

RENTON

Volume 4 / No 9 September 2009

Magazine



Silver Wings
Russell Williams goes
analog for vintage airplanes

page 10

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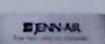
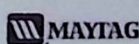
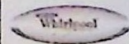


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publisher's note

One reason we don't cover current events in *Renton Magazine* is that they change too quickly for us to be able to give you an accurate picture. We must rely on newspapers and blogs to inform us.

One recent case in point is the firing of Dr. Don Bressler as president of Renton Technical College.

RTC offers valuable training for students living in Renton, Kent and surrounding areas. Area businesses have been helped through the Small Business Development Center, as just one example.

RTC is part of a loop. It offers what the community needs. The community responds by participating in its offerings, hiring its graduates, or giving

time and money to support its programs.

I hope Dr. Bressler is re-instated, and perhaps by now, he has been. He's done well by the college and the communities it serves. Not everyone is happy with his performance, but no one person can please everyone.

But for me the takeaway in this situation has been the extent to which one determined person or a small group can influence an outcome. It's what is great about living and working in a real community, as Renton is.



Diana Kramer
PUBLISHER

Within minutes or hours, news spreads about a specific situation. Phone calls (or e-mails) go out, and people start talking. What to do, what to do. Sometimes thinkers and doers gather, and suggestions are made about what to do next. Some consensus is reached, and people move forward.

This is what happens in communities. It happened when Dr. Bressler was fired, when catastrophe strikes a family or neighborhood, when people need help or an institution becomes broken.

This makes me proud to share this community with you. It emphasizes just how much we genuinely influence our lives. We are not simply at the mercy of our environment or the decisions of others – unless we choose to be.

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cover:

Russell Williams' 1938 Ryan SCW-145 awaits a day's activities at a fly-in for vintage aircraft. The polished aluminum is dramatic to see, but a challenge to maintain. Story page 10. Photo courtesy of Rob Bach.

important phone #'s

City Hall
425.430.6400

Chamber of Commerce
425.226.4560

Community Center
425.430.6700

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Library (Main)
425.430.6610

Library (Highlands)
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Police Dept
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Renton Community Foundation
425.264.0516

Renton Magazine
425.271.9300

Renton Museum
425.255.2330

Senior Activity Center
425.430.6633

Valley Medical Center
425.228.3450

upcoming events

Forever PLAID

September 4-19

This funny musical tells the story of four young, eager male singers killed in a car crash in the 1950s on the way to their first big concert. They're miraculously revived for the posthumous chance to fulfill their dreams and perform the show that never was. The play includes pop hits of the 1950s and choreography and directing by Ann Arends.

Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m.

Renton Civic Theater
507 S. 3rd St.

425-226-5529

Admission:
\$25/adults; \$17/seniors and students

SOCCER CHALLENGE

SEPTEMBER 24



Youth ages 5 to 14 are welcome to this evening event where they can play soccer games and learn new skills. Pre-registration is required by Sept. 1 for residents and Sept. 8 for non-residents. This annual event is co-sponsored by the City of Renton and Renton Sports and Spine Physical Therapy.

425-430-6700
Thursday, 6-8:30 p.m.

Ron Regis Park
1501 Orcas Ave. SE



september 8

Commemoration of September 11

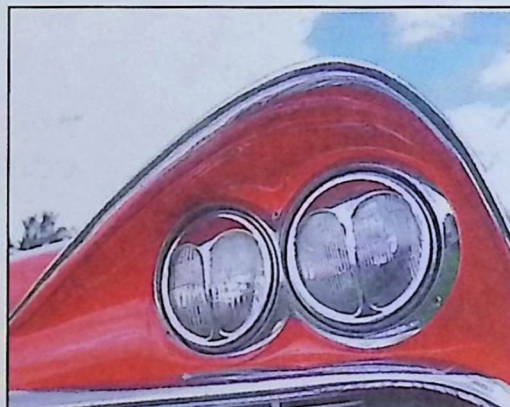
Professor Faizi Ghodsi returns to the Renton History Museum to explore the relationship between Islam/Middle East and Western cultures within religious, historical, social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions. He will also comment on the current situation in Iran and the Middle East.

Tuesday, 5 p.m.

Renton History Museum
235 Mill Ave. S.

425-255-2330

Admission: Free for RHM members



september 12

3rd Annual Skyway Classic Car Show

The West Hill Business Association presents its annual show with more than 80 cars in 10 different categories. In addition to classic cars, there will also be vendors, food, raffle prizes and trophy awards at 3 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Skyway Plaza (Roman Casino parking lot)
11829 Renton Ave. S.

206-818-4999 or 206-243-1231

Fee: \$20 entry fee after Sept. 1; free to spectators

www.westhillbusiness.com



september 12

Washington Small Business Fair

Small business owners and prospective owners are welcome to this free event where they can learn tricks of the trade and network with other business owners. The event features workshops and seminars with approximately 30 business and trade associations, local chambers of commerce, and government agencies.

Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Renton Technical College
3000 N.E. 4th St.

206-220-5300

Admission: Free, no advance registration required

upcoming events

SEPTEMBER 13

ST. MATTHEW'S BLOCK PARTY



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church Block Party is open to all families. There will be a "Kids Zone" and expanded activities for kids of all ages. Included also will be an expanded car show, live music, plant exchange, and pony rides, and of course, free food.

Sunday,
2-5 p.m.

St. Matthew's
Lutheran
Church
1700 Edmonds
Ave. N.E.

425-226-2420

Admission: Free

SEPTEMBER 19

Off-Leash Dog Park Celebration



Saturday, 10 a.m.-noon

Cedar River Off-leash Dog Park
1500 Houser Way S.

425-430-6700 / Admission: Free

With help from Mayor Denis Law and local volunteers, Renton will unveil the Cedar River Off-leash Dog Park. Instead of the traditional ribbon cutting, there will be a leash cutting. Food and refreshments will be available. All breeds of dogs are welcome.

SEPTEMBER 26

HARVEST CELEBRATION *Farm Tour*

SATURDAY, 10 A.M.- 4:30 P.M.

Farms from around King County invite you get a taste of farm life. It's a day of fun and agricultural learning for children and adults. See for yourself where farmers grow our local foods, raise farm animals, and steward rural and agricultural land in King County. Farm locations in south King County can be found at www.king.wsu.edu. Click on "food and farms" and follow the link to "harvest celebration."

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calendar of events



COMMUNITY EVENTS

2009 Renton Farmers Market

Tuesdays through Sept. 15, 3-7 p.m.

The public is welcome to get a taste of summer at the annual downtown Renton Farmers Market. The market welcomes more than 50 vendors and farmers selling locally grown farm products, including organic fruits, vegetables, cut flowers, baked goods, and herbs. Live entertainment and chef demonstrations are featured each week.

The Piazza
South Third Street

425-430-7214

Admission: Free

www.rentonfarmersmarket.com

St. Vincent de Paul Friends of the Poor Walk-a-thon

Saturday, Sept. 26 from 8 a.m. to noon

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is hosting the second annual Friends of the Poor Walk in 151 cities nationwide to help poor and needy families. The walk is a countywide event, but participants

may designate the funds to their local St. Vincent de Paul group. Last year the event raised \$33,000 in the Seattle area and \$800,000 nationwide. To download and print, or to email pledge sheets to your friends and family, go to www.svdppfriendsofthepoorwalk.org. There is no minimum or maximum donation.

John F. Kennedy High School
140 So. 140th St. Burien.

206-957-7241 (Richard Bray)

Admission: Registration is free.



Fall Recycling Day

Saturday, Sept. 19, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Residents have an opportunity to recycle large items and hard-to-recycle materials at a central location. Call Solid Waste Utility for more information at 425-430-7396.

Renton Technical College (north parking lot)
3000 N.E. 4th St.

Cost: Free

FREE PROGRAMMING

Free Tours at Renton History Museum

Third Saturday of the month, 11 a.m.

Tours at the Renton History Museum are appropriate for elementary students through adults. No

reservation is necessary, unless there are more than five people in the group.

Cost: Free

LIBRARY EVENTS

Renton Public Library

100 Mill Ave. S.

425-430-6610

Adult Reading Group

Third Thursday of the month, 7-8:30 p.m.

Sept. 17-"Peace Like a River" by Leif Enger

Cost: Free

Baby Time

Fridays, 10 a.m.

This new story-time program, starting in September, is for parents and their babies, ages newborn to 24 months. The morning includes board books, puppets, songs, rhymes, and play-time.

Cost: Free

Young Writers Group

Thursday, Sept. 24, 4-5 p.m.

This new program at the library's main branch is for youth, ages 13 to 17, who want to learn new ways to express themselves in writing. Students will be able to share their writing, learn creative writing techniques, and build a creative portfolio in a relaxed, non-judgmental setting. Snacks and refreshments will be provided. Call the library to register.

Cost: Free

Teen Tuesdays

Tuesday, Sept. 29, 3-4:30 p.m.

The last Tuesdays of the month are teen days at the Highlands Library. Teens can drop in for games, snacks, free stuff, contests, and more.

Highlands Library
902 N.E. 12th St.

425-430-6790

Cost: Free

SENIORS

Renton Senior Activity Center

211 Burnett Ave. N.

425-430-6633

Pet Show

Thursday, Sept. 10, 10-11 a.m.

For one morning you can bring your live pet to the senior center. There will be a pet parade, a raffle of goodies, and refreshments for you and your pet. All pets must be leashed, or in a cage or kennel. Register no later than Sept. 8.

Cost: Free

Fitness Studio Grand Opening

Wednesday, Sept. 30, 10 a.m.

The Renton Senior Center unveils its newest amenity: a fitness studio. The fitness center was converted from a sewing room with support from a \$76,340 grant from the First Financial Northwest Foundation Fund.

Cost: Free

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RTC: A vital economic stimulus

There is a troubling myth that I frequently encounter in the community. It has to do with one of my favorite institutions, Renton Technical College. People often assume that RTC is made up of students who have washed out of high school, who can't get into college and therefore have lowered their expectations.

Nothing could be further from the truth. RTC has some of the most highly committed students attending any place of learning. Many of them are working full time, going to school and raising a family. They have a deep desire not only to improve their own lot in life, many of them want to excel so they can provide more for their extended families.

You might be surprised to know that the average age of RTC students is 33. More than 50 percent of the students are people of color. The cafeteria looks like a gathering of the United Nations.

Renton Technical College keeps the Puget Sound economic engine fueled because it provides courses only in areas where business and industry are looking for skilled positions. A student in as little as six months or as long as two years can go from earning minimum wage to making a living wage. Some of the programs are so in demand that companies are trying to hire the students before they complete their course work.

The programs are as varied as the demands in the community. Currently in the lead position is Allied Health, providing training for LPNs, surgical, pharmacy and ophthalmic techs. Running neck-and-neck are programs in computer science and networking, with strong backing from the Boeing Company. The automotive program continues to operate with

state-of-the-art equipment and a solid relationship with the Ford Motor Company. You have to be computer smart to work in the auto industry today.

I am known to take full advantage of RTC's world-class culinary arts program headed by one of the top chefs in the world, John Fisher. I asked John one day why, with his superb credentials, he is teaching. He told me he had done it all in the culinary world. At the end of the day, nothing gives him more joy than teaching others the art he loves. John is representative of a top-flight faculty who are not only tops in their professions but passionate about empowering others to do the same.

The list goes on and on of fascinating professions that are responsive to the demands of even a challenged economy.

RTC and the Renton Technical College Foundation are working overtime to identify scholarship monies to help these highly motivated students move from poverty to self-sufficiency. I know some of the stories of people living in their cars while attending school, desperate for that last quarter of tuition that will put them in a trade earning \$60,000 - \$80,000 a year. I was surprised to learn their greatest source of scholarship money is private individuals.

Heading RTC over the past nine years has been Dr. Don Bressler. He has been a passionate advocate for RTC and through his active participation in the community has made RTC a first class institution and a valued community partner. I was shocked when I learned three board members took it upon themselves to fire Dr. Bressler, citing their desire to point the college in a new direction. This is a tragic abuse of position and one that undermines so much of what is so right about RTC. I know I speak for many when I express both my sadness and a deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Bressler and his wife Susan for their contributions to our community.

Renton Magazine columnist Kirby Unti is pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in the Renton Highlands.



Kirby Unti
COLUMNIST

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Dogs are free to run in new off-leash park

BY ANDREW FICKES

Thanks to support from volunteers, city leaders, and retail and private sponsors, Renton's four-legged residents finally have an off-leash dog park to call home.

And their owners couldn't be more thrilled.

"I was tired of getting on the freeway and going all the way up to Marymoor Park in Redmond," says Debbie Englund, a Renton Hill resident with two female dogs: a shepherd lab and a cocker spaniel. "If Renton is ahead of the curve, we need to remain ahead of the curve."

Located at the head of the Cedar River trail, the four-acre Cedar River Off-leash Dog Park opened June 26. On a recent, cool August evening countless dogs and their owners gathered at the park. The dogs were let loose while their owners socialized and shared doggy stories.

"It's amazing for the community to come together like this," says Englund. "I've met a lot of friends so far."

There is even a corral at the park for smaller breeds, helping to keep smaller breeds away from the big dogs, so they're not frightened.

"The fact there is a corral is perfect," says Jeannette Bell, a small dog owner who recently started the Renton

Pint Sized Pups (search for Renton Pint Sized Pups at www.meetup.com).

Sure, some dogs play rough, but it's just play. Owners carefully monitor their dogs. And when the dog does its duty, so to speak, owners are expected to pick up afterwards with poop bags provided by the City of Renton. The park is self-policing, says Englund.

There are no restrictions on breeds. A list of rules is at the kiosk at the front of the park along with displays of dog aggression owners should watch out for. Two big rules: your dog must be vaccinated and licensed, and your dog can't wear spike or choke collars.

The journey to build the park began in March 2008.

A task force found a site and the City Council approved the site plan last October. By

the end of March 2009, RUFF (Renton's Unleashed Furry Friends), a non-profit, was incorporated and became a part of the Renton Community Foundation.

RUFF has raised nearly \$30,000 to support building and maintenance of the park. McLendon Hardware donated the fence. The Animal Health Care Center also donated \$1,500 to help build the information kiosk. Other donors include Perry Excavation, the

Dog and Pony Ale House, Vino at the Landing, Renton Rotary, Armondo's Café Italiano, and Melrose Grill.

For Renton Hill resident Kevin Poole, the off-leash park couldn't have come at a better time for his dog,



RENTON MAGAZINE / ANDREW FICKES

Development of the Cedar River Dog Park along the Cedar River trail was accomplished by dog owners, local businesses, and city leaders. Advocates Kevin Poole (left) and Alex and Mindy Gillespie celebrate with their dogs on a cool August evening.

Pokey, a lab mix.

"I was really hoping to see a dog park created, because I adopted a dog who had a lot of energy and required a lot of space to run and play," says Poole.

Poole said Philip Arnold Park had become sort of an unofficial place for dogs, but animal control officers quickly put an end to that by enforcing a \$250 fee for off-leash dogs.

"People are really amazed that the park was built so quickly and are really appreciative of its existence," Poole says. "It's really nice to drive a short distance, or in my case, walk to a place on a regular basis where you can let your dog play and run around and exercise. You also don't have to worry about them running into the street."

More
information about the
Cedar River Off-leash Dog Park is
available on-line at www.rentonoffleash.org. RUFF (Renton's Unleashed Furry Friends) continues to look for support from businesses and private donors. The group has a two-year funding goal of \$50,000, and donations are tax-deductible.

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Janie Hendrix, CEO of Experience Hendrix, was only 9 when her brother died. The Jimi Hendrix Memorial was dedicated in 2002, honoring the life of the famed rock guitarist as well as past and future family members, with 56 plots. Photo left, taken by Kerri Ladines, photo right, taken by Andrew Fickes.

'I'll always take care of you'

BY ANDREW FICKES

Jimi Hendrix's sister keeps her promise

Janie Hendrix remembers a time when she was a little girl, visiting her famous rock star brother, Jimi, backstage at the Seattle Coliseum (now Key Arena).

"He told me, 'I'll always take care of you.' And I said, 'When I grow up, I'll always take care of you.'"

And in a way she has. Only 9 years old when Jimi Hendrix's life was cut short on Sept. 18, 1970, Janie is taking care of her brother's legacy. Since 1995 – the year the Hendrix family secured the rights and licensing to all of Jimi's music – Janie has been CEO of Seattle-based Experience Hendrix.

Initially, when Jimi Hendrix died, his father Al could afford only a simple, humble plot for his son in Greenwood Memorial Park in the Renton Highlands. Cemetery officials were guessing that some 10,000 people would visit the grave site each year. After 27 headstones were stolen, Al finally purchased a marker that went deep into the ground. So afraid his son's body would be stolen, Al had the casket buried in a cement vault with a top that could be removed only with a crane.

Throng of visiting fans trampled the grass, and the grave site endured significant wear and tear. Al passed away in April of 2002, but Janie carried on with her father's wishes and saw to the com-

pletion of a permanent memorial for Jimi and other family members. It was dedicated June 10, 2002.

Fans from all over the world continue to pay homage every day of the year. Even celebrities have visited, including – very recently – the guitarist of Motley Crue and members of the hard rock group Papa Roach.

Jimi's grave marker is in the center of the memorial, which has eight benches with cremation urns. Below the floor are four crypts, including one with Jimi's body. Etched in the marble and granite are drawings of Jimi, reproduced from the "Jimi Hendrix Experience" recorded collection.

The marble includes one named rainbow marble, which Janie says was appropriate for Jimi, who once performed at the Rainbow Bridge on Maui Island. The group he put together to perform at Woodstock, the year before his death, was Gypsy Sun and Rainbows.

Janie notes the prodigious amount of work – songs, record albums and tours – that Jimi produced in the four years before he died.

"It was almost as if he had the foresight that he had a short amount of time on this earth, and he was here for a purpose," says Janie. Yet her fondest memories are of the times Jimi came home to Seattle. If he performed in Seattle, he would stay with family.

"When Jimi came home, it was a nice reunion," Janie says. "It was family time when he came home."

Janie appreciates that the memorial teaches other generations about her brother.

"I've been here when people are playing songs on guitar," she says. "It's just amazing that 39 years later, people still remember him."

In addition to the memorial, visitors may also sign a guest book at Greenwood in a special room dedicated to Jimi. Guests will find a framed "Are You Experienced" album and historical artifacts, including letters written home by Jimi while he served in the 101st Airborne and cartoon drawings.

Janie Hendrix

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Flying Silver

BY JAMES BAVENDAM

Owning an antique airplane is a choice of character over convenience. Critics complain that antiques need too much servicing, they smoke, they're noisy, they don't go fast, they use too much fuel, and you can't see out of them very well.

Enthusiasts smile and say, "Yeah, isn't that great?"

One such enthusiast is Russell Williams, who spent years developing software for digital computers. His spare time is spent in an analog world of antique airplanes.

Flying a modern airplane high and fast will get you to a destination quickly. Flying an antique airplane low and slow lets you smell newly mown grass; hear the throaty, warm growl of a radial engine, and enjoy a community of people who appreciate the beauty, originality and craftsmanship of earlier times.

The Ryan

Responding to a classified ad, Williams first saw the Ryan at a small strip in the Mohave Desert. Powered by a 160 horse power

radial engine, it cruises at about 110 mph, burning 10 to 11 gallons of fuel per hour.

Polished aluminum is not for everyone. There are no short cuts to polishing sessions that can last 30 to 40 hours. It was obvious that the craft would need work. But the Ryan was uncommon and striking.

After months of negotiations, Williams and the previous owner agreed on a price and in June of 2000, Williams flew to southern California to bring the airplane home to Renton. When Williams fired up the engine, the cockpit became a solid cloud of white smoke as the engine burned off oil that had seeped from its aging radial engine during months of storage.

At the first fuel stop, Williams noticed that his feet hurt a little, but didn't think much of it. By the second stop, his feet really hurt. He took off his shoes to discover his feet were blistered from hot air coming through a hole in the firewall. Duct tape to the rescue! Taping the hole shut allowed Williams to get home and make a proper repair.

Working on an antique vehicle can be like an archaeological dig as you discover the remnants of years of

skilled and unskilled craftsmen. The Ryan was no different. Over time it became clear that the Ryan needed a new cowling, wheel pants, wiring, radios and more.

"It's all part of the joy of ownership," smiles Williams.

For years, he has flown the Ryan to the Antique Airplane Association's annual fly-in in Blakesburg, Iowa, a three-day journey each way. This year, there may be a flight of two antiques.

'Spinach'

If you watched TV in the 1950s, you may remember Robert Cummings in "The Bob Cummings Show" and later in "Love That Bob." Cummings was a pilot, both on and off the screen.

The TV show highlighted his Aerocar. Off-screen, he also had a 1936 Porterfield he painted green and called "Spinach." Williams had heard of "Spinach" passing from one owner to another over the years.

Running the website for the



and 'Spinach'

the Airplane Association brings Williams into contact with aircraft owners searching for information. As it turns out, the airplane's owner contacted Williams for information about its antique engine. They became friends and when the owner decided to sell, Williams bought it.

More well-known than the Ryan, "Spinach" is also a handful.

Coming in for a landing, you can't just look forward to see the runway," Williams says with a smile. You have to peer through an opening between the cylinders in its radial engine or slip the airplane sideways and then kick it around straight at the last minute. In fact, it's a challenge to even just get in and out."

"Spinach" doesn't have an electric starter. Williams has to sit in the airplane, then stands in front and rotates the propeller by hand to start the engine.

even toenails

Not only is the airplane well-known due to its unique owner, John Ennis – who restored the airplane

in the 1970s – added his own character and humor. Where the pilot's feet sit on the floor, are two aluminum outlines of feet with green spots for toenails.

Ennis flew the airplane to many fly-ins with his trombone wedged in the back seat, and gave spontaneous evening concerts. Above one of the windows, a miniature trombone is mounted on a small plaque. Most visible, Ennis chose a different shade of green for the airplane and a more flamboyant lettering style for the name.

"Spinach" has its own list of needed repairs. The fabric covering on the plane's fuselage and wings will need to be replaced. There are also improvements underway for the carburetor and engine. This will all get done in due time without losing the character that makes it unique.

This year, Williams hopes to have a fellow pilot fly one of his planes, so the antique fly-in at Blakesburg will see the Ryan approach from the Northwest, accompanied by a helping of "Spinach."



Photos right from top to bottom.

Russell Williams in his shop at the Renton Airport.
Photo by James Bavendam.

Russell Williams and former owner, John Crittenden,
at Whiteman Airport (Calif.) shortly before "Spinach" is
flown home to Renton. Photo by Ursula Tobler.

Russell Williams flies his 1938 Ryan SC-W at the Antique Airplane
Association fly-in at Blakesburg, IA. Photo by Gilles Auliard.

Russell Williams preparing to depart Whiteman Airport (Calif.) in his
newly purchased 1936 Porterfield 35-70 Flyabout. Photo by Ursula Tobler.

Photo left, Williams' 1938 Ryan SC-W at a fly-in in Broadhead, WI.
Photo by Rob Bach.

A paean to the pretty peony

BY ELAINE ANDERSON

A paean is a song of joyful praise and a most appropriate tribute to the peony. The Chinese called the peony Sho Yo – Most Beautiful – and began cultivating the flower thousands (some say 4,000) years ago. The most commonly grown peony is often referred to as the Chinese peony plant. Its scientific name is *Paeonia lactiflora*. Peony flowers are large, fragrant, and lovely. They bloom only once, but the plant's foliage remains pleasing to the eye until the end of the growing season.

The plant is named for Paeon, a physician whose life was threatened by Aesculapius, the Greek god of medicine. Pluto stepped in and saved

Paeon's life by turning him into a peony plant.

If you've decided to plant peonies, do it in September or October, the ideal time. Here are some tips for planting and care: Peonies do best in full sun. They require well-drained soil with a neutral pH, and they need little to no fertilizer. In fact, too much fertilizer can be deadly. They'll do best with a bit of bonemeal worked into their soil each spring.

These plants can grow to three feet in diameter, so make sure you space your new plants four to five feet apart. If your peony plants grow up and into one another, they will be susceptible to disease due to poor air circulation. Give them room to breathe! Cutting them down and cleaning up around them in the fall is also a good practice to help prevent disease. Peonies can be quite tall, and the flowers are heavy, so be prepared to stake them. Don't panic if ants seem to be enjoying your flowers as much as you are. They won't do any harm, and they may



even help the buds open.

If you take good care of your peonies, you'll have them to enjoy for many years. Peony plants have been known to live 100 years. These are plants that have spent their lives exactly where they were first planted. Peonies do not like to be disturbed.

It was once believed that you could dig up a peony during the night. But, if you tried the same thing during the day, woodpeckers would find you and peck your eyes out. Don't take a chance. Leave that peony exactly where you plant it!

Elaine Anderson is the Washington State University Extension coordinator for the King County Master Gardener Program. The program, funded by King County and WSU, provides free, environmentally friendly gardening advice to home gardeners. For answers to your questions about peonies and other gardening topics, call the Master Gardener Phone Clinic at 206-296-3440.

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Litter box basics for happier cats and owners

BY DR. KATHLEEN CONNELL

It is important for new cat owners to give thought to the litter box. Complaints about elimination result in cats being relinquished to shelters and are one of the most common reasons for seeking veterinary advice.

Kittens and cats prefer elimination in sand or soil and don't need housetraining like puppies. Kittens will use a litterbox at a few weeks of age after observing their mom. By the time most new kittens reach a household, they are likely using a box.

Make sure the box is the right size. A box that's too small or with overly tall sides may result in your cat eliminating elsewhere. Generally, cats prefer fine-textured, unscented litter. Start with a two-inch layer of litter and scoop and change it frequently. If you're unsure which box or which litter to provide, ask pet stores, your veterinarian or cat-owning friends.

Make sure your feline knows the location of the box. The goal is successful use of the box every time. Until you can trust your cat to routinely use the box, don't let it have free rein of the house.

Placing boxes in a quiet, private and easy-to-reach location prevents



PHOTO COURTESY OF HENRY MOORE JR., BCU/WSU

Even bobcats, like this captive orphan treated at Washington State University's Veterinary Teaching Hospital, prefer a litter box.

accidents. Avoid areas that are noisy or active. The cat must feel safe. Entry and exit from the box should be easy, so they don't feel trapped or cornered.

Take the pet to the litterbox several times daily until they get used to the location and you trust they will prefer to eliminate there. For young kittens, take them to the box first thing in the morning, after meals and after playing and waking up.

Most cats adjust to a new litterbox easily. If there are accidents, don't yell or punish your cat. That only confuses and scares the cat, teaching it to be afraid of you. It can also teach it to associate the box with punishment.

Clean up accidents and remove stains and odor with enzymatic cleaners designed for pet stains. After any accidents, start training over from the beginning. If accidents continue or if you see diarrhea, straining or other problems, consult your veterinarian.

Have one box per cat, with one extra for insurance. Cats are very fastidious and particular. Don't put their box next to food and water. Some cats will not share litter boxes or will not use one that is not scrupulously clean and dry. Some like to use one box for urine and another to defecate. Multi-story homes should have boxes on every level.

Scoop out boxes daily. Weekly, empty, wash and dry the box. Avoid strong or harsh disinfectants, rinsing well and drying before installing new litter.

Cats trained to eliminate properly are not often eliminated from homes.

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BY CHRISTIE KATONA

Strange as it might seem, I wasn't born cooking. In fact, when I was a young bride I had a few culinary disasters, and green tomato chutney was one of them.

Trying to be domestic, I had a great garden of juicy ripe tomatoes all summer. As the frost began to nip our noses, I looked for a recipe to use all the remaining green tomatoes in the yard. Thus began my first adventure with a pressure cooker. Need I say more?! It sure went a long way when it exploded and we had many, many jars



CHRISTIE KATONA

Christie Katona is the owner of Christie's Catering Inc. in Renton. She attended the Cordon Bleu in London, has authored many cookbooks, taught cooking classes for many years and worked as a restaurant consultant. More recipes and suggestions can be found at www.Christies-Catering.com.

Give meals pizzazz with fruit Salsas and chutney



of green tomato chutney to share.

None of the following recipes require canning. Just cover and store in the refrigerator. These will add colorful flavor to barbecues, snacks and weekday meals. Enjoy!

Fruit Chutney

Makes about 3 pints

I have used green tomatoes, mangoes, peaches, apples, black cherries and nectarines for this recipe and they have all been delicious. Apricots, cranberries, blueberries and kiwi would work as well. Chutneys are wonderful with curries, pork and chicken. Just stir into the pan juices and heat through, then spoon over the top. This can be spooned over cream cheese or Brie as a snack with crackers. It also makes a nice hostess gift.

you will need

1 whole lemon, finely chopped,
seeds removed
5 cups coarsely chopped fruit
2 red peppers, seeded and chopped
1 1/2 cups raisins
3 oz. chopped crystallized ginger or

1/4 cup fresh ginger, peeled and
chopped
2 1/4 cups brown sugar
2 cups cider vinegar
1 clove garlic, minced
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

directions

Combine all ingredients in a heavy-bottomed kettle, bring to a boil while stirring. Turn heat to low and simmer for at least 2 hours until thickened, stirring frequently. I must admit that this makes my eyes water; it's very pungent. Pour into jars and store in the refrigerator.

Cranberry Salsa

Makes 1 1/2 cups salsa

Good on turkey and cream cheese sandwiches or with quesadillas made with Brie or Monterey jack cheese.

you will need

1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
1/3 cup sugar
1/4 cup green onions
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
Grated zest and juice of one lime
1 jalapeno chili, seed-

ed and finely minced
2 tsp. finely grated fresh ginger root
1/4 tsp. salt

directions

Coarsely chop cranberries and combine with remaining ingredients. Cover and chill.

Watermelon and Avocado Salsa



Makes 1 1/2 cups

Terrific with fish tacos or teriyaki chicken, this salsa will become too juicy if it is held longer than an hour. You can have all the ingredients prepped, but wait until just before serving to combine them. I have doubled the recipe and served it as a salad sprinkled with feta cheese. Great with Greek food.

you will need

1 cup diced watermelon, 1/2 inch cubes	1/2 cup diced red onion
1 avocado, peeled seeded and diced	2 tbs. chopped fresh cilantro
	Grated zest and juice of one lime

directions

Gently combine all ingredients, serve immediately.



Artichoke and Tomatillo Salsa

Makes 2 cups

Fresh tomatillos are available in the produce section of most grocery stores. Remove their papery husks before using. This one is good with tortilla chips, pita chips or with roasted chicken.

you will need

6 tomatillos, husked and coarsely chopped	2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 - 4 oz. jars marinated artichokes, drained and chopped	1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1/4 cup sliced green onions	Grated zest and juice of one lime
	1 jalapeno chili, seeded and finely chopped
	1/2 tsp. salt



directions

Combine all ingredients, cover and chill.

Melon, Cucumber and Mint Salsa

Serves approx 6

Serve this salsa with grilled salmon or halibut. It's good as a salad too.

you will need

2 cups diced honeydew melon	1 tbs. vegetable oil
2 tomatoes, seeded and diced	1 tbs. EACH finely chopped parsley, chives and mint
1/2 cup English cucumber, peeled, seeded and diced	2 tsp. sugar
2 tbs. red wine vinegar	1 tsp. salt
	1/2 tsp. pepper

directions

Combine all ingredients, cover and chill.



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Life

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BY DANA NEUTS



Above, Kelli Steiner Arena, 42, rides Bucky, owned by Vann Belvoir, at Emerald Downs. Photo courtesy of Heather Sacha. Left, Married 47 years, Joe and Sally Steiner are fixtures in the Emerald Downs racing community. Photo courtesy of Sally Steiner.

Joe Steiner of Renton first laid eyes on Sally Leonard in 1961 at Joe's 19-cent Hamburgers, one of his dad's many restaurants. Sally was picking up burgers to take to Longacres Park racetrack, where her family owned and trained horses. Joe was immediately attracted to 17-year-old Sally, telling his dad he thought she was "pretty cute." His dad was skeptical; Sally's brother was Jackie Leonard, the famous local jockey.

"She won't go out with you," he told Joe. Joe asked Sally out anyway, and they've been together ever since, sharing their love for horse racing and restaurants along the way. Having raised four children — all of whom are involved in the horse racing industry one way or another — the Steiners opened the Quarter Chute Cafe at Emerald Downs in Auburn in 1996.

Sally, now 62, loved the racing life as a child. She remembers when her father, Jack Leonard, was asked to be a stunt rider in "The Story of Seabiscuit," a 1949 movie starring Shirley Temple. Temple visited the Leonard's home and posed for a photo with 5-year-old Sally sitting on her lap. That photo now hangs

at the cafe.

After an injury, Sally's father gave up riding competitively to become an owner/trainer. The family traveled around the country to different race tracks during the year, returning home to Renton each summer.

"It was always a new adventure. I thought I'd marry a jockey, though," Sally says with a smile.

Even though his father's restaurant was near Longacres, Joe, now 67, was not a horse racing fan when he met Sally.

"I just went along for the ride," he jokes.

Lured by racing life

After a brief courtship, Joe and Sally married and began their family. Sally enjoyed growing up around the race track, but she wanted their four children to have a different life. They moved from Renton to Panther Lake to raise their children on a farm, where they played outside, participat-

ed in sports and rode ponies without the influences of the race track, Sally says.

In spite of their best efforts, however, the Steiner children fell in love with the racing life, one by one.

It started with son Joey, who frequently looked at Uncle Jackie's scrapbooks from his riding days. Joey told his parents, "I'm going to be a jockey when I grow up." At age 15 and only 5 feet 5 inches, Joey was the "perfect size" to become a jockey, so his grandfather took Joey to California to train and live with ex-jockey Johnny Longden.

Joey, now 44, raced from the age of 18 until just a few years ago. Following in his grandfather's footsteps, he was a stunt rider in the 2003 version of "Seabiscuit." He is now an exerciser-trainer, most recently working with Pioneer of the Nile, the horse that took second place at the 2009 Kentucky Derby.

Daughter Kelli Steiner Arena, 42,

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RENTON MAGAZINE / DANA E. NEUTS

Combining their two loves, horse racing and restaurants, the Steiners enjoy working in their restaurant, the Quarter Chute Cafe, open seven days a week at Emerald Downs in Auburn.

Racetrack cafe is open to public

Located outside the quarter chute at Emerald Downs, the Quarter Chute Cafe is one of only a few U.S. racetracks with an entrance open to the public who aren't attending the races. Nonetheless, race fans can place their bets at the cafe's betting windows, and enjoy racetrack memorabilia dating back to the early 1900s. The cafe is open daily. More information is available on the Internet at www.quarterchutecafe.com or watch the Emerald Downs Preseason Pass No. 11, 2009 on YouTube.

fell in love with horses in her teens as well. While working after school in the Backstretch Cafe at Longacres, she enjoyed seeing the jockeys come in off the track, helmets in hand.

"I want to do that," she told her mom. Kelli started riding at age 18 and is now an exerciser at Emerald Downs for owner Vann Belvoir, riding horses each morning before going home to be a full-time mom to children ages 14 and 4.

"This is my fun job," she jokes.

Son Jack, 43, is also involved in the horse racing business, working in southern California as a trainer. Not to be left out, the Steiner's youngest child Karri, 37, married a jockey's agent and has worked at both the Backstretch and Quarter Chute cafes. Karri visits the cafe several times a week with her children to help in the kitchen.

The 'first family'

Joe and Sally have become an integral part of the Emerald Downs community, watching several generations of fans and riders come and go.

"They are one of the first families of the racetrack," says Vince Bruun, media

relations director, "And Sally is the head mother. If something is going on, she knows about it.

The family's shared love for horse racing is one of the many things that bonds the Steiners and makes their children "the best of friends," Sally says. For Joe, whose family has owned numerous restaurants throughout the Seattle area, the restaurants and the horses helped them to stay in touch with each other.

"We work a lot of hours, but it's great being close to our family," Joe explains.

The Steiners stay away from betting on the horses, except for one notable time. Joe bet – and won big – right after Sally had given birth to Joey. He had to miss visiting hours to collect his winnings, and – after showering his new family with gifts – he decided that betting wasn't for him. He leaves that to his father-in-law and other racing fans.

After 47 years of marriage, Joe and Sally remain best friends and enjoy working together. Asked when they'll retire, Joe says they aren't leaving any time soon.

"We love it here and have fun," he explains. "We aren't ready to leave."

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inline skating

Rolling toward feeling fit

BY SARAH ZUGSCHWERDT

When late summer sun entices you to an outdoor workout, it may be the perfect time to try inline skating. Katie Webster of Renton did just that when the Rollerblade company was initially promoting the new sport. Twenty years later, she's still rolling.

"Rollerblading is actually one of my favorite sports," she says. "It's good exercise, and you don't feel like you're working hard. It's like roller skating—it's fun!" And fairly easy to get started.

"It took me only a couple times, like two or three times going out and doing it. After a couple of times you pretty much have it."

Originally developed for ice skaters to practice during the summer months, inline skates have a single line of multiple wheels that form a sort of "blade." In contrast to ice skating, however, Webster offers this judgment: "It's a lot less painful than ice skating. It's more supportive on your ankles, the boots are, whereas the ice skates don't have as much support in the ankle. Your ankles have to be stronger in ice skating."

She also likes its low-impact benefits.

"Jogging jars your knees. It's a lot easier. Maybe that's why I like it, too. It's kind of like swimming; it's not hard on your joints because you're rolling."

While inline skaters can join roller skaters at indoor rinks, the lure of the wind at their backs draws many to the sport.

"You can get outdoors. Once you learn it, it's just easy. I can go farther on Rollerblades than I could walking, jogging or running," says Webster. She enjoys the Cedar River Trail in Renton, and the Burke-Gilman Trail, especially at Marymoor Park in Redmond.

Other options include the Green River Trail, the Interurban Trail, the boardwalk at Gene Coulon Memorial Park, and the Soos Creek Trail further south in Kent. Other popular skating destinations around Puget Sound, as well as links to all types of skating, and a skating forum, can be found at the Skate Northwest website, www.skatenw.com.

But even if you live far from skating hot spots, skating can happen

"Anywhere where there's a pretty flat surface," suggests Webster.



RENTON MAGAZINE / SARAH ZUGSCHWERDT
Inline skater Katie Webster pauses to say hello.

If you're ready to roll, you'll need: a good pair of skates, knee and elbow pads, and a helmet, available at local sporting goods stores.

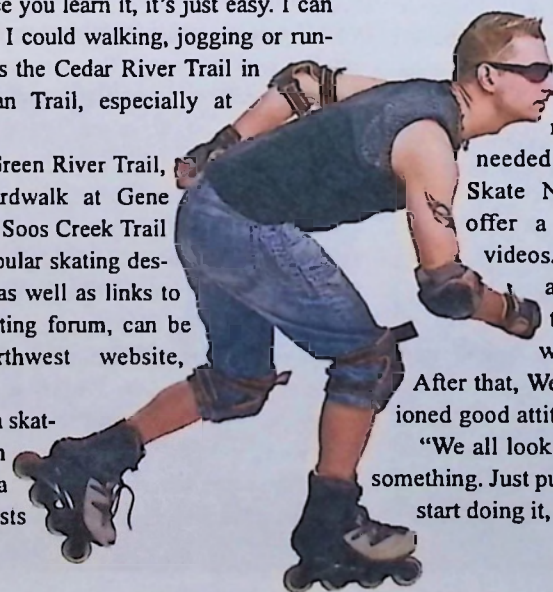
Formal instruction is available from Skate Journeys, an inline skate school for all ages that operates classes indoors and out at locations along the I-5 corridor (www.skate-journeys.com). Trish Alexander, instructor and executive director, starts her students out on carpet, first teaching them how to fall, then teaching them how not to fall. It takes an average of about eight sessions for first-timers to master the basics, Alexander says,

before they can become what she calls "angels in the wind."

In the spirit of technology, others may find needed guidance online. Both Skate Northwest and You Tube offer a myriad of free tutorial videos. Animated tutorials are also available on the manufacturer's site, www.rollerblade.usa.com.

After that, Webster suggests an old-fashioned good attitude.

"We all look stupid at first when we try something. Just push through it, and once you start doing it, I think you'd really like it."



Starting from scratch

BY ELIZABETH P.
STEWART

The new movie, "Julie & Julia" juxtaposes two stories of women and cooking to remind us that the transformation of raw food into tasty dishes is a hard-won skill. Cooking in the era of refrigeration and mass food production, their experiences were quite different from most women's experience through history, however. Before the late 19th century, everything had to be made from scratch. Mothers passed this knowledge to their daughters for generations, honing their skills while practicing the art together.

One of the objects in the museum's new exhibit, "Sustaining A City," is evidence of this. Viola Evans began a handwritten recipe book in her teens, lovingly copying out her favorite recipes from her mother, Nannie Evans. Her book contains notes for brown Betty, coffee custard, and fruit cake, among many others. This little book would have served as her kitchen helper when she left her family home at 19 to marry Horatio J. Stetson in 1905.

Filled with dessert recipes, Viola's cookbook was unlike those we are familiar with today; her "recipes" were really lists of ingredients that served as memory jogs. Viola did not need specific preparation instructions, because she would have absorbed these techniques at her mother's elbow.

Marian Duff Thomson, a contemporary of Viola's, remembered of her



COURTESY OF RENTON HISTORY MUSEUM

Viola Evans Oughton's little recipe book is a centerpiece of the museum's exhibit about food in Renton.

mother, "In those days you didn't go to the store to buy a loaf of bread; you made the bread. And I can remember my mom kneading huge batches of dough." After years of practice, Viola knew how to combine ingredients, what oven temperature to use, and how long to bake in order to make the best cake.

If she forgot anything, she might have turned to an early publication like "The Economical Cook Book," also in the museum's collection. Its recipes were also lists of ingredients, with slightly more guidance for unconfident chefs. Under "Hints for Making Cakes," for example, the author advised, "flour should always be dry and well sifted," and "cakes bake nicer if the pans are lined with buttered paper."

Viola's life reflected women's lives in and out of the kitchen. After her divorce from Stetson, she worked as Renton's first telephone switchboard operator. But when she remarried around 1911, to Thomas Oughton, she returned to homemaking. Active in civic organizations, she may not have had time to cook, and such innovations as refrigeration and frozen foods came along to make her life easier. Her little handwritten cookbook became even less necessary, but no less important as an artifact of history.

For more Renton food stories, visit the Renton History Museum. Elizabeth P. Stewart is museum director, info@renton-history.org, 425.255.2330.

did you know that...

...Pelly Avenue was named for Bernard Pelly, British consul in Seattle? Pelly was involved in numerous commercial activities in Seattle, including The Renton Farm Co. He and his partner J. D. Lowman platted the Renton Farm Plat in 1903.

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