

RENTON

Magazine

Volume 2 / No 5 May 2007



**Blue Herons
flourish at
Black River
Riparian Forest**
page 13

KING and BUNNYS

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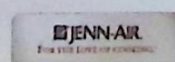
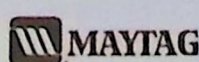
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publisher's note

In the "land of opportunity," entrepreneurship is alive and well. Thousands of new businesses sprout up in this state each year, as dreams to build one's own business become a reality.

While many of these dreams are later shattered (Washington boasts one of the highest business failure rates in the country), others survive to contribute to the region's economic vitality. It's refreshing to read about those success stories.

In this edition of *Renton Magazine*, two local entrepreneurs have purchased an ad to thank their customers and their families for helping them make their venture a success. Shawn Beresford and Ted Coffman started Shawn and Ted's Meat Market on the east Renton Plateau in 2004, and report that sales

are exceeding all of their early projections. They were nervous about starting a new business, and received their fair share of warnings about the rate of new business failure before launching their venture. But they stuck to their plan of providing quality product and quality service, which they say has truly paid off.

I experienced some of the same anxieties when I began toying with starting a community magazine. Even though my earlier venture of starting the Renton, Kent and Auburn Reporters proved to be successful, a communi-



Denis Law
PUBLISHER

ty magazine posed some greater challenges.

We're excited that our vision of a very local, upbeat publication that celebrates what's going right in a community has also proven to be a success. We're excited at the positive reader response and the fact our advertisers are reporting measurable results. Ted and Shawn state that the story we did on them in our March edition continues to generate comment every day, much greater than any other publication that has featured their store. As you might imagine, that's music to our ears and something we like to share with our potential advertisers.

As we publish our seventh edition, we want to thank our loyal readers and advertisers for all your support. And as always, we welcome your feedback and ideas.

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cover:

Renton has become the home to the largest blue heron colony in the state. See page 13 for details / Cover design by Kerri Ladines.

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

upcoming may events

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Ilkka Talvi, Concertmaster

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symphony pops!

Rainier Symphony presents "A Tribute to John Williams" featuring music from "Star Wars," "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "E.T.," "Superman" and more. The program will also feature Gershwin's "American in Paris" and guest conductor Eduard Diadura of the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra.

may 19

Symphony Pops!

Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

425-204-3455

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

Admission: \$17/general and
\$12/students and seniors



may 6

Renton Youth Symphony Orchestra concert

Sunday at 3 p.m.

425-430-6700

Carco Theatre
1717 Maple Valley Hwy.

Admission: \$7/adults and
\$5/students and seniors



may 8

Ahead of the Class Excellence in Education Awards

Tuesday at 7 p.m.

425-226-4560

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

Admission: Free



may 8

Within the Silence

Tuesday at 4:30 p.m.

425-255-2330

Renton History Museum
235 Mill Avenue South

Admission: Free with museum
admission. Children under 8
free



may 13

Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

425-235-5845 ext. 4

Renton Technical College
3000 NE Fourth Street

Admission: \$10.95 per adult;
\$8.95 for seniors and children
under 10



may 18

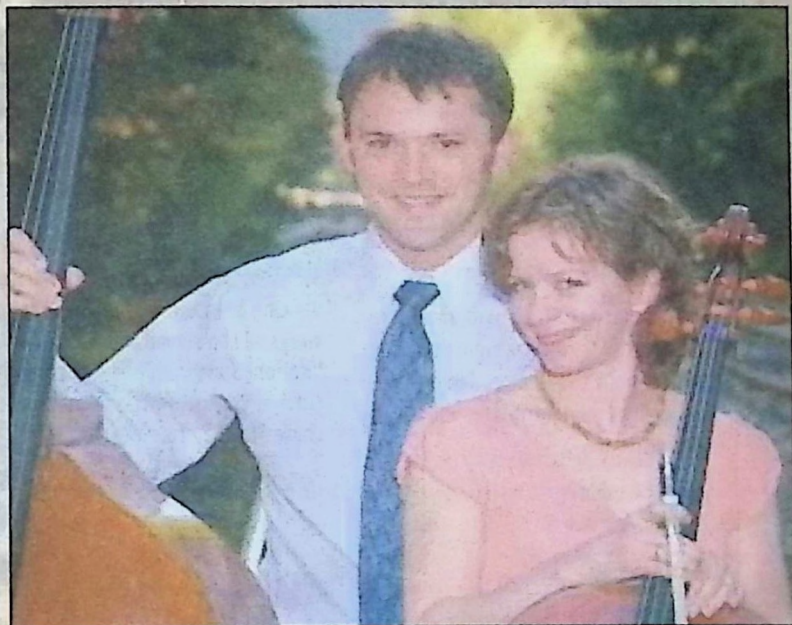
Twisted Flicks

Friday at 7 p.m.

425-204-3455

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

Admission: \$22/adults and
\$20/students and seniors



may 13 at 3pm

The Bottom Line Duo

Best described as light humor with serious music, the Bottom Line Duo explores the most intimate relationship in music, the duo. Combining the warm sonority of the double bass with the soaring melodic beauty of the cello, the Bottom Line Duo tastefully and artfully presents a concert for all ages and musical backgrounds. Enjoy Mother's Day and treat your family to the delightful music of The Bottom Line Duo. www.bottomlineduo.com

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St., 425-204-3455

Admission: \$22/adult; \$20/seniors and students;
\$10 children 12 and under; \$24 at door

Bottom Line Duo

May have your number

BY MARY KOCH

If the word "classical" in front of the word "music" seizes your throat into a giant yawn, you're exactly who Spencer and Traci Hoveskeland are looking for. The classically-trained husband-wife duo are members of the "cross-over" generation, equally nimble at blues, jazz, gentle rock and easy humor, all of which they include in performances.

But be forewarned. It's a ploy. Their real aim is to seduce more people into loving chamber music. They admit as much in liner notes for their fifth CD, "Long Dissonant Romance." The scheme is to convert everyone who hears their music "into passionate, heavy-breathing, drool-dripping aficionados like us and all other good people."

At an early age, Traci and Spencer knew exactly what they wanted in life: each other and music. And not necessarily in that order. Both 36 now, they can claim success at two daunting challenges: making a teen-age marriage work and making a living from classical music.

They perform together as "The Bottom Line Duo," so named because they play the two lowest-sounding string instruments in the traditional orchestra — double bass and cello. Traci (cellist) and Spencer (bassist) take their music seriously, but rarely themselves. Spencer, who does most of the narrating during concerts, can't seem to open his mouth without being funny. Traci is the ideal foil, cracking up along with the audience even if she's heard the jokes before.

"I'm an easy laugher; it doesn't get old for me," she admits. Spencer's aim is to "keep Traci on her toes."

Although they didn't become sweethearts until high school, Spencer and Traci each started playing cello at age 10 in the Port Angeles public schools. Traci went on as a scholarship student to earn a bachelor of arts degree in music from

Western Washington University.

Spencer took a slightly different track, playing bass in a high school jazz band and electric guitar with rock groups. He started off in college studying classical guitar and admits that he still "occasionally accompanies the screaming guitars of famous rock stars."

He matches Traci's virtuoso skills while playing a much bulkier instrument, though he'd resent anybody calling the bass that. Observed a fellow bassist: "The guy . . . transcribes bebop melodies and violin solos for himself. It's disturbing that he can actually play them, too." Because there's a dearth of music for cello-bass combo, Spencer does nearly all the arranging and some composing.

At age 18, Spencer asked Traci's father if he could marry his daughter, admitting that he planned to make his living as a musician. His future father-in-law gave him "my first vote of confidence." The couple married the next year and by age 25 were making enough money as musicians so Spencer could quit his day jobs in music stores and truck driving. "We've never missed a house payment since," Spencer boasts.

With a home in Tukwila ("We do our shopping in Renton"), they're on tour about half the time — mostly in the Northwest, but they've performed as far away as Spain and Mexico. They'd like to tour more, hoping to see more of the world and show it to their 3-year-old son, Sheldon. They're probably among the few recording artists who list baby sitters in their liner note acknowledgements.

Gigs at home range from performing as guest soloists with the Rainier Symphony at IKEA last year to playing in the pit orchestra at the Paramount last month for "The Light in the Piazza."

They've played their share of background music for various events, but the ideal, says Spencer, is "playing where people are there to hear us — on purpose."

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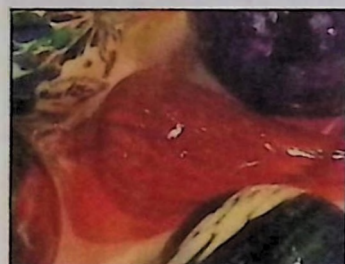
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calendar of events

CINCO DE MAYO EVENTS



Mucho Bueno Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Saturday, May 5 at 5 p.m.

Come blow your own glass chili pepper at Uptown Glassworks. Glassblowing begins at 5 p.m. Enjoy margaritas, cervezas, and live music. Must be 21 years of age or older to attend.

Uptown Glassworks
230 Main Ave. S.

425-228-1849

Admission: \$62 per person

www.uptownglassworks.com



Cinco de Mayo at the Rockin' Horse Dance Barn

Saturday, May 5 from 8 p.m.
to midnight

Dance to rock, pop and Latin hits played by Ron Bolin, the Dancin' DJ. Beginners cha cha lesson at 7:30 p.m., dance from 8 p.m. to midnight.

Rockin' Horse Dance Barn
11820 150th Ave. SE

425-255-9211

Admission: \$12 per person

www.learn2dance4fun.com

ENTERTAINMENT



Something's Afoot

Friday, June 1 through Sunday, June 17

Renton Civic Theater presents a musical comedy of mystery and romance, Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m.

Renton Civic Theater
507 S. 3rd St.

425-226-5529

Admission: \$20/adult and \$15/seniors
and students

www.rentoncivictheater.org

Renton City Concert Band

Thursday, June 7 at 7:30 p.m.

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

425-430-6700

Admission: \$7/adults and \$5/seniors

RENTON TECHNICAL COLLEGE EVENTS

Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday, May 13 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Renton Technical College Catering and the college foundation present a Mother's Day brunch at the college cafeteria. Reservations are preferred and mothers each receive a carnation. Brunch includes an omelet bar and a meat carving station, as well as pastries and fresh fruit.

Renton Technical College
3000 NE Fourth Street

425-235-5845 ext. 4

Admission: \$10.95 per adult; \$8.95 for
seniors and children under 10

www.rtc.edu

CLUB EVENTS



Wine Tasting and Art Show

Thursday, May 17 at 6 p.m.

Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, music and art designed by members of the Renton Skyway Boys and Girls Club Kids Art Studio and other local artists. All proceeds will benefit the Renton Skyway Boys and Girls Club.

Spirit of Washington Events Center
233 Burnett Ave. S.

206-856-7642

Admission: \$35 in advance,
\$40 at the door

EDUCATION EVENTS

Ahead of the Class Excellence in Education Awards

Tuesday, May 8 at 7 p.m.

Join the Renton Chamber of Commerce in recognizing outstanding teachers in Renton. Awards will be given to individual teachers or teams of teachers who exemplify excellence in education. Ceremony is followed by a dessert reception.

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

425-226-4560

Admission: Free

www.ikeapac.com

ART SHOWS

Merrill Gardens Art Show

Saturday, May 19 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Join us for art of all mediums at the new Merrill Gardens retirement facility. Artists from the Renton Senior Center as well as resident artists will display and sell work.

Merrill Gardens
104 Burnett Ave. S.

425-235-6400

Admission: Free

www.artsunlimited.org

SENIOR EVENTS

RENTON SENIOR CENTER

211 Burnett Ave.

425-430-6633

www.rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=40

Senior Stage Review

Thursday, May 3 at 1 p.m.; Friday, May 4
at 1 p.m.

The annual Senior Stage Review at the Carco Theatre includes dancing, singing and acting, music, comedy and more. Entertainment by the Renton Senior Activity Center seniors.

Admission: \$2

Mother's Day Fashion Fiesta

Wednesday, May 9 at 11:30 a.m.

Get ready for Mother's Day with a "cou-ture" fashion show and luncheon. Ladies and gentlemen who would like to model a unique or special outfit and walk the runway are needed. Enjoy lunch, meet the models and gain some fashion sense. Advance tickets are required and are available in the nutrition office between 12:30 and 4:30 p.m. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. and the fashion show will be at 11:45 a.m.

Admission: \$3 (donation if 60 and up);
\$5.75 (charge if under 60)

May Mixer

Friday, May 18 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

RJ and Company, featuring Ray Johnson, will play for your listening and dancing pleasure. Tasty chili with the works will be served and a light dessert later on. Supper will be served from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets must be purchased by May 16.

Admission: \$6



Fish Tales on Father's Day

Thursday, June 14 at 11 a.m.

Men are invited to cast a line and try to hook a "big one" at this special luncheon to honor fathers. There will be prizes for the largest fish caught. The fishing activity is free and will begin at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. Advance tickets are required and will be available May 31 in the nutrition office from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Admission: \$3 (donation if 60 and up);
\$5.75 (charge if under 60)

Picnic in June

Friday, June 15 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

A fun evening picnic to usher in the summer season. Evan and Charlie Brown will provide music. Feast on pasta salad and popsicles. Supper will be served from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets will be available beginning May 21 and must be purchased by June 13.

Admission: \$6

*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 news@renton-magazine.com or call us at
425-271-9300.*

God bless the cow that gave its life for me

I'm dedicating this column to the cow that saved my life.

I never met the cow, but I carry part of it with me everywhere I go these days.

I had open-heart surgery recently to replace the defective aortic heart valve I was born with. After six decades, the valve wasn't allowing my heart to pump out enough blood to the rest of my body. As a result, I was becoming short of breath when I exercised. Without a valve replacement, my expected life span was probably three years or less.

I'm not alone in this ailment. Lots of males, and females to a lesser extent, are born with a defective aortic valve that requires replacement at some point in their lives. Even Arnold Schwarzenegger had his replaced a

few years ago.

I'm just fortunate I was born at a time when medicine can replace the valve and offer me a return to normal life and, hopefully, many more years of life.

That's where the cow came in. There are several artificial aortic valves surgeons can use to replace the original. One is a metal valve. Another is made from pig tissue. The third is made from bovine tissue, fashioned from the sac that surrounds a cow's heart. My surgeon recommended the latter. While a metal valve lasts forever, compared to maybe 20 years



David Suffia
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

for the bovine tissue valve, it requires the recipient to be on blood thinners for the rest of his or her life.

I'm sorry to think a cow may have given its life for me and I love animals, but I'm not one of those who believe an animal's life is equal to a human's. I'm grateful to the cow and to medical researchers who figured out they could create a new valve from cow tissue.

Recovering has not been fun. In fact, it's been one of the most difficult things I've had to endure in my life. Little wonder. Surgeons sawed my sternum in half, swung my ribs open like the covers of a book, cut into my heart, cut out the old valve, and sewed in the replacement.

Recuperation has been painful and punctuated with difficulties and setbacks, including a return to the hospi-

tal for treatment of a post-surgery infection. That's not surprising given the severity of what they did to my body. At one point, I told my doctor that had I known how difficult the aftermath would be, I might have decided to skip the operation and die instead.

That's when I realized surgeons lie. I figured that if they told patients the whole truth, many of them would decide not to be healed.

Yet here I am, a couple of months afterward, and I'm glad I underwent the ordeal. I'm regaining some of the 18 pounds I lost following surgery and I'm exercising and getting stronger again.

I suspect that some time in the future – hopefully not too far away –

SUFFIA - page 9

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New market adds a local flavor



greenfresh
market

RENTON MAGAZINE / Denis Law

Fred Coutts recently opened his new market on Rainier Avenue near the Renton Airport.

BY MANNY FRISHBERG

Buying locally and choosing natural foods where possible is a hallmark of what has become known as the "Slow Foods" movement but following those precepts in Renton has not always been easy. Just getting to a natural foods market like PCC or Whole Foods can be a challenge – the nearest PCC Market is about seven miles away from the heart of the city and the closest Whole Foods store is in Bellevue.

But all that is changing with the opening of the "greenfresh market" on Rainier Avenue. Fred Coutts, who has been planning for this day over for more than two years, is bringing more than a quarter century of experience, mostly in the natural foods business to bear in the project. Greenfresh market is the first of three new buildings going up next to the airport in the Rainier Station project being developed by local landowner and developer Jack Alhadeff.

Coutts says at 15,000 square feet of

space, the new store will be about twice as large as a Trader Joe's and about half as big as a standard supermarket. Beyond that it will distinguish itself by the attention to local needs and desires, a quality that's been in somewhat short supply in Renton of late.

"We want to be a neighborhood store as much as we want to be a natural food store," says Coutts. "I would probably put local ahead of natural and organic, in terms of what's important to us. This store is well stocked with local items."

He says the mix of products will lean heavily toward natural products, ranging between 75 and 80 percent of what they include on their shelves. But he adds they will carry "a few things that the true dyed-in-the-wool natural food store wouldn't." Two items that he says come to mind that a shopper is unlikely to find at Whole Foods but will be on the shelves of greenfresh market are Jell-o and marshmallows. Another is a somewhat larger selection of kosher products that can be found in a lot of other stores of a similar size. We're not looking to tell people to eat so much as to suggest it.

"What we really plan on doing for the neighbors is being extremely perceptive to what they ask for," Coutts says.

"If somebody comes in and asks for something, we're going to stand on our head to get it for them whether it's natural or not. We didn't try to anticipate too deeply what the neighbors might want. What we tried to do as we merchandise the store is leave ourselves space so we can react quickly to what the neighbors request. That's how we intend to make our mark in that direction." Another distinction is the amount of space they are allocating to fresh fare, made-from-scratch deli items, produce and meats. Coutts says they are devoting twice as much space to those categories as most stores of their size would.

He chose the location both because of Jack Alhadeff's strong vision for Renton's future and his own estimation of the direction the community is moving.

"It being our first store, we wanted to make sure we chose our location very wisely," Coutts says. "We're just very impressed with the gentrification that's occurring in Renton," he says. "People look at us now and think we might be a little bit ahead of our time. I think they'll look at us in a couple of years and say, 'Boy, those guys must've known something.'"

Kirby Unti

Hot Iron!



KIRBY UNTI

*I*t is a well-known fact among family and friends that when it comes to being a father, I am a bit on the neurotic side. It would be fair to label me as overly protective. My daughters have all suffered under my zealous desire to protect them from all calamity and harm. They all echo the same line whenever they leave the house, "Yes, Dad. I will call you when I get there."

The code word in our family for dad's preoccupation with low-risk behavior is, "Hot Iron." I typically iron my dress shirts every other week. From the time the girls could crawl they heard the warning whenever they were with in 100 feet of the iron, "Be careful – hot iron."

Mind you not one of them has ever been burnt or for that matter even come close. I am convinced it is because of my prudent approach to safety. They are convinced it has everything to do with their own brilliance. "Dad, we know what a hot iron is."

The truth is, I have not done my daughters or myself any favors. Low-risk behavior may make for a safe life, but it certainly can dampen one's sense of

exploration and adventure. There needs to be a healthy balance between practicing safety and risking adventure.

Pushing the envelope is what makes it possible for us to discover whole new worlds. We would never put a man on the moon if we practiced only "hot iron" thinking.

You would think in my business I would have developed a little more trust and faith, but I must confess these tend not to be my strong suits.

People of genuine faith know there comes a time when you have to pass from being responsible to trusting the unknown. More times than not, the faithful thing to do is, in fact, the risky thing.

I have been impressed with the City of Renton's ability to at one and the same time practice responsible fiscal management while risking a brighter future. Such decisions are never easy ones. Do we invest in a golf course? Do we build a public water park? Do we construct a skateboard park? Do we consider a major public relations campaign putting Renton Ahead of the Curve? Do we move our auto dealers out of downtown? Do we invest in a piazza and event center? Do we invest in the infrastructure to support a major retail center?

These are all "hot iron" issues. You can get burnt doing them. And there will be plenty of critics to say, "I told you so."

The latest "hot iron" issue is to roll out the red carpet for the Seattle Sonics. The risk-takers in town are all about it. The "hot iron" people are afraid somebody is going to get burnt. Where we are fortunate is that we have a good mixture of both in this town, which only adds to the promise that Renton has a very bright future.

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

SUFFIA from page 7

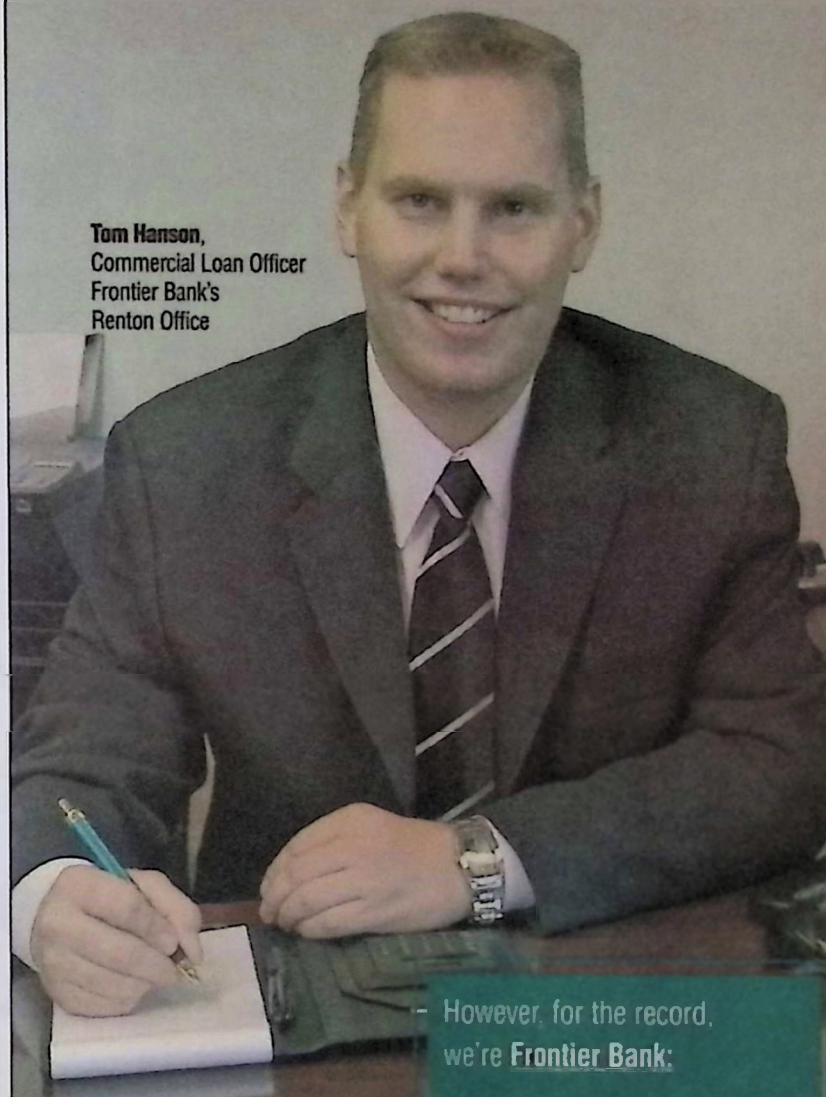
medicine will grow natural replacement valves from our own tissue and there will be no need for artificial valves.

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RENTON MAGAZINE / Dena Rosko
Elizabeth "Liz" Bunch, one of the group's original members, and Pearl Jacobson hold finished Layette kits.

By Andrew Fickes / Photos By Dena Rosko



Jean Hurmer has knitted for 70 years. Particularly satisfying have been the 10 years she's knitted as part of the "Can Do Ladies" layette program at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.

"I love baby sweaters. They're so soft and cuddly," Hurmer says. "This is a way for me to do something



RENTON MAGAZINE / Dena Rosko
(Above) Carol Hill and Helen Berner pin batting to the top and bottom of a quilt. (Right) Carole Veitch of the group who call themselves "the Bag Ladies" cuts fabric that will be made into hats for cancer patients.

Layette program supports young mothers in need

for someone else. I like the fact that we can welcome new babies that wouldn't normally have anything else."

Hurmer is one of 25 women, most in their 80s or 90s, who enjoy both meeting the needs of young mothers and a ministry of fellowship.

The "Can Do Ladies" produce approximately 300 layettes a year for low-income, first-time mothers through referrals with the Public Health offices in Renton and Kent.

"This program is a ministry for the young and the old," says Carol Botts, a sewer with the group for 10 years.

Each layette includes a crib size quilt, two receiving blankets, two nightgowns, two sleep and plays, two shirts or "onesies," a sweater and cap, a pair of socks, a washcloth, bib, three cloth

diapers, and a rattle. The "Can Do

Ladies" make the quilts, receiving blankets, nightgowns, bibs, washcloths, and some sweaters.

Each woman picks a task she's comfortable with and it becomes her niche. Every Monday from 10 a.m. to noon in St. Matthew's recreation room, the women storm through yards and yards of flannel and other fabrics. Pearl Jacobson says the group uses approximately 3,000 yards of flannel in a year.

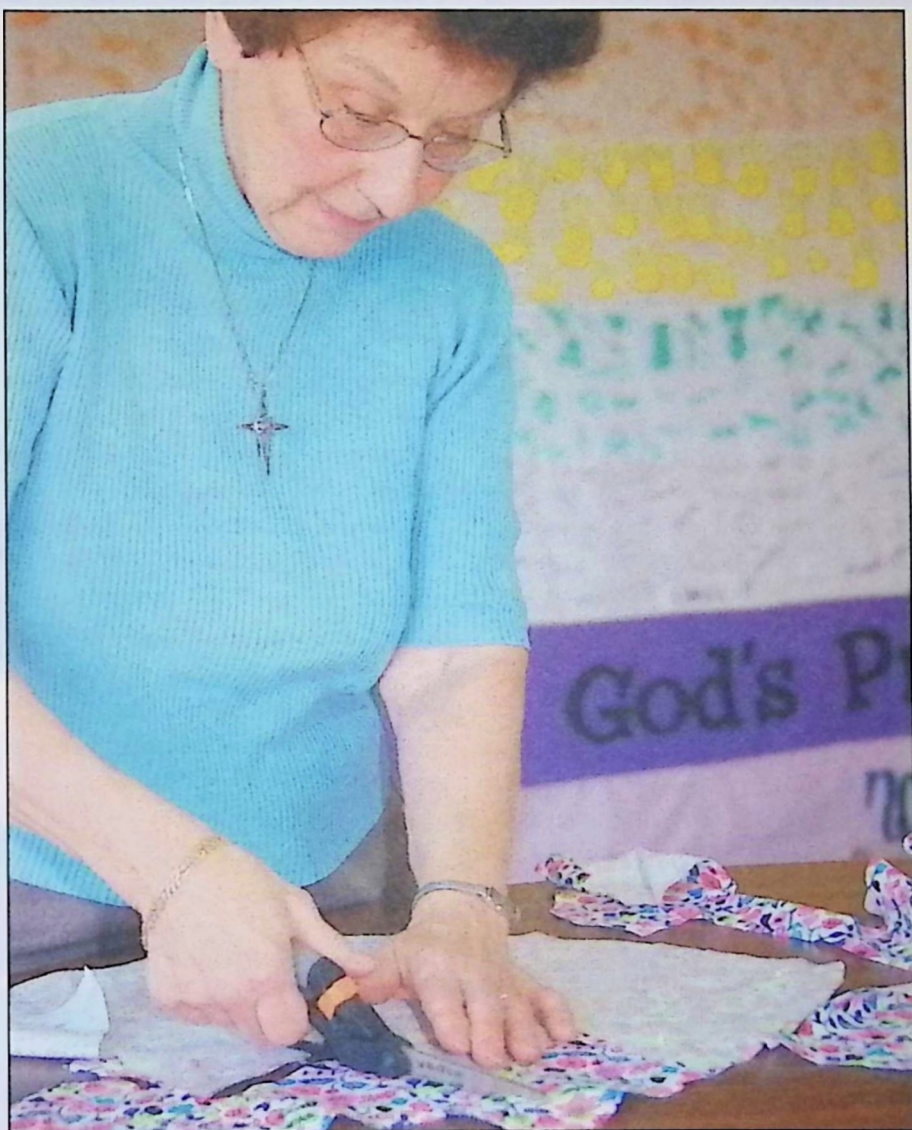
"We are frugal purchasers," she says. "We always look for flannel sales, coupons and bargains. Any donations are gladly accepted."

Jacobson says the group's \$10,000 budget is supported through its annual bazaar and an annual diaper appeal.

"The whole congregation really supports us," she says.

The program started in 1961 to provide layettes for needy mothers overseas. The layettes were distributed through Lutheran World Relief. After 1970, the need to help local mothers

ST. MATTHEWS ~ next page



ST. MATTHEWS

from page 10

became acute and the layette program focused exclusively on local needs.

Each month a dozen layettes go to each of the public health offices in Renton and Kent. Layettes also are distributed through the Renton School District and the Renton Clothes Bank as needed.

Three hundred layettes are assembled

each year on the Saturday before Mother's Day and then distributed throughout the year. Last year, 40 people volunteered to assemble the layettes. Each layette package is labeled with a message that reads: "Babies are such a nice way to start people."

"We want moms to know their babies are special and that there's a group at St. Matthew's that wants to welcome them in the world," says Liz Bunch, a founding member of the group.

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*Shawn Beresford
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healthy advice

by dr. bob thompson

Gastric bypass surgery can have life altering affect

I imagine undergoing a two hour procedure that in six to twelve months time would allow you to overcome diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, sleep apnea, infertility, congestive heart failure, depression and social isolation, and at the same time add many productive years to your life expectancy! For a growing subset of our population, that is the remarkable fairy tale ending to their lifelong struggle with severe obesity.

Last week I was deeply moved to hear several real life stories from the men and women who attended an annual patient reunion and awards ceremony sponsored by the Washington Bariatric & Weight Loss Center. Each came to share the remarkable and life altering events they

had experienced since undergoing gastric bypass surgery at Valley Medical Center. They also came with great praise and heartfelt gratitude for their surgeon, Dr. Gabriel Alperovich, and

the team of nurses and staff who cared for them during the weeks of preparation, throughout their hospital stay and during their most difficult months immediately following surgery.

It was a room full of joy, renewed hope, new careers, new relationships, and new life.

Perhaps my favorite story was a couple who were so proudly sharing pictures of their two young sons. At 5'4" and over 400 pounds the mom had been told at one point that she would never be able to bear children. Now weighing less than 200



Dr. Bob Thompson

pounds, she was beaming as she spoke, "I'm not only a mom, I can be a great mom!"

Obesity is a complex multi-factorial chronic disease involving environmental (social and cultural), genetic, physiologic, metabolic, behavioral and psychological components. Next to smoking, it is the second leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. It is estimated that over 300,000 Americans die each year from complications of severe obesity. Published scientific reports document that non-surgical efforts alone (diet, exercise and medication) have not been effective in achieving medically significant long term weight loss in severely obese adults. With over 9 million Americans categorized as severely obese (100 pounds or more over weight) and another 60 million more categorized as obese, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of patients undergoing surgery for obesity.

Although gastric bypass surgery is the only proven method of treating severe obesity in the general population today, it

is considered high risk surgery. It involves modifying the stomach and intestines to reduce the amount of food that can be eaten. National statistics indicate that one in 200 patients will die as a result of the surgery. It should be reserved for the severely obese patient who has failed multiple attempts to lose weight while under the supervision of a physician.

Anyone considering gastric bypass surgery should look for a well rounded certified program composed of a multi-disciplinary team including behavioral, exercise and nutritional professionals along with a very experienced surgical team. For more information, consider attending a local free informational seminar by calling 425-251-5111.

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.



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Urban sanctuary

Black River Riparian Forest is a wildlife haven

By Andrew Fickes / Photos by Denis Law

Amid urban bustle, development and even controversy, the Black River Riparian Forest offers a place of peace and refuge. Nestled near the office parks in Renton off Oaksdale Avenue, the 93 acres of wildlife habitat is home to the largest colony of blue heron in the state.

Minutes away from this habitat is the incessant traffic of I-405, I-5, and SR 167. Across the street is a sewage treatment plant and on the hillside above is residential development.

Yet within the bound-

aries of the riparian forest are 75 species of birds, dozens of native vegetation, and other animals, including muskrat, river otter, beaver, coyote, red fox, rabbits, ducks, snakes, lizards, fish and water fowl. Advocates for the blue heron worry that further development will threaten the flock, which has grown from just a half-dozen nests in the 1980s to last year's count of 121, resulting in some 300 offspring.

The area gets its name from the Black River, which once flowed through Renton, fed by Lake Washington. The river dried up in 1916 with construction of the Lake Washington Ship Canal and lowering of the



Dorothy
Flower Photography

BLACK RIVER - next page



The Black River

BLACK RIVER from page 13

lake. The riparian area is now fed by Springbrook Creek.

For Dorothy Flower, avid bird-watcher and photographer, the riparian forest is like a private getaway. Once a week the Renton resident, who uses a motorized wheelchair, catches the 140 bus at the

Renton Transit Center to reach the

forest. She usually arrives at the break of dawn so she can have the place all to herself.

"What's cool is, all of this nature I get to work with is accessible in my chair," she says. "With the Black River Riparian Forest, I don't have to give it all up just because I'm disabled. The Black River Riparian Forest has saved my life more than once."

"It's a wonderful place for being able to relax and get away from the job and hassles," she says.

Flower loves her early-morning vigils, waiting to see what unusual things show up.

"There are some fascinating critters out there," she says.

Her collection of photos will be part of



Dorothy Flower
Photography



Riparian Forest is Renton's hidden jewel

an educational kiosk planned for the site.

"In the long term, the city would like to do a wildlife and habitat study to determine what development the site could handle," says Leslie Betlach, city parks director. "Part of the development would be a small interpretive center educating the public on the habitat."

Prior to 1990, the City of Renton owned 34 acres of the habitat. Between 1990 and 1996, it increased land ownership to 93 acres, spending \$7.8 through grant money and Metro mitigation money. Advocate and support groups include Herons Forever, The Black River Watershed Alliance, and Friends of Black River.

Since 1989, the non-profit Herons Forever has argued for elimination of development

around the forest, which is visited annually by thousands of people.

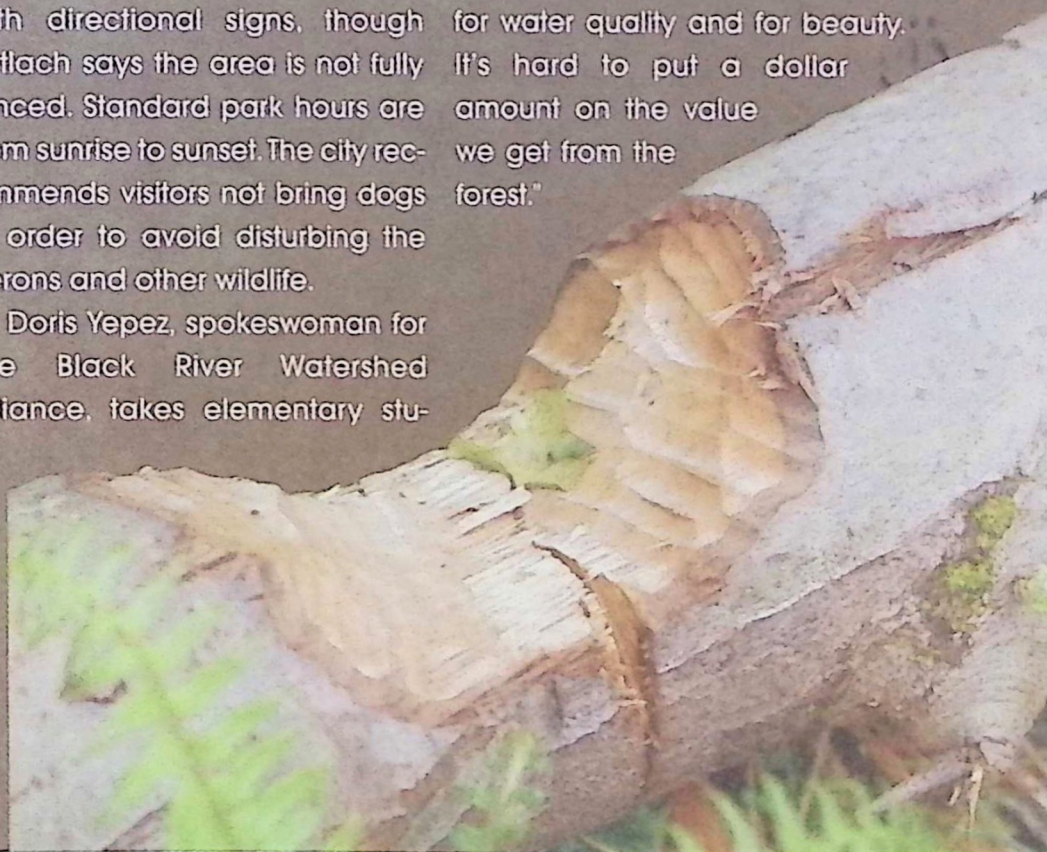
"It's unique in that it's 93 acres of wetland in a highly urbanized area. It's also a part of the Springbrook Trail system," says Betlach.

The forest is clearly marked with directional signs, though Betlach says the area is not fully fenced. Standard park hours are from sunrise to sunset. The city recommends visitors not bring dogs in order to avoid disturbing the herons and other wildlife.

Doris Yopez, spokeswoman for The Black River Watershed Alliance, takes elementary stu-

dents from grades four and up to the forest for educational tours through King County's Wheels to Water program. Classes from all around Puget Sound have visited.

"We need to hold onto these urban forests," she says. "We need them for our wildlife, for air quality, for water quality and for beauty. It's hard to put a dollar amount on the value we get from the forest."





RENTON MAGAZINE / David Nelson

Lori Corbett, a cancer survivor, says she'll walk a lap for every relay team registered. She advises those with cancer to keep fighting and never give up.



RENTON MAGAZINE / David Nelson

Claudia O'Neill will volunteer for Relay for Life for the ninth time this June. She plans to raise \$10,000 with her team.

Relay represents a "break-through" for cancer

BY ANDREW FICKES

When Lori Corbett was diagnosed with lymphoma, cancer of the lymph nodes, in October of 2005, she adopted a "kick butt" attitude and eventually broke through to "the other side."

"The Doors' song 'Break on Through to the Other Side' stayed with me though my six months of chemo," she says. "My advice to anybody who has cancer is, they've got to hang on because they will get to the other side as long as they keep looking to the other side. If you stop fighting, then it wins. So keep your chin up and your spirits up."

Today, Lori is cancer free.

Cancer struck Claudia O'Neill twice at the same time.

In 1998, her 44-year-old brother was diagnosed with an aggressive form of throat cancer. While caring for him, Claudia was diagnosed with thyroid cancer. It was earth-shattering news for her family.

"I was scared, thinking I had the same fate as my brother," said Claudia.

Her brother passed away. Claudia had her cancer removed within weeks of diagnosis and within a year was cancer free. She's been cancer free ever since,

checking regularly every six months.

Claudia and Lori are among 75 cancer survivors who will walk in the survivor lap at the Relay for Life of Renton June 8-9 at Renton Memorial Stadium. Fifteen teams, generally with 12 to 18 members, will participate in the 17-hour relay with a goal of raising \$150,000. Last year, the relay raised more than \$125,000 for the American Cancer Society.

"Relay for Life encompasses all cancers," says Lori.

"The relay is a chance to contribute and remember those we have lost and those who have fought and made it," says Claudia, who is participating for her ninth year in a row. She tries to raise about \$2,000 herself and is putting together a team with a team goal of \$10,000.

Lori has committed to doing a lap at

the relay for every new team registered for the event.

"I'll walk all night, if I have to," she says.

Relay for Life originated not far from Renton. In 1985, Dr. Gordy Klatt, a Tacoma colorectal surgeon, decided to raise money for the American Cancer Society by doing something he

loved to do: running

marathons. Klatt ran

the track at

Baker

Stadium in

Tacoma

all by

himself

for 24

hours.

He

raised

\$27,000.

Klatt

thought oth-

ers could take

part, so in 1986,

19 teams participated

at the Stadium Bowl and

raised \$33,000.

To date, Relay for Life worldwide has raised more than \$2 billion, which has funded cancer research, early detection and prevention education, advocacy efforts and patient services. In 2006, it

raised \$380 million. Approximately 4,800 communities in the U.S. and around the world are expected to hold relays this year.

"Relay for Life is therapeutic," says Karee Boone, a community relationship manager with the American Cancer Society. "It definitely acts as a network for people to be with people who have experienced the disease."

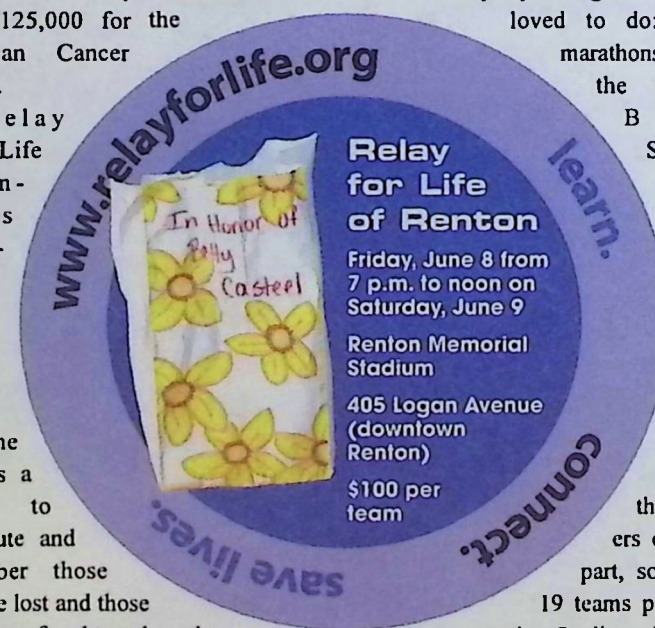
She says more than 200 youth will participate in Renton this year, including church youth groups, high school service clubs and scout troops.

Corporate sponsors include Wizards of the Coast (gold sponsor), AirVan (platinum sponsor), and Valley Medical, Remco Deacon Inc., along with in-kind sponsorships from Great American Catering, Renton Reporter, and Bill's Bodacious Barbecue.

The event will begin at 7 p.m. on Friday, June 8, continuing through the night until noon Saturday.

The evening begins with the survivor lap. When night falls, participants gather around luminarias for a ceremony of hope, remembering survivors and those who lost the fight. Each luminaria, a candle set in sand inside a paper bag, represents a person with a story to tell.

"Relay for Life makes me feel reassured that there are people out there volunteering for us and working for us," says Lori.



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Roadrunner Club connects school with home life



RENTON MAGAZINE / Dena Rosko

Tanaike Speight, a 5th grader, likes to play games such as chess at the program.

BY ANDREW FICKES

Children miss out on a lot when they can't attend traditional after-school programs. They have fewer chances for positive social interaction and a sense of belonging.

For students who can't stay after school,



RENTON MAGAZINE / Dena Rosko

(Left to Right) Lise Lindfors, Maureen Kosir, and Theresa Strutynski lead the after school program at Stonebrook Apartments.

Renton Park Elementary staff members decided to take activities to the students – literally where they live.

Theresa Strutynski, family liaison, Lise Lindfors, librarian, and Maureen Kosir, who heads up nutritional services, developed a program that uses the lobby area at Stonebrook Apartments on Petrovsky Road. Many of the school's students live within a mile of the apartments, and the facility's management was open to the idea.

"I saw it as a nice alternative for the students to do something after school," says Phynisha West, apartment manager. "Kids here are always looking forward to it."

The program, which began in the first week of January, has 18 students from kindergarten through grade five

enrolled. Students named it the Roadrunner Club, inspired by the school mascot.

Initial funding, to pay for snacks and art supplies, came from a \$1,000 grant through the Renton Community Foundation. All teachers and school staff who participate do so on a volunteer basis. Teachers, school counselors and even the school principal have been known to show up.

"The kids are so excited about their teachers coming to see them. They love being able to show off where they live," Strutynski says. "Through this program, the relationships between students and staff are strengthened. It makes students feel like they belong. It's important that teachers

ROADRUNNER ~ next page



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Renton School District good news announcements

DECA awards

Lindbergh High School senior Mercy Hoang was named Washington State's Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) Member of the Year at a recent state conference. More than a dozen Lindbergh students participated in the conference, placing high in competitions for business law, marketing, and public relations projects. DECA offers high school students hands-on experiences in the fields of marketing, business, finance, hospitality and entrepreneurship.

Science advances

Renton High School this year added an Advanced Placement Chemistry class, thanks in part to grants from the school's alumni group, Excellence in Education. The donations went to purchase supplies for lab experiments appropriate for first-year college chemistry, and for Super Science Saturday, a program planned for June to offer science education to incoming ninth-graders from Dimmitt Middle School.

Scholarship winners

Lindbergh High School senior Diana Nguyen has been awarded a \$1,500 scholarship from the

Marriott Corporation and senior Lisa Nguyen received a \$1,000 scholarship from Walgreen's, both through the National DECA program. The scholarships can be used at any university in the U.S.

Teacher's efforts pay off

Cascade Elementary School second-grade teacher Harvey Sadis recently won a \$1,000 field trip grant from Target to allow the school's entire second grade to participate in the Woodland Park Forest Explorers program. Sadis also won a National Consortium for the Teaching of Asia (NCTA) Initiative grant to take students to the performances by the Northwest Puppet Center and the Seattle Children's Theatre.

Sadis also was selected to participate in a three-week teacher's tour of China this summer through the NCTA Initiative. The program is administered through the University of Washington's East Asia Resource Center. Sadis is one of 18 teachers who will travel to five Chinese cities to explore historical and modern sites, museums, and schools.

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.

ROADRUNNER

from page 18

and staff are approachable to students."

Terral Rogers, mother of 8-year-old Mayonna, is excited for her daughter to interact with kids her own age. Mayonna has a 12-year-old brother and a 13-year-old sister.

"She's been going to the program every Tuesday like clockwork," said her mother. "Every Tuesday she has something she's made for me. I've kept everything. It makes me happy to see her happy."

Mayonna says she loves it because she gets to meet new friends.

Lindfors, who helps coordinate activities, says social interaction is huge. Activities include spatial ability projects—helping the students identify shapes. She also integrates games like chess.

"Studies have shown that those students who play chess score higher on standardized reading tests," she says.

Kosir has provided snacks through the school's nutritional services program. Bananas, apples, string cheese and goldfish are some of the students' favorites. Kosir has also integrated many arts and crafts projects.

With such a great response to the program, Strutynski and her colleagues are now considering developing a middle school program at the apartment complex.

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renton history



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Renton Fire Station No. 1, 1947.

Preservation retains the

BY ELIZABETH P. STEWART

*A*s we observe our third annual "Preservation Month" in May, this year's theme - "Making Preservation Work" - is a perfect fit for a working city like Renton. Renton has four sites on the Washington Heritage Register—one of which is also on the National Register of Historic Places. All four represent sites where men and women worked for a living.

Pacific Coast Coal Company House No. 75, though just outside Renton's boundaries in Newcastle, so far is the only site that has also been listed on the National Register. Built sometime

between 1872 and 1880, this little house still stands as a reminder of the wood-frame homes where miners with families lived. Barney Baima and his family rented the house from the Pacific Coast Coal Company from 1906 through 1917. In 1920 widow Andriena Baima purchased the house for her seven children, and Baimas continuously occupied the home until 1977. The Baima family's affection for their home probably saved it from destruction when the surrounding miners' houses were dismantled.

Another site associated with mining, and closer to downtown, is the concrete foundation for the steam hoist that lifted coal-filled cars out of the Renton mine. The hoist was built around 1890. Its foundation is one of the few remaining pieces of evidence above ground of Renton's coal



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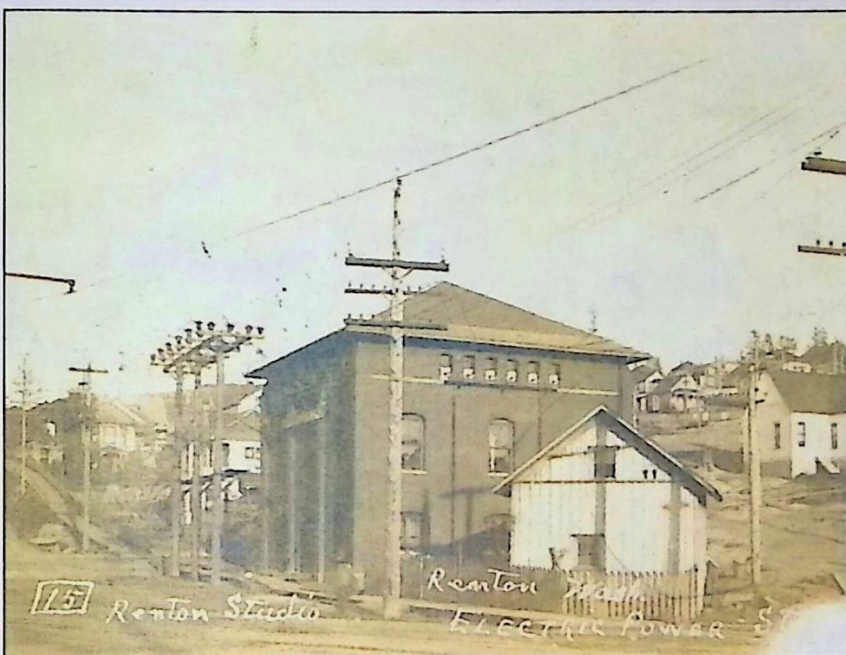


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE RENTON HISTORY MUSEUM / 41.0215
Snoqualmie Falls Power Company Substation No. 2, ca. 1898.

character of community

mines.

A few blocks away is another state Heritage Register property, the Snoqualmie Falls Power Company Substation No. 2, built in 1898. One of Renton's earliest brick buildings, the substation was part of an electrical distribution system that enabled power to be sent from Snoqualmie Falls to Seattle and Tacoma and to be converted for use in streetcars and lighting.

Finally, there is the home of the Renton History Museum, Renton Fire Station No. 1. The fire station is significant for numerous reasons. The home of Renton's first full-time paid fire department, the building is also one of the few remaining Works Progress Administration buildings still standing in Washington. The architect, Ivan M. Palmaw, designed

the fire station at the very end of the Art Deco movement. We have him to thank for its beautiful rounded corners and the wave-design frieze under the roofline. It was—and still is—an elegant building for a growing city.

As Americans our impulse always tends toward progress and change, which often means tearing down the old to make way for the new. Preservation Month is an opportunity for communities to rededicate themselves to looking after those historic sites that give character and richness to the community.

For more about Preservation Month, go to www.dahp.gov.

*Elizabeth P. Stewart is the director of the Renton History Museum. 425.255.2330.
www.rentonhistory.org*

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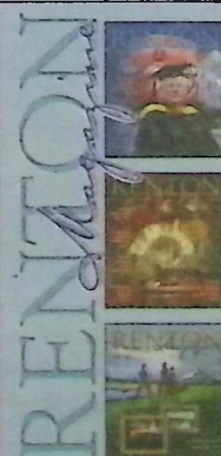
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Living downtown is a vibrant lifestyle

BY ANDREW FICKES

*M*ass transit and walking to work is in Elizabeth Stewart's blood. So, when the East coast native moved from Annapolis to Renton last April, she knew right away she wanted to live in Renton's vibrant downtown at the Metropolitan Place apartments.

"I looked at a lot of other apartments around the city, but I really liked the idea of being right downtown and being able to walk to work," says Stewart, director of the Renton History Museum. "Coming from an urban area, I loved it. There are lots of restaurants and coffee shops and places you can hang out and relax. I just renewed my lease, because I really like it there."

People moving into downtown Renton these days find a scene greatly changed from 10 years ago. New service-oriented businesses, grocery stores, coffee shops, eclectic restaurants and entertainment venues have opened, allowing residents to shop, dine and



RENTON MAGAZINE / Denis Law

The Renaissance Apartments in downtown Renton are being converted to condominiums.



RENTON MAGAZINE / Denis Law

The Renton Farmer's Market is a popular downtown event that runs every Tuesday from June through September.

be entertained where they live.

Alex Pietsch, who is the economic development, neighborhoods, and strategic planning administrator for the City of Renton, says the downtown population is expected to increase in coming years. Several hundred units are now under construction, he says, and 200 to 300 units are in the pipeline.

"The city's investment in the downtown is really paying off," he says. "It's what we've wanted all along."

Construction of more multifamily units is clipping along at a lightning pace. It seems everywhere you look, there's a new building with business flourishing because of it. Close to 900 residents are living in the downtown with another 1,000 expected to arrive.

Demographics are ever changing. Single women, young couples and families, college students, and even active seniors are all part of the self-sustaining neighborhood. Merrill Gardens on Burnett Avenue, a high-end retirement community, opened its doors last December. 55 Williams, a condominium complex for those 55 and older, sits behind Merrill Gardens.

"The swelling of people coming into the downtown will definitely change the face of retail," says Bill Taylor, president of the Renton Chamber of Commerce. "There will be demand for new products and services, which will lead to new businesses and businesses expanding."

Jennifer Davis Hayes, the city's community development

DOWNTOWN - next page



RENTON MAGAZINE / David Nelson



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RENTON MAGAZINE / David Nelson

New restaurants, bars, coffee shops, performing arts and special events enhance downtown living.

DOWNTOWN from page 22

project manager, has been helping the downtown revitalization efforts since being hired in September of 2005. Since her start, Hayes says she's seen a couple dozen new businesses downtown.

"I think we're really on the upswing of making things happen," she says. "We want to continue to have unique stores in our downtown. We're lucky, because a lot of cities in the country don't have the traditional downtown. We want to make sure that we don't lose that."

The evolution of Renton's downtown revitalization began in the late 1990s when Don Dally Homes purchased several parcels of property on Burnett Avenue and Logan Avenue from the city. Within a few years, Dally had developed the first three multifamily projects in the downtown: Renaissance Apartments, Burnett Station and the Metropolitan Apartments.

Wasatch, based in Salt Lake City, recently purchased them with plans to convert the apartments to condos.

A new transit center and parking garage was constructed in 2001 and 2003,

respectively. Piazza Park, in 2000, as well as the Spirit of Washington Event Center, in 2005, opened for year-round community events.

Piazza Renton, a non-profit organization working to help Renton reclaim its vibrancy, organizes four annual events in the downtown: the Piazza Renton Spring Festival in April, and Piazza Fall Harvest Festival in October, the Piazza Renton Dinner/Auction in November, and the Piazza Holiday Tree Lighting Celebration in December. Piazza Renton members also volunteer at the Renton Farmer's Market

Tuesdays from June through September.

Jim Medzegian, president of Piazza Renton, said Saturday events at Piazza Park usually attract upwards of 500 to 1,000 people. The Farmer's Market attracts more than 2,000 visitors every Tuesday.

Medzegian says he definitely has seen a change in Renton's downtown since Piazza Renton started in 1993.

"I see more businesses opening," he says. "I see businesses and property owners showing more pride of ownership."

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Lamb stew is a popular spring meal



CHEF ROBERTO ATHERLEY

This month, Roberto is sharing his favorite recipe for lamb stew. This is a traditional Mediterranean soup that is perfect in spring. It is good for special occasions.

Chef Roberto started his career in his native country of Panama. As a successful soccer player, he helped coach youth soccer until he decided on a career in culinary arts.

He attended Renton Technical College (RTC) Culinary Arts program and graduated top of his class in 1996. Upon graduation he joined RTC's catering department as the lead cook. He has successfully provided for hundreds of weddings, private functions, and catering events.

His previous experience included working at Seattle University and Bon Appetite as the chef de cuisine. Recently, Chef Roberto accepted the position as catering operations manager and oversees the college's catering department.

Lamb Stew

- 2 dice Jalapeño peppers
- 1/2 cup chopped green olives
- 2 parsnip, peeled and cut into four
- 2 carrots, pared and cut into sticks
- 2 turnips, peeled and cut into fours
- 3 tbsp. melted butter
- 3 1/2 lb lamb shoulder, cut into large cubes
- 2 small onions, peeled and diced
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 3 tbsp. rice flour
- 4 cups hot chicken stock
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1/4 tsp. thyme
- 1/4 tsp. marjoram
- 1 bay leaf
- Chopped cilantro, bunch
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup red wine

1. Preheat oven to 350 F
2. Place carrots, turnips in bowl. Cover with cold water. Set aside.
3. Heat butter in sauté pan. When hot add lamb and sear 3 minutes on each side over high heat. Transfer to large oven-proof pan (Dutch oven).
4. Add onion, garlic, and Jalapeno peppers. Mix well. Season with salt and pepper. Cook 3-4 minutes.
5. Mix in flour and continue to cook 2 minutes
6. Pour in chicken stock and red wine and stir well. Add tomatoes, olives, tomato paste, spices and vegetables. Season to taste. Cover and cook 1 1/2 hours in oven. Sprinkle with cilantro before serving.

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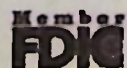
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If the City of Renton were a house, the Renton Public Library would be its living room. The library has two locations: the main downtown branch, built over the Cedar River, at 100 Mill Avenue South and the Highlands branch at 2902 NE 12th.



Bette Anderson
COLUMNIST

The libraries provide a refuge from the hectic pace of busy lives, and offer a creative environment in which minds can grow. Both libraries are comfortable places where you can browse the collection, sit and read, use computers, attend a program, or get information on almost any topic. For work, homework, business, household, leisure, and personal activities, the library and its friendly staff will help you find the information you need to live your life.

The nearly 200,000-item collection at the libraries includes a wide variety of materials in different formats. Whether it is books on recreation, videos to entertain the family, maps to plan a trip, or magazines to browse through, the library has something for everyone.

Among our special collections are business/investment and career information, local history, large print books and travel materials. Audio books, DVD's, Renton history, and many other resources

too numerous to mention round out a collection that is designed to meet your personal, educational and professional needs.

Free Internet and office computers are available for your use, and the libraries are hot spots for wireless if you would like to bring your own.

Children's Librarian Jerene Battisti presents regular pre-school story times to introduce your children to the joys of reading. Check our website's Children's Services page for a schedule of up-coming story times and special events.

For a direct link to our website, search on Google for "Renton Public Library". There you will find directions to the libraries, access to information databases, suggestions for great books to read, information about the library, and the library's catalog.

Our information databases include magazine and newspaper articles, auto repair information, and a directory of U.S. businesses and residents. Only Renton library cardholders can access these superior resources from Internet-connected computers outside the library. Also, cardholders can use the catalog to access their accounts to renew items or place a hold on materials they would like to check out.

Come in and discover this part of your community home! For more information, call us at 425-430-6610 (Downtown) or 425-430-6790 (Highlands).

*Bette Anderson is the
Renton Public Library director.
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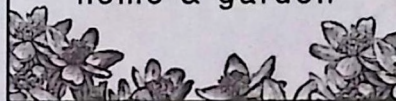
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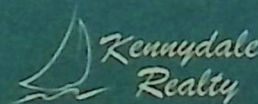
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Variety program showcases Renton Senior Center's top talent

BY ANDREW FICKES

Donna Schukar once lived a glamorous life as a professional nightclub dancer in San Francisco, performing alongside celebrities like George Liberace.

Today, at age 67, she's dancing alongside her peers at the Senior Stage Review, a program that showcases talent from the Renton Senior Activity Center. Schukar will perform in a tap dance number as well as a belly dancing for this year's review at 1 p.m. Thursday, May 3, and 7 p.m., Friday May 4, at Carco Theatre.

Months of planning and work go into the annual event.

"We picked out the music for our belly dancing routine last June and started practicing in September," she says. "We make our own costumes."

Frank Montecalvo, 85, a regular showman at center, plans to blow the audience away for the sixth consecutive year with a three-minute harmonica medley.

Montecalvo began performing on the harmonica at age 5. His father, an Italian immigrant, taught him how to play, and he often can be heard at the center. This year's harmonica program will



RENTON MAGAZINE / Dena Rosko

(Top) Saroya Polrier, front row and upper right, has taught Mid-Eastern dance class for over 8 years; "they inspire me," she said of her students. (Middle) Rei-Mel Zoellner and Mahina Lazzaro lead the class in a sit-down hula dance. Rei-Mel loves to perform "to share the happiness." (Bottom) Helen Hawkins has taken Mid-Eastern dance class for nearly 5 years; "I love the shimmies," she said.

include "Blue Danube" and "Getting to Know You."

The Senior Stage Review started in 1979. Over the years, it's been a way to promote the center's arts and activity classes and encourage seniors to become involved.

"It has a nice variety, with different types of dancing, singing, and skits," said Wendy Kirchner, center program director.

Approximately 70 to 80 seniors participate in the talent showcase. Combined audience for the matinee and evening show is close to 700 people.

The energy is palpable.

"I just love being backstage where all the

action is," says Darlene Jones, who teaches the tap dancing class and also choreographs a group of five limber men, "The Fabulous Five." The men — Dick Falk, John Scheffer, Darce Barager, Hal Murphy, and Hugh Reeves — started performing innovative dance routines 15 years ago.

Falk, who lives in Des Moines, says he sometimes is spotted in Renton by fans of the five-man act. For this show, the men started working in January on a cheerleading routine to the song, "Tequila." By show time, they'll have put in a dozen two-hour practice sessions.

"The adrenaline drive in performing is a kick," said Falk. "Being involved in these activities transforms people's lives. It gives them a reason for living."

"Even if you're sick, you still want to be in the show," agreed Schukar.

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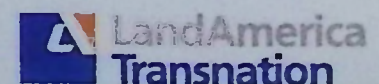
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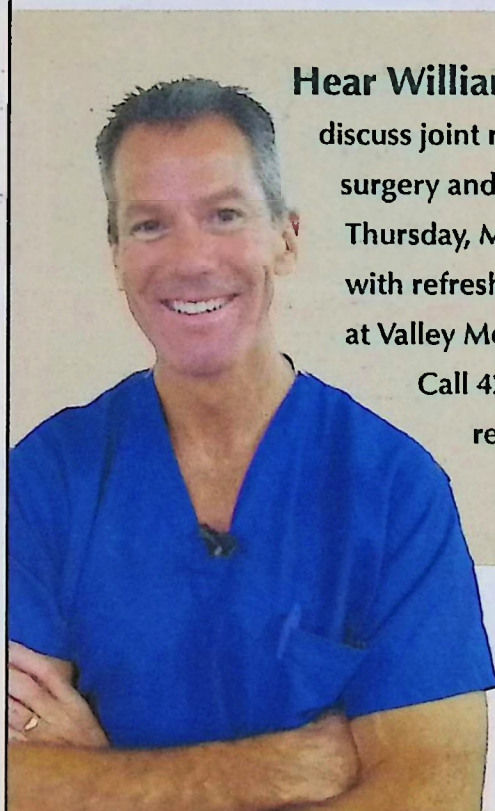
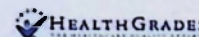
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