

RENTON

Magazine

Volume 6 / No 1 January 2011



**Rainy days don't
have to get you down**

page 8

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publisher's note

Last month we asked you to send in tips on how to stay cheery throughout January's dreariness. Several of you did, and we share them with you this month. There are some real gems, and we hope you enjoy them.

We have to work to stay ahead of you in this business, and so we've already turned our thoughts to February. The groundhog will make his appearance on Feb. 2, of course. It's also American Heart Month, and firefighters will be offering blood pressure checks around town. One can never get too many of those.

It's also National Black History Month, Wedding Month, International Boost Self-Esteem Month, International Expect Success Month, National Bird Feeding Month, National Caffeine Addiction Awareness Month, National Cherry Month, National Children's Dental Health Month, National Hot Break-

fast Month, National Single and Searching Month, Plant the Seeds of Greatness Month, Publicity for Profit Month, Potato Lover's Month, Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month, Spiritual Teachers Month and Wise Health Care Consumer Month. The month also includes Back For Family Fun Week, Whew! I had no idea February was so busy.

When I was in grade school, we made valentines for our mothers, our fathers, our grandparents. Do you remember them? They involved red construction paper, a paper doily, some white paste. We tried not to make too



Diana Kramer
PUBLISHER

many mistakes in the writing, because erasing wore out the paper. We labored over them, wanting them to be as beautiful and perfect as the love that filled our little hearts. And then, we "surprised" our moms with our handmade creations.

Several years ago, long before I found love and remarried, my friend Imogene and I went out to dinner on Valentine's Day. She had recently lost her dear husband, Clyde, and from talking to her, I knew she was dreading "the day." So we made a dinner reservation at a favorite restaurant. We dressed up in red and had a wonderful evening, laughing at our favorite stories about Clyde.

Do you have stories to share? Tell me about your favorite Valentine's Day or how you met your significant other. Send them to Valentine@RentonMagazine.com. Send them soon so we can publish them next month.

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cover:

John Joseph Springer, known as JJ to his many friends, loved to dance at the Plaza, and did it rain or shine, warm or cold, as often as he could. He could be counted on to brighten any day with his warm smile and gentle, helpful ways. JJ died in October, and will be greatly missed. For suggestions on fighting the blues, turn to page 8. Photo by Diana Kramer.

important phone #'s

City Hall
425.430.6400

Chamber of Commerce
425.226.4560

Community Center
425.430.6700

Fire Dept
(non emergency)
425.430.7000

Renton Library
425.226.6043

Renton Highlands Library
425.277.1831

Police Dept
(non emergency)
425.430.7500

Puget Sound Energy
1.888.225.5773

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



RENTON HIGH SCHOOL & *Dimmitt Orchestra* CONCERT *January 20*

The high school orchestra will perform two pieces from Greek mythology and a dance piece with middle school players performing additional numbers. Donations will help with the expense of the orchestra going to a music festival.

Thursday, 7 p.m.

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. Second St.

425-204-3463

Admission: Free



January 1 POLAR BEAR DIP

You can start the new year with a quick dip into the icy waters of Lake Washington at the Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park. This annual event is growing to be a local tradition. No registration is necessary. A lifeguard will be on duty.

Saturday, 11 a.m.

Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park
1201 Lake Washington Blvd. N.

425-430-6700

Admission: Free



January 11 - March 15

BODYWORKS A Toolkit for Healthy Teens & Strong Families

BodyWorks is a health education program designed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to help parents and caregivers of teens ages 9-13 improve family eating and activity habits. The "tool kit" includes a video on healthy shopping and cooking strategies, a recipe book, food and fitness journals, and more.

Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m.

Valley Medical Center
400 S. 43rd St.

Admission: Free,
with preregistration required

206-498-9523

bodyworks@valleymed.org



JANUARY 20 *Lindbergh Jazz Choir/Band Concert*

Enjoy an evening of lively music provided by talented student artists.

Saturday, 2 p.m.

Auburn Avenue Theater
10 Auburn Ave.

253-931-3043

www.auburnwa.gov/arts

Admission: \$6



January 29 & 30

STORY BOOK THEATER JACK & THE BEANSTALK

Jack won't let fear of heights or giants deter him from his quest to reclaim his family's stolen fortune. This madcap rendition of the classic fairytale includes bravery, adventure, and a truly amazing vegetable patch. Story Book Theater Shows emphasize music, laughter, whimsical costumes and delightful characters. The 55-minute original musicals give children ages 3-10 a chance to experience live theater.

Saturday, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. 425-820-1800
Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

www.storybooktheater.org

Carco Theater
1717 Maple Valley Hwy. S.E. Admission: \$9



January 29 HEALTHY & HOMEMADE: FITNESS & NUTRITION FOR THE NEW YEAR

Fitness center and diabetes and nutrition specialists will teach easy exercises to do at home when you can't make it to the gym. Other topics will include the value of warming up and group fitness, osteoporosis prevention, and affordable, nutritious foods that can be prepared at home. Workout attire is advised. Participation in the group exercise session may require a medical clearance depending on medical history.

Saturday, 1-3 p.m. 425-656-4636

www.valleymed.org/events

Valley Medical Center
400 S. 43rd St. Admission: Free



January 30 RENTON HOOP SHOOT

Boys and girls ages 6 to 14 are invited to test their free-throw skills. Participants will compete in separate gender and age divisions, based on participant's age as of March 31, 2011. The top two finishers from each age group will advance to compete against other area winners. Pre-registration suggested. Register for class No. 48127.

Saturday,
4 p.m. (ages 6 to 10)
5 p.m. (ages 11 to 14)

Renton Community Center
1715 Maple Valley Hwy. S.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: Free

save the date

Agatha Christie The Mousetrap



**FEBRUARY 25 -
MARCH 12**

A group of strangers is stranded in a boarding house during a snow storm, and one of them is a murderer. The suspects include the newly married couple who run the house. Others are a spinster with a curious background, an architect who seems better equipped to be a chief, a retired Army major, a strange little man who claims his car has overturned in a drift, and a jurist who makes life miserable for everyone. Into their midst comes a policeman, traveling on skis.

Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.
Fridays & Saturdays, 8 p.m.
Sundays, 2 p.m.

Renton Civic Theater
507 South Third St.

425-226-5529

Admission:
\$22/\$17 senior & student

calendar of events

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Terrific Tots Playground

Jan. 4-March 15, Tuesdays, 9:30-11 a.m.

Ages 10 months to 3 years (with adult) Children ages 10 months to 3 years, accompanied by an adult, are invited to run, jump, climb, and explore in an indoor playground. Parents provide the supervision while kids create the fun with ample toys and space. Parents and caregivers remain with children at all times.

Renton Community Center
1715 Maple Valley Hwy. S.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: \$25

Tomato, Tomato Crafty Drop-In

Jan. 6-ongoing, Thursdays, 1:30 - 3 p.m.

Children ages 2 and up, accompanied by an adult, are invited to drop in and create with crafts. No preregistration is required.

Renton Community Center
1715 Maple Valley Hwy. S.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: \$10 per child, pay instructor.

FITNESS CLASSES

Core Focus

Jan. 4-Feb. 17
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:35-7:30 p.m.

This class is for all fitness levels, ages 14 and up, using the core muscle group — abs, obliques, glutes and lower back. Drop-ins are welcome if space permits.

Renton Community Center
1715 Maple Valley Hwy. S.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: \$65 resident/\$78 nonresident \$7 for drop-ins as space permits

Cross-Country Skiing Introduction

Sunday, Jan. 9, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Learn the basic techniques of gliding, pole position, falling and getting up, then take a trek along the Iron Horse Trail. Instruction will be given along the way. It's

a distance of up to seven miles with zero elevation gain on a groomed trail.

Renton Community Center
1715 Maple Valley Hwy. S.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: \$20 resident/\$24 nonresident

Avalanche Awareness & Snowshoe Basics for Women

Wednesday, Jan. 12, 7 p.m.

Topics include avalanche safety, trip planning, terrain definitions, snowpack factors, basic avalanche risks and more with the aim of staying safe in the backcountry.

REI at Southcenter
240 Andover Park W., Tukwila

206-248-1938

Admission: Free

Pressure Point Pain Relief: Upper Body

Tuesday, Jan. 25, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Workshop participants, ages 18 and up, will explore reasons why they're feeling pain and what can be done to help relieve it. Much of the course work will be hands-on and can be done with a partner.

Renton Community Center
1715 Maple Valley Hwy. S.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: \$15 resident/\$18 nonresident

YOUTH PROGRAMS

After-School Program

Jan. 10-26 (and ongoing)
Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays,
3:45-5:30 p.m.

Renton Salvation Army is offering homework assistance, activities and life skills instruction. Limited transportation assistance is available.

Salvation Army Community Center
720 S. Tobin

425-255-5974 (Melissa Daily)

Admission: Free

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Needlework: A Visual Anthology of Art and Literature

Tuesday, Jan. 25, 7 p.m.

A popular new literary genre, the "needlework novel," reflects a renewed interest in domestic arts, especially needle crafts. Fueled over the past 10 years by readers' appetites, the publishing world has produced a bumper crop of novels and mysteries centering on the themes of knitting, lace-making, weaving, quilting and a variety of embroidery arts. Art historian Susan Olds explores the needlework theme in art and contemporary fiction.

Fairwood Library
17009 140th Ave. S.E.

425-226-0522

Admission: Free

LIBRARY EVENTS

Renton Library
100 Mill Ave. S.
425-226-6043

Study Zone

Jan. 2-30
Sundays, 2 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4 p.m.

Students in Kindergarten through grade 12 are invited to drop in for free homework help from volunteer tutors.

Admission: Free

Pajama Story Time

Jan. 3, 10, 24, 31, Mondays, 7 p.m.

All ages are welcome to wear their pajamas to the library and enjoy stories, songs and finger plays before bedtime.

Admission: Free

Baby Story Time

Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.

Story time for babies, newborns to 24 months — along with their grown-ups, will include board books, puppets, songs, rhymes and play time.

Admission: Free

Citizenship Class

Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25, Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

Students will prepare to become United States citizens by learning about the naturalization process and studying for the interview.

Admission: Free.

No registration necessary

Talk Time

Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26, Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

Talk Time for adults (no child care available) offers a time to practice conversational English skills. It is not necessary to have attended previous sessions.

Admission: Free

Family Story Time

Jan 5, 12, 19, 26
Wednesdays, 10 a.m.

All ages are welcome for stories, songs and finger plays. It's a time for families to explore the world of books together.

A River Runs Under It Book Club

Thursday, Jan. 20, 7 p.m.

This lively book discussion group, which meets the third Thursday of each month, will talk this month about "Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister" by Gregory Maguire.

Admission: Free

SENIOR PROGRAMS

Renton Senior Activity
Center

211 Burnett Ave. N.
425-430-6633

80s and Over Birthday Luncheon

Wednesday, Jan. 12, 11:30 a.m.

A specially decorated table will be reserved for those over 80 years old, with cake for all for dessert.

Sign up at the front desk by Jan. 7.

Admission: \$3 donation over 60/\$6 charge under 60

National Popcorn Day Luncheon

Wednesday, Jan. 19, 11 a.m.

Competition will involve seeing who is the quickest and handiest at popcorn. There'll be a prize for the winner and dessert after lunch.

Admission: \$3 donation over 60/\$6 charge under 60

Circle of Giving

Wednesday, Jan. 26, 5-7 p.m.

Renton Community Foundation is hosting its annual Circle of Giving party. The circle, an adjunct of the Renton Community Foundation, consists of members who contribute \$1,000 or more for grants. This group then selects the recipients from the many nonprofit groups in Renton. Awards will be presented at the event.

425-255-5145 - Char Baker, event chair
425-282-5199 - Lynn Bohart, RCF Ex. Director

Admission: Free

EXHIBITS

Mirka Hokkanen Exhibit

Jan. 7-Feb. 25
Mondays-Fridays, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Mirka Hokkanen was born in 1979 in Helsinki, Finland. Growing up she was always close to nature, playing in the woods and swimming in the lakes. Though Hokkanen has lived in America for a long time, her work still reflects her heritage and upbringing. A respect for and closeness to nature draws Mirka to issues concerning the environment and animals and man's relationship with them.

Centennial Center Gallery
400 West Gowe St., Kent

253-856-5058

www.kentarts.org

Admission: Free

If you have an upcoming event you want others to know about, we want to hear from you. Please send information about your event to events@pugetsoundpublishing.com or call us at 425-271-9300.

Kirby Unti



I grew up in a family of all boys. I was the middle of two brothers. Mom was the lone ranger. We did our fair share of arguing and fighting. It prepared us well – we all three excelled in debate. It wasn't so good when fists were exchanged or words of even greater hurt were issued. My mother developed a mantra that I would later learn to appreciate as a parent: "Can't you please just get along?"

Life is certainly more enjoyable when a family is at peace. No doubt this has shaped my life in significant ways. I have grown up hating conflict and working overtime at trying to maintain peace. My daughters will testify to the fact that their father is not happy when there is discord in the air. I will own that this is my issue. Conflict has its rightful place in the world when the cause is worth fighting for. But even great causes require discovering common ground.

I have brought this same perspective to my work as a pastor. The people of St. Matthews have listened to me rant for 30 years now about how I believe God cares more about how we treat one another when we disagree than God cares about who is right. Living together in community demands that we not allow our differences to trump what we have in common. History proves a community divided will eventually fall.

My deepest hope for this New Year is that we can break the gridlock that our country finds itself in. We have become so polarized that we refuse even to agree on matters that will benefit all parties concerned. We continue to elect a majority of our candidates on razor thin margins. Regardless of party, our elected of-

ficials turn these razor thin margins into declarations of mandates.

I would like to believe that the only mandate that exists for Washington is the mandate my mother used to lay down: "Can't you please just get along?" Can't you find a way to work together? Can't you check your ego and party pride at the door so that what matters most for the country might be achieved? Can't you rediscover the art of compromise which creates the possibility of win/win scenarios?

There was a time in our history when political parties knew how to work together. I have had the privilege of being in the company of both former Washington state governors Dan Evans and Mike Lowry. They both pride themselves and have track records that validate being able to work with people on both sides of the aisle. They currently are co-chairs of the Washington State Wildlife and Recreation Coalition, advocating for preservation of wild life habitat and recreational land. They are affectionately referred to as the odd couple for their ability to bring their diverse political histories to bear on a common cause. We need more politicians who can put the country before party loyalty.

2011 marks the beginning of a new decade. Let's do what we can at every level of the community to work together for the common good. Our future depends upon it and I know my mother would be very pleased to see everybody getting along.

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



Kirby Unti
COLUMNIST



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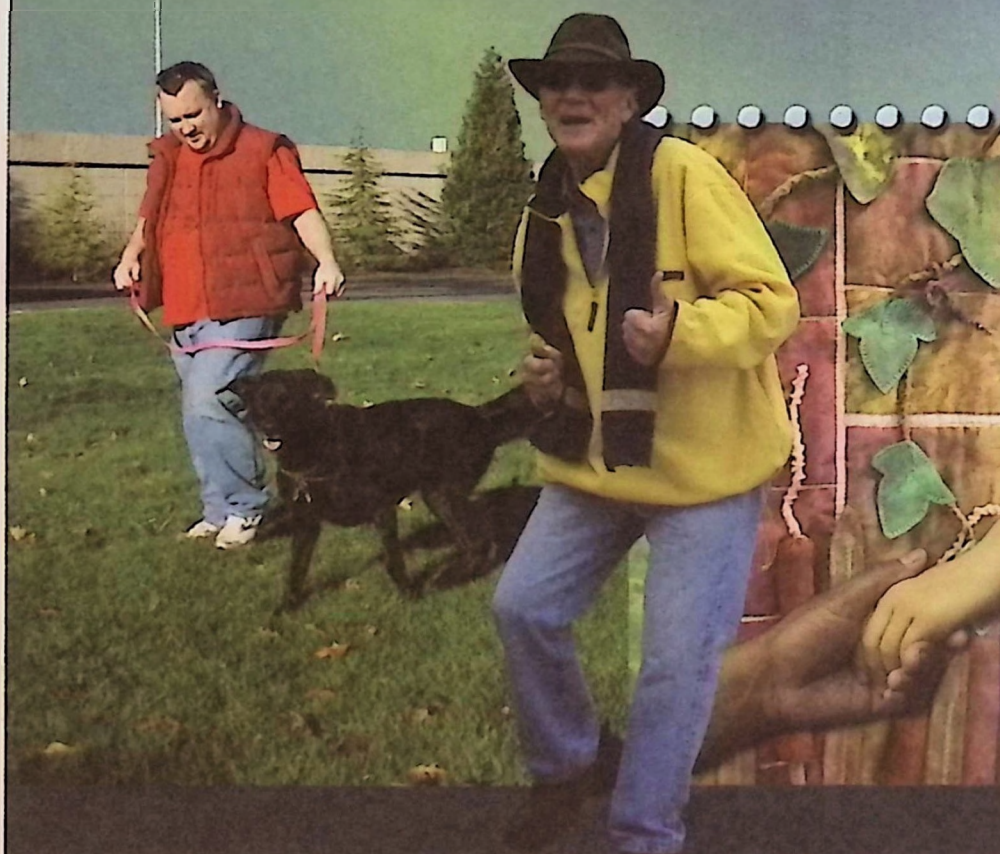
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We've got a right to sing the blues, but...

BY DIANA KRAMER



It's cold. There isn't much daylight. (Most) of the holiday decorations have been put away until later this year. If we're lucky, our precipitation is coming a mizzle – the technical term that covers both mist and drizzle.

We may feel a little down. And yet, seemingly every

From Debra of Renton:

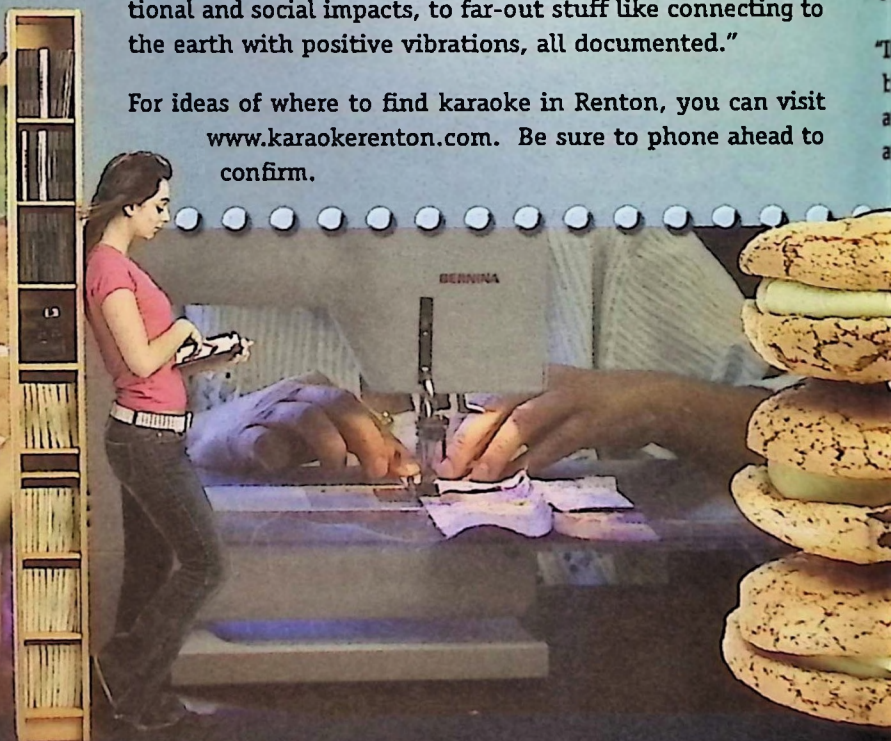
"Go find a karaoke place! We have 19 places to go singing, right here in Renton. The venues come and go so be sure to call before heading out.

"The first time I worked up enough courage to sing into a microphone at a karaoke show, it was such a rush. The flood of endorphins was thrilling, and I kicked myself for waiting so long. Now that I am a self-proclaimed karaoke addict, I am the first to tout the merits of singing, whether it's on stage or in your car. I changed my radio station from relaxing jazz to listen to a variety of stations where the songs actually had lyrics. My little purse is full of lists of songs from the karaoke books that I want to practice and sing.

"Realizing I'm exaggerating, I've gone so far as to speculate that karaoke can cure cancer or whatever ails you. Since I know it's changed my life in a very positive way, I took the time to do an Internet search on the benefits of singing.

"Wow! There have been numerous research studies listing all the positive things that result from singing, everything from lifting your mood, with actual physical, psychological, emotional and social impacts, to far-out stuff like connecting to the earth with positive vibrations, all documented."

For ideas of where to find karaoke in Renton, you can visit www.karaokerenton.com. Be sure to phone ahead to confirm.



i- where we turn, people are smiling. They seem posi-
is tively chipper. How do they do it?

as Last month we asked for suggestions on how to keep
nd the candle shining brightly from within. We received
several excellent suggestions, which we're pleased to be
able to share with you.

Tom Happy in Fairwood:

My husband and I both retired in 1990 and I was very concerned about the long, dark winters at home after both of us spending our whole careers working downtown, where there's so much going on. He was not the least bit interested in going 'South' for the winters, and he doesn't have any hobbies.

I love to sew, but how many clothes do we need in retirement? I needed to find a way to use that love in some way besides garment making. So I took a series of quilting classes and was totally enamored. Since then I've made beautiful bed-size quilts for each of my six kids, my dozen grandkids, three great-grandchildren and numerous babies.

I've made several for charity auctions and as gifts for friends. I also spend about six hours a week doing volunteer work at our church. So now there are hardly enough hours in the day to do all the things I want to do. Having a hobby one is totally in love with is really important. The other thing is to make sure to get outside every day and to be with other people often.

My husband still doesn't have a hobby but he did try making model sailing ships for a couple of winters. He isn't really a hobby person though and has reverted back to just puttering. Needless to say, he feels the gloom of winter more than I do."

Another reader, Dick, offers these suggestions:

I grew up in Michigan, with lots of snow, lots of rain, and a little sunshine. No blues! For a while I lived in Texas with way too much sunshine. Glad to get away! In Washington, when I was working, I spent 45 to 50 hours a week in an office, and did not know if it was sunny or not.

"In retirement, an active volunteer life in public service keeps me too busy to worry about the weather. So again, no blues! But in reality, I like my daylight at the end of the day, rather than in the morning, so I love Daylight Savings Time."

Direct from our readers, here are some cures for January blues:

- Sing
- Find a hobby you love
- Get outside every day
- Spend time with other people frequently
- Volunteer for public service
- Take your canine pals to an off-leash park
- Read Renton Magazine (No kidding! That's what one of our fans suggested.)

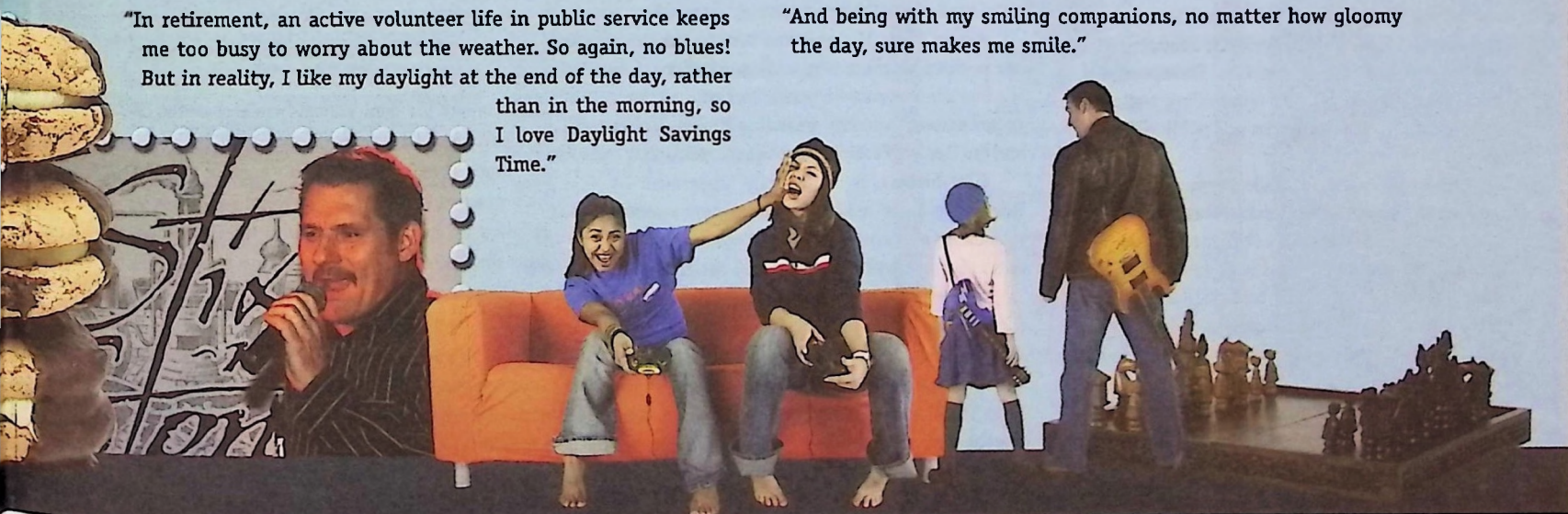
A dog-loving reader, Kathleen in the Highlands, has found a way to get some fresh air and meet people, aided and abetted by her pugs, Nimble and Cinder. Here are her suggestions:

"Besides reading Renton Magazine, any day with reasonable weather (not pouring), I love to take my two pug girls to one of our area's many off-leash dog parks. The enthusiasm my girls show, as well as that of the other dogs we encounter and their owners, never fails to perk me up any time of the year.

"You can visit Renton's own off-leash park just off the Cedar River Trail; SODA's (Serve Our Dog Areas) Grandview Park off Military Road south of SeaTac; Marymoor, truly one of SODA's jewels; Warren G. Magnuson Park, rated online as high as No. 8 in North America, and many more - readily findable online. Other than the occasional one dollar parking fee, they are usually free.

"There's always room for another dog and owner, another tennis ball or Frisbee; they're open standard daylight hours seven days a week, and I enjoy finding new ones and taking the girls on an exploratory adventure, where we're all sure to meet new friends, because all the dog-owners there have one thing in common - the love of their dogs.

"And being with my smiling companions, no matter how gloomy the day, sure makes me smile."



Three from Renton prove you make a life *By giving*

BY SARAH ZUGSCHWERDT

"I 'm just one of those kind-of-guys, if I meet you on the street I can carry on a conversation for 20 to 30 minutes. You know, I really talk with people," says Jeff Reynolds.

"There's something truly magical about a city where people feel valued," Terry Higashiyama notes.

"My belief is that serving others by volunteering our time, resources and talent builds a stronger community, deepens our relationships with others and brings a lasting joy and fulfillment beyond anything else we do in life," sums up Dr. Bob Thompson.

Three people, three lifetimes of service to Renton.

Meet Renton's 2010 Outstanding Citizens: police officer Jeff Reynolds and City of Renton community services administrator Terry Higashiyama, and Citizen of the Year, Dr. Bob Thompson. All three were chosen for their outstanding contributions to the city, from medicine and public safety to nonprofit support.

Officer Reynolds has made a name for himself walking the streets of the Renton Farmers' market in the summer, chatting with shop owners and embodying the firm friendliness of an in-touch police force. In the fall, he heads back to Renton High School, where he's a school resource officer but really a mentor, a role model and as Reynolds calls himself, "a grandfather."

Reynolds would like to see more citizens get involved mentoring students, especially young men.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARY PALMER

Renton's 2010 Outstanding Citizens and Citizen of the Year pose with Mayor Denis Law. From left, Jeff Reynolds, Mayor Denis Law, Dr. Bob Thompson, and Terry Higashiyama.

Renton's Outstanding Citizens program is a cooperative effort of the Renton Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club of Renton, and the City of Renton. Representatives from each organization and past winners select the outstanding citizens. The winners were honored for their service and presented awards at a banquet in their honor held last October.

"The future of our society is our kids. No matter what we do, if we don't have kids to carry it on or improve it, it's going to fail. And a lot of the kids, especially at Renton High School, don't have fathers in their lives. And to me, that's one of the most fundamental things there is."

Across town, Higashiyama is busy, not just at her position with the City of Renton where she's worked for the past 35 years, but with multiple organizations, currently including Renton Rotary and the Renton Technical College Foundation.

Higashiyama is continually impressed by Renton residents' willingness to help one another, recounting a recent service event where 900 residents showed up to serve neighbors in need.

"There's a different feeling in the city of Renton about how everybody connects and makes sure that there isn't any stone left unturned when it comes to people that need ... everybody turns away from where they sit on an organizational chart and brings it to a level of where they can best support the community – and you just don't find

that in other communities."

Thompson has taken on the same mantle, only with medicine. Besides his family practice and administrative position with Valley Medical Center (VMC), he was instrumental in organizing the Renton RotaCare free health clinic for uninsured patients in 2003. Two years ago, the same sponsorship resulted in the VMC Acute Specialty Access Clinic where the same patients can access free orthopedic care and surgery through VMC.

Since Thompson opened his practice in 1984, he's watched Renton's steady growth and says he believes its core of volunteers is largely responsible for that development. Looking forward, it's no different.

"I believe we should celebrate and continue to lead the way as a city known for its generosity and volunteerism, cheerfully providing for those in need of even the most basic services. As Winston Churchill put it, 'You make a living by what you get, you make a life by what you give.'"



PHOTO COURTESY OF HENRY MOORE JR. BCU/WSU

Pets need exercise during cold months, but may need extra protection if they usually live indoors and have short hair. They may also become dehydrated.

Winterize those pets

BY KATHY CONNELL

Just as you prepare your house and car for winter driving, you should also give some thought to winterizing your pets. Our pets need our protection from the harsh weather when temperatures dip, especially if they are accustomed to being indoors.

With more time spent indoors, you may notice skin and coat problems. Exposure to dry indoor heat and frequent bathing could lead to dry skin, itching and scratching. Bathe your pet less frequently so you are not washing away protective skin oils. Your veterinarian may have some recommendations on soothing shampoos and conditioners that can help.

Regular walks and exercise are time well spent with your dog for companionship and good health. For short-haired, indoor dogs, you may want to use a dog sweater or coat for protection.

Ensure outdoor pets have water resistant shelter from wind, snow and colder temperatures. They should have a snug, insulated house for protection with dry bedding. Outdoor pets will also need more food. The additional calories will help them maintain their body temperature.

Be observant for frozen water bowls outside and offer fresh water to

combat dehydration. Keep water bowls in a heated area or use a water bowl heater.

Outdoor cats can be seriously injured or killed if they make the mistake of climbing under a car hood, seeking the heat of a warm car engine. Bang on the hood of your car before starting it up to give heat-seeking cats a chance to escape.

As we move into winter, there are many chemicals that people use around their house and garage. Ensure all chemicals and household cleaners are stored safely away from pets and children. Antifreeze is toxic and deadly to pets. Its sweet taste may encourage your cat or dog to lick up any spills or drips. For even more safety, look for less toxic products made with propylene glycol instead of ethylene glycol.

If you use rodent bait, make sure your cat or dog cannot get into the bait. Just as these baits poison and kill mice and rats, they are also dangerous when our pets eat them. To avoid the risk of poisoning, you can bait traps with peanut butter or use live traps.

Your pet's skin and paws could become irritated or damaged by salt and other ice melting chemicals. Be conscientious about your use of these chemicals and wipe off pets' paws before they come back into the house. Check the pads and hair between the toes and remove any ice and snow.

Dr. Kathy Connell, DVM, owns and operates Foxglove Consulting in Olympia.



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Mmmmm... SOUP



As the frosty days of winter turn skies dark early in the day, how lovely it is to have a delicious soup for dinner. Some of these recipes are quick to assemble, while others can simmer all day. Feel free to add your own additions to these recipes and make them your personalized favorites.



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.

Cream of Leek with Brie Soup

Serves 8

I often serve a wheel of brie cheese as an appetizer during the holidays and let's face it, after the guests have helped themselves, it can look like it's been in a train wreck. To use the leftovers, I remove the rind, cut it into chunks and freeze it for another use, such as cheese balls, mashed potatoes or this great soup. This soup is very elegant and would make a lovely romantic dinner in front of the fire or as a starter for a dinner party.

you will need

4 large leeks	1 tsp. salt
½ lb. sliced mushrooms	2 cups half and half cream
2 cloves garlic, minced	2 tsp. dried tarragon
½ cup butter	½ tsp. white pepper
1/3 cup flour	8 oz. cubed brie cheese, rind removed
4 cups chicken broth	

directions

Trim leeks by cutting off the roots and most of the heavy green stems. Slice in half and rinse thoroughly under running cold water to remove grit and dirt. Blot dry with paper towels and slice thinly crosswise. In a large soup kettle, melt butter, sauté leeks over medium high heat until beginning to soften. Add garlic and mushrooms to the pan and continue cooking until mushrooms and leeks are tender. Sprinkle with flour and stir to combine. Cook for three minutes, until mixture thickens. Add chicken broth and simmer for five minutes. Stir in cream, spices and cheese. Cook until cheese is melted.

Taco Soup

Serves 4 to 6

This one is easy to throw together with items off the kitchen shelf. Kids seem to really like it.

you will need

1 lb. ground beef	1 medium size can kidney beans and juice
1 onion, chopped	1 small can sliced ripe black olives, drained
1 large can chopped tomatoes and juice	1 pkg. dry taco seasoning
1 medium size can whole kernel corn and juice	

directions

Brown ground beef in a large soup kettle over medium high heat. Add onion and cook until soft. Drain off any fat. Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes. Serve with sour cream, grated cheddar cheese and sliced green onions.

Sausage and Lentil Soup

Serves 6 to 8

Rich and hearty, this is a meal in itself with crusty bread and a crisp salad.

you will need

1 ¼ cup dry lentils	3 carrots, peeled and chopped	1 tsp. salt
10 oz. Italian sausage, cooked and crumbled	3 stalks celery, sliced	½ tsp. pepper
1 tbs. butter	4 cups chicken stock	8 oz. heavy cream
1 tbs. oil	2 tbs. Dijon mustard	1 cup fresh spinach, stemmed and thinly sliced
1 large onion, chopped	1 T. red wine vinegar	

directions

Brown the sausage in a skillet, drain and set aside. In a heavy kettle, melt butter and oil and sauté onion, carrots and celery until softened. Add chicken stock and lentils, season with the mustard, vinegar, salt and pepper. Cook over medium low heat until lentils are tender. Just before serving, add sausage, cream and spinach. Cook until sausage and cream are heated through.

Golden Onion Soup

Serves 4 as a main dish

I have never tasted a better onion soup than this one, not even in Paris! Years ago when I attended a cooking lesson taught by Julia Child, I won a raffle. The prize was a bunch of bones to make stock from scratch. In spite of the good "Julia" vibes and the tremendous amount of time it took to make the stock from scratch, the resulting recipe wasn't nearly as good as this one.

you will need

- 4 large yellow onions, sliced
- ¼ cup butter
- 3 Tbs. oil
- ½ tsp. sugar
- 2 Tbs. flour
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 Tbs. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbs. tomato paste
- Salt and pepper to taste
- For serving:*
- ½ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup brandy
- 4 slices toasted French bread
- 8 oz. monterey jack cheese, shredded

directions

Melt butter and oil in a heavy soup kettle over medium heat. Add the onions and sprinkle with the sugar. Saute for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally or until onions are golden. Add flour and stir to combine. Add the chicken stock, mustard and tomato paste. Turn heat to low and simmer for one hour. Add salt and pepper to taste. Just before serving, stir wine and brandy into the soup. Ladle into bowls, top with the bread and sprinkle evenly with the cheese. Place bowls on a cookie sheet and place under the broiler until cheese melts.



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A winter rose by any other name

BY ELAINE ANDERSON

In January, sometimes as early as December, the "Christmas rose" comes into bloom. Legend tells of a shepherdess who had no gift for the baby Jesus, and her tears falling into snow brought forth the first blooms of a Christmas rose, *Helleborus niger*. Other hellebores bloom a bit later, and some are called "Lenten rose." Today, hellebores are gifts year after year for the lucky gardeners who enjoy these shade-loving perennials.

Hellebores may resemble wild roses, but they aren't roses at all; they belong to the same family as buttercups and clematis. They are hardy in our climate and easy to grow, tolerating drought and neglect. However, these beauties deserve better than that! Take a bit of care with them, and they will bloom from midwinter well into spring. When not blooming, their foliage serves as a lush groundcover, and many of them are evergreen. Another desirable trait is that

deer find them *undesirable*.

In early spring, plant hellebores in partial shade, ideally under deciduous trees, so they receive sunlight – what little we have of it – in winter. Place them in organically rich, well-draining soil and provide some protection from winter winds. They have deep-growing roots, so don't spread their roots when planting.

Don't eat them, either, or any other part of the plant. The Latin name *Helleborus* is from the Greek, *helleboros*, which means "food that kills." Hellebores contain toxic alkaloids (which, no doubt is why deer avoid munching on them). Several thousand years ago, the plant was used to poison wolves and foxes, rats and mice, and people, too. According to Pliny the Elder, the meat of deer brought down with arrows dipped in the juice of a hellebore was tenderer when cooked. I guess it wasn't poisonous, though.

There were medicinal uses for hellebores as well. These ranged from relieving itching in horses to use as a purgative in humans and a treatment for insanity. Witches used it to summon demons.



Hellebores offer beauty in the often lackluster winter landscape. They do well in our climate, are hardy and drought-resistant.

It's nice to know all the practical uses of this plant, but nowadays we don't much concern ourselves with them. We see in our gardens what, at first appearance, seems to be a small, modest plant that adds interest to an otherwise lackluster winter landscape. Then, a closer look reveals the beauty of these flowers. For gardeners, that's practical enough.

Elaine Anderson is the Washington State University Extension coordinator for the King County Master Gardener Program. The program, funded by WSU and the Master Gardener Foundation of King County, provides free, environmentally friendly gardening advice to home gardeners. For answers to your questions about hellebores and other gardening topics, call the Master Gardener phone clinic at 206-543-0943.



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Turn-of-the-century teacher

BY ELIZABETH P. STEWART

When 25-year-old Florence Guitteau started teaching here in 1910, Renton was a city of 2,740 people with three very overcrowded schools: Spring Glen, Sartori, and Central. Looking back, Miss Guitteau observed that "if anyone had told me in 1910 that Renton was to become my permanent home, I would have been surprised." Still, her students, their parents, and Renton itself grew on her, and she would become one of Renton's most beloved teachers.

Miss Guitteau had been recruited from a school in eastern Washington by Renton school superintendent V. W. Talbott, after a recommendation by a parent whose son Miss Guitteau had turned around with her discipline. She had to be a strict disciplinarian; she started at Central School with a class of 50 fifth graders. She would later be remembered as the teacher who had eyes in the back of her head, because of her ability to spot students with chewing gum; her secret was strategically placed framed pictures that allowed her to see every student while she wrote on the blackboard.

Teachers were important public figures in small communities at the turn of the century, and they had special responsibilities. During the 1911-1912 coal mine strike, Superintendent Talbott instructed teachers to be "absolutely neutral in look, word

COURTESY OF THE RENTON HISTORY MUSEUM
Miss Florence Guitteau in 1910, the year she started as a Renton teacher.

and deed, [and] that all subject matter, even spelling words that might start talk, was to be deleted." But Miss Guitteau also remembered Renton as more tolerant than many communities.

"No one objected if we played cards or danced ... or had a beau," she recalled. "We were, however, expected to live in Renton, spend most of our Saturdays and Sundays here, [and] spend our salaries here."

School budgets were tight, however. Teachers earned so little money that Miss Guitteau knew one who could not afford a two-cent stamp to write home for help. By the time she arrived, the school was so old that the kindergarteners in basement classrooms had to worry about rats, and teachers taught in classrooms with walls so thin they could hear the lessons next door.

So Miss Guitteau was thrilled to be invited in 1911 to teach seventh graders in the new Renton High School. Here her career really took off; she moved through seventh and eighth grade with the same students, and then served as their French teacher, penmanship teacher, and academic advisor throughout their school careers. She left in 1918 to teach at a new school in Rainier Beach, but she never forgot that first class with whom she had grown up as a teacher.

Elizabeth P. Stewart is the director of the Renton History Museum, info@rentonhistory.org, 425-255-2330.



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...Renton High School started its library in 1907. The Renton Mine Association donated all its books to the school for upper-level students; by 1917 the high school had 1500 books.

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