

During the last six months, the Whidbey Institute has been blessed to consider a rich pool of candidates interested in becoming our next Executive Director, as Dianne Shiner heads into her planned retirement at the end of January. Last Wednesday, the Institute Board of Directors was thrilled to accept the recommendation of the Search Committee to appoint Ruth Pittard as the new Executive Director of Whidbey Institute at Chinook.

Ruth has spent 30 years with Davidson College, most recently as Assistant Dean for Community Service, in Davidson, NC. After retiring from Davidson College, Ruth has been traveling around the country visiting friends. She spent the summer as a volunteer with the Giraffe Project on Whidbey Island and fell in love with the area and with the Whidbey Institute.

In her application, Ruth answered the question, "Why would you like to be Director of Whidbey Institute?" with this statement:

*For thirty years I loved getting up to go to work, looked forward to the challenges and glories of educating young people, working with faculty, and being a part of a magnificently creative and dedicated team of professionals working toward a common goal with a common mission. The possibilities of bringing all sorts of people together around the challenging issues facing us today stoke my passion, engage my mind, and move my heart. As old paradigms morph into the new realization of one-ness, dreaming becomes a respectable and desirable operating system that can open up exciting ways of being and doing.*

Ruth is already working closely with Dianne and the Board to intentionally complete a critical leadership transition in the rich history of the Institute. This transition will honor with deep gratitude the incredible fulfillment of Dianne's commitment to give the Institute "her all" for 3 years, and leverage this renewal to its next stage in service to earth, spirit, and the human future. Ruth will arrive January 8th and you will be receiving an invitation early in the year to participate in welcoming Ruth to her new community ... and to experience Ruth's grace, engaging storytelling, and infectious embrace of life.