

KATHY LONG-YSNN Volunteer Story

By ED STOVER

Kathy Long is retired and like most people who have reached that stage of life after a career in the workplace (she taught school in Selah for 32 years), she places a high value on her time.

"I try to do the things I love to do; I don't do much I don't like to do," says Long, who turns 72 in March. She ticks off a list of favorite activities: time with her first grandchild, "Charlie" (short for Charlotte Louise), traveling, hiking with Cascadians, singing in the Yakima Symphony Chorus (she's a soprano), and acting/assisting with Yakima's Warehouse Theatre Co.

Recently added to Long's "love-to-do" list is volunteering with the Yakima and Selah Neighbors' Network (YSNN).

"It's been nothing but a good experience," said Long, who signed on as a volunteer in the summer of 2019. "I enjoy each and every member (I help). I marvel at how appreciative they are. They're always so glad to see me. I've enjoyed each and every one of them."

Long said she heard about YSNN through a fellow Cascadian, Susie Lattomus, a YSNN board member.



"Then I met Chrissy (program manager Chrissy Schott) and did the (volunteer) training. I just love the whole idea of supporting seniors who want to stay in their homes. It's low cost (compared to assisted living). I admired the whole concept so I thought I would give it a try."

Long says the whole volunteer experience with YSNN has been a labor of love: "It's just an outstanding community of people. I've enjoyed every member."



CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

March 6: 12:00 pm Brown Baggers Interest Group at The Season's Performance Hall. Call 509-853-1917 for info.

March 6: 4:00 pm First Friday at Starbucks 57th and Summitview. Call 509-853-1917 for info.

March 10: 6:00 pm Potluck & Ponder. RSVP at 509-853-1917

March 13: 1:30 pm St. Patrick's Day Iron Chef & Dance at Harman Center. Baking For Friends Interest Group is baking for the Guinness Contest. Call 509-853-1917 for info.

March 16: 1:00 pm New Volunteer Orientation. Register at 509-853-1917

March 20: Workshop Prep for Emergency Preparedness. RSVP 509-853-1917

April 3: 12:00 pm Brown Baggers Interest Group at The Season's Performance Hall. Call 509-853-1917 for info.

April 3: 4:00 pm First Friday – Sundance Coffee, Selah. Call 509-853-1917 for info.

April 7: 8-4 pm- Central Wa. Non-Profit Conference. Go to- <https://centralwanonprofitconference.org/>

April 19: 4:00 pm-Member, Volunteer and Donor Appreciation Event. RSVP 509-853-1917

April 20: 1:00 pm New Volunteer Orientation. Register at 509-853-1917

April 30: 10:00 Workshop– Emergency Preparedness. RSVP at 509-853-1917

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From the Board President

By MARY LOU ROZDILSKY

What is The Value of the Yakima and Selah Neighbors' Network in our Community?

What is essential is invisible to the eye. It is only with the heart that one can see rightly.

-Antoine De Saint-Exupery

Many older people begin to feel invisible, and that can be unnerving. In contrast, think how we feel when peoples' eyes light up when they see our faces - family, friends, and communities that are there for us when we need and want them. Many local families, faith communities and agencies share concern for older adults. The Yakima and Selah Neighbors' Network (YSNN) is based on the successful National "Village" Model. A "village" is a plan, not a place. It is a grassroots volunteer-based non-profit organization that can be a powerful force, an "ecosystem of elders" at all stages of aging that offers a consistent local climate for those of us who choose to age in our homes and neighborhoods. "Villages" go by various names. We decided on "Neighbors' Network." Our role is to fill gaps not being met elsewhere in the community and moderate the challenges and transitions inevitable in aging, by sharing them with others who are responsive, and by the exchange of resources and assistance. We want programming that opens up new opportunities for learning, deepening friendships, engagement and enjoyment.

The need to find new models to facilitate healthy aging has been widely recognized. By 2035, one in five Americans will be 65 or older. Our local demographics (based on 2017 estimates), reflect national trends. In Yakima and Selah, the 2010 census showed 14,000 residents 65 or older, 4,000 living alone. Isolation has become a global health concern, and in older adults it has been linked to both poorer health outcomes and higher health care costs. Staying in our homes as YSNN members is a cost-effective option for many of us; ten years of membership in our Network is the equivalent of a month or two living in a residential setting. Older adults are consumers, volunteers, and voters. They are invested in their community, appreciative of the opportunities it offers. YSNN has built an infrastructure that is beginning to flourish. Dependable services are being provided.



Members and volunteers are stepping up to lead small interest groups where people can develop new friendships and share experiences over dinner, at the Seasons' brownbag concerts, Baking for Friends, and StorySharing. We have had 23 well-attended Potlucks where we invite the community to join us in monthly programs and fellowship. If you are already a member, volunteer or donor, ***thanks so much for your support:*** we would not be here without you!

Now we need to broaden our membership, attract new volunteers, and become a Network Yakima and Selah ***know about and can rely on.*** If you are ***not yet involved*** with YSNN, your donation will help us expand outreach, form partnerships, and develop programs. Your membership will help us create thriving programs for an ever-stronger "ecosystem" of interesting neighbors. Trained volunteers continue to be essential to provide services and support.

This Network must be built ***before we need it*** and while many of us are still in good health and have energy to make it happen. ***Won't you join us?***

Call 509-853-1917

Membership and volunteer applications: Go to our website- www.yesneighbors.org



YSNN Board members and staff

Barb Heinzen, Becky Johnson, Janet Doty,

Mary Lou Rozdilsky, Susie Lattomus, Inga Wiehl,
Chrissy Schott program manager.

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TOBY HASTIE— YSNN Member Story

By ED STOVER

It's been a challenging year for Toby Hastie.

Hastie, a Yakima-Selah Neighbors' Network member who turns 75 in March, lost his wife, Dee, to cancer on Jan. 28. Meanwhile, he's dealing with health issues of his own: myasthenia gravis, a chronic autoimmune neuromuscular disease that causes weakness in the skeletal muscles. That, in turn, can affect breathing and other moving parts of the body. "With me, it was the right side of my body. That (right) eyelid would close down and I had difficulty swallowing and my limbs were weak. I've been recovering pretty well, but I still can't drive."

Between Dee's cancer and Toby's neuromuscular disorder, the pressure was on for some sort of assistance. The couple's daughters, Annie Hastie and Heather Hastie-Ulery, both live in Yakima and do a lot, but both have families and work fulltime with the Yakima School District. They're busy on weekdays. Meanwhile, Dee and Toby had medical appointments for their respective conditions.

That dilemma— the need for affordable transportation— is how they discovered the Yakima and Selah Neighbors' Network (YSNN).

"We've been involved for almost a year," recalled Hastie, adding it was Dee who learned about YSNN through staff members at North Star Lodge, the cancer care center run by Virginia Mason Memorial Hospital in Yakima. "They gave us the phone number and told us about their services." They also heard a news blurb about YSNN on TV.

Before YSNN, the Hasties were caught between a rock and a hard place when it came to transportation— their retirement income was too much or too little to meet the income thresholds for some of the transportation services in town.

"We called the number and they came to the house and gave us a pamphlet of information. Wow, we thought! This really fits the bill, particularly with our kids working during the week. It really appealed to us. I can't praise it (YSNN) enough. It's just been great."

With the recent passing of Dee at age 69 after 51 years of marriage, and his own health issues, it's been rough for Hastie, who grew up in Spokane.



He and Dee met as students at the University of Washington. They finished their undergraduate degrees at Washington State University, then embarked on careers with the U.S. Forest Service, Dee as a wilderness and fire lookout ranger, and Toby as an anthropologist and archaeologist (he has a doctorate in the field). They spent years on the Snoqualmie Ranger District out of North Bend, eventually moving to Tucson, Arizona, where Dee completed a second career with the U.S. Agricultural Research Service. Eventually, in 2012, they returned to Washington to be closer to their daughters and three grandchildren.

"I've always been very independent," he says. "I did almost all the cooking for the past 20-25 years."

Right now, Hastie is dependent on YSNN volunteers like Joel Heinzen for periodic rides to Virginia Mason Memorial Hospital where he receives infusion treatment for the myasthenia gravis. These sessions can last 4-1/2 hours. The upside is that he's become good friends with Heinzen, a retired emergency room doctor who understands what Hastie is going through, and is a good listener.

Other volunteers bring food and help in other ways. Hastie said there have been probably five or six volunteers who have helped him and Dee in the past year.

"They've always been great, just wonderful people, and if I ever get back to where I can drive again, I would like to do some driving for them (as a volunteer)."

IN MEMORIAM

Dee Hastie

StoryShare by ED STOVER

Do you have stories to tell?

The Yakima and Selah Neighbors' Network "StoryShare" interest group believes you do. That's right, YSNN has formed an interest group to encourage YSNN members to share the experiences that come with having lived rich and full lives.

We plan to share stories on various themes and explore where they take us. At the March 10 Potluck and Ponder, a half-dozen of us will share personal stories on a theme familiar to anyone who is aging: loss.

The specific theme for the roll-out of StoryShare is "Losing and Finding: the Yin-Yang of Aging."

In choosing the topic we gave ourselves wide latitude, recognizing that loss is complicated and painful and can yield interesting surprises and discoveries in a person's life journey. At its initial planning meetings in December and February, the StoryShare group agreed on some rough guidelines for storytellers to follow:



The story shared should pertain in some way to the theme for that particular StoryShare session, i.e. "Losing and Finding: The Yin-Yang of Aging."

Keep stories to an oral presentation that will last roughly 5-7 minutes (500-800 words).

The Potluck and Ponder on March 10 will have stories fol-

lowed by a question-and-answer session from the audience. Group members who signed up to StoryShare that night include Inga Wiehl, Charles Chesney, Ed Stover, John Putney, Mary Lou Rozdilsky, and Spencer Hatton. We hope our stories will inspire others to tell a story at the potluck or join the StoryShare interest group.

Any YSNN member or volunteer who is interested in participating or would like to RSVP to the potluck on

March 10, 6:00-8:30 pm, please call 509-853-1917.

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May 1: 12:00 pm Brown Baggers Interest Group at The Season's Performance Hall. Call 509-853-1917 for info

May 1: 4:00 pm First Friday with YSNN- Collaboration Coffee, 18 S. 1st St. Call 509-853-1917 for info

May 18: 1:00 pm New Volunteer Orientation. Register at 509-853-1917

May TBA: 6:00 pm Potluck & Ponder- Open to the public. RSVP 509-853-1917

June 5: 12:00 pm Brown Baggers Interest Group at The Season's Performance Hall. Call 509-853-1917 for info.

June 5: 4:00 pm First Friday with YSNN- NorthTown Coffee, North Front St. Call 509-853-1917 for info.

June 15: 1:00 pm New Volunteer Orientation.

June 9: 6:00 pm Potluck & Ponder-Coffee House Poets

July 16: 4:00 pm Potluck & Picnic

Call 509-853-1917 for more information.

YSNN Interest Groups:

Brown Baggers

DOT (Dine Out Together)

BFF (Baking For Friends)

StoryShare

Interest Groups open to the public:

Meet YSNN First Friday's

Potluck and Ponder

Workshops:

Emergency Preparedness

Call 509-853-1917 for more information.