

# Community NEWSLETTER

April 2026

## Animals as Natural Therapy



Residents often express deep joy and surprise during the ongoing visits from Animals as Natural Therapy, with many sharing how these moments have become something they genuinely look forward to. One resident described opening their door to find a small goat waiting in the hallway, saying, "I couldn't believe it—I just started laughing. I haven't smiled like that in a long time." Staff regularly witness residents' eyes light up as they step into the hallway or common space, immediately softening and engaging with the animals. For individuals who have experienced long periods of isolation or survival-focused living, these unexpected, gentle interactions create moments of joy, connection, and emotional relief that are both immediate and lasting.

## Confidence boost brought you by Norrthwest Barber Academy

Residents often share how meaningful it is to receive haircuts from Northwest Barber Academy, with many expressing a renewed sense of confidence and dignity afterward. One resident looked in the mirror and said, "I feel like myself again," while another shared, "I haven't had a real haircut in years—I forgot how good this feels." Staff regularly observe residents smiling more, engaging with others, and even making plans to attend upcoming events after receiving a haircut. The experience goes beyond appearance—it creates a moment of care, normalcy, and human connection. For individuals who have spent long periods in survival mode, something as simple as a haircut can be transformative, helping them feel seen, valued, and more connected to their community.



## A huge thank you to Village Vets

The donation of vaccination supplies from Village Vets has a direct and critical impact on residents' ability to maintain stable housing. By ensuring that emotional support animals are up to date on required vaccinations and flea treatment, residents are able to meet lease compliance requirements that might otherwise put them at risk of violations or housing loss.

For individuals with low or no income and limited access to transportation, these services remove significant barriers and provide peace of mind. Beyond compliance, this support strengthens the bond between residents and their animals, which often serve as vital sources of emotional support, while reinforcing housing stability and overall well-being. We also extend our sincere thanks to Lutheran Community Services for generously allowing us to host this event in their community center, demonstrating the power of collaboration in supporting our residents.



# Looking Ahead

## A miniature horse and miniature donkey!



Bringing a miniature horse and miniature donkey through Animals as Natural Therapy offers a uniquely engaging and memorable experience that stands out from traditional programming. Their small size makes them approachable and safe, especially for residents who may feel hesitant around larger animals, while still sparking a sense of wonder and excitement. Residents often light up at the unexpected joy of seeing these animals up close—right in their own space—creating moments of laughter, curiosity, and connection. This one-of-a-kind interaction not only reduces stress and lifts mood, but also encourages social engagement and provides a rare, meaningful experience that many residents would not otherwise have access to.

## Here comes the sun!

Bringing back nature walks with Wild Whatcom as the weather becomes warmer and sunnier has had a refreshing and revitalizing impact on residents after the long winter months. These walks provide an opportunity to re-engage with the outdoors, soak in natural light, and gently increase physical activity, all of which support improved mood, energy, and overall well-being. After a season often marked by isolation and limited mobility, residents benefit from the chance to connect with nature, build routine, and share meaningful experiences with others. The return of these walks brings a renewed sense of vitality, connection, and joy as residents step back into the rhythm of the natural world.

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