



Stanwood Lions Club

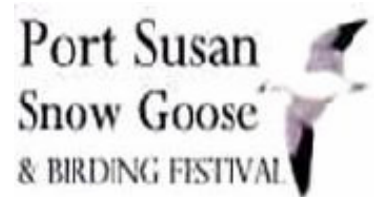
Lions Roar

February 2007

Stanwood Lions Club, PO Box 1211, Stanwood WA 98292
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It's Snow Goose Festival Time.

Four art shows and three special events, and – oh yes - I understand we'll do a great deal with the birds, too! All of the activities are at <http://www.snowgoosefest.org/>



1. Taxes: It's that time again. Here's some research I did for our Methodist Church Finance Committee. Everyone on this distribution is involved in support of charitable organizations, such as our Lions Club, or religious organizations. If you itemize deductions, there have been some significant changes, most affecting 2007, however, I would recommend a good review of Publication 526, Charitable Contributions It's on-line at <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p526/index.html>. Here are some significant features and I've abbreviated very heavily.

An IRA owner, age 70 ½ or over, can directly transfer tax-free, up to \$100,000 per year to an eligible charitable organization. This option is available in tax years 2006 and 2007. Eligible IRA owners can take advantage of this provision, regardless of whether they itemize their deductions. Distributions from employer-sponsored retirement plans, including SIMPLE IRAs and simplified employee pension (SEP) plans are not eligible. To qualify, the funds must be contributed directly by the IRA trustee to the eligible charity. Amounts so transferred are not taxable and no deduction is available for the amount given to the charity.

For clothing and household items (donated to charity after Aug. 17, 2006) must be in good used condition or better. However, a taxpayer may claim a deduction of more than \$500 for any single item, regardless of its condition, if the taxpayer includes a qualified appraisal of the item with the return. Household items include furniture, furnishings, electronics, appliances, and linens.

To deduct any charitable donation of money, a taxpayer must have a bank record or a written communication from the charity showing the name of the charity and the date and amount of the contribution. A bank record includes canceled checks, bank or credit union statements and credit card statements. Bank or credit union statements should show the name of the charity and the date and amount paid.

Credit card statements should show the name of the charity and the transaction posting date. Donations of money include those made in cash or by check, electronic funds transfer, credit card, and payroll deduction. Prior law allowed taxpayers to back up their donations of money with personal bank registers, diaries or notes made around the time of the donation. Those types of records are no longer sufficient. This provision applies to contributions made in taxable years beginning after Aug. 17, 2006. For taxpayers that file returns on a calendar-year basis, including most individuals, the new provision applies to contributions made beginning in 2007.

Donations in cash or value of \$250 or more. The new law does not change the prior law requirement that a taxpayer get an acknowledgement from a charity for each deductible donation (either money or property) of \$250 or more.

Car expenses. If you do not want to deduct your actual expenses, you can use a standard mileage rate of 14 cents a mile to figure your contribution.

2. More Tax information. After I distributed the information above to our non-profit activities on the island, I received a note from one of our best election workers. Here's the supplemental article.

One of the people we should all know better is Veronica Chadesh. She helps us run elections on Camano Island and has become our resident expert on the new electronic voting machines. In one of her other lives she will also serve as a tax consultant volunteer at the Camano Island Community and Senior Center this year. After reviewing my recent article, Veronica had these comments.

"I hope people also realize that the sales tax deduction is still available, even though it doesn't appear on the Schedule A. They passed the law keeping this deduction after they printed the forms. Any tax software package should have it included.

Same thing for the tuition and fees deduction and the deduction for educator expenses (both in the "Adjustments" section of the 1040).

I'll be one of the tax volunteers working at the Camano Senior Center this tax season. It should be fun. Veronica Chadesh"

3. Lion Ollie and Donna Stewart. I talked to Ollie's son Mike on Monday and Ollie is still making good progress and is expected to be release within the next two days. Donna is doing as well as expected, but she will be looking at an extended stay. Ollie and Donna are in Room B-11 in the Warm Beach Care Center if you have an opportunity to visit.

4. Can you help the blind? From Lion Rosemary Richert. "The February Activity for United Blind of Seattle is going to be a Shopping Trip to Northgate Mall on Saturday, Feb. 10th. We need volunteers to act as sighted guides and help with the

shopping experience (for example you might describe the look of a jacket or read a price tag) We'll provide some brief training before you start and then you have two hours to 'shop till you drop' together with one of our members. We'd love your help to make this a fun afternoon for everyone! For more details, Contact Patt Copeland, Activity Chairperson by calling (206) 282-3913, or e-mail Patt at pattcopeland@mac.com.

5. Helping the blind on Camano Island. I had talked to Patt Copeland about the possibility of our Club hosting an outing for United Blind of Seattle sometime this summer or fall. Patt had suggested September which is impossible for us, so I think we're looking at October now. I would like to take some of them down to the State Park and get some of the creepy crawlies out of the water for them to feel. Then, possibly use the University Lions camp ground for a box lunch of some type. Potty stops in and out at the new senior center. This can't happen without Lions volunteers to help with the arrangements and assisting the blind. I think I need around six or seven volunteers to make this a go. If you're interested please telephone, e-mail, or just let me know at our next meeting. Roy Leshner, 387-0483, roylesher@aol.com

6. Spring Conference is Here! Friday, February 23rd and Saturday, February 24th at the Holiday Inn - Downtown Everett. Registration forms are in your Busy B for this month (page 3), but we'll have some extra copies at our meeting next week too. Lion Frank Votry has mentioned that our Zone is responsible for decorations for Fun Night on Friday night. Since most of our members usually go down Saturday morning by car pool, that doesn't help Frank out. If any members can go down on Friday to help with the decorations, please let Lion Frank know. His telephone number is 654-0145 and his e-mail address is favotry@verizon.net. We will also need to make a head count at our next meeting of those going down on Saturday, the 24th for car pool purposes. The guest speaker this year is Dr. Beverly A. Roberts, serving a two year term as an Lions International Director. Her complete biography is on the front page of the Busy Bee this month.

7. Global Warming. The main site promoting the film, "An Inconvenient Truth" is at <http://www.climatecrisis.net/>, but if you'd like a good checklist of practical things that can be done, please print off the "Ten Things to Do" checklist at <http://www.climatecrisis.net/pdf/10things.pdf>.

8. John Dean's First 30 Days. Here's an extract from John Dean's first report to the public. "On the positive side, still another surprise is how many islanders are already volunteering on boards, commissions, and committees to improve our water supplies, human services, parks, health, agriculture, historical assets, and tourism. There is so much good going on, and so much more needed. As a New York Times writer recently suggested: "It is time for thoughtful citizens to turn off their TVs and step into the public arena." Many people are doing just that." If you would like to review a copy (subscription information is included), let me know and I'll forward a copy.

9. February Programs. On February the 7th, Stanwood Mayor Dianne White will address the Club on the "State of Stanwood." Arrangements for the second meeting are not firm at this time. Lion Jim Foster working on it.

10. The Whidbey Camano Land Trust is celebrating acquisition of the Livingston Bay tidelands and lower reach of Kristoferson Creek. This will be at Four Springs Preserve on Thursday, February 8, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. This notice was sent to you separately, but just a reminder that if you'd like to go, please RSVP by February 5th to (360) 222-3310 or jan@wclt.org

11. Food Handler's Permit. As we get ready for summer cook outs and organizational work where you prepare food, please take the time to get a food handlers permit. You can go to Skagit Valley Public Health in Mount Vernon where it can be done Monday - Friday, regular office hours, or you can get it done on Camano Island at the Community Meeting Room at the Public Health Clinic on East Camano the first Tuesday of each month. No need to sign up ahead of time. Please arrive around 10:15 am and class begins at 10:30. The class is about an hour and the cost is \$10.00. For further information the person who gives these classes is Sally Waters on Whidbey at 629-4522 X 5564.

See you at our meetings, Spring Conference and many other activities taking place this month!

Lion Roy Lesher