

The Pulse

From Inoperable to Cancer Free

Pages 4, 5 inside.

Volume 25, Number 1
SPRING 2017



A Foundation of Caring

Big-Hearted Island Thrift

When it comes to charitable giving, the WhidbeyHealth Foundation feels the love from its community time and again, and Island Thrift is one of its biggest love bugs.

Oak Harbor's Island Thrift was established in 1977, with a mission that proceeds from sales at the store be given back to the community. Since 2000, Island Thrift has given more than \$4.5 million to organizations throughout our community, including \$147,000 in grants and medical equipment to the Foundation over the past 10 years.

"We're extremely grateful to Island Thrift for its years of support to our Whidbey Island healthcare system," says Helen Taylor, executive director of the Foundation. "We can all continue this circle of support by shopping at the store and by bringing gently used items to Island Thrift."

Over the years, Island Thrift gifts to WhidbeyHealth have included \$10,000 for MRSA testing machine in 2007; \$2,000 for infection control in 2008; \$15,000 to WhidbeyHealth Cancer Care and its Medical Ambulatory Care unit in 2010; \$15,000 for a vital sign monitor in 2011; \$20,000 for general medical equipment in 2012; a \$20,000 grant toward a digital mammography machine in 2013; another \$20,000 for breast MRI technology in 2013; \$20,000 for Emergency Department stretchers in 2014; and \$25,000 for Emergency Department privacy stretcher chairs and screen dividers in 2016.

"The Island Thrift board of directors supports WhidbeyHealth Foundation in its effort to support the hospital and clinics in providing state-of-the-art healthcare," says Island Thrift board member Peggy Whitford. "We also appreciate that part of the Foundation's mission is to make sure that healthcare services are available to all residents of Whidbey Island."

Island Thrift is located at 600 SE Barrington Dr., Oak Harbor and is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Information about applying for grants can be obtained by emailing the store manager at islandthrift@frontier.com or the grant committee chair at ohwc1@comcast.net.



Island Thrift board members joined staff for a photo. In the back row (left to right) are Jim Slowik, Alex Pfeiffer, Monica Brown, Peggy Whitford and Cabot Grey. In front are Liza Delacruz, Leticia Lee, Marietta Bolduc, Carlee Borka, Beth Scott, Julie Wilhelm and Wendy Kettlewell.

On the Cover

Cancer survivor, Debi Karjalainen, sits in the Medical Ambulatory Care unit where she received chemotherapy treatments. Karjalainen shares her story (Pages 4-5) about how she went from a cancer nightmare to cancer free in a period of nine months.

Whidbey Island Public Hospital District Board of Commissioners

District 1, Grethe Cammermeyer, RN, PhD • 360.221.5882
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 District 4, Nancy Fey • 360.240.8822
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of WhidbeyHealth
for the Whidbey
Island Community

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WhidbeyHealth Medical Center
101 N. Main Street
Coupeville, WA 98239

Telephone
360.678.5151 • 360.321.5151
Fax 360.678.0945

Email and Web
contactus@whidbeyhealth.org

www.whidbeyhealth.org

CEO

Geri Forbes

Patricia Duff, **Editor**
Keith Mack, **Co-Editor**

Graphic Design

Carol Moliter of Big Rock Designs

Cover Photograph, Page 4
Jim Carroll, jshuimages.com

Welcome



University in St. Louis, Mo.

Alex Kosloff, MD sees patients at our Primary Care location in Freeland. Kosloff is double board certified in both internal medicine and geriatrics. The scope of Dr. Kosloff's care includes all phases of adulthood, as he strives to help patients make the most informed decisions about their health. His goals include encouraging prevention, helping folks deal with illness, and listening closely to understand a patient's needs. Kosloff received his medical degree from St. Louis

Chase Simpson, CRNA joined WhidbeyHealth in 2016. He is dedicated to selecting the best anesthetic for each patient undergoing surgery and derives satisfaction from making childbirth more comfortable for moms. Simpson received a Master of Science in anesthesia from Midwestern University College of Health Sciences in Glendale, Ariz. Simpson provides anesthesia services through our partnership with Anesthesia Associates Northwest and is certified by the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists.



Michelle Aube, CRNA also joined WhidbeyHealth in 2016. Her goal is to make each person's anesthetic experience comfortable, safe and positive. She received a Master of Science from the University of New England, School of Nurse Anesthesia. Aube provides anesthesia services through our partnership with Anesthesia Associates Northwest and is certified by the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists.

Thank you, Commissioner Gardner

Georgia Gardner recently stepped down from her position as District 2 Commissioner of the Whidbey Island Public Hospital District. Gardner informed the District that she intends to spend more time at her home in Mexico, to travel and to pursue other interests.

"Georgia Gardner has been a trusted public servant for more than 30 years at both the state and local levels," says CEO Geri Forbes. "We are deeply grateful for her passion, dedication and commitment to the health of the Whidbey Island community."



Exceptional Cancer Care at Home

From Inoperable to Cancer Free – One Patient’s Miracle Journey



Debi Karjalainen with Lisa Toomey, RN, OCN

Debi Karjalainen says it’s a miracle she’s alive.

After being diagnosed with stage four cervical and lung cancer, the Coupeville resident began treatment at WhidbeyHealth Cancer Care in January 2014. Karjalainen was told by her doctors that patients don’t usually survive such a diagnosis. But Karjalainen says the positive attitude she carried with her through this frightening journey was made possible by the compassionate, expert care she received so close to home.

“I know that everybody’s story is different, but for me the care that I needed was right here at the hospital and it made everything easier and better,” Karjalainen says.

“I feel like I was gently walked through this journey with the needed information at the time that I needed it. I didn’t feel overwhelmed with too much information, but I always felt like my care was everyone’s top priority.”

The WhidbeyHealth Cancer Care program has been accredited by the Commission on Cancer since 1979, and was one of only two programs in Washington to win the commission’s Outstanding Achievement Award in 2013. The program provides Whidbey Island patients with evidence-based, coordinated treatment. And, as Karjalainen emphasizes, it’s better to be able to do it at home. Her nurses agree.

“People often mistakenly think if you go to a large cancer center you will get better cancer care,” says oncology-certified nurse Lisa Toomey, RN. “With oncology care, there are evidence-based protocols for chemotherapy no matter where you are in the United States. Most cancers can be treated here, and if you need to go to the city for more specialized treatment or radiation, we can help coordinate that.”

When she was first diagnosed, Karjalainen says she was thankful for both the gentleness and the honesty of her doctors. After getting same-day results from an ultrasound that was suggested by her primary care provider, Karjalainen was referred to Melissa Chinn, DO, an OB/GYN at WhidbeyHealth Women’s Care, next door to the medical center. She was eventually referred to our medical oncologist Dr. Wendy Wang.

“Both doctors were very honest with me in a very difficult situation,” she says.

“It was stage four, inoperable, incurable cervical and lung cancer, so the original prognosis was not good. They told me this treatment could give me more time,” Karjalainen recalls.

Her immediate impression was that she was in good hands and that she didn’t need to go somewhere else. That was November 2013. In January 2014, she started

The staff here at WhidbeyHealth cares for you more like family, because here on Whidbey you are family. That’s a huge difference from going off the island; that we care personally for each person that comes through our doors.

Jackie Bruns, RN, OCN

chemotherapy in the Medical Ambulatory Care (MAC) unit at WhidbeyHealth Medical Center.

“I can’t even tell you how critical the nurses were to my treatment. It takes a special person to do what they do. They were very careful with their words and actions – aware how vulnerable I was. If I hadn’t been getting chemo I would have thought I was at a spa, because they would bring me warm blankets and pillows, hot tea and always comforting words. It was just really amazing.”

The WhidbeyHealth team scheduled Karjalainen's off-island radiation treatments, which she needed for 30 consecutive days.

"My care team was great at coordinating the radiation and letting me know what to expect and what to pay attention to during the treatments. They were very careful about watching those things for me and boosting me up when the journey became tough. They did everything to make it as manageable as possible."

Manager of WhidbeyHealth Cancer Care, advanced practice oncology nurse Renee Yanke, ARNP, MN, says that one of the most important things her team values is the connection they make with their patients.

"We often hear from patients and family members that they appreciate the sense of community and support they get from WhidbeyHealth Cancer Care," Yanke says. "These patients feel that they are more than 'just a number' and yet they have access to cutting edge therapies such as immunotherapies and genetic testing."

And now Karjalainen's cancer is completely gone.

Wui-JinKoh, MD of the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance is one of the radiation oncologists who treated her.

"Dr. Koh told me that it was unique and amazing the way my body responded to treatment. 'We do not see this,' he said to me. 'We do not see people come back from stage four cervical and lung cancer.'"

Treatment ended after about nine months and now Karjalainen sees her doctor every six months after a visit to the lab for a blood draw.

"I come to the lab here at the hospital and see the doctor the next day. I'm so grateful to the lab because I don't have to leave the island and they always make sure the lab work is ready for Dr. Wang the next day."

Meanwhile, Karjalainen says she feels great. She is so grateful for her care that she now volunteers in the MAC, comforting patients in the same way she was comforted.

When Karjalainen looks back on her experience at WhidbeyHealth, she wants people to know that her care was both professional and compassionate.

"There is nowhere I could have gone to receive better care. I thank Dr. Wang for that. She calculated everything correctly and I'm a living example of her success."

Medical Oncologists

Three medical oncologists care for WhidbeyHealth patients through the Providence Regional Cancer Partnership.



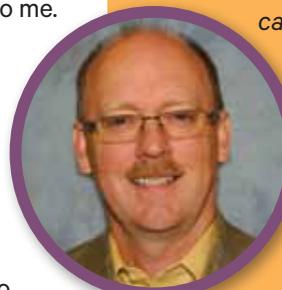
It is a privilege to serve the people of Whidbey Island. When I come to treat people on the island, I often feel that I have received more than I have given. It has always been a rewarding experience to treat patients in this community.

~ Wendy Wang, MD, PhD



Our team of oncology nurses is second to none. The passionate care for our patients, cheerful spirit, and the detail-oriented working ethics of the nurses and front staff make the cancer treatment journey at WhidbeyHealth much smoother.

~ Peter Jiang, MD, PhD



As someone who has cared for many cancer patients on Whidbey for the past 25 years, I can't emphasize enough how important it is to provide as much care as possible in a patient's local community. It makes a difference and I'm happy that I've been able to do that for Whidbey Island.

~ Mark E. Coughenour, MD

To Learn More

WhidbeyHealth Cancer Care
360.678.7624

As the cancer care program has grown one thing we are most excited about is our collaboration with nutrition, rehab and social work to round out our survivorship focus. People can regain their optimal levels of physical and emotional activity during and after cancer treatment — allowing them to live with the disease, instead of cancer taking over their lives.

~ Renee Yanke, RN, OCN
WhidbeyHealth Cancer Care manager

From the Desk

of CEO Geri Forbes



A more healing environment.

That's what patients and families can expect when our new 39-bed, single-room inpatient wing opens. We have always provided great care. Now we will have an environment that is as good as our doctors and nurses.

The original hospital, with double patient rooms, was designed in 1967 and opened in 1970. In the past 50 years, hospital care has made enormous strides in treatments, quality, technology, equipment, infection control, safety and privacy. The new wing will reflect these advances while eliminating the complexity of double patient rooms.

We won't need to move a patient out of a room to bring in equipment to take care of another patient. Doctors won't have to attempt confidential conversations, while a second

patient is just a few feet away. No more contending with a roommate's unwanted visitors, noise or TV.

Instead, expect a more comfortable, pleasurable experience at what is usually a stressful time for patients and families.

Our new wing will mean:

- Enough space and greater comfort for patient, family and visitors
- Improved privacy and confidentiality; easier to work with entire medical team
- Space designed to accommodate bedside computers and advanced medical technology
- More patient control over their own environments
- Greater quiet for better sleep
- Superior infection control
- Safer patient handling with modern lift equipment
- A more efficient work environment

We are excited about what the new wing will mean to the patients and families who entrust us with their care. We are also grateful to the community, without whose tax support this would not have been possible.

Look for more coverage of our new wing in the next issue of *The Pulse*.

Geri Forbes

Building Update

With the exterior work of window installation and brick façade largely completed, Andersen Construction continues to build interior spaces in our new inpatient wing.

“What’s great about this phase of the project is that after so much planning, preparation and hard work, you get to see things really come together,” says George Senerth, executive director of Facilities. “It’s very exciting.”

Since early January, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems have been added to 39 single patient rooms. Next, rooms are sheet-rocked, taped and painted.

While rooms are being painted, workers install bathroom floors, walls and finishes. Finishes include items such as headwalls, which house medical gases and vacuums.

Each room will include a “nurse server,” which is an innovative storage system that provides rooms with needed items, while helping nurses spend more time with patients and less time collecting and organizing supplies.



George Senerth, Executive Director of Facilities and Plant Engineering, looks over progress at the new wing.

Patient Perspectives

These Docs Made My Year!



Mention WhidbeyHealth Women's Care provider Dr. James Giem and Traci Bergsma gets excited.

"I love Dr. Giem! He's a wonderful doctor," Bergsma says.

The Freeland resident had had a medically challenging year and when she met Dr. Giem in February 2016, she

was quite anxious about her health.

"He gave me his full attention from the beginning," Bergsma says, "And he had me go right in for an ultrasound, when another doctor didn't want to pursue it."

Giem found that Bergsma would need surgery and was referred to WhidbeyHealth general surgeon Dr. John Hassapis.

"I've never had a better experience. Dr. Giem has a very good bedside manner and even called me personally to check up on me. I've never had a doctor do that before."

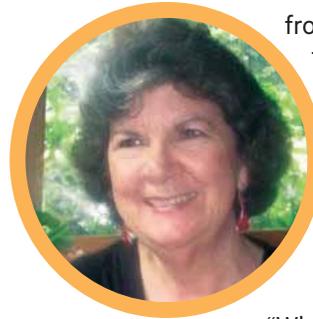
Bergsma was impressed, too, with Hassapis, whom she said took the time to explain everything very well to her. She was also thrilled with the nurses, especially Anna the charge nurse.

"It was a really rough year and they all made it really easy and comfortable for me. They listened when other doctors wouldn't."

~Traci Bergsma, Freeland

Easing a Nurse's Pain

Peggy Sullivan has been living with breast cancer and the side effects from treatment since 2013.



This former hospice nurse of more than 20 years was surprised when she realized that she wasn't the best advocate for her own pain management.

"When I met Carla Jolley, ARNP, a palliative care nurse practitioner at WhidbeyHealth, I was hesitant to trust anyone, but was quickly converted," says Sullivan.

"Carla listened deeply and reflected back to me some of my fears that I thought were hidden. We nurses are not an easy bunch to care for. We are used to being in control, but Carla gently persisted, and won my trust."

After giving up control of her pain management, Sullivan trusted Jolley to modify her medication plan.

"My pain is better controlled now and I am so grateful," Sullivan added.

"I also have an excellent oncologist in Dr. Wendy Wang, who works in collaboration with the Palliative Care team. I am impressed that each of these providers sees the other as a skilled practitioner, whose work assists both of them, as well as me," says Sullivan.

I am convinced that having the connected care between both these specialties is allowing me to receive five-star, quality care."

~ Margaret Sullivan, Langley

To Learn More About Services

WhidbeyHealth Surgical Care
John Hassapis, MD
360.678.6799

WhidbeyHealth Women's Care
James Giem, MD
360.678.0831

WhidbeyHealth Palliative Care
Carla Jolley MN, ARNP,
360.914.5634

Health News

Remote Interpreter

WhidbeyHealth Medical Center and its provider groups have expanded their translation services to include Video Remote Interpretation, which means we now offer 24-hour interpreter services for American Sign Language. This is a nice complement to our existing service, which includes certified interpreters trained in healthcare terminology, available via phone.

ICyraCom Language Solutions is the leading provider of language interpreting services in healthcare, exclusively endorsed by the American Hospital Association. They operate 24/7 in centers located throughout the continental United States.

For a listing of available languages, visit <http://www.cyracom.com/phone-interpretation/language-list/>.

Electronic Medical Records

Two of WhidbeyHealth's primary care clinics transitioned from paper charts to electronic medical records (EMR) in September 2016. The clinics also implemented a new scheduling system that improves the registration process because it works in tandem with the EMR system.

The clinics, located in Oak Harbor on Goldie Street and in Clinton, can now locate, chart and update patients' medical information, share it with other providers in our specialty clinics, provide prescription information and even give patients a summary of their visit before they leave the clinic.

With an average of a combined 14,000 visits per year, having quick access to this information at the two clinics, enhances healthcare professionals' ability to focus on disease trends, treatments and best practices for our patients.



Physical Therapist Jennifer Wesley talks to seniors at the Oak Harbor Activity Center about sustainable physical activities for a healthier life.

Out and About with WhidbeyHealth

WhidbeyHealth physical therapist Jennifer Wesley is a favorite speaker at the Oak Harbor Senior Activity Center, where a recent focus is on the Aging Mastery Program. This program was created by the National Council on Aging and is designed to educate, encourage and support older adults to take actions that improve their lives. Ten sessions are taught by local professionals, who educate folks on physical activity and other healthy behaviors.

"Jennifer was so well-received after her first session, we just had to invite her back," says Mary Anderson, Senior Services administrator.

"The Aging Mastery Program encourages sustainable behaviors, with the idea that folks can maintain improved health and independence much longer in their lives with more physical activity."

Health News

Low Dose Lung Screening

WhidbeyHealth Medical Center's Diagnostic Imaging department offers cutting-edge, low-dose radiation lung cancer screenings in partnership with RADIA, a Pacific Northwest radiology group. This radiation screening, which is called low dose CT (Computed Tomography) lung screening, can detect tumors that 80 percent of chest x-rays don't reveal.

Medicare will cover lung cancer screening with low dose CT once per year for beneficiaries who meet certain criteria. Talk to your primary care provider, who must order the CT screening for you. Find out more about this service on our website at whidbeyhealth.org/services/diagnostic-imaging/.

Home Health Kudos

We are pleased to recognize our Home Health team for their performance on a recent Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers, also known as the Press Ganey Patient Satisfaction Survey. In the survey, Home Health ranks higher than its peers in areas such as listening carefully to the patient, communicating with the patient's provider, giving help or advice when needed and assisting with medications.

Home Health impacts patients and families all over the island, often when these individuals are at their most vulnerable. WhidbeyHealth is proud to see their team rise to the top in home healthcare.

To Learn More

WhidbeyHealth Medical Center
Diagnostic Imaging
360.678.7656, ext. 3252

WhidbeyHealth Home Health
360.914.5634



The Home Health team includes, from left in the front row, Mary Meek, RN; Thel Aguirre, RN; director Karen Schanno, RN; Janet Craig, RN; and Monica Stiles, LPN. Included in the back row from left are Marcella Zarifis, OT; Katie Thayer, CNA; Jennifer Vasileff, RN; Debbi Williams, OT; Jeremy Aaron, RN; Marie Shaw, PT; and Bianca Terado of Patient Financial Services.

Not pictured are: Colleen Childs, PT; Jessica Durr, DPT; Etta Pinkens, PT; Orlanda Enriquez, RN; Carla Ann Naymik, RN; Meg Johnson, MSW; Shawn Whitlock, LPN; and Jessica Leukhardt, CNA.

Foundation Update

New Patient Companion Program

WhidbeyHealth Foundation is excited to announce the launch of our Volunteer Patient Companion Program at WhidbeyHealth Medical Center.

The idea of pairing volunteers with patients is all about improving the well-being of patients during their stay at the hospital. Volunteers will provide comfort to patients with some one-on-one time, a valuable resource to many families that are unable to take time off to be at the hospital with family members.

Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of the medical staff. Essential duties and responsibilities will include:

- Provide one-on-one companionship to patients through reading, listening, talking, playing games, etc.
- Keep a watchful eye on patients at a high-risk for falls
- Assist with meal tray services
- Assist in keeping the patient's area neat and clean



Meet Our Volunteer Coordinator

WhidbeyHealth Foundation Volunteer Coordinator Heather Zustiak wants you!

Volunteers are always needed at WhidbeyHealth Medical Center in Coupeville, where they enjoy the benefit of meeting new friends, having a free lunch at the West Wind Café with each shift and, best of all, supporting quality healthcare for fellow community members.



Volunteers are needed in areas such as:

- Patient companion program
- Front desk
- Gift shop
- Live music program
- Chaplain program

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, call Heather at 360.678.7656, ext. 3246 or 360.321.7656, ext. 3246 or email her at zustih@whidbeyhealth.org.



Gift Shop Spring Sale!

20% off
clothes and accessories
through April 30

Open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Proceeds from the gift shop buy necessary medical equipment for our healthcare network.

Thank you to WhidbeyHealth Gift Shop volunteers who so generously donate their time to make this possible.

Abdominal Deep Breathing and Relaxation

Learn to reduce tension and stress by attending this free one-hour class.

When: 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month; except April, which will be the second Wednesday, April 12

Where: WhidbeyHealth Medical Center Life Center

Instructor: Janie Keilwitz, RN, MN, Heartwise Coordinator

Phone: 360.678.7656, ext. 2130

Fee: Free; Preregistration is required as space is limited to eight participants per class.

Car Seat Safety Check

Free child car seat safety checks available for parents or caregivers.

Where: Oak Harbor Fire Station Whidbey Island

When: 3 to 5 p.m. on the first Tuesday of May, July, September and November

Phone: 360.279.4700

Information: whidbeyhealth.org/stay-healthy

Chronic Heart Failure

If you have been diagnosed with chronic heart failure, our Life Center offers a free consultation to empower you and help you create balance in your life.

When: By appointment any time during the year

Where: WhidbeyHealth Medical Center Life Center

Instructor: Kim Arends, RN, BSN

Phone: 360.678.7656, ext. 2130

Fee: Free; By appointment only

Getting Ready for Medicare 2017

Statewide Health Insurance Benefit Advisors (SHIBA) are available on Wednesdays at WhidbeyHealth Medical Center to help you with your Medicare-related insurance questions. Call to schedule a one-on-one appointment with a SHIBA counselor. You will receive free, unbiased advice to help you meet your medical needs.

Instructor: Joan Wortman, SHIBA volunteer

Phone: 360.678.5151

Fee: Free

Living with Loss

This free, six-week seminar is designed to help you work through the normal and needed process of grief that follows the death of a loved one. The class meets once a week.

When: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays, April 18 to May 23

Where: Coupeville United Methodist Church, 608 N. Main St. Coupeville

When: 6 to 8 p.m. Mondays, July 24 to Aug. 28

Where: Healing Circles Langley, 534 Camano Ave, Langley

Instructor: Dave Bieniek, BCC

Nutrition for Health

Nutrition for Health covers basic nutrition, meal planning, reading food labels and mindful eating. Handouts are included and there will be time for participant questions. Take it in combination with Abdominal Deep Breathing and Relaxation, which is also on Wednesdays.

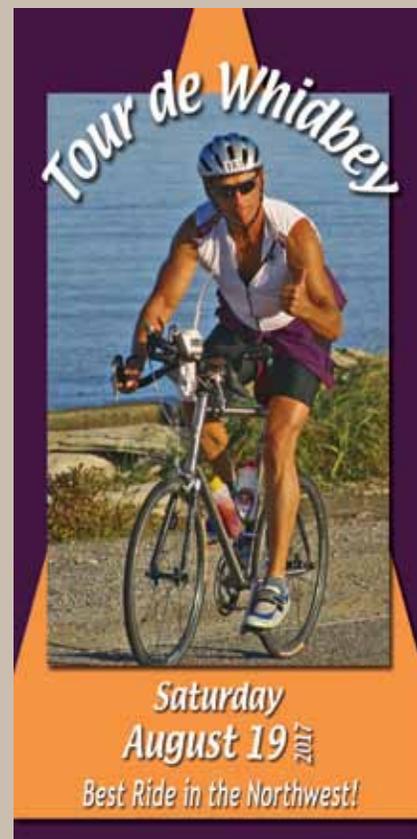
When: 2 to 3 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month through the year

Where: WhidbeyHealth Medical Center MAC Unit Education Room

Instructor: Maggie Schuster, RD

Phone: 360.678.7656, ext. 2130

Fee: Free; Preregistration is required as space is limited.



The Tour de Whidbey is one of the most popular rides in all of Washington, and this summer there will be all new routes covering Central and North Whidbey.

The ride starts at Greenbank Farm with a check-in at 7 a.m. Find out more at whidbeyhealth.org/giving/tour-de-whidbey.

Quality Care Close to Home

Gratitude



Janet Russell

Longtime Greenbank resident Janet Russell was shocked when she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

“But I knew it wasn’t a death sentence and that I would keep an optimistic outlook,” Russell says of her first days getting acclimated to the diagnosis. When she met WhidbeyHealth general surgeon Dr. Allison Alberton, she was encouraged even more.

“My experience with Dr. Alberton was wonderful because her care was so personal; she was so clear,” Russell says.

“She gave me all the necessary information and treated me like a person, not a number. She took the time to find out who I was and not just what my diagnosis was. She listened to me.”

To Learn More
WhidbeyHealth Home Health
360.914.5634

As a proud island homesteader for more than 40 years, Russell says she and her late husband, Glen Russell, have always been champions of the island’s rural healthcare system. It was artisan woodworker Glen who created the Tree of Life donors’ sculptures that still hang in the lobby of the medical center today.

“So many people told me I needed to go to Seattle or somewhere else, but I got to stay here on Whidbey for my treatment,” Russell says.

“That means so much to me as I have mobility issues and I don’t want to have to deal with strangers off-island.”

After a bi-lateral mastectomy, Russell says she needed a fair amount of after-care. WhidbeyHealth coordinated Russell’s home health services and physical therapy, along with providing financial advice from Patient Financial Services. She also received help from Senior Services of Island County and the Meals on Wheels program.

“Even though I am on a fixed income, I am able to pay my bill in increments, thanks to the advice I received. That was important to me,” Russell says.

Thanks to her positive attitude and the excellent care she received, Russell’s prognosis is good.

“Whidbey Island is an amazing place to be a senior citizen. We’ll see what happens on the next leg of my journey. None of us knows, but I’m glad I have good care in my community.”



Allison Alberton, MD

To Learn More
WhidbeyHealth Surgical Care
Allison Alberton, MD
360.678.6799