

HEALTH MATTERS 2.0

Lopez Island health-related news from CWMA, Lopez Island Hospital District, Lopez Island Fire & EMS (LIFE), and UW Medicine



A Message from the LIHD 2019 Board President

It was a busy year and I am proud of the Board's accomplishments during my tenure serving as President. The most significant event in 2019 was our co-hosting of the June Community Conversation with Lopez Island Fire & EMS (LIFE). In addition to a great turnout, close to 260 Lopezians completed the 2019 Health Care Survey in English and Spanish.

The Survey contained a tremendous amount of data and insights. The information shared by the community helped to inform and direct the Board's efforts over the second half of the year, and will continue to influence our longer-term strategic planning.

The areas of concern, and our activities in response, centered around the following:

1. **Insurance and coverage for emergency air transport** – Superintendent Presson has worked closely with Premera/LifeWise since it was announced they would be the only provider of individual, small group and Medicare Advantage insurance plans in San Juan County. She facilitated two visits to the County, including a site visit to Island Air, with a focus on ensuring a smooth transition in 2020 and a successful long-term relationship.
2. **Meeting future health care needs** – LIHD joined Peace Health, SJC PHD #1 and the Inter Island Healthcare Foundation in pursuit of a Network Planning Grant to explore ways of creating innovative, community-based solutions to meet the long-term care needs of islanders. LIHD's participation will ensure the needs of Lopez Island are factored into the design of future solutions.
3. **Continuation of Physical Therapy on Lopez** – LIHD's initial agreement with LIPT contained a limited subsidy, which was due to be exhausted in January. The Board voted to increase the 2020 subsidy by \$30,000 to support the practice as they continue to develop their business model.
4. **Access to Primary and Urgent Care** – results of the health care survey conveyed the importance of maintaining primary care services, including chronic condition management, in addition to addressing urgent care concerns. Clinic staff is also focused on striking the right balance to ensure the daily schedule will accommodate both scheduled and same-day appointments.
5. **Wellness** – Superintendent Presson worked closely with LIFRC to find and support the implementation of the Open Source Wellness program. The first group of 24 participants will begin the 16-week program in January.
6. **Mental Health** – through the Board's advocacy, UW Medicine will make its telepsychiatry program available to Lopezians in early 2020. Telepsychiatry services will be provided by the UW Medical Center Outpatient Psychiatric Clinic, and patients will be able to complete their appointments either at home or via video within the UW Medicine Lopez Clinic.

7. **Communication** – the LIHD Communication Committee, which includes LIFE, CWMA, and the UW Medicine Lopez Island Clinic, continues to look at ways of delivering timely and valuable health care information to the community.

I am pleased to share that the Board starts the New Year well-positioned to execute a three-year renewal term with UW Medicine, and there is mutual excitement to explore innovative ways of addressing the unique challenges we face on a rural, remote island. The strong partnerships we have worked hard to develop over the past year, both locally and with our clinical and insurance partners, allow us to bring resources and support that are beyond what's available to most small communities. As I pass the baton to the 2020 President, I feel confident LIHD will build on what we have achieved. I look forward to continuing to serve the Lopez community and deliver on our mission to ensure high-quality, island-appropriate health care is available to all Lopezians.

Rebecca (Becky) Presley, 2019 Board Chair

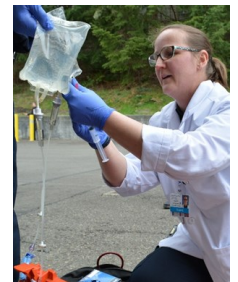
LIFE: Spotlight on our Paramedic Team



Caleb Pal



Nicole O'Bryant



Michelle McDarmont

Photos courtesy of the Medic One Foundation

We are excited to introduce you to our three full-time, firefighter-paramedics who serve the Lopez community. Caleb Pal, Nicole O'Bryant, and Michelle McDarmont all received their paramedic training through the University of Washington's Paramedic Training Program, hosted at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle. The Medic One Foundation provides the full tuition of approximately \$25,000 for each of our students.

The Paramedics receive 2,750 hours of intensive training over the ten-month program, including classroom instruction and clinical rotations through Harborview Medical and Trauma Center (HMC), Children's Hospital, and the University of Washington Medical Center. They learn to provide critical emergency medical and trauma care for the young, old, and everyone in between.

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During the program, Paramedics also gain valuable field experience applying newly acquired skills while riding on Seattle Fire Department Medic Units. Once they are back on Lopez, Paramedics maintain and advance their skills through monthly continuing education received from both HMC and San Juan County's new Medical Program Director, Dr. James Corsa.

Each Paramedic is assigned a "Sprint Car", allowing for rapid response to any fire, rescue or emergency medical/trauma incident on the island. When a Paramedic is on duty, they are considered the *Staff Duty Officer* for the day, which means that in addition to their normal duties they are responsible for the initial command and control of any incident – directing firefighters and EMT's on scene to effectively handle any emergency. We are fortunate that all three firefighter-paramedics live on Lopez Island and may be called in to provide additional help, if available.

Caleb is our most senior firefighter-paramedic and was born and raised on Lopez. He has been a member of LIFE for over sixteen years, the last seven as a firefighter-paramedic. Caleb has a significant background in electronic communications systems, which is of great value when dealing with the radio communications challenges here in the San Juan Islands. He currently lives at the north end of the island.

Nicole is a lifelong Lopez resident, has been a member of LIFE for nine years as a firefighter and EMT. She has been a Paramedic for just over one year and has an academic background in English communications. Nicole currently lives at the south end of Lopez.

Michelle is our newest firefighter-paramedic and completed her training in August 2019. Michelle came to Lopez in 2000, becoming a member of LIFE in 2012. She currently lives near Lopez Village.

All three of these great individuals are dedicated to the health and wellbeing of the residents and visitors of Lopez Island, and we look forward to their years of service. In the next edition of Health Matters, we will spotlight some of our exceptional volunteer Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and provide insights into the important role they play in supplementing and supporting the Paramedics.

Yours for *LIFE* – J. M. Havner, Fire Chief

CWMA Remains Dedicated to Supporting Local Health Care

Clinic Maintenance and Improvements

Catherine Washburn Medical Association's Building and Maintenance Committee has been busy! We purchased and installed a new lab grade refrigerator/freezer with newer, better monitoring to prevent loss or damage to critical medications/vaccines. We also improved procedures for monitoring the condition of the generator to ensure it's working properly during an unexpected power outage. We've also set up a process to ensure the ongoing monitoring of all sensitive medical devices in the clinic by health care equipment professionals.

New Equipment

Recently Lopez Island Fire and EMS (LIFE) was told by the manufacturer that their current Heart Monitor/Defibrillators would no longer be supported after 2020, effectively making all three of them obsolete. The total replacement cost is \$90,000, and CWMA donated \$30,000 to cover the cost of one heart monitor. We are happy to help ensure LIFE has the equipment they need to treat heart patients and save lives.

CWMA reached out to the Clinic staff to understand their equipment needs for 2020. The majority of the items were approved by the CWMA Board, including repairs to the x-ray machine, replacing three adjustable exam tables, a blood draw chair, a Vital Signs monitor, and a child's blood pressure cuff.

Physical Therapy Update

The Lopez Island Physical Therapy (LIPT) practice is doing well in their "terrific new space" (therapist Terri Drahn's words) which allows both providers to see patients at the same time. The practice has added a part-time administrative assistant to allow the providers to be more efficient. The number of new patients per day is steadily increasing, as is the demand for services. Comparing the third quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019: patient visits increased by 32% and visits per day increased by 34%.

CWMA Fundraising and Appeal to New Donors

We have a very brief history for those of you who are new to the island. CWMA was established in the 1970s to raise money to build and equip a medical clinic. Once that was accomplished, CWMA continued supporting the clinic by purchasing equipment, maintaining the building (which CWMA owns), and as the practice grew, expanding the facility. LIPT outgrew their space in the clinic years ago, and after an extensive search, CWMA found a new location for the practice. CWMA does not own the Physical Therapy building but subsidizes the rent, building maintenance and helps to provide equipment.

Our purpose is to extend a way for community members to support healthcare access on Lopez Island. All of the work we do is paid for by donations from our members and supporters. Small rural communities across the country are losing their medical facilities, and we are very fortunate to not only sustain but continue to support the practices as needs on the island change. We are committed to keeping health care local, and with the tremendous support shown by our members, we are confident we can help maintain access to high-quality healthcare on our small island.

For information about how to become a member and donate to CWMA, please visit our website: www.catherinewashburnmedical.org/guide-to-giving.

UW Medicine Lopez Island Clinic Welcomes New Staff

The UW Medicine Lopez Island Clinic is excited to announce that Heather Whybrew has joined the clinic care team as the newest RN. Heather has a Master of Science in Nursing degree and recently moved up to the San Juan Islands from Tacoma, WA. Her passions include patient care coordination and helping patients achieve the best possible care outcomes. Since Heather joined the Lopez team in October, we now have three nurses available almost every day to serve our community!

Janet Burleson has transitioned from her role as a Patient Service Representative to a Laboratory/X-Ray Technician 1. Janet is doing an amazing job running the lab and x-ray departments and is looking forward to serving patients in a more spacious and private lab space in 2020.

Andrea Rendon will be joining the clinic as a Patient Service Representative in January. We are so excited to have Andrea join our team. Most patients will recognize Andrea from her previous role at Lopez Island Pharmacy. Andrea has a unique set of skills and work experience that will truly round out the front desk team.

Thanks so much for welcoming our new team members!



Heather, her husband Charlie, and their dog Kota, hiking on San Juan Island