



Mercer Island SENIORS RISING Newsletter

November 2025

Dear Island Seniors,

Holiday celebrations have a way of finding deeper meaning when seniors are involved. Seniors are the living history of our families and community whose stories link past and current generations.

Celebratory events are also vital for seniors who might be struggling with isolation, loneliness, or finding purpose in extended retirement. Meaningful connections also boost mental health, enhance cognitive functioning, and strengthen interpersonal bonds.

This holiday season, YFS extends its best wishes to all Island seniors and invites you to stay active and engaged, and vital as part of Mercer Island Seniors Rising.

Derek Franklin
YFS Administrator



CITY OF MERCER ISLAND
YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

Seniors Scene



Mercer Island seniors are seen learning about end-of-life planning during a presentation that was part of the Ducks in a Row workshop series.



Mercer Island seniors are seen choosing a tree at last year's MI Tree Lot. The tree lot returns on November 29. Proceeds support YFS and other programs.

End of Life Planning

End of Life planning is for everyone. The planning is a proactive process to prepare for when one can no longer make decisions for themselves. Like all important decisions, it's better if you have the opportunity to consider your choices when things are calm.

Planning includes legal, financial, funeral, and healthcare decisions, and personal wishes. End of Life planning is the last gift you give your loved ones.

Advance Directives

Advance Directives are documents that communicate your wishes about medical care near the end of life to your medical team and family. Medical care has developed amazing innovations that support and prolong life even in extremely medically complex cases. [End of Life Washington](#) is the best resource for information and sample forms to support your medical wishes being respected. If you have never considered this topic before, it is recommended you start with the Values Worksheet.

Final Resting Place

In Washington we have many options for how a body finds its final resting place after death. The most common choices in Washington are cremation and burial.

In 2019, Alkaline Hydrolysis (Water Cremation) and Natural Organic Reduction were legalized and are now offered as a choice.

These options all have a wide range of price tags and provide choices for how loved ones can be remembered.

[People's Memorial Association](#) (PMA), a trusted non-profit, provides funeral education and advocacy throughout Washington and is a great resource for learning about funeral options. PMA also publishes a price transparency survey every two years and maintains a 24/7 answering service for all funeral related questions. 888-762-2762

Financial and Legal Documents

Finally, once the body is at rest, there are many other logistical, financial, and legal steps to make. Property, bank accounts, and physical objects all have to be sorted through and put in place. This is often an extended process and there are many opportunities for errors or conflict to occur if there hasn't been preparation. It is important to have complete documentation and for your family to know who will have what job and where to find necessary documents. In the electronic age, it is important to remember to include information such as login instructions for online accounts and instructions on how to find digital copies of any necessary documents.

Reminder: It is important to review and update your documents regularly to ensure that they reflect your current wishes and that the agents designated are still available and willing to perform their duties.



Partner Spotlight

The Mercer Island Historical Society (MIHS) is the history keeper of the Island community. As one of the oldest organizations on the Island, it has been preserving the island's memories and heritage.

Since 1954, the mission of MIHS has been to collect, preserve, research, and record the heritage of Mercer Island.

Continuing activities of MIHS include:

- Programs by experts on topics of local or regional historical interest. Recent topics include 45 years of underwater discoveries along the shores of Mercer Island; the experiences of local Japanese during their World War II incarceration.
- Placement of historic signs and markers, such as at Riley Cove and the milk barn ruins at Luther Burbank Park.

- Partnering with the high school radio station to conduct oral interviews on various historic topics.
- Making presentations about Island history at local service clubs, schools and retirement homes.
- Making nearly 40 years of the Mercer Island Reporter available online and word-searchable.

Next year, 2026, will be an exciting one for all Americans. The country will celebrate the "Semiquincentennial," the 250th anniversary of the founding of our nation. In partnership with the City of Mercer Island and the Chamber of Commerce, the historical society will be helping organizations, schools, churches and other community groups observe the 250th.

For more information visit the MIHS website: www.mercerislandhistory.org

Beneath the Surface: 45 Years of Scuba Diving into Mercer Island's History

Presented by Mercer Island Historical Society

November 5th, 7:00PM

Mercer Island Community and Event Center



Join the Mercer Island Historical Society for this unique view of the Island's history. Speaker, Matt McCaculey, will focus on the Island's history from the perspective of the relics, wrecks (navy planes, parts of the ferry Dawn) he's discovered in the lake. Matt began scuba diving in the waters off Mercer Island in 1979 as a sophomore in high school. In addition to his other interesting finds, Matt recently found a milk bottle from one of the Island's early dairies.

The Holidays are Near!

The holidays are just around the corner and provide a perfect moment to pause, reflect and express gratitude. It's also a time to think about helping others who may be less fortunate or struggling.

YFS will once again be coordinating two programs to support Mercer Island individuals and families during the holidays.

YFS Holiday Program

The annual YFS Holiday Program provides families with the ability to purchase special meals and holiday gifts for kids. This program relies on the support from generous community donations from both local businesses, organizations, and individuals. To support fellow Islanders, email marina.gonzales@mercerisland.gov to learn how you can contribute.



YFS Holiday Food Program

Families and individuals facing food insecurity can pick up extra holiday food at the regular Hopelink Mobile Market on November 19 and December 17, from 1:00–4:00PM at the Mercer Island Community & Event Center parking lot. To support this program, donate via the MIYFS Foundation at www.miyfs.org.

Visit the Thrift Shop to Prepare for the Holiday Season

The MI Thrift Shop is ramping up for the holiday season. Holiday decor and items will be displayed beginning November 9. Get there early to get started on your holiday decorations and preparation! While shopping, you can also participate in the Thrift Shop Giving Tree which supports the YFS Holiday Program.



Mercer Island Holiday Tree Lot

The holidays are right around the corner, and with them comes one of Mercer Island's favorite traditions — the Mercer Island Holiday Tree Lot! Each year, the lot comes alive with the scent of fresh evergreens, the laughter of families, and the spirit of giving back.

You'll find beautiful holiday trees of all sizes, along with fresh wreaths and garland to make your home festive and bright. Our friendly volunteers are ready to help every step of the way — directing traffic, answering your questions, displaying trees, making fresh trunk cuts, trimming branches, and even carrying and securing your perfect tree to your vehicle.

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS >

Mercer Island Holiday Tree Lot

The tree lot is proudly hosted each year by the Mercer Island Youth and Family Services Foundation and MI Trade Inc., with all proceeds supporting local programs and services that strengthen our community.

Stop by, pick out your perfect tree, wreath, or garland, and be part of a cherished Mercer Island holiday tradition that brings joy to families and gives back to those in need. Come early for the best selection — and thank you for supporting our community!



Location: MI Presbyterian Church (3605 84th Ave SE)

Dates: November 29-December 21 (weekends only)

Times: Saturdays 10AM-5PM and Sundays 12PM-5PM

Plant a Tree



The fall season is upon us, bringing rain with it, which means that tree planting season is here!

As a way to incentivize tree planting and to educate on the value of tree care and planting, the City of Mercer Island has implemented a tree giveaway program.

Island residents who are interested in supporting the environment may be eligible for a voucher to cover the cost of purchasing a tree or trees (value up to \$150).

Trees offer numerous benefits in the urban environment. They are foundational to healthy ecological

systems, cool the air through shading and evapotranspiration, increase property values, slow stormwater, absorb runoff, and sequester carbon. Based on the 2018 Mercer Island tree canopy analysis, we know increasing tree planting on private land is essential to maintaining the island's total canopy cover.

Learn more about the tree giveaway at www.mercerisland.gov/publicworks/page/tree-giveaway

Medicare Open Enrollment

It's that time of year again – Medicare Open Enrollment! Each year from October 15-December 7, individuals are able to review, evaluate, and change their Medicare plan to select a plan that works best for their changing health. Any changes to the plan are effective beginning January 1, 2026.

Plan details such as premiums, deductible, formulary (list of prescription medications covered by the insurer), and other benefits can change year to year. Even if you do not intend to change your Medicare plan, it is recommended that you review your coverage every year to make sure you aren't surprised on January 1.

Medicare Open Enrollment



Be informed

Review your coverage. Compare your options.
Choose or change your Medicare health and
prescription drug plans for the coming year.
Help is available!

With Medicare and Medicaid a topic of conversation in the federal budget, you may be unsure about what is happening. We're here to help!

In addition to the Medicare Open Enrollment presentation that was held on October 30th at the Mercer Island Community and Event Center, YFS is partnering with the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) to provide one-on-one Medicare counseling to Island seniors. Here are the details:

One-on-One Medicare Counseling

- Available by appointment only.
- FREE 1-hour counseling with a SHIBA volunteer to assist with plan selection.
- November 6, 17, and 20, 10:00am-3:00pm
- Luther Burbank Building, 2040 84th Ave. SE, Mercer Island
- To schedule an appointment, call YFS at (206) 275-7657 or email MIYFS@mercerisland.gov

Once you have scheduled an appointment, be sure to bring the following information with you: current insurance plan, doctors' names and medical facilities visited, preferred pharmacies, and a list of current medications including exact dosage.



November Activities and Events

MI Youth and Family Services

www.mercerisland.gov/YFS

(206) 275-7657

- **11/4 [Living Alone Senior Group](#), 1:30-3:30PM**, Mercer island Community and Event Center
- **11/5 [Death Cafe](#), 1:30PM**, MICEC
- **11/6 [One-on-One Medicare Counseling by appointment](#), 10:00AM-3:00PM**, Luther Burbank Building (Repeats on 11/17 and 11/20)
- **11/18 [Living Alone Discussion Session](#), 1:30-3:30 PM**, YFS Office at Luther Burbank Building
- **11/26 [Caregiver Support Group](#), 10:30AM-Noon**, MICEC, (Fourth Wednesday of each month)

Mercer Island Library

kcls.org (206) 236-3537

- **11/1 [Tech Support for Older Adults](#), 3:00-4:30PM** (Every Saturday)
- **11/3 [Mercer Island Chinese Association ESL Classes](#), 10:00am-12:00pm** (Meets every Monday)
- **11/3 [Tech Support for Older Adults](#), 3:15-4:45PM** (Every Monday)
- **11/18 [MI Library Book Club](#), 1:30-3:00PM**
- **11/20 [2026 Medicare & Affordable Care Act \(ACA\) Open Enrollment Period 2026年醫療保險開放投保期](#), 2:00-5:00PM**, MI Library, Presented in Cantonese, Mandarin and English.
- **11/29 [Mooncake Making Workshop](#), 12:00-1:30PM**

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.

City of Mercer Island

www.mercerisland.gov/calendar

(206) 275-7657

- **Monday-Friday [Community Coffee](#)**, MICEC, **9:30-11:30AM**
- **Wednesdays [MI Thrift Shop Senior Discount Day](#)**, 20% off regular priced items (60+ with ID)
- **Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays [Stay Active & Independent for Life \(SAIL\)](#)** fitness program, **10:30-11:30AM and 12:00-1:00PM**, MICEC

Mercer Island Historical Society

mercenislandhistory.org

- **11/5 45 Years of Scuba Diving into Mercer Island's History with Matt McCaculey**, **7:00PM**, MICEC

Stroum Jewish Community Ctr.

sjcc.org (206) 232-7115

- **Ongoing, [Mercer Crest Bridge Club](#)** Lessons
- **Mondays, [Mahjong Mondays](#), 6:00-8:30PM** (Drop-in weekly & Beginner Classes monthly)
- **Monday-Friday, [Aqua Fit](#), 9:00AM**
- **Wednesdays, [Chair Yoga](#), 11:00AM**
- **Fridays, [Ageless Strength Training](#), 7:15AM**

Other Activities & Organizations

- [Mary Wayte Pool](#)
- [Mercer Island Farmers Market](#), **11/23 - Special Harvest Market, 10:00AM-2:00PM**
- [Mercer Island Sister City Foundation](#)
- [Mercer Island Visual Arts League](#)
- [Mercer Island Women's Club](#)
- [Old Friends Club](#)
- [OSHER](#) Lifelong Learning Institute at the UW



CITY OF MERCER ISLAND
YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

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YFS, 2040 84th Ave SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040

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