



Personal Safety Nets Newsletter

Increasing your effectiveness touches
many lives

April 2009, Issue 16

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Seattle PI photo of Tim Woodland

Tim wrote to us to say that the 2009 **Firefighter Stair Climb** had been a success.

"Honestly, it was one of the hardest physical things I've done, ... but I'm already looking ahead to training for next year... **I just feel lucky to be able to participate in this event**, and try to raise money, especially for the kids diagnosed with **leukemia**."

On March 8, 2009 over 1,500 **firefighters ran, in full gear, up the stairs of**

Dear Linda,

This month we're focusing on increasing **Effectiveness**. To show you how effective your comments and input have been, we're proud to unveil the **new website for [Personal Safety Nets!](#)**

New features we're sure you'll enjoy:

- Our Toolkit with [Cool Free Downloads](#) - you can download and print these tools to help you as you build your own personal safety net!
- [Share your story](#) - we now have a way for you to share your Personal Safety Net story with fellow readers.

Our launch gift to you this month, is the [Extended Personal Data](#).

This simple one-page form (PDF) combines all the key personal information that you may need in a personal emergency. Who has your power of attorney, who has spare keys to your house? Fill in this form, update it regularly and you'll be better prepared for the unexpected.

Increase your effectiveness by joining the next class on weaving your own Personal Safety Net, April 29 & May 6, 6-8 PM. Held in West Seattle. [Event Details and to register](#)

Soft Skills: What it Takes to be Effective

In our feature story on the left, many Seattle firefighters joined together to multiply their individual efforts toward a common goal. Together they were much more effective than would have been possible if each had moved separately. It seems simple to ask participants in an event to each raise a portion of the funds for a good cause... especially for firefighters. However, these men and women needed a whole host of soft skills to actually be effective. The most significant skills were:

- **Commitment**
- **Organization: Both Personal and for the Team**
- **Support and Service to Others**

Commitment: The firefighters made and kept their commitment to the kids' health. They trained for one grueling year to climb the flights of stairs. They thought through the various barriers to their success, including their



Seattle's tallest building - the Columbia Tower. Their goal was to raise \$550,000 to help kids with leukemia. What a safety net they provided!

Tim organized his network of friends, family, and associates (his own Personal Safety Net) to raise donations so that, **together with other firefighters**, he could run up all those stairs. He wanted the kids to know that people cared. This happened, of course, 1,500 times over, since **each firefighter reached out to their individual networks, offering people in their communities a chance to help.**

The marvel of Tim's actions were evident in the power of the already courageous firefighters to extend the invitations, to communicate the need, to ask for help, to meet their individual fundraising goals, and to do so for the good of the whole.

Success relied upon a whole community pulling together for the good of all, multiplying the success of each. It was the right thing to do, to help those who need our love and support.

Our West Seattle firefighter, Tim, said "Through YOUR donations, I was able to contribute \$3,200 towards that goal! Thanks so much for your support!!!... I just feel lucky to be able to participate in this event, and try to raise money, especially for the kids diagnosed with leukemia."

Aren't we all fortunate to have 1,500 "Tims" in our midst! They are part of our own Personal Safety Net.

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personal physical limits, together solved problems and strengthened their skills. Their commitment kept their focus on the kids and not the daily workouts.

Organization: Personal and Team: A single pencil can easily be broken while a handful is much harder to snap. When an organized team with a purpose commits itself to a cause greater than any one person their collective will is not easily broken, like the sticks in a tight bundle that are all headed in one direction. They used the following organizational skills to pull this event together:

1. Shared Vision
2. Clear Priorities
3. Tasks Divided
4. Time Line
5. Goals Set

Support of and Service to Others: The 1,500 Firefighters, together with their networks of supporters, knew that joy and happiness in life are not found in "I and Me" but in caring for, supporting, and being of service to others. Learning how to reach out or reach down to link hands and help one another is a gift that keeps on giving. To do this required them to:

1. Think of others' needs - big picture focus
2. Believe in the value of their efforts - that each mattered
3. Reinforce one another when they flagged

Effectiveness

Effectiveness in our Personal Safety Nets is similar to the effectiveness of our fire departments. **It is both an individual and team effort** and involves multiple ingredients, as in [Steps to Having a Strong Safety Net](#).

1. Planning - individual and team
2. Preparation - foreseeing probable challenges and preparing for them
3. Individual and team training - in communication and coordination
4. Knowing your personal limits and how to ask for assistance in a timely and effective manner
5. Lots of heart for the effort, your team members and making a critical difference

Thank you firefighters - thank you Safety Net members. Creating a more caring and connected world is everyone's responsibility. Join us.



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Our Writers

[More About John](#)

[More About Judy](#)



Seattle Events - Open to All

Ready to make a difference in your life and become more effective? Join us at one of our upcoming events and learn how to weave your own Personal Safety Net, and why it's important.

[Tending Our Roots](#)

Dr. John W. Gibson is the keynote speaker at the April 22, 2009 breakfast meeting of Senior Services, dedicated to promoting the well-being of older adults. [Event details and to register](#)

[Bringing Order into the Next Chapter of Your Life NEW!](#)

Join Judy Pigott as she teaches a 2-session class held at 1718 Palm Ave. SW, Seattle WA, 98116, April 29 & May 6, 6-8 PM. \$10 plus \$40 book fee. [Event details and to register](#)

[Giving Care Taking Care](#)

Often caregivers find it difficult to ask for help even when they are providing more care than they can comfortably give. This 3-part class will cover how to ask for and accept help, clarify your preferences, and maintain the support from others. Northshore Senior Center, 10201 E Riverside Drive, Bothell WA 98011, May 20, 27 and June 3, 2009 6-8 PM, \$50 class fee includes the book and workbook. [Event details and to register](#)

[Feelings: Recognizing & Coping with Anger, Guilt and Grief and Getting the Help from Those Around You](#)

Join John and Judy as they discuss the above topics at the annual Seattle Caregiver Conference held in Tukwila, WA on June 1, 2009. [Event details and to register](#)

We invite you to submit and [share your own Personal Safety Net story](#) and personal photo.

Each newsletter we'll be offering a "[Cool Free Download](#)" for you to print and use to start building your own Personal Safety Net.

**The Safety Net Team,
Judy, John, Linda, Nate and Sue**