

Aging in Place



BY **SUSAN NOACK, CHAIR, TUALATIN AREA AGING TASK FORCE**

GOOD NEWS! Ride Connection is now officially in Tualatin and ready to go. The administrator is Debbie Waalkes and the new office is located at the Tualatin Chamber of Commerce offices at 8101 SW Nyberg Street, Suite 1. Vans and drivers are in place and ready for your call. If you are a senior or person with a disability, you just need to register with the Service Center by calling **503.226.0700**. They will take your contact information, discuss your needs, explain how this service works and then you will be ready for a ride.

As we have talked about in previous columns, Ride Connection's mission statement is "to link accessible, responsive transportation with community need." We hope you will take advantage of this free service which will give those who need it the opportunity to have more mobility in and around Tualatin.

On another note, the Aging Task Force continues to focus on one of our goals which is Safe Routes for Seniors (don't forget that whatever research we do and proposals we offer actually would benefit everyone in our community, not just seniors). Walking is the second most popular means of travel among people 65 and older. Walkability is a fundamental contributor to livability to connect people to their community.

Our objectives for this goal are:

1. Work directly with seniors to identify obstacles to walking;
2. Develop design guidelines that would remove obstacles to walking for seniors;
3. Advocate for local government adoption of street safety improvements, targeted to seniors, as well as advocate for physical changes on the streets.

To that end, we are asking for your help in identifying troublesome aspects of the walking environment and possible solutions. We need to evaluate sidewalks, intersections, cross walk striping and signal timing, signage, lighting, seating and even driver behavior to pedestrians. An example of an area to study would be the walk from the library to Fred Meyer on Martinazzi or the intersection of Boones Ferry Road and Nyberg Street (which turns into Tualatin Sherwood Road). It's not just safety and accessibility in our downtown and business areas, but are your neighborhood streets safe to walk along and cross? We need your input for the whole of Tualatin.

Join us at our next meeting on Monday, June 13, 3:00 pm. Juanita Pohl Center, to get involved in the study/research process and participate in offering our findings to the City as they redesign the City's Development Code and update the Master Plan. We CAN BE part of the solution.

If you cannot attend the meeting, please send your questions, concerns or comments to susancnoack@hotmail.com.

Susan Noack has lived in Tualatin for 15 years. Before retirement, she was a development director/event planner for non-profits. Now as an "Aging in Place" senior, her passion is being an advocate for seniors and giving back to the community. She is a member of both the Meals on Wheels People and Juanita Pohl Center advisory committees and chair the Tualatin Area Aging Task Force committee.

