



# Health Matters

Health and Wellness Information for Our Community

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Quarterly  
Health  
and  
Wellness  
Information  
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Our  
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Autumn 2011  
Vol. 13 No. 4

CWMA  
Communications:  
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Editor:  
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Printing:  
Lithtex Northwest

**Dr. Bob Wilson**

## You Are Radiant

*Editor's note: Dr. Bob Wilson delighted readers for years with his quirky, off-beat medical columns in the Islands' Weekly. Here now, back by popular demand, is his latest offering.*

**S**uperman was not a pervert. While he did have x-ray vision, he only used it for good. Even if he wanted to use it inappropriately, which he didn't, it would not have been possible. Superman's x-rays were too powerful to mimic those airport Back-Scatter x-ray systems that see through clothing. He could only see bones or maybe through a wall.

Light is composed of photons. Very high-energy photons are x-rays or gamma rays, which, you recall, created The Hulk's super powers. Because of their high energy, rays can penetrate through material.

Superman's x-ray vision was about the same power as the x-rays used at Lopez Island Medical Clinic. These can penetrate tissue and are stopped only by our dense bones. This is ideal for imaging the bones in broken hand for example. Even so, they are still quite safe. It would take hundreds of clinic x-rays or a long, serious stare-down by Superman, to raise a person's chances of cancer. And Superman, being super polite, would not stare.

The interesting thing about radiation is that it behaves like many other "poisons." For example, tiny amounts of arsenic, dioxin or lead do not have any measurable effect on us. Likewise, until a person is exposed to about 50 mili Sieverts (mSv), a measure of absorbed radiation, there is no detectable increase in the incidence of cancer. So how many x-rays does it take to make 50 mSv? A single chest x-ray uses about .02 mSv. It would take 2500 chest x-rays to equal 50 mSv. On the other hand (not the broken one), some x-ray studies use much higher doses.

A CAT scan of the abdomen requires 10 mSv. Five abdominal CAT scans bring us to the limit. The Hulk gets 200 to 300 whole-body CAT scans a month just to stay in shape, but we should not.



Fortunately, very few of us will ever need frequent CAT scans and now there are other imaging tests that use no x-rays. Ultrasound uses high frequency sound waves that, as far as we can tell, don't hurt anyone. (This was unfortunate for UltraSonic Man. He only lasted about one issue. The bad guys kicked his behind.) MRIs are also safe. They use a combination of radio waves and a magnetic field. At about \$1700 to \$2500 per scan they aren't so safe for your pocket book though. There is no MRI Man. No one could afford him.

I see a time in the future when we use only the radiation from our bodies to make images. Yes, you emit radiation that is virtually all infrared, unless you are actively on fire or happen to be a super hero. Technology already supplies us with infrared detectors, e.g. night vision. Some day you may go to a clinic, walk in front of a detector, emit your radiation, and walk out with a diagnosis (no radiation for you but a very large bill for me.) Until then, choose your imaging studies wisely. In the meantime, feel free to emit your own radiation especially when coming to the rescue of others. You are Radiation Woman/Man!

## CWMA Board Members

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## Evening Meals at School

# Feeding Body & Soul on Lopez



The Lopez Locavores are behind the dinners. From the Locavores website: When the seed of Evening Meals at School was first planted, we hoped it would fall on fertile ground. Enthusiastic response has shown that our com-

**N**ourishing our community, nourishing ourselves” is the theme of Evening Meals at School.

The idea: local food, cooked by local chefs, served to the whole community in a communal setting. Everyone is invited. The price? Donation only. “We want it to be affordable for everyone,” says Michele Heller, who first envisioned the dinners in 2008. “The original idea was to help working parents provide a delicious meal for their families and to create a fun way to bring the community together.” The dinners were the outgrowth of Lopez School’s nationally acclaimed Island Farm Education (L.I.F.E.) Program which teaches students from K-12 about growing, eating and appreciating healthy local food.

munity was ripe for shared meals based on local, seasonal foods, and that the ideals we hoped to foster—to reconnect, revitalize, and sustain community—have taken root. ([www.lopezlocavores.org](http://www.lopezlocavores.org))





Volunteers transform the school lunchroom into the community's dining room covering long tables with color-coordinated tablecloths, votive candles and seasonal centerpieces. On some Evening Meal nights, Helen Sanders is out front in full regalia playing her bagpipes. Each dinner requires the help of about 25 volunteers who hang posters, set-up, greet, cashier, serve, bus, wash dishes, wrap silverware and clean up. "I enjoy tying on my apron and bussing tables," reports one volunteer. "I've lived on Lopez for 17 years, but one thing that surprises me is how many new people I meet. It's fun to share a table and eat a delicious meal together. These dinners appeal to a real cross-section of Lopez."

Evening Meals at School are now being held four times each year. The next dinner will be held at the school January 26, 2012 from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

"What we see here is islanders supporting islanders," says Jean Perry who has been an Evening Meals chef from the beginning.

"The dinners have evolved over time. Now we are reaching out especially to older people, elders, and families with children – anyone who may not regularly have delicious, fresh, natural food at home." Jean and chef Kim Bast plan the menu for each meal then put out the word

to local farmers for the foods they'll need. Almost everything is organic and locally grown.



**Photos from Evening Meals at School 2008-2011.** All photos by Robert Harrison



## Clinic Hours

Lopez Island Medical Clinic is located in Lopez Village at 103 Washburn Place.

Clinic hours:  
Monday–Friday,  
8:30 am- 5:00 pm

To schedule an appointment, call 468-2245 during regular clinic hours.

For medical emergencies dial 911.

<http://www.lopez-islandmedical.org/>

# Health Matters

Catherine Washburn Memorial Association  
P.O. Box 309 • Lopez, WA 98261

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Bellingham, WA  
PERMIT No. 114

CWMA Communications:  
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Editor: Lorrie Harrison  
Printing: Lithtex Northwest



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## How to Contribute to the Clinic

Donations to the Catherine Washburn Memorial Association (CWMA) directly support Lopez clinic. Checks may be made to CWMA. Please send your tax-deductible contribution today to:

CWMA  
Post Office Box 309  
Lopez Island, WA  
98261

[www.lopezislandmedical.org](http://www.lopezislandmedical.org)

## Your Donation Matters

# Lopez Clinic Depends on You

**D**id you know that without Lopezians' donations there would be no clinic on Lopez Island?

Consider this:

- Until the early 1970s there was no medical clinic on Lopez Island.
- In 1972 a group of islanders formed Catherine Washburn Memorial Association (CWMA) to built a clinic here. The Lopez Island Medical Clinic opened its doors in 1974.
- Neither the CWMA nor Lopez clinic has ever received government funding.
- Today, our clinic continues to depend on CWMA members' donations.
- One hundred percent of your CWMA donation goes directly to support our clinic.
- CWMA membership remains just \$25 per family; \$15 per individual.

The Catherine Washburn Memorial Association is the all-volunteer group of islanders that collects and manages operating funds and works with Island Hospital in Anacortes to assure that health services are available here. Island Hospital leases

the building from CWMA and operates the clinic. This unique relationship keeps our clinic on the leading edge of medical developments and technology, guaranteeing excellent healthcare for all who live, work and visit here.

But it takes each of us to make it happen. Every year, the CWMA sends a letter to all Lopezians asking for donations for the clinic. Membership letters went out last week. If yours is still on your desk, please mail it today. As a CWMA member, your check helps keep the clinic strong, gives you the opportunity to vote for the CWMA board and assures you a voice in the future of our clinic.

On behalf of Lopez clinic staff and the CWMA Board of Directors, thank you for your generosity. With your support, our Lopez clinic will continue providing first-class healthcare for all of us here on the island.