



Mercer Island **SENIORS RISING** Newsletter

August 2025

Island Seniors are a treasure and a big part of what makes Mercer Island great. They carry our oral and lived history which supports continuity of Island culture through sharing stories, songs, and perspective.

However, too many seniors still face isolation and struggle to find connection. As we age, finding connections that have deep meaning is essential because it helps improve quality of life, reduce cognitive decline, and improve overall physical and mental health.

The Seniors Rising newsletter is one way the City's Youth and Family Services Department (YFS) supports Island seniors finding meaningful connections. In this issue, we feature many opportunities for social connections, senior-specific activities, and ways to volunteer.

Thank you, Island Seniors, for all you give to Mercer Island. We hope Seniors Rising helps connect you to your community in ways that support your needs and honor your amazing contributions.

Derek Franklin
YFS Administrator

Seniors Scene



Island seniors can be seen on the Luther Burbank courts staying active and enjoying a friendly (or competitive) game of Pickleball.



The launch of the falls prevention Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) fitness class at the Community and Event Center was a hit! Island seniors were seen stretching, moving, and improving their balance with guidance from SAIL instructor Meg.

The Magic of Music

Hearing a favorite song can bring a smile to our face, remind us of a special memory, or get us tapping our feet. Music can connect us with others, and most agree that music just makes us feel better!

According to the University of Michigan, [music has been shown](#) to have many health impacts for seniors, including improving blood pressure, memory, pain, depression, stroke recovery, and more.

9 Health Benefits of Music

Nearly all older adults (98 percent) polled stated they get some health-related benefit from music, including:

- Stress relief and relaxation (75 percent)
- Joy (73 percent)
- Improves mental health, mood or attitude (65 percent)
- Sparks memories or helps recall life events (61 percent)
- Motivates or energizes (60 percent)
- Helps them feel a spiritual or religious connection (36 percent)
- Keeps the mind sharp (31 percent)
- Connects them with others (27 percent)
- Reduces pain (7 percent)

[Source: University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging](#)



Given these findings, you may want to try introducing more music into your daily life. Consider listening to music if you tire of watching TV or use background music while cooking or doing other household activities. The health benefits of music are connected to all kinds and types of music, whether listening to recorded music, live music or playing an instrument.

You can also enjoy music right here on the Island! Join the MI Parks and Recreation [“Mostly Music in the Park”](#) free concert series this summer, presented every Thursday, 6:30-8:30pm through August 21 at Mercerdale Park. You can also listen to local musicians at [Mosaic MI](#), held the first Thursday of each month from 7:00-9:00pm at Aljona Mercer Island.

Turn on some tunes and enjoy the benefits!



August Activities and Events

MI Youth and Family Services

www.mercerisland.gov/YFS

(206) 275-7657

- **8/12** [Living Alone Senior Group](#), **1:30-3:30pm**, Mercer island Community and Event Center (MICEC), (Second Tuesday of each month)
- **8/26** [Discussion Session of Living Alone Senior Group](#), **1:30-3:30pm**, YFS Office at Luther Burbank
- **8/27** [Senior Support Group](#), **10:30am-Noon**, MICEC, (Fourth Wednesday of each month)

City of Mercer Island

www.mercerisland.gov/calendar

(206) 275-7657

- **Tuesdays & Fridays** Community Coffee at the Community and Event Center (MICEC), **9:30am-11:30am**
- **Wednesdays** [MI Thrift Shop Senior Discount Day](#), 20% off regular priced items (60+ with ID)
- **8/1** [Stay Active & Independent for Life \(SAIL\)](#) fitness program, **10:30-11:30am**, MICEC (Repeats every Monday, Wednesday and Friday)
- **8/1** [Shakespeare in the Park](#), **6:00pm**, Luther Burbank Park (Repeats Aug. 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15)
- **8/3** [BAT Night](#), **8:00-9:00pm**, Luther Burbank Park (Repeats 8/13)
- **8/5** [National Night Out](#), **5:00-8:00pm** Community-wide event in the City Hall parking lot or host an event in your neighborhood.
- **8/7** [PRIDE in the Park](#), **4:30-6:30pm**, Mercerdale Park
- **8/7** [Mostly Music in the Park](#), **6:30-8:30pm**, Mercerdale Park (Repeats 8/14 and 8/21)
- **8/7** [Native Plant Nursery Restoration Event](#), **12:00-2:00pm**, Luther Burbank Caretakers
- **8/12** [Mindfulness Walk](#), **11:00am-12:00pm**, Pioneer Park

Mercer Island Library

kcls.org (206) 236-3537

- **8/4** [Mercer Island Chinese Association ESL Classes](#), **10:00am-12:00pm** (Meets every Monday)
- **8/5** MI Library Book Club, **1:30-3:00pm**

Island Books

<https://islandbooks.com> (206) 232-6920

- **8/14** [Virtual Knitting Book Club](#), **6:00pm**, Zoom
- **8/19** [Author Event, Laurie Frankel](#), **6:30pm**
- **8/28**, [Open Book Club, The Anthropologist](#), **7:00pm**, Mercerdale Park

Mercer Island Visual Arts League

<https://mival.org/> (206) 414-4981

- **Mondays** [Drop-in Artmaking](#), **1:00-3:00pm**
- **Fridays** [Fiber Friday Drop-In](#) (knitting, crochet and stitchery group), **1:00-3:00pm**
- **8/8** [First Friday Art Walk](#), **5:00-8:00pm**

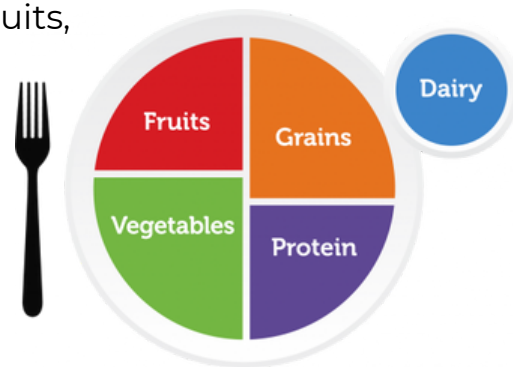
Other Activities & Organizations

- [Mary Wayte Pool](#)
- [Mercer Island Farmers Market](#) - **Every Sunday** from **10:00am-2:00pm**, near Mercerdale Park
- [Mercer Island Historical Society](#)
- [Mercer Island Sister City Foundation](#)
- [Mercer Island Women's Club](#)
- [Old Friends Club](#)
- [OSHER](#) Lifelong Learning Institute at the UW
- [Stroum Jewish Community Center](#)

Please check the organization website or call to confirm program information. YFS has neither reviewed nor approved the program, personnel, activities or organizations included in the list.

Healthy Eating for Older Adults

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Make eating a social event

Enjoy meals with friends or family members as often as possible. Take advantage of technology to enjoy meals virtually with loved ones in different cities or States.



Drink plenty of liquids

You may not always feel thirsty when your body needs fluids, and that's why it's important to drink beverages throughout the day. Enjoy coffee and tea if you like, or some water, milk, or 100% juice.



Add a touch of spice

Limiting salt is important as you get older. Fresh and dried herbs and spices, such as basil, oregano, and parsley, add flavor without the salt.



Make the most of your food choices

Older adults need plenty of nutrients but fewer calories, so it's important to make every bite count. Foods that are full of vitamins and minerals are the best way to get what you need.



Be mindful of your nutrient needs

You may not be getting enough nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin B12, and also protein. Read the [Nutrition Facts label](#) on packaged foods and also speak with your healthcare provider about possible supplements.



Keep food safe

Discard food if it has an “off” odor, flavor, or texture. Refer to the “use by” dates for a guide to freshness. Canned or frozen foods store well if shopping trips are difficult.

Partner Spotlight



Summer on the island is marked by the return of the Mercer Island Farmers Market (MIFM). The MIFM supports Islander access to fresh food from local farmers, food makers, artists, and small businesses. The market is located next to Mercerdale Park and is open Sundays from 10am-2pm, June 1 to September 28.

The MIFM offers something for everyone!

- Fresh produce from local farms
- Coffee, yummy beverages, baked goods, sweets, specialty goods, and prepared foods
- Live music 11am-2pm
- Plants and “Ask a Master Gardener”
- Collection of artists and artisan vendors
- Senior gathering locations
- Community education/information booths

In addition, the MIFM is a community partner to YFS in food security efforts. Each week, the MIFM distributes Market Bucks to people experiencing low income. Market Bucks can be used to purchase food from farmers and food vendors to provide access to fresh, local, nutritious food. The Market Bucks program is supported by generous community donors and sponsors.

Come check out the market, say “Hi” to friends and neighbors, and stop by the market information booth by the music stage to chat and learn more about vendors, programs, and what they have to offer! Visit www.mifarmersmarket.org for more information.

CAREGIVER Corner

Learn about caregiver support, connections, and resources.

Adult children are often the primary caregivers for aging parents. In some cases, the children live in a different city or state than their parent(s) and this creates unique challenges in caregiving. Here are some things to consider in supporting your loved one:

- **Utilize technology:** Contact your loved one’s physician and request to Zoom into a doctor’s appointment so that you are informed of how you can support your parent.
- **Communicate with family members:** If you have siblings, stay in contact with each other through phone calls or video calls to share perspectives on the needs of the parent(s) and how you can each contribute.
- **Learn about senior issues:** There are many great books and [resources](#) on aging issues to help you better understand what seniors are experiencing. Visit www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving to get started.
- **Enlist help:** Consider utilizing a [geriatric care manager](#) (also called aging life care manager) if you are overwhelmed and need professional guidance.

Be Aware of Senior Scams



Mercer Island Youth and Family Services reminds seniors to be aware of scams targeting older adults. Scammers tend to target seniors because of their trusting nature, potential for wealth and limited tech skills. It is important to be aware of common scams and know the steps to keep your resources safe.

Scams can come via the mail, phone calls, emails, or texts. What most scams have in common is an unsolicited request for your money or private information along with a sense of urgency.

One common scam targeting seniors is the imposter scam. In this situation, someone attempts to trick an individual by pretending to be a government agent, bank representative, or trusted business. They may even pretend to be someone you know personally such as a grandchild, relative, or friend requesting help.

Here are some examples of how a scammer may impersonate a business or trusted organization:

- A utility company calls to threaten that they will cut off services unless you pay what you owe them.
- A government organization such as the IRS, Social Security Administration, or Medicare contacts you about owing taxes or fees and threatens criminal charges if not paid.
- Your bank contacts you about a problem with your account and requests you transfer money or provide account details.

A bad actor may also pretend to be a friend or a loved one to convince you to send them money or give them personal information. Here are some examples of these types of scams:

- An email is sent claiming to be a friend who is asking for a contribution for a party or donation for a cause. They may also ask for your help purchasing and sending gift cards.
- A caller claims to be your grandchild or claims to be with a family member and indicates your loved one is in trouble and needs you to send them money (such as bail or money for medical bills).
- A scammer could also gain your affection and trust by pretending to be romantically interested so that you will eventually give them money or access to banking information.

Tips to Avoid Scams

- **Establish a family safe word:** Talk to family members and determine a safe word you can all use to verify a family member's identity if you receive a call. This will help you confirm the person on the phone is who they say they are.
- **Be leery of unsolicited emails, texts, or calls:** If you are contacted by an unknown sender via text or email, do not click on links, open attachments, or share personal information.
- **Verify the sender's identity:** If you receive an email that is suspicious, such as a message from an unknown sender or one requesting urgent action, be sure to verify the sender's identity in some other way (contact the organization directly using a phone number on their website).
- **Use strong passwords and multi-factor authentication:** Utilizing these measures adds an extra layer of security to your online accounts.
- **Be aware of red flags:** Scam messages often have grammatical errors, generic greetings, language with urgency and odd/random email addresses (click on the sender name to reveal the full email address).
- **Never share personal information:** Organizations such as banks and government agencies will never request sensitive personal information such as passwords, account numbers, etc. via text or email.
- **Slow down and trust your instincts:** Scammers use a sense of urgency to get you to act quickly without questioning. Slow down and pause when making decisions, especially around finances or sharing personal information.



If you believe you have been scammed, there is help.

- **Talk to a trusted family member:** They can help you navigate next steps.
- **Report suspected scams:** Contact the National Elder Fraud Hotline at (833) 372-8311 or call the [Mercer Island Police](#) at (206) 275-7610. The [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Office for Older Americans](#) has information on avoiding scams at (855) 411-2372.
- **Act quickly:** Disconnect your devices from the internet, change your passwords, and monitor your accounts for unusual activity and other signs of identity theft or fraud.
- **Contact your financial institutions:** Notify your bank or credit card companies about the situation and identify any fraudulent transactions.
- **Find support:** Consider seeking counseling to help cope with the emotional impact of the scam. Contact the MIYFS Confidential Voicemail at 206-275-7657 for support.



CITY OF MERCER ISLAND
YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

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