



Helpline House's Volunteer Special Edition Newsletter | January 2017



Bainbridge Turkey Trot Founders: Ann Browning (left) and Jennifer Campbell (right) deliver this year's proceeds to Helpline's Director, Joanne Tews.

Thank You Turkey Trot Founders for all you have done for Helpline House

The **Bainbridge Island Turkey Trot** in 2016 was a bittersweet day at Battle Point Park for the two longtime friends who are retiring their organizational running shoes and passing the baton. This year, more than 900 runners and walkers of all ages - many decked out as turkeys – turned out for the 5K and the 1 mile Fun Runs.

Jennifer Campbell and Ann Browning started the annual Turkey Trot 7 years ago, raising more than \$138,000 for the Helpline community!

In the end, they shared their experiences with Helpline's volunteer reporter, Karen West. Join us in a big thank you to Jennifer and Ann! We hope these reflections inspire and strengthen your volunteer efforts of *Neighbor Helping Neighbor*, in our island community. Visit HelplineHouse.org to learn more about our volunteers and volunteer opportunities.

Why did you want to be a part of this?

Ann: My second kiddo was sleeping through the night and I had energy again for work outside of the family. I have a lot of experience in event planning, love all things running and wanted to get more connected to our community (we were just a few years living on the island).

Jenny: Similar to Ann, my kids were reaching the age where I had enough bandwidth and flexibility to get involved in a new project. I used to run turkey trots with my extended family on the east coast during college breaks and felt that Bainbridge Islanders would welcome having one right here.

What have you gotten personally out of this experience?

Ann: It's amazing how many generous and thoughtful people and organizations are in our area. We have dedicated volunteers who come back EVERY year for the Turkey Trot. I might only see them on Thanksgiving every year, but we have a connection and it's like a unique family.

Jenny: Creating an entirely new event with a good friend made it all the better. Beyond that, the gratitude from people in the community expressing such appreciation for the event is so

rewarding. I've heard that it brings multiple generations of families out to exercise together, creates a local opportunity for people - kids and adults alike - to proudly achieve their very first 5K, and that it's people's new "family tradition."

Tell us about some of the funny, or maybe not so funny, experiences over the years?

Ann: This year the basement of the transmitter building flooded (where we have our registration pick-up) the night before the race. It was dry when I left after setting up on Wednesday afternoon, then FULL of water at 6 a.m. the morning of the event with 1,000 people coming to pick up their registration packets in over an hour as power cords were submerged and gear was floating. Thanks to a fantastic team of volunteers we moved everything outside quickly, set up tents and lights in the dark rain, and were ready in time for the crowds.

Jenny: There have been many challenges over the years: the ice storm and power outage the first year and the flooded building this year; in year 3 I moved to a new house just a few weeks before Thanksgiving and it took 2 weeks to get phone and internet at home; and one year the rear of my jeans split right near the finish line while I was surrounded by hundreds of people! Luckily I was also surrounded with friends, one of whom gave me her running skirt so I could cover up.



Funniest costume or experience.

Ann:We've had hundreds of turkeys. People take it very seriously. Mayflowers (with a crew running INSIDE the mayflower for 3.1 miles!), tables covered with food, life sized forks, knives, spoons and goblets, Vikings, even a local dentist in a life-sized tooth! We've always offered a prize for coming in costume (a mug or pint glass). I'm not sure if people dress up for the freebie or just because - but it's become a colorful tradition.

Jenny: One year a woman showed up in a full-body chicken costume but we couldn't find her registration packet. She later remembered that she had registered as "Rotten Egg" rather than using her real name! She donated the extra registration fee anyway since it benefits the worthwhile cause of Helpline House. In subsequent years she has become a friend of ours.

Why are you retiring?

Ann: We'd actually like to run IN it some day! We are retiring as it's time to make room for other projects in our life. We also have nurtured the event into something repeatable and turn-key so that another organization can come right in and keep it running smoothly.

Jenny: It has been a joy to create this event of which we are so proud and we are thankful that Island Fitness will carry on the tradition. Passing it along gives us more room in our lives for other projects, as well as more flexibility around the holidays to spend with family or travel out of town.



Stay tuned...

Look for the Bainbridge Island Turkey Trot in 2017 to continue to support Helpline House. The baton has been passed on to Island Fitness owners and long time supporters of Helpline House, Michael and Alexa Rosenthal. Visit BainbridgeTurkeyTrot.org this fall to learn more.

Helpline House is an umbrella of social services: providing professional crisis intervention, assessment, case management, resource referral, advocacy, short term counseling, food bank and medical equipment loan. Neighbor Helping Neighbor--One Neighbor At A Time.

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STAY CONNECTED

