



WASHINGTON CARE CENTER  
Understanding your rehabilitation and long term care needs.

# Connections

2821 South Walden • Seattle, WA 98144 • 206-725-2800 • www.wacenter.com



## “Still Lives” Art Project

Susie Lee, a local artist, says, “My practice merges time-based sources: video, sound and performance, with compelling physical objects: spatial and corporeal. As teacher and researcher, I shift toward a practice based upon collaborations with and outward observations of others.” In this capacity and with grants from SEEDArts and 4Culture, Susie became a regular visitor at WCC on her journey to create meaningful video portraits of our residents. After extensive interviews and casual time spent with residents, Susie developed scenarios for the portraits based on the Black Paintings of Spanish artist, Goya. Professional videographer Ryan Adams filmed each resident. His extensive film knowledge facilitated and contributed to the composition, lighting and tone. Elizabeth Grubb, a high school volunteer, also helped throughout the project. The portraits do not

hide or camouflage aspects of aging or illness, but hopefully present each resident’s fragility and strength of body and spirit.

Each portrait is 30 minutes long. Half an hour of film is half an hour in each person’s life; the timeline is not edited to freeze or slow down. As people near the twilight of their lives, time takes on a different meaning. Susie shared with us that “over time, aspects such as fragility, fatigue, dignity, restlessness, stubbornness, elegance, confusion, humor, and peacefulness are conveyed, and it is within these ideas that, perhaps some ideas of honesty and beauty hopefully emerge.”



*Georgia N. viewing her videoportrait with her two daughters*



*Artist Susie Lee with resident Helen Y.*

*The public is invited to view the 13 portraits in the lobby of Washington Care Center during visiting hours: Daily, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.*

## Rehab Still Shining Brightly!

We continue to survey our discharged rehab patients and their families about the services they received at WCC. Our great staff continues to receive high marks, and the positive comments are very gratifying. Here is a sample of some of the most recent feedback from patients and families:

*“I value that they get the confidence of the person and make them work towards their goals.”*

*“Quality of service – that was a 5-plus! I had such an enjoyable time and was so happy there. When I’m well enough, I will come in and do volunteer work.”*

*“His pace of progress went much more quickly than we expected.”*

*“I would tell others that my father definitely improved from the moment he got going on his therapy at Washington Center.”*

*“Atmosphere/Therapy Area – This would be 200 because of their wonderful staff.”*

***Congrats to our wonderful rehab team!***

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## Welcome, Flavia Lagrange

We’re pleased to welcome **Flavia Lagrange** to the WCC team as the Director of Admissions and Marketing. Hard to believe she’s been a member of the long-term care family for 20 years.

Born and raised in Ballard, Flavia began her nursing home career while in high school cleaning wheelchairs, among other duties. Along the way to her current position, she earned a Bachelor’s degree in Health Services Administration from Eastern Washington University, and a Masters degree in Public Administration from Seattle University. She is a licensed nursing home administrator and says, “I love being in the support role of admission and marketing. It gives me a chance to help residents, families and our referral sources and to be part of this extraordinary WCC team.” She says she’s drawn to the long-term care industry because “Our residents have such wisdom and amazing life experiences. They deserve to be cared for in a manner fitting their contributions. I’m so glad to be part of this team which has a much deserved wonderful community reputation.”

And in her spare time? Flavia enjoys practicing Bikram yoga regularly and playing soccer!

We’re glad she’s part of our team.

## Management Team

**Scott Hale**  
Executive Director

**Helen Sikov**  
Administrator

**Gary Engelmann**  
Controller

**Betty Rogers**  
Director of Nursing Services

**Karen Aguilar**  
Director of Social Services

**Flavia Lagrange**  
Director of Admissions and  
Marketing

**Lori Graham**  
Dietician

**Ruben Santiago**  
Maintenance Director

**Richard Lowery**  
Director of Housekeeping/  
Laundry

**Sharon Nienow**  
Health Information Services  
Director

**Lora Ray**  
Therapeutic Recreation  
Director

**Jan Ramirez**  
Rehabilitation Manager

**Kathleen Mulron**  
Business Office Manager

**Bill Hodgins**  
Food Service Manager

## Going Green



Over the past several years, WCC has moved toward being a “Green” facility. We have installed energy efficient lighting, all new toilets with water saving features, and energy systems that maximize comfort with much less environmental impact. As our country becomes increasingly conscious of the need to preserve and conserve for future generations, it is important for those of us who serve the community to move in this direction.

A special thanks to **DeCarla Williams** for recently launching our Recycle Program. Because of her efforts, we are not only saving money each month on cardboard and garbage pick-up, but also feeling good about being more environmentally friendly. It’s true garbage is not good for our neighborhoods! We pay to shred our documents that have health and payroll information. All the excess paper, glass, cans, clean re-cyclable plastic (they are turning plastic into oil in Japan now) can be thrown in the blue bins.

As we have learned, being “Green” is not more expensive or more trouble. In fact, it’s simply a matter of changing habits. It is also the right thing to do if we care about our children and the generations to come.

## Someone’s in the Kitchen with Bill

**Bill Hodgins**, WCC’s new Dietary Manager, has been around nursing homes and kitchens for years. His mother was a nursing assistant at a nursing home in Kirkland, Washington, where as a youngster he volunteered. Bill tells us, “I remember an incident at the time that struck a cord with me. A dementia resident who had been a music instructor could communicate little with speech, but when she sat down at the piano and played, the world opened up for her and everyone listening. That taught me the power of resident experiences and I try to capture that moment every day in how we select, prepare and serve food at WCC.”

Bill is a licensed chef with training and experience that includes nursing homes, assisted living communities, retirement communities and retail restaurants. He also has extensive catering experience. He tells us, “While at Larry’s Market in Seattle, I learned so much about specialty foods and I still use much of that knowledge today.” He notes that the specialty foods experience has been a great foundation for food selection for WCC’s wonderfully diverse population.



Our Food Committee (21 residents attended the first meeting) has begun to take a look at the breakfast menu. According to Bill, “This is a lively group willing to make suggestions and think outside the box.” We all realize we can’t please everyone, but at the same time everyone is invited to share their opinions about what’s on the menu. Our goal is to combine nutrition and variety. Adds Bill, “Food is important in everyone’s life; it can please as well as help to heal. That’s my mission.”

Welcome to the team, Bill!

## A Season of Fun Activities

### *Barbecue*

Twenty employees from the Department of Labor (DOL), with their leader **Tracy Johnson**, volunteered to spend United Way's Day of Caring with the residents of Washington Care Center on September 24. Because of their invaluable help,



*The absolutely positively fabulous United Way Volunteers*

over 80 residents were able to enjoy a delicious outdoor barbecue, complete with games and entertainment!

**Alexis Mettler**, chef extraordinaire from the WCC kitchen, did an amazing job prepping and serving a barbecue feast, with department head **Richard Lowery** and DOL volunteers taking turns manning the grill all day. Residents danced to the



*Thanks to The Old Rides Car Club for their generous \$250 donation*

bluegrass tunes of the three-piece **Haggis Brothers Band**, while **Fruitcake the Clown** crowned many residents with one-of-a-kind balloon hats. Four cakewalk winners were the lucky recipients of a handmade cake by Alexis!

A highlight of this year's annual celebration was the participation of the Old Rides Car Club. Under the leadership of **Cliff Holland**, this generous group brought eight of their decked out classic cars for the viewing enjoyment of residents, staff and visitors. Said resident Margaret H., "My favorite was the blue '72 Cadillac Eldorado convertible!"



*Resident Robert W. admires one of the classic cars*

### *Halloween*

Halloween is a favorite holiday of the WCC Activities staff, who jump at any opportunity to don a costume! Making sure every resident at the Halloween party also had the same opportunity made for a fun and entertaining event! Pumpkins carved by the residents served as centerpieces.

### *Veterans Day*

Every year, volunteers from the Veterans of Foreign Wars come to the facility to help us celebrate Veterans Day. This year's event was no exception, with **Les Jacobs**, **Robert Swartley** and **Margaret Belote** joining us to honor all those who have served

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in the military. Everyone present at the celebration was given an opportunity to tell of their personal military service or of their relative's service in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force or Coast Guard. Many fascinating stories were told. Resident **LeManuel ("Lee")** recounted, "I was in the Army for 19 years and spent time in Vietnam as a combat veteran in the US Infantry." Over the past 25 years, Lee has facilitated an African-American Veterans group at the VA Hospital in Seattle. "My primary responsibility has been to recruit and educate veterans on benefits and resources available to them," Lee said.

### *Thanksgiving*

Thanksgiving is a time to gather with family for feasting and friendship. WCC was pleased to honor the contributions of family members with an afternoon reception on November 17 in the 2W Dining Room. Our new dietary manager, **Bill Hodgins**, and intern **Susie Adamson**, laid out a spectacular appetizer buffet. Families and guardians were invited to feast while listening to the talented jazz duo of Blumeadows and Lamar. The wife of one of our residents commented, "It was a wonderful event. I look forward to the next one!" A Thanksgiving Happy Hour for residents the following day began our winter holiday celebrations!

## Social Work Learning Center

Washington Care Center has recently become a Learning Center for the University of Washington School of Social Work. We have often featured Bachelors' and Master's level students in this newsletter, and two former students are now key members of our management team. It is significant that the university recognizes the importance of our setting to learn about the value of the social work profession.

### *Social Work Values*

Social work values include advocacy for the underserved and oppressed, social justice and social change. As a medical setting with an increasing acuity of care, the need for thoughtful multi-disciplinary approaches to care both short and long-term, and appropriate discharge planning are areas our team can teach exceptionally well. Our students learn the importance of communications as people travel through an often complex healthcare system, moving in and out of different care environments with an increasing need to understand what to expect, and who will be there for them. We respect each individual's unique situation. We seek to understand our residents' personal stories, and meet their needs within the context of the window to the world they are willing to share. We recognize that family and friends are important parts of the equation. WCC patients/residents, their families, and our interdisciplinary team have been superb teachers for the next professionals graduating from the School of Social Work.

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## Dignity and Respect Award

**Pinnacle**, a national market research organization, has been featured in past WCC newsletters. The survey results consistently demonstrate high satisfaction marks for therapy performance by the residents who were questioned post-discharge from Washington Care Center (WCC). Recently Pinnacle calculated a Best In Class for each of the twelve categories included in their studies. **WCC is extremely proud to have been the recipient of the Best In Class for "Dignity and Respect" in care and treatment.** Although I am not amazed, because respect is one of our facility's core values and I have seen each month's past survey results, it is still remarkable to achieve this goal among the hundreds of facilities who use Pinnacle to measure customer satisfaction. It is a great honor and tribute to the professionalism of our team.

*—Helen Sikov*

## Message from the Administrator

When there are several months between newsletters, I have to think what I most want to share about our Washington Care Center (WCC) community. Since there is always so much happening, I decided just to tell you about a day in my life.

### *Thanksgiving Reception*

On this day, we had the Thanksgiving Reception for our families. The room was filled to capacity. When we host these events we are never quite sure how many people will be able to join us, so we were delighted that the occasion was so well attended. Everyone had a great time. It was truly a team effort and I was especially grateful for the experience, for being a member of the caregiving team, and for the many residents who have touched my life.

### *A Special Visitor*

Earlier in the day, a former WCC resident came to visit us. He was a success story for many reasons: he had to overcome complex medical issues and complete extensive rehabilitation. "Bob" was also very depressed when he initially arrived at WCC. He thought he would not have a worthwhile life again. He came today to thank us for not giving up on him, and to let us know he was moving with his wife to a condo outside Seattle. His gratitude was genuine, and we love when people "graduate" and come back to visit.

One of our current residents was waiting to speak with me as I was saying goodbye to "Bob." She wanted to purchase 50 gift cards from our recently opened Purple Rain Café. It was her thought to give cards to employees as recognition of their many acts of kindness. I told her she

didn't need to do that, but she insisted that with the holidays coming, she wanted to let people know how grateful she is for their caring.

### *Another Day of Gratitude*

Believe it or not, this is a pretty typical day for me, if there is such a thing in our world at WCC. I made a commitment to write an article for *Seniors Digest* since I was recently invited to participate on the Advisory Council for African American Elders. So, later in the day when I had a moment, I decided to write about our recent art project (please see front page, "*Still Lives*"), and the joy of ethnic dance at an "All Ages World Party" at the



*Helen Sikov, Administrator*

SE Senior Center. The gratitude theme came back to me as I realized how much I enjoy our blend of cultures, and how much we have to learn from each other. The art project for me had additional value in that it serves as a reminder that no matter where we are in life, young or old, frail or able to dance, there are meaningful ways to contribute throughout life. Desmond Tutu said, "Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." I see this played out everyday at WCC, by our caregivers, patients/residents, family and volunteers.

In truth, every day reveals new reasons to celebrate and share with others. Coming from a place of gratitude each day can make a difference not only in psychological wellness, but has also been demonstrated to have positive physiological benefits: less pain, lower blood pressure, etc. So, if the holidays, unexpected—or even expected—events are giving you the blues, try focusing on what there is to be grateful for while you work through your grief and suffering. So, another day in the life! Best wishes as we approach another New Year!

## Swedish Family Medicine Partnership

Washington Care Center (WCC) is pleased to announce a new physician partnership with Swedish Family Medicine. Beginning December 1, 2010, the team will accept new patients and round out each week with those residents they are assigned. Swedish Hospital has been a major source of referrals for WCC. Having physicians directly associated with the hospital can facilitate essential communications with practitioners on admission, and with those patients seen in specialty clinics.

The team includes **Carroll Haymon, MD**, who completed her residency at Swedish Family Medicine and joined the faculty in 2006. She also completed the Advanced Training in Geriatrics at Swedish in 2004. **Sarah Babineau, MD**, has been on the faculty at Swedish Hospital since 2009 and also specializes in geriatrics. WCC is familiar with Dr. Babineau, who currently visits residents as part of her practice with Providence Elderplace. **Carla Ainsworth, MD**, joined the practice in 2007. She also trained at Swedish/Providence and completed a geriatric fellowship at Swedish prior to joining a community health center practice in central Seattle.

Our residents will have the benefit of being part of their teaching model, which includes being seen by physicians in residency. Having established a teaching facility with numerous university and professional healthcare disciplines, we are pleased to now include Swedish Family Medicine!

## WCC Video

**Morgan Wieland, RN**, a member of our nursing team, has been working diligently on her time off to create a video of Washington Care Center. She joined us after spending a year in Ecuador and is preparing to return there in January 2011! As she came to know the WCC community and enjoyed people she worked with, Morgan decided to capture, with fun and creativity, snapshots of her WCC experience. She wanted to include residents, but due to privacy laws had to focus only on employees. She decided to dedicate the film to the residents of WCC “because that is the reason we are all here.”



Morgan will gift WCC copies of the video and has generously given copies of photos to the staff who have participated. We have a few shy staff members, but for the most part we've all played along. When I realized I was going to be featured with the Divas, I thought, “Where else will that ever happen in my life?” so I was in! **Gregory DeKlever's** Charlie Chaplin routine is quite amazing. Morgan selected some music that aptly reflects are many ethnic backgrounds, and has organized the film in a unique manner. We hope to have it running, at least in part, at our holiday party on December 17.

Morgan appreciated everyone who participated in her project. She enjoyed working in our community and wanted to share our culture with her friends in Ecuador. Thank you, Morgan, for thinking so much of your stay here that you will leave us this video to enjoy for years to come! We wish you the best!

—Helen Sikov

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## New WCC Web Site—and Thanks!

We've recently unveiled our new Washington Care Center web site! Check us out at [www.wacenter.com](http://www.wacenter.com). We thank everyone who worked so hard to make our look and content fun, informative and contemporary. Be sure to check the site regularly for the latest news and photos.

And, while we're saying “thanks,” a special salute to The Old Rides Car Club for their \$250 donation to WCC. We're fortunate to have your support and friendship.



## Given With Our Hearts

As a non-profit, Washington Care Center appreciates the support from private donations (see articles “Still Lives and “Classic Cars”), because everyone knows that government funding is not adequate to provide the quality of care and services our patients/residents require. We also understand that as a community resource, we must look to support other efforts to meet our community’s needs. WCC has recently donated to the following organizations with great pride:

- ✓ Senior Services
- ✓ Atlantic Street
- ✓ Rainier Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Southeast Effective Development
- ✓ Mary Mahony
- ✓ Alzheimer’s Association–African American Caregiver Forum
- ✓ Elderhealth Northwest
- ✓ Public Schools Radio



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