Building Community
A Message from the Board President, Laurie Stumme-Diers

It is a delight to welcome Maria Metzler as the new Executive Director at Helpline House!

50 years ago, a handful of faith communities were listening.

A few dedicated volunteers gathered and gave birth to what is now Helpline House. In the beginning, the food bank was the primary focus of Helpline House. Today, Helpline House continues to provide access to nutritious food to over 200 households a week.

Over the past 50 years, listening to the community has continued. We have given shape to new programs that address the needs of the current community. Social Workers help clients navigate through complicated forms for Medicare, Department of Health and Human Services, Housing and Energy Assistance. They listen and provide support in the midst of life’s many transitions; job loss, relationship challenges, depression, grief, changes in physical and mental health.

Thank you for being an integral part of Helpline House! Thank you volunteers and donors. Thank you gardeners who share your produce. Thank you school children who collect tons of food. We are honored to be partners with you as we live out what it means ‘for neighbor to help neighbor’.

Isn’t it wonderful to know that Helpline House has been supporting our community for 50 years? We’re throwing a party for all of the people that have contributed to a more vibrant and caring Bainbridge. And we’re celebrating all of our neighbors that come to Helpline House to use the services our donors support.

This is truly a celebration of this community that has come together for 50 years to participate in the cycle of giving, and has volunteered countless hours, donated food and money, and has supported the Helpline House mission of ‘Neighbor helping Neighbor.’

We want to say THANK YOU to our community. Please join us on September 29, 2018 at Helpline House between 11am – 4pm.

There will be music, activities for kids and adults, food, and opportunity to look back at 50 years of Helpline House contributions to the community. Please Save the Date!

Donate online at helplinehouse.org
Homeless on Bainbridge

What can I do to help people experiencing homelessness? Given the enormity of growing homelessness crisis in our region, homelessness can seem like an impossible problem that personal actions can do very little to solve. But, the truth is that there is an opportunity - and a need - for each of us to become involved and to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness.

1. Ask questions. What are the causes of homelessness? What are the funding sources and policies that govern implementation of interventions on Bainbridge and in Kitsap County? What are the additional resources needed for any one intervention to be sustainable and successful? As a community we can start having conversations with our neighbors and elected officials about Homelessness.

2. Donate. You may have seen some people that you suspect are homeless on Bainbridge Island. If you want to help but aren’t sure how, reach out to agencies that work with people experiencing homelessness and ask what they need. At Helpline House, we receive and distribute a variety of items to support people who are sleeping outside:

- we take limited donations of socks (year round) and warm clothes (in colder months)
- in addition to some tarps, tents, and outdoor camping supplies.

Helpline House also supports neighbors who sleep in their cars, sheds, and other places of substandard housing. Donating supplies and funds to Helpline House allows us to obtain ‘kitchenless bags’ for people sleeping outside and weekly supplemental food for those who need it. Your support also funds staff that provide mental health counseling and case management to the local homeless community.

3. Volunteer. Get to know the available resources for people experiencing homelessness by volunteering in organizations that serve these neighbors. Volunteers better understand the struggles that the people experience trying to find meals each day, find much needed housing, or prepare for a job search.

4. Advocate. Beyond donating money and items, dedicating time to understand the types of interventions that work well is one of the most valuable ways to contribute to sustainable solutions. Having a deeper understanding of the potential interventions allows you to be an informed advocate to elected officials. Reach out to Helpline House to learn more about:

- overnight shelter, transitional housing, and affordable housing
- a day center with resources such as hygiene services and computers (job searches)
- outreach workers specifically for homeless individuals

How much will those interventions cost? What will make those efforts sustainable? What are the city and county policies surrounding these interventions? Informed advocates are one of our most important resources for sustainable change.

Donate online at helplinehouse.org
The Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island recently provided Helpline House with a $7,000 grant for computer upgrades. This very generous contribution of the Rotary Club means that our social work team will more easily be able to:

- connect with other social service agencies
- update client data records
- research appropriate referrals
- off-site engagement

Existing computers will be re-purposed for other staff and volunteer use as well as provide a computer in our Resource Room for clients to conduct necessary research and communication for:

- employment opportunities & applications
- apply for insurances
- book doctor appointments
- plan transportation
- complete applications

Some Island children have a happier birthday because of YOU, our donors and supporters. Project Happy Birthday receives requests for children’s birthday presents and this community responds generously. Thank you! I’d like to share that Helpline recently raised the age of Project Happy Birthday to extend to families who have children through high school. Previously, the age limit had been 12. We received a request for assistance with presents for a 13 year old and decided that simply because you’re 13-17, you should still be able to have presents and celebrate with family and friends.

We anticipate that the teenage requests we might get are likely to be for gift cards or electronics, and that these requests will increase the ask of the small but mighty group of current Project Happy Birthday volunteers. If you’d like to join this effort, we’d welcome some new faces to this amazing crew. If you’re interested in more information, please contact Tanya at tbierlein@helplinehouse.org
Free Medical Equipment Loans

We made some changes to our Medical Equipment Loan Program. We heard from some of our neighbors that the fee associated with the equipment loan was unaffordable. The cost led them to ask other non-profits to cover the cost or simply to refrain from requesting a loan at all. Helpline House wants to ensure that the equipment is available to anyone who could benefit from it. We've removed the required fee from this program.

We will still accept donations but will communicate that there are no pre-requisites to borrowing medical equipment. While we were strict about a maximum 90 day rental period, if you need to borrow equipment for more than 90 days, we just ask that you let us know. We also understand that the Bainbridge community may have friends or family members off island who could benefit from the program. Helpline House makes this resource available for others you know of who could utilize it.

We remain grateful to all of the donors who generously provide gently used equipment. Please know that your contributions allow us to loan items to people in need.

The Helpline House Food Bank is Working

How many of you have gone into one of the island grocery stores and been approached by an Interfaith Council volunteer, a young Cub Scout or a member of the Bainbridge Police Department and given a list of food items needed for the Food Bank? Helpline has benefitted from island-wide food drives for most of our 50 years; this support is invaluable for almost 10% of our island neighbors. While we provided essentially the same number of services in 2016 and 2017, the number of new households has risen from 67 in 2016 to 164 in 2017. How wonderful to know that even though we have increasing new shoppers, we also have folks who have achieved stability and don’t need to continue to use the Food Bank.

2017 FOOD BANK STATS
Discrete households served in 2017: 668

**HOUSEHOLD SIZE**

- 56% 1 person
- 21% 2 people
- 9% 3 people
- 6% 4 people
- 6% 5 people
- 2% 6 people

**AGE GROUPS**

- 2% 0-3
- 22% 3-17
- 37% 18-54
- 39% 55+

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Welcome: New Board Members

For the last 28 years, Mark Siler served as the Chief Financial Officer of DESC, a not-for-profit agency that provides emergency shelter, mental health case management and substance abuse case management services to homeless women and men. DESC also owns and manages 1000+ units of permanent housing for formerly homeless adults. Those housing projects are staffed 24 hours per day by social workers and case managers who assist residents to maintain their housing in the community.

Mark also volunteers with the National Park Service and the Poulsbo SEA Discovery Center. Mark looks forward to bringing specific experience in fiscal oversight to Helpline House.

Margo Dannemiller serves as the Utility Marketing Manager at Seattle City Light, one of the nation’s largest municipally owned utilities, recognized as a national leader in energy efficiency and environmental stewardship. Seattle City Light’s energy-efficiency programs allow customers to be active participants in creating a sustainable energy future for the region. Fully bi-lingual, Margo spent more than 12 years working in Central America.

She returned to the US and continued to work in marketing, primarily in Hispanic marketing, and mostly in Spanish and in an online environment. At Seattle City Light, she served on the Race & Social Justics (RSJ) change team. Margo brings this dedication to Race & Social Justice initiatives to her work in community outreach, energy efficiency and program marketing for the utility. She looks forward to offering digital marketing outreach knowledge to Helpline House.

Welcome: New Staff Member

Together, Supporting a Healthy & Whole Community

Sarah Doemland, MA, EAMP, joined the social work team in March. She has worked in the field of social work and mental health counseling for 15 years. Sarah worked in the social work field in California and Washington, and brings her experience in mental health counseling in Washington and Alaska. Sarah has provided counseling to adults, children and families. She believes strongly in the importance of community and looks forward to learning more about Bainbridge Island. She likes hiking, sailing, music and spending time with family and friends.

Donate online at helplinehouse.org
Bainbridge Island supports a healthy & whole community.

Donate Online at Helplinehouse.org

Join the Helpline House social network today.

Go Green
Subscribe to our e-newsletter at HelplineHouse.org or email Office@HelplineHouse.org

Volunteering at Helpline House

Join the Helpline House volunteer team, with more than 100 donating their time each year to help people in need throughout our community.

Foodbank
Picking up donated food from grocery stores filling shifts in the food bank (checking in clients, receiving donations and stocking shelves).

Special Events
Help with all aspects of the Helpline House seasonal programs, such as Project Backpack, Project Happy Birthday, Holiday Book Nook and the Turkey Trot.

Start Volunteering with Helpline House
Go to HelplineHouse.org/volunteer and apply online and you can help make our community a better place, too.