



# Newsletter

November 2019

## Inside

From the Director

Around the Village:  
Andersons' Ice Cream  
Social and More

Another Gift from *Wider  
Horizons* by Michael  
Kischner

Co-Cooking is *Smokin!*

Suzanne Hittman Profile  
by Chris Morris

The Chicago 5 Report  
by Michael Kischner

The Schoolyard is on  
Fire by Gay Hoerler

Keeping our Car Too  
Long by Michael  
Kischner

Warm for Winter  
Delivers!

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## From the Director: Denise Klein

I'm so pleased to be able to announce we have a new membership category. Our Board of Directors decided in October to offer to people living...well...anywhere an "out-of-area" membership. These members may come to any of our events, gatherings, trips, classes, discussion groups, and help as volunteers. The jury's still out on whether out-of-area members can serve on the Board; they may certainly serve on internal committees and task forces.

Our first out-of-area member is **Jeanne Marie Thomas**. Jeanne Marie, a colleague of mine for many years, recently retired as the Executive Director of NEST, our sister village. She brings a wealth of enthusiasm and know-how and is jumping in with both feet, recently telling her husband, "*Wider Horizons* is my new hobby!" Among other things, she joined Michael Kischner's Communications Task Force (he was a college professor of hers in the 1970s) and, along with **Gigi Meinig**, is working with me on our grant applications.

Look for many folks to follow Jeanne Marie. In both senses: there will be others and you can tell people you know about this new opportunity. Not every part of Seattle has a village and some of your friends may prefer *Wider Horizons* just because **you** are already a member.

Of course, the additional revenue will benefit us all—out-of-area members pay \$300, assuming they pay full dues. We'll accept a lesser amount as we do with regular members, if the full dues would be a barrier to joining. That's one of the items on our grant applications wish list: funding to subsidize those who need it.

Which brings me to my second topic: Not only is the smell of Thanksgiving foods in the air, but so is our organization's annual campaign. When you get your solicitation letter, please do consider making a gift of whatever amount is do-able for you. We will put your donation to good use, including some day being able to have social worker time to help with health care advocacy and care management. Volunteers and member-driven work groups are wonderful but sometimes purchased expertise is needed.

Other ways you can help *Wider Horizons*: Make requests of our stellar technology volunteer Noel Hanzel. Every time Noel helps **you**, Microsoft donates to **us**! Too good to be true, yet it is. And the behemoth Amazon will also donate a percentage of your purchases if you make them through the *Amazon Smile* portal. It's not difficult. I'd be delighted to show you how.

# Around the Village Summer and Fall: The Annual Anderson Ice Cream Social

Photos by Bob Anderson and Michael  
Kischner



**Bob and Julie Anderson** (above) welcomed Pod 7 and other members to their annual Ice Cream Social in September as one of the last summer days' blue skies welcomed the encroaching evening.

A variety of colorful ice creams with delicious toppings were served while members gravitated to the heated deck for a fun evening of word and trivia games with prizes.



From left: Chris Morris, Bob Anderson, Wren Campbell



Big Time Trivia Winner Shanta Sabersky (left) and Pat Siggs



From left: Scott Dills, Chris Morris, Michael Kischner, Beret Kischner, and Julie Anderson



From left: Diane Zerbe, Julie Anderson, Eleanor Dills

Ask someone who was there to tell you about the salacious *Mad Libs* the group created.

## More "Around the Village"



*Dick Zerbe and Susan Adler hiking in "the Methow." Susan and Denise Klein enjoyed hikes of slightly increasing difficulty organized by Dick. Weather and company were sublime!*



*Denise Lishner's adorable new dog, Maisy Mae*



*Barb Oswald, finally able to cuddle with her mentor, Claude Monet, when she and Wendy Carlton visited the Tacoma Art Museum*



*Pod 7 enjoys wine and hors d'oeuvres on Deirdre Cochran's new houseboat deck on a beautiful summer evening. From left, Deirdre, Joan Bergman, and Charles Wheeler*



*Gay Hoerler (left) of the WH Hands-On Gardeners (HOGS), gently corrals our Day of Caring Volunteers at the Dolores Browne Garden*



*Ann Lawrence and Denise visit with Australian villages' founder Peter Kenyon on his way to the national Village to Village conference*

## Another Gift From Wider Horizons

by Michael Kischner

**Denise Lishner** called it “a gift.” **Kathleen O’Connor** called it “astonishing.” **Donna Sunkel** agreed with them both. The three were talking about the help, care, and concern they got from Wider Horizons following surgery in the past year.



Each of them had prepared for the expected aftermath of surgery. All of them ran into the totally unexpected. Professional home care lined up in advance fell through the very day of hospital discharge. Six weeks projected for rehab turned into three months that included several returns to the hospital. Tests following a fairly routine hip replacement revealed a new and urgent health concern requiring eight days of hospitalization and multiple visits to Urgent Care.

In all three cases, Denise Klein sprang into action with direct help and with notice to other members that help was needed. And it was forthcoming, from transportation home from the hospital and a health advocate to attend follow-up appointments to people spending the night, bringing meals and companionship, and even a major garden clean-up.

Recalling their experiences together over coffee, Denise Lishner, Kathleen, and Donna talked of many things: Confronting a lifelong reluctance to ask for help. Getting occupational therapy suggestions *before* you go into surgery. The importance of a health advocate. Their gratitude for belonging to a village.



*Kathleen (above) and Denise Lishner and Donna Sunkel (left) are still smiling despite their serious health events!*

Their experiences and thoughts helped give rise to “Preparing For a Serious Health Event,” which is based on months of deliberations by Wider Horizons’ 10-member Health Advocacy Task Force. Written with beautiful clarity by Denise Lishner with editorial assistance from **Carolyn Allen** and **Chris Morris**, its pages bring together essential information and excellent advice on topics from “Important Documents” and “Accident Proof Your Home” to “How and Where You Will Receive Needed Care,” and—importantly—“Accessing Health Advocacy.” The last section is titled “What About an *Unexpected* Health Event—a *Whoops?*” As this article shows, a *Whoops* can drop out of the blue into the middle of the best-laid medical plans!

“Preparing For a Serious Health Event” is scheduled for distribution in November. It is an enormous gift even to the best prepared among us. But as Denise Lishner insists, “first you have to read it—and *do it!*” Read it. Do its checklists. Then review parts of it each year. The givers of this most useful of gifts hope you’ll never have to use it!

### Co-Cooking is Smokin’!

After a brief hiatus, August, September, and October saw three co-cooking events in rapid succession: **Denise Klein**, **Susan Adler**, and **Jane Cotler** each hosted a co-cooked dinner for 8-10 diners. Attendees had rave reviews. Let Denise know if you want to host a holiday co-cooking or co-dining event.

The first two events drew their menus from José Andrés new cookbook *Vegetables Unleashed*. Jane's, from *The Barefoot Contessa Cookbook*. Hosts are free to dictate the parameters of the menu and format.

A common theme is that cooks and diners are on an equal footing. Diners can mingle and even prep or be useful in other ways, in addition to bringing an appetizer, side dish, wine, or other offering.

The format for shopping and prep can be similarly tailored to participants' interests. For Denise's event, she and **Maggie Pheasant** shopped together for the main dish at the U District Farmer's Market.



Denise's event featured the only male co-cooking participant. **Dick Zerbe**, a diner, brought an appetizer of watermelon and prosciutto. Below, he and **Deirdre Cochran** seriously attack their meal, while **Diane Zerbe** chats across the table.



At Susan's event, the menu and food prep were appropriate to a Conservative Jewish household. Susan keeps Kosher so there was no pork or shellfish on offer. Cooks and diners brought their dishes and Susan transferred them to appropriate serving plates. Sticking with vegetables made things easy.



Above, Susan beams at her guests and **Liz Ohlson** smiles at the entire proceedings! Below are the dishes arrayed for visual appeal.

Below, the squash dish (far left), from Andrés cookbook, has become one of Susan's favorites.



The absence of photos from Jane Cotler's co-cooking event in October reflects the distraction of the photographer. The main course, co-cooked by **Barbara Oswald** and **Debbie Ward**, Indonesian Chicken, was marvelous and other great dishes included **Wendy Carlton's** pumpkin cake, **Sue Lerner's** Waldorf Salad, and **Kathleen O'Connor's** green beans.

## A Stroll Down Memory Lane: Suzanne Hittman Profile

by Chris Morris

A stroll down memory lane with member Suzanne Hittman includes her family's early roots in Seattle and their extraordinary contributions to the launching of the Pike Place Market in 1907. Grandparents, Giuseppe ("Joe") and Assunta Desimone, immigrants from Naples, farmed in South Park. Her family members were among the Market's original suppliers and owners.

Joe and his son Richard were instrumental in the Market's success from then till 1971, when purchase by the city gave this gem permanent protection. Suzanne also recalled a sad moment in time when notices on poles in 1942 stated "all persons of Japanese ancestry to muster for relocation to camps." Many Japanese were small farmers growing crops and selling them at the Market. The action wounded her sense of justice and has influenced her politics ever since



Born and raised in South Park, Suzanne graduated from Cleveland High School and majored in psychology at Stanford, marrying fellow social worker Donald Hittman. When children Laura and John were born, she opted to be a stay-at-home-mother and avid community volunteer.

Suzanne's energetic, engaging personality and her strong desire to contribute to the welfare and improvement of her beautiful city, made her an effective advocate for women's issues, education, government, and the arts.

As an active school parent in the 70s, she decided to run for the Seattle School Board. She was elected and served from 1975-1981, including as the Board's president in 1981-82 when achieving **voluntary school desegregation** was its goal. To that end, she testified before the U.S. Congress. Papers from her time on the Board are now in a

special collection at the University of Washington Library.

Suzanne's career included her professional (United Way) and volunteer philanthropy. Favorite non-profits include social services organizations, the Seattle Repertory Theater, Washington Women's Foundation, First Hill Improvement Association, Intiman Theatre, and the Wing Luke Museum. The Seattle Library enjoyed her support, and there the Suzanne Hittman Collection of Pike Place Market documents, photographs, and memorabilia are a treasure for researchers on Seattle history. Read materials at <https://tinyurl.com/y3dm4hz8>

When asked about hobbies, Suzanne's eyes lit up. "I started to enjoy ballroom dancing as a hobby," she said, "after the passing of my husband at a young age." This served her well in her fifties and continued to give her much pleasure as well as keeping her fit and trim. Developing her skills with a professional teacher-partner, she attended numerous Ballroom Dancing Competitions held in major cities around the world.

A conversation with any Seattle resident these days inevitably includes observations about the astonishing growth cycles of industry, commerce and population. Suzanne credits much of the city's early development to a few savvy elected officials who successfully brought lucrative growth to the area. Boeing, several military bases, and Bremerton's naval base were crucial to the WWII effort.

Suzanne is happy to have her family nearby since both the Hittmans and the Desimones remain in the Seattle area. She recalls with pleasure many family trips in this country and in Europe.

### Save the Date: Transgender Panel Kicks Off our 2020 Events

On **Sunday, January 12 from 2 to 4 pm**, join us at *12<sup>th</sup> Avenue Arts* for an important and interesting panel discussion, co-sponsored by *Wider Horizons* and *GenPride*.

Learn from panelists their first-hand stories of defining a new gender framework. Find out more about why pronouns matter and how our world is changing to accommodate more diversity.

**The Chicago 5 Report:  
People Need People**  
by Michael Kischner

People need people, and the Village Movement is growing as one important way to meet that need. That is a message **Ann Lawrence, Sue Lerner, Liz Ohlson, Charles Wheeler, and Sandra Wheeler** brought back from the Windy City, where they attended the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual National



*Charles Wheeler and Sue Lerner at the Conference flanking Michael Kischner's sister Sonja, of Clayton Valley Village in Clayton, California*

Village Conference in September. The Village to Village Network, which puts on the conference, includes 240 open Villages and 100 in development throughout the country. Villages in Australia and New Zealand were also represented.

The five Wider Horizons attendees gave a lively and informative de-briefing, complete with PowerPoint, on Nov. 3 at Skyline's beautiful Sky Club Room. Our generous host was WH member Suzanne Hittman. *See the profile of Suzanne elsewhere in this issue.*

The de-briefing led off with the importance of social connections. One slide titled "Staying Alive" summarized research indicating that social integration and close relationships are well ahead of quitting both smoking and drinking as factors

that reduce people's chances of dying. Even exercise was rather down the list!

Seniors need connections not only with each other but with younger people, too. We heard about ways that a number of different Villages make that happen, and of its many benefits. In one study of a program to connect folks in their seventies with folks in their twenties, 60% percent of the younger people reported a change in their view of older people. Liz Ohlson, who presented this finding, admitted she did not learn whether the change was positive or negative!

Concerning communications technology for Villages, Charles Wheeler reported that the Helpful Village website software, which is growing fast in acceptance, did not seem to him to be significantly better than Club Express, which Wider Horizons still uses. This topic will be studied here in the coming months.

Other topics covered were volunteers in Villages; healthcare and related issues; elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; partnerships with many other kinds of organizations; "improbable relationships" across cultures; and the growing voice of Villages in advocacy for the aging at all levels of government.

From audience questions, it was clear that the group's rich report was already stimulating ideas in those present. This prompted a concluding reminder from Sue: "If you think our Village needs to start talking about something, or doing something, get in touch with a few like-minded members and start a conversation or an activity. That's how our Village works."



*Pat Siggs looks on with interest as Sue Lerner presents. From left: Charles Wheeler, Pat Siggs, Sue, Ann Lawrence, and Michael Kischner (struggling to get a photo with neither inside nor outside light cooperating)*

## The Schoolyard is on Fire

by Gay Hoerler

I heard the words and looked out the window. Nineteen years old, I was teaching in a one-room school on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation in South Dakota near my childhood home. All the students had YCL (Young Citizens League) duties; that's how we got things done. Someone swept the floor, someone pounded the chalk erasers, someone burned the trash, took down the flag, etc. How many times had I reminded them, "Push the trash way down into the barrel before you light the match."



There's very little water left at the end of the day. Parents took turns filling the 5-gallon crock water cooler each morning...used for drinking and washing hands in the speckled enamel basin. Drips and leftover wash water went into the slop bucket. I emptied the crock into the bucket for a total of about 3 gallons.

When a teacher has only seven students, she knows them almost like a mother knows her children...who is the most strategic, who is the best listener, who knows physics, who is the best problem solver, who can anticipate? With that thought in mind I told the students, "You can watch at the windows but DO NOT leave this building unless I come to get you. Frankie, come with me."

Frankie was my fourth grader. He was not my best student as far as grades were concerned and there

were three older students, but he was my best bet for getting through this difficulty.

I grabbed the slop bucket and the string mop from behind the entry room door. Frankie and I ran to the edge of the fire. "Now you keep this bucket right where I need it." Frankie had the bucket in just the correct spot with the exact tilt for my mop every time it needed wetting so I could pound the fire with the mop.

In the end, the fire only burned about half an acre—not a big fire as prairie fires go. Frankie was definitely the hero of the day. And me? Well I had survived the first difficult day in my foray into adulthood. Several parents commented that we must have had a fire as they picked up their kids after school. "Yep, we sure did," was all I ever said and though I'm sure it was talked about at several dinner tables that evening, no one ever mentioned it to me again. I drove home that afternoon with a huge sigh of relief, leaving my one room school with the blackened schoolyard behind me.



*Gay Hoerler is a retired teacher and married to Charles Heaney who recruited her to Wider Horizons. She relocated to Capitol Hill from the Skagit Valley several years ago but is still nostalgic about rural living. She goes back "home" once a week to care for her two grandchildren.*

## Keeping Our Car Too Long

by Michael Kischner

Our first Volvo was two years old when we bought it in 1965. A few years later, we brought our newborn son home from the hospital in it. Sixteen years after that, we taught him to drive in it, and he drove it through high school. When we finally sold it for a song to a needy student who knew how to work on cars, it was almost thirty years old. Its engine was still going strong.

But there's more to a car than its engine. There's safety, comfort, appearance, even pleasure. As our beloved Volvo aged, one problem led to the other. The driver's side window, which was hand-cranked, kept coming off its pulley and disappearing down the door. In the drier months, one could live with this until a mechanic could get into

the door to fix it. But the rush of air would get under openings in the ceiling upholstery, which without warning would billow and start pressing on your head as you drove, a startling feeling the first time it happened.



The Kischners' '63 Volvo around 1970. The little boy on the right, Gerrit Kischner, would grow up to drive the car through his high school years.

At least with no driver side window the front windows didn't need defrosting, which was a good thing, as the only visible effect of turning on the defroster was that it made the oil warning light go on. Volvo electronics were a subject of much mirth for the radio Car Guys. Our next car, another used Volvo, had serial alternator issues, but we luxuriated in its having a dome light that actually went on when you opened a door.

Last year, in what may be our last car, a comfortable 2018 Toyota with all the current safety features, I drove to a series of medical appointments and tests. I saw my primary care physician, a dermatologist who specializes in Mohs surgery, a physical therapist, a cardiologist, and finally a vascular surgeon, who scheduled an operation. The appointments were connected. One had led to the other.

My last test, the treadmill, went spectacularly well; it was a long time before I showed the slightest fatigue. The technician and I talked cars. He said I had a heart like a Volvo engine.



Michael Kischner taught English in the Seattle Community Colleges for forty years. He joined Wider Horizons in 2016, serves on the Board of Directors, and recently stepped down as Newsletter Editor.

### Warm for Winter Delivers!

This just in from **Joan Bergman**, who, along with **Donna Sunkel**, **Sandra Wheeler**, and non-member participant Nancy Ravenzwaay, made a special holiday delivery this past Monday:

*Our Warm for Winter group gifted **31 handmade** scarves, hats and baby blankets in 2019 to Wellspring Family Services' Baby Boutique which serves birth to 18-year-olds, as well as five "store-bought" items, and nearly four pounds of personal toiletries collected from hotels.*

*All these items will be offered by Wellspring to families who are homeless or at great risk of becoming homeless.*

*In 2020, we'll focus our efforts on items for 4 and 5-year-olds--the great need of the boutique at this time.*



From left: Joan, Nancy, Sandra, and Donna proudly repping WH at Wellspring