

RENTON *Magazine*

Volume 3 / No 9 September 2008



**Celebrating the
Coming of age**

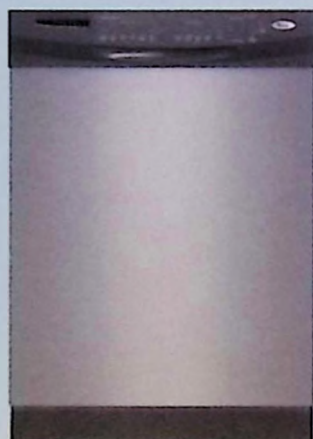
page 14

September Savings Days



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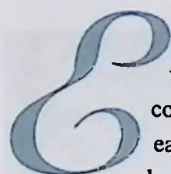
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Every culture has a story about travelers coming together for a shared evening meal, each contributing an ingredient that complements the others. The sum of those offerings is more interesting and delicious than any single ingredient. Sharing stories and food brings us together. In learning more about others, we learn more about ourselves.

South King County is a vibrant, diverse community of people from around the globe. Each group has its own history, own perspective, own culture. Yes, there are many differences. But everyone shares a desire for a better life for our families and children.

We want this magazine to play a role in greater understanding, and we can, if our readers will share their stories with us, so we can share them with the rest of you. This issue opens a small window into the Hispanic community; watch for

future stories about other cultures. There are many stories to tell.

Which brings me to my next point. Each month a few of us sit together to talk about upcoming stories. Hands-down, some of the best stories have been suggested by our readers. Does your neighbor have an interesting hobby? Do you know of a group that helps others in the community? Or comes together through shared interests or heritage? Please drop us a note by e-mail or mail. Help us delve deeper into the rich pool of stories that should be told because they're interesting. With an issue every month, we will have many opportunities to share many stories. Fresh ideas and



Diana Kramer
PUBLISHER

interesting stories will ensure the magazine is something you look forward to and enjoy.

And finally, we hope you'll enjoy our newest family member, "fresh tastes." Christie Katona is a long-time South King County resident with a deep passion for food. She's a delightful spirit who has studied at the Cordon Bleu, won a national cook-off, published many cookbooks and fed hundreds of thousands of people. Christie will feature fresh ingredients, available locally, as well as recipes from around the world.

Christie joins our other columnists, each chosen for their expertise. Putting out a magazine is a team sport, and we're fortunate to have a team of talented and local writers.

Together we bring something to the magazine. All of us, you and us, add ingredients to make a savory monthly "meal."

RENTON Magazine

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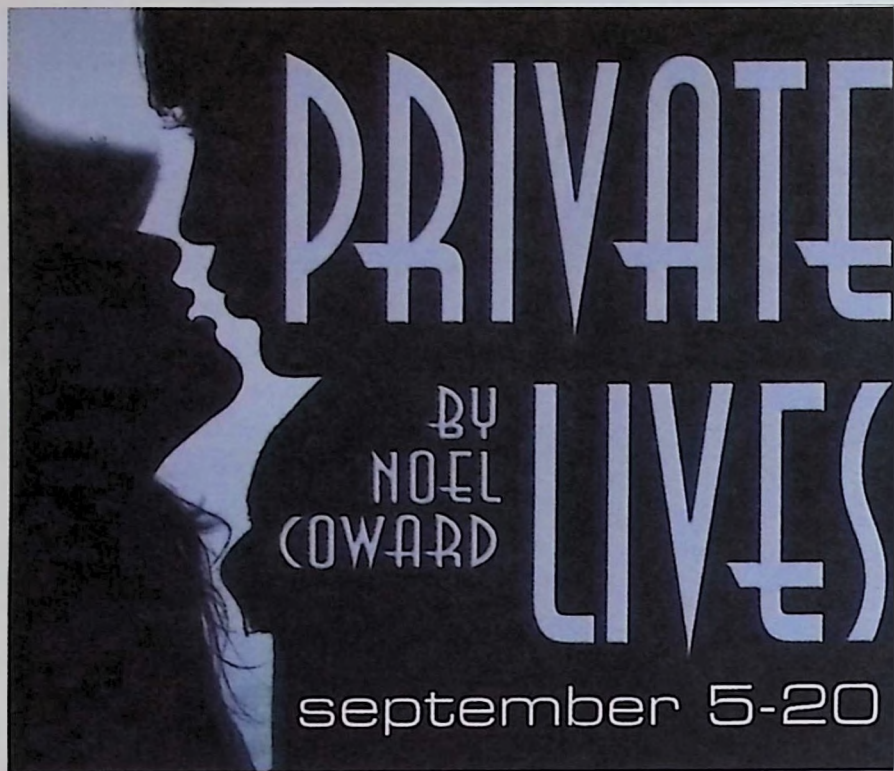
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cover:

Laura Villalobos is one of many Renton area Hispanic girls who celebrate their 15th birthdays with a Quinceañera. See page 14. Photo by Jagoda Sondej.

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
- Library (Main)**
425.430.6610
- Library (Highlands)**
425.430.6790
- Maplewood Golf Course**
425.430.6800
- Police Dept**
(non emergency)
425.430.7500
- 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



PRIVATE LIVES
BY NOEL COWARD
september 5-20

In this comedy, a divorced couple, Elyot and Amanda, end up honeymooning with their new spouses at the same hotel. A chance encounter in the hotel reignites an old flame and they elope. Hilarious chaos ensues as relationships are formed then fall apart. The play had four successful Broadway runs, starring major Hollywood actors Sir Lawrence Olivier, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor.

The Renton Civic Theater
507 S. 3rd St.
425-226-5529

Admission: \$22/adults;
\$18/seniors and students

Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

Fridays and Saturdays
at 8 p.m.

Sundays at 2 p.m.



september 6

WA Small Business Fair

Small business owners and prospective owners can learn tricks of the trade at "BIZfair 2008." The event features a full day of networking opportunities and seminars with more than 30 business and trade associations, local chambers of commerce, and government agencies.

Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Renton Technical College
3000 NE 4th St.

425-235-5842

- Admission: Free, no advance registration required



september 9

The Travels of Ibn Battuta: Explaining the Divergent Paths of Islam and the West

In commemoration of Sept. 11, Professor Don Holsinger will illuminate critical turning points that set the West and Islam on their divergent paths.

Tuesday, 4:30 p.m.

Renton History Museum
235 Mill Ave. S.

425-255-2330

Admission: Free with museum admission, \$2 resident/ \$3 non-resident



september 13

Fall Recycling Day 2008

Many items can be recycled instead of thrown in the garbage. A list of acceptable and non-acceptable materials is available on the website, www.rentonwa.gov. Oversized loads will be refused.

Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Renton Technical College
N.E. 6th Place and Monroe Ave. N.E.

425-430-7396

Admission: Free



september 25

Disaster Job Fair

Volunteers are needed in the community when disaster strikes. Stop by the Disaster Job Fair to pick up information and ask questions about volunteering. The fair will include demonstrations and displays to help you select the perfect "job" for you.

Thursday, 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Renton City Hall
Seventh floor conference center
1055 S. Grady Way

425-430-7027

Admission: Free

NOT NOW

Presented by
VALLEY COMMUNITY PLAYERS

Darling

September 19 - October 5

This farce, with suspicious wives, mistaken identities and outrageous jokes, pokes fun at attempted infidelity and the mess of misunderstandings it can lead to. Tickets are available by calling the Valley Community Players office.

Carco Theater
1717 Maple Valley Highway / 425-226-5190

Admission: \$15 per adult, \$14 per student or senior

Fridays, Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

Sundays at 2 p.m.



september 27

Seventh Annual Budkis Fund Auction

The Budkis Fund has been working for years to provide emergency medical care for the pets of low-income senior citizens. The auction, held at Renton Technical College, will include dinner, a silent and live auction, raffle and games. To donate auction items or reserve a seat, call Mij Charbonneau.

Renton Technical College

N.E. 6th Place and Monroe Avenue N.E.

Saturday, at 5:30 p.m.
425-226-7285

Admission: \$50 in advance



september 27

Harvest Celebration Farm Tour

See where your food comes from at this 10th annual event, which allows you to tour local farms. Meet farmers, taste local food, walk the fields, enjoy live music, explore corn mazes, and go on hayrides.

Farm locations in South King County can be found at <http://www.king.wsu.edu/foodandfarms/HarvestCelebration.html>. Sponsored by King County, the King Conservation District, and the WSU King County Extension office.

Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

206-205-3185

Admission: Free

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- Special giveaways

The Battle

HAT ATTACK 2 is a friendly kill or be killed competition where the weapon of choice is a hat. You will receive a target and original weapon pattern. Your goal is to knit and mail a hat to your target before you are killed before receiving one yourself! Warriors can stop by and continue their all day battle into the night!

The Prize

- \$500 worth of yarn from the South West Trading Co.
- A \$150 gift card from Renaissance Yarns*
- * See website for restrictions

Enter at www.hat-attack.com

Entrance fee of \$2 (for cost of battle yarn)

253.852.YARN
877.852.YARN
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Kent, WA 98032

Hours:
Sun: 11am - 4pm
Mon - Sat: 10am - 6pm
Tue & Thur: 10am - 8pm

calendar of events

ALL AGES

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church Annual Block Party

Sunday, Sept. 7, 2 - 5 p.m.

A vintage car show, plant exchange, pony rides, tons of music and food are designed for family fun. Children especially are promised entertainment with an expanded kids' zone this year.

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

425-226-2420

Admission: free

www.smlc.cc



Renton Farmers Market

Tuesdays through Sept. 16, 3 - 7 p.m.

Time is almost up for the 2008 Renton Farmers Market, but there's an ample selection of fresh vegetables and fruit for your family. Located at The Piazza, the market is filled with foods, flowers, arts and crafts from more than 50 vendors. It is the only Tuesday farmers market in the Puget Sound region and provides customers with entertainment along with the goods for purchase.

The Piazza, South 3rd Street between Logan and Burnett avenues

425-679-1502

Admission: free

www.rentonfarmersmarket.com



Free Blood Pressure Checks

Second and fourth Mondays, 9 a.m.

Receive free blood pressure checks from fire and emergency services personnel at city hall.

Renton City Hall
1055 S. Grady Way

425-430-6400

Admission: free

<http://rentonwa.gov/news>



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

Saturday, Sept. 27, 8 a.m. - noon

Everyone is welcome to participate in this annual event to raise funds for families and individuals in need in Renton. The walk is a county-wide event, but participants may designate the funds to their local St. Vincent de Paul. Last year money raised helped more than 3,000 people in Renton. Pledge sheets are available at www.svdpfriendsofthepoorwalk.org. There is no minimum or maximum monetary amount.

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

206-957-7241 (Richard Bray)

Admission: Free to enter, just collect pledges for the walk.

FOR WOMEN



Renton Soroptimist Mixer

Tuesday, Sept. 9, 6 - 8 p.m.

Renton Soroptimists will host a get-acquainted

mixer to introduce prospective members to the club and its support of educational and charitable programs to help women and girls—here and around the globe. Hors d'oeuvres and beverages are complimentary. Women planning to attend the event are asked to RSVP to Judy Craig at 425-255-3210.

Blossom Asian Bistro
305 Burnett Ave. S.

425-255-3210

Admission: free

judyandgene1@comcast.net

CHILDREN/YOUTH

Renton Library
100 Mill Ave. S.
425-430-6610
www.rentonwa.gov



Baby Signs

Friday, Sept. 5 and 19, 10:30 a.m.

You and your baby can learn sign language together. The program is designed to give children a head start on learning another language before they begin speaking. It is for babies, ages 6 months to 24 months.

Admission: free



Teen Game Days

Thursday, Sept. 11, 4 - 5 p.m.

Dance Revolution, board games and snacks are available for teens in grades 6 through 12.

Admission: free

SENIORS

Renton Senior Activity Center
211 Burnett Ave. N.
425-430-6633
www.rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=40



Pet Show

Friday, Sept. 5, 10 - 11 a.m.

Show off your best animal friend, be it feline, canine, reptile or bird; even stuffed animals can join. It'll be a pet parade with a raffle to win fun pet goodies, a photo station, and snacks. Live pets must be in a kennel, cage, or on a leash.

Admission: free

Safe Steps- Fall Prevention Workshop

Tuesday, Sept. 23, 9:30 - 11 a.m.

Maintain your health and independence by learning ways to prevent or reduce the risk of a fall. Serious falls can result in major injuries for older adults, often leading to restricted mobility and loss of independence. Experts will analyze individual's risk of falling. Pre-registration is required and can be done on-line. Prizes will be awarded.

Admission: free



Celebrate Being 80 Years and Over

Wednesday, Oct. 1, 11:30 a.m.

A special luncheon will honor all who are 80 or over and provide them with the opportunity to make new friends. Pre-registration is required, beginning Sept. 24, and tickets may be purchased Oct. 1.

Admission: \$3 (donation for lunch)

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- computer smarts
- parks & camping
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Added bonus: The Sunday RV School at McLendon's in Renton on October 26, 9AM -2:30PM. Join us for special classes on basic plumbing and electrical repair and a chance to get a mechanical walk-through of your RV by a certified technician.

Register at www.RentonRVSchool or www.RTC.edu/LifeStyle or contact Jennifer (425) 235-2352 or jrock@RTC.edu

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Renton Technical College | 3000 N.E. Fourth Street | Renton WA 98056

www.RTC.edu/lifestyle >>>

kirby unti

First-day-of-school jitters? Relax



KIRBY UNTI

had friends; they hung a threat over my head the entire summer. They promised me on the first day of school they would pants me, strip me of my underwear and run them up the school flag pole.

I was miserable that last week of summer. I didn't sleep much the night before school and spent the entire day looking over my shoulder. I couldn't believe it when I made it through the first day without so much as a close call. Little did I know then that it was a fear that all older classmen placed upon their younger siblings. It was rite-of-passage material.

Eventually the feared turned to joy when I realized I had survived and knew the ropes of junior high. Before long it was my school, and I was very much at home on campus.

The fear returned for me as a parent when my own children left the safety of our neighborhood school to the threatening environs of middle school. Like me, they worried themselves sick and slept very little the night before. Isn't it amazing they managed to complete their middle school careers without any scars to show for it!

It just simply is a part of life that new beginnings are always filled with fear, anticipation and joy. It is how we grow and are stretched for the next challenges that meet us.

So let me offer a word of reassurance to all the children in our community and parents who are dreading that first day of school. This too shall pass and you, like all who have gone before, will soon have your day when you too can tell stories about what that first day in middle school was like and how you survived it.

Have a great fall and good year. And if you think it is hard on you, imagine what it is like for your teacher. Going to school never ends for them.

The school bells will soon be ringing and hundreds of children will find their way back into our classrooms. The start of school has always stirred up in me a strange combination of fear, anticipation and joy. I can remember as a kid counting with dread the last days of summer vacation.

I loved the freedom of summer. It was a thrill to play outside, underneath the street light with all the neighborhood kids. I loved sleeping late and not having to worry about assignments and due dates.

It all came to a screeching halt when the first day of school arrived and out the door I would go, wearing my new school clothes. I could count on butterflies churning in my stomach, sweaty palms and real concerns about whether I would have any friends in my class.

The worst of all beginnings was seventh grade. It was back in the days of junior high school. I had an older brother, and he

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



BY ANDREW FICKES

*I*n a crisis, the simple solution can make all the difference. That's why a group of volunteer, ham radio operators is a valuable asset to Renton's Fire and Emergency Services Department.

"The strength of ham radio communications is in its simplicity," says David Cromer, Fairwood resident and eight-year ham radio volunteer. "That's why it's called upon consistently to back up very sophisticated systems. It works when nothing else does."

"Fire trucks are outfitted with 800 megahertz radios, and that system works extremely well when everything is going right," Cromer explained. "When disaster strikes that system becomes

Hams are on-call, ready

overloaded; too many using the system locks it up. That's where we activate our (amateur) radios to subsidize that missing link."

Amateur radios transmit signals omnidirectionally (going in all directions), said Cromer, compared to 800 MHz radios that rely on perfectly aligned towers. The amateur radios can also rely on batteries when conventional power is down.

When Renton annexed the Benson Hill area last winter, it gained an active, 24-member organization called the Amateur Radio Support Group (ARSG), which originally organized in 1994. Now the Renton Emergency Communication Service (RECS), has grown to 41 members.

"A lot of groups would boast that they have 200 members, but we have 41 very well-trained ham radio operators," says Mindi Mattson, city emergency management coordinator. "It's a neat group because there's a whole variety of backgrounds and training."

Members include retirees, working professionals, and educators.

Amateur radio operators see their fascination with this century-old technology as partly a hobby and a way to communicate with people from around the world. But when disaster strikes,

they're ready to buckle down and engage.

Mattson recalls the ham operators' – then with Fire District 40 – "shining day" during the fierce windstorm two-and-a-half years ago.

"Valley Com in Kent was experiencing a high amount of calls, so District 40 opted to do its own dispatch," she said. "The district took it a step further and decided to do all dispatch with amateur radio. The battalion chief funneled all calls out on amateur radio. Volunteers relayed orders from the battalion chief to firefighters in the field."

Mattson said the group's primary function is to provide radio services to the fire department during times of disaster. But often, to help keep volunteers' skills up to par, the group will provide communication support for public events.

"We have helped with the Special Olympics Golf Tournament at the Fairwood Country Club," she said. "Other volunteers have helped with Seafair. We would like to help with communications at Renton River Days next year."

"We're actively looking for new members," says Lee Cummings, RECS team trainer. "I've determined that we should have at least 80 members so that we can effectively provide a good level of service."

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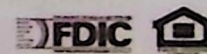
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A sweet decision

To bee or not to bee

Story and Photos by James Bavendam

You have to care for their health. I get immense pleasure from them."

Reinhardt says. So he started reading about bees.

A cook at the corporate food service for Microsoft, Reinhardt said he was looking for a hobby.

"With my job, I spend so much time indoors that I really wanted to be outdoors more. Beekeeping is a way to do that."

Sometimes hobbies can get away from you. Reinhardt planned to have just a few hives. In a relatively short time, he ended up with more than 360. Managing the hives and extracting the honey, using a device like a centrifuge, is no small task. Although he is more active in the summer, bees are a year-round hobby.

"I know that many people just want to swat bees, but keeping them is very much like keeping a dog or a cat. There are times during the year you have to feed them.

Lifting a corner of a hive to see how much it weighs indicates if the bees have enough food. A solution of sugar water or returning some of the honey to the hive helps bees survive the winter.

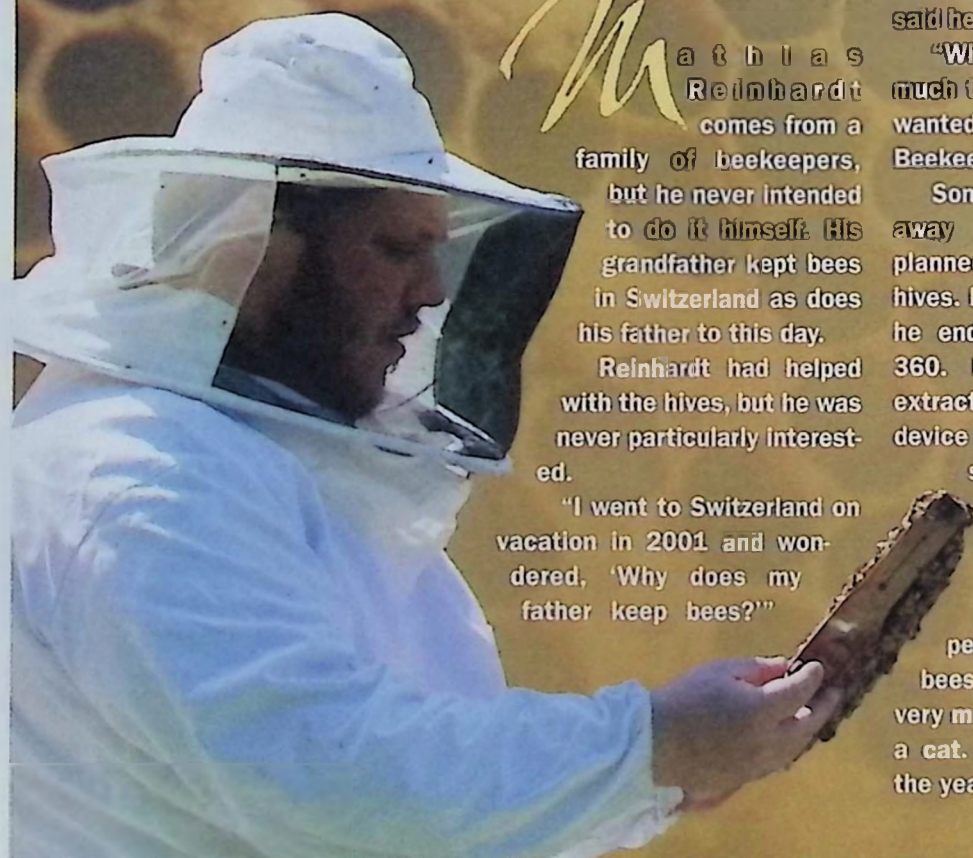
Some beekeepers have used antibiotics to thwart mites and disease – a practice that has led to drug resistance. Reinhardt uses several compounds found in honey during the year as natural, effective medications. He says this produces healthier bees and drug-free honey that is above the standards needed to call it organic.

Even the taste of honey is personal. Similar to growing specific grapes to give wines a unique taste, beekeepers can place their hives near plants or crops to influence the flavor. "Place the hives near blackberries, cherries, or orange blossoms and these will dominate the taste," says Reinhardt. This

*M*atthias Reinhardt comes from a family of beekeepers, but he never intended to do it himself. His grandfather kept bees in Switzerland as does his father to this day.

Reinhardt had helped with the hives, but he was never particularly interested.

"I went to Switzerland on vacation in 2001 and wondered, 'Why does my father keep bees?'"



A few facts about beekeeping

How do I get started?

Puget Sound Beekeepers Association (www.pugetsoundbees.org) has information. Trees N' Bees near Auburn (www.treesnbees.com) offers seminars and supplies. Most beekeepers like Reinhardt, who sells his honey at Renton and Kent farmers' markets, are eager to help others get started.

I don't have a property suitable for hives.

Reinhardt didn't either. He simply drove through the countryside and asked likely property owners until he found a few that let him keep his hives there.

I have the property, but not sure if I want to commit.

Beekeepers often look for new sites. Offer a beekeeper the chance to place hives on your property in exchange for your participation for a year or two to see if you really like beekeeping as a hobby.

There's a swarm in my yard!

Honeybees are a protected species; you can be fined if you harm them. Call the fire department. They have a list of beekeepers who will remove the swarm for you.

It is especially so when local beekeepers don't dilute the honey with corn syrup, the way some large manufacturers do.

Between keeping the hives in good condition, keeping the bees healthy, managing queens, dealing with swarms and extracting honey, there's a lot to do. Yet there are rewards beyond the honey in the jar.

"I very much like the way I feel I contribute to nature," says Reinhardt. "Bees are very important. I also contribute to people's food. Over 75 percent of all the food people eat depends on pollination and bees. It feels good to know I help with that."

Beekeeping requires patience. A new hive may not produce honey until the second year.

"I remember my first jar of honey. It took a year-and-a-half from when I started. I was so proud, I had tears in my eyes."

Reinhardt smiles.

"My wife enjoys the honey, but has a phobia for bees. But my daughter has grown up with them and likes them a lot. She says, 'Someday I'll come beekeeping with you.' It is something I would like to pass along."



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BY CHRISTIE KATONA

*F*ood is intertwined with our lives. More than just sustenance, when we share our home with our friends, feed the kids after school, provide dinners for our families, manage times of stress or sorrow, or want to impress someone new in our lives, food plays a big role.

What a wonderful way to be creative! Each recipe gives you ways to vary how it tastes, how it feels on the tongue, how it's presented on the plate, and how it interacts with other courses. Changing the beverage you serve can change the nature and taste of the meal. Even the scent of flowers on the table can change a meal.

I have had a lifelong passion, interest and career in food. I started reading *Gourmet* magazine in the early 1950s and got my first cookbook in 1959. In the 70s, I discovered the Cuisinart. Here was a machine that could make recipes in seconds that would normally take hours. I was in love. The next thing I knew, I was working for Cuisinart, flying from Alaska to Denver, teaching people how to use the machine. My career has evolved over time, writing 18 cookbooks and running my own catering firm for more than 20 years.

Welcome to my kitchen. Each month I'll share with you practical, interesting recipes. Expect my recipes to stress fresh vegetables and foods that we can find locally in the Northwest. America is founded on diversity. Expect some of my recipes to honor other cultures.

One of the best forms of healthy eating is the salad. Salads really are an art form; they can be as simple as a bunch of fresh lettuce, drizzled with good olive oil and vinegar or a stunning composition of anything and everything that's in your fridge. Recently I purchased a bunch of carrots that were orange, yellow, white and tinged with purple, or wonderfully shaped and colorful tomatoes can make a salad visually interesting as well as taste good.

My cousin, Margie, has a formula for salads. Include something green, something sweet, something crunchy and then something tangy to dress it. This formula has worked for me countless times.

Here are some delicious salad recipes for you to try. If you try only one recipe, make sure it is the Raspberry Dressing. It is one we developed in our catering kitchen and it is truly outstanding. Tinker with these recipes! Use more cheese, leave out the nuts or add more dressing - it's up to you.

Fresh for September - an array of *Salads*

Mixed Greens with Raspberry Dressing

you will need

- 1 pound spring mix lettuces
- 1 can - 11 oz. mandarin oranges, drained
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta or blue cheese
- 1/2 cup toasted or candied nuts - almonds, walnuts or macadamias

raspberry dressing

In a food processor, using the steel blade or in a blender, combine:

- 1 clove minced garlic
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 cup salad oil or light olive oil
- 1/3 cup Balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup raspberry freezer jam

directions

Add the garlic, salt, pepper and mustard to the workbowl and combine. Add the oil and slowly drizzle in the vinegar through the feedtube. Add raspberry jam, taste and correct the balance of sweetness, if desired. Raspberry freezer jam is available at the grocery stores in the freezer section. Jam that is heat processed and comes in jars does not give the fresh, zingy taste. Store dressing in a covered container in the refrigerator. This makes about two cups or enough for two batches of the salad. Consider using fresh mangoes for the oranges and thinly sliced red onion for the nuts.

Roasted Beet Salad

You can also use the raspberry dressing on roasted beets. Simply trim the greens from fresh beets, scrub them well and wrap them in a heavy sheet of foil. Roast them at 400 for about an hour until softened, use a sharp knife to test one.

Cool beets and store in the refrigerator. When ready to make the salad, peel the beets and quarter them. Place on individual plates and drizzle with the Raspberry Dressing. I like to scatter feta or blue cheese crumbles on top and add a few toasted walnuts for crunch.

This can make a lovely vegetarian lunch, particularly when you use a variety of colored beets such as yellow or candy cane beets. This salad is also good at dinner with chicken or pork entrees.

Personally, I could live on spinach salad – here's one that is quick and refreshing and goes well with fish or seafood.

Spinach Salad

- 1 pound fresh spinach
- 2 pink grapefruits, peeled and sectioned
- 1/2 cup toasted sunflower seeds
- Girard's Champagne dressing to taste or a simple vinaigrette

directions

Combine ingredients in a large salad bowl, toss and serve. Makes about 4 to 6 servings.

To make this salad even easier I have used the refrigerated pink grapefruit sections by Dole which are available at Costco and Sam's Clubs. Alternatively, you could use mandarin oranges and throw in a diced avocado. The beauty of this salad is in its simplicity and bright colors and flavors.

Another spinach salad that is different and pretty is:

Spinach Salad II

- 1 pound fresh spinach
- 1 cup dried blueberries
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese

- Bottled poppy seed dressing to taste
- 1/2 cup chopped macadamia nuts or sliced almonds

directions

Whenever I make a salad for company at home, I always put the heavy or wet ingredients in the salad bowl first. Then I add the dressing to the bottom of the bowl and top with the greens and dry ingredients. Cover with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator up to 8 hours ahead. When it comes time to serve, simply toss the salad and serve. It saves a lot of time in the kitchen and you are not as likely to forget an ingredient. Trust me.



CHRISTIE KATONA

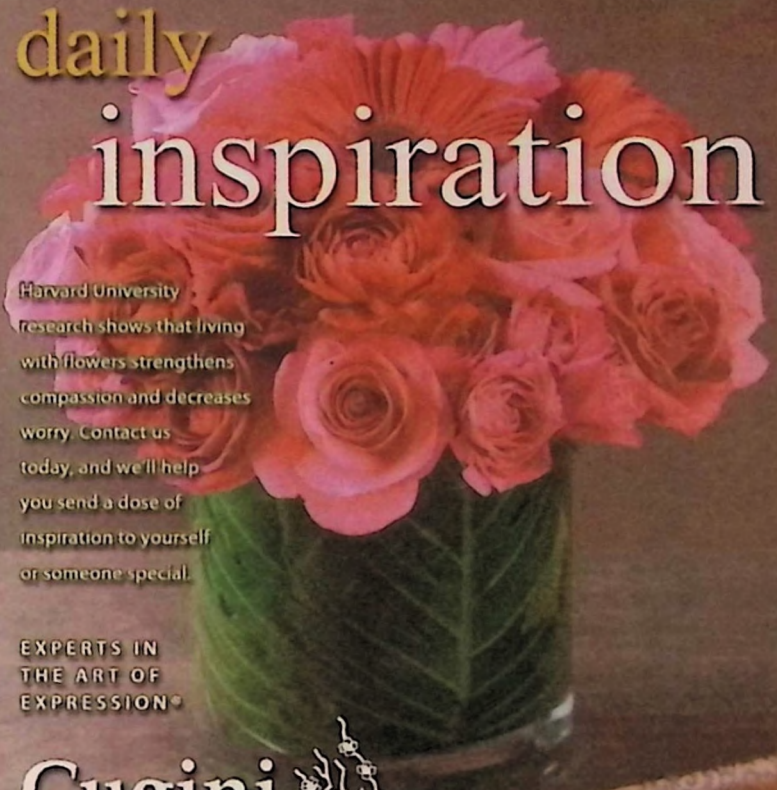
Another timeless salad that everyone enjoys is simply sliced ripe tomatoes, mozzarella cheese and a scatter of fresh basil. Just before serving drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Salt and pepper are hardly necessary on this jewel of a salad.

In my catering business, we serve this salad using small, sweet plum tomatoes, small mozzarella balls, called Boccalini and toss them with the dressing. We then place them in the center of a huge platter surrounded by roasted asparagus. It is a beautiful and stunning presentation on the buffet.

So until next month, feast your eyes and your palate on the wonderful bounty of summer produce. Eat, relax and enjoy!

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.

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A popular rite of passage *Quince*

Story by David Suffia /

centuries ago, when the Maya and Toltec cultures ruled in what is now Mexico, the tribes practiced a ceremony that marked the coming of age of boys and girls. On their 15th birthdays, the rite proclaimed them to be men and women.

Following Spanish invasion and the conversion of natives to the Catholic religion, the ceremony became mingled with the European tradition of presenting young women into society.

That tradition lives on in the Hispanic community's ceremony called "quinceañera," sometimes referred to as "quince años." The Spanish term, pronounced keen-say-ah-nyer'-ah, translates as "15 years," the age at which the ceremony takes place. Although boys sometimes take part, it is primarily for Hispanic girls.

The closest equivalents to quinceañera in the English-speaking world are a sweet sixteen celebration or debutante ball, or the Jewish bar or bat Mitzvah.

As South King County's Hispanic population has grown in recent years, the quinceañera celebrations have grown at local churches.

During the ceremony, each young girl offers a bouquet of flowers to a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe, an incarnation of the Virgin Mary, and asks for guidance in her adult life, according to Dulce Casanova, who works with the Hispanic ministry at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in downtown Renton.

"Each young lady is accompanied by young men and women for the ceremony, kind of like best men and bride's maids in a wedding," she said. "The young girl also gives away a doll, symbolizing giving up her childhood."

Typically, the church ceremony is followed by a gala party with dancing in a

For young Hispanics Quinceañera

Photos by Jagoda Sondej

home or hall.

"The ceremony can take different forms but it basically involves the reading of scripture and singing of songs," according to St. Anthony's priest, the Rev. Gary Zenger. "The young girl renews her baptismal vows that were made by her parents when she was a child, to live her life according to the teachings of Jesus Christ."

"It's a rite of passage that is very important in the Hispanic community. A family often will spend more on a quinceañera than on a wedding," he said.

Father Zenger performs the ceremony quarterly and a church deacon at St. Anthony's performs it as well at other times.

Two young women took part in a recent quinceañera at St. Anthony's, each wearing a colorful gown and hair done up for the occasion. Photographers and videographers crowd around to commemorate the occasion.

With Hispanic musicians and singers performing in the background — heavy on the guitars — the girls formed a processional to the altar, each accompanied by a young man. Father Zenger does the entire ceremony in Spanish. His robe is emblazoned with a depiction of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

"I came up from California two weeks ago for my sister's wedding, and now I'm back for my niece's quinceañera," said Jose Marsical. "It's a big deal in our culture. It's almost as expensive as a wedding."

If you've never seen a Quinceañera, it's kind of a combination of a wedding, Christmas, graduation ceremony, and a debutante ball, all wrapped around a colorful church service.



Blue dress: Jacqueline Mariscal
Green dress facing: Laura Villalobos



RENTON MAGAZINE / DANA E. BLOZIS

Birder Amy Schillinger recommends that birders start out with a field guide and a set of binoculars.

Binoculars, guide book and you too can be a *bird* nerd

BY DANA E. BLOZIS

At first glance, Amy Schillinger does not fit the stereotype of a birdwatcher. The Renton 32-year-old is younger than many birders in the Rainier Audubon Society. In addition, she has been birdwatching since she was a kid, a hobby many people don't develop until later in life.

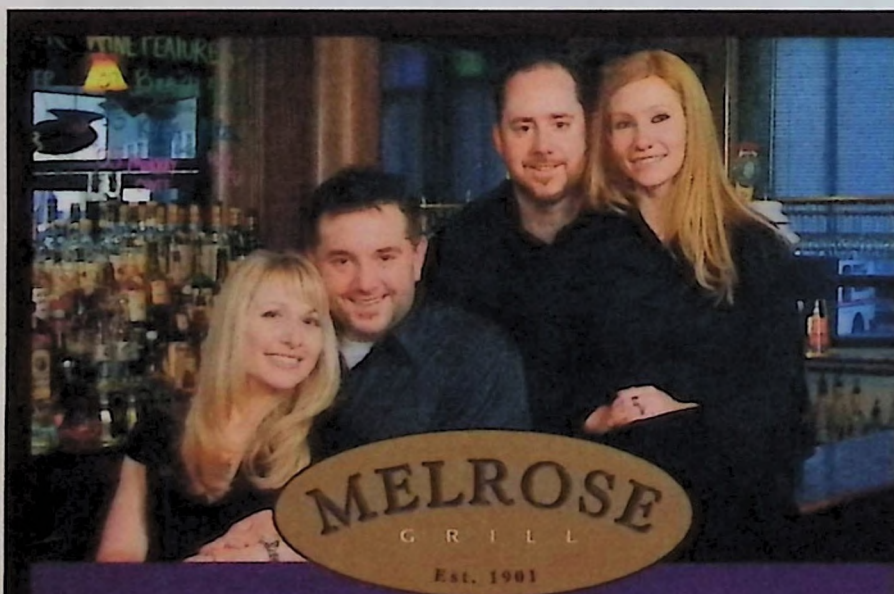
Schillinger comes from an outdoor camping and hiking family. As a child, she remembers listening to birds in her backyard and wanting to know what she was hearing.

"I've been birding for as long as I can remember," Schillinger said. "I'm the 'bird nerd' of the family."

Since those early outings, Schillinger has become more involved in birding, documenting and researching her findings, taking area field trips to expand her list of sightings and learning more about Washington birds and their habitats. On her personal "life list," Schillinger has seen 246 species, all but 10 from Washington. The most unusual bird she has seen is the Palm Warbler. Spotted at the mouth of the Cedar River in Renton, it was "something special to see" because that species is usually found in the eastern United States.

"Birding gets me outside and it gets me away from everybody and everything," Schillinger said. "It's very relaxing and soothing."

Birdwatching is an affordable hobby suitable for anyone, says Schillinger. To get started, she suggests purchasing a pair of inexpensive binoculars and a sim-



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PHOTO COURTESY OF AMY SCHILLINGER
A Red Breasted Sapsucker spotted in its nest hole.



RENTON MAGAZINE / DANA E. BLOZIS
Birder Amy Schillinger uses her scope to identify birds at Riverview Park.

ple field guide that describes local birds. Using these tools, birdwatchers can observe birds in their backyards or nearby parks. They should write down what they see and hear, making a list of birds seen and where. Other ways to learn about birding include joining a local Audubon chapter and taking chapter-sponsored field trips.

Schillinger said field trips are the best way to connect with and learn from other birders, whether they are beginners or veterans. Her most recent trip

was to Lake Sammamish State Park in Issaquah. The park is ideal, Schillinger said, because it offers a variety of bird habitats including marshes, meadows, the forest and lake. During a six-hour field trip, Schillinger will see between 50 and 60 species. In her bird-watching journal, she includes which species she sees, where, what habitats, and age and gender of the birds.

"It's a fun hobby and a great way to meet people of all ages," Schillinger said.

Where to go birding in Renton

Popular spots for bird watching in the Renton area include:

- Black River Riparian Forest
- Riverview Park
- Ron Regis Park
- Shadow Lake Bog
- Green River Natural Resources Area

Additional Resources

- *Birds of Washington Field Guide* by Stan Teklela
- *A Birder's Guide to Washington* by Hal Opperman (Includes self-guided tours)
- *The Sibley Guide to Birds* by National Audubon Society (not for beginners)

Rainier Audubon Society:

www.rainieraudubon.org

Eastside Audubon: www.elwas.org

Washington State Audubon:

<http://wa.audubon.org>

Washington Birding:

www.birding.com/wheretobird/washington.asp

The Bird Guide: <http://thebirdguide.com>



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The library over the Cedar River

BY AARON OESTING

Renton's river-spanning, downtown library is considered unique in the country. When it opened in 1966, it was highly celebrated in both the regional and national press. However, the building that has served as Renton's main library for more than 40 years had a difficult beginning.

The city's first public library, a 1914-vintage Carnegie building, was long overdue to be replaced by the 1960s. Designed to house a

collection of 8,000 books and serve a population of 4,000, the old building was bursting with 68,000 volumes and serving a population of over 20,000. However, because of disagreements about the location of a new building, voters defeated three successive bond measures.

At a City Council meeting, someone joked that the solution was to build the library over the river. The idea caught everyone's attention, as it solved the location problem by being centrally located and easily accessible, with no need to buy land. A local architectural firm, Johnson-Campanella-Murakami and Co., was contracted to draw up plans for the proposed building, and the unique design inspired voters to approve the fourth bond measure of \$150,000 in November 1964.

The library's position over the river provided special challenges since the structure needed to accommodate water velocities, sub-river ground conditions, potential flooding, the excessive weight of books, and the bridge construction requirements of other government agencies. The resulting structure rests on 12 pilings sunk 7 feet into the riverbed, and the majority of its books are shelved at the outer edges of the building rather than mid-span. The project cost \$344,322 in 1966, had room for 100,000 volumes, and was 20,160 square feet.

The opening collection of 50,000 books was hand-trucked over from the old library by Boy Scout troops, who donated 198 hours of labor. The new library was dedicated on April 17, 1966, with Laurie

Renton, the great-grand niece of Captain William Renton, performing the ribbon cutting. Contrary to popular belief, there was no window in the floor for viewing the salmon.

The building underwent a major remodel in 1987, when two additions were constructed. Given its beautiful setting, convenient location, and unique river-spanning structure, it is no wonder that the building has become an icon and continues to appeal to Renton citizens.

Aaron Oesting is the Renton Public Library assistant director, phone 425-430-5610.

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Dogs need conditioning for fall activities

BY CHARLIE POWELL
& DR. KATHLEEN CONNELL

Dogs often reach a peak of outdoor activity with their owners about this time each year. The weather is ideal and still warm and many people take their vacations now.

On the sporting side, upland bird seasons open in September and bow hunting is in full swing in some areas. With dogs doing so much in so many different environments, protecting them from some seasonal hazards becomes important.

Heat exhaustion and dehydration is common this time of year. Often, large dark-colored dogs that protect their owners' sofas most of the year are brought with the family to run on coastal dunes, or accompany a group of hunters and other dogs on an annual excursion to an eastern Washington bird hunt. In many cases, the dogs are not in good enough condition to take on a sudden increase in activity like that.

Conditioning for your dogs is more important than conditioning yourself. Usually, humans know when to quit; pack animals don't and they will literally run themselves to near-death to please the pack leader. Ask your veterinarian about a solid program to condition both your dog, and by default, you before you set out.

Also, outdoor enthusiasts will dutifully carry water for themselves, but ignore the pooch. As for surface waters, if you won't drink it, don't let your dog. The bottom-line – carry along their water, too.

A hunting dog's feet can take a pounding on early season hunts. Even if the dog is conditioned cardiovascularly, the skin on its paws may not be. Ask your veterinarian how to toughen their pads before the trip. Otherwise, sloughed skin on a pad on the first day of a week's hunt makes for a disappointing outing.

Some terrain, such as sharp volcanic rock, cinders or cactus, will always injure a dog's feet. There are booties available



You can shop for hunting dog equipment on the Internet. Three sites are:

<http://www.gundogsonline.com>

<http://www.nextag.com/hunting-dog-vest/search-html>

<http://www.gundogsupply.com>

for dogs and they work quite well—if you can get your friend to wear them. Again, get the footwear early, and acclimate the dog to them slowly.

Bird hunters or hikers may share forestlands with simultaneous archery seasons for big game. Consider visual protection. There are hunter orange vests and collars for dogs that are light and can prevent a tragic accident. I consider them essential forms of cheap insurance.

Some vests are also made to protect a dog's chest and belly from chafing while running through tall grass and brush. I highly recommend these; it is heartbreaking to see a dog scratched and bleeding after a day afield when it was preventable. For boating dogs, a flotation vest goes without saying.

Finally, don't forget a basic first aid kit for your dog. Your veterinarian can advise you on putting together one that is cost effective and practical. Make sure your animal's vaccinations are current, too.

Charlie Powell is the senior public information officer for WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine and the public information Director for the Washington State Veterinary Medical Association. Dr. Kathleen Connell is a veterinarian and owner of Foxglove Consulting in Olympia.

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Renton School District good news announcements

Hazen High senior works on state board

Hazen High School senior Lorilyn Roller recently worked with other members of the Washington State Board of Education to adopt new high school graduation requirements. Lorilyn is one of only two students statewide serving on the board, which recently completed work including: meaningful high school diploma, system performance and accountability, state science standards, and state math standards.

Hazen High graduate saves a life

Hazen High School graduate Andrew Wendling was recently credited with saving the life of an adult swimmer at the Hazen pool. Andrew's quick response to a woman who was trying to reach the bottom of the pool likely result-

ed in saving her from drowning as she drifted underwater into the deep end of the pool. Andrew dived in and pulled the woman to safety. The swimmer later wrote a letter of gratitude to Andrew, stating that she felt she was drowning and Andrew's skillful reaction indeed saved her life.

Renton Schools adds 100 new teachers to district

Human resources staffers have been busy during the summer months processing applications, recruiting, setting interview schedules and helping to hire more than 100 new teachers, administrators and other district staff. The hiring of new staff replaces those who have retired, moved to other districts closer to home and other forms of attrition. The human resources staff also helped the Renton Chamber of Commerce present its new

teacher breakfast, welcoming nearly 100 new teachers to Renton in late August at Renton Technical College.

Hazen H.S. senior accepted by People to People

Hazen High School senior Elias Lunsford recently attended the People to People Leadership Summit at Stanford University, Palo Alto, Calif. Lunsford joined a select group of students from around the globe representing their schools, communities, and country as People to People student leaders.

Lunsford was nominated and accepted for the honor based on outstanding scholastic merit, civic involvement and leadership potential. People to People was founded by President Eisenhower in 1956 with the mission to foster world citizenship. Additional information is available on the Internet site, www.isleaders.org.

These Good News Announcements are prepared by the Renton School District Community Relations department. Contributions may be offered by contacting Randy Matheson at 425-204-2345 or at randy.matheson@renton.wednet.edu.

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healthy advice by dr. bob thompson

Prepare for the unexpected

It is easy to feel that large disasters only happen to others. Of course, that's what thousands of people felt before their disaster happened to them. September has been designated National Preparedness Month. This is the time to clarify and establish resources you might need to help you and your family.

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

Valley Medical Center is making progress on its new Emergency Services Tower. Set for completion in early 2010, the Emergency department and Level III Trauma Center will offer the area's first true disaster recovery facility with decontamination equipment and a resuscitation room in the event of a large scale disaster, whether an earthquake, pandemic flu or act of terrorism.

PERSONAL RESOURCES

Each of us needs to be prepared in our own homes and businesses to deal with emergencies. The first step is to think about the basics of survival - fresh water,

food, clean air and warmth. Your basic emergency supply kit should include:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least 3 days
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- First aid kit
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, plastic sheeting and duct tape to limit exposure to contaminated air
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food
- Prescription medications and glasses
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- Matches in a waterproof container



Dr. Bob Thompson

- Complete change of clothing
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper (sixteen drops per gallon of water to disinfect)

COMMUNICATION

Develop a plan for how your family will contact one another and how you will get back together if you are apart when disaster strikes. Consider calling your child's school for a copy of their emergency plan to have at home or work. Finally, be familiar with the emergency plan where you work. If your business doesn't have an emergency plan, volunteer to help create one.

In the event of a major disaster, being prepared is more than a Boy Scout motto.

It can be a life saving measure for you and your family. To learn more about how to prepare and respond in the event of a disaster, you can visit the Ready America web site at www.ready.gov.

Dr. Bob Thompson is a family practice physician with 25 years of experience in Renton, and is Valley Medical Center's Director of Recruitment and New Program Development.

The Eldercare School

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Worried about keeping your aging parent safe and healthy?

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8:30 AM Registration for walk-ins (Eldercare School fee is \$20)

8:50 AM Welcome

9 - 11:45 AM "Introduction to Eldercare,"

Keynote speaker, **Liz Taylor**, former
Seattle Times columnist

- Why we're in this eldercare pickle today
- The four basic ways to pay for care
- Determining an older person's needs
- What to do if there's memory loss
- The three rules of caregiving
- Dealing with your difficult family

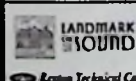
11:45 - 12:15 PM Pick-up light lunch (included in registration)

12:15 - 1:15 PM Bring your lunch to one of these workshops:

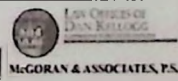
- Services & Resources - What and Where
- Housing & Living Arrangement Options
- Legal & Financial Issues
- Healthcare & Aging Related Issues

1:15 - 1:30 PM Break

1:30 - 2:30 PM Workshops above repeated



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For more information and to register for The Eldercare School: Contact Jennifer Rock at
(425) 235-2352, ext. 5727 or email jrock@RTC.edu or go to www.RTC.edu/LIFESTYLE

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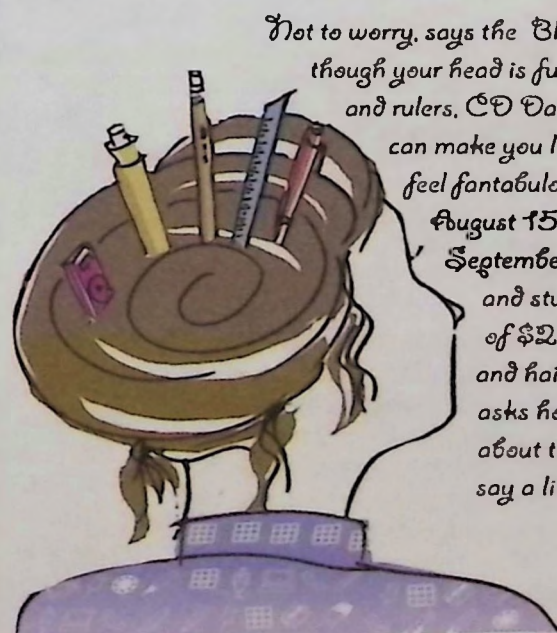
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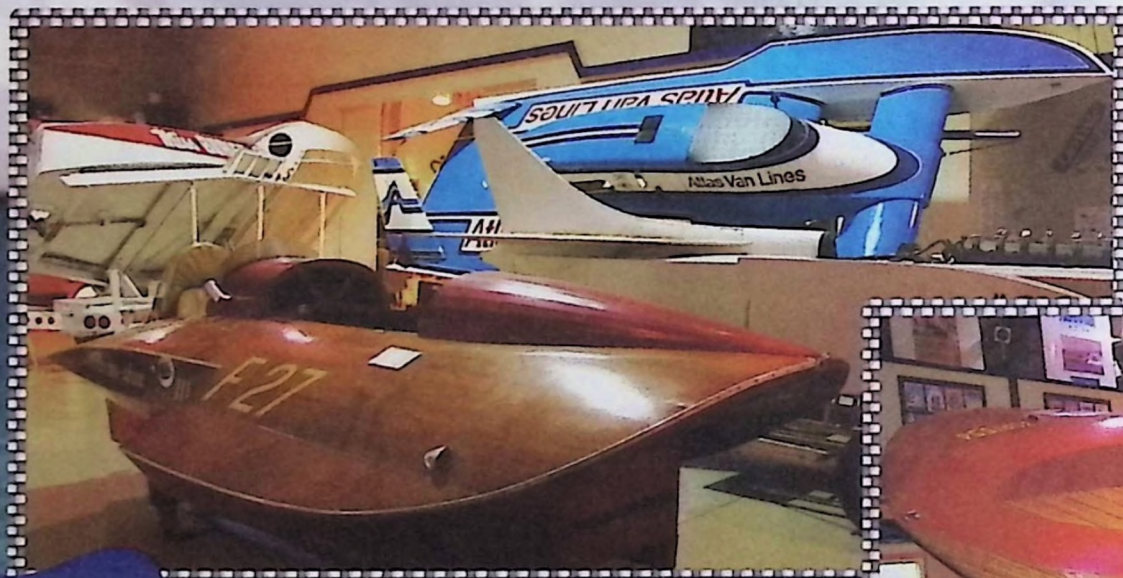


Danza Salon & Spa

Museum hydroplanes

are still roaring

to go



Story by Andrew Fickes / Photos by Jagoda Sondej

efore the Mariners, the Sonics or the Seahawks – there was hydroplane racing.

While the Seattle region first embraced thunderboats in 1951 with the second annual Seafair, it is Kent that serves as home to America's only hydroplane and raceboat preservation museum.

"If we didn't have hydroplane racing, we would have a different identity," says David Williams, professional racer and executive director of the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum. "Hydroplane racing and this museum give the region a very specific flavor."

Approximately 700 members are involved with the museum, which will celebrate its fifth year in Kent this summer. The museum showcases up to 10 refurbished hydroplanes at any one time in an 8,000-square-foot exhibition hall. Williams says the museum's collection comprises 16 boats spanning seven decades. Thirteen are fully restored to running condition.

"We own seven boats outright and the rest are member owned," he

If we didn't have hydroplane racing, we would have a different identity. Hydroplane racing and this museum give the region a very specific flavor.

— David Williams, Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum director.

says.

The collection is shown in action two or three times a year in many parts of the nation. Williams invites the public to the museum's next Washington state exhibition on Lake Chelan during the first weekend in October.

The museum also includes a 3,000-square-foot woodshop and a 1,000-square-foot engine shop. Volunteers visit regularly to help refurbish hydroplanes, which over the years have included, Miss America VIII, Slow-mo-shun IV and V and Miss Thriftway.

For researchers, the museum includes more than 200 hours of rare racing film footage and a comprehensive inventory of books, magazines, race programs, newspapers, photos, and trophies.

The museum began operations in 1982 at a turning point in hydroplane history. Engines were moving away from piston and going to turbine. To regulate safety, cockpits evolved



from open to closed.

"The museum was started by a group of fans that thought this was a marvelous sport and that the sport's history prior to the 1980s had to be preserved before it was lost," says Williams.

In 1993, museum volunteers restored the race boat dubbed Slow-mo-shun V. In 1950, Slow-mo-shun IV had won the Gold Cup in Detroit and was subsequently out-performed by "V" in 1951 on Lake Washington. Slow-mo-shun IV would win the Gold Cup at Seafair in 1952 and 1953.

It would take 5,000 man-hours to restore Slow-mo-shun V, and today it's on display for all to see.

"Remembering these race boats for those in their late 50s, early 60s, is a lot like how kids one day will remember Ichiro," says Williams. "It's a very nostalgic experience."

Williams says the museum attracts 5,000 to 10,000 visitors each year, with summer the busiest season. Volunteer work parties for those interested in refurbishing race boats are held Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturdays.

Visiting the Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum

more information or to become a

General admission to the museum at 5917 S. 196th St. (just a few blocks west of West Valley Highway) is \$10 for adults and \$5 for students, kids and seniors. Children age 5 and under are free.

Hours are from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturdays. It is closed on Sunday and Monday. For

member, call 206-764-9453 or visit the museum on the Web at www.thunderboats.org.

DIRECTIONS FROM RENTON

Take SR 167 South, take 180th Street exit, turn left onto East Valley Road, then right onto S. 180th Street (near IKEA), turn left onto West Valley Highway, turn right onto S. 196th Street. The museum is at 5917 South 196th St. on the left side of the street.

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renton museum



PHOTO COURTESY OF RENTON HISTORY MUSEUM #1989.060.2803

Black Bear Manufacturing Company's Labor Day float, 1937.

Remember the labors of women

BY ELIZABETH P. STEWART

Labor Day is a good time to think about what our aunts and grandmothers did at a time when every family member had to contribute to the household income, yet many jobs were not open to females. Many women turned traditionally female skills, like sewing and cooking, into careers. Oral histories at the Renton History Museum point to several examples of this.

Anne Marie Bressan's mother Maria Bonora Bressan was a seamstress in Italy before she came to live in Renton. Maria continued working from home, earning money for her growing family by making men's suits and children's clothing on a treadle machine.

When Anne Marie graduated from high school in 1933, she took a job at Black Bear Manufacturing in Seattle. Her brothers Orlando and Angelo and sisters Eda, Julia, and Elina all worked for Black Bear, the men as cutters and the women as seamstresses and boxers.

"It was all piece work," Anne Marie remembered later. "They made milkman's overalls; they made slacks, shirts, mackinaws, topcoats, everything, leather jackets." Anne Marie had taken clerical courses in high school, so she quickly moved up to office work. She was responsible for the payroll for 225 employees until 1943.

Many Renton women worked at Black Bear, taking the Interurban streetcar there

and back every day. Lena Tamborini did piecework on men's jackets from 1923 to 1929. She started at \$13.20 a week. After the factory was unionized, she earned a base rate of \$16.00 a week.

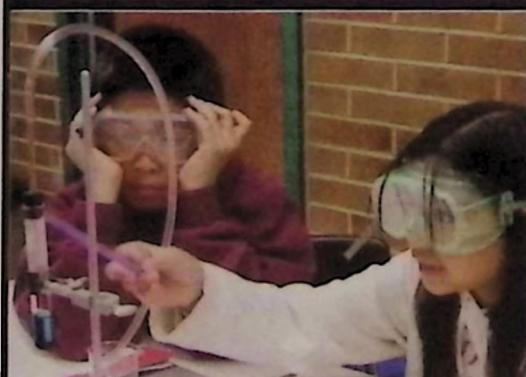
Lena was not shy about demanding her rights as a worker. As early as 1911 she was marching in a mothers-and-daughters' demonstration for higher pay for Renton coal miners; much later, when the factory tried to require her to stitch longer seams for the same pay, she asked for (and received) more money.

Still, Black Bear had its advantages for women workers. In the 1920s efficient stitchers could earn up to \$25.00 a week, the cafeteria offered tasty lunches for 50 cents, and most importantly, the seamstresses' supervisors were all women. Josephine Belmondo Cugini was one of these "floor ladies" for many years, responsible for the quality of the shirts produced in her department.

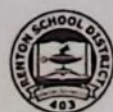
As World War II approached, Black Bear shifted over to the manufacture of Army fatigues for the troops to be deployed to Europe and Pacific. But Boeing and other higher paying manufacturers attracted Black Bear's workforce away, and the clothing factory closed. Still, many Renton women recalled the factory as their first step into the workforce.

For more information, go to <http://www.rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=13330>. Elizabeth P. Stewart is the Director of the Renton History Museum, info@rentonhistory.org, (425) 255-2330.

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BY ELAINE ANDERSON

Maybe not for every occasion, but for nearly every plant. There are over 4,000 species of aphid in the world, and most of them are monophagous (they eat only one species of plant). For example, the rose aphid, *Macrosiphum rosae*, feeds on rose bushes; the watermelon aphid specializes in watermelon, the fern aphid ... well, you get the idea. Lucky for us, there are only 1,300 species in North America. And, there

An aphid for every occasion

aren't even that many here in the Northwest.

Aphids are small, rarely larger than one-twelfth inch. They can be green, black, white, or pink. Some plants are resistant to the attentions of the aphid. Others develop yellowed, sometimes twisted, leaves or stems but aren't seriously damaged. Occasionally, aphids will actually kill leaves or tender buds. They do their harm by sucking the sap out of a plant's phloem (food-conducting) vessels. They also transmit plant diseases as they move from plant to plant.

The most annoying, and potentially destructive, aphid habit is their production of sweet, sticky honeydew. Honeydew is a by-product of the aphid's digestive process. It comes out of their back ends and drips onto side-

walks, lawn furniture, and cars, where it can destroy the finish. When it drips on plant material, it attracts the sooty mold fungus, causing the foliage to appear furry and black. Sooty mold isn't usually harmful to a plant, but if enough of it is present, it can affect a plant's ability to photosynthesize.

Healthy plants can fight aphids without our assistance. One way they do this is by producing chemicals that repel aphids while at the same time attracting aphid-eaters. If that doesn't seem to be happening in your garden, attack the insects with a strong jet of water from your hose. Aphids don't crawl back up on plants once they've been hosed. (I don't know where they go, though.)

If the aphid infestation is getting away from you, try using a horticultur-

al oil or insecticidal soap. Read the product label to be sure you are applying these properly. Stronger chemical measures are available, but are rarely required by the home gardener.

There is one good thing about aphids. Lots of beneficial insects like to munch on them. Often an aphid infestation will attract predators, the predators win, and your aphid problem disappears.

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 gardening all year long, call the Master Gardener Phone Clinic at 206-296-3440.

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North Renton investments pay off in many ways

BY ANDREW FICKES

When Heath and Jennifer Knickerbocker moved into their north Renton home on Garden Avenue North in 2001, they were attracted by the individuality of the homes and diversity of the people.

North Renton has historically been a melting pot of different ethnicities. In the early 20th century, Boeing and PACCAR attracted many Italians, Polish, and Germans to the area.

On their street alone, the Knickerbockers say the varied nationalities include African-Americans, Hispanics, and Russians, along with many young families. Sixteen young children live on their side of the street. The Knickerbockers have three of their own: Bradford, 4; Theodore, 2; and Edward, 1.

In the 1970s north Renton entered a period of blight. Now new residents are moving into the neighborhood with an eye on turning around their investment.

"A lot of people are buying houses here to invest in for a few years and then resell," says Heath.

Even he and Jennifer are in the market to resell. Two years ago they purchased, as an investment, a dilapidated home on the corner of Garden Avenue North and North Third Street. The house was on its last legs, rotting, rat-infested, and full of mold.

"You name it, it had it," says Jennifer.

The Knickerbockers' labor of love has produced a craftsman-style house with all the trimmings, including four bedrooms with walk-in closets and two full-baths.

"Everything we love about homes, we put into this one," says



RENTON MAGAZINE / ANDREW FICKES

Heath and Jennifer Knickerbocker with their three boys: (left to right) Bradford, 4; Edward, 1; and Theodore, 2. The Knickerbockers love the neighborhood because of its diversity and downtown amenities.

Jennifer.

Asked if they'd like to move into the newly remodeled house, Jennifer says they still have much more to do with their first home, which they purchased in 2001 with the intent of selling in a few years. But now the Knickerbockers have grown attached to the neighborhood and all it provides.

The young couple are just blocks away from Liberty Park, the Renton Public Library, the Renton Community Center, the Cedar River, and The Landing.

"On Tuesdays, we all walk over to the Farmers Market," Jennifer says.

Heath and Jennifer are active on the board of directors of the North Renton Neighborhood Association. Jennifer is the newsletter editor and

within the past few years took a lead (along with Angie Laulainen) on a \$12,500 grant to provide beautification for the Sartori Education Center on Garden Avenue.

Ray Giometti, who is also active in the neighborhood association, says he's lived in the area for 13 years.

"I'm from Chicago and north Renton reminds me of my neighborhood in Chicago," he says. "It's light-urban living. Single-family houses in an urban environment are exciting."

His home on Pelly Avenue North was built in 1932, complete with a basement.

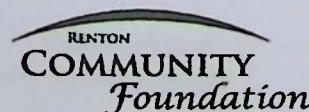
"The Brattus family owned our home originally for 50 years; the husband was a Renton police officer," he says. "Originally our neighborhood was the river bed for the Black River, until

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North Renton Real Estate Snapshot

Who's living there: Young families, working professionals, and retirees

Average real estate price:
Approx. \$325,000 (single-family)

Average sale price:
Approx. \$300,000 (single-family)

Days on the market:
140 days (single-family)

What's the attraction: Downtown amenities are within reach.

Real estate info provided by Ryan Runge of American Classic Homes.

it was redirected."

Giometti sees a lot of economic diversity in the neighborhood, with young and old alike, kids and empty nesters.

"Some probably paid \$6,000 for their home in 1955 and now they're paying \$250,000 to \$300,000," says Giometti, an employee at Port of Seattle.

As of 2005 census figures, there were 7,800 households in north Renton. Median age was 35; total population was near 18,000 and the median income was \$60,000.

Gerry Marsh, a north Renton resident for 20 years,

says, "I see the demographics change all the time. Kids grow up and new ones come in."

George Daniels, president of the neighborhood association, says the neighborhood was once, long ago, a strong coal mining community. And still today, he says, there are many blue-collar workers there.

Daniels, who lives on a third of an acre, bought his home as a fixer-upper and is determined to keep north Renton vibrant.

"Most people in north Renton would like to keep it as a neighborhood," he says.

Sleep easy at night.



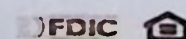
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