

# The FOOTHILLS OUTLOOK

Connecting Foothills community members with vital  
resources, organizations and events



Issue 2, no. 16  
December 2025

## Ordinary Magic: Communities in Schools Transforming Student's Lives

By Melonie Ancheta

When you walk into a school partnering with Communities In Schools Skagit Whatcom (CISW) you'll discover a difference; you'll find a sense of connection that goes far beyond the classroom. CISW isn't just a program—it's an entire network dedicated to making sure kids don't slip through the cracks.

Spanning 26 states, each CISW community strives to support students in their own way. Here in Whatcom and Skagit counties, the local CISW affiliate stands out with its own nonprofit status, a dedicated board, and fundraising that keeps resources flowing straight into the schools for students and families. While the national and state CISWWA (Communities in Schools Skagit Whatcom Washington) offices provide training and guidance, the local teams are the ones in the schools, translating those tools into real support for students.

Launched back in 2007, CISW of Whatcom & Skagit started small. Since then, it's grown dramatically; now, 17 schools across the Mount Baker, Ferndale, Bellingham, Anacortes, Burlington-Edison, and Mount Vernon districts benefit from CISW programs. Each school, with its own unique environment has specific requirements to which CISWW offers tailored support.

To create a sustainable funding stream CISW receives financial support from a variety of sources, including corporate donations, individual contributions, grants from foundations, and funding from government entities at the local, state, and federal levels. Notable backers include prominent foundations, individuals such as MacKenzie Scott, and companies like AbbVie, which have made substantial contributions for targeted programs. Local organizations, including school districts and United Way chapters also play a role in funding, along with federal initiatives like the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.

### Supporting Success

The mission is simple, but powerful and effective: surround students with a community of support so they succeed—both in school and in life. As resource brokers, CISW connects students and families with a wide variety of resources including food banks, Energy Assistance and entities that can help relieve stress on families which in turn helps students remain in school and do well. The backbone of this mission is the CISW site coordinator, a full-time school staff member integrated seamlessly into the schools. As permanent support staff, they work with school district support staff and blend into the fabric of the school. They are at the front door every morning greeting students by name, asking how they are, and keeping an eye out for students who may need support. Students come to rely on site coordinators as Safe Adults, someone they can go to with both problems and triumphs and know they will always be welcomed and helped.

Site coordinators are specially trained in advocacy, diversity and inclusion, along with other training that help them work within the multi-tiered CISW program. They work to build trust and long term relationships with the students, but also with the families to ensure each student has what they need to stay in school and succeed.

Tier 1 supports are Whole School Supports that anyone in the school can access. These are aimed at building community and making progress toward school wide goals.

This year **9,497** whole school supports were provided, totaling over **4,388** hours of the following interventions:

Tier 3 supports are individual interventions for case-managed students. These 1:1 meetings are aimed to address unique needs and student goal progress.

This year **6,288** one-on-one supports were provided, totaling over **2,137** hours of the following interventions:

Tier 2 supports are provided in small group settings for case-managed students with similar interests, goals, or needs. These are aimed at building peer groups and building a sense of belonging.

This year **3,478** small group supports were provided, totaling over **2,065** hours of the following interventions:

### SCHOOL WIDE IMPACT

**6,355** students received School Wide Supports that built a sense of belonging

**1,367** parents and guardians directly received intentional support

**1,124** school staff received staff appreciation and supports

CISW uses a highly successful tiered model to provide support in each school:

This type of model ensures no student is left out and provides support for their individual needs.

**Listening, Then Doing**  
Because CISW doesn't believe in a one-size-fits-all

approach, site coordinators hold listening sessions and conduct surveys prior to the beginning of the school year as well as throughout the year, drawing inspiration from students, teachers, parents, administrators and even the community to set goals that make sense for their school. When a student is flagged for more intensive support, their needs are assessed individually and addressed in a manner appropriate to their culture, home environment and needs.

Middle schoolers, it turns out, are especially hungry for connection. They want more clubs, after-school programming, drama—and they're not shy about saying so. And at elementary level, families and faculty echo this need for engagement where everything from recess options to lunchtime clubs are valuable activities that help students succeed.

### It Does Take a Village

CISW success is founded in relationships—not just with students, but with existing school support staff like Cynthia at Kendall or Christina Ortiz at the junior/high school, along with agencies like the local libraries, food banks, and more. Together, they meet basic needs and ensure that no family has to face challenges alone.

What stands out is accessibility. CISW programs are open to every student, no matter their background or financial situation. Progress isn't measured just in test scores—it's about building trusted relationships, increasing engagement, and tracking tangible progress for each student, with regular reports going back to district leaders and partners to help guide their process and decisions.

### The Spirit of "Baker Pride"

CISW gets that school spirit matters. At Mount Baker schools, "Baker Pride" isn't just a slogan: it's the glue that ties students, families and the community together through sports, music, and clubs: through our STUDENTS! By recognizing and amplifying this culture, CISW keeps kids invested—not just in school, but in their local community, reducing risk and building stronger, more resilient and happier youth.

Above all, CISW is doing more than just offering programs—they're offering all students the tools and skills every student needs to stay in school, to succeed academically, and most importantly, to feel like they have a community to which they belong.

For more information about CISW, check out their website at <https://whatcomskagit.cisw.org>, or contact the site coordinator at your child's school.

## Free

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## Submissions Deadline: 15th of each month

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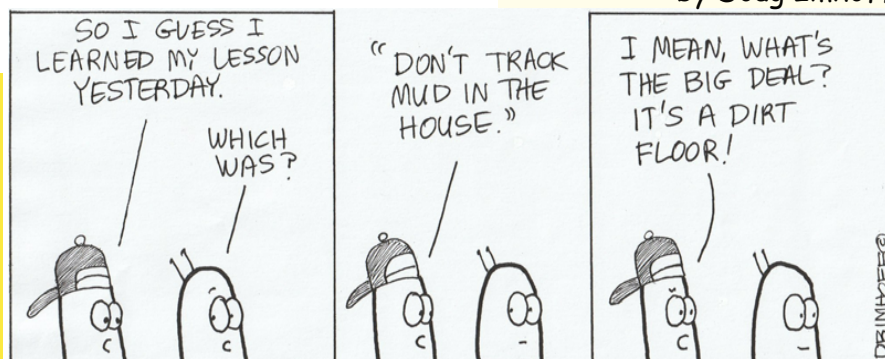
# bugwalla

by Doug Imhoff

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# HOW MUCH IS A CHILD’S LIFE WORTH?

by Melonie Ancheta

That’s not a rhetorical question. It’s something everyone in our community has been forced to confront in the most painful way—the danger of the main access road for our junior and senior high schools. According to Washington Department of Transportation data, since 2010 there have been 17 accidents at a particular intersection in our area, one of which resulted in a fatality.

This intersection isn’t some out-of-the-way spot few people ever see or use. It’s the main gateway for approximately 1,100 students, day in and day out, plus parents and siblings picking up students after school, sports practice or other after school activities as well as a high volume of traffic attending sporting events.

## No School Zone Warnings

You would think the primary intersection for school access would be high priority for appropriate signage, speed limits, and lighting. But there



Reminder of Kourtney Cadle’s fatal accident. photo: Carl McDaniel

are no school zone signs or flashers on SR542, and the speed limit (lowered from 50 to 45 after Cadle’s death) should be 20mph as in other school zones at the least. However, this is not the case. Despite a significant increase in traffic on SR542 over the past few years, the Washington State Department of



Intersection of Mitchell Rd and SR 542. Note school zone and speed limit signs down Mitchell Rd out of sight of motorists on the highway. photo: Carl McDaniel

Transportation says, “The 45 mph limit was determined to be a suitable speed limit for that specific section of highway given the conditions.” They do not specify the conditions they mention, but we all know this is a populated area with about 600 residents, a tribal center, busy gas station/convenience store, a library, and other businesses, not to mention, bicyclists and pedestrians.

But, the only school zone sign is tucked away down Mitchell Rd and cannot be seen by motorists on the highway. Most weekdays between 3 and 5 p.m., you’ll find the Mitchell Rd intersection jammed with families and students trying to turn in or merge out, bracing themselves and passengers for a mad dash into high-speed traffic. In the mornings, it’s just as bad—drivers peering down the road, waiting for a break, hoping they won’t be the next name in a news headline.

With approximately 1100 students attending the high school and junior high school, along with after school activities and sporting events, anyone accessing or leaving the campus is at risk of injury or death. Data from the state indicates there has been a significant increase in traffic on Hwy 542 over the past few years. And, despite Washington having laws about indicating school zones, there is not a single sign or other indicator on SR542, from either direction, letting people know they’re entering a school zone.

Between 3 and 5pm each week day of the school year, students and parents attempt to enter the highway and get up to speed (45 mph) in the midst of oncoming traffic. In the morning they often have to sit in the left turn lane waiting for a gap in eastbound traffic to enter Mitchell Rd. In 2010, Kourtney Cadle, a 17 year old student at Mt Baker High, was attempting to do just that. While waiting in the turn lane to enter Mitchell Rd., Kourtney’s car was hit from the rear pushing it into oncoming eastbound traffic. She was killed when a freight truck hit her car.



Kourtney Cadle, 17. Killed in crash attempting to get to school in 2010. Photo: Lemley Chapel.

Last week, two more teenagers—Helena Pierce and Crystal Anderson—collided in that same spot. They survived, but survival isn’t the end of their stories; the shock and fear of what almost happened are going to shape their memories for years, just like it’s shaping the entire community.

## Youth Voices Need to be Heard

Helena Pierce has added her voice to those of others campaigning for appropriate safety in a school zone. She stood in front of the Whatcom County Council, not to be pitied, but to remind everyone of what gets lost in the numbers—a real, living person with dreams and ambitions.

“I am not just a person who got in an accident, I am so much more than that,” she said. “I’m a junior in high school, a big sister, a theater kid, the Thespian Troupe secretary, the teen intern for our library system. I am strong, I am intelligent, I am empathetic, and I am living, breathing.”



Helena Pierce (R) with sister and brother. photo: Helena Pierce

She went on: “In that accident, I realized just how close I was to all of that being taken away from me. And it got me thinking about how important it is to preserve young lives and give them a safe space to grow in our community. The intersection between Mitchell Rd. and the highway is NOT safe. It is pitch black at night, 45 MPH when it should clearly be a school zone, and children are passing through for regular commute and sports daily. A young girl, Kourtney Cadle, lost her life at the same intersection only 15 years ago in another terrible accident. I wholeheartedly believe funding should be the least of our concerns when it comes to this matter. This is not a suggestion; this is a demand: we must have a safer intersection at the school, we must have lights to see, a reduced speed limit, and especially a roundabout and cross walk. If you truly care about Whatcom County’s children’s safety and well-being, you will make this a priority.”

These words are resonating throughout the MBSD spurring community members to sign the petition for our school zone to meet the criteria for all Washington state school zones. By lowering the speed limit, installing adequate lighting, building a roundabout and putting in a crosswalk, we can reduce the likelihood of future accidents and

## How Much, cont.

increase the safety we, along with our legislators, are responsible for for our children.

In addition, our county council is taking action to support efforts to this intersection safer. Later at that council meeting, the subject was again taken up by council member Todd Donovan for further discussion, and a letter drafted by Council member Ben Elenbaas was presented and approved to go to our state legislators for their support in increasing safety at the intersection. The council will continue to work with the community and state officials in improving the safety of our children. Two petitions have been started, one for voting adults in the Mt Baker School District, the other for Mt Baker School District students to allow their voices to be heard. While voters have some power with legislators, our student’s voices are even more important and powerful; they need to be able to speak out, especially on issues that so deeply impact their safety and lives.

Helena Pierce noted that the outpouring of concern and caring has helped her see how a community comes together around a tragedy or near tragedy. Add your voice to ensuring the safety of our kids; please sign this petition: <https://tinyurl.com/578nvzdt>

Students, please add your name to this petition: <https://c.org/NXkgyH5C8t>.

Or look for both petitions on NextDoor and Kendall/Maple Falls Facebook.





The holidays are one of the best times of year to make memories in the kitchen with your children. When they become adults the aroma of baking cookies will always remind them of the fun they had with you in the kitchen!

### Grinch Cookies

Makes 2 dozen	Prep time: 20 minutes	Total time: 1 hour
3 1/2 cups flour	1 tsp baking soda	1 tsp kosher salt
green sanding sugar*	1 cup butter, room temp	1 1/2 cups white sugar
2 large eggs	1 tsp vanilla	1 tsp almond extract
green food color	red heart sprinkles	

\*To make your own green sanding sugar place 2-3 drops green food color into 3/4 cups white sugar and blend well.



Step 1. Preheat oven to 350F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Whisk together flour, baking soda and salt in a bowl. Place green sanding sugar in a second, shallow bowl.

Step 2: Beat butter and sugar on medium until light and fluffy, 1-2 minutes. Beat in eggs until just combined. Beat in vanilla and almond extracts. Slowly add flour, 1/2 cup at a time and blend well (the dough will be soft). Add 2-3 drops green food color to dough and blend until all streaks are gone. Use a tablespoon to scoop dough, roll into balls and roll in green sugar. Arrange dough on baking sheets about 2 inches apart.

Step 3. Bake until crisp around edges, 8-10 minutes. Press a heart sprinkle into each cookie as soon as they come out of the oven. Cool on pans 5 minutes, then move to a wire rack to cool completely.

## Santa Advent Calendar



‘Tis the time of year for all things crafty! For a fun project your kids will love and to teach them about the days of the month, here’s a simple, low budget project that also helps teach the days of the month.

**Materials**  
White craft paper  
Red craft paper  
Colored pencils, markers or crayons  
Cotton balls  
Glue

To make: Cut Santa’s face from white craft paper. Add texture with colored pencil. Cut pink cheeks, eyes, and nose from construction paper; glue to the face. Cut the hat from red and white craft paper; glue to the face. Glue a large cotton ball at the point of the hat. Cut a long beard shape from white craft paper. Write the dates of the month leading up to Christmas on the beard. Hang the calendar and set a bowl of cotton balls and a bottle of glue nearby. Each day have your child add another cotton ball to fill out Santa’s beard.

## Family Friendly Winter Break Activities

Coming up with ideas for things to do during winter break can be challenging; here is a short list of things your family might love doing.

- Go wild with markers on empty boxes: All those empty gift boxes are wasted space. Let the kids go wild with markers and crayons all over the boxes.
- Board games marathon: And the winner is! Bring out the board games and challenge the family to see who can win the most.
- Start a family scrap book: Creating a scrap book of things each family member enjoys is a great way to preserve memories for the future.
- Play “don’t laugh”: It’s always fun to see who breaks first! Stock up on jokes and funny stories, make a list with everyone’s name and challenge them to not laugh. When someone breaks, put a check next to their name; the one with the least checks wins.
- Volunteer as a family: There are all sorts of volunteer opportunities, particularly during the holiday season: food banks, homeless shelters, soup kitchens. Many hands make lighter work, and your hands will be deeply appreciated.
- Plan “staycation” adventures: Make a list of places that can be explored in a day close to home. Museums, art galleries, local landmarks and historical sites...take a tour of your local tv station or go behind the scenes at a local business.
- Scavenger hunt: This is always a great hit with the kids. You can have one person hide stuff or get each family member hide 2-3 objects around the house and see who can find the most items.





## The Global Food System and the Need for Local Food Security (Part I)

Linda Kerth

**Commodity agriculture**, such as single-crop grains (corn, wheat) and livestock production (beef, pork), has become extremely consolidated today. There are fewer but larger farms, and fewer and larger equipment and seed suppliers, grain handling facilities, processing and distribution firms — the effects go all the way down the line to the consolidation of supermarkets, hitting the entire food system. Only the industrial model can describe this food system. It is dominated by a mere handful of large, integrated international corporations.

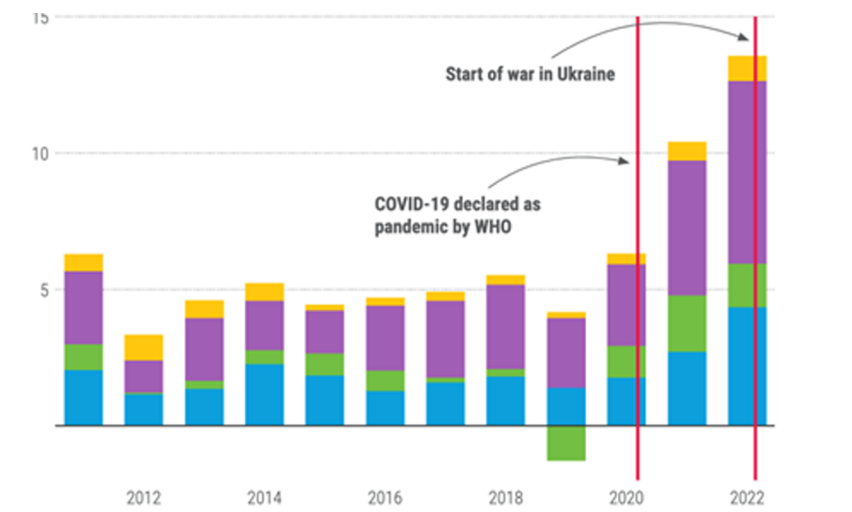
Global “agri-food” is grown with two goals in mind — to make a profit, and to withstand long-distance, time-consuming travel — which requires long shelf-life and durability. Production is entirely disconnected from consumption. These are not “farms” but large international corporations, not tied to any single nation, and thus cannot be held responsible by either country or consumer. They have no concerns as to the innate food value of their product, nor its taste, freshness, or nutritional value.

These corporations prey on the lower cost of labor and other production costs in under-developed countries, and frequently they are wealthier than the entire Gross Domestic Product of the countries they occupy. “There are international inequities” in this outsourcing; “these countries may experience a loss of agricultural self-sufficiency, undermining their food security.” (*Stephenson, 2008, Farmers Markets*)

### Consolidation of Power

The scale and power of these companies is simply staggering: The beef-packing industry is controlled by four corporations in the U.S. However, two of these corporations have been acquired and are controlled by a Brazilian meat packer. Their American subsidiary is a leading beef and pork processor in the U.S., and a major chicken producer. The 2025 merger between U.S. and Brazilian companies has resulted in a U.S. meat market which is now 84% under foreign control. Foreign ownership of U.S. beef processors raises food safety concerns (due to lack of health regulations) as well as environmental concerns — Brazil's beef industry is held accountable for massive deforestation in the Amazon.

During the pandemic, when chains of food delivery systems broke down, four major international corporations\* made billions. The chart below (from the United Nations) shows the profiteering in *billions* of US dollars (<https://unctad.org/publication/trade-and-development-report-2023>). People starved.



The Brazilian company\* based in Sao Paulo is now a global company, worth \$73 billion, with goals to be the world's biggest processor of beef and also of poultry ([www.foodprocessing.com](http://www.foodprocessing.com)). (\* Due to liability issues, names of corporations cannot be identified here.)

Similar situations exist in other food markets:

- Grain facilities — 60% are held by four companies.
- Almost half the supermarkets in the U.S (46% in 2008) are controlled by five companies.
- Two companies control 70% of the corn seed market in the U.S., and 44% of the global market.
- The same two companies also hold 59% of soybean seed (Hendrickson, Oxfam 2008).

Consolidation of the seed market began in 1996, with the introduction of genetically engineered seeds, which were created to resist herbicidal and insecticidal spraying (made by the same company). In other words, the seller of the most insidious killer chemicals on the planet control the world's seed market, and now sell a remedy for the poisons they still make — lethal pesticides (exterminating entire bee colonies, butterflies, and other beneficial insects). So — they made a fortune making toxic chemicals, and now make a second fortune by selling seeds that (supposedly) resist their original chemicals.

### Consolidation Continues

Consolidation leads to fewer competitors. Lack of competition leads to “considerable power.” Corporations are able to exercise the power they have gained from a dominant market share, including the setting of prices, resulting in accumulation of wealth, and even greater access to markets (*U.N. Trade and Development Report 2023*). So the global food system is now no longer based on competitive markets — a cornerstone of any capitalistic system.

But globalization doesn't just apply to the producers of food — this pattern also applies to the sellers — huge supermarkets which have expanded to selling almost everything (clothing, home and garden supplies) which have rapidly evolved into global markets found all over the world.

The global economy is at a crossroads, with “widening inequalities, growing market concentration and mounting debt casting shadows on the future” — due in part to the pandemic. The rise in prices is “attributed to the combination of profiteering by large agri-businesses ... and financial speculation in food commodity futures.” By 2024, the global food price index was

*The Global Food System, cont.*

down to pre-pandemic levels, but domestic prices are slow to follow and some do not come down at all, and may even to increase, as international prices fall. <https://unctad.org/publication/trade-and-development-report-2023>.

Market concentration in the trading of agriculture commodities has grown since 2020, deepening the asymmetry between the profits of top multinational enterprises and the declining share of profits to the labor sector — the men and women who actually grow the food, or process it or transport it.


### Food Sovereignty

The bottom line here is that reliance on global markets for food is proving to be extremely problematic. For minimal resilience in the face of crises such as flood or pandemic, it is important for countries to protect themselves by striving for domestic food sovereignty. This applies to the U.S. in general but must be specifically addressed by local networks to ensure food availability.


The concept of food sovereignty is “an overarching framework employed by civil society groups to reclaim land, territory and human dignity.” (*World Trade Organization, 2005*). The call for food sovereignty is also a plan for prioritization of food production for local markets through authentic agrarian reform and sustainable, ecological practices. Food sovereignty is a way to shift decision-making about food back to the people, where ideas of rural development, agrarian reform and food production can be debated and defined by each community.

The “... fundamental pillars of food sovereignty include the recognition and enforcement of the right to food and the right to land; the right of each nation or people to define their own agricultural and food policies, the right of indigenous peoples to their territories and the rights of traditional fisherfolk to fishing areas” (*Hendrickson, “The Global Food System and Nodes of Power”*).

One way to achieve food security is for farmers to form farmers' associations and to assist in the creation of a farmers' market. See Part II in the January issue.



# To Your Health



## Ahhh, A Good Night's Sleep

by Dr. Gabriel Durben

My experience as a primary care doctor has often taught me the lesson that each and every human being is incredibly unique, and that we all experience both health and the disruption of health in individual and nuanced ways. At the same time, despite the diversity of our health experiences, there are common themes and shared experiences that we almost all have. There are health practices that are crucial for each and every person, and there are activities that, when disrupted, have uniformly negative impacts on our health.

There are few behaviors or activities that are more important to our health than quality sleep. Indeed, the impact that a lack of quality sleep can have on one's health is difficult to overstate. Poor quality sleep, which includes inadequate hours of sleep, disrupted sleep, and unrefreshing sleep, has been shown to contribute to most of our common chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes, cancer and neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's disease. Studies have demonstrated that a relatively short period of sleep deprivation can cause a person with previously normal blood sugar to develop prediabetes. This is something that I see in clinical practice all the time: an individual experiences a major life stressor and goes through an intense period of sleep deprivation, which is then followed by the development of insulin resistance and prediabetes. But sleep deprivation does not only impact chronic disease conditions. Poor quality sleep has immediate impacts on acute health experiences as well, increasing susceptibility to infectious illnesses, like colds and flues, and making it more difficult for our muscles and joints to recover from injury.

As a major contributor to so many health concerns, it would seem that the causes of poor quality sleep would be widely known and that treatment of sleep disruption would be a key component of managing things like heart disease and anxiety. Unfortunately, there are so many different factors that can lead to poor quality sleep that many of these things are overlooked when an individual is focused on things like bringing their blood sugar down, managing their blood pressure, or trying to figure out how to better treat their persistent depression. That said, some of the most common contributors to poor sleep that I hear about from patients include use of too much caffeine or alcohol, too much screen-time exposure particularly right before bed, not getting enough physical movement, and untreated sleep apnea. But, perhaps the most common disruptor to quality sleep that I see in the clinical context is stress, which comes in many forms including relational conflict, loneliness, depression and anxiety.

These causes of poor quality sleep can sometimes be impossible to avoid. So, an important question becomes: What contributes to good quality sleep? Our behaviors and environment can have a potent impact on how we fall asleep and how well we stay asleep through the night. Our bodies produce melatonin, a hormone that helps promote sleep, in the absence of light. Thus, exposure to light, particularly in the form of screen use like smart phones, computers, and television, in the hour before trying to go to sleep significantly disrupts our ability to get quality sleep. Additionally, our bodies tend to sleep most naturally when body temperatures gradually decrease as we are sleeping. Thus, keeping your sleeping area cool can help support this natural pattern. Alternatively, warming yourself by taking a shower or bath before going to sleep also helps promote helpful sleep patterns. Finally, because stress and tension are such common contributors to sleep disruption, practices like deep, slow breathing before sleep may be one of the simplest and most profound health changes that someone can make.



# COMMUNITY SCENE



## RENOVATION NEWS

We knew early on that we had a winner with Summit Construction, but any doubt was completely flushed last week when our fearless foreman, Keenan, single-handedly removed the cupola on the church belfry, then jumped in the cherry picker bucket and harnessed the old school bell, guiding it safely to the ground, beginning its official journey back to the Hall where it first rang. You know

it's a fun job when most of the crew stop to watch this unusual spectacle.

The refurbished bell will be hung over the East entrance, so we can call kids in from the playground. We can be sure they heed the call when we look out the new four giant windows.

Overall, it's been an exciting month of renovation. There's a small but important list of things we will need to do to finish the job when the Summit gang moves on. If you can help with a donation, please contact [info@southforkvalley.org](mailto:info@southforkvalley.org), or visit the SFVCA website and click on the orange DONATE button.

Please Save The Date! The Grand Opening of Van Zandt Hall is set for Friday April 11th 4-8PM. Folks will get to hear many stories about the work and care of the Van Zandt Hall renovation as we celebrate all who contributed. Contact us at [info@southforkvalley.org](mailto:info@southforkvalley.org) to receive an invite via email and to let us know what ideas you have for future activities, events and classes. We are excited to see what we will build together for our community!

## From Kristi's Desk

by Kristi Warren Slette  
Director Whatcom Family & Community Network

### What's Your Family Culture?

Every individual has a culture and every family does too! Sometimes it can be hard to put into words what your culture is when you are immersed in it daily. It may not seem unique or special, yet, everyone's culture influences who we are and how we show up in the world.

#### What is your family culture?

Culture is a set of values, beliefs, preferences and behaviors that are part of our everyday way of walking through the world, such as habits and ways of responding. As well, culture includes repeated rituals, like celebrations and holidays and how we celebrate them, are part of a person's culture. Do we gather on a certain day and do certain activities? Do we eat certain foods, talk about certain memories? Do we anticipate and look forward to or dread certain activities or behaviors? Those elements are part of a culture.

The way our families manage time, conflicts and problem solving are also parts of a family culture. Some elements of culture are positive and should be celebrated and held dear, like gathering for special occasions, going on outings annually, eating family dinner together once a week, or talking through problems calmly and finding collaborative solutions.

Other elements of culture can be unhealthy, like smoking, drinking, overeating processed foods, or hollering at or hitting one another when a conflict arises.

These elements can be passed down from generation to generation or chosen anew by a person or family.

Culture can be disrupted or shifted when life transitions occur. Situations like parental separation or divorce, loss of a grandparent or other significant family member, changes to health of a member of the family, and developmental stages of children growing into adolescence can shift family culture, too. Changes can add a lot of stress or relief to a family. People can grieve the loss of cultural factors, especially if they brought comfort and security. And even if they didn't! Cultural loss is loss. The holiday season can bring up a lot of feelings that have to do with family culture. Often it can be hard to put a name to the reason. As 2025 closes, consider whether your family culture is healthy and hopeful or whether this holiday season begs for some New Year resolutions for change.

Talking with your family members about what your culture is and how it got that way can be helpful. Ask questions like:

"What about our family's culture serves us well?"

"What about our family's culture could help us or harm us in the future?"

"Are there elements about our family's culture that if we changed soon, we and future generations would benefit?"

When a piece of culture no longer works well for a family for any reason—there is a program offered through a local community partnership (Thanks to Washington State University, Mount Baker Schools, Whatcom County Health & Community Services and the Mount Baker Community Coalition) called, **Strengthening Families Program (SFP), that can help families raising children 10 to 14—examine family culture and organization, communication and conflict management.**

Keep your eye open for the next session of this to be announced in the new year. SFP is an evidence-based, 14-session program for parents and youth (ages 7-17) that teaches skills to improve family functioning and prevent problems like substance abuse, delinquency, and mental health issues. The program aims to build a positive family culture by strengthening parent-child relationships, improving communication, and increasing family cohesion and resilience.

Holidays are great time to think about family culture. Family dynamics can be both lovely and challenging—sometimes both at the same time!

One thing we may look forward to are sharing family cultural recipes from childhood with our own children. Whether we are serving up Scandinavian Lefsa, Mexican Tamales, Slavic pastries; or American mashed potatoes and gravy, we all have rituals, habits and preferences that can bring joy. Let's focus on what we want MORE of in our lives and let less enjoyable elements go!

Solve the problem  
or leave the problem,  
don't live with the problem.

## The Book Shelf



### December events at the North Fork Library

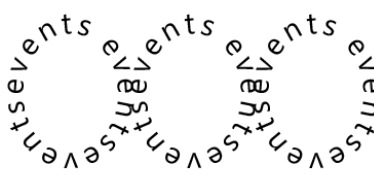
#### North Fork Let's Make Presents for Kids

We'll have all the supplies and ideas you'll need to craft beautiful, meaningful gifts for the loved ones in your life. Tuesday, Dec 9 2025 3:45pm - 4:45pm

#### North Fork Storytime

For ages 2-6, 30 minutes. An open program that includes stories, rhymes, and songs with opportunities for movement and interactive participation. Tuesday, Dec 2 and Dec 9 10:30am - 11:00am

### Rebus 1



### Safe Driving Tips for Teens

Traffic crashes are a leading cause of death for teens 15 to 18 years old. In 2023, 822 teen drivers died in crashes, and a total of 2,611 teen drivers were involved in crashes where *someone* died.

It's up to parents and teens to ensure the vehicle is safe, that the rules are clearly known, and that we all take responsibility for helping teens transition into being safe drivers.

#### Always Buckle Up

The car doesn't move until everyone is buckled up — front seat and back, on every trip, every time. In 2023 more than half of the passengers killed in cars driven by teen drivers in recent years weren't buckled up.

#### No drinking and no drugs

Emphasize the fact that it's illegal to drink before you're 21 — and that driving drunk or high is unacceptable at any age. In 2023, 24% of teen drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking.

#### No distractions

Driving is the first and only task when behind the wheel. That means no phones or texting while driving, and not doing anything else — like eating, drinking, or fixing hair and makeup — when you should fully focus on driving. About 10% of all teen drivers involved in fatal crashes in recent years were distracted at the time of the crash. Teens should activate the "do not disturb" feature on their phones to eliminate the distractions notifications cause.

#### No speeding

In 2023, speeding was a factor in 34% of the passenger vehicle teen drivers involved in fatal crashes. Faster speeds rob inexperienced teen drivers of the extra reaction time they may need to avoid a crash. Emphasize that they must obey posted speed limits.

#### Limit extra passengers

Teen drivers are at a greater risk for a crash when they have others in their car. Passengers can serve as a distraction for inexperienced teen drivers, and that's why many states' [graduated driver licensing \(GDL\) restrictions](#) prohibit any passengers in vehicles with teen drivers. GDL laws also set other limits on teen drivers for safety.

#### Drowsy Driving

We all know how important sleep is, especially for your teens during the school year when studying can cause long nights. Remind your teen the importance of a good night's sleep, and the dangers of drowsy driving.

### December events at the Deming Library

Friends of the Deming Library **Holiday Tea** on December 6th from 1pm to 5:15pm.

Enjoy delicious home-baked treats and tea while being entertained by local musicians at this annual holiday tea hosted by the Friends of the Deming Library.

Performance schedule:

1:00-1:35 MBHS Choir

1:45-2:20 Tim McHugh and Greg Gundersen

2:30-3:05 Star Tom

3:10-3:3:45 Robin Wallbridge and Doug Sutton

3:55-4:30 Breanna Anderson

4:35-5:10 Nooksack Royalty

**Deming Let's Make Presents** on Saturday, Dec. 20th from 10:30am to 11:30am

We'll have all the supplies and ideas you'll need to craft beautiful, meaningful gifts for the loved ones in your life.



**Friends of the North Fork Community Library**

Join the North Fork Friends! We are currently looking for volunteers to help us support the library's programs and services for our foothills community. For more details, please see our website below and fill out the volunteer form if you're interested. For questions, you can email us. Thank you!  
Website: <https://fnfcl.wordpress.com/>  
Email: [friendsnorthforklibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsnorthforklibrary@gmail.com)  
North Fork Community Library  
7506 Kendall Road, Maple Falls, WA 98266  
(360) 599-2020



**Well they said I should bulk up for a hard winter!**

### Essentials to Keep in Your Car

The American Automobile Association (AAA) responds to over 30 million roadside assistance calls each year.

During the long commute between here and Bellingham any number of situations can arise in which you'll be glad you keep these items in your car at all times:

- ✓ First Aid Kit
- ✓ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ✓ Jumper cables or portable jump starter
- ✓ Reflective warning triangles or road flares
- ✓ Bottled water
- ✓ Hand warmers
- ✓ Water and non-perishable food
- ✓ Blankets
- ✓ Tire repair kit and inflator
- ✓ Road flares or reflective triangles





# HEALTH EQUITY ZONE: PHASE 3 HAS BEGUN

*YOUR IDEAS. YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR FUTURE.*



HEZ is building a new way for our community to decide what matters most, together. We're inviting YOU to share your ideas big or small anything that could make our neighborhoods stronger, safer, healthier, or more connected. You don't need to be a grant writer or expert. Just fill out the Community Project Proposal Form — tell us what's on your mind, and we'll help with the rest.

## Timeline at a Glance

- **November–December: Community submits project ideas**
- **January: Community voting (ranked-choice style — pick your favorites!)**
- **February: Results shared and top ideas move forward for funding**

## What Happens When You Submit an Idea

- **You Share an Idea:** Fill out the form — online or on paper. Don't worry if it's not perfect!
- **Local Residents Review:** Our Community Advisory Board (CAB), made up of your East Whatcom neighbors, reads every idea using a fair and simple scoring system.
- **Community Voting Begins:** Everyone age 14+ who lives, works, learns, or gets services in the Mount Baker School District can vote online, on paper, or at community events.
- **Top Ideas Move Forward:** The most supported projects enter the Community Priorities Pipeline, where HEZ helps find grants and partners to bring them to life.

## Ready to Share Your Idea?

- **Grab a paper copy at local libraries or the Resource Center**
- **Email [hezinfo360@gmail.com](mailto:hezinfo360@gmail.com)**
- **Submit online at:**



## Examples of Ideas

- Local shuttle or rideshare program
  - Community-run farmers market
  - Youth mentorship and skill-building nights
  - Shared workspace for small business start-ups
- (These are examples — what matters most is what YOU think the community needs.)

**Facebook:** Mount Baker Health Equity Zone  
**Instagram:** [mountbaker.healthequityzone](https://www.instagram.com/mountbaker.healthequityzone)  
**Email:** [hezinfo360@gmail.com](mailto:hezinfo360@gmail.com)

**We all live here in the foothills and love our peaceful way of life.**

## HOME WHATCOM

**HOME WHATCOM is inviting you to an informational meeting regarding the proposed Ranch Quarry Mine.**

**Date: Dec. 4, 5-7 pm**, at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center, 8251 Kendall Rd. Snacks will be provided.

The proposed mine will be on the corner of Frost Road and South Pass Road. Cowden/Lafarge/Amrize will clear cut, blast and excavate 64 acres over the next 60+ plus years with major excavation during peak summer season. They expect 50-100 double rigged gravel trucks like the one in the photo per day.

The County has issued a Determination of Significance which means they understand that this mine will have huge impacts to the local community and environment.

We will discuss haul routes, environmental impact, clear cutting to access rock, the amount of truck traffic during peak summer excavation, as well as noise, and the impact on air and water quality.

The County Planning Department will give the community **30 days to respond** to the proposal. This may happen soon. We want everyone to understand what impacts are anticipated and how this may affect our foothills way of life.

Website: [HOMEwhatcom.com](http://HOMEwhatcom.com)

Committee: Elli Harron, Kathleen Greenbaum, Andrew Clark, Mark and Wendy Porter, Erica Simons

Elli Harron: 360-229-1468







**Dear Deb...**  
Answering your questions with  
compassion, not criticism!  
Deb Shawver, LICSW

Dear Deb,  
My son is getting D’s and F’s in his  
classes in 10th grade right now. He  
tells me there’s no help and nothing  
he can do. I’m trying to hold him  
responsible but also support him to  
succeed in high school. What should I do??

— *Confused and Concerned Parent*

Dear Confused and Concerned,

Navigating the school system can be tricky — and you’re not alone in  
feeling that way! There’s often a wide range of possible truths when  
teens say “there’s no help.” Sometimes they really don’t know what’s  
available, and other times, they’re overwhelmed or afraid to ask for it.

At Mount Baker Junior and Senior High, there’s a Homework Help  
program available right after school on Tuesday, Wednesday, and  
Thursday.

- Tuesdays: General academic support
- Wednesdays: Math
- Thursdays: Science and English

If your student isn’t aware of this, that’s a great place to start.  
Encourage him to check it out — sometimes just showing up once can  
make a difference.


You can also reach out to teachers directly, but be thoughtful about  
how this is done. Teens often want a sense of independence, and  
sometimes parent-teacher contact can feel like an invasion if they  
aren’t looped in. You might say, “Hey, would it help if I emailed your  
teacher to ask about support options?” That keeps the alliance between  
you and your son strong.

school counselors are another great resource. If your student hasn’t  
met with his counselor yet, this might be a good time to connect. They  
can help identify obstacles and explore academic supports or  
accommodations.

If learning struggles or test anxiety seem to be part of the problem, you  
can ask the school about a 504 Plan or request an IEP (Individual  
Education Plan) evaluation. These provide structured supports for  
students who need them.

Most importantly, keep your relationship with your son at the center.  
When students feel that their parents are on their side — helping them  
rather than punishing them — they’re far more likely to re-engage.  
Rewarding effort and improvement works better long-term than  
consequences alone.

The goal is to help him *want* to do well — not just to avoid  
disappointing others. Stay patient, stay connected, and celebrate even  
the small wins.

—  Deb  
*Helping you catch your power and shape your path*



## Whatcom Healthy Children’s Fund

### Connecting Families to Early Support: SEAS and ESIT in Rural Communities

If you’re a parent, you know the feeling — that quiet voice in the back  
of your mind that wonders if your child might need a little extra  
support. Maybe your baby isn’t babbling like you expected. Maybe  
your toddler isn’t walking yet, or your gut just says something feels  
off. You want to do the right thing, but in a rural area, that can feel  
complicated. Services are far away. Waitlists are long. And figuring out  
*where to even start* can feel like another full-time job.

That’s exactly why programs like SEAS (Single Entry Access to  
Services) funded through the Healthy Children’s Fund and Whatcom  
County and ESIT (Early Support for Infants and Toddlers) exist — to  
make it easier for families to get the help they need, when they need it,  
without feeling overwhelmed.

The SEAS line is a guide through a maze — one call or online request  
connects families to the right supports in Whatcom County. Whether  
you’re worried about your child’s development, looking for early  
intervention services, or just need someone to help you figure out your  
next step, SEAS is here to help you find your way.

And when a child does need extra support, ESIT steps in. ESIT offers  
early intervention services for children from birth to age three who  
have developmental delays or disabilities. That might mean speech  
therapy, physical therapy, or support from specialists who help  
families turn everyday routines — mealtime, playtime, nap time —  
into opportunities for growth.

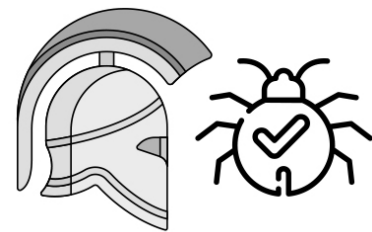
For families living outside city centers, these programs can be a  
lifeline. Long drives, limited resources, and the feeling of being “on  
your own” are real barriers. SEAS helps cut through that. One call, one  
person, one system that listens — and connects you to the right  
services, often close to home. With ESIT, families can even receive  
therapy in their own living rooms, so support fits into your life instead  
of turning it upside down.


When families get the right support early, the ripple effect is powerful.  
Children gain skills and confidence. Parents feel more capable and less  
alone. Communities grow stronger. Because when we lift up one  
family, we all rise together.

If you’re wondering where to start — or just need someone to talk to  
— you can reach the SEAS line at (360)715-7485 or visit <https://www.seaswhatcom.org/>

Early support changes everything. No family should have to do this  
alone — and thanks to SEAS and ESIT, you don’t have to.  
Want to learn more about what the Healthy Children’s Fund is  
supporting? Go to our website!  
[www.healthychildrensfund.org](http://www.healthychildrensfund.org)

#### Rebus 2



  
When the wrong people leave  
your life, the right things  
begin to happen!

## Road Rules Winter Driving

by Dough Dahl



As I watched my neighbor  
scrape ice from her  
windshield I realized it’s  
probably time to review the  
topic of winter driving.  
Mount Baker ski area has  
opened, the freezing level is  
dropping, and we’ve already  
had some flooded roads.  
Here comes winter.

If you’ve ever had a conversation with someone from  
Minnesota about winter driving, you’ve probably heard the  
ridicule about how Washington doesn’t have a “real” winter.  
And that’s exactly the problem. In wintery parts of the country  
people prepare for the inevitable ice and snow. Here we often  
get caught off-guard by a storm system that blows in, makes a  
mess of things, and then melts away two days later. And  
unlike places that stay frozen for weeks at a time, we have  
weather that fluctuates between just below and just above  
freezing, creating the slippery hazard of a thin layer of water on  
top of a layer of ice. I’ve seen a parked car slide off the road in  
those conditions.

With the change in the weather, there are a few things to keep  
in mind to successfully navigate winter driving. Let’s start with  
the car. Car maintenance is important to safety, and in poor  
weather well-functioning brakes, wipers, defroster, heater and  
tires become even more critical. Tire tread depth affects  
traction and braking distance, and while the minimum legal  
tread depth of 2/32” works on dry pavement, in rain or snow  
performance suffers. A full tank of gas and an emergency kit  
with food, water and a blanket will be handy in the unfortunate  
event of getting stuck or having to take a longer route due to  
road closures.

When driving, keep in mind that speed limit signs are intended  
for good road conditions. In bad weather, the appropriate speed may be  
much slower. Drivers of all-wheel and four-wheel-drive vehicles might  
feel confident driving close to the speed limit, but don’t forget that the  
braking capability of an all-wheel-drive is no better than a two-wheel-  
drive. There are some roads in our region that are vulnerable to  
flooding, and water over a roadway is much more dangerous than it  
appears. It only takes 12 inches of fast-moving water to carry away a  
small car. Over half of flood-related deaths occur when a vehicle drives  
into hazardous flood water. Also, even with just a few inches of water,  
erosion can wash away sections of road, leaving dangerous unseen  
holes.

Sometimes when the weather gets bad the best decision is to park the  
car. The impact of lousy road conditions range from inconvenient to  
disastrous, so consider using the stormy weather as an excuse to stay  
home and get a bit of rest during the busy holiday season.

The less you respond to negative  
people, the more peaceful your  
life will become.

	8	7	3		4			
	3		5				4	
								7
					2	4	5	
	9	6		1		8	3	
	2	5	8					
8								
	5				7		1	
			2		1	7	6	

Solution on back page

#### Riddle Me This

Two fathers and their two sons go on a fishing trip together. Each one  
catches a fish to take home with them. They don’t lose any fish, and yet  
when they get home they, only have three fish. How is this possible?



Seven out of ten of us will need some form of  
long-term care support at some point in our  
lives. Many of us also won’t have a way to pay  
for it or will have to drain our savings or  
retirement funds when we need that support.  
The WA Cares Fund is a program that can help  
us when we need it. Washington state is the first state in the country  
putting together a worker earned long-term care program. In July 2023,  
working Washingtonians started contributing to this program, and July  
2026 is the first time people can apply once they meet the  
qualifications.

This is something that can be used to help with meal delivery,  
transportation to medical appointments, home modifications like  
building ramps and grab bars, paying caregivers, and more. Right now,  
the benefit amount people can receive for these supports is \$36,500  
and this amount will continue to increase with inflation each year. It is  
important for working Washingtonians to know this is something that  
we are all contributing too already, and what support we can receive  
from it in case of a sudden injury or need for care later in life.  
If you have further questions, please contact NWRC at 360-738-2500





KENDALL PTA HOSTS A

Santa photo pop-up booth

\$5 SANTA PHOTOS

SUN | 7 DEC | 12PM-3PM

PEACEFUL VALLEY HOA CLUBHOUSE  
8225 KENDALL RD

Come meet Santa for a family photo. We will have refreshments for sale, all proceeds raised will go to Kendall PTA to benefit staff and students at Kendall Elementary.

HOT CHOCOLATE BAR!

BAKE SALE!

THE DISTRICT DOES NOT SPONSOR OR ENDORSE THIS EVENT/INFORMATION AND THE DISTRICT ASSUMES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT. IN CONSIDERATION OF THE PRIVILEGE TO DISTRIBUTE MATERIALS, THE MOUNT BAKER SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL BE HELD HARMLESS FROM ANY CAUSE OF ACTION FILED IN ANY COURT OR ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL ARISING OUT OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THESE MATERIALS, INCLUDING COSTS, ATTORNEY'S FEES AND JUDGMENTS OR AWARDS.



Happy Holidays

Christmas Tree Safety Tips:

In the U.S., Christmas tree-related fires cause an average of 155 to 210 home fires annually. While not a common occurrence, these fires are more likely to be deadly than other residential fires and result in an average of 4 to 6 deaths and 7 to 16 injuries each year. The leading causes are electrical issues from lights and other equipment, and the risk increases significantly as fresh trees dry out.

• Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long and has probably dried out and is a fire hazard.

• Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.

• Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.

• Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.

• Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.

• Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.

• Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.

• Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.

• Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

• When purchasing an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as fire-retardant.

• Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home. Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

EDDIE'S SCOREBOARD

(One of the) Best in the West

For the second straight year, Mount Baker is moving on to the postseason.

The team finished the regular season with an 8-1 record including a perfect 4-0 record against division opponents. It's the first season since 2016 where the team has won it's conference outright. The team did win conference titles in 2019 and 2022, but those were shared with other schools (Lynden Christian in 2019 and a three-way-tie between Mount Baker, Lynden Christian and Nooksack Valley in 2022). The one loss of the season came at the hands of 3A powerhouse Bellevue in the rare Saturday day game back in week four.

Going into the Week 10 play-in round, the team finds itself ranked second overall in the WIAA's RPI rankings and third overall in the playoff season.

Senior running back Brice Cooper set the school record for rushing yards per carry in a career with an average of 10.09. The previous record was held by Jed Schleimer whom many consider to be the greatest of all time.

Another record breaker was Senior quarterback Setoga Tigilau Jr. who threw five touchdown passes in the Mountaineer's blowout win over a struggling Sultan team on Homecoming night. Said record was held by multiple other quarterbacks with four including Tigilau who would throw four himself in the team's upset win over #1 ranked Lynden Christian.

Don't forget about Senior wide receiver Jet Ross either. He also set multiple records of his own this year. Ross would be on the receiving end of four touchdowns in a game during that same win over Sultan and would tie his own record a few weeks later in the Lynden Christian game. Once again, multiple players held the record with three with the most recent to tie it being Brett Johnson in Mount Baker's 2008 game against Blaine. Ross also holds the record for most touchdown passes in a single season with fourteen breaking Roger VanWeerdhuizen's record of thirteen set all the way back in 1986.

Mount Baker will begin it's playoff run against wrestling powerhouse Wapato on November 8th. The game will be played at Borderite Stadium in Blaine with kickoff set for 4:00pm in the afternoon. Mount Baker is looking for it's first state championship in school history. It's closest approach so far has been in the 2013 and 2022 seasons where the team played in the Gridiron Classic state championship game. The football team's playoff result as well as overviews on both wrestling teams will be provided in the January 2026 edition of Foothills Outlook.

COLUMBIA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

It is almost the holiday season again and we would like to inform you of the upcoming scheduling changes that may affect you: The office will be closed on the following days:

Day after Thanksgiving

Friday, November 28, 2025

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

For water related emergencies on those days, please call district pager at 360-714-3558

The November and December Board Meetings are rescheduled. November Board Meeting is being held on November 20th and December Board Meeting is being held on December 18th, both at 7:00pm.

You may attend in person at the district office at 6229 Azure Way, Maple Falls, WA 98266 or by zoom.

Help keep District rates low by eliminating postage costs. Sign up for paperless billing at:

Visit [www.cv-wd.com](http://www.cv-wd.com) to set up Paperless Billing. Just hit the "Pay Your Bill Online" button.

There is even an app available that you can download onto your phone. Easy as 1, 2, 3.

Get Ready For Winter!

WHATCOM COUNTY WATER DISTRICT NO.13

Whatcom County Water District 13 would like to share some winter weatherization tips as we make the transition from summer to the fall and winter months:

• Disconnect and drain garden hoses. If you have a yard sprinkler system, drain and blow out the system completely.

• Insulate exterior pipes and faucets with foam covers from the hardware store. You can also use newspapers, rags, or insulating material, then cover with plastic and secure with string or wire. Using heating tape can prevent freezing pipes.

• Insulate interior pipes and faucets that are in cold areas of your home (including unheated attics, basements, garages and crawl spaces) the same way as Step 2.

• Keep the heat in your home at a minimum of 55 degrees.

• On extra cold nights, open the doors of closets or cabinets that are located near water pipes on your home's exterior walls.

• For maximum protection, apply caulk around incoming pipes, and seal any cracks and holes properly. Close or block your home's foundation vents during the coldest months (just be sure to open them up once the threat of freezing has passed, to prevent dry rot).

• Locate your home's main water shut-off valve and test it prior to an emergency, so you know how to stop excessive water loss and flooding if a pipe breaks. Use a wrench to turn it firmly but gently in a clockwise direction.

Anagrams: Holiday Activities

1. goths snacking

3. enter grimm it

5. angling shuttling

7. ageist nick

9. dreg gonking

2. gnaw psfig trip

4. bikes cia kongo

6. angling thighs

8. oracling signs

10. moat touche

Local Doula Program Helps Whatcom Families Welcome Babies with Care and Support

Whatcom Healthy Children's Fund

Welcoming a new baby is one of life's biggest joys and challenges. For families in Whatcom County, that time can bring excitement, uncertainty, and a whole lot of change. Even in the best situations, every parent deserves extra support and care.

The [Healthy Children's Fund \(HCF\)](#) is helping make that possible by funding doula services for Whatcom County families who eligible for Medicaid, Medicare, or WIC—including those who are pregnant, within 12 months postpartum, or caring for an infant under a year—and by building the local infrastructure so these services can line up with the Apple Health doula benefit.

Doulas support families through pregnancy, birth, and the early days of parenthood, offering steady emotional and physical support. They're the calm voice in the room, the reassuring hand to hold, and the person reminding parents they're strong and capable.

For families in rural parts of Whatcom County, this kind of care can make a world of difference. Many parents face barriers such as long drives to appointments, limited providers, or fewer local resources. The HCF program helps close that gap — with doulas providing prenatal and postpartum visits right in families' homes, making care more personal and accessible.

"I see the benefits of this support daily, especially in how our community of doulas and parents uplifts each other," said Heron Paulson-Quick, one of eleven local doulas in the program. "It feels communal and powerful."

Heron, who speaks both English and Spanish, shared how meaningful it is to connect with families in their own language. "There are translation services at the hospital," they said, "but when you can really talk to someone, heart to heart, in their language — that's when care feels personal." Yazil Dhillpe-Castro, a doula who is a native Spanish speaker, joined the program in June of this year, further expanding access for Spanish-speaking families. The HCF program provides all the doulas with access to live video and phone interpreting 24/7.

Even families with strong communities around them find that a doula offers something uniquely different, someone focused entirely on their experience, emotions, and needs during birth and early parenting. "From bringing food and water to my client, to holding parents as they cry, to seeing them realize how powerful they are, it's an honor to be part of those moments," Heron said.

By investing in doula care, the Healthy Children's Fund is investing in families and in the future of Whatcom County. When parents feel supported and babies are born into care and community, everyone benefits.

Families interested in accessing doula services through the Healthy Children's Fund, or local doulas interested in partnering with the county to support families, can learn more by visiting the Whatcom County Health Department's [Healthy Pregnancy and Parenting page](#).



# RESOURCES

## Crisis/Emergency



**The 988 Lifeline** provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones.



**211** helps connect you to community resources statewide.



**24/7 Crisis Line**  
**800.584.3578**



**The Kendall Fire Station** (Whatcom County Fire District Station 92) is housed at the roundabout in

Kendall Washington and has fire fighters highly trained in fighting building fires as well as wild fires. They provide a number of other emergency services including medical aid, as well as offering fire safety and prevention education to our community.

Non-emergency number: (360) 599-2823

**Remember: in an emergency dial 911**

info@wcfd14.org



The **Red Cross** is a registered(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing disaster relief whether it's loss of home due to fire or flood to mobilizing volunteers, supplies and services in disaster stricken regions of the world. 1 800 RED CROSS ( 1-800-733-2767) <https://www.redcross.org>



### Salvation Army

For many, making ends meet is a daily challenge, forcing people to choose between things like

heating their homes and putting food on the table. We understand the stress these situations put on families and are here to help. 360-733-1410 [shevaun.malone@usw](mailto:shevaun.malone@usw). [salvationarmy.org](https://salvationarmy.org) <https://bellingham.salvationarmy.org> 2912 Northwest Ave., Bellingham



Serving individuals throughout Whatcom County, DVSAS is a volunteer-driven 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working to heal victims and end domestic and sexual assault. With client-centered, accessible housing and support services, DVSAS empowers victims and survivors while offering safe housing and the possibility of a new life. 24 HOUR HELPLINE 1.360.715.1563 Business Line: 360.671.5714 <https://www.dvsas.org>

## Maximizing your Heating Capacity: Wood Stove Tips

**It's getting to be that time of year again when we're trying to keep the house warm. Follow these tips to maximize the heating capacity of your wood stove.**

–Wood burning stoves are built and optimized to burn firewood. Other types of combustibles can create significant challenges with respect to controlling the combustion process, which can result at best in higher emissions, and at worst in a chimney fire.

–Different types of firewood have different properties. Hardwood, like birch, have a higher density than softer (more porous) varieties like spruce. The energy density of hard firewood is correspondingly higher. It follows that the volume of wood used has to be reduced. Bark has a different composition than the wood it protects and gives higher emissions of certain compounds. Try to avoid inserting many thin logs with lots of bark at the same time in the stove.

–When loading your wood stove, pile the logs horizontally in two layers so they aren't touching the sides or door. Place largest logs on bottom, medium next, then smallest (kindling or firestarters) on top. Avoid using

## Food



### Foothills Food Bank

Tuesday: 8-11am  
Thursday: 4-7pm

Mobile Pantry outside Food Bank: 1st Saturday of every month 11:30 - 12:30

And third Friday of every month 10am-11am

Contact: [Foothillsfoodbankcontact@gmail.com](mailto:Foothillsfoodbankcontact@gmail.com)  
360-392-8149

\*We are always looking for volunteers![www.foothillsfoodbank.org](http://www.foothillsfoodbank.org)



### St. Peter's Catholic Church Social

**Action** invites our community to join us every Thursday afternoon from 3:00 -5:00pm at 6210 Mt. Baker Hwy. Deming.

We are happy to accept your donations of lightly used clothing and household items. Also shelf stable food items, feminine care items, paper products, body wash, and cleaning products for our community resources bank. Our friends have access to these items as inventory lasts each week.

On the last Thursday of each month each family receives 4 pack toilet paper and laundry soap.

If you are in need of a specific item let us try to help you!



## Low Income Health Care



### Unity Care

**NW** provides affordable primary medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services for children and adults. Care NW accepts Washington Apple Health (Medicaid), Medicare, and most private insurance plans. For those who do not have insurance or who have high deductibles or co-pays, we offer a Sliding Fee Discount Program that can reduce the cost of care. Eligibility for the Sliding Fee Discount Program is based on household size and income. No one is ever denied services because of an inability to pay. 360-676-6177 <https://unitycarenw.org>

### Sea Mar Community Health Center



is a community-based organization committed to providing quality, comprehensive health, human, housing, educational and cultural services to diverse communities. Sea Mar proudly serves all persons without regard to race, ethnicity, immigration status, gender, or sexual orientation regardless of ability to pay for services. 360.671.3225 <https://www.seamar.org/whatcom-medical-bellingham.html>

paper to start your fire. Light your fire from the top. This ensures reaching optimal temperatures quickly and will spread the flames to larger combustibles below. It takes considerably longer for your fire to reach the temperatures required for clean combustion if you light it from below, and the emissions will be higher.

## Rebus 3



## Homeless Help



**Bridge 2 Services** is a mobile outreach program that bridges

homeless people to the organizations and services they need. We help make connections to vital services like housing, medical assessments, substance treatment, case management, and more. Supplies we offer: basic triage supplies like water, food (sometimes hot), snacks, clothing, hygiene items. Tents, sleeping bags, tarps, blankets. [info@ferndalecs.org](mailto:info@ferndalecs.org)  
Text: 813-957-4935  
<https://ferndalecs.org/bridge-2-services/>

## Local Healthcare



### Ask-a Nurse Clinics

Health

Ministries Network volunteer nurses provide free blood pressure checks, health counsel, referral and telehealth, as well as limited screening. On the fourth Tuesday of the month, the “Ask a Nurse” program is augmented by community partners that include the Family YMCA., Baker Foundation, of Whatcom County, and Support Northwest. 8-11am—2nd and 4th Tuesday each month at EWRRRC.

## DON'T FORGET!

Stop by an Ask a Nurse clinic at the EWRRRC on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month between 8 & 11.30 am, and get your A1C tested. It's the best way to understand your blood sugar levels and see if you're at risk for diabetes.



### Whatcom Mobile Medicine

Primary care services the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month from 1-5pm at East Whatcom Regional Resource Center. For an appointment, call 360.230.8157. We take non-emergency, acute and chronic health problems. Walk-in appointments are available. Sliding scale or Molina, Premera, UHC, Lifewise and more. Patients will not be refused help based on ability to pay.

## Mental Health



**NAMI** Whatcom Mental Health Support Group meets the 2nd Thursday of each month 10:00am -11:30AM at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center, 8251 Kendall Rd, Maple Falls WA 98226. This no-cost structured support group, facilitated by trained peers offers respect, encouragement, connection, and hope for individuals 18 and over affected by mental health conditions, including family and friends. Learn from other's experiences, share coping strategies, and offer each other encouragement and understanding in a safe, confidential space. For more information visit [www.namiwhatcom.org](http://www.namiwhatcom.org), call us at 360-671-4950 or email [namiadmin@namiwhatcom.org](mailto:namiadmin@namiwhatcom.org) NAMI Whatcom Office 800 E. Chestnut St., Suite 1C P.O. Box 5571, Bellingham, WA 98227 Phone: (360)-671-4950 Website: [namiwhatcom.org](http://namiwhatcom.org)

Deb Shawver, LICSW offers individual counseling sessions in-person and on telehealth for ages 13+, as well as support groups for teenagers and parents.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of each month, she will be joining the Ask-A-Nurse program from 8-11 AM. In addition, Deb is offering a free drop-in group for teenagers starting July 1st. This group will meet weekly on Tuesdays 6-7:30 PM through the summer.

Deb accepts most insurances, including Cigna (out of network) Molina, Medicare, Kaiser, Premera, Blue Cross, Regence, CHPW, Humana.

Catch-Me, LLC  
360-536-1565  
[catchmecoachme@gmail.com](mailto:catchmecoachme@gmail.com)  
<https://www.catch-me.io>



## Additional Health



**SEAS** is a free local resource navigation service available to families in Whatcom County. SEAS provides resource navigation for all families that have a child with a disability or developmental concern under 21. Additionally, in 2022, SEAS expanded to provide resource navigation for all families with a child under 5, and expecting families. From questions about your child's development or behaviors, to connecting to services or resources, SEAS works with you to help you get what you need so your children and family can thrive. SEAS family resource navigators are experts in Whatcom County's programs for families and children. They provide confidential, judgment-free, multi-language navigation services. Staff are multilingual and interpretive services are available. Our goal is to help every family get connected to the resources that they need. 360-715-7485 [seas@oppco.org](mailto:seas@oppco.org) <https://www.seaswhatcom.org>



### Center for Independence

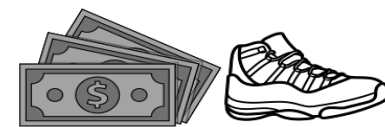
(CFI) is a non-residential, community-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization operated by people with disabilities, serving people with disabilities ages 14 and up. We serve as a resource for individuals with disabilities to fully access and participate in the community through outreach, advocacy, and independent living skills development. We work together with participants to achieve independent living goals such as self-advocacy, self-sufficiency, and self-determination. 1-888-482-4839 [info@cfi-wa.org](mailto:info@cfi-wa.org) <https://www.cfi-wa.org>



### Washington Connection

offers a fast and easy way for families and individuals to apply for a variety of services such as Food, Cash, Child Care, Long-Term Care, and Medicare Savings Programs. Individuals that are age 65 or older, blind or disabled may also apply for medical assistance. (877) 501-2233 <https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/>

## Rebus 4



## Addiction



### Lifeline

**Lifeline Connections** is a community-based behavioral health organization that specializes in providing confidential and compassionate care to individuals who experience a substance use and/or mental health condition. Dial or Text 988 the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, if you or a family member is experiencing a mental health crisis. The Lifeline is available for everyone, is free, and confidential. [info@lifelineconnections.org](mailto:info@lifelineconnections.org) (800) 604-0025 <https://lifelineconnections.org>



Whatcom County AA  
Alcoholics Anonymous Area 72 / District 11

### ALANON

A part of the Al-Anon Family Groups' fellowship for younger members whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. Find an Alateen meeting: <https://www.whatcomafg.org> Find an Alanon meeting: <https://www.whatcomafg.org>

### NA

Find a Meeting: <https://nwscna.org/meetings/> 360-647-3234 [WebServant@nwscna.org](mailto:WebServant@nwscna.org)

### AA

Find a Meeting: <https://whatcomaa.org/meetings> [altwebservant@district11aa.org](mailto:altwebservant@district11aa.org) <https://whatcomaa.org/> (360) 734-1688





# RESOURCES



## Addiction Continued



SAMHSA's National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP

(4357) (also known as the Treatment Referral Routing Service), or TTY: 1-800-487-4889 is a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations. 1-800-662-HELP (4357) <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/helplines/national-helpline>

## Seniors

### Whatcom Council on Aging



WHATCOM Council on Aging

**Aging**, in partnership with the people we serve, offers nutritional, health, social, recreational, and educational programs that promote lifelong independence. Vision: Lifelong empowerment through education, advocacy, and support: Independence through affordable housing, nutritious food, health care and programs that support lifetime wellness. Connections with community Senior Centers, programs and outreach. Opportunities for civic and community life engagement through education, recreation, and volunteerism. Self-respect through self-determined and independent living to prevent premature non-independent living and through opportunities for seniors to maintain autonomy. Good physical and mental health through proper nutrition, exercise, and other social activities. Community support built through advocacy for older adults and through a positive image of aging. Values: Whatcom Council on Aging engages in partnerships with agencies and community groups that support the values of Accessibility, Connectedness, Involvement, Independence, Individual Respect, Health, and Advocacy. 360-733-4030 <https://whatcomcoa.org/contact-us/>



### Northwest Regional Council

connects and creates new solutions to navigate the challenges of aging and disability. NWRC provides an extensive array of services and resource to assist the elderly and disabled improve their lives with short- and long-term solutions including health care, medical transportation, in-home care, case management, resources for veterans, housing, food, a variety of support services, and much more.

(360) 676-6749 <https://nwrcwa.org>  
600 Lakeway Drive  
Bellingham, WA

### seniorResources

#### Senior Resources

A guide to services and resources for seniors in Whatcom County 360.344.3333 [guide@olypen.com](mailto:guide@olypen.com) <https://nwseniors.com/whatcom-county/>



### Adult Protective Services (APS)

is dedicated to serving vulnerable adults. We investigate reports about abuse, abandonment, neglect, exploitation and self-neglect of vulnerable adults in Washington State. We collaborate with other agencies to offer protective services as needed. Our goal is to promote lives free of harm while respecting individual choice.

**Make an APS Report: Report Online or Call 1-877-734-6277** <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/adult-protective-services>

### Catholic Community Services

is the largest local private provider of assistance to individuals and families struggling with poverty and the most vulnerable in our communities. (360) 676-2164 [info@ccsww.org](mailto:info@ccsww.org) <https://ccsww.org>



### Medicare.gov

provides information on how to get started with Medicare, with what Medicare covers, as well as information about prescription drug/dental/vision plans, has health counseling, assists in finding a provider, and other health-related resources. 1-800-MEDICARE(1-800-633-4227) TTY users can call-877-486-2048 <https://www.medicare.gov>



### Volunteer Chore Program



provides volunteers to help the elderly (60 and over) and adults with functional disabilities remain independent in their own homes. The Chore Program serves as a safety net, helping those for whom other resources are unavailable. Chore assists 200+ Whatcom County residents each year. (360) 734-5121 ext. 1172 [chore@whatcomvolunteer.org](mailto:chore@whatcomvolunteer.org)



Each year we provide hundreds of hours of

support to caregivers in Whatcom and Skagit County through our free programs: Adult Day Programs for scheduled caregiver respite Support Groups for adults caring for those affected by dementia Adult Children Support Groups for those adults caring for a parent affected by dementia Dementia-Friendly events Art Access Classes with Allied Arts of Whatcom County Project Lifesaver (a partnering with the Whatcom County Sheriff) providing electronic technology to locate those who wander All seek to provide a support to those living with dementia as well as to those providing their care. (360) 671-3316 <https://www.dementiasupportnw.org>

## Family Services

### FAMILY SERVICES & PARENTING SUPPORT



There are four Family Services Coordinators at Mount Baker School District. Our mission is to create partnerships between families, school, and the community. All our services are confidential. We provide support which enables children and adolescents to live in a safe and healthy environment, as well as encourages them to be present and do their best in school. We assist families with resources, information and problem solving to help their children succeed in school.

We are available for confidential meetings by phone, at school, or at home.

(360) 383-2000  
(360) 383-2009  
**Kendall Elementary**  
(360) 383-2055 <https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/kendall>

7547 Kendall Road  
Maple Falls, WA 98266  
**Acme Elementary School**  
(360) 383-2045 <https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/acme>

5200 Turkington Road Acme, WA  
**Mt Baker Jr High School**  
(360) 383-2016 <https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mbjh>

5100 Mitchell Road Deming, WA  
**Mt Baker Senior High School**  
(360) 383-2015 <https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mbhs>  
4936 Deming Road Deming, WA



### PARENT TRUST

Because kids don't come with instructions! The Family Help Line is free call from anywhere

in Washington State, available to parents, caregivers, and anyone who has an interest in or questions about a child in their community. We can help you find resources, parenting classes, community resources and so much more. We are here to talk and problem solve with you! If you need a translator, please call and let us know – in most cases we can have a translator available in minutes! 800-932-4673 [familyhelpline@parenttrust.org](mailto:familyhelpline@parenttrust.org) <https://www.parenttrust.org>



### Care Connect

helps pregnant and newly parenting women prepare for delivery and parenthood with a series of classes. Lessons include topics such as Understanding Pregnancy, Labor and Delivery, Postpartum, Infant Hygiene, Infant First-Aid and Getting Your Baby to Sleep. At each weekly appointment, clients will meet one-on-one with a trained peer mentor for one hour. With each lesson that is completed, clients will earn "baby bucks" for supplies such as diapers, wipes, clothing and blankets. (360)-9057 [info@whatcomclinic.com](mailto:info@whatcomclinic.com) <https://www.whatcomclinic.com/services/education/>



**NYS** offers a wide variety of programs, services and support for Whatcom County youth, including

housing, health care, mental health, employment and education, gender identity support, and teen court. Youth are welcome to drop in. (360) 734-9862 [hello@nwys.org](mailto:hello@nwys.org) <https://www.nwys.org>  
1020 North State St. Bellingham,



### ECEAP & Head Start

**ECEAP** (pronounced "E-Cap") is the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program funded by Washington State for children 3 and 4 and, in some locations, infants or toddlers who are younger than 3 years old. Both ECEAP and Head Start include: Free early learning child care or preschool to support child's development and learning. In some locations, Head Start may also offer home-based services. Family support and parent involvement. Child health coordination and nutrition. Services responsive and appropriate to each child's and family's heritage and experience. Children who attend ECEAP and Head Start learn to manage their feelings, get along with others and follow classroom procedures. They build the beginning skills for reading, math and science. The programs work closely with parents to support their children's health and education and to meet family goals. They help families access medical and dental care and social services. [eceap@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:eceap@dcyf.wa.gov) for ECEAP [dcyf.hsco@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.hsco@dcyf.wa.gov) for Head Start <https://dcyf.wa.gov/services/earlylearning-childcare/eceap-headstart>.

**Family Reconciliation Services (FRS)** is a voluntary program serving runaway adolescents and youth who are in conflict with their families. The program targets adolescents between the ages of 12 through 17. FRS services are meant to resolve crisis situations and prevent unnecessary out-of-home placement. They are not long-term services. The services will assess and stabilize the family's situation. The goal is to return the family to a pre-crisis state and to work with the family to identify alternative methods of handling similar conflicts. If longer-term service needs are identified, FRS will help facilitate getting the youth and their family into ongoing services. If you experience any difficulties when calling to make a referral to the FRS program, contact Hannah Merley at 253-254-3473. For FRS Intakes call: 1-866-363-4276 and tell the intake worker that you would like "Family Reconciliation Services" to start working with your family.



### Department of Children, Youth, and Families

DCYF is a cabinet-level agency focused on the well-being of children. Our vision is to ensure that "Washington state's children and youth grow up safe and healthy—thriving physically, emotionally and academically, nurtured by family and community. **Report Child Abuse and Neglect** | 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276) <https://dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-welfare-system/cps>

### The Parent to Parent Support Programs

provide emotional support and information to families of children with developmental disabilities, delays, and special health care needs. Personal support from another parent, who has a child with similar needs, can be helpful in coping with many challenging experiences and feelings. Helping Parent volunteers have completed a training program and are available to provide support and information to other parents. All information will be kept confidential. There is no cost for this service. (360) 715-0170 [p2p@arcwhatcom.org](mailto:p2p@arcwhatcom.org) <https://www.p2pwhatcom.org/home>

### Parent to Parent of Whatcom County

## Veterans



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

### Veterans Administration

Serving

Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, and Island counties, we offer confidential help for Veterans, service members, and their families at no cost in a non-medical setting. Our services include counseling for needs such as depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the psychological effects of military sexual trauma (MST). We can also connect you with more support in VA and your community. 800-698-2411 <https://www.va.gov>  
3800 Byron Av, Suite 124, Bellingham,



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

"Serving Those Who Served"

### Vet Center

Serving Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, and Island counties, we offer confidential help for Veterans, service members, and their families at no cost in a non-medical setting. Our services include counseling for needs such as depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the psychological effects of military sexual trauma (MST). We can also connect you with more support in VA and your community. 800-698-2411 Hours: 24/7 <https://www.va.gov>



WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



### If you're a Whatcom County veteran,

we can help you or your family access local, state, and federal benefits and services. Call or visit us in person to find out how. 509 Girard Street, Lower Level, 676-6724 ext. #50700 M/W/F 12:30-5pm; information for all available

## Education

### ESL: English Language Learning



Whatcom Literacy Council  
Opening Doors. Changing Lives.

Roughly two thirds of the people we serve are immigrants who are learning English for the first time. More than half of our learners have no high school diploma or GED, and the majority have no computer at home. Our free, customized, individual tutoring and small group classes make a difference in their lives by...

\*Improving their basic reading, writing, math, computer, and parenting skills. \*Helping them prepare for a GED test and/or further education. \*Helping them attain US citizenship. \*Increasing their employment opportunities. \*Enabling self-sufficiency. \*Enhancing the stability of their daily lives. [ell@whatcomliteracy.org](mailto:ell@whatcomliteracy.org) (360) 685-6756 <https://www.whatcomliteracy.org/english-language-learner>



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL & HEALTH SERVICES

### Vocational Rehabilitation

Providing vocational rehabilitation services for disabled and displaced workers. (360) 812-6610 [DVRBellinghamReferral@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:DVRBellinghamReferral@dshs.wa.gov) <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/location/dshs-dvr-bellingham>  
4101 Meridian St Bellingham,



# RESOURCES

## Education/Jobs



Evergreen Goodwill offers ESOL classes at basic and intermediate levels for people who want to develop English literacy and improve language skills for the workplace. Classes include ESOL Basic through ESOL Level 4 and Citizenship Test Preparation. **Digital Skills:** With our different Digital Skills classes, you'll learn the basics of how to operate a computer, including file management (saving), typing (keyboarding), internet, and email. Later, you can take classes in Microsoft Word and Excel to learn to create spreadsheets for organizing data and documents for writing a resume or cover letter. We also offer online job search classes and special computer classes for non-native English speakers. No previous computer knowledge or experience is required. **Wraparound Services:** Evergreen Goodwill's instructors, case managers, and employment specialists support students holistically based on their individual needs and help remove barriers to employment and education. Students can receive support for barriers like housing, transportation, legal or immigration matters, among many others. **Reentry Services:** Finding work with a conviction history can be a challenge, but Evergreen Goodwill is here to help. Initially, our Employment and Reintegration Strategies class focuses on mental and physical health, stress management, the theory of change, and goal setting exercises. The second half of the curriculum helps students plan their careers, search for jobs, and prepare for interviews. (360) 752-2080 [evergreengoodwill.org](http://evergreengoodwill.org)

**WorkSource** is a statewide partnership of state, local and nonprofit agencies that provides an array of employment and training services to job seekers and employers in Washington. We also offer assistance in applying for unemployment. 888-316-5627 <https://www.worksourcewa.com>



**Vocational Rehabilitation** Providing vocational rehabilitation services for disabled and displaced workers. (360) 812-6610 [DVRBellinghamReferral@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:DVRBellinghamReferral@dshs.wa.gov) <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/location/dshs-dvr-bellingham> 4101 Meridian St Bellingham,



**Employment Security** Agency dealing with employment/unemployment issues. Apply for unemployment insurance. Paid family and medical leave. 360-890-3500 <https://www.esd.wa.gov>

## Immigrants/Refugees



**Helping Immigrant Families**

IRIS primarily serves immigrant women and children who are survivors of violence. IRIS responds to the urgent and unmet needs of immigrants in our communities in Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish counties in an inclusive and comprehensive manner. IRIS connects immigrants with needed resources in our communities by acting as liaisons for our recipients. IRIS also directly provides funding for items and services that are not accessible to this marginalized population. [info@irisnw.org](mailto:info@irisnw.org) 1050 Larrabee Ave. Ste. 104 #498 Bellingham 360-935-1688 [irisnw.org](http://irisnw.org)



**Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Resource Tool**

The Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance goal is to help refugee and immigrant families and individuals succeed and thrive in Washington state. <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=8e7e2fd0641f4f1e90bbaa36a0bc232d>



**Whatcom Human Rights Task Force** The Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP) provides

comprehensive immigration legal services and community education to advance the human rights and well-being of low-income immigrants and refugees. 360-389-3898 [whatcomhrtf@gmail.com](mailto:whatcomhrtf@gmail.com) <http://www.nwirp.org/>



WHATCOM DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER

**Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center**

services focus on both conflict prevention and conflict intervention and include mediation, training, facilitation, coaching, supervised visitation, and community education for youth, adults, families, organizations, and businesses throughout Whatcom County. Services are offered in-person and virtually. 206 Prospect Street, Bellingham 360/676.0122 [wdrc@whatcomdrc.org](mailto:wdrc@whatcomdrc.org) [www.whatcomdrc.org](http://www.whatcomdrc.org)



**Immigrant Rights Resources**

WAISN-Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network At WAISN, we are committed to defending immigrant and refugee communities from deportation while advocating for meaningful, systemic change. Our work focuses on both deportation defense and pushing for policies that ensure justice for all Washingtonians. Deportation Defense Hotline (Monday-Friday; 6am-6pm) at 1-844-724-3737. [info@waisn.org](mailto:info@waisn.org) <https://waisn.org>



**Supporting Families of Those Detained/**

**Deported** The Whatcom Community Foundation has three funds (they established them when the last ICE raid occurred several years ago) open to support immigrant families and those detained. The Immigrant Relief Fund is set to support Other organizations that are providing family support include the Immigrant Resources and Immediate Support (IRIS), school-district based family engagement specialists, and Racial Unity Now. 360.671.6463 [wcf@whatcomcf.org](mailto:wcf@whatcomcf.org) [https://wcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit\\_id=1523](https://wcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=1523)

## Home Owners/Utilities

**Washington State**



**Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF)** provides individual support and federal relief funds to qualified Washington homeowners behind on their mortgage due to pandemic hardship. This program is administered by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC). Pre-Purchase Homebuyer Education Classes or Housing Counseling Down-Payment Assistance Programs or other help buying a home Foreclosure Prevention Housing Counseling Legal Aid Home Repair or Home Modification Assistance Payment Assistance Programs (Availability varies. Call for information) 877.894.4663 [www.homeownership-wa.org](http://www.homeownership-wa.org)



We are a local government agency that serves thousands of residents in Whatcom County. **The Bellingham Housing Authority(BHA)& the Whatcom County Housing Authority** work together provide needed housing in our community. We serve Low-Income Families, Elderly People, Those with Disabilities, & Working Families in need of affordable housing. (360) 676-6887 ext. 1025 [info@bellinghamhousing.org](mailto:info@bellinghamhousing.org) <https://bellinghamhousing.org>

You can be emailed important Columbia Valley Water District News and Updates by creating a login at Xpressbillpay. Go to [www.cv-wd.com](http://www.cv-wd.com) On the home page you will see a button that says "Pay Your Bill Online" hit that button and it will take you to Xpressbillpay.com. Create a login by providing your email address and answering a couple of questions. It's that simple! Once you have a login you will begin to receive email updates about Columbia Valley Water District activities like: Emergency Notifications and Newsletters.Although creating a login will ensure you receive email notifications - Here you can also pay your bills online, sign up for auto-pay and/or paperless billing if you choose. All you need is an internet connection and an email address. Once you sign up for your account and start using this service, you'll wonder how you ever got along without it! It's simple to use. If you choose paperless billing, every month we'll send you a reminder email to let you know when your bill is online. Then, you just log into your account at [xpressbillpay.com](http://xpressbillpay.com) or use our mobile app to view your bill. You can also see two years' history of your account online, so you can compare your current bill to a previous bill.When you're ready to pay your bill, select a payment type. You can pay with a credit card, or debit card. Enter the information and you're done! It's that easy, and only takes you a few minutes each month. Or you can set up your bill on Auto Pay and have it automatically paid for you each month! 6229 Azure Way, Maple Falls, WA (360)599-1699 [admin@cv-wd.com](mailto:admin@cv-wd.com)



**Whatcom County Water District 13** is committed to protecting the environment and the natural habitat while supplying pristine water and reliable wastewater services to our customers. 360-599-1801 [admin@wcwd13.com](mailto:admin@wcwd13.com) 532 Sprague Valley Drive, Maple Falls



**Habitat for Humanity in Whatcom County**

provides a unique opportunity for hardworking families to help build and buy their own homes. We work closely with qualified individuals and families to build safe, decent, and affordable homes here in Whatcom. 360.715.9170 [info@hfhwhatcom.org](mailto:info@hfhwhatcom.org) <https://www.hfhwhatcom.org>



**Whatcom/Skagit Housing**

Since 1976, we have assisted over 700 families in building their own homes in Whatcom and Skagit Counties. Mutual Self-Help combines your sweat equity with technical assistance from WSH and affordable loans from USDA Rural Development. (360) 398-0223 [julia@whatcomskagithousing.com](mailto:julia@whatcomskagithousing.com) <https://whatcomskagithousing.com>



The dementia journey isn't easy.

Reaching us is.

**You're not alone. We're here to help.**

24/7 Helpline • 1.800.272.3900

Visit us online at [www.alzwa.org](http://www.alzwa.org)

**ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION**



**Energy Assistance**

Do you need help with energy costs?

Apply for Energy Assistance directly through PSE now by going to: <https://www.pse.com/en/account-and-billing/assistance-programs> 1-888-225-5773

**PSE's Bill Discount Rate (BDR)** program provides you with ongoing help on your monthly energy bill. Depending on your household income and household size, you can save 5% to 45% a month on your bill. There is one simple application to fill out. In most cases, no proof of income is required to apply. And the application only takes a few minutes to complete online. If you've received energy assistance in the past, it's likely you qualify. 1-888-225-5773 <https://www.pse.com/en/account-and-billing/assistance-programs/bill-discount-rate>

**PSE customers: Manage your energy usage online.**

For personalized energy-saving suggestions, complete an online home assessment to update your home's energy profile in the my usage of your online account. Measure, and monitor your home's usage. Find additional energy efficiency suggestions in our to Save library. To learn more or receive personalized advice over the phone, call an Energy Advisor1-800-562-1482, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



**Whatcom County Property Tax Exemption for Senior Citizens and People with Disabilities** If you are a senior citizen or a person with disabilities with your residence in Washington State you may qualify for a property tax reduction under the property tax exemption for senior citizens and people with disabilities program. 360-778-5000 <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/265/Property-Tax-Exemption>

## Rebus 5



## Septic Systems Evaluation Rebates

Do you need your septic system evaluated? Washington State and local public health regulations require septic system owners to have a complete evaluation of their septic system performed one to three years (depending on the type of system) and to report the condition of their system to the local health jurisdiction. Whatcom County Health Department is offering enhanced rebates for homeowners who have senior or disability tax exemptions who need their septic system evaluated. You can learn more at: [whatcomcounty.us/septicrebate](http://whatcomcounty.us/septicrebate), or call: 360.778.6267.

## Are you eligible for free home weatherization?

**Check it out at PSE:** [https://www.pse.com/rebates/insulation?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=rem-wx-e&sc\\_camp=D919B664C064490784988653CB82AEE3&gad\\_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw3624BhBAEiwAkxgTOg2T58DRtQs9HtgCYL1gm0vPI6ITIUCd4f2jgMPVuzFWMdc8uuWBkhoC7VcQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.pse.com/rebates/insulation?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=rem-wx-e&sc_camp=D919B664C064490784988653CB82AEE3&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw3624BhBAEiwAkxgTOg2T58DRtQs9HtgCYL1gm0vPI6ITIUCd4f2jgMPVuzFWMdc8uuWBkhoC7VcQAvD_BwE)



ORGANIZATIONS



**Columbia Valley Park and Recreation District** is a local government

body serving the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area in the East Whatcom Foothills. Learn more about our commissioners and the work CVPRD is doing on our About page at [cv-prd.org](http://cv-prd.org). We welcome the public at our meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 6.30 pm at 8251 Kendall Rd, Maple Falls, Rm 3. You can contact us at: [cvparksandrec@gmail.com](mailto:cvparksandrec@gmail.com) or visit out website at: <https://cv-prd.org>.



**KAVZ Radio is Your Voice of the Valley** in the South Fork Nooksack Valley and East Whatcom County.

We are the only community, low-power FM radio station in East Whatcom County. Please contact us at [info@kavz.org](mailto:info@kavz.org) if you want to find out how you can contribute, participate and learn. You can stream music from our website 24 hours a day at: <https://foothillsinfo.com/print-and-radio/> (360) 230-8176 [info@kavz.org](mailto:info@kavz.org) <https://www.kavz.org>



Local community-led Watch Group focused on safety in the Columbia Valley UGA area.

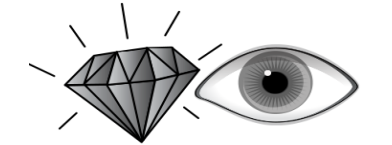
Monthly meetings held the first Tuesday of each month at the North Fork Library. [nwmaplefalls@gmail.com](mailto:nwmaplefalls@gmail.com) 360-933-1620 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/718686472042194>



**The Foothills Community Alliance (FCA)**, a

501c3 organization was formed in 2020 by local community members with the purpose of funding projects aimed at improving the lives of the residents of Columbia Valley UGA. JOIN US THE 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH at the Kendall Elementary Library, 7547 Kendall Rd. Maple Falls at 5:30pm in person and via Zoom Look for our event on our Calendar and in The Foothills Outlook and on [www.foothillsinfo.com](http://www.foothillsinfo.com). [info@foothillscommunityalliance.com](mailto:info@foothillscommunityalliance.com) 360-410-9114 [foothillscommunityalliance.com](http://foothillscommunityalliance.com)

Rebus 6



**East Whatcom Regional Resource Center**

The East Whatcom Regional Resource Center Information and Referral (I&R) Team serves the East Whatcom Community as a branch of the Opportunity Council. We provide the same access to services that can be found at our downtown Bellingham Opportunity Council location. 8251 Kendall Rd, Maple Falls. Or contact us at 360-599-3944. 8251 Kendall Rd (360) 599-3944 [ewrrc-allstaff@oppco.org](mailto:ewrrc-allstaff@oppco.org) <https://www.oppco.org/ewrrc/>



**Mt. Baker Chamber of Commerce**

Staff and Volunteers are on hand to answer questions and provide suggestions to travelers and locals alike. Some business support services are available including printing, laminating, and notary. Stop by, Rebecca and Sonya will be happy to see you! The Chamber Board of Directors meets once per month on the second Tuesday at 6 o'clock in the Maple Falls Town Hall. Members and visitors are welcome. Contact Rebecca if you'd like to make a presentation. The Mt. Baker Visitor Center in the Maple Falls Town Hall is open daily from 10 am to 4 pm, 360-599-1518 [mtbakervisitorcenter@gmail.com](mailto:mtbakervisitorcenter@gmail.com)



**Do you live in the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area? NEED A NEW WOOD STOVE? WE CAN HELP!**

A major Northwest Clean Air Agency effort focuses on reducing wood smoke in the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area. We do this in part by helping people replace old, polluting wood stoves with new stoves and ductless heat pumps. This helps cut down on smoke during winter periods when stoves are in heavy use. To date, NWCAA has funded the replacement of nearly 200 wood stoves in Columbia Valley. For more information, check NWCAA's website: <https://nwcleanairwa.gov/resources/columbia-valley-air-quality-improvement-project/> Columbia Valley (Whatcom County) air quality improvement project - North West Clean Air Wood stove Change-Out Program: This program helps residents in the Columbia Valley urban growth area of Whatcom County replace old wood stoves with new, certified wood or pellet stoves and/or heat pumps. It is open to Columbia Valley residents who meet certain qualifications.

Machu Picchu or Stonehenge for Christmas?

Do you struggle finding family-friendly activities while your kids are on winter break from school? This year do something different! Traveling to visit some of the world's most interesting places may not be on your holiday list of things to do, but this year gather the family around and take some virtual tours of destination hotspots, historical sites, fabulous art galleries and spectacular museums.

Begin by letting each family member choose one or two places they've dreamed of visiting and have them compile a little background on each including, traditional foods, national celebrations, where they're located, and other special topics. You can deep-dive into Chinese history by walking a section of the Great Wall of China or climb to the ancient Incan city of Machu Picchu and see how they planted gardens, watch the sun come up at Stonehenge and ponder how they moved those stones, or learn about and watch thermal energy in action at Yellowstone National Park. Wander the ancient city of Troy via satellite and street views, discover the untouched geology of the Grand Canyon. The list is endless.



How about taking a flavorful tour of Machu Picchu by pairing it with a traditional Peruvian dish called Aji de Gallina (chicken stew) (<https://www.piscotrail.com/2012/06/03/recipes/aji-de-gallina>). Or make sushi and take a walking tour of Kyoto, Japan.

Tips for making the most of your virtual vacation:

- Choose the Right Device: For the most immersive experience, use a device with a large screen and high resolution.
  - Use Headphones or other good audio: Many virtual tours include audio elements like narration and background music.
  - Take Your Time: Don't rush through the tour. Set aside a specific time when the whole family can gather and participate. Make snacks and turn off all the cell phones so there are no interruptions.
- Virtual tours allow you to navigate at your own pace, so take advantage of that.
- Engage with Interactive Elements: If the tour includes interactive elements like clickable objects, be sure to use them; they offer more information and enhance your experience.
  - Do Some Research: Before starting the tour, have family members do a little research on the location they've added to the list. This can give you some context and help you appreciate the significance of what you're seeing.
  - Virtual touring the world is easy with a laptop, cellphone or tablet and an internet connection. A VR set isn't required for any of these, but for other tour sites they are necessary. There are quite a few websites that offer virtual tours but here's a short list of those I checked out, all of which are free:

**Matter Port Discover:** (<https://discover.matterport.com>)

**Hop a Tour:** ([hopatour.com](http://hopatour.com))

**Google Earth:** Explore the world at your own pace or take guided tours curated by organizations.

**Virtual Vacation:** Offers live camera footage, aerial views, and city videos to explore by clicking on a map.

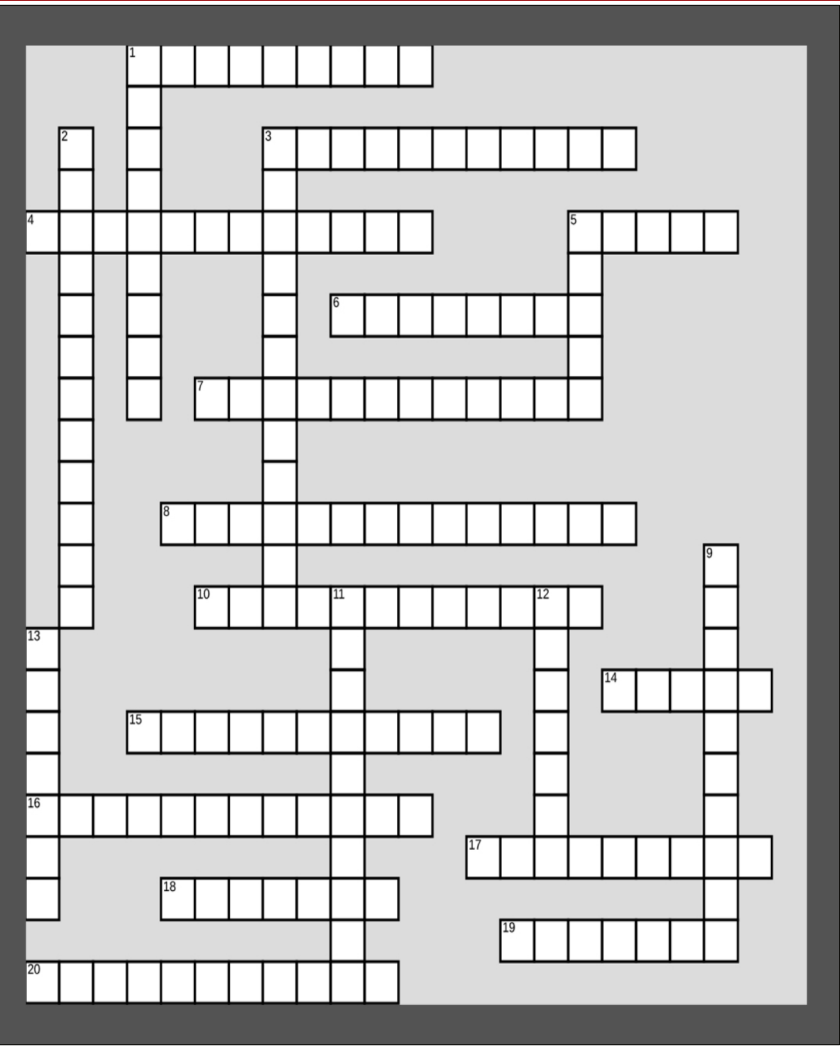
**Nomad in Love:** Has a great list of places to visit that you can click on right in their website. ([https://nomadandinlove.com/virtual-tours-for-travel/#Virtual\\_Tours\\_How\\_To\\_Travel\\_For\\_Free\\_From\\_Home](https://nomadandinlove.com/virtual-tours-for-travel/#Virtual_Tours_How_To_Travel_For_Free_From_Home))

So, get out the world map, make a list of places to visit, and tour the world for the holidays!

In the column to the right are a short list of several free tour websites I visited to check them out. Each has their own unique offering so test them to find the one/s best for your family.

December Crossword: Classic Christmas Movies

Solution on back page



Across

1. Luther learns the true meaning of xmas
3. The sweetest Who of all
4. He despairs due to financial woes
5. Home Alone
6. Willie Sokes
7. Clark, Ellen, Audrey, Kevin are?
8. Prospector who helps Rudolph
10. Jon Lovitz's blue hat wearing role
14. Believes himself to be an elf
15. RV drivin', trouble causin' relative
16. ? battles the Nut Cracker
17. He loves his ladies leg lamp
18. It is or isn't it an xmas movie?
19. St Nick's frightening counterpart
20. Cautions Scrooge 3x's

Down

1. He's a mean one
2. Makes sure the Polar Express runs on time
3. 1<sup>st</sup> comic strip to be turned into TV show
5. Reclusive toymaker
9. Jack Skellington wants to be?
11. She snaps a pic and saves xmas
12. He'll shoot his eye out
13. Inspires Scrooges reformation

**Machu Picchu cont.**

**Google Earth:** Explore the world at your own pace or take guided tours curated by organizations.

**Virtual Vacation:** Offers live camera footage, aerial views, and city videos to explore by clicking on a map.

**Nomad in Love:** Has a great list of places to visit that you can click on right in their website. ([https://nomadandinlove.com/virtual-tours-for-travel/#Virtual\\_Tours\\_How\\_To\\_Travel\\_For\\_Free\\_From\\_Home](https://nomadandinlove.com/virtual-tours-for-travel/#Virtual_Tours_How_To_Travel_For_Free_From_Home))

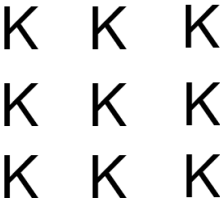
So, get out the world map, make a list of places to visit, and tour the world for the holidays!

We recommend using Google Chrome web browser because some of these virtual tour websites are not in English. Chrome makes it really easy translating foreign languages to English or whatever language you prefer.

**Matterport Discover--** <https://discover.matterport.com>

**Hop A Tour--** <https://hopatour.com>

Rebus 7







# Community Events Calendar



For more information about each event, go to [foothillsinfo.com](http://foothillsinfo.com) and click on our Events Calendar. You can find a description of the event, see the cost, view the location on our map, visit their website, and more.



## DECEMBER 2025 FOOTHILLS EVENT CALENDAR

SUN 30	MON Dec 1	TUE 2	WED 3	THU 4	FRI 5	SAT 6
	<div>● 1pm Whatcom Mobile M</div>	<div>● 8am Ask-a-Nurse Clinic</div> <div>● 8am Catch Me: Teen Me</div> <div>● 8am Foothills Food Bank</div> <div>3 more</div>	<div>● 10:30am Storytime @ De</div> <div>● 6pm Good Yarns</div>	<div>● 3pm St Peter's "Thursda</div> <div>● 4pm Foothills Food Bank</div>		<div>● 10am Foothills Food Ban</div>
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		<div>● 8am Foothills Food Bank</div> <div>● 10:30am Digital Equity E</div> <div>● 10:30am North Fork Stor</div>	<div>● 10:30am Storytime @ De</div> <div>● 6pm Good Yarns</div>	<div>● 3pm St Peter's "Thursda</div> <div>● 4pm Foothills Food Bank</div> <div>● 6:30pm Columbia Valley</div>		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	<div>● 1pm Whatcom Mobile M</div> <div>● 2:45pm Mt Baker Comm</div>	<div>● 8am Ask-a-Nurse Clinic</div> <div>● 8am Catch Me: Teen Me</div> <div>● 8am Foothills Food Bank</div> <div>2 more</div>	<div>● 10:30am Storytime @ De</div> <div>● 6pm Good Yarns</div>	<div>● 3pm St Peter's "Thursda</div> <div>● 4pm Foothills Food Bank</div> <div>● 5:30pm Foothills Commu</div>	<div>● 10am Foothills Food Bar</div>	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		<div>● 8am Foothills Food Bank</div> <div>● 10:30am Digital Equity E</div> <div>● 10:30am North Fork Stor</div>	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day		
28	29	30	31	Jan 1	2	3
	<div>● 1pm Whatcom Mobile M</div>	<div>● 8am Ask-a-Nurse Clinic</div> <div>● 8am Catch Me: Teen Me</div> <div>● 8am Foothills Food Bank</div> <div>2 more</div>	New Year's Eve	New Year's Day		<div>● 10am Foothills Food Ban</div>

### PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Crossword Solution  
Across

- 1. THE KRANKS
- 3. CINDY LOU WHO
- 4. GEORGE BAILEY
- 5. KEVIN
- 6. BAD SANTA
- 7. THE GRISWOLDS
- 8. YUKON CORNELIUS
- 10. HANUKKA HARRY
- 14. BUDDY
- 15. COUSIN EDDIE
- 16. THE MOUSE KING
- 17. THE OLDMAN
- 18. DIE HARD
- 19. KRAMPUS
- 20. JACOB MARLEY

Down

- 1. THE GRINCH
- 2. THE CONDUCTOR
- 3. CHARLIE BROWN
- 5. KLAUS
- 9. SANDY CLAWS
- 11. KATE PIERCEY
- 12. RALPHIE
- 13. TINY TIM

**Do you have an idea** for a feature story, Helping Hands article, or an interview with someone who is making a positive difference in the Foothills communities? Do you have photos of the area you'd like to share with the community? Would you like to write reviews of local events and activities? Are you interested in writing about local history, interesting sites, local geology, and more?

**LET US KNOW!**  
We're always interested in what you'd like to see in the paper as well as what you'd like to share.  
Contact the editor at: [info@foothillsinfo.com](mailto:info@foothillsinfo.com)

Riddle Me This

Only three people were on the fishing trip—a grandfather, his son, and his grandson.

Rebus solutions

- 1. Chain of events
- 2. Romantic
- 3. Cold beer
- 4. Cashew
- 5. Eyeliner
- 6. July (jewel eye)
- 7. Canine

Soduko

1	8	7	3	6	4	2	9	5
2	3	9	5	7	8	6	4	1
5	6	4	1	2	9	3	8	7
7	1	8	9	3	2	4	5	6
4	9	6	7	1	5	8	3	2
3	2	5	8	4	6	1	7	9
8	7	1	6	9	3	5	2	4
6	5	2	4	8	7	9	1	3
9	4	3	2	5	1	7	6	8



**Do you have or know of an upcoming event? Let us know by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior and we'll help promote it. Email the editor at [info@foothillsinfo.com](mailto:info@foothillsinfo.com).**