



Village Life

HDV Member Profile - Dorothy Ferguson

There are several things many of us Villagers have in common. A life of service is one. A love of travel another and an Alaskan experience is another. Dorothy Ferguson, one of our newest members, shares all of those connections.



Dorothy is a long time school counselor. She says service is part of her makeup. She enjoyed working with elementary school students developing friendship and conflict resolution skills.

As it happens Dorothy has been a volunteer for the Whidbey Island, WA Village, although not a member. That village's model incorporates volunteers from the surrounding community to support members.

"I was a driver. One of my regular tasks was to take a member to the hairdresser. I also bought groceries and performed errands for some of the members." It is important to her to be active in a community and the

Village fits the bill.

Now as a Bend resident Dorothy will be a full member of High Desert Village hoping to be of service in whatever way necessary.

Dorothy grew up in the Pacific Northwest. She earned her degrees at Washington State University and Seattle University and met her husband, Duncan, at Whitworth College where he was the academic dean and she worked in recruiting new students.

As with many academics, the couple did stints in colleges across the country. They lived for 18 years in Louisville, KY where Duncan served as director of higher education for the Presbyterian Church, USA. And five in Alaska where Duncan served at Alaska Pacific University and Dorothy counseled at Williwaw Elementary and served on the PTA at son, Brian's school. Chugach Open Option School offered many opportunities for parents to be involved and suited Dorothy well.

They also traveled widely from Scotland and Ireland to Europe, New Zealand, Australia and most recently Croatia and Greece.

The Fergusons owned a vacation home at Black Butte Ranch for many years. They thought they might retire there, but decided in 2020 that Bend with all it has to offer would be a better choice at this stage of life. And Bend Athletic Club allows Dorothy to indulge in one of her passions, tennis. She tries to play at least three times a week. Other interests are knitting, kayaking and hiking. I cannot watch television without knitting," she says.

Duncan Ferguson is an ordained minister and author of eleven books. The latest, published in 2022, is *Traces of Transcendence, the Heart of the Spiritual Quest*.

Joette Storm, Associate Editor

Village News

A hearty welcome is extended to five new Village members. They are Dorothy Ferguson (see above profile), Terry Jolly, Faith Holly Hall, and Margy and Art Lim.

Village members are encouraged to log into the **HDV website** and click on "You are Invited." That links to a page of current events or resources of interest. This area is for members only. Also explore the "Members" menu for specific information including directory of current members, Newsletters (current and past) as well as other information only for Village members. The "Events" menu allows you to see up-coming HDV events.

Coming up - HDV **Film Noir**, Wednesday, Jan. 11th - 2-4:30 p.m. at Sons of Norway Lodge, 549 NW Harmon. Showing - **Mildred Pierce (1945)**

Free COVID Tests Available

Every U.S. household is eligible to order four free at-home COVID-19 tests. Here is the link.

<https://www.covid.gov/tests>

Music Corner



Through the miracle of modern technology, low bass singer Geoff Castellucci is able to sing four-part harmony with himself in this rendition of the standard I'M DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS. See and hear how low he can go and enjoy!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxq5_kMIGxk

From the President's Desk - New Direction in the New Year

As we shared last month, the Board is having a series of strategy sessions in preparation for the year ahead. Our continuing discussions have led us in a new direction as far as our Board and Team components. For further discussion next month we are looking at the possibility of a smaller Board comprised of the four officer positions and two at-large members. They would meet less frequently and focus more on macro vs. day to day issues. Relieving Team leaders from being on the Board would provide more opportunities for teams to meet to strengthen their identities and overall member engagement and satisfaction. As always, we encourage all members to provide your feedback to any Board member on these current topics that we hope will improve everyone's HDV experience.

Pam DiDente, HDV Board Chair

Speedy Recovery Baskets

Earlier this year, HDV began sending Recovery Baskets to members returning home after surgery or a hospital visit. Barbara Caggiano had been handling this service by sending flowers to HDV members recovering, and it has morphed into sending Recovery Baskets instead. The baskets contain fresh fruit, a pastry, and...how can you recover without a little chocolate?

Our two volunteer angels are Anne Brickner from the Helping Hands Team and Peggy Carey from the Health Advocacy Team.

If you know of someone who would benefit from good wishes from HDV—delivered with a smile— from Anne or Peggy, please contact Mary Hartrich, Helping Hands Team and she will pass along the request.

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To Your Health

Neuroplasticity – Firing, Wiring & Fertilizing Our Brains for Better Health

Imagine: You're using satellite navigation while driving in an unfamiliar city, you make a "wrong" turn, and the navi device "recalculates", putting you back on course to your destination. If your car represents you and the navi device your brain, this is an example of neuroplasticity.

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to change and adapt due to experience. *Plasticity* refers to the brain's malleability. *Neuro* refers to neurons, the nerve cells that are the building blocks of the brain and nervous system.

There are two kinds of neuroplasticity: **Functional plasticity**: The brain's ability to move functions from one area of the brain to another area, e.g. when one area is damaged.

Structural plasticity: The brain's ability to change its physical structure because of learning. Every brain, can modify its connections, or **re-wire** itself. Without this ability, our brains couldn't develop from infancy through adulthood or recover from brain injury.

Neuroplasticity helps us learn new things and enhance existing cognitive abilities; regain function after strokes and brain injuries. When function has declined due to disuse (e.g. lack of stimulation) or learned non-use (e.g. impaired balance due to decreased physical activity), the principles of neuroplasticity can improve our functions and quality of life.

How? If you would want to improve your balance and coordination to prevent falls, exercise is prescribed, but what kind? If you are not fond of exercise, finding an activity that you like would be important. If you enjoy the activity, your brain's reward center releases dopamine, which makes you feel good! Make that activity a habit, and new neural pathways are created that lead to improved balance and coordination.

High intensity exercise, a minimum of eight minutes per day. **Dual task exercises**, such as pickleball, dancing, Tai Qi, even gardening is great. Walking backwards will improve your ability to walk forward. Try it! Neuroplasticity in action!

Music (playing or listening), learning a foreign language, creating art, traveling, mindfulness meditation, playing video games, and good sleep hygiene also fertilize our nervous systems. With a bit of time and patience, you can rewire your brain. This may help protect against cognitive decline, improve resilience, and enhance your general health.

Hilary Garrett

No December Board Meeting - Happy Holidays!