



# Health Matters

Health and Wellness Information for Our Community



## 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 hours.

Medical emergency?  
Dial 911.

[www.lopezisland-medical.org/](http://www.lopezisland-medical.org/)

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## Ready to Roll

# Big Red Makes its Lopez Debut

**L**opez Island's first ambulance, a white Cadillac hearse, was outfitted with a first aid kit, a stretcher and an oxygen bottle. "Basically one step up from a pickup truck," recalls Charlie Washburn, one of the locals who drove the rig in the 1960s. There were only about 550 full-time residents back then. With no paid medical staff or clinic

on island, friends and neighbors came to each other's aid when farming, fishing or logging accidents caused most emergencies.

As the saying goes: We've come a long way, baby!

If you've seen Lopez Island's new ambulance cruising around the village, you know just how far. Fire chief Jim Ghiglione describes the new addition to the fleet as our island's mobile emergency room. "Between Monday and Friday, 9 to 5, we use the back room of the clinic for extended treatment, but when the clinic is closed a great deal of patient care can take place in the ambulance. In an emergency, we have a lot of people back there, we need to maneuver. For the lifesaving team, space is a crucial resource. Getting fluids going with intravenous drips, intubation, taking vital signs, it's all about patient care." The vehicle was designed to serve two patients and accommodate enough staff to treat both.

If you're wondering whose dollars paid the \$200,000 price tag, the answer is: Lopez property owners. In 2013, voters agreed to increase the Lopez Fire District #4 levy by 16 cents per \$1000 of assessed property value. In addition to a third paramedic position, the levy funded the ambulance. "I look at it this way," says the fire chief, "this ambulance will serve Lopez for 20 years, that's \$10,000 a year, an excellent investment." Here's an interesting factoid: New ambulances



**"We carry more medications and diagnostic equipment than ever before," says Fire Chief Jim Ghiglione. He describes the state-of-the-art ambulance as Lopez Island's "after-hours emergency room."**

don't come rolling off the assembly line. They are custom built for the department ordering them. The process can take years. On Lopez, a small committee led by Paramedic Caleb Pal and Mike Christie, owner of Mike's Mechanical, began the rigorous process of investigating, evaluating and specifying exactly

what we needed in late 2012.

"I want to make sure Caleb gets credit for making certain the taxpayers got the most bang for their buck," states Jim. "He and his crew came up with a spec packet one-inch thick. Caleb was meticulous on the follow through. Before the cabinets and electrical were installed, before they began cutting a piece of metal, he went down to the factory to make sure the design matched our needs. Four trips in all. Imagine, line by line, page by page, checking each detail so our ambulance would be perfect. We used Braun Northwest in Chehalis. At the time they were building 500 ambulances for Los Angeles County and, of course, just this one for us."

Patting the side of the shiny red vehicle, he ticks off a long list of features: 4-wheel drive, diesel engine, LED lighting, cabinets custom-designed for medicine and lifesaving equipment that improve emergency responders' ability to provide advanced life support.

A final comment from Caleb: "Could you ask citizens to ensure their driveways have adequate clearance for emergency vehicles? With the size of this ambulance, tree limbs and branches are more likely to cause damage. We'd like to have unimpeded access to patients' homes. If people would like us to come inspect the driveway, they can contact the fire station at 468-2991 and we're happy to come out."

# Getting Healthy at Lopez Fit



**T**he Tuesday morning Circuit Class is revving up at Lopez Fit, with 17 people bending and stretching before their hour-long workout with Heidi Strong. Class members come in all shapes, sizes and ages. While the camaraderie, mutual support and good tunes are motivators, improved health is the reason most people leave the morning covers behind and head for this 7:45 a.m. workout. You don't have to be in good shape to show up. The new gym is more like a "come-as-you-are" party; welcoming, bright and airy, the space itself is energizing. In the background, peppy Latin music sets the pace.

Karen Gilbert, an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner, talks about why she comes to class. "I want to get stronger. As I've aged I noticed my muscle mass shrinking. I was getting weaker and I didn't like that. I've been coming three times a week for about 2 months, and see a difference. I can do more, lift heavier things in the yard and the garden plus it's fun to look at my arms and see muscles now! I am also seeking to reverse the effects of osteopenia (the natural loss of bone density that comes with aging). Working out with weights is one of the best ways to do that. There are medications, but I don't want those side effects. For me, this is the way to go."

Lopez Fit was founded as a not-for-profit community gym, available to everyone. "Officially, we're Lopez Island Wellness Center," says Pamela McCabe, one of the founding board members. "Our goal is to enhance the health and well-being of the whole community. We offer scholarships and reduced monthly memberships based on what a person can afford. It's good to see people coming in who haven't had the chance to do this before." Some monthly payment is part of

the agreement, even if it's a few dollars. To sign up, come in and speak with Heidi, the gym manager, who calls the process "easy and organic." A foundation grant, obtained through The Family Resource Center, helps fund the scholarships.

As a start up, the gym is naturally on a tight budget. Two part-time staff members are supplemented by volunteers working the front desk. The hope is that more memberships and increased donations will put the gym on solid financial footing and expand the operating hours. The board's goal is 125 annual memberships (\$40 per month or \$400 year.) The gym has 30 annual members now, plus 34 monthly members, 26 people on scholarship and 42 people are part of the SilverSneakers program for those over 65. Members get full use of the gym. Classes are additional, but the cost is low. Visitors are welcome to give the gym a try for the day rate of \$10.

How did Lopez Fit get started? When Aaron Dye announced his gym in the village was closing last fall, Heidi, who was teaching there, suggested starting a smaller community gym. A few of her class regulars, inspired by Heidi's skills and background, jumped on the bandwagon. Beth Shirk, Lexi Taylor, Laura Adams and Pamela got the ball rolling "never realizing the work involved!" Kirm Taylor and Mark Herrenkohl joined the team along with Kim Herrenkohl. Aaron donated his equipment to the new gym. "It was astounding. That's a lot of what made Lopez Fit possible," says Pamela. With immense help from the community (on moving day Dwight Lewis transported workout equipment on his front end loader), Lopez Fit held their grand opening the first week of January.

White Bear, who describes herself as "not a gym person" says it's like getting a blast of *ain't-life-great* every time she walks through the door. "Most of that comes from Heidi who is very positive. There can be a class of 20 people here, and Heidi's got time for each of us."

"When I started working out I was scared to death. I was so out of shape from being in the kitchen all those years. Most of the equipment was too much for me. I've had four joint replace-

ments but I'm here to tell you, it's definitely do-able. I cut my meds in half in two months, that's big! I'm sleeping better and have lost 19 inches already. People are lighthearted and non-judgmental. It's a kick in the pants being here every week!"

Lopez Fit phone: 3199

For more information, check out: [www.lopezfit.org](http://www.lopezfit.org)



# Please Donate Today

The Catherine Washburn Medical Association's Board is the all-volunteer group that organizes financial support for Lopez Clinic, collects and manages its operating funds and works with Island Hospital to assure that Lopez islanders have excellent medical care. Because the clinic relies on community funding, it's fair to say it belongs to all of us. Please make your contribution today. Supporting Lopez Clinic with your annual membership donation and financial gifts is the best way to keep outstanding medical care here on the island.

## 2015 Clinic Wish List

Dr. Wilson and the staff keep a list of items that the clinic needs. If you'd like to fund a Wish List gift, please contact Dr. Wilson or Office Manager Crystal Rovente directly at 468-2245.

- Elliptical trainer workout machine for physical therapy, new or used \$1400
- Hoyer Lift for the emergency room \$750 - \$1500
- Hand stabilizer for x-ray machine \$29
- BiPAP respiratory machine \$7000 - \$8000

# Island Hospital Ranks 3rd for Quality in WA State

Island Hospital earned high marks for quality from Medicare patients, according to an article in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer (PI). In a survey taken in 2013, 79 percent of Island Hospital's patients rated their care as 9 or 10 on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being highest.

The PI ranked hospitals based on the results of a U.S. Department of Health & Human Services survey of patients who stayed at Washington's Medicare-eligible hospitals. "We are very pleased by these rankings that substantiate our quality-of-care initiatives as well as our focus on the Island Hospital promise," said Vince Oliver, hospital chief executive officer. "This honor is shared by each and every Island Hospital employee and physician, as well as our Board of Commissioners."



# Support For Lopez Clinic

Annual CWMA membership (\$25 family household / \$15 individual) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Your additional gift will make a big difference*

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS FUND \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Upkeep of the clinic building and grounds*

SIKSTROM FUND \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Assist those who are unable to afford medical care*

EQUIPMENT FUND & WISH LIST \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Purchase state-of-the-art medical equipment for Lopez Clinic*

*List item you would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_*

RESERVE FUND \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Available for capital improvements or emergency needs*

ENDOWMENT FUND \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Provide perpetual income for funding major capital improvements*

Total tax deductible donation (credit card payment or checks to CWMA; no cash please) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here if you'd like your donation to be anonymous

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Visa  Mastercard# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ Billing zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to CWMA • P.O. Box 309 • Lopez Island, WA 98261

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



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## New Electronic Medical Record System: Many Benefits for Both Patients and Staff

**P**aper charts at Lopez Clinic have gone the way of the \$12 ferry ticket. Instead of inch-thick patient charts, once as common as tongue depressors in exam rooms, Lopez clinic staff now use sleek computers.

Good news for patients? Absolutely. From check in to check out, information gathering and recording is streamlined and improved. The moment a physician, nurse or technician takes your information, it's entered into your electronic medical record (EMR). All clinic staff has access to your information with the click of a mouse. No passing charts back and forth, and leafing back, page by page, to find medical details. Hospitals around the country have been converting to EMR for years, and the benefits are impressive. Administrators report that the system's built-in checks and balances keep medical details from falling through the cracks. The improved efficiency and accuracy are making the system popular with patients, administrators and clinicians.

But there's more. Starting this summer, patients who sign up for a free service called Patient Portal can access their own medical records anytime, 24/7 on their computer, tablet or smartphone. All they need is connection to the internet.

The service, which will be offered to Lopez Clinic patients through Island Hospital, will enable patients to take a more active role in their own healthcare. Once they log on to the secure server, patients can access their personal health information and view portions of their medical record. Typical examples, given on the Island Hospital website, include information about recent visits, physician's notes, medications, allergies and immunizations, lab tests and blood work results. Billing information, too. If you have other specialists to see, you can print out key information from your personal record and take it to those appointments.

Signing up is easy. Just drop by Island Hospital next time you're in Anacortes and register for the service. You'll be given a one-time logon ID and password (both case sensitive). For security purposes, you'll be asked to activate your account within 7 days. Once that's done, access to your medical records whenever, wherever you like, is at your fingertips. Lopez Clinic will be signing up patients later this summer.

For more information about Island Hospital's Patient Portal, visit <https://www.islandhospital.org/myisland-health>