



WICS Newsletter

Widowed Information and Consultation Services

Winter 2013-14

PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAYS

“When we are in the midst of grief, the last thing we may want to think about is the holidays. We may have little desire to participate. We may simply refuse to make plans, wishing the holidays would quickly, if not painlessly, pass.”

The holidays are tough when we are grieving a loss. Holidays are centering moments in our lives, full of memories. We remember the Thanksgiving the oven broke down, the Chanukah or Christmas gifts we received. It is very easy for our longing for someone we miss to become intense.

There are other reasons the holidays can be tough. We often see reminders – the perfect gift or a holiday card addressed to the person who died. They are stressful and busy times. This stress is difficult to bear when coping with grief. We might feel so out of step with the season. Our sadness seems magnified against the joy of others. Finally, in the midst of winter, we may feel more isolated and alone, the deepening darkness a reflection of our inner being.

That is why it is essential to plan. We need not spend a great deal of time thinking of holiday menus or planning the perfect gift or card. I am speaking of something more important – planning how to get through the holidays.

The danger is drift. It is easy in the stressful times of the holidays to surrender our decision making to well-meaning others, like the sister-in-law who will not take no for an answer. The result is that we find ourselves drifting into activities that are tiring, painful, or that don't meet our needs.

The first thing we need to do is to **choose**. What activities do we really want to do? What activities do we need to do? What doesn't need to be done this year? We might decide to not send cards or host a dinner.

As for the activities we choose, we must find the best way to do them, consistent with our own needs. For example, if we decide to give gifts, we might consider how we wish to do this. Do we simply send a check, shop from the Internet or a catalog, or shop with a friend?

With whom do we wish to spend the holidays? Who can be present with us as we grieve? Who will understand that we may not be our usual selves?

Sometimes it is a choice not to make a choice. Grief is often a roller-coaster experience, full of ups and downs. Grace knew that. So she decided that she would keep her options open until that very morning. She knew she would spend some time with her in-laws, but would wait until that day to see where she was on that roller coaster before committing to a particular schedule. We need to remember to remain flexible. For Tom, he decided to take his own car so he could leave when he was ready, rather than be obligated to wait for others.

We need, too, to recognize the individuality of grief. For some of us, the holidays are difficult and stressful. There may be others of us who welcome the diversion and find comfort in the bustle of activity. Still others of us might find ourselves torn between both feelings. It is the range of reactions that makes our grief unique.

Once we have made our choices, we should **communicate** those decisions to others. Part of that communication is listening to others. That may add a third “C” to our holiday plans – **compromise**.

The holidays are approaching so we need to plan. But we may want to remember this recipe –

Choose, Communicate and Compromise.

WICS

Board of Directors

John Hanson President
Holly Finkbeiner Secretary
Sara Acree
Claudia Antuna
Burnie Barbus
Larry Dixon
Elaine Eggebraaten
Le Habryle
Sue Styer
Ann Thorpe

Consultant
Molly Krinsky

Gifts of Love

In loving memory of **ARNOLD LOFFELMACHER**
from Patti Acheson

In loving memory of **JOSEPH HAGGERTY**
from Sharon Haggerty

In loving memory of **DAVE McFARLAND**
from Mary Zacharias

In loving memory of **CURT ROSS**
from Mary Zacharias

In loving memory of **HERB FREDENBURG**
from Harriette Fredenburg



www.windermere.com
425-235-7777

WICS would like to thank

Windermere

RE/Renton, Inc and The

Windermere

Foundation for their
generous donation to our
children's program.

HOLIDAY MEMORIALS

*ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A SPECIAL WAY TO
MEMORIALIZE YOUR LOVED ONE FOR THE HOLIDAY?*

*We invite you to send a gift in memory of your loved one.
You and your loved one's name will be noted in the next
newsletter.*

WICS relies on your donations. Your gift allows WICS to
support grieving individuals and families in our community.

Please help us help others by sending a LOVE GIFT today.

~ An envelope is enclosed for your holiday memorial. ~

All donations are tax deductible.

*(Workplace "Matching Gift" programs can increase your donation.
Check to see if your employer will match your gift.)*

Seabeck Retreat May 30 – June 1, 2014

Save the date and mark your calendar!!!

*"I know for certain that we
never lose the people we love,
even to death. They continue to
participate in every act, thought
and decision we make. Their love
leaves an indelible imprint in our
memories. We find comfort in
knowing that our lives have been
enriched by having shared their
love."
~ Leo Buscaglia*

Remember ... you can find our newsletter and other contact
information online at: www.kcwics.org.

You can email us at: wicsoffice@qwestoffice.net .

PLEASE NOTE: *If you are no longer interested in
receiving the newsletter via USPS mail, please contact
our office to be removed from the list.*

North

Every Friday

Dinner at 4:30pm

For more info contact:

Delina Bardon

206.789.8852

Federal Way

2nd Monday

of each month

Dinner at 5:30pm.

For more info contact:

Carole

253.927.0404

bzeebee@msn.com

East

Bellevue

Dinner at 5pm before
Monday group meetings.

For locations call:

Kathy Clancy

425.653.7209

All WICS members welcome.

WICS Weds

A support group for those who
have remarried or are in a
coupled relationship.

For info re: monthly
meetings of WICS-Weds
please call:

Diane at 253.839.5453



*“Grief is a sacred time,
where we can rearrange our
fragments into a new
definition of wholeness.”*

~ Stephanie Ericcson,
Living Enrichment Center,
Wilsonville. OR

About WICS WEDS

WICS WEDS is a support group evolving from the grief groups developed by WICS over the years. It is made up of couples who have met at these WICS groups or outside WICS and have formed a relationship. Some have married and some have not. We have all gone through or are going through the grief process and now have new things to face as we go on with life. Our purpose is fellowship and sharing our experiences and problems as couples, dealing with step-children, the financial arrangement of a household, other family matters, or anything else of interest to us as couples.

We try to meet once a month at someone's home for a potluck dinner or at a restaurant, usually at midday on a Sunday. We invite anyone who is interested to join us in this fellowship. Simply call the WICS office at 206-241-5650 or Diane and Charlie Bingham at 206-870-8642. if you get an answering machine, please leave your name and telephone number and mention WICS WEDS so we can return your call to let you know when our next meeting is or to answer any questions you may have. You are welcome to join us!

Subscriber Form

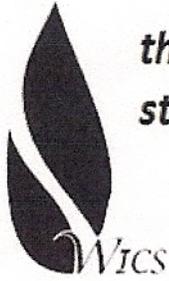
Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Return to: WICS, P.O. Box 66896, Seattle, WA 98166

Subscription: \$25 per year



*the flame
still burns*

Support Group Meetings

For all widowed men and women who would like to share their concerns and experiences and discuss coping skills.

BALLARD: 7 p.m. Tuesdays

Please contact Doug for details.

Contact: **Doug** 206.441.9490

BELLEVUE: 7 p.m. Mondays

10420 S.E. 11th St. — Pilgrim Lutheran Church (Corner 11th St. & Bellevue Way)

Contact: **Kathy** 425.653.7209 (best to call M, W, F during the day) or email at:

clancyKa@comcast.net

COVINGTON: 7 p.m. Tuesdays

25810— 156th Ave SE, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

Contact: **Le** 253.630.0324 or email at: saraacree@comcast.net

FEDERAL WAY: Currently, this group is not having meetings, but are looking for a new place and time. They are continuing to give support, information and connection.

Contact: **Molly K.** 253.839.4560

KIRKLAND: Currently, this group is not having meetings. But, they are offering support, information and connection.

Contact: **Holly** via email: hlfinkbeiner@gmail.com

RENTON: 12:30 p.m. Wednesdays

211 Burnett North, Renton Senior Center

Contact: **Burnie** 425.255.1888 or email at: burnie@comcast.net

Gifts of Love

Amount: \$ _____ In Memory of: _____

From: _____

Send Acknowledgement to (name): _____

Address: _____

Return to: WICS, P.O. Box 66896, Seattle, WA 98166



Successful Fall Auction-Luncheon-Bingo Fundraiser



Our annual fundraiser was held November 23rd at St. Andrews Lutheran Church in Bellevue. A big heartfelt *Thank You* to all those who had a part in making it a success. There are many businesses and individuals who donated items, assembled gifts into baskets, solicited gift certificates, prepared the necessary paperwork for each auction item, helped with set-up and take-down, and worked at the check-in/check-out tables. A special thank-you to all the attendees who bid often and purchased so many items. We also want to thank those who weren't able to attend, but sent their well-wishes and cash donations. We appreciate everyone who gave of their time, energy and assistance to make this Fall fundraiser so successful.

(A follow-up report with more details will be posted on the website and in the next newsletter.)

Holiday Hints

From Dorothy Hanley's book: *Seasons of Grief*

A few ideas for getting through the holidays more easily. It is a difficult time for anyone who has lived through a life change. Perhaps these hints will make the holiday blues a little easier to deal with.

DO SOMETHING FOR YOURSELF – get as much rest as you can and attempt to keep the stress level low. Buy yourself a present. Take a leisurely bath, light candles, read a good book. Eat at least one good meal a day and be careful with liquor consumption.

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH LOVING SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE – you know who they are. Don't let people push you to do things you don't want to do or go places that will add to your discomfort.

ALLOW TEARS – holiday times are emotional times and particularly difficult if this is your first (or other years) big holiday without your loved one. Express your feelings without worrying that you will make others uncomfortable.

REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONE – do something special like a memorial gift to a charity, take a wreath or flowers to the cemetery. If you put up a tree, buy a tree ornament as a memorial or light a candle.

DON'T GO OVERBOARD – Expensive gifts won't make up to the children the loss of a parent. Sometimes we feel we must do something to fill the void in their lives, but bankrupting the family won't help.

IT WILL BE DIFFICULT, BUT YOU WILL GET THROUGH – Anxiety and anticipation are often much worse than the holiday itself. You've had many bad days since the death of your loved one, you know you can get through a few more. Take heart, next year will/could be easier.

For the New Year

Ruth Eiseman, Louisville, KY

Where there is pain,
Let there be softening
Where there is bitterness,
Let there be acceptance
Where there is silence,
Let there be communication
Where there is loneliness,
Let there be friendships
Where there is despair,
Let there be hope.

JANUARY WARMTH

Pat Dodge, Sacramento Valley, CA

Like a tree in winter
which has lost its leaves,
we look ahead to spring
for new growth and warmth
of the sun to heal the pain in our heart.



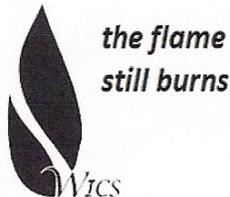
Let us make January a time
To reach out to each other
And give that warmth from our hearts,
And in return,
We will all show new growth.

What I Need

Beth Pinion, Andalusia, AL

A lot of time!
A little space,
A kind of quiet
Resting place,
Are what I need
At times like these
A special spot
Where I can grieve.

WICS Newsletter
PO Box 66896
Seattle, WA 98166



Winter 2013-14

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. Postage Paid
Seattle, WA
Permit #1014

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Widowed Information and Consultation Services (WICS)

- WICS is non-sectarian and is not affiliated with any other agency.
- WICS is a program that offers group support to men and women who are coping with the death of their spouse or partner. Since its beginning in 1974, WICS has served more than 75,000 men and women.

Phone: **206-241-5650**

Website: www.kcwics.org

Email: wicsoffice@qwestoffice.net

- The most frequent inquiries at WICS are for clarification of the grief process, such as "Are my feelings normal?" or "Am I losing my mind?" and also seeking help for dealing with loneliness.
- When a widowed person telephones or visits a WICS support group, he or she can be sure to find other widowed people who will listen and understand. A warm and supportive atmosphere is provided for those who call on the service.