

RENTON *Magazine*

Volume 5 / No 3 March 2010



**Renton resident
Meeghan Black**
page 10

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Who: Washington Women's Employment & Education

What: King County Futures Within Reach Benefit Breakfast

KIRO 7 news anchor, Angela Russell will join us as emcee for this inspiring event

When: Tuesday
March 23rd from
7:30-8:30am

Where: Doubletree Suites
16500 Southcenter Parkway
Seattle, WA 98118-3388

How: If you would like to attend this fundraising event please RSVP by calling 253-590-0642 or learn more at www.wwee.org

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Reach*



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Despite the unseasonably warm winter, this year's Winter Olympics provided great stories of human achievement. Yes, there was the tragic death of the Georgian luger, and I hope it causes us to rethink the vicious cycle of ever-faster, ever more challenging courses for sport.

No event is perfect, certainly not anything as big as the Olympics.

But the stunner for me was reading an entire news article about every little flaw. Wow. We've come to that?

I've spent my career as a professional journalist, and heaven knows I can point out the flaws in something as well as the next person. Well, probably better than most. It's been my job. And often as a result, improvement follows.

Still, a significant part of the richness in my

life has come from observing and celebrating the "nice moments" that I see and hear about every day: innovative programs in the schools, people who have banded together to make a difference in their community, people who help children or adults succeed in a variety of situations. People who volunteer to clean up graffiti, trash or weeds.

So many people who say without hesitation, "Sure, I can help with that." And then they actually do.

Most of us have sat through a children's per-



Diana Kramer
PUBLISHER

formance, and some of us have realized we have a choice. We can wince at every mispronounced word, missed step or off-key note, or delight in the thrill of a child's early attempt to be brave and perform despite fears.

If the children are trying, there is something to celebrate.

There is much to celebrate about what is going on in our community. Yes, we can focus on all that's gone wrong, could go wrong, or could be better. Yes, we could. But *Renton Magazine* isn't going to. Because much of what we see around us is going pretty well. Thanks to all of you, and the many ways you reach out to the broader community, and the contributions you make.

RENTON Magazine

VOL. 5 | ISSUE 3

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Renton Magazine is mailed each month to homes in Renton, East Plateau and Fairwood. Total circulation is 18,000. Publisher retains the right to reject any advertising. Copyright 2010 Puget Sound Publishing Co. All rights reserved. Use or reproduction, in part or full, without written permission is prohibited. Back issues and single copies are \$3.00. Subscriptions are available for \$25 per year.

Puget Sound Publishing Co.
15 South Grady Way, Suite 514
Renton, WA 98057

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cover: Renton resident Meeghan Black often shares her garden with the television viewing public on "Gardening with Ciscoe." She became the new host of "Evening Magazine" in December, and said she enjoys the variety of her new job. She doesn't miss doing hard news. Photo by James Bavendam.

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

Police Dept
(non emergency)
425.430.7500

Puget Sound Energy
1.888.225.5773

Renton Community Foundation
425.264.0516

Renton Magazine
425.271.9300

Renton Museum
425.255.2330

Senior Activity Center
425.430.6633

Valley Medical Center
425.228.3450

upcoming events

MARCH 10

2010 STATE OF THE CITY LUNCHEON

Renton Mayor Denis Law will be the keynote speaker at this annual Chamber of Commerce-sponsored luncheon, attended by business and community leaders. The public is welcome.



Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Holiday Inn
One South Grady Way

425-226-4560

Admission:
\$35

Seattle Festival
ORCHESTRA

Spring Concert

Seattle Festival Orchestra, formerly known as Musicians Emeritus Symphony Orchestra, will perform its spring concert featuring a Vivaldi concerto for four violins, Haydn's Piano Concerto No. 11, and both of Enesco's Rumanian Rhapsodies. The performance will feature soloists ranging in age from 7 to 11 years, including 18-year-old pianist Michael Messer, a senior at Kentridge High School. This event is co-sponsored by Allied Arts of Renton.

Sunday, 3 p.m.

First Evangelical
Presbyterian Church
19800 108th Ave. S.E.

206-949-1485 (Billy)

Admission: Suggested
donation is \$10
per person

www.seattlefestival-orchestra.org



March 21



march 16

The Parrot Lady

Join Debbie Goodrich, better known as the parrot lady, as she shows and talks about her live tropical birds, also known as the "ambassadors of the rainforest."

Tuesday, 6 p.m.

Renton Downtown
Library
100 Mill Ave. S.

425-430-6610

Admission: Free



march 18

Renton City Concert Band

Directed by Michael Simpson, the 50-plus piece band will delight audiences with popular favorites.

Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Carco Theatre
1717 SE Maple Valley
Highway

425-430-6700

Admission: \$10/adults;
\$7/students and seniors

Flashlight Egg Hunts



march 26

Flashlight Egg Hunts

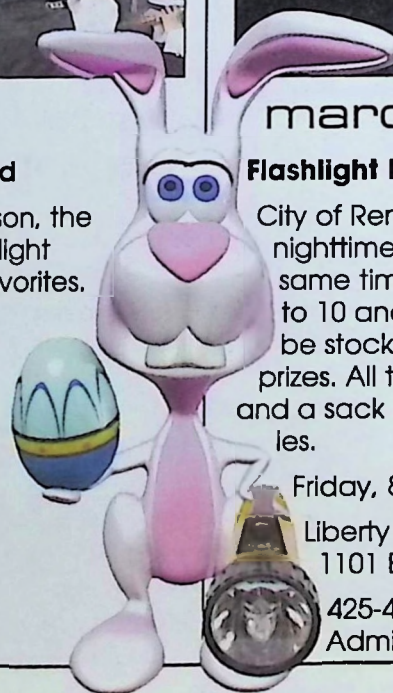
City of Renton hosts two separate nighttime egg hunts occurring at the same time at Liberty Park for ages 7 to 10 and ages 11 to 15. The park will be stocked with loads of candy and prizes. All that's needed is a flashlight and a sack to carry home all your goodies.

Friday, 8 p.m.

Liberty Park
1101 Bronson Way North

425-430-6700

Admission: Free



save the date

APRIL 3

WOMEN'S MONTH

Centennial Celebration

MARCH 23

In celebrating 100 years of women's suffrage in Washington state, Barbara Callander and Toni Douglas present "May's Vote," the story of how it all happened. They bring to life the partnership between Emma Smith DeVoe and May Arkwright Hutton—two courageous women who sealed women's right to vote in Washington in 1910. This Renton History event is appropriate for teenage audiences and up.



Tuesday, 5 p.m. 425-255-2330
Renton History Museum
235 Mill Ave. S. Admission: Free for RHM members

SUNSET EASTER EGG HUNT

The Sunset Neighborhood Association presents an Easter egg hunt, open to children up to 12 years. Golden eggs and prize baskets will be awarded for each age group.



Saturday, 10 a.m. 800 Edmonds Ave NE
Highlands Neighborhood Center (lower field) 425-430-6595 (Norma)
Admission: Free

march 27 & 28

THE Sleeping BEAUTY

Will the beautiful Aurora awaken from deep sleep? Only the kiss of her true love will save her. Love triumphs over darkness in Evergreen City Ballet's lavish production of this classic ballet.

Saturday, 1:30 and 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 1:30 p.m.

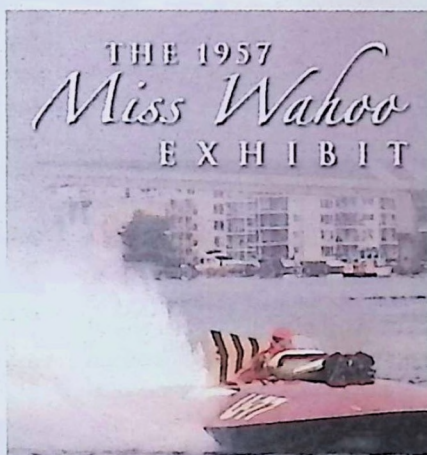
Evergreen City Ballet
2230 Lind Ave. S.W.
425-228-6800

Admission: \$43.50/adults; \$30.75/seniors; \$19.75/children

www.evergreencityballet.org



THE 1957 Miss Wahoo EXHIBIT



The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum presents an exhibit featuring the 1957 replica of Bill Boeing Jr.'s Miss Wahoo. The museum will feature historic photos, artifacts from the original boat, and interpretive displays.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.;

Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Closed Sundays and Mondays

Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum
5917 S. 196th St. (Kent)
206-764-9453

Admission: \$10/adults; \$5/seniors and children under 16; free for members and children under 6.

www.thunderboats.org

T H R O U G H A P R I L 3 0

now playing

THROUGH MARCH 6

FOOTLIGHT Frenzy

Renton Civic Theater presents this zany play about an inexperienced PTA that, in a desperate attempt to save its bankrupt "School for Unusual Children," valiantly mounts an ambitious benefit play, written by a has-been Broadway director. A lack of direction coupled with the PTA's questionable talent turns the production into shambles.

Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.;
Fridays and Saturdays,
8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m.

Renton Civic Theater
507 S. Third St.
425-226-5529

Admission: \$22/adults;
\$17/students
and seniors

Life After Elvis

What if Elvis is alive and living in middle America? This play answers the question in farcical fashion, suggesting that the rock legend has been placed by the witness protection program in the home of an average couple. When their son returns unexpectedly from college and finds a stranger in his room, chaos and hilarity reign.

Sundays and Mondays,
7:30 p.m.

Admission: \$15 per person
(includes dessert)

Renton Civic Theater
507 S. Third St.

425-226-5529
www.rentoncivictheater.org

march 1, 7 & 8

calendar of events

DANCE PROGRAM

Step Up Saturday Workshops

Saturday, March 13 – Fox trot 10-11 a.m.; Salsa 11 a.m.-noon; Hustle noon-1 p.m.

The Rockin' Horse Dance Barn presents this monthly series of dance workshops with instructor Jeannette Baker. The class covers intermediate steps in fox trot, salsa, and hustle.

Rockin' Horse Dance Barn
11820 150th Ave. S.E.

425-255-9211

Fee: \$15

EMERGENCY COURSES

General Disaster Preparedness

Wednesday, March 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Washington state is prone to some of the worst natural disasters in the United States, says the American Red Cross. Find out in this interactive lecture from your local Red Cross how to make a plan, build a disaster supply kit, and how to be your own best resource.

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

425-430-6700

Fee: Free

Amateur Radio Licensing

Saturday and Sunday, March 6 and 7, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

If you've ever desired to be a "ham," or a licensed amateur radio operator, the City of Renton is offering this free course covering Element 2 of the FCC Amateur Radio Service materials. After successfully passing the Technician Class Licensing exam, participants will receive their amateur radio license by mail from the FCC.

Fire Station No. 12
1209 Kirkland Ave. N.E.

425-430-6700

Fee: \$50 payable to instructor for manual and license exam

Interacting With Emergency Responders

Monday, March 29, 6-8 p.m.

In the middle of an emergency or unexpected event, it is important to know what to say or do to interact effectively with emergency responders. Through lecture and discussion, this class will cover a wide spectrum of possible scenarios. This course is for ages 12 and up.

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

425-430-6700

Fee: Free

FREE ENTERTAINMENT

Teen Nights

Saturday, March 6, 7-10 p.m.

City of Renton Parks and Recreation provides a safe place for youth ages 11 to 17 to hang out at the Highlands Neighborhood Center. The evening includes games, sports, and movies. Snacks provided.

Highlands Neighborhood Center
800 Edmonds Ave. N.E.

425-430-6700

Admission: Free

Renton History Museum Tours

Third Saturday, 11 a.m.

Tours are appropriate for elementary students through adult. No reservation is necessary unless there are more than five people in your group. In that case, call the museum one day in advance.

Renton History Museum
235 Mill Ave. S.

425-255-2330

Admission: Free

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Free Courses at REI

Wednesday, March 10, 7 p.m.

Bike Maintenance 101: Get your bike ready to ride after the long winter. Learn the basics of bike maintenance, and bring a tire for hands-on experience changing a flat.

Wednesday, March 31, 7 p.m.

Hiking the Pacific Crest Trail: The presenter will share his experiences hiking the length of Washington's Pacific Crest Trail. Participants will learn how to coordinate their own trip: gear, logistics, safety and more will be covered.

REI (Southcenter)
240 Andover Park West

206-248-1938

www.rei.com/tukwila

Fee: Free



FITNESS COURSE

Balls and Bands

Friday, March 26, 1-2 p.m.

Participants will learn simple exercises that they can do at home using a body ball and exercise bands. Instruction will include selecting the correct ball size and proper exercise form. Class participation may require a medical clearance prior to using the facility, depending on medical history.

Valley Fitness Center
400 S. 43rd St. (Talbot Professional Center)

To register, call 425-656-4006

Fee: \$5

LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Teen Tuesdays

Tuesday, March 30, 3-4:30 p.m.

Final Tuesdays of the month are teen days at the Highlands Library. Teens are invited to drop in for games, snacks, free stuff, contests, and more. Check the teen blog for details at <http://rentonteens.blogspot.com>.

Highlands Library
2902 N.E. 12th St.

425-430-6790

Fee: Free

Family Game Days

Saturday, March 6, 2-3:30 p.m.

Families have their choice of Playstation 2 or board games. Research shows that gaming can be a powerful tool for literacy and learning.

Renton Downtown Library
100 Mill Ave. S.

425-430-6610

Fee: Free

Genealogy Class: The Search Begins

Tuesday, March 30, 7-8:30 p.m.

Have you ever wondered about your ancestors or how to find your family roots? Presented as a community service of the Education Committee of the South King County Genealogical Society, this course (and one fol-

lowing in April) helps participants learn how to research their family history.

Renton Downtown Library
100 Mill Ave. N.

425-430-6610

Fee: Free

SENIOR EVENTS

Renton Senior Activity Center

211 Burnett Ave. N.

425-430-6633

National Banana Cream Pie Luncheon

Wednesday, March 3, 11 a.m. with lunch at 11:30 a.m.

The Senior Center celebrates National Banana Cream Pie month, complete with a new game: Banana in a bucket. Contestants can test their long arm and see how many bananas they can toss into the bucket. The winner with the most bananas in a bucket wins a prize. Everyone will get a piece of Banana Cream Pie for dessert courtesy of The Lodge at Eagle Ridge.

Admission: \$3 (donation if 60 and over); \$6 (charge under 60)

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Wednesday, March 17, 11:30 a.m.

Everyone is welcome to the annual St. Patrick's Day luncheon. Wear something green and be entertained by the senior center's ballroom dancers. Treat your taste buds to shamrock cookies for dessert.

Admission: \$3 (donation if 60 and over); \$6 (charge under 60)

Hawaiian Luau and Dance

Wednesday, March 31, 5-7:30 p.m.

The Senior Center invites everyone to welcome spring by digging out those Hawaiian shirts and dresses, and joining in for food, dancing, and entertainment by Hawaiian dancers. Roasted pig will be the main dinner entree with all the sides to go with it. Everyone will get a lei at the door. Tickets are available and must be purchased no later than March 26. This event is co-sponsored by Shawn and Ted's Meat Market and Newcastle Retirement Home.

Admission: \$5

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 info@pugetsoundpublishing.com or call us at 425-271-9300.

kirby unti

The often forgotten

I cannot think of a greater joy in life than to be able to hold a baby in my arms. Fortunately my work affords me this opportunity often as parents bring their children forward to be baptized.

Babies cast a spell over me. I am mesmerized by their crumpled up little smiles and the way they squirm about until they find that sweet spot of comfort. I look into their eyes and I wonder what in the world are they experiencing?

I find myself immediately rocking back and forth as if the rocking were my language to communicate to the little one that everything is going to be OK. It must work, because rarely do they ever cry. The one exception was my own daughter who screamed bloody murder during her baptism.

This love that I have for these little ones has created in me a deeper compassion for those families who lose a child.

One of the most pain-filled experiences in life is to conceive a child and look forward with great anticipation to this new life only to have the experience end in death. This is a loss known by so many people in our community. It is also an experience that we often don't acknowledge or know how to talk about.

I learned more about the depth of this loss when we recently offered a support group to parents who had a child die before experiencing the fullness of life. It became clear right away that each of them

uniquely experienced their loss. It became important not to try to compare experiences but rather to individually embrace one another.

Often adding to the loss was the response of family and friends who fell short in realizing how significant and pain-filled the loss is. It is not uncommon that someone close will say, "Oh, you are still young and can have another child soon." For the grieving parent, it is not about having another child. It is about mourning the loss of the one they never got to spend a lifetime with.

It is so true that even before conception, as parents we begin to dream about our children. How many will we have? What will it be like to be a family? What kinds of things will we do together? Will we be able to save enough for college? The dream is filled with imagination and detail. When the dream is broken, the loss can be overwhelming.

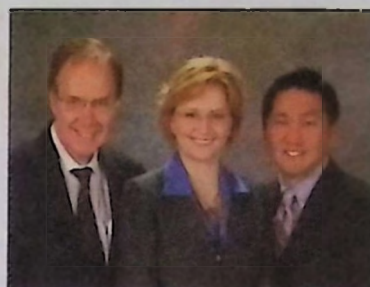
In March we are going to host a Celebration of Life as one way for our community to acknowledge this loss that so many families experience, and to honor their children.

I know one thing is for certain when I stare into the face of a little one. I am reminded how at one and the same time, life is so awesome and so fragile.

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



Kirby Unti
COLUMNIST



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DR. ANNA A. DANIELI & DR. WILL CHUNG

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

It's magic on the dance floor

BY ANDREW FICKES / PHOTOS BY JAMES BAVENDAM



Rockin' Horse Dance Barn

11820 150th Ave. S.E.

Renton, WA 98059

425-255-9211

More information on
dance instruction and
evening dance times can be
found at
www.learn2dance4fun.com.

Jamie Andonian and AJ Temple
dance on the barn's 4,000-square-foot floor.

Cindy French is stumped when asked to name her favorite dance style.

"I love hustle, country two-step, and the waltz, but it's hard to pick a favorite," she says. "I'm a total dance addict. I'd be dancing every night if I could."

French owes her love for dance—as do many others—to a place she calls the "best dance floor around," the Rockin' Horse Dance Barn.

Located on the border of Renton and Issaquah, "the barn" is home to a 4,000-square-foot hardwood dance floor—one of the largest in Western Washington.

Dances every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday night attract upwards of 100 people from all over the greater Puget Sound. Owner Dave Serfling, along with several instructors, teaches a range of dance styles.

Serfling bought the building in 1998 from previous owners, Arnie and Doris Hagen. The Hagens built the barn in 1958 as a community center for square dancing. Up to 1998, it was known as Hagen's Barn or just "the barn."

With square dancing no longer in fashion, Serfling introduced popular styles like

ballroom, swing, salsa, country two-step, cha-cha, hustle and line dance.

"Our main thing is adult social dancing, but we do offer classes to teens," he says.

Many couples have met at the barn and some have even married there, including Serfling and his wife, Jimmi.

Jimmi first came to the barn five years ago and attended the pre-dance lessons before the Friday night dances. Serfling was her instructor.

"Dave is such a good instructor and great with students," she says. Now Jimmi says she enjoys watching other beginners.

"We get to watch them blossom," she says. "All of a sudden a light comes on."

For French, learning to dance was the beginning of a new chapter. She came to the barn to rebuild her life after the conclusion of a 25-year marriage.

"I had zero confidence when I started and didn't know a single dance step or a single soul," she says. "Coming here has made such a drastic change in my life. It's given me more confidence."

Cindy met her boyfriend, Bert, at the barn. Dancing brought them together, and every Friday and Saturday night, Cindy and Bert call the barn their home base.

Serfling says there's nothing wrong with coming to the dances alone. He encourages people to rotate partners during classes and the evening dances.

"'No partner required for dancing' has made a lot of difference for a lot of people," says Serfling.

Learning to dance can be transformative, he adds.

"It's like the Wizard of Oz," says Serfling. "Their world is black and white before they come here, and then when they come here, everything is in color."

French says she enjoys the atmosphere and the fact that it's alcohol and smoke-free.

"No matter the day, it's magic," she says. "Everything goes away at the dance floor."

With school dollars declining, a foundation of 'friends' responds

BY ANDREW FICKES

*R*im Menon, a kindergarten teacher at Lakeridge Elementary, sees the difference a federal grant-funded program like Reading First has on her class.

At the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, 60 percent of her class were reading below grade level. Astonishingly, by January of this year 75 to 80 percent of her class were at end-of-year benchmarks.

"Reading First provides a framework of what a good instruction looks like," she says. "It has given me ideas on how to implement things in more of a positive way."

Federal grant dollars pay for additional educational assistants, as well as school supplies that support teaching students to read.

Unfortunately, programs like Reading First that are supported by a mix of state and federal grants will lose funding beginning next fall. In addition, the impact on Renton from state budget cuts exceeds \$4 million.

Renton School District is also in an uphill battle when it comes to levy rates that set the district on an unequal playing field

with districts like Seattle and Bellevue. Renton's district, for example, in 2007 and 2008 received only \$8,919 in funding per student, compared to the state average of \$9,286.

In answer to this situation, community leaders have formed Friends of Renton Schools—a 501(c)(3) non-profit under the umbrella of the Renton Community Foundation—to provide supplemental funding to support the district and enhance student learning and achievement in every school.

"To have the community come together and say, 'These kids matter,' makes me feel not so isolated," Menon says. "It's huge to me. The fact that there's people who say these kids matter, too, empowers me to keep working on."

On April 26, Friends of Renton Schools will present its first annual "Launching Lifetime Learning" Benefit Breakfast at the Spirit of Washington Event Center.

Hosted by Meeghan Black of KING 5's "Evening Magazine" and with a keynote address by Bill Gates Sr., the breakfast will serve as a vehicle to bring the pressing need for supplemental funding to the forefront.

"The old adage, 'It takes a village,' is accurate," says Superintendent Mary Alice Heuschel. "Partnerships are essential, and a quality education system will grow pride, spirit, sustainability, bring economic stability and provide a future for our children and for the communities this district serves."

Friends of Renton Schools plans to raise \$1.5 million by the end of the 2010-2011 school year. The foundation hopes to raise approximately \$1.2 million of the total by next fall to continue state and federal-grant funded programs, including secondary transition programs, Algebra 1 support, and Reading First.

A phone-a-thon in the fall will campaign for some \$350,000 to support teachers and classrooms with teaching supplies and promote student engagement in the arts and sports.

In spring 2011, the foundation will partner with the Seahawks organization for a major fundraiser at the Seahawks training center. The Mariners baseball franchise has also shown interest.

Bob Bridge, owner and operator of Bob Bridge Toyota, is a committee member of the foundation and is attracting business sponsorships and contributions.

"Renton has a rich and wonderful commercial base," says Bridge. "There's a groundswell of support waiting to happen."

Foundation chairwoman Sherre Piantanida says the value for Renton residents to contribute, even those who may not have kids in the district, is great.

"These students are our future voters," she says. "Education so permeates society that we can't let it go unfunded. The consequences are quite dire."

Monday, April 26, 7-9 a.m.

Admission: Free

1st annual "Launching Lifetime Learning" Benefit Breakfast

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STORY BY ANDREW

PHOTOS BY JAMES BAY

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KING 5, Monday through Fri

"Gardening with Ciscoe"

Saturdays at 10 a.m. on KING 5

1:30 p.m. on KONG 6



Black's new job...
THE 'CRE



On a mild, winter afternoon, Meeghan Black is getting dirty alongside Ciscoe Morris as they film a segment of "Gardening with Ciscoe" on location at her Renton Highlands home.

The charismatic pair are educating viewers on how best to prune back a Spirea Magic Carpet.

Ciscoe "is the expert and I never pretend to be," Black says. The show, entering its ninth year, works because "we all get along," she says. "Ciscoe is just a character."

"We just love giving each other a hard time," says Ciscoe.

Gardening aside, what Black calls "the cream of the crop" is her new gig as host of "Evening Magazine," which she began last December.

This, she says, is the pinnacle of her career. She joined KING 5 ten years ago, moving from KIRO TV, where she was a news reporter. Before that she anchored and reported at stations in Spokane and Wichita, Kan. She paid her dues also as weekend weather anchor and on the weekday morning traffic desk.

Her biggest news story? Being on location in 1999 during the World Trade Organization riots in downtown Seattle.

"It was as close to chaos as I ever wanted to get," she says. "It was almost like a war zone, but without the bullets flying. It was so surreal, because it was not Seattle."

These days Black says she's fine with not doing hard news reporting. In her early days, she desperately wanted that big lead story. But then, she says, you get tired of it. And it was difficult separating work from home life.

At "Evening Magazine," Black relishes the prospect of telling stories about interesting people and fun things to see and do in

the Pacific Northwest.

"I used to watch 'Evening Magazine' when I was in high school, and I never thought I'd be that person [the host] someday," she says.

Black grew up on Mercer Island and is a graduate of Mercer Island High School. She graduated from the University of Washington with a double major in communications and political science.

She got her first taste of broadcast journalism at 16 when she was one of three winners of an "editorial comment" contest in her high school debate team. KIRO TV selected the three winners to air on the evening news as guest editorialists. Her 90-second segment was on the Moral Majority.

"I thought to myself, 'People get paid to do this,'" she says. "I thought it was the greatest thing in the world."

In retrospect, she admits she didn't realize all the hard work broadcast journalism requires. She says she gets a kick out of "Evening Magazine" because it allows her to see new places, meet new people, interject her personality and stretch herself.

She's lived in Renton with her husband and daughter since 2004. In addition to running in her off time, she and her daughter enjoy visiting the parks and slurping on slushies.

Renton has been a frequent locale for "Evening Magazine." Black says she plans to film a segment at the new Seahawks training center along Lake Washington and she's fond of returning to Coulon Park – her favorite and a popular location for the show.

This place in her career, she says, is the "stuff you dream about."

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pilates

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The perfect exercise connects mind and body

BY KIM COLLETTE

Want to lose five pounds fast? Or at least look five pounds thinner?

It's not a new diet, but an exercise regimen called

Pilates.

Pilates changes the way you carry yourself. Proponents claim you can appear five pounds thinner just by learning to stand up straight.

"You'll realize when you're slouching," explains Mary Ann Alexander, who operates a private studio called Pilates to the Core from her home in the Fairwood area of Renton. The goal of Pilates is to create long, lean muscles by stretching and strengthening them. Even so, it is low impact.

"It's the perfect exercise," says Alexander, who recommends Pilates along with aerobic activities. "It's a great compliment to sports, running and yoga."

"You'll feel better when you walk out of my class," she promises.

Patrick McCabe was first introduced to Pilates after a car accident left him with a shattered heel and unable to walk. He couldn't walk for four months and used a walker.

"Finding Pilates gave me the ability, awareness, and strength to gain my mobility back," he says.

The Pilates exercise regimen was developed in the early 20th century by Joseph Pilates in Germany while he was rehabilitating World War I veterans. His regimen is now practiced worldwide.

The regimen focuses on learning to control your



breath, strengthen your torso, and deepen the connection between your mind and body. Pilates is designed to align your spine and teach you how to work your body all the time – whether you're sitting, standing or even driving.

McCabe and his wife Crystal own a Pilates studio called Core Life Studio in Federal Way. The studio focuses on class as well as studio work. A new class, called Pilates for Golfers, is aimed at helping golfers get a steadier, stronger swing. It begins March 5, just in time for summer.

The Evergreen City Ballet offers a Pilates/yoga class, open to the public, on Saturday mornings. Kelley Terwillegar, the instructor, has been teaching Pilates since 2005. Her style of teaching uses a lot of flowing movements. Pilates is notable for conditioning the body core by using arms and legs against the core for resistance.

Every move begins with the Pilates breath – a deep inhale through the nose and a long exhale out through the mouth. Correct breathing enhances abdominal work.

McCabe says he helped a Boston marathon runner shave 30 minutes off her race time because Pilates strengthened muscles in ways running alone could not achieve.

The light impact of Pilates allows people to begin the regimen at any stage of life. A beginner and advanced person can do the same Pilates workout, and both gain from it.

"You get what you put into it," says McCabe.

RENTON
COMMUNITY
Foundation

meets priorities, empowers philanthropy

BY DANA E. NEUTS

*I*n March 2007, 20-year-old Jeremy "JJ" Gidlund of Renton died tragically after his car veered off the road and crashed into a tree. He was a senior with special education needs at Lindberg High School in Renton. To honor her son's memory, Pam Gidlund set up a scholarship fund through the Renton Community Foundation to help fund higher learning opportunities for special education students. For the 2008-2009 school year, the fund provided three students with \$1,000 scholarships.

"It makes me feel really good that I am able to give something back to students who normally wouldn't have an opportunity to continue their education," Gidlund says. "It helps me get through the grieving process."

Gidlund chose RCF to manage and administer the scholarship funds because she serves on the committee of another scholarship fund – Lindbergh High School Memorial Scholarship Fund – administered by the foundation.

"Pam works on behalf of her son to do something meaningful that she

wouldn't be able to do otherwise," RCF executive director Lynn Bohart says.

RCF was created 10 years ago for just this purpose – to ensure that money is available and properly administered for a range of community needs and charitable causes, ranging from college scholarships, parks maintenance and senior pet care to education, arts programs, and services for the homeless.

At its inception, RCF had only two funds with \$257,000. Ten years later the foundation administers 45 charitable funds totaling nearly \$5 million.

"Renton Community Foundation helps meet the current priority needs of the community," Bohart explains.

Bohart says many funds are set up during the estate planning process, but anyone with a minimum of \$10,000 can set up a charitable fund with RCF in as little as a day. By doing so, donors get the benefit of pooling their resources for a better return on their investment while also being assured that the fund will be properly managed and administered as directed. Another benefit to using RCF to administer donor funds is that the community foundation can respond more quickly to the community's needs than if an individual or group were to set up their own non-profit or foundation first, which can take a year or more.

"We solve problems, bring people together and help others achieve their charitable dreams," Bohart says.

In addition to the charitable funds, RCF hosts a circle of giving each fall. This event allows donors with \$1,000 or more to participate in the grant selection process for the pool of funds collected during the circle of giving. In 2009, for example, RCF raised \$42,000 with \$11,000 going to the Renton School District.

"The giving circles help fill a community gap," Bohart says.

To learn more about RCF or to view a list of established funds and their beneficiaries, call 425-282-5199 or visit on-line at www.rentonfoundation.org.

The Next Curve

A new offshoot of the Renton Community Foundation started in January. The Next Curve (www.thenextcurve.org) is made up of emerging community leaders who want to ensure Renton's legacy of philanthropy. Members join The Next Curve by making a minimum annual contribution of \$250 and participating in regular events. The ultimate goal for the group is to nurture the next generation of future leaders while also increasing charitable donations within the Renton community.

"The Next Curve has a lot of potential," says Lynn Bohart, foundation executive director. "It's a very exciting way to get the next level of community leaders involved and to expand philanthropy locally."

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Something different from

BY CHRISTIE KATONA

ASIAN Cuisine

This month's column is going to be a bit different. With my long history in the culinary world, it's amazing to me how much our palates and general knowledge about food has grown in the past 25 years. I can remember when Bon Appetit magazine first appeared on the scene and carried recipes for Jello – now if that isn't a blast from the past. Most people then didn't know a tortilla from a croissant, nor were they available at most grocery stores. Now we have ethnic markets featuring items from all over the globe available to us on a daily basis. In future columns, I will be chatting about different areas of the globe and their unique cuisines.

It's such fun to wander through the aisles seeing what is new and unusual. I frequently ask the clerks or other shoppers what an item is or how it is eaten and there have been some fascinating answers.

This month, we'll discover a bit about some interesting Chinese ingredients that probably aren't in your typical chop suey! Which, I understand, is not Chinese at all.

Years ago I was given a marvelous, big fat cookbook published by the Hong Kong China and Gas company. It is truly a treasure and wonderful source of information about some of the items I come across.

China has a unique and wonderful cuisine wherein

nothing is wasted. Chinese chefs can turn almost anything into a meal, and frugality has been turned into an advantage. Duck webs, chicken feet, offal and strange sea creatures become delicacies.

My cookbook has recipes for goose feet with abalone, stir-fried duck's tongues, and stewed frog bladders. The Chinese also use food as preventative medicine, using various leaves, seeds, bark and tree roots, such as ginseng.

Here are some items that I have seen locally and wondered what to do with them.

Ling Gok or Cal Trop – A glossy black nut which looks amazingly like a bull's horns, a bat or a devil. Makes me wonder what brave soul first decided it would be good to eat? It is always boiled and shelled. The inner flesh is much like a water chestnut, used to add texture to oriental dishes.

Angled Luffa – An elongated gourd with ridged, dark green skin. Resembles a large okra and is also known as Chinese okra or silk squash. You can use bitter melon or zucchini as a substitute. This is where we get our skin scrubbers!

Beche de Mer – Also known as the sea Slug or sea cucumber. Wouldn't you know the French name sounds more glamorous? Sold dried and will keep indefinitely. (Which you probably should!) I'll give you the short version on how to prepare it here: Drain, boil, drain, boil, cover with cold water overnight. Drain, slit in halves and scrub clean (ick!). Cook over moderate heat, until softened, then drain and rinse. Should be soft with a gelatinous texture. Personally, I think I would just cook a package of ramen.

Fish Lips – Yes, that IS what they are. Simply soak them, drain them and cover

with boiling water and a dash of wine. Boil until completely softened. Drain and cut into pieces. Good with a sauce and crispy rice crackers – at least that is what it says in my big recipe book.

Braised Turtle – First prepare the turtle and then serve with thinly sliced ham, bamboo shoots, mushrooms, ginger and scallions. To prepare the turtle: Place the turtle on a chopping board, stomach upwards. Remove head and drain off the blood. Discard. Place the turtle in boiling water and boil until skin begins to flake. Remove from the water and scrape off the skin. (I wonder what you do with the shell? Probably went in the discard pile.) Slit open stomach and remove intestines. Chop off claws. Wash the turtle very well and return to clean boiling water and boil for another 5 minutes. Drain and scrub thoroughly to remove the remaining fishy odor. After this you boil it for another 3 hours

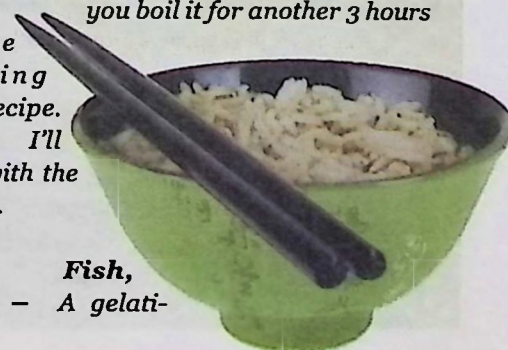
before starting the recipe. Think I'll stick with the ramen.

Jelly Fish, Dried – A gelati-



CHRISTIE KATONA

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



new oceanic fish with a multi-tentacled inverted saucer shaped body. Chewy in texture and bland in flavor. Used as a main ingredient. Sold, with tentacles removed, dried or cubed and shredded. Occasionally available presoaked.

Matrimony Vine — A shrub whose leaves are used as a flavoring agent. Also known as the box-thorn. (Is there a message here?) I am in the wedding catering business!

Bamboo is also used in Chinese cooking. This wonderful plant is immensely popular, not only for flooring and raw building material. It is also used in clothing. Bamboo is a valuable source of food. The new shoots of trees are gathered each spring. They are considered to be a delicacy when fresh. They also can be dried or canned. Green tips of the bamboo branches are considered to bring good health and are used in soups and congee.

Rice, noodles, tofu, soy sauce, and an amazing array of fresh vegetables are readily available. I would encourage you to try something different in your recipes or at least take a leisurely stroll through the store and see these fascinating foods.

Here's a great recipe, rather Chinese in flavor but a bit different in the ingredients. It's fast to put together and very colorful.

Certainly you could do any number of things with this dish. I usually serve it with steamed white rice. You could also use red pepper instead of green or use green onions instead of white. Some pineapple chunks might be nice, or use slivered almonds or sesame seeds. It is easily doubled and you can prepare all of the ingredients in advance and refrigerate.

Stir-Fry Chicken Melon

Serves 4

chicken

2 whole chicken breasts, skinned,
boned and cut into 1 inch cubes
3 tbsp. EACH soy sauce and sherry

directions

Marinate the chicken in the soy
and sherry while preparing the
rest of the ingredients.

sweet & sour sauce

1 tbsp. soy • 1 cup pineapple juice
3 tbsp. EACH cornstarch, brown sugar,
vinegar and catsup

directions

Mix all together in a measuring
cup and set aside.

vegetables

1 large green pepper, seeded
and cut into cubes
1 large white onion, cut length-
wise into 1/2 inch wedges
1 large cucumber, peeled, seed-
ed and cut into wedges
1 small cantaloupe, peeled,
seeded and cut into 1 inch
cubes
1/2 cup whole almonds,
skinned or not, as desired
2 tbsp. peanut oil

directions

Heat the peanut oil in a large wok or skillet
over high heat. Drain the chicken cubes
and discard the marinade. Stir-fry the
chicken cubes in the hot oil until they are
cooked through. Remove and set aside.
Add the green pepper and onion and stir-
fry until tender/crisp. Add the cucumber
and melon to the pan and continue to
cook until they are heated through. Return
the chicken to the pan and add the
sauce, continue stir-frying until the sauce
thickens and is bubbly. Add the almonds.

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The longer a cat's hair, like that on this tortoiseshell kitten, the more likely it will cough up a hairball.

Hairballs in cats

BY DR. KATHLEEN CONNELL

*Q*h no! What's that gagging, hacking sound? It could be your cat trying to cough up a hairball.

As your cat grooms itself, it swallows loose, dead hair. Normally, this hair will just pass through the cat's digestive system without causing any problems. However, hair may accumulate and collect in your cat's stomach. This wad of hair in your cat's stomach that does not pass through the digestive tract is then ejected or vomited out as a hairball.

You may see more evidence of hairballs in longhaired cats, during periods of heavy shedding, with excessive grooming or in cats who groom themselves and other cats in the household.

One way for you to help prevent the problem is through frequent combing or brushing. Most cats enjoy being groomed. If your cat is easy to handle, you may also consider bathing to remove loose hair. Use shampoos and products labeled specifically for cats. Products for dogs may contain ingredients that are irritating or toxic to cats. If you do bathe your cat, be sure you

rinse and dry the cat's fur thoroughly.

To ease the passage of hair through the cat's digestive tract, you can add fiber to its diet or treat with a lubricant. Fiber can be added by gradually switching your cat to a prescription hairball control cat food or cat treats. You can also offer vegetable fiber, such as canned pumpkin or baby food squash. Offer up to one tablespoon twice a day, either plain or mixed with wet food. Excessive fiber holds water in the gastrointestinal tract, so make sure you always make plenty of clean drinking water available.

Lubricants can be petroleum jelly or a commercial product such as Laxatone, Petromalt or Katalax. Commercial products come in malt, tuna and other flavors that cats like. Talk with your veterinarian or read package directions to determine how much to use. Some cats will readily eat lubricant from the tube or off of your finger. For other cats, smear the lubricant on a paw or leg where it can be licked off.

If you are seeing your cat vomit hairballs frequently, it may be time for a trip to your veterinarian for an examination. Coughing without expelling a hairball and frequent or persistent vomiting of any kind should always be checked by your veterinarian.

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

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Avoid the flu – wear good underwear!

BY ELIZABETH P. STEWART

The Seattle area had six extra weeks to prepare for the arrival of Spanish influenza, but when it hit in October 1918, no one could have predicted the worldwide death toll. Spanish influenza killed an estimated 50 to 100 million people, 10-20 percent of those who contracted it.

Renton, too, suffered during the peak of the disease from October to December 1918, with many loved ones lost, schools closed, and people fearful about gathering in public places.

The first cases of Spanish flu, with its high fever and cold-like symptoms that could turn to pneumonia, were recorded in Seattle on Oct. 3, 1918. By Oct. 18 the

Renton Bulletin reported that “we are unable to chronicle all those who are down with the flu.” Local doctors Charles L. Dixon and Adolph Bronson were both busy caring for those who became ill. Dr. Dixon went through 100 doses of vaccine in one day. Dr. Bronson himself contracted the flu twice during this period, but recovered.

Public health officials reminded people that spitting, “a known fault of men,” might spread the disease. By Oct. 30, gauze masks were mandatory in public around the state; the Red Cross distributed them. Some stores even found ways to capitalize on fears. The People’s Store in Renton advertised that wearing good underwear could help people avoid Spanish influenza (without explaining how).

The pastor of St. Anthony’s Catholic Church, Father Ailbe Heelan, was among

the first to be struck down by influenza, and E. R. Woodard was probably the last Renton casualty in February 1919. In between were many deaths. City Clerk Grant Bates would die of the flu, as well as James A. Tonkin.

Young widows were left behind with children. Agnes Edwards’ husband Aaron left behind three small children under the age of 5. Bessie McCaffrey also had three children when her husband died of flu; she returned home to live with her parents, city councilman (later mayor) Thomas Raymond and his wife Bessie.

But not everyone died. The superintendent and general manager of construction on the Milwaukee Railroad both recovered, as did the family of John Benson, a founder of Spring Glen.

By mid-December, the Bulletin was able to report that although “the influenza has not yet lost its grip...it is not quite as



COURTESY OF RENTON HISTORY MUSEUM
Jack Harris and Dr. Charles L. Dixon, who earlier had tended to patients taken ill in the Spanish Flu epidemic, standing in a ward in Renton Hospital, 1920.

bad as the first few weeks.” Spanish influenza, a worldwide pandemic, disappeared almost as quickly as it took hold, yet it left a mark on so many families.

Elizabeth P. Stewart is the Director of the Renton History Museum, info@renton-history.org, 425-255-2330.

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When do these Lions sleep?

BY DANA E. NEUTS



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RENTON LIONS CLUB

Once each quarter, volunteers from the Renton Lions Club make and serve a meal to 100 or more family members of seriously ill children at the Ronald McDonald House in Seattle. Left to right: Roberta Logue, Eleanor Bertagni, John Bertagni, Roger Richert, Jason Richert, Patty Richert, Bob Dinning, Rosemary Richert.

Judging from the numbers, the men and women who belong to the Renton Lions Club fully live up to their motto, "We Serve."

Since July 1, the club has collected 2,100 pounds of clothing for the Renton Clothes Bank, 2,000 pounds of food for the Renton Food Bank and 71 pounds of used blankets and towels for the King County Humane Society; worked 1,850 hours at the Renton Memorial Stadium (2008-2009 football and track seasons); and raised \$42,000 for the Renton Lions Foundation, which is the club's charitable arm. These projects and donations represent only a fraction of the work completed by the enthusiastic group in a given year.

"The lion sleeps tonight' is not our theme song," jokes Roberta Logue, secretary and immediate past president.

"We are very busy folks," says Rosemary Richert, the club's president.

Among the 58-member club's key projects are the care and maintenance of the 14-acre Renton Lions Youth Camp on the Cedar River. Given to the club in the 1940s for \$1, the wilderness camp is now used by schools, scout troops and youth groups. In 2009 alone, the camp was used by 4,083 children and 193 adults.

Another favorite project is hosting the annual Pioneer

Night – a dinner and social outing for people who have lived in Renton for at least 75 years. Last year about 150 Renton area pioneers joined the event, which Richert and Logue describe as a high school reunion of sorts.

"For some, it is the event of the year," Logue says.

The club has been providing service to the greater Renton area since October 1938 as a part of Lions Club International, the largest service club in the world with more than 1.3 million members in more than 200 countries.

Internationally, the Lions Club is known for its work for the sight- and hearing-impaired. The Renton club honors those goals by funding corneal transplants at SightLife, the Northwest Lions Eye Bank; collecting

and distributing eyeglasses and hearing aids; providing funds for Leader Dogs for the Blind; free health screenings during Renton River Days; and more.

Despite the hard work and never ending community needs, Richert and Logue say they can't imagine life without the Lions Club, which they have served for a combined total of 60-plus years.

"It's so important to give back to your community," Logue explains. "I can't stress enough how lucky I am to have lived in Renton all my life. I want to give back as much as I've been given."

"My kids learned about community service through the Lions. It would be a shame not to give in return," Richert says. "We have a wonderful time making life better for those in need."

The Renton Lions Club meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month and holds board meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of month. During the summer months, meetings are held at the Youth Camp. During the remainder of the year, meetings are held at Merrill Gardens. Annual dues are \$80 and guests are always welcome.

For more information about the Renton Lions Club or to find out how you can help, visit <http://rentonlions.com> or call Rosemary Richert at 425-746-6767.

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Renton Senior Center dishes up a hot lunch and warm friendship

BY DAVID SUFFIA

It may be the best bargain lunch in Renton. Daily specials range from soup, salad and sandwich, to barbeque chicken, turkey and gravy or pineapple glazed ham with all the trimmings, all for a \$3 donation.

That's why 80 to 100 folks come in to the Renton Senior Activity Center every weekday for lunch. That and the camaraderie of old and new friends.

"It's really good food, and the people you meet here are wonderful," says Susan Tibbetts, a retiree who visits the center almost every weekday for lunch. "It's wonderful to know there'll be good friends waiting for you."

"We get a lot of interesting people coming for lunch," says Alice Lange, a retired Renton teacher who both volunteers and dines. "We've got former college professors, teachers, truck drivers, a real cross-section of the community."

"It's kind of like a family. The camaraderie that develops is really cool."

The lunches are for people age 60 and older. The \$3 is a suggested donation, but it's just that, a donation. Those who can afford a dollar put in a dollar, according to the center staff. At least one volunteer is homeless and waits tables in exchange for lunch.

The lunchroom at the center is abuzz with conversation from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Many of the diners take classes, exercise, play billiards or participate in other activities while



RENTON MAGAZINE / DAVID SUFFIA

George Shaughnessy and Alice Lange enjoy lunch at the Renton Senior Activity Center, where seniors can get a bargain lunch and a tableful of camaraderie for \$3.

they're there.

Ken Wright, a retired Boeing finance employee, is enjoying lunch with some of the seniors he's been helping with their income tax preparation. He's an AARP volunteer tax preparer, one of several who come to the center every year to aid seniors with their tax returns.

"The food is good and I like giving back to the community," he says, as a woman stops by his table to double-check what she needs to do next with her tax return.

The center's food is provided by King County Senior Services, a non-profit agency that works with the county. Volunteer staff dish it up, serve it, and clean up the dining room.

"Renton has the largest lunch program in King County," says Cheryl Williams, Senior Services coordinator for Renton.

"I'm a trained chef and we have a nutritionist who makes sure the menus make up a third of the daily nutritional requirements for seniors. I love this program. It's my passion being involved with

food and helping the community.

"We're not just feeding people. If I see someone who is ill or neglected, I can get outreach workers on board to help them with medical care, legal aid, transportation. We also provide meals on wheels to about 100 homebound seniors every week."

"The lunch program isn't just for low-income people," says Shawn Daly, recreation supervisor. "It's for all seniors. No one likes to eat alone and our lunch tables are as much a place to socialize as they are for food. But it's comforting for family members to know a senior they care about is getting at least one good meal a day by coming here."

"We have special luncheon events at least once a month, for holidays and anniversaries, and we get 150 people or more coming for those," he says.

George Shaughnessy is a retired accountant and dining room volunteer. "I get to know most of these people on a first-name basis. The food is great and the friendship is wonderful."

"I see so many nice things happen to people here," says Alice Lange. "I counted the other day, and there were at least a dozen people over 90. A lot of them may be seniors, but they refuse to not be intellectually stimulated and socially active."

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