



## Welcome!



**Renee Lormé-Gulbrandsen**  
Executive Director

Welcome to the Fall 2020 issue of *The Willow Tree* – the Oak Bay Volunteer Services' healthy living and healthy aging newsletter. Much has changed in our community with the arrival of COVID-19. In this edition, we have prepared resources and articles on living well during this unprecedented time. You will once again find community resources and information on OBVS services, along with testimonials from fellow clients on what they are doing to stay healthy during this time.

Please know that everyone at OBVS is with you during this challenging time. Reach to our helping hands should you need us. We are in this together.

## OBVS Services During COVID-19

OBVS is proudly serving the community of Oak Bay through the COVID-19 health emergency. This is a testament to the dedication of staff and volunteers to ensure we provide a continuity of care for our clients through the provision of innovative direct services designed for the health and safety of everyone.

Staff and volunteers follow strict health and hygiene protocols, including mask wearing and social distancing, and provide these new services with minimal face-to-face contact to limit the chance of spreading infection. Please know that while we have taken these precautions, there is always a smile behind every face mask and our volunteers are committed to serving you.

As we move to the fall and winter months, we aim to continue providing safe, healthy, reliable services to our clients, while adhering to the directives and expectations of the Provincial Health Officer and BC Ministry of Health. Our volunteers will continue to follow health and hygiene protocols so you can feel safe while receiving a medical drive or taking a walk in the community.

If the region experiences a second wave of the virus, you can expect our services will change accordingly, and we will once again update you on changes to service delivery.

**"Be Kind. Be Calm. Be Safe." - Dr. Bonnie Henry**

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### Health Services

#### Babylon by Telus Health

P: 1-855-577-8838

[www.telus.com/health/personal](http://www.telus.com/health/personal)

Get video consultations, prescriptions, and referrals from BC doctors. Covered under MSP.

#### Influenza Vaccine Clinics

Flu vaccines are now available at local pharmacies. Call to inquire:

##### Estevan Pharmacy

(250) 598-2517

##### Pharmasave Oak Bay

(250) 598-3380

##### Rexall Oak Bay

(250) 590-8799

##### Save on Foods Foul Bay

(250) 370-0772

### Active Living

#### Oak Bay Recreation Centre

P: (250) 595-7946

Now re-opened for pre-registrations in aquatics, fitness and wellness.

#### Greater Victoria Public Library

P: (250) 940-4875

Reopened for limited service.

### Seniors Support Services

#### Seniors' Entitlement Services

P: (250) 388-7696 ext. 230

Advocacy and assistance with finances, housing, healthcare, legal systems, and elder abuse.

#### Seniors Serving Seniors

P: (250) 413-3211

Referral service for senior-centric resources around Greater Victoria



## Healthy Living During COVID-19

What a stressful time we have been living in! Many businesses and services have closed, we have to limit time out and about, and we have to be selective in who we can spend time with. With the realities of social distancing and living through a pandemic, you may have wondered how to continue keeping yourself active and healthy. We wanted to get some ideas to share with our clients, so who better to ask than clients themselves? Here's what Betty Jean (94), John (72), Kay (80), Mona (58), and Robert (77) had to say!

### What challenges have been brought on by the pandemic?

**John:** Same old challenges, but I just need to keep social.

**Mona:** Coping with MS and the challenges this brings on.

**Betty Jean:** Not getting to play bridge and the social side of it.

### What kind of things do you do to keep busy?

**John:** I take a handyDart to appointments, visit the Snug Pub at Oak Bay Beach Hotel, socializing, lots of reading.

**Robert:** Using the computer a lot, writing, staying in - not venturing out.

**Kay:** Lots of reading - detective novels are my favourite. I bought 20 books at

Value Village at \$2 each!

**Betty Jean:** Poke in the garden with volunteers. Planted some pansies that my neighbour brought me. I walk to a bench on the waterfront to watch boats and seals.

**Mona:** I love exploring, going Downtown, to the beach, Cook Street. I get out everyday and enjoy landscapes, houses, and exploring. I use my scooter and have gone 1,040 km.

### How have you been staying active?

**John:** Library visits.

**Robert:** Deep knee bends and push-offs from the sink.

**Kay:** Early walks every second day along the beach or around the marina.

**Betty Jean:** Walking with my walker, chatting with people who walk by.

**Mona:** I use my walker to walk to a duck pond to feed ducks. I'm a very disciplined person and do stretches daily.

### Have you found new ways to connect with people?

**John:** Facetime or Zoom with family.

**Robert:** Skype, Hangouts on Google, video visits with my 97 year old dad in Ontario.

**Betty Jean:** I meet lots of people when sitting on a beach bench. Lots of phone calls with my daughter and

son, too.

**Mona:** I'm part of a Zoom get together in a church group for weekly reflection. I have a walking group of friends who walk as I use my scooter. I also have a bible study group in my building.

#### What do you look forward to most each day or week?

**John:** My friend visiting in the morning, or going to Russell's for new books.

**Robert:** I look forward to getting meals from OBVS and meeting other residents in my building's courtyard.

**Kay:** Quiet time in afternoon reading is my favourite time.

**Mona:** Getting outside, meeting friends, and seeing what God's got in store for me.

#### What's a tip you have for staying positive during COVID-19?

**John:** Nothing gets me down - I live with illness and always have a positive attitude.

**Robert:** I don't think about the virus as a threat. I stay in the here and now, and celebrate the good experiences.

**Kay:** I try to think, "I can still get around."

**Betty Jean:** Watching nature and my veggies grow, and I decide it's going to be a good day!

**Mona:** Do not listen to the news on the TV - too depressing! Staying close to God. Reaching out to others, doing volunteer work whenever possible. Early on during COVID-19, I undertook calling three seniors in my building and support them.

We have all had to keep ourselves occupied while in isolation, and may need to continue for quite some time. Whether it's getting outside to spend time in nature, or a new way of talking to your friends and family, we hope you have been inspired to try something new.

*Thank you to our interviewees for sharing their experiences with us! We hope you are inspired to try some of their ideas for keeping active and healthy.*

#### MELINDA'S REMINDERS

1. Please try to call in your medical drive request 4-5 business days in advance of your appointment. This provides the best opportunity for us to be able to find you a driver.
2. During COVID-19, clients are required to sit in the back seat of the vehicle and wear a face mask.

#### OBVS CLIENT SERVICES

- Drives to medical appointments
- Shopping, delivery of groceries & prescriptions
- Walks in the community
- Social and wellness check phone calls
- Income tax return preparation
- Light gardening

#### OUTREACH AND SERVICES COORDINATOR



#### Melinda Mann

Melinda can be reached by telephone:

Monday to Thursday,  
9:00am – 4:00pm.

Ph: (250) 940-3433

If you have an urgent request on a Friday, please phone the Helpline at (250) 595-1034 for further assistance.

## WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

While everyone at Oak Bay Volunteer Services is taking health, hygiene and safety precautions to minimize the risk and exposure to infection during the COVID-19 pandemic, there remains an inherent risk to receiving services. As a result, clients freely and voluntarily accept services during this time, and are responsible for any illness arising from their decision to receive services. All OBVS services can be cancelled at any time.

We ask that clients help us by agreeing to minimize the risk and exposure to infection by adhering to personal health and hygiene protocols including washing hands, wearing a mask, following social distancing requirements, and not participating in a service if feeling unwell. Please advise OBVS should you be exposed to COVID-19 through personal contacts.

**Minimizing risk during these challenging times is a collective responsibility, and we thank all clients for their efforts!**





## More than Meals Meal Delivery Program

Receiving freshly prepared meals can make such a difference in the life of someone living on their own. OBVS is proud to embark on a new meal delivery program with James Bay New Horizons Society, United Way of Greater Victoria, and other agencies across the CRD.

The More Than Meals program provides three fresh, healthy meals a week which can be warmed and enjoyed, or frozen for later. Examples of meals include: pasta dishes, meatloaf and potatoes, turkey and vegetables, etc. Meal packages are delivered to your doorstep by a caring volunteer weekly on Wednesday afternoons.

If you are a senior who may benefit from this program, contact the OBVS office at (250) 595-1034 **to learn more.**

## How Will You Be Remembered? Leave a Legacy to OBVS

There are many reasons why people choose to leave a gift in their will to a charitable organization:

- Wanting to leave a lasting impact in the community you love
- Interest in reducing taxes on your estate
- Opportunity to make a big difference in the lives of neighbours-in-need
- Desire to thank an organization that assisted you or a loved one in a time of need

For as many reasons as there are for leaving a gift, there are just as many ways to leave a gift. Learn more about Gifting OBVS in Your Will by contacting us at (250) 595-1034 or [legacygiving@oakbayvolunteers.org](mailto:legacygiving@oakbayvolunteers.org).

## Meet Your OBVS Team



Left to Right: Executive Director, Renee Lormé-Gulbrandsen; Outreach and Services Coordinator, Melinda Mann; Volunteer Coordinator, Ruth Platts, and Administrative Coordinator, Britney Nguyen



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