



Welcome!



Executive Director
Kara Udell

As the leaves change colour and the air turns crisp, we're delighted to bring you the cozy fall edition of The Willow Tree, your community newsletter dedicated to healthy living.

In these pages, you'll discover inspiring articles, local events, and helpful resources to nurture your well-being in this beautiful community we call home. Enjoy!

Autumn at OBVS

As we head into the colder months of the year, this edition of *The Willow Tree* focuses on the warmth and connection that community can bring.

Our main article features some new ways you can connect to community in the coming months, whether by coming out to one of our Silent Disco events or by getting crafty in support of our Welcome Team. Additionally, if you are looking for some holiday cheer, we encourage you to sign up for our Holiday Gift Exchange by November 20th to experience the joy of giving or receiving.

Of course, getting out in the community during virus season can present some challenges. Recommended ways to prevent viruses include handwashing, wearing masks, getting vaccinated, and staying home if you have a cold or flu. We appreciate your efforts to help keep everyone safe!

On the final page of this edition, you will find an informative summary of Better at Home, a key program supporting active aging in BC, which you can learn more about at our information session on November 20th.

From all of us at Oak Bay Volunteer Services, we are wishing you inspiration, warmth, and connection to community this fall!

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

SUPPORT SERVICES

Island Deaf & Hard of Hearing

Services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals
#301 - 3960 Quadra St
(250) 592-8144

Family Caregivers of BC

Support and education for caregivers of all kinds
#6 - 3318 Oak St
(250) 384-0408

CNIB Foundation

Programs for blind or partially sighted individuals
#100 - 1675 Douglas St
(250) 595-1100

HEALTH SERVICES

BC Get Vaccinated

Register for reminders to book flu & Covid-19 shots
1-833-838-2323

Free Prescription Delivery

Oak Bay Pharmasave
Shoppers Drug Mart
Save-On-Foods Pharmacy

Community is for Everyone

We need community, and community needs us! A sense of belonging is a lifelong need that feeds into our health, happiness, and fulfillment. While health and life changes can affect how we engage in community, finding new ways to get involved can be incredibly rewarding. We encourage you to reflect on the ways you like to connect to community and read on for some opportunities we have on offer this fall.



Our new **Silent Disco** events merge music, dance, and community in an inclusive atmosphere. Attendees wear wireless headphones, allowing them to select their favourite tunes and control their own volume. This innovation supports individuals with sensory sensitivities as well as those with impaired hearing.

Dancing is a joyful exercise that promotes heart health and overall fitness. Research indicates that synchronized movement enhances social bonding by releasing endorphins, heightening our sense of connection. Dancing together has also been found to create an analgesic effect by elevating pain thresholds.

Silent Discos support a holistic approach to well-being, serving as a unique, enjoyable opportunity for connection, movement, and mental health benefits. Fun for people of all ages and abilities, these free community gatherings are sure to put a smile on your face. Experience the rhythm; embrace the connection, and give us a call if you'd like to attend an upcoming event!

Community Events

AN EVENING OF MUSIC

November 20
5 to 8 pm

Dinner and music at Monterey Centre with the Monterey Concert Band. Please call 250-370-7300 for tickets (\$29).

CHRISTMAS IN OAK BAY

November 24
2 to 6 pm

Kick off the season at this free cozy event on Oak Bay Ave offering holiday games, performances, and snacks!

MOSS HOLIDAY MARKET

December 14 & 15
10 am to 4 pm

Do some shopping or simply soak in some holiday cheer at the Moss Street Holiday Market at 1330 Fairfield Road.

Another community activity that might appeal to crafters and makers is our new **Welcome Team**. This initiative aims to build community by recognizing major milestones in Oak Bay such as new residents, babies, and marriages. When a



community member is nominated, our team will organize a basket of goodies, handmade items, and local resource directories to take over to the recipient. If you'd like to make a small handmade item for a welcome basket, we'd love to hear from you! All types of crafts are welcome, from birdhouses to pottery to knitted baby hats.

With the holidays coming up, another exciting way to engage in community is our **Holiday Gift Exchange**. Join in the fun this holiday season by signing up to give or receive a gift — no need to do both! Gifts will be under \$40 and can be handmade or purchased. To sign up or to nominate another community member to receive a gift, please call in by November 20th for more details.



Finally, a community program for the music lovers out there may be coming your way soon! We are exploring possibilities with **Victoria Symphony** and may be offering tickets again in the coming months. Please get in touch if you'd like to add your name to our interest list.

If you see anything here or elsewhere that sparks your interest, we hope you'll reach out to enjoy the benefits of community!

OBVS OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Friday

9:00am — 12:00pm

1:00pm — 4:00pm

ANNA MACKAY



YOUR CONTACT AT OBVS

If you are looking for more support or connection, please give Anna a call. She can talk you through our offerings, update any of your personal details that may have changed, and help you sign up for new services and programs.

Anna can be contacted from Monday to Friday on our main office line: (250) 595-1034.

Reminders

1. Please call us at least one week (5 business days) ahead to book a service.
2. Please note that if an emergency occurs while you are accessing our services, our volunteers are required to call 911. Our volunteers are not trained to offer medical care or provide any transport in the event of sudden illness or injury, but will ensure to contact emergency services to assist you.
3. To help prevent the spread of viruses, please call our office to reschedule your OBVS booking if you have a fever, a wet cough, or a contagious illness.



United Way helping seniors remain independent.

Better at Home is a program funded by the B.C. Government and managed by United Way B.C. Healthy Aging. The aim of this program is to assist seniors with simple non-medical tasks so that they can continue living at home and stay connected to their communities.

Each community operates Better at Home differently based on community resources and needs.

Oak Bay Volunteer Services is the Better at Home provider for Oak Bay, and out following volunteer-based services are partially funded by this program:

- Friendly Visits
- Drives
- Minor Repairs
- Light Gardening
- Snow Shoveling
- Grocery Shopping Support

We also offer referrals to a paid (sliding-scale) Better at Home housekeeping service.

You can learn more about Better at Home at our info session at 1 pm on Wed., Nov. 20 at the Monterey Recreation Centre in the Dogwood Room. Registration is not required.

WAYS TO GIVE

There are many ways to help support our organization.

Donate

Any contribution, big or small, is always welcome. We accept donations by phone at (250) 595-1034, by cheque made out to Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society, in our office at 1442 Monterey Ave, or at www.oakbayvolunteers.org/donate.

Leave a Legacy

Making a gift in your will ensures a lasting impact in the community and may help reduce estate taxes. Learn more about legacy giving by contacting Kara at (250) 940-3434 or kara@oakbayvolunteers.org.

MEET OUR TEAM

Executive Director

Kara Udell

Outreach & Services Coordinator

Anna Mackay

Volunteer Coordinator

Ruth Platts

Administrative Coordinator

Jaimie Sumner