

RENTON *Magazine*

Volume 2 / No 4 April 2007



Evergreen
City Ballet
page 13

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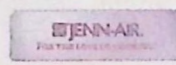
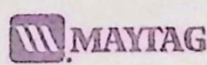
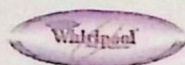
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publisher's note

*I*f the spirit of a community is measured by how much its citizens are willing to give back, to help those less fortunate or in their time of need, Renton certainly ranks at the top of the list in this region. I'm continually amazed how much people do in this community to serve others. Community leaders, business owners and local residents at every level of the economic spectrum, routinely step forth with their time and their wallets to help address the needs of others.

Several hundred people gathered on St. Patrick's Day for the annual Renton Rotary CAPER Auction. It has become one of the best attended social events of the year where people go to have fun, eat a great dinner provided by Renton Technical College and bid on hundreds of donated items, trips and dinner packages. And they spend tens of thousands of dollars that are put directly back into the community to fund a Rotary-sponsored health clinic, purchase winter

coats for kids, feed and house those in need and provide scholarships to local students.

This event requires months of work by Rotarians and their families and friends. This year's event was chaired by former school superintendent Dolores

Gibbons and city council member, Terri Briere, two busy individuals who still found time for this daunting task. The auction was a tremendous success and this community will benefit again for another year.

This type of "giving back to the community" is repeated throughout the year by other service clubs (Kiwanis, Lions, Soroptomists); school PTAs, churches and individuals who continually give of themselves for others. Community spirit



Denis Law
PUBLISHER

is alive and well!

Another example of giving to the community was very evident during a recent award presentation at city hall.

Twice in his nearly 30 years with the department, Renton police officer Larry Strauss has been wounded in the line of duty. Both times he nearly lost his life.

On March 5, Larry was awarded the Medal of Valor during a ceremony before the Renton City Council. He was critically wounded while trying to apprehend a career felon last year in downtown Renton and continues to recover from his injuries.

During the presentation, Chief Kevin Milosevich said, "Heroism is not about what you did once, but what you do instinctively every day. It's not about what you plan to do, but what you do when it's unplanned."

Larry Strauss epitomizes the spirit of giving all you have in order to help others.

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Publisher | Denis W. Law
denislaw@rentonmagazine.com

Associate Publisher | Diana Kramer
dianakramer@rentonmagazine.com

Executive Editor | David Suffia
davidstiffia@rentonmagazine.com

Reporter | Andrew Fickes
news@rentonmagazine.com

Advertising | Marie Shaw
marie@rentonmagazine.com

Graphic Artist | Kerri Ladines

Photographer | David Nelson

Columnists | Kirby Unti
| Elaine Anderson
| Dr. Bob Thompson

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cover:

Evergreen City Ballet flourishes in its new home in Renton. 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 april events



Rainier Symphony presents: **classical concert III**

April 21

The Rainier Symphony performs Dvorak's "Carnival" Overture, Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, and Brahms' Symphony No. 3.

Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

206-781-5618

IKEA Performing
Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

Admission: \$17/general
and \$12/student and
senior



harlem gospel choir **April 6 & 7**

The Harlem Gospel Choir is one of the pre-eminent gospel choirs in the world. It travels the globe, sharing its joy of faith through its music and raising funds for children's charities. The choir, founded in 1986 by Allen Bailey, is a gathering of the finest singers and musicians from various black churches in Harlem.

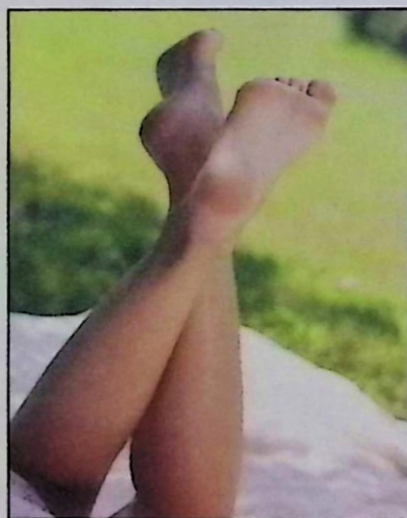
Friday at 8 p.m.;

Saturday at 8 p.m.

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

Admission: \$22/adult,
\$20/senior and students,
\$10/children 10 and under,
\$24 at the door

425-204-3455



april 6-22

**Valley Community Players
present: Barefoot in the
Park**

425-226-5190

Carco Theatre
1717 Maple Valley Highway

Admission: call for ticket
prices



april 13-15

**Evergreen City Ballet:
Cinderella**

Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday at 1:30 and 7:30 p.m.

Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St. 425-228-6800

Admission: \$30/adult,
\$25/seniors, \$20/student/child



april 14

**Storybook Theater presents:
Little Mermaid**

Saturday at 11 a.m. and 1
p.m.

425-204-3455

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

Admission: \$8 for all



april 14

**Calamity Payne's Wilde
West Wonder Show**

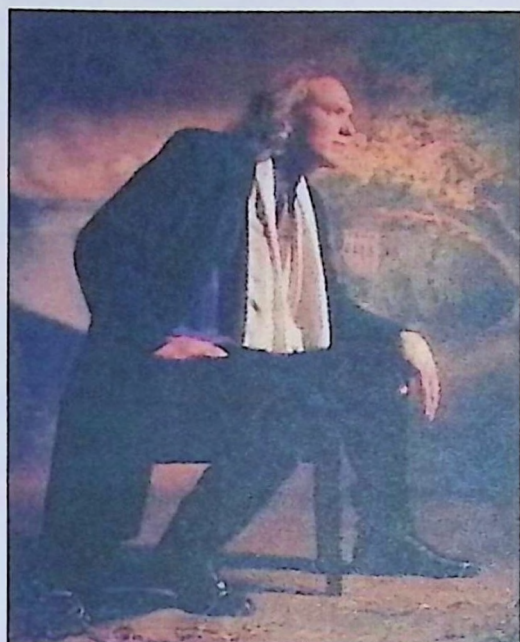
Saturday at 11 a.m.

Renton History Museum
235 Mill Ave. S.

425-255-2330

Admission: Under 8 is free

upcoming april events



IKEA Performing Arts Center presents:

david lanz

IKEA Performing Arts Center presents the sounds of David Lanz, a versatile, grammy-award winning new age artist. Seattle-born pianist David Lanz, after two decades of exploring jazz and rock 'n' roll, emerged as a new age songwriter in the early 1980s with the album "Heartsounds." He garnered his first Grammy nomination in 2000 for his new age-orchestral rock event "East of the Moon." For more than 20 years, Lanz has delighted audiences with his concerts and workshops.

april 20

Friday at 8 p.m.

IKEA Performing Arts Center
400 S. 2nd St.

Admission: \$22/adult,
\$20/senior and student,
\$24 at the door



april 21

Fifth Annual Spring Festival

Celebrate Earth Day at the Piazza Park in Renton while shopping, eating, enjoying music, and having fun. This event, provided by the City of Renton, Renton Chamber of Commerce and the Piazza Renton, includes a poker tour, live music, children's booth, master gardeners, arts and crafts, farmers' market and food vendors. It's sponsored by Frontier Bank.

Saturday from noon to 5 p.m.

425-228-1977 or 425-917-0173

Piazza Park
S. 3rd Street between S. Logan and S. Burnett Avenue

Admission: Free

now
playing



Inherit the Wind

Renton Civic Theater provides food for thought with a presentation of "Inherit the Wind." This play explores the famous Scopes Monkey Trial in Tennessee during the 1920s. Directed by RCT favorite Gregory Magyar.

March 23 - April 8

Renton Civic Theater
507 S. 3rd St.
Admission: \$20/adults;
\$15/students and seniors
425-226-5529
www.rentoncivictheatre.org

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calendar of events

COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Renton
Community Center**
1715 Maple Valley Highway
425-430-6700

www.rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=55

3rd Annual Community Garage Sale

April 7 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Give your place a clean sweep and sell those items that have been collecting dust. This is the perfect opportunity to bring your clutter to the table. Purchase a 10 x 10 space to sell your "junk" for \$25. Tables are available for rent for \$10. Admission is free for shoppers.

Admission:
Free



"Great Outdoors" Gear Mart

April 28 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

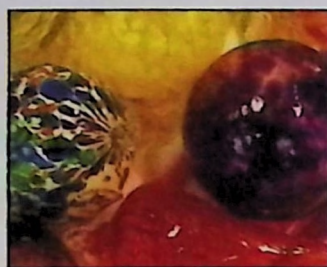
The Renton Community Center is presenting, for the first time, an opportunity to buy or sell personal outdoor equipment. Come visit us and browse thousands of gently used or brand new outdoor items. Purchase a 10 x 10 space for \$10 to sell your "outdoor gear." Rental tables for \$10 are also available. Gear on sale includes skis, tents, camping equipment, bikes, fishing gear, snowboards, boots, apparel and more. Admission is free for shoppers.

Admission: Free

ENTERTAINMENT FOR KIDS

Kids Eggstravaganza

April 7 from noon to 5 p.m.



Calling all little ones! Kids age 5 and older can come blow their own glass Easter egg at Uptown Glassworks. Includes coloring sheets, pizza, chips and soda.

Uptown Glassworks
230 Main Ave. S.

425-228-1849

Admission: \$35

www.uptownglassworks.com

IKEA Kid's Club Bunny Hop

April 8 from 9 a.m. to noon

Kids can pick up an Easter basket to collect prizes and toys at different Bunny Hop stations throughout the store.

IKEA Seattle
601 SW 41st St. / 425-656-2980

Admission: Free

SPRING KID'S CONCERT SERIES

Carco Theatre
1717 Maple Valley Highway
425-430-6700

www.rentonwa.gov/living/default.aspx?id=156

ALLEYOOP

April 11 from 1 to 2 p.m.

For over 20 years Alleyoop (a.k.a. Allan Hirsch) has been entertaining and educating children. He tells stories, asks riddles, sings songs, and plays musical games. He shares his fabulous whistle collection, his puppets and his collection of American Folk Toys.

Admission: \$2

Brothers from Different Mothers

April 13 from 1 to 2 p.m.

This dynamic duo of juggling comedians challenges the law of gravity time after time. The Brothers' high-energy wackiness and off-the-wall antics will stop nothing short of hilarity and amazement. Bring the extended family because this is a show for all generations.

Admission: \$2

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

2007 Annual Job Fair

Wednesday April 25
from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Student Success Center at Renton Technical College presents the 2007 Annual Job Fair. Employer exhibit tables will be set up to recruit employees and promote their businesses.

Renton Technical College
3000 NE 4th St.

425-235-2352 ext. 7785

Admission: Free

www.rtc.edu

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 out 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

Siore de Chocolat

Saturday, May 12 at 5 p.m.

St. Anthony School presents its 18th annual St. Anthony Auction Regale, STAAR Dinner and Auction. This year the school celebrates 80 years of providing quality education to a diverse student population in kindergarten through eighth grade. Items funded by the auction include classroom technology, library materials, new science curriculum and materials and tuition assistance. For an invitation, please call 425-255-0059.

Marriott Seattle Airport Hotel
3201 South 176th St. / 425-255-0059
Admission: \$65 / www.sasr.org



Patriot Players presents: Crazy For You

April 20, 21, 26, and 27 at 7:30 p.m.
April 28 at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

A big, tap dancing musical comedy with romance, assumed identities, show girls, singing cowboys, and classic Gershwin music! Who could ask for anything more? Performed by Liberty High School's award winning drama department.

Liberty High School
16655 SE 136th St. / 425-837-4855

Admission: \$9/adults, \$7/seniors, children under 12 and students with ASB cards

www.liberty.issaquah.wednet.edu

SENIOR EVENTS

RENTON SENIOR CENTER

211 Burnett Ave.

425-430-6633

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

Easter/Spring Celebration

Thursday, April 5 at 11:30 a.m.

Bring your Easter bonnet, put flowers and ribbon upon it; on your head adorn it in our Easter Parade! An egg hunt will begin after lunch. Bring your own basket! Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. Advance tickets are required and are available in the nutrition office between 12:30 and 4:30 p.m.

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

Spring Fling

Friday, April 20 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Bring your friends and join us to celebrate the coming of spring! Eddy Fukano will be back to entertain us with music throughout the evening. We'll dine on succulent bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches and a fabulous dessert! Supper will be served from 4 to 5 p.m. Tickets must be purchased by April 18. / Admission: \$6

Senior Stage Review

Thursday, May 3 at 1 p.m.;
Friday, May 4 at 7 p.m.

The annual Senior Stage Review at the Carco Theatre features dancing, singing and acting galore, music comedy and much, much more! Bring your friends and enjoy entertainment by our Renton Senior Activity Center seniors! Tickets available April 3. / Admission: \$2

Mother's Day Fashion Fiesta

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

A fun, "c outure" Fashion Show Luncheon for a Mother's Day celebration. We are looking for ladies and men who would like to model a unique or special outfit as you "walk the runway." Come enjoy lunch, meet the models first hand and gain some fashion sense! Advance tickets are required and will be available in the nutrition office beginning April 23 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)

kirby unti

Angels, or as close to the real thing as I have come



KIRBY UNTI

The past several years have brought a growing interest in the phenomena of angels. Many people report mysterious and deeply meaningful experiences with bright lights, a strong sense of presence and even audible voices.

I must confess I have never come close to such an encounter. For that matter, I have never heard God's voice in an audible form. My faith has always relied upon everyday experiences that have caused me to believe there is something more to life than what I can see or hear.

The closest things to real angels that I have encountered are nurses. Nurses rank right up there at the top in my book. They not only have valuable knowledge and a tremendous set of skills, they often have a wonderful way of bringing about reassurance and comfort.

Angels in the Judeo-Christian tradition have always served as messengers of God. One of the most reassuring messages they speak is, "Do not be afraid." If you are familiar with the Christmas Story, this is the message that was spoken both to Mary upon learning that she was pregnant and to the shepherds who were out in the field watching over their flocks.

I know in my own life when I or

members of my family have been hospitalized, I have deeply appreciated the care and support of the nursing staff. It can make a world of difference to receive a word of encouragement or a gentle touch.

One group of nurses has taken on the toughest assignment of all. They choose to use their gifts to be with people who are dying. They come to the home of the dying person to offer not only medical care for the patient but reassurance and hope to the whole family.

Hospice nurses have learned to be comfortable in the presence of death. They are able to help families who are often afraid and unaware of what is about to happen. They not only perform the most essential nursing duties, they make themselves available to the family on a 24/7 basis.

Death has many similarities to birth. It is hard work that often involves labored breathing and at times moans and groans. The hospice nurses are often there, functioning like midwives, to help the person leave this world and enter the next.

Hospice nurses, by the calm and assuring approach they take, teach families one of the most important lessons in life: Death is not something we need to fear. The truth is, death can be one of the most meaningful and life-giving experiences we can go through.

Often I have heard people say, "I was so glad that I was there when my loved one died." We are vulnerable when death comes, and it binds us closely to those we share it with. Hospice nurses often become cherished friends of the family.

I have never seen a real angel, but I have seen with my own eyes on many occasions and experienced deep within my heart a very special group of people who come to be present at one of life's most important moments. They come to bring comfort and they come to say, "Do not be afraid."

Thank you to all of you nurses out there, and a special word of thanks to all of you who provide hospice care.

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

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William LeBlanc,
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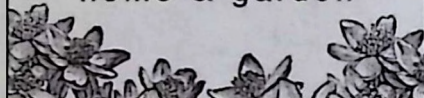


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Officer Larry Strauss awarded Medal of Valor

On Monday, March 5, during a Renton City Council meeting, Police Chief Kevin Milosevich made a special presentation to a standing-room only crowd, honoring officers of the quarter; officer of the year; and the Medal of Valor, the Department's highest honor. Officer Larry Strauss received the Medal of Valor for his efforts to stop a fleeing felon last year, which nearly cost him his life. The following comments were made by Chief Milosevich during the presentation.

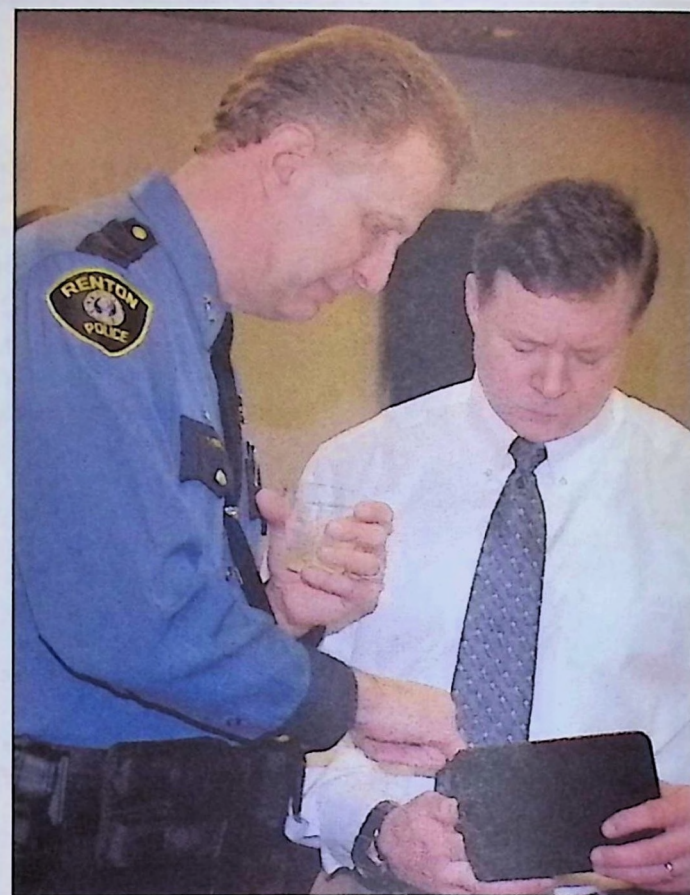


PHOTO BY DET. ROBERT ONISHI

Officer Larry Strauss shows the Medal of Valor to Deputy Chief Tim Troxel.

BY CHIEF KEVIN
MILOSEVICH

Every day, we call upon officers to respond quickly to emergencies and to protect our families, our neighbors and our property.

Every day, police officers across America answer that call, acting with courage, determination and valor.

The Medal of Valor is the highest honor that I can bestow upon a member of the Renton Police Department. According to our policy, the Medal of Valor will be awarded to members for acts which meet the following conditions: "When substantial risk to the members' physical safety actually existed, and the member was unquestionably conscious of this imminent threat, and when the member accomplished the objective, or was prevented from doing so by incurring a disabling injury or death."

This medal has only been awarded on one prior occasion since this policy was adopted 20 years ago, to Officer Larry Strauss in 1991.

Officer Strauss responded to a report

of a domestic violence situation at the Evergreen Building on Grady Way, on March 19, 1991, and confronted an armed man in the parking lot, which resulted in an exchange of gunshots. Officer Strauss was shot in the chest, but his protective vest saved his life. During the gunfight, the suspect was wounded and apprehended at the scene. It's believed that the actions of Officer Strauss prevented further acts of violence from occurring at the Evergreen Building that day.

We are here tonight to, once again, recognize the actions of Officer Strauss. On Jan. 8, 2006, he stopped to speak to three individuals in a parking lot at Airport Way and Rainier Avenue. This was just another routine contact.

What Officer Strauss didn't know was he was about to stop an armed 20-time convicted felon, who was wanted on a burglary warrant. The suspect fled on foot and Officer Strauss caught up to him and they struggled. Officer Strauss fell to the ground and the suspect fired several shots at him. Officer Strauss was able to return fire, striking the coat of the suspect as he fled on foot.

Officer Strauss was struck just above his protective vest, and the bullet entered his cheek, broke his clavicle, collapsed his trachea, punctured his lung, fractured a rib

and exited his back, narrowly missing his spinal column. Lying injured and unable to speak, Officer Strauss had the presence of mind to push the emergency button on his radio to summon help. He was able to give arriving officers a description of the suspect, which led to his arrest later that evening.

Heroism is not about what you did once, but what you do instinctively every day. It is not about what you plan to do, but what you do when it's unplanned. It is not about glory, or the fame, but it's about going home at the end of the day and knowing your job makes a difference in this community.

Officer Strauss was hospitalized for weeks after this incident and is still recovering from his injuries. We are very fortunate he is with us this evening.

It is great honor that I present the Medal of Valor to Officer Larry Strauss.

(In other recognition, employees are recognized for their efforts by their colleagues. Officer Chris Edwards, Sergeant Chad Karlewicz and Corporal Dave Skelton were honored as Employees of the Quarter in 2006, and Detective Don Gustine was named Employee of the Year.)

around the garden



BY ELAINE ANDERSON

During our months of summer drought, watering a landscape garden can bring on feelings of guilt. Is this a frivolous use of water? Am I

Fall is the ideal time to plant

harming the environment in some way? Relax. If there isn't an actual water shortage, and if you water responsibly and care for your garden in an environmentally friendly way, you're fine.

I'm going to get the one piece of advice that is the most painful for gardeners to hear out of the way right now. That is, don't do any planting in the spring. Wait until fall. This is heresy, I know. But, hear me out, and at least consider the idea. Plants put in the ground in spring will need regular watering throughout the summer months.

Transplanting has already stressed them, and they may not survive the added stress of having to cope with too little water. Note that this is true of drought-tolerant plants as well as others. These plants are drought tolerant once established, and it takes at least two summers of supplemental watering to get them to that point. Trees need supplemental watering for three to five years.

But, you are thinking, nurseries have the best variety of plants now, not in the fall. True. How about a compromise? Shop now, plant later. Keep your purchases together where they'll get the proper amount of light but won't be in direct sunlight for any length of time. Having them grouped together in their original pots will make watering, which you'll need to do every two or three days, easier on you and on the water table. You would use

much more time and much more water if these plants were in the ground.

Planting in the fall will relieve you of most of your watering duties. Until it's raining nearly every day, continue checking your plants so they won't become too dry. Soon, they won't need any supplemental water at all.

During the dormant season, a plant uses its resources for root growth, and your new landscape acquisitions will have months of regular watering in which to establish good, healthy roots.

Give this suggestion of waiting until fall to plant some thought. Not ready to try it now? Well, maybe next year. Once you adopt this practice, your plants – and the environment – will thank you.

Next month, look for more tips on wise watering.

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 drought tolerant plants and other gardening topics, call the Master Gardener Phone Clinic at 206-296-3440.

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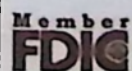
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Bernie Dochnahl: Building consensus and community

BY ANDREW FICKES

*I*f you want people to work well together, you'd be wise to add Bernie Dochnahl to the mix.

"I like to collaborate on bringing people to the table," says the community activist and business leader. "Collaboration is the mechanism that I really believe in to make a better world."

Dochnahl was recently appointed to an 18-month term on the Harborview Medical Center board, on the recommendation of King County Council member Julia Patterson.

"The consensus building that she has is most impressive," says Patterson. "She has very diverse experience in political, social, health, and economic environments. She's an honest, straight-forward communicator."

"I look at things I can do, not that I can't do," says Dochnahl, who chairs the Mutual of Enumclaw board of trustees. "You can't limit yourself or your community. If you start off that way, then you're going to miss opportunities that other people can see."

Dochnahl is no newcomer to health care issues. She is a former board member for the Washington State Health Insurance Pool. Between 1994 and 1998, she was the governor-appointed chair of the Health Services Commission. She was also a hospital commissioner for Valley Medical Center in the early 1990s.

She describes Harborview as "a wonderful organization."

"There's great people on the board—really smart, forward thinking," she says. "I'm really honored. I'm looking forward to digging into it."

The 1964 Renton High School grad earned a degree in business administration, with a focus on accounting, from the University of Washington. She entered the accounting training program of Puget Sound Energy, then Puget Power, and found her niche in customer service. She was at Puget Power for 12 years and eventually became the first woman vice president.

"While at Puget Power, one of the corporate principles as far as being in a leadership position was that you participated and gave back to the community," she says.

"Long time ago I decided that my concentration would be on women and kids' issues, both locally as well as internationally."

For four years she chaired Global Partnerships, a



RENTON MAGAZINE / Denis Law

Bernie Dochnahl (left) talks with King County Council Member Julia Patterson at a recent Renton Chamber event. In photo below, Dochnahl is shown with Renton School Board Director Marcie Maxwell, Julia Patterson and Suzette Cooke, Mayor of Kent.

Bernie takes everything
she's working on to the
next level.

~ Betty Nokes, president,
Bellevue Chamber of
Commerce



Seattle-based non-profit that provides small loans to women in Central America, enabling them to start small business.

"Micro-credit is something that I truly believe in and continue to help do fundraising for and donate time," she says. "If you give women more economic opportunity in these developing countries, they will take it more often than men."

Dochnahl is also legislative co-chair for the Renton Chamber of Commerce, chairwoman for the Eastside Chambers' Coalition and a Renton Community Foundation board member.

She commits more than 20 hours a week to community service, but sees none of it as work. It's all rewarding.

"I look at it as all interesting," she says. "I look at it as continuous learning and adding value to my life."

She and husband Denny own various commercial

properties in Renton and Kent, doing business as DENBE of Renton, LLC. They don't at all mind mixing business and community service with their social lives.

Parties at their Renton Highlands home include an annual wine tasting to raise money for Renton Rotary's special projects. Last year, the event raised approximately \$15,000 for Coats for Kids. Funds from this year's event will go towards Rotacare, which is a free medical clinic for the uninsured.

"We tend to gravitate to the issues that are going on in the community," says Dochnahl. "It's always a part of what we're doing, even when we're just socializing."

"Bernie and Denny are fabulous giving back to the community," said Betty Nokes, president of the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce. "Bernie takes everything she's working on to the next level."

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recipe of the month



CHEF MICHAEL MCBRIDE

This month's featured recipe is for fresh pea soup, provided by Chef Michael McBride. Chef McBride, at Renton Technical College, Chef Instructor, graduated from South Seattle Community College with an AAS Degree in Food Science Production

Management. He is also an American Culinary Federation Certified Executive Chef.

He has 30 years of diverse experience in Hotels, Clubs and Education. During his 30 year career, Chef McBride has worked at the Brazilian Court Hotel in Palm Beach, Florida; The Jupiter Island Club in Hobe Sound, Florida; The Otesaga Hotel in Cooperstown, New York; and The Sunset Club in Seattle, Washington.

He was the First Chef Instructor for the Culinary Arts Program at Edmonds Community College and was Chef Instructor at the Art Institute of Seattle for 9 years; where he also coached the Culinary Competition Team which included winning the honor of State Champions for 2005.

Fresh Pea Soup

Yields 2 quarts

you will need

	Butter
1 oz	Onion, small dice
3 oz	Celery, small dice
1 oz	Carrot, small dice
1 tsp	Garlic, minced
1 lb	Peas, fresh or frozen
3 pints	Chicken Stock
12 oz	Cream
1 bunch	Mint
	Salt
	White pepper

directions

In butter, sweat the onion, carrot, celery, and garlic until translucent.

Add stock and bring to a boil. Add fresh peas. As soon as the peas are hot, approximately 3 minutes, puree until smooth.

Add hot cream. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Garnish with mint sprigs.



the Evergreen City Ballet

Broadening Renton's cultural offerings

By ANDREW FICKES / Photos by DAVID NELSON

When Evergreen City Ballet moved its studios to the former McLendon Hardware site in Renton a year ago, the non-profit, professional dance school arrived with a 12-year successful run of high quality productions.

The ballet had attracted tens of thousands of patrons in Auburn. It presented popular performances from the classical dance repertoire, including

"Sleeping Beauty," "Swan Lake," and "Giselle."

"You'd be hard pressed to find a studio our size anywhere in the world doing quality productions like we do," says Wade Walthall, artistic director.

Auburn's desire to build a multi-million dollar mixed-use development in its downtown forced the school to seek a new site. It chose Renton because of its central location to the Seattle art scene.

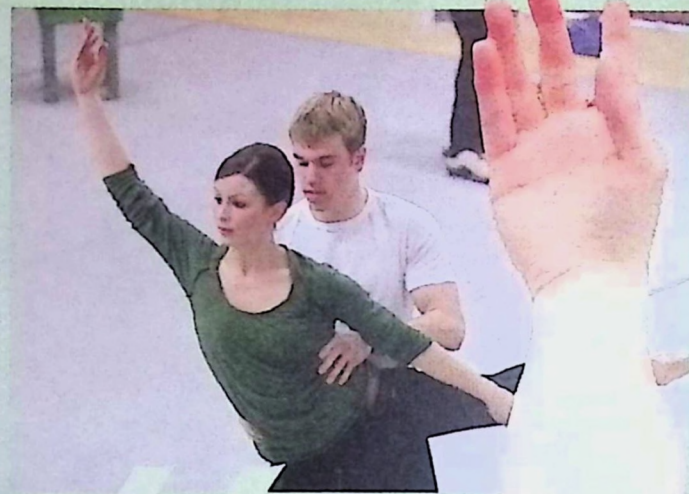
"The community of Renton was very welcoming to us," says Walthall.

Because of the move, the school lost some students, starting last year in Renton with an enrollment of 70. Stronger marketing and better visibility helped increase enrollment to nearly 200.

"As long as we don't compromise the quality of our instruction and performances, we plan to increase our enrollment as much as possible," says Colleen Montgomery, development director.

Montgomery said tuition is affordable, increasing as a student's instruction level increases.

"We do offer scholarships," she says. "We give out more than \$10,000 a year



The community of Renton was very wel

BALLET from page 13

in scholarships and we'd like to see that increase."

An annual auction in the fall helps support the scholarship fund.

Montgomery, who was hired as development director in December 2005, said the move to Renton has made a tremendous difference.

"The facility in Renton is much larger, so it's been able to accommodate our needs," she says. "In the year plus we've been in Renton, we've accomplished so

much. We started seeing more of the potential that we have."

The years ahead look promising. As funds become available, Montgomery said the school would like to renovate its lobby area and add rehearsal halls. The school now uses three rehearsal halls. It also leases out space to the Bellevue Opera and has space for its own orchestra.

"We'd like to eventually purchase the building," she says. "We'd like to make it into an art center."

For the community at large, dance classes range from hip-hop, to pilates, to jazz. Montgomery said the school is also introducing a stretch and fitness class for seniors in the spring.

The school has about 150 students in its lower level instruction courses. Twenty students between the ages of



opening to us.
~ Wade Walthall



14 and 18 are in the performance division. Students must audition to reach the performance division, which is involved in four performances a year. The academy also has eight paid dancers.

Students start as young as 5 years old. For a student motivated to turn professional, instruction is recommended by age 7. It usually takes ten years for students to train their bodies.

"It's important that training start from an early age, because it's hard to un-train bad habits," says Montgomery.

The exception was artistic director Walthall. He started dance as a teen-aged whim in his native

Texas. He quickly gained skills and within a year of training was on his way to the School of American Ballet in New York City. After just two-and-a-half years of instruction in New York City, Walthall landed a contract with the Dutch National Ballet.

For the next seven years, he performed all over Europe. His credentials today include 25 years of professional experience.

Walthall has been the artistic director for ECB since its founding in 1994. His renown as a principal dancer for the Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle helped ECB move quickly with funding in its early years.

Walthall does all the choreography and dance instruction for the school. His latest undertaking is the school's first-time production of *Cinderella*.

"I've been thinking about *Cinderella* for a year," he says. "I have never danced to *Cinderella* and I've only seen one production in my life. This production of *Cinderella* is totally mine."

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PHOTO COURTESY OF Evergreen City Ballet

Neighborhood Program brings residents together

BY MANNY FRISHBERG

As the City of Renton's Neighborhood Coordinator, Norma McQuiller has been building bridges between the communities that make up the city and their government for the last six years. Part of her job has been to help coordinate the Community Emergency Response Team training, sponsored by FEMA and the Renton Fire Department and designed to equip neighborhood volunteers in areas such as search and rescue and disaster medical assistance. The goal is to train citizens who can make a difference in case of an emergency.

But the Neighborhood Program does much more. Another goal is to empower residents to get involved with one another and the city to make Renton a safer and happier place for everyone.

"The purpose of the program is to promote positive communication between the residents and the city government," she says. "We want them to be connected to the city."

Activities include sponsoring neighborhood picnics, where residents can meet their neighbors as well as city officials while discussing needs and concerns in a friendly, informal setting.

"We take our barbecue out into the neighborhoods and we give them a picnic," she says. "We also invite city staff, such as the mayor and council members and department heads. It's a lot easier to talk to an official over a hot dog than over a microphone at a City Council meeting."

The program provides a volunteer city worker who acts as a liaison with people in a particular neighborhood. McQuiller says



RENTON MAGAZINE / Denis Law

Norma McQuiller is the force behind the successful neighborhood program.

It's a lot easier to talk to an official over a hot dog than over a microphone at a City Council meeting.

~ Norma McQuiller, Neighborhood Coordinator

each officially recognized neighborhood (there are 32 that have gone through the application process and been recognized) has a staffer who is the "go-to" person when concerns arise. The liaison helps put residents in touch with the right person in the right department to respond to their needs.

"There's nothing more frustrating than to make a call to city hall or anyplace and having to go through the telephone tree, trying to get to the right person," McQuiller says. "They can call their liaison and the liaison can give them the infor-

mation on how to contact the appropriate person, with a contact name and phone number or email."

McQuiller also coordinates a grant program to fund a variety of neighborhood enhancements. Some of the projects funded include the neighborhood identity signs in Kennydale, Renton Highlands and Monterey Terrace, and the development of community parks. Since 1999, the city has awarded

NEIGHBORHOOD ~ next page



Glenn Knowle

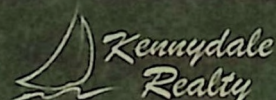
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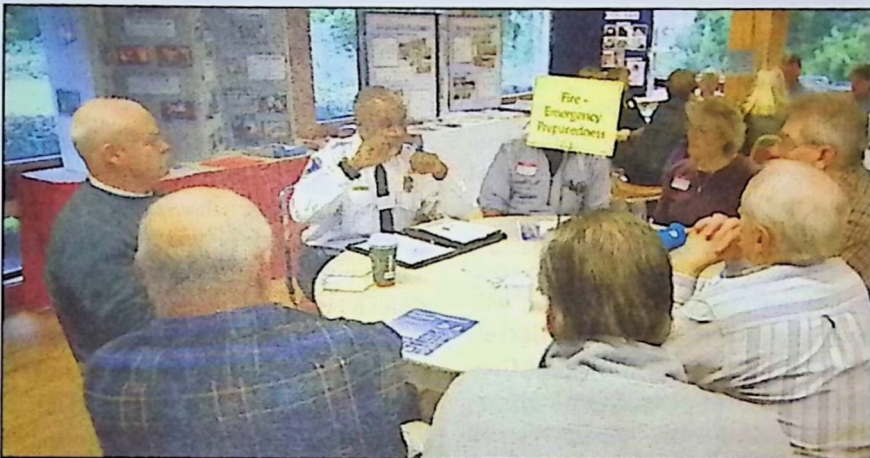
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RENTON MAGAZINE / Denis Law

Dozens of Renton citizens attended a recent workshop to learn how to take advantage of the city's Neighborhood Program.

NEIGHBORHOOD

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63 neighborhood grants to 30 neighborhoods. The City Council puts aside \$50,000 a year in matching funds for neighborhood projects, which are selected based on planning, neighborhood support and public benefit. The amount of matching grant funds allocated to a neighborhood is based on a project's worthiness. There are two grant cycles per year, in the spring and fall.

The Neighborhood Program is also a vehicle for the city to get word out to the

residents in times of emergencies. During the December windstorms, McQuiller says, she was able to send out email alerts through her contacts to give people information about shelter sites and what services people could expect from the city and what they should not.

"I realize that not everybody had email because of the power outages," she says, "but different departments would give me information and then I would send it out." McQuiller said she encouraged people who could receive email to provide information to neighbors and people they knew.

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National certification means going the extra mile



RENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT PHOTO

Five of Renton's eight Nationally Board Certified teachers discuss plans to attend physics classes during summer break. From left to right: Judy Oakes, Lyn McKay, Janet Regge, Rhonda Cox-Mased and Brian Teppner.

BY MANNY FRISHBERG

Teachers spend a lot of time in school. It's not just that they work there. Before even getting their degree, there is a year as a student-teacher. By the time they land their first job, most are at least well on their way to their master's degree and all teachers are expected to take continuing education workshops and seminars to maintain their credentials.

Going above and beyond those requirements are eight teachers in the Renton School District, who made the commitment to put themselves through a

challenging, even grueling process, to pursue National Board certification. Close to a dozen more are in the process or looking into pursuing it now.

National Board certified teachers work at every level in the district, from preschool through high school. All of them talk about the process and what they learned from it in similar terms.

"Because I went through the certification, I'm more reflective," says Esther Rich, a seventh grade family and consumer sciences teacher at Nelsen Middle School. "It made every lesson I teach more focused, so I know what I'm going for." She has spent over 10 of her 11 years teaching in Renton and is the first teacher in the state to earn her certificate in her particular specialty.

Every decision made needs to be in regards to . . . how we can best help students learn, because that's our job.

~ Janet Regge, Renton School District professional development coach

Rich, one of four Renton teachers to have earned certification this year, says that when she sees the message is not getting through to her students, she is able to adjust her approach and find other ways to present the information instead of simply repeating the same material.

The other three teachers to earn certification this year are Becky Haver, who teaches preschoolers at the Hillcrest Special Service Center, Rhonda Cox-Mased, a 26-year veteran in the classroom, currently teaching fourth-grade at Hazelwood Elementary School, and Brian Teppner, a fourth-grade teacher at Sierra Heights Elementary.

"I was looking for something that would make me a better teacher. That's why I went into it," says Cox-Mased. She says the process "forced me to try things that I hadn't tried. I think that any time that, as a teacher, you try new things and they work, that's proof that you're a better teacher."

The four who preceded them in becoming nationally board certified are Lyn McKay, Judy Oakes, Janet Regge and Rosemary Shaw. McKay is a music teacher at Kenndale, where she has been for the last seven of her 18 years in the Renton School District. Shaw is a math teacher at Renton High and Oakes is a

librarian at Nelsen Middle School and the district's facilitator for teachers working on National Board certification.

"It is the mother of all staff development," Oakes says she tells teachers. "This is to take us from the way we've been doing things, take a good long, hard look at that, reflect on it, and make some really profound changes."

Regge is the professional development coach at Cascade, where she says her job is to teach and train the teachers.

"I model teach and co-teach with teachers," she explains. She also teaches at Seattle Pacific University, where she is in charge of the professional certification program. Over the past 20-plus years Regge has taught kindergarten, first-grade, sixth-grade, junior high reading and children's literature at the college level. She completed her National Board certification in 2005.

"I got a lot out of this," she says. "I find myself questioning daily, what are students going to learn from this? Every decision made currently with other teachers, I'm constantly bringing them back to what will our students gain? What is best for student learning? Every decision made needs to be in regards to student learning

TEACHERS ~ next page



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Renton School District good news announcements

Two receive more than \$10,000 in scholarships

Renton High School seniors Azuka Nwude and Aaron Lockhart received admissions to Virginia State University and \$10,000 in scholarships during a recent Historical Black Colleges and Universities recruitment visit. Nwude and Lockhart also were admitted to Philander Smith College in Little Rock Ark., each receiving the Excelsior Scholarship of free tuition and fees.

Lindbergh High students recognized for school store

Lindbergh High School students and staff involved in the school's Distributive Education Club America (DECA) program recently received national Gold Certification for management of the school's student store. To receive the award, DECA students spent two weeks writing and editing documentation reports, creating verification materials, and compiling an 85-page manual detailing more than 60 areas of store operation according to pre-established guidelines. The DECA team will be recognized at the International Career Development Conference in Orlando. DECA is an international association of students and teachers of marketing, management and entrepreneurship education.

Student nominated for diversity award

Lindbergh High School junior Dalla Amin has been nominated for the Diversity Makes a Difference

scholarship award, offered by Northwest Asian Weekly newspaper. Dalla, who was featured in a recent edition of the paper, was nominated for her active leadership in the Kurdish community, devoting hours to chairing cultural events, volunteering as an interpreter at the Kurdish Human Rights Watch Center, and helping new immigrants adjust to life in the United States and prepare for citizenship tests. Dalla also writes for the Kurdish International newspaper.

Students honored by Seattle Supersonics

Dimmitt Middle School students in Michelle Olander's seventh-grade language arts/social studies class recently wrote essays for the Seattle Supersonics Black History Heroes Challenge. Their work and research paid off. Dimmitt won an "Outstanding School" award for having the most essays submitted in the contest. As a reward, Olander, some of her students and their parents were invited to a recent Sonics game.

Student honored for volunteer service

Lindbergh High School senior Katie Nolan was recently recognized by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards with the President's Volunteer Service Award for exemplary volunteer service. Volunteer activities were judged on criteria such as personal initiative, creativity, effort, impact, and personal growth. Katie was

SCHOOLS - page 22

TEACHERS from page 18

and how we can best help students learn, because that's our job."

One thing she says she is hoping for is more support from the Legislature and the school districts.

"It really does encourage professional standards among teachers and there is research to back that the students of National Board Certified teachers do better in school than students of other teachers that aren't nationally board certified," Regge says.



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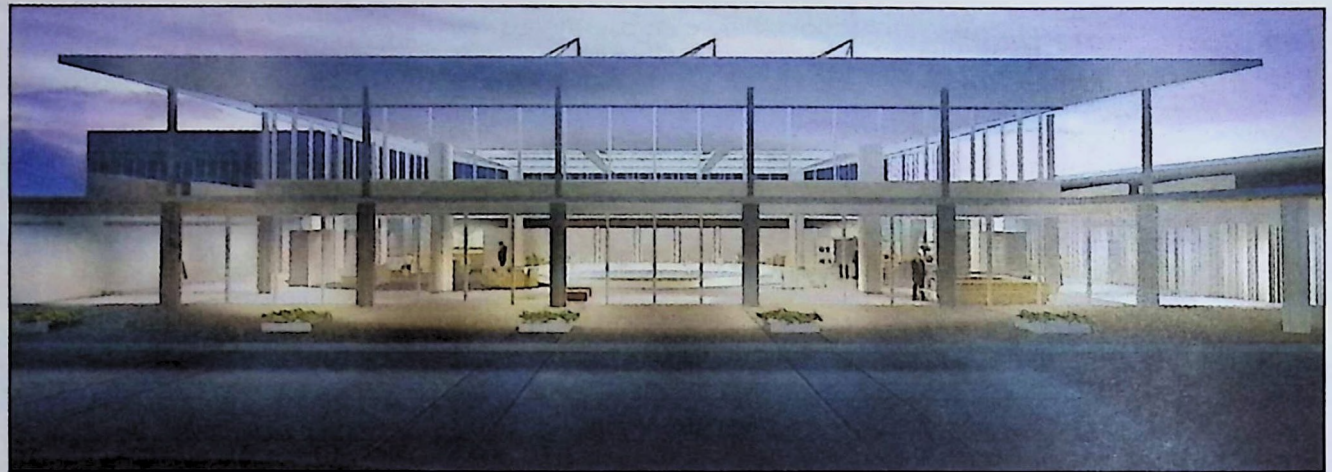
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VMC announces grand opening of surgery center

Valley Medical Center is weeks away from the grand opening of its new surgery wing and lobby entrance.

To celebrate, the hospital is giving the public a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to view the surgery center's new high-tech operating rooms – without being a patient.



VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER RENDERING

Valley Medical Center will host a public open house on April 28th of its new surgery wing and lobby entrance.

The open house will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 28. Admission is free.

"This is an opportunity for the public to see our new services," said hospital spokesman Perry Cooper. "People will be treated to refreshments and our new fountain in the lobby. Also, there will be a dis-

play to describe our new seven-story emergency department tower."

Construction on the seven-story emergency department tower will start later this summer. Completion is scheduled for summer of 2009. The tower is designed to improve emergency services and disaster preparation.

The surgery center and lobby entrance is the second phase in a three phase, \$200 million capital master plan project. The first phase, completed in April 2005, was a family center that included a new birth center and a neonatal intensive care unit.

An additional floor to the surgery center will be finished in the spring of 2008.

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renton library news



Your library card takes you to online information

BY AARON OESTING

In a world where anyone can publish a web site, it is difficult to tell whether you can trust the information you find on the Internet. However, there are trusted online information sources available for free - the Online Databases and Research Tools on the web site of the Renton Public Library. Public libraries subscribe to a variety of online resources produced by well-known book publishing companies, so you can be sure that the information has been carefully edited. With just a library card and an Internet connected computer, you can get this information anytime and from anywhere. The Renton Public Library offers five online databases providing the types of information asked for most often. Here is a description of what you can find in each:

ProQuest magazine and newspaper collection gives you access to the contents of thousands of magazines, journals, and newspapers in a variety of subject areas including business, science, the arts, humanities, social sciences, and the news. Many of these publications provide entire articles which you can print out or easily e-mail to anyone. Whether you are researching a specific topic or just looking for the recipe you saw in the paper recently, ProQuest is a great place to start.

Auto Repair Reference Center contains information on over 23,000 vehicles dating from 1954 to the present, including repair instructions, factory drawings, step-by-step photographs, technical service bulletins, manufacturers' recalls, wiring diagrams, maintenance schedules, quick tips, and vehicle ownership and maintenance guides. The information is taken from the Chilton's car manuals, and it is

updated continuously, making the database a handy tool for every car owner.

ReferenceUSA database is a nationwide phonebook that includes both Yellow and White pages listings for more than 14 million U.S. businesses and 210 million U.S. residents. ReferenceUSA also provides information such as census data, official web sites, annual sales figures, executive staff, number of employees, SEC filings, and more. ReferenceUSA is an excellent tool for finding contact information whether you are targeting your business marketing efforts or tracking down a long lost high school friend.

Thomson Gale Legal Forms database is an extensive collection of thousands of legal forms needed for everyday uses. The forms include state, federal, business, personal, real estate and general forms covering hundreds of legal subjects and issues. The next time you need a legal form, save time and money by checking the Thomson Gale Legal Forms database.

Learning Express Library is a learning and test practice web site that offers courses in math, reading, and writing; essay writing practice; resumé writing and workplace skills enrichment; and more than 300 online practice tests for students and adults of all ages. The practice tests include exams such as the ACT, SAT, GED, ASVAB, Firefighter, Police Officer, Paramedic, EMT Basic, U.S. Citizenship, Postal Worker, Cosmetology, Real Estate Agent & Broker Exams. Ace your next test by using the Learning Express Library.

To use this treasure trove of resources, get a Renton Public Library card and visit the library's web site at <http://library.rentonwa.gov>.

Aaron Oesting is the Renton Public Library assistant director.

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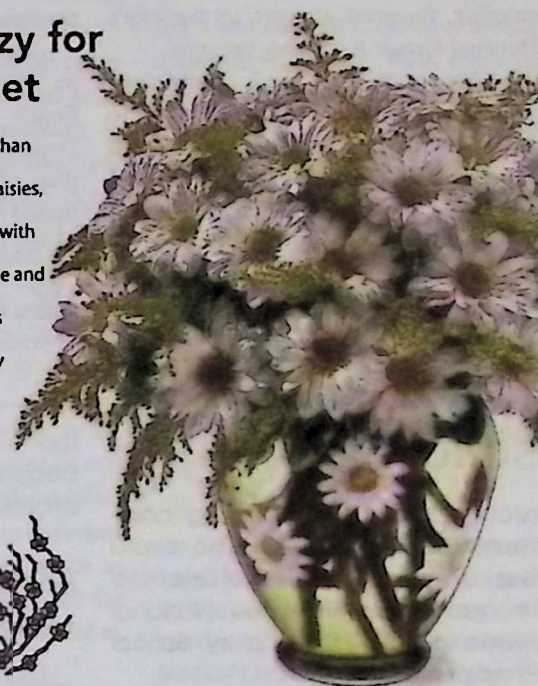
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First Savings recognized for housing program support

The City of Renton recently recognized First Savings Bank of Renton for its ongoing financial support to the city's Housing Repair Assistance program.

This year the bank contributed \$30,000 its largest annual donation to date. Since 1997, the bank has contributed approximately \$155,000 to the program that assists low-income or disabled homeowners with their home improvement needs. All the money goes directly into buying materials and supplies for home improvement.

"We are extremely thankful for their

contribution," says Tim Lawless, coordinator for the Housing Repair Assistance program.

The program was created by the city in 1976 following passage of President Ford's Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. Renton's program officially began in 1978, primarily funded by community development block grants. In 2005, the program had a budget of approximately \$129,000, 81 percent funded through the CDBG. The remaining 19 percent was funded by individual donation.

"The lion's share of funding comes from federal dollars," says Lawless. "Federal funds have been shrinking and will continue to shrink, so individual donations are critical."

Lawless said that so far First Savings Bank is the only individual donor to step up to the plate.

"It's a good fit for the bank, because we have an opportunity to take some initiative that improves the housing inventory in Renton," says Bob Gagnier, senior vice president and chief lending officer of First Savings Bank of Renton.

"This program helps to improve the safety and integrity of homes in Renton and helps keep the neighborhoods looking good," he says.

Lawless is estimating a \$200,000 budget for this year. He is in the process of contacting neighborhood organizations to drum up additional financial support for the program.

Meanwhile, Gagnier said he hopes the bank's board will continue to recognize the validity of supporting the program.

SCHOOLS from page 19

recognized for outstanding community service activities. The award is sponsored by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Hazen High drill team receives top honors

The Hazen High Drill Team took four first-place trophies at competitions during mid-winter break. The Hazen team won first in both drill and pom categories at both the Capitol High Invitational and at the Interlake Invitational. Individually, Angel Nguyen placed second and Cassey Tran first in the novice drill-down competition.

Renton High student receives scholarship

Amy Vu, a student at Renton High School, was recently recognized as a recipient of the 2007 Greater Renton Kiwanis \$1,000 scholarship.

Amy is active as the president of Future Business Leaders of America, RHS Speech and Debate Team, RHS Mock Trial Team, RHS representative to the Communities in Schools of Renton Board, secretary of RHS Key Club, and a four-year member of the National Honor Society.

She is an intern at the Pacific Science Center teaching about environmental awareness in the community to fourth grade class-

rooms. Her educational goal is to become a medical examiner/forensic pathologist.

Renton Academy teacher recognized for efforts

Lisa Chapman, a teacher at Renton Academy, was honored recently by The Friends of Youth Organization for her work in teaching writing and the creation of a student-written newspaper, The Griffin Home Times. The program helps students who have struggled in school to participate in writing and publishing a monthly newspaper.

Lindbergh High senior receives WSU scholarship

Amanda Brennan, a senior at Lindbergh High School, has been awarded a Dean's Scholarship through the College of Engineering and Architecture at Washington State University. The \$2,000 scholarship is for the first year of study and is renewable for up to four years. The scholarship is awarded based on outstanding academic performance.

Senior receives Tony Marino Scholarship

Mary Kawamura, a senior at Lindbergh High School, has been awarded the Tony Marino Scholarship. The \$2,000 scholarship is awarded by the Seattle Metropolitan Credit Union and is awarded based on academic,

professional and personal success.

Kennydale Elementary celebrates joy of reading

Kennydale Elementary School students and families recently celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday and Read Across America with a week of family reading. The highlight of the week came when 25 teachers and staff formed eight teams and visited families reading in their homes. The groups visited more than 60 students and their families at their homes to "catch" them reading and presented the families with prizes including books, stuffed animals, and treats.

Renton Park Elementary collaborates with Lindbergh High

Nearly 80 Renton Park Elementary School students recently participated in the school science fair. Seventeen Lindbergh High School students came to judge the projects and experiments. Discussions between the elementary and high school students included manipulating and controlling variables and other scientific practices.

Renton High celebrates multicultural week

Renton High School recently celebrated another successful and culturally rich multicultural week. Performances and assemblies

included everything from Irish ballads to the Lion Dance. Students were also visited by Elaine Miles, a Renton High grad and actress best known for her work on the TV show Northern Exposure, who shared stories of her experiences as a Renton High student in the 70's and as a Native American woman and a professional actress.

Renton student musicians excel at music contest

Several Renton School District high school musicians recently competed in the annual Soundview Region Solo and Ensemble Contest. This contest has vocal and instrumental soloists and ensembles competing from 10 area high schools in Renton, Highline and Tukwila. Eleven of Renton's groups or individuals received superior ratings and were selected to go to state.

Two students Receive WSU Regents Scholarships

Hazen High School seniors Madison Herman and Lauren Young have been selected to receive scholarships as part of the Washington State University Regents Scholarship Program. Madison has been awarded a Silver Regents Scholarship and Lauren has been awarded a Crimson Regents Scholarship. The scholarships herald Madison and Lauren as among the most accomplished and promising young scholars in the state.

healthy advice

by dr. bob thompson

End of Life Planning

*H*arry and I had gone down this path before, several years ago in the care of his sister-in-law, then his daughter, and two years ago his devoted wife. We were having the difficult but significant conversation about end of life wishes, but this time Harry was dying.

I've had the privilege of caring for four generations of his family which included delivering his great-grand children and being present at the death of his beloved daughter.

Harry was always a straight shooter, and fortunately for his family was diligent enough to complete both a Living Will and Health Care Power of Attorney prior to suffering the physical and mental decline of his Alzheimer's disease.

In last month's Journal of

American Geriatrics Society, a new study found that families of patients who completed advance directives before their deaths tend to feel

their loved ones received better end-of-life care. The families also felt better about their communication with their loved one's doctor and better informed as to what to expect during the dying process. Patients with advance directives were also more likely than those without to die with hospice care in a setting outside the hospital or intensive care unit.

Having witnessed the death of family members and friends, many



Dr. Bob Thompson

within the hospital setting, Harry expressed a strong desire to die in his bed at home. He did not want to be kept alive with tubes, ventilators or pumps. Earlier this month Harry got his wish as he died peacefully in his own bed in the presence of loved ones.

Someone once said: "When I die, I want to go peacefully like my Grandfather did — in his sleep. Not yelling and screaming like the passengers in his car."

While many of us hope that we die quickly, the fact is that most of us will die after a slow and lengthy decline. Planning for your death is an important step to ensure that you will be able to live your life to the fullest up until the end. It will also bring peace of mind to your loved ones.

The first step is to formulate your goals and treatment wishes. You need to ask yourself questions like: Where

do I want to die? What kind of medical treatment do I want? What don't you want? Who do you want to take care of you? What do you think is a good death? What kind of services do you want? Use advance directives to write your wishes down, and then discuss them with you family and healthcare provider. Those who want to forgo life-sustaining measures should ask their doctors specifically how they will make sure that their wishes are honored and that they receive good end-of-life care.

To learn more about advanced directives and end-of-life options, you can talk to your healthcare provider, contact Grace Dalrymple, Director of Valley Medical Center's Golden Care Program (425.656.5318) or seek information from the AARP or The National Hospice Foundation.

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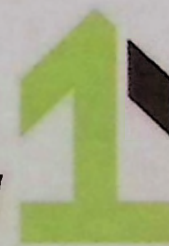
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RENTON MAGAZINE / David Nelson

Char Baker led a capital campaign effort to raise \$1.5 million toward construction of the Renton IKEA Performing Arts Center.



CHALK ART PHOTOS COURTESY OF Allied Arts

The Chalk Art Festival is now an annual event.

Allied Arts boasts a solid record of performance

BY ANDREW FICKES

Art should be accessible to everybody, regardless of financial status. This simple statement was the foundation of the Allied Arts of Renton when it was incorporated in 1964.

Now, more than 40 years later, this group of 160 members, including 11 volunteer board members, contributes time and human resources to the growing number of arts organizations in Renton.

"We volunteer our time and financial resources to those we support," says Barbara Nilson, president.

That has included the Renton IKEA Performing Arts Center, the Renton Annual Art Show, Valley Community Players, Renton Civic Theatre, Communities in Schools of Renton, grants for Renton Youth Symphony, PTA Reflections and the Renton Arts Plan Together essay contest.

In the late 1990s, the group led a campaign to raise \$1.5 million for construction of a new performing arts center at the Renton High School. Led by Char Baker,

the committee adopted the theme, "Be a Star in a Cast of Thousands," and raised the funds to build a state-of-the-art facility. The Renton School District had already come forward with \$3.5 million and IKEA put in \$500,000 for naming rights.

"Renton IKEA Performing Arts Center is a marvelous addition to downtown Renton," says Char Baker, the group's membership and budget chairwoman and former president. "It's being well attended. The community is very proud of it. It's one of Renton's gems."

This past year the group became a spotlight sponsor for the Renton IKEA Performing Arts Center. Two annual events are the Chalk Art Festival during Renton River Days and, in the fall, a sponsored performance by the Seattle Philharmonic Orchestra.

The group started the Chalk Art Festival 10 years ago. It gives amateurs, professionals and kids of all ages a chance to express themselves on concrete and earn prizes. For many years it was held at the piazza. Last year, it was moved to the tennis courts in Liberty Park to give artists more exposure.

Prizes ranging from \$25 to \$100 are awarded in three categories: professional artists, young adults and adults. Allied Arts provides children 12 and under all the art tools needed to express themselves.

"It's fun to see the children express themselves at the chalk art festival," says Nilson.

Baker said last year's event attracted more than 10 amateurs, five or six professionals, and lots and lots of kids.

"The drawings are just incredible," said Baker, "and we take pictures of them before they disappear."

The group, joined by the Renton Arts Commission, has been bringing the Seattle Philharmonic to Renton for 29 years. Allied Arts' goal is to keep ticket prices affordable so the whole family can attend.

"For many kids, it's the first live performance they've seen," says Baker. "We were very excited last year because we had a sold-out house. More than 500 people attended."

Allied Arts also has an open invitation to any high school music student who would like to audition to perform with the orchestra.

Allied Arts is always open to new members. Individual membership is \$5, student membership is \$1, organization or business membership is \$20 and family membership is \$10. The group meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Kohlwe's Administration Center in Renton. For more information, call Barbara Nilson at 425-228-5903.



Arts Unlimited brings people downtown

BY ANDREW FICKES

Arts Unlimited, Renton's newest arts group, is a small organization with an ambitious goal. "Our goal is to get people to downtown Renton through different festivals and art exhibits," says co-founder Ryan Runge. "Renton has a lot of momentum. This is a perfect time to get the art community recognized as the momentum in Renton grows."

The group, an unofficial non-profit not yet incorporated, is composed of approximately 15 members. It was formed a little over a year ago by Jennifer Davis Hayes of the city, Runge of American Classic Homes, and local artist Britt Peterson.

Its most ambitious event to date was the inaugural Art and Antique Walk held downtown last August. Some 30 downtown businesses sponsored the event and showcased work by more than 75 local artists. Those taking the walk were given a map describing the various locations and descriptions of all the art.

Businesses exhibiting art reported upwards of 200 to 300 people coming through the doors. Runge says the event not only showcased artwork, but helped area businesses increase their visibility.

"This coming August we plan to focus the event in a smaller area so people can walk to all the exhibits," says Runge. "We'll also be extending the hours."

The second annual Art and Antique Walk will be held from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Aug. 25.

The group's next major art exhibit showcase will be held Saturday, May 19, from 11 to 3 p.m. at Merrill Gardens.

"We're working with Merrill Gardens to get artists for the show as well as live-in artists at Merrill Gardens," says Runge. "So far, we have 20 to 25 artists signed up for the event."

Runge says the group will have an art exhibit at the Return to Renton Car Show. It also plans to work in an exhibit at the Piazza group's Spring Festival and one at the Renton Farmers' Market.

Runge says the group would also like to venture into other media, including music and film festivals.

On its website, www.artsunlimited.org, the group provides an application form for artists interested in displaying in downtown Renton. Artists are given various options for exhibiting their work.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ARTS UNLIMITED

Ryan Runge says last year's Inaugural Art and Antique Walk was a huge success. Approximately 30 businesses sponsored the event, showcasing art by more than 75 artists.

ARTS UNLIMITED
UPCOMING EVENTS
SPRING FESTIVAL ART SHOW
(IN CORRELATION WITH
PIAZZA SPRING FESTIVAL)
SATURDAY, APRIL 21
FROM 12 TO 5 P.M.
MERRILL GARDENS ART SHOW
SATURDAY, MAY 19
FROM 11 TO 3 P.M.
MERRILL GARDENS
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"Our goal is to support Renton," says Runge. "We want to support other arts groups. We don't want to be competitive."

Runge, who earned his degree in interior design at the University of Washington, found a career path in real estate. He says his involvement with Arts Unlimited is his way of staying connected with the arts community.

Further down the road, Runge envisions Renton having many art galleries downtown.

"We'd like to help Renton be a self-sustaining cultural hub," he says.

Runge says the group welcomes new members. It meets Wednesday nights at 5 p.m. at various locations in the downtown. There are no membership dues. For more information, contact Runge at 206-407-8719.

Clothes Bank provides sense of dignity to those in need

BY ANDREW FICKES

Q In any given Monday through Thursday from 2 to 5 p.m., business is brisk at the Renton Clothes Bank.

"Clothes come in fast and go out fast," says Renton Clothes Bank president Del Mead. "What makes us unique is that all the items are free."

Every square inch of the 750-square-foot retail spot at 1025 South 3rd St. is filled with high quality apparel and shoes. The bank's mission is to give a sense of dignity, purpose and pride to those in need in the Renton community.

During a short visit to the clothes bank on a Wednesday afternoon, more than a dozen people walked through the doors and left with bundles of clothes. In 2006, the bank provided free shoes and clothing to 4,570 residents of the Renton School District. More than half were children. The bank puts on about a half a dozen clothes drives each year.

The bank's "Children's Needs

Fund" provides new shoes, socks, underwear and whatever else children need that is unavailable at the clothes bank otherwise. School liaisons take the children shopping, and the clothes bank pays the bill.

"Last year we bought more than a 100 pairs of shoes for students in the Renton School District," says Mead.

The Renton Clothes Bank began in 1967 as the Clothes Closet. It was started by a group of service club volunteers, business owners and interested citizens. Mead was a founding member. A set-back in the economy increased the necessity for the organization, and it expanded with an 11-member board of directors led by school administrator Keith Renfrew.

The clothes bank moved into its existing location, the Renton Area Youth Services building, in 1984 with help from a grant donated by the City of Renton. In 2000, the board decided to incorporate as a non-profit organization, a move that has helped garner more visibility.

"Over the last five years, people have become more aware of the pro-



RENTON MAGAZINE / Andrew Fickes

Carol Sargent and Del Mead (right) say they keep very busy at the Renton Clothes Bank. Last year, the organization provided free shoes and clothing to 4,570 residents.

It's heartwarming to see the gratitude and the happiness that comes from the people getting clothes. ~ Del Mead, president, Renton Clothes Bank

gram," says Mead. "The community is very supportive."

The organization's budget for this year is about \$18,000. The bank receives a yearly grant of \$11,000 from the City of Renton. Other service club organizations, churches, the Renton School District, the PTSA, and individuals donate clothing and financial assistance.

Those who want clothing from the bank must be referred by either an individual or organization. People may be referred by local schools or churches, the Salvation Army, UGN Center, RAYS, the

Public Health Office, YWCA, or DSHS. Those referred must have an income under \$30,000.

"I have a passion for it because it gives me self-fulfillment seeing the wonderment that comes in the eyes of individuals," Mead says. "It's heartwarming to see the gratitude and the happiness that comes from the people getting clothes."

More information is available online at www.rentonclothesbank.org. Donations to the bank can be dropped off from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

OBITUARY

VIRGINIA FRENCH CLAWSON

Jan. 16, 1920 - Feb. 19, 2007

Virginia Rosario French was born Jan. 16, 1920, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. She moved to Texas at age 4 with her mother and three siblings. She served in the U.S. Navy during World War II as a clerk in New York City. In 1948 she married George N. Clawson, a CPA. By 1953 they had three boys including Dan Clawson, who is now a Renton attorney and City Council member. Virginia ran the family business, a restaurant near Weatherford, Texas, until the Clawsons moved to Los Angeles in

1964. She and George attended UCLA, where she earned her B.A. and teaching certificate while George earned his Ph.D.

Virginia was remarkable for her warmth and graciousness, and her passion for teaching. She spent her entire career teaching English at a junior high school challenged by poverty and gangs. She was known for occasionally confiscating weapons from students and for starting a successful remedial reading pro-



Clawson
1920 - 2007

gram that became a model for other schools in the district.

She spent her last years in the Renton area. She greatly enjoyed her family, especially reading to her great-grandchildren.

Virginia is survived by sons Dan (Laura) Clawson and Terry (Leticia) Clawson; grandchildren Katy (Abdi) Vafaezadeh, Keith (Anna) Clawson, Christine (Franklin) Leggio, Melissa Clawson and Alex Donald; and great-grandchildren Laila, Shian and Kian Vafaezadeh and Zoya Clawson.

Donations in her memory are suggested to Communities in Schools of Renton, 1055 South Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057.



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—Cliff McCrath,
soccer coach and
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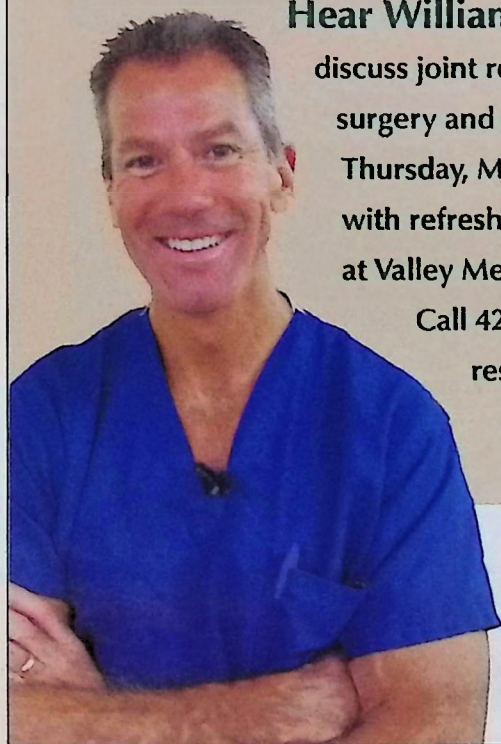
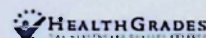
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