 people lending a hand to help stop hunger. Food Lifeline needs volunteer assistance to sort and pack donated produce and food. Each day, they receive 25,000 pounds of donated food, which is sorted by volunteers and then distributed to 275 food banks and meal programs in western Washington. They have opportunities to fit every schedule. ~South Seattle

Reading Partners, a literacy nonprofit that mobilizes community volunteers to provide 1:1 tutoring to struggling elementary school readers, seeks volunteers to tutor 1 hour a week during the school year. No experience required as you'll be provided with an easy-to-follow curriculum that includes all the books, worksheets, and step-by-step lesson plans to teach an effective lesson. In person and virtual tutoring positions available! ~South Seattle

Full Life Care is dedicated to enhancing quality of life for low-income elders and adults with disabilities. Volunteers are invited to support elders through the ElderFriends Program, which custom-matches volunteers with lonely and isolated older adults in King County for 1:1 companionship via in-home or remote friendly visits in Seattle and King County. ~Countywide

SHIBA (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) through Solid Ground provide free, unbiased information about health care coverage and access to Medicare-eligible Washington state residents. Roles include: 1) Medicare Counselor, 2) Fraud Specialist, 3) Public Presenter, 4) Outreach Volunteer, and 5) Administrative Assistant. Training provided. ~Countywide

Habitat for Humanity seeks regular volunteers to help build and repair homes for hardworking families in King County. Volunteers also coach families in Habitat's Family Support program, helping them find a home. Remote and in-person options are available. Join them for a volunteer orientation session to learn more. ~Countywide

Hopelink serves people living on low incomes and/or experiencing homelessness, promoting self-sufficiency for all members of the community. Daytime and evening hours are available at Bellevue, Kirkland, Northshore, Redmond, Shoreline, and Sno-Valley locations. Volunteer opportunities include food distributors, community van drivers, and food bank workers. ~North and East King County

- 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 North 45th Street, Seattle, WA 98103