

The FOOTHILLS OUTLOOK

Connecting Foothills community members with vital resources, organizations and events



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WHERE DOES THE BUCK STOP?

Cleaning Up Blighted Properties in
Columbia Valley

by Melonie Ancheta

In 2014 a resident of Columbia Valley (CV) got fed up with a neighbor's mounds of garbage so he went to the County and to get help. It quickly became clear to him that there was no recourse for dealing with a blighted property out here so he went to Barbara Brenner (former county council member) and Jack Louws who was the county executive at that time. With their assistance a code enforcement team was created that included one person from code enforcement, one person from the Solid Waste division of the Health Department, local law enforcement, the local fire chief, a community member, the Mt Baker Chamber of Commerce and one other person. The CV resident was the key player on this team because he personally knew the circumstances as well as the people involved with each property. The team was able to use his knowledge in developing strategies for dealing with each of the problem properties.



Each instance of a blighted property has its own unique genesis and process: sometimes it's someone who has become ill or disabled and can no longer dispose of their garbage properly. Sometimes it is a result of mental illness, or someone who believes his junk cars will be valuable someday, or a person who thinks their junk will someday be useful. Whatever the case may be, each must be managed with sensitivity, compassion and support that can include other forms of intervention such as involving family members, senior services, mental health providers and more.

Some properties were simply vacant lots where people decided to start dumping their garbage; those were the easiest to get cleaned up. The team contacted the property owners and offered them a one-time cleanup if the owner would secure the property to prevent future dumping.

After reviewing each case, the team selected thirty five of the worst properties to tackle and began strategizing how to deal with each situation according to the circumstances they found there. For example, one home owner was a hoarder and the team knew they couldn't just go in there and haul all of it away without distressing her, so they got her son and mental health professionals involved who helped provide support when she felt as if parts of herself were being taken away.

By 2020 they had cleaned up all but ten of the original thirty five properties but those last ten people refused all help and would not comply with the laws. Economics intervened in the form of rising real estate prices and of the last ten properties five of those were bought out by developers who cleaned them up. The five that were left consisted of junk car/ scrap yards, one property on which the owner had placed several small RVs and rented them out, and vacant lots occupied by squatters. Today those junk yards and encampments are still there and are at the top of the list of properties that need intervention.

With about a seventy percent win rate at the time Covid hit and clean-up efforts had to be curtailed, this team had developed effective methods of dealing with most blighted properties. But what about those junk cars, dead refrigerators, scrap metal, and piles of old tires? Also, how to deal with squatters and unscrupulous landlords?

That is still a big question.



A few years ago Opportunity Council in conjunction with the health department held a garbage cleanup day where they had several dumpsters available at the resource center for community members to dispose of their garbage. The dumpsters were filled to the maximum within minutes while vehicles sat in long lines in both directions on the highway. The health department gave out vouchers to those turned away to offset dump fees, but despite the vouchers, in many cases those people simply could not afford the gas to go all the way across the county to Ferndale and back, so their garbage ended up back home with them.

The Whatcom County Health and Community Services responds to complaints by trying to "work with the property owner or tenant to mitigate the human and environmental health hazard." Their goal is always to protect, promote, and preserve health, not to cause someone to lose their property, be evicted, or become homeless.

Several years ago there was a strong push to implement an abatement program that would have set up protocols and provide at least one solution for dealing with blighted properties. This would have been an effective long-term solution, however when the person making the request to the county council requested street lights instead of an abatement program, that program never got further than the paper on which it was written.

This month two community members requested the Whatcom County Council pass new laws that allow for "...foreclosure on Blighted, Distressed and Abandoned properties when the homeowner has failed to correct the problem after a designated period. The County Executive will confiscate the property and sell it at market value."

In addition they asked that a task force be created to develop procedures to "communicate with residents that their property is in violation of Whatcom County property codes and the specific time to act before their property is fined, condemned or confiscated and sold." However a council member recommended the task force look at the problem countywide as Columbia Valley is not the only area affected by blight.

According to Washington State law (RCW 47.41), when a junk yard is in violation of state laws, after appropriate notification and other procedures have been done, law enforcement is authorized to intervene and act, along with code enforcement officers, to remove the junk. Our Deputies Lebedev and Shelton are using their authority to have junk vehicles towed that are sitting on public property, even if it is only by an inch. However, as deputies their authority does not stretch much further than what they are already doing. So law enforcement at the state and county levels have the authority to intervene, particularly with illegal junk yards such as the ones in Columbia Valley. The problem is actually getting those who are supposed to enforce the laws to do so.

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If you are a resource provider, belong to an organization, or have a local event, and wish to be included in our listings, please contact us at info@foothillsinfo.com or go to foothillsinfo.com to request an account.

**Submissions Deadline:
15th of each month**

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bugwalla
by Doug Imhoff

**CALLING ALL MAKERS!!
SEE INFO ON PAGE 6**

Check out our website, foothillsinfo.com, for more information!

Go to our Event Calendar and click on any listing to learn more about local events, meetings and other activities. You can also find back issues of the Outlook in our Archive, contact us with questions, story ideas, and more through our contact form.



COMMUNITY SCENE

From Kristi's Desk

by Kristi Warren Slette
Director Whatcom Family & Community Network

Fall Fun Elevates Family Well-being



Research tells us that when families laugh, play and enjoy quality time together, they bounce forward through tougher times together as well. Autumn is a great time to cultivate a sense of togetherness and identify ways to have fun. Families that take time for walks, do simple chores or activities together including eating some meals together each week develop stronger **Family Resilience**.

The concept of resilience is not just an individual trait. It can be a family, neighborhood or community trait as well. What resilience is made of is different for each person in a family and for the family unit as a whole. Individuals contribute their strengths and abilities to the whole and the family dynamic can help develop and expand individuals' strengths. The building blocks of resilience are also called "protective factors". The more resilience we have—the more protected we are as we face risks and hard times.

Dr. Ann Masten organizes resilience factors into three categories: 1) **Belonging and Attachment**—the people who care for, support and love us and vice versa and the people with whom we feel a sense of acceptance and belonging; 2) **Capabilities**—things we can do and learn to do; and 3) **Community; Culture and Spirituality**—Other people and systems that we are connected to in community. Fall shifts us indoors.

Work together to create a "Fall Fun Bucket List". Add some of the following to it...and have fun adding your own ideas!

- Learn to make a new soup recipe and teach the youngest among you to be the cooks.
- Play a game that some of you excel at and Learn a board or card game that you've never tried.
- Rearrange the furniture together—work together to deep clean the couch cushions and the dust bunnies from the corner before enjoying your new look to your living room.
- Go outdoors for an autumn scavenger hunt: Look for an orange leaf; a red leaf; a yellow leaf; a small, medium and large pine cone; and any still blooming flower. First person to collect all the items gets to choose a movie to watch later in the day or on the weekend.
- Buy a handful of glow stick necklaces or bracelets at the dollar store—one for each member of the family. Put on some danceable music and host a "glow in the dark dance party" with some cold drinks after sweating it out to the oldies.
- Make a blanket fort big enough for everyone in the family—adults too! Bring a book to read to each other—take turns reading or share stories about your family history or brainstorm family goals with one another.
- Play bobbing for apples.
- Carve, paint or color any size of pumpkins together.
- Have a fall themed movie viewing party.
- Play charades.
- Go to a corn maze.
- Everybody learn a new skill—knitting, ice skating, bread baking.
- Go for a walk in the autumn sun or wind.
- Eat at least one snack or meal together every day—or week if that's what works.

There is all sorts of fall fun awaiting and many opportunities to build family resilience that increases connection, belonging and laughter!



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



Dear Deb,

My daughter came home scared and mad after being bullied on the bus! I feel so helpless and angry myself—what should I do?—*Urgently Asking*

Dear Urgently Asking,

First off, this is one of the toughest feelings as a parent—to see your child hurt while you feel powerless to protect them. But you're not powerless. Let's focus on what *is* in your control:

- **Call transportation (the bus barn).** They often respond quickly to student and parent concerns and questions.
- **Call the school principal.** Notify them so they can step in and monitor.
- **Teach coping skills.** This is the most important step, whether or not you take the other actions. And, if there was *any* physical harm, report it right away.

Bullies thrive on reaction. Think of it like math: *negative + negative = more negative*. If your child can respond with calm, confusion, or humor, it often takes the sting away. Don't respond literally to what they are saying (do not catch the bait) For example:

- "Huh... what makes you so interested in me?" (Shifts attention back to the bully.)
- "I'm not sure what *YOU'RE* doing, but I'm busy with my game right now."
- "Are you OK?"
- "Did you want that to hurt me?"
- "What a weird thing to say out loud!"
- "I'm sorry you are having a bad day"

By practicing responses like these, your child learns that they *do* have power—they can choose not to get rattled or take it personally. And the best gift we can give our kids is showing them how to stand tall in tough moments, even when others are unkind.

With care,

Deb



Take your kids for a leaf gathering walk then turn your fall jewels into a fun activity that will brighten up your windows!

Autumn Leaf Sun Catchers

With all the gorgeous fall leaves, a fun and colorful activity to do with kids is making leaf sun catchers to hang in your windows.

Supplies

- White glue
- Colorful fall leaves
- Wax paper
- Small dish for glue (the glue will wash out)
- Small paint brush
- Clear tape for hanging

Instructions

Paint a thin layer of glue onto your wax paper in any shape you want. Lay your leaves onto the wet glue. If you leave spaces between them you get a stained glass effect, or you can overlap them if you want (if your glue has already dried, just add another coat). After you have all your leaves laid out, let them dry then add another coat of glue on top of them. Place another sheet of wax paper over the one with leaves and press down to remove air pockets and wrinkles. Let it dry overnight. Once completely dry you can cut out different shapes or leave them as they are. Pierce a spot to insert string or yarn for hanging in a sunny window.

These make great grandma gifts as well!



Cooking with your kids is a great way to bond! Try this simple, delicious recipe and see the glow of pride on their faces when the family digs in!

PORCUPINE MEATBALLS

Prep: 10 min Cook: 55 min Total: 65 min 4 servings/14 meatballs

Ingredients:

1lb ground meat (85-90% lean)	1/2 cup water
1/2 cup uncooked long grain rice	1 med yellow onion finely diced
3/4 teaspoon salt	1/4 teaspoon black pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil	2 cloves garlic, minced
1 (15 oz) can tomato sauce	1 1/4 cup water
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce	1 tablespoon chopped parsley (optional)

Instructions:
In a large bowl combine ground meat, water, rice 1/4 of diced onion, salt and pepper. Mix together with hands until evenly combined.
Prepare sauce: Heat oil and garlic in large (12 inch) skillet over med heat. When garlic starts to bubble around edges, add remaining onion and saute until onion begins to soften and turn translucent, 3 minutes. Stir in tomato sauce, Worcestershire sauce, and water.
Cook meatballs: While the sauce comes to a simmer, portion out meatballs (about 2 tblspns meat mix per ball). Place them in sauce in a single layer and let sauce return to a simmer. Turn heat to low, cover skillet with lid or foil. Let meatballs simmer until tender, rice is cooked, rice grains are poking out of meatballs, and the sauce has thickened, about 45 minutes. Check at 30 minutes and if sauce is too thick, stir in a splash of water.
Serve: Garnish with chopped parsley and ENJOY!



Talking to Your Health Care Provider: How to make the most of your appointment

Talking to your provider is an important part of managing your health, but for some it's not always easy. Maybe you feel nervous, don't want to waste their time, or walk out realizing you forgot to ask an important question.

The good news is, with a little preparation and some simple strategies, you can make your visits more useful and less stressful.

Get Ready Before You Go

A few minutes of prep can make a big difference. Jot down your main concerns, any new symptoms, or questions you've been meaning to ask. If you've started or stopped medications, noticed side effects, or made lifestyle changes, write those down too. Having a short list helps you stay focused, even if nerves kick in once you're in the room. If you have a long list, prioritize your concerns so your most important points aren't missed.

Be Straightforward

It's tempting to downplay symptoms or leave out details you find embarrassing, but honesty really does help your doctor give the best care. Try to explain when your symptoms started, how often they happen, and how they affect your daily life. If you don't understand something your doctor says, speak up—ask them to explain in a different way.

Bring Someone Along

If you're worried about forgetting information or just feel more comfortable with support, consider bringing a trusted friend or family member. They can take notes, remind you of questions, and give you another set of ears to catch details you might miss. 4 ears are better than 2!

Ask Questions—Then Ask One More

A doctor's visit shouldn't be one-sided. If you're given a new medication or test, ask why it's needed, what the risks or side effects are, and what other options you might have. A helpful question to remember is: "What happens if I do nothing?" That often gives you a clearer picture of your choices.

Wrap Up with a Plan

Before you leave, repeat back the main takeaways—your diagnosis, the next steps, and when to follow up. That way you know you're both on the same page. Some clinics also provide a printed summary, which can be useful later.

Build Trust Over Time

A good relationship with your provider doesn't happen overnight. The more open you are, the easier it becomes to talk honestly. Think of your care provider as a partner who wants to help you stay healthy, not just someone who checks boxes on a chart.

EVERYDAY HEALTH

We Are What We Eat

ARTIFICIAL BLUES — BLUE DYES, and RED DYES, and GREEN DYES

By Linda Kerth

I ate some strawberry cream cheese pastries this morning, small 2x3" rectangles of pure delight. Then I looked at the label, and there it was, after sodium benzoate: Red 40, yellow 5 and 6. Yikes! I had just eaten sweet and colorful petroleum-derived chemicals that do not occur in nature.

More than 36,000 American food products contain Red 40; and *more than 8,000 foods still contain carcinogenic Red 3*. In the US, synthetic dyes must be listed in the ingredients, but a good deal of flexibility is allowed. Color dyes, like Blue 1 for example, can be listed as FD&C Blue 1, Blue #1, or Blue No. 1. Other color additives, like titanium dioxide (potentially damaging DNA) can be listed simply as "artificial color" or "color added". In Europe, any food containing a synthetic dye has a warning label (like "may cause cancer"). In the US, manufacturers only have to include the dye in the list of ingredients. The average person in the US today eats or drinks *five times* as much food containing color dyes compared to say, 1955. Some of these dyes were originally made of coal tar. Now most are made from artificial chemicals that come from petroleum — like gasoline. Mmm, tasty. These artificial dyes are found everywhere, especially in vibrantly colored foods aimed at children.

These dyes offer no nutrition. They don't preserve food or prevent it from spoiling. All they do is make foods look more attractive. Artificial color additives enhance and "correct" natural colors that would otherwise be virtually colorless due to processing and long storage. Even fresh oranges are dipped in dye "to brighten them and provide uniform color," said Michael Jacobson, executive director at the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI).

The *top five food products most often targeted for children* are candy, sugar-sweetened beverages, ready-to-eat meals, breakfast cereals, and baked goods (cakes, cookies and pastries). Products in these categories were found to have *28% more dyes* compared to 11% in other categories (like soups or pasta). In addition, the average *sugar content* in dyed products was *141% more* than in those without the dyes; *79%* of all sports drinks contained synthetic dyes.

So why are food colors so dangerous?

Other than the fact that they are made from petroleum? And quite probably carcinogenic? Scientific research suggests synthetic food dyes are linked to neurobehavioral problems in susceptible children, with some studies showing a clear association. Evidence of harm is found in neurobehavioral effects, hyperactivity and attention deficits, and in one case, Red 3, carcinogenicity. Acceptable daily intakes were set by the FDA based on studies from the 1970s and 80s that were *not designed to assess behavioral effects*. So all FDA's assessments are based on outdated studies.

Until this year, Red 3 was still used in thousands of candies, baked goods, and beverages. In spite of all the evidence, Red 3 — banned in cosmetics and topical drugs — *was not banned in food*. The FDA has been dragging its collective feet for many decades. So in 2022, along with 23 other organizations and leading scientists, CSPI petitioned the FDA to ban Red 3 from all foods. Not until January 15 of this year did the FDA finally agree. Manufacturers still have two more full years to remove Red 3 from their products.

However, the FDA also requested that food manufacturers "phase out the use of six petroleum-based synthetic food dyes — Blue 1, Blue 2, Green 3, Red 40, Yellow 5, and Yellow 6 — by the end of 2026." Even so, "compliance is voluntary." It has been "voluntary" for 60 years. Yet even today, the FDA *does not require* manufacturers to test dyes for developmental neurotoxicity.

Three dyes, Red 40, Yellow 5 and Yellow 6, account for 90% of the dyes used in foods. These three dyes contain *benzidine*, a human and animal carcinogen — permitted by FDA in low, presumably safe levels. The manufacturers of color dyes say they adhere to FDA protocols, noting: "The FDA has repeatedly stated that these colors are safe based on the *available safety data*." That very data concerning benzidine? **A word about benzidine**

Benzidine is actually quite toxic, well known to be a human carcinogen. Benzidine is no longer manufactured for commercial sale in the United States. All large-scale production was discontinued in 1976, and only relatively small quantities are imported for use as stains for microscopy and similar laboratory applications. *The FDA limits the benzidine content in food colorants to 1 ppb* (one part per billion); however, other impurities in synthetic coloring agents may be metabolized into benzidine after ingestion, increasing the total dose. In addition, FDA tests measure only the free form of benzidine, overlooking a combined form found in intestinal enzymes, so we could be exposed to vastly greater amounts of carcinogens than the FDA's tests indicate — especially true considering that today's typical diet exposes everyone, most notably children, to multiple dyes and flavoring agents and other additives in numerous foods in every meal — three meals, snacks — every day.

Color additives Yellow 5 and 6 and Red 3 actually may contain benzidine at maximum levels that range much higher than stated. Samples from 67 manufactured lots of Yellow 6 were analyzed for combined benzidine. Of the 67 samples analyzed, 34 were found to contain more than 10 ppb combined benzidine per gram. Of these 34, 30 were from one manufacturer. Their level of combined benzidine ranged from 11 to 104 ppb per gram, except for one sample containing *941 ppb*. (7) These data are far above the FDA's own limits — 1 ppb. Meanwhile, the US version of Fanta orange soda is colored with Red 40 and Yellow 6; in the UK pumpkin and carrot extracts are used for color. McDonald's strawberry sundaes are colored with Red 40 in the US, but real strawberries are used in the UK! Imagine that.

Obviously you can't visually identify which foods have additives. The only way to avoid these harmful ingredients is by checking every food label (I carry a magnifying glass). But that only works with boxed foods and cans — what about fruits and vegetables? What about dining out? The only method to protect us is through a united governmental response. The FDA must start protecting consumers by restricting the use of all harmful additives.

Rainbow of risks

So here, from CSPI, is a literal "rainbow of risk."

- Red 3 - Carcinogenic.
- Red 40 - The most widely used: in candy, gelatin desserts, pastries, and even pet foods. Used in most "junk foods." Causes "allergy-like" symptoms.
- Yellow 5 - the second most widely used: Beverages, gelatin desserts, candy and baked goods. Causes allergy-like symptoms and hyperactivity in some children. It may be contaminated with such cancer-causing substances as benzidine (or other chemicals that the body converts to those substances).
- Yellow 6 - Beverages, candy, baked goods. May cause severe hypersensitivity reaction, The third most widely used causes tumors of adrenal gland and kidney in animal tests.
- Green 3 - Mostly in candy and beverages. Causes bladder and tumors in male rats' testes. Minor use.
- Blue 1 - Found in thousands of food products, beverages, candy and baked goods. A test-tube study found this dye might affect brain neurons.
- Blue 2 - Beverages, candies, some pet foods. Some evidence shows it caused brain cancer in male rats, but the FDA concluded there is "reasonable certainty" of no harm to humans.

The bottom line is this: The **ONLY** use for these dyes is cosmetic — to make foods look more colorful than they are. There is absolutely no other benefit in their use. Are they worth the risk? Especially to our children?

For more info and citations, contact the editor at info@foothillsinfo.com.

Food Matters



When you've got less than half an hour to get dinner on the table, a sausage sheet-pan dinner is a great go-to. With crispy mini potatoes and hearty greens that are roasted in a sweet-tart mustard dressing, this one's an easy family-pleaser.

Sheet Pan Sausage Dinner with Potatoes & Green Beans

Prep: 5 min Cook: 25 min

Ingredients

4 fully cooked sausages sliced
12 oz fresh green beans, trimmed
1 lb potatoes cut into 1 inch chunks
3 tbsp olive oil
¾ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp dried oregano

Instructions

Preheat oven to 425F. Line a 12x17 baking sheet with aluminum foil. Spread beans, potatoes and sausage on pan. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle salt, pepper, garlic and oregano over everything. Stir and spread into one layer. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until potatoes are tender and cooked through.

Notes You can use any potato variety you like. Be sure to slice your potatoes into 1 inch chunks so they cook through. Swap green beans with Brussels sprouts, broccoli, or carrot rounds or sticks.

Nutrition

Calories: 358kcal | Carbohydrates: 25g | Protein: 18g | Fat: 23g | Saturated Fat: 4g | Cholesterol: 60mg | Sodium: 1323mg | Potassium: 648mg | Fiber: 5g | Sugar: 4g | Vitamin A: 887IU | Vitamin C: 24mg | Calcium: 72mg | Iron: 6mg



TWIN SISTERS MOBILE MARKET

Twin Sisters Mobile Market Announces Last Markets of the Year

The Twin Sisters Mobile Market truck, a great source of fresh produce grown right here in Whatcom County, will host its last farmers

markets of the 2025 season this month (October). Community members are encouraged to visit the final East County markets of the year on Friday Oct. 24 and Saturday, October 25th, 2025 at three convenient locations:

Nooksack Tribal Health Clinic:* Fridays from 10:00A M to 2:00 PM; 2510 Sulwahnnon Dr., Everson

Deming Library:* Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM; 5044 Mt. Baker Hwy, Deming

North Fork Library (Kendall):* Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM; 7506 Kendall Rd., Kendall

The non-profit, farmer-led, market truck accepts cash, credit, TSM Senior Voucher cards, Nooksack Fresh cards, and EBT — and EBT shoppers get 50% off their entire purchase at the market through the SNAP Market Match program! The market also has a limited number of \$30 Senior Vouchers left for Whatcom County seniors 60+ — just ask a friendly staff person to sign up at the market and you'll get your card the same day, as long as supplies last. Seniors and Nooksack Fresh participants who have already received their cards are encouraged to use their remaining balances before the market season ends!

"We know it can be a real challenge for families to stretch their food budgets, especially with inflation and the increasing cost of living," said Cat Sieh, the Director of Special Projects at Twin Sisters Mobile Market. "We're proud to accept these great programs that help make the cost of high-quality, local food more affordable."



Shoppers at the final markets can expect to find a diverse selection of seasonal, Certified Organic produce

from 18 small Whatcom County farms, in addition to pasture-raised meat, fish and eggs, yogurt, honey, and more. It's an excellent chance to stock up on high-quality fall storage crops like onions, potatoes, carrots, shallots, and winter squash. Did you know that our local, fresh-harvested carrots can last months stored in the fridge?

"We want to extend a huge thank you to all our customers who have supported us throughout the year," Sieh said. "We look forward to seeing everyone at the last markets of the season!"

The mobile market will resume service the first weekend of June, 2026.

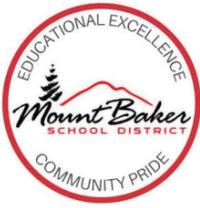
About Twin Sisters Mobile Market

Twin Sisters Mobile Market (TSM) is a farmer-led, 501c3 nonprofit mobile farmers market dedicated to increasing access to fresh, healthy, high-quality local food, and supporting the success of the Whatcom County farmers who grow it. We serve four rural and urban Whatcom County locations during the local growing season; three are USDA-designated food deserts, and one is a tribal health clinic.

A group of small-scale Whatcom County farmers founded TSM in 2015 recognizing a lack of market access for high-quality local food — for both consumers and producers in East Whatcom County. In 2014, Foothills Food Summit community stakeholders identified a mobile farmers market as a key strategy to address food access and insecurity. More Info: www.tsmmarket.com

FOR TIPS ON STORING YOUR FRESH PRODUCE SO IT LASTS LONGER, SEE THE CHART ON PAGE 11.

COMMUNITY SCENE



Staying Connected as We Begin a New School Year

By Jessica Schenck, Mount Baker School District Superintendent

The start of a new school year always brings energy and a renewed sense of possibility. As I step into my first full year as Superintendent, one of my top priorities is communication. When schools and communities are well-connected, students thrive.

This year, we are expanding how families and community members can stay informed. I encourage everyone to follow the Mount Baker School District Facebook page, along with each school's page. These platforms allow us to share news, celebrate accomplishments, and provide timely updates.

During the last week of each month, the district will publish a digital newsletter called *Mountaineer Moments*. The newsletter will provide information about what students are learning, updates about district finances and operations, and celebrations of our wonderful students and staff. It will automatically be sent to families who have provided email addresses. Community members can also receive *Mountaineer Moments* each month by sharing their name and email at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/5a7eb4zk>. My hope is that this newsletter becomes a consistent way to highlight the great things happening across our schools.

Our website is also a good source of information. I encourage families to use the printed 2025–26 school calendar sent home with students. That calendar is also available in PDF form on our website.

Beyond digital tools, one of the best parts of this role has been meeting people face-to-face. Whether at a football game, the Deming Speedway, or a local restaurant, I've enjoyed hearing directly from parents, students, and community members. I look forward to many more of these conversations.

Starting this fall, I will host "Superintendent Trail Talks" at different venues and events. These will be informal opportunities for anyone to ask questions, share ideas, or simply connect. Watch for announcements about dates and locations.

Finally, a reminder: school board meetings are open to the public and take place at 6:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. Agendas, along with Zoom links, are posted on our website. Whether you attend in person or online, your presence and voice are valued.

If you have questions or ideas, please reach out: jschenck@mtbaker.wednet.edu or (360) 383-2000. Together, by staying connected and informed, we can continue to strengthen the Mount Baker community for our students. **Go Baker! STAY CONNECTED! GET the MBSD Newsletter, Mountaineer Moments by scanning the QR code.**



Mount Baker Community Coalition – October Update

The Mount Baker Community Coalition (MBCC) is excited to welcome our Mount Baker students back to school! We are looking forward to a year filled with connection, leadership, and opportunities to grow together.

Coalition Meeting

Our next coalition meeting will be held on Monday, October 20 from 2:45–4:15 p.m. We'll meet in person at the Mount Baker School District Office and online via Zoom. We invite community members, parents, staff, and youth passionate about mental health and substance use prevention to join us as we continue building a strong and healthy Mount Baker community.

One Baker Voice (OBV) – Student Leadership

One Baker Voice (OBV), our student social and leadership club, is back and meeting Tuesdays during lunch and Fridays during Club Friday in Room 311. OBV is open to all students—just show up and join in! This year, OBV is offering peer education training and supporting students who want to plan events or lead community service activities. OBV is about leadership, connection, and giving students the opportunity to make their voices heard.

Welcome, Sav Shell!

We are thrilled to welcome Sav Shell as MBCC's new Assistant Coordinator! Sav brings four years of experience with the Whatcom Family & Community Network, where she coordinates the MAD-HOPE Suicide Prevention program across Whatcom County schools. With her organizational skills, passion for prevention, and enthusiasm for working with young people, Sav is a wonderful addition to our coalition team.

Drug Take Back Day

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 25th! MBCC is partnering with the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office for Drug Take Back Day at the North Fork Library from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.. This is a safe, no-questions-asked opportunity to dispose of expired, unwanted, or unused medications. By participating, you're helping keep our homes and community safe.

Sector Representation

MBCC is looking to fill two sector vacancies: Religious/Fraternal Organizations and Youth Serving Organizations. If you know someone passionate about helping young people live happy and healthy lives, please share!

We're excited for all that fall has in store and grateful to continue this work together with our students, families, and community members. For more information, please contact Allison Ormsby at mbcc@wfcn.org.



One Baker Voice

Contact Info:
Mrs. Axelson at
saxelson@mtbaker.wednet.edu

& Allison at
mbcc@wfcn.org

Are you interested in:

- Supporting your peers
- Gaining resume experience
- Traveling to events/Training
- Strengthening your community
- Bonding with your fellow club members

THEN
JOIN OBV

Every tuesday at lunch!!
and Club Fridays



Mt. Baker
Community
Coalition
Prevention Works

Meetings are in room 311
Snacks Provided
Follow OBV on Instagram
@onebakervoice

The Book Shelf

whatcom county
library system



October events at the Deming Library

Good Yarns

All needleworkers and crafters are welcome to share a casual evening with old and new friends while doing something you love. Wednesdays from 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Poultices, Compresses, and Infused Oils: A Hands-On Herbal Medicine Class with local community herbalist Sonia Wollin. Seating is limited, please register for this class at wcls.org. Saturday, Oct 4 from 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Jennifer Hahn presents Pacific Harvest: Foraging as a Healing Passport to Place, Plants, Animals and Nature

on Thursday, Oct. 9th from 6:30 to 7:30pm.

Deming Mask Making

Calling all masters of disguise in grades K–5. Whatever you want to be, from astronaut to albatross, luchador to lumberjack, we'll have supplies to make the mask of your dreams. Saturday, Oct 18 from 10:30am - 11:30am

Stories from Desolation Peak

The Desolation Peak Fire Lookout, established in 1932, is one of 93 remaining fire lookouts in Washington State and one of the few that is still staffed during fire season. Local resident Jim Henterly shares his 30 years of fire lookout experience, including the many seasons spent at Desolation. We will watch the short documentary "Ode to Desolation" and hear from Jim as he shares pictures and stories from his adventures in a fire lookout. Saturday, Oct 18 at 4:00pm

October events at the North Fork Library

North Fork Storytime

Tuesdays in October 10:30am For ages 2–6, 30 minutes. An open program that includes stories, rhymes, and songs with opportunities for movement and interactive participation.

Firetruck Storytime

Tuesday October 14th 10:30am For ages 2–6, 30 minutes, A storytime featuring firefighters – sharing what they do to make our community better!

Storytime

Tuesday October 14th 10:30am For ages 2–6, 30 minutes, A storytime featuring firefighters – sharing what they do to make our community better!

Drawing From Memory:

Creating a Memory Map Saturday, Oct 11 2025 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Find inspiration in a creative exercise that taps into specific memories and develops them into a visual representation. This program is for anyone, regardless of your drawing ability, and whether you are an aspiring writer or not. Space is limited; registration is required.

North Fork Mask Making

Tuesday, Oct 14 2025 3:45pm - 4:45pm

Calling all masters of disguise in grades K–5. Whatever you want to be, from astronaut to albatross, luchador to lumberjack, we'll have supplies to make the mask of your dreams. Who or what will you be?

Wild Fermented Breads

with Genevieve Bardwell Saturday, Oct 18 2025 2:00pm - 3:30pm

Join us for a hands-on lesson on kneading and a slide show presentation about making raised bread without commercial yeast.

Teen Art Night

Thursday, Oct 23 2025 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Do you love to paint, draw, or simply get creative? Whether you want to paint a canvas, create an original character, or just doodle in your sketchbook, this night is for you.

Drug Take Back Event

at North Fork Library Saturday, Oct 25 2025 10:00am - 2:00pm

Drug Take Back event at the North Fork Library put on by Prevention Program Manager at Mount Baker Community Coalition in partnership with a local sheriff.

Twin Sisters Mobile Market

at the Library Saturdays in October 9:00am - 3:00pm

At the North Fork Community Library every Saturday through October 25, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. The truck delivers fresh produce, pasture-raised eggs, meat and more!



Friends of the North Fork Community Library

Join the Friends of the North Fork Community Library! We are always looking for volunteers to help support our library's programs and services for our foothills community. Fill out the volunteer form on our website, or email us: friendsnorthforklibrary@gmail.com Website: <https://fnfcl.wordpress.com/> 7506 Kendall Road, Maple Falls, WA 98266 (360) 599-2020

EDDIE'S SCOREBOARD



Road trip? What road trip?

Starting the season with two straight out of area road games has done little to affect the Mountaineers' start to the season. Mount Baker has started the 2025 season with a 2-0 record for the second straight year. The team has outscored both of its opponents 82-19 despite both foes being larger 2A schools in Port Angeles and Hockinson.

As of the writing of this article (September 12th), the Mountaineers currently share first place with the other four schools in the conference due to no league play being held until the end of September. With the exception of the perennially struggling Blaine Borderites, the entire conference is undefeated.

Senior quarterback Setoga Tigilau, Jr. currently holds a 48.9% completion percentage and an average of 7.32 yards per pass attempt. Tigilau also holds the all-time school record for the lowest interception percentage at 3.7%. Sophomore wide receiver Enoc Smith is already 9th all-time with forty-three extra points kicked. Combine that with his one field goal (Coach Lepper rarely if ever goes for those) and Smith has forty-six total points underneath his belt. Senior running back Brice Cooper enters the season with 195 total punt return yards and is currently second all-time with a 15.0 punt return average.



HEZ UPDATES



HEALTH EQUITY ZONE: PHASE 3 HAS BEGUN *YOUR IDEAS. YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR FUTURE.*



This fall, the Health Equity Zone is moving into Phase 3, built on 18 months of listening and laying the groundwork together. What comes next will be shaped by your ideas, your priorities, and your vision for a stronger, healthier Mount Baker community.

*“The best is yet to come.
Phase 3 means more room, more opportunity, and more ways for community voices to shape the future.”*

What We Accomplished Together

- 11 community members now serving on our Advisory Board
- Thank you to neighbors and partners at the DentALL Party, Mt. Baker School Resource Fair, and Deming Log Show for welcoming us into your events
- Grateful to the Mount Baker School District for inviting us to support parent-teacher and staff development days
- Thanks to the North Fork and Deming Libraries for hosting summer concerts we were proud to support
- Together with our Community Advisory Board, we’ve begun shaping a participatory budgeting process to put decision-making in community hands



Community Spotlight

Join Build Community Day with Habitat for Humanity

17 Saturday, October 4 | 8:15 AM – 2 PM
East Whatcom Regional Resource Center, 8251 Kendall Rd, Maple Falls
Volunteer for home repairs & neighborhood revitalization

👉 Sign up:
hfh.volunteerhub.com/vv2/event/1481e7b7-e1dd-44e9-8c0f-bcd9ae1ead25

Event Reminder

17 Next Public Comment Workshop
Date: October 21, 2025
Time: 5pm-7pm
Location: East Whatcom Regional Resource Center
Get updates on Facebook & Instagram
Snacks provided. All ages welcome.

Facebook: [Mount Baker Health Equity Zone](#)
Instagram: [mountbaker.healthequityzone](#)
Email: hezinfo360@gmail.com



DONATE or VOLUNTEER with
MAD HOPE!

Middle and High School teachers:
Schedule a MAD HOPE training for
your classroom!

Encourage students in your life to
utilize our Back to School Wellness
Plan to get ahead of stress!

MadHope.org



NAMI Whatcom Stigma
Stomp
Saturday October 4
10 AM, Bloedel Donovan
Park

NAMIWhatcom.org/stigma-stomp.html



Learn about the mental health classes, workshops, and support groups offered through NAMI Whatcom!

NAMIWhatcom.org



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



FOOTHILLS ALIVE



CALLING ALL ARTISANS, CRAFTERS, MAKERS, BAKERS, AND MORE!

Show off your talents in our pre-Christmas feature article!

We know there are many talented makers living in the Mt Baker School District and for our November issue we would like to tell the whole district about your talents.

During the month of October we will be putting together a pre-Christmas feature article that shows off your talents and skills so the community can help support all of our talented local makers this holiday season.

To be included on the list, please fill out the form at this link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSedSa93wFQ1-oE8k9_hNE8SwfcFVP5J0fykzH3jpaOBSYb-XA/viewform?usp=header

For more information, contact the editor at: info@foothillsinfo.com

Sudoku: Challenging

Solution on back page

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

Rebus 1



Across

- 3. Broken down S
- 4. Harmless A
- 5. Tear apart A
- 9. Apply consequences S
- 11. Reduce negative impact S
- 13. Take care of S
- 15. Messy A
- 17. Remedy S
- 18. Sanitize S
- 20. Toxic S
- 21. Good health A
- 22. Not dangerous A
- 23. Contaminated S

Down

- 1. Clean A
- 2. Causes problems S
- 6. Bring back to life S
- 7. Make impure S
- 8. Pests S
- 10. Safe A
- 12. Environment S
- 14. Improve appearance S
- 16. People living near one another S
- 18. Organize A
- 19. Overrun with pests S

Road Rules

Q: Signs around public schools often read "Speed Limit 20 mph when children are present". Does this mean when children are present inside the school? Or when children are present outside the school?

A: If we could travel back in time 110 years, the answer to this question would be yes to both situations, and when they're not present at all.

Washington's first school zone law established a speed limit of 12 mph "within one hundred yards of any school house, on school days between eight o'clock in the morning and six o'clock in the afternoon." There's no mention about children being present, so the speed limit was in effect even if all the kids left the campus by three pm.

Interesting side note: it wasn't until two years later that they made a law requiring the posting of school zone signs. In 1927 the school zone speed limit increased to 15 mph and changed the hours to between eight am and five pm, and in 1937 increased again to 20 mph and added marked school crossings to school zones. In 1951 the hours got cut from the law, and a school zone became the 300 feet in any direction from a marked school or playground crosswalk (eliminating the part about passing a school house). It wasn't until 2003 that school zones again included the area within 300 feet of school or playground property rather than just crosswalks.

I point out all this school zone history as a reminder that laws change, and it's hard to keep track. I skipped a bunch of historical changes to school zones; the law lists 20 revisions over the last century. For anyone approaching 80 years old, half of them were in your lifetime.

When it comes to the words on a school zone sign, the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) sets the standards. This is the book that makes sure the signs are the same when you travel from one jurisdiction to another.

Imagine if every city made up their own design for stop signs. This book is pretty important. In addition to the "When children are present" sign, the MUTCD provides other options, including times of the day, days of the week, and "When flashing."

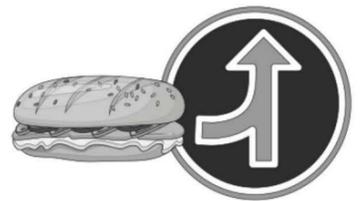
The "When children are present" sign on its own isn't great at explaining itself. I say that confidently because you're not the first to ask what it means. The Washington Administrative Code defines it as when school children are in a crosswalk, about to cross the road, or walking along the roadway in a school zone. Under our current laws, children inside the school building wouldn't trigger a school zone speed limit if the zone is marked, "When children are present."

It can still be confusing though. What if it's nine pm and kids are leaving a football game? How about if kids arrive early on a Saturday morning to ride the ski bus? Can you be sure the 20-mph speed limit isn't in effect? While schools can choose from the signage options in the MUTCD, many of them are switching to flashing beacons because they eliminate the ambiguity about when a school zone speed limit is in effect.

Along with the school zone laws, there's also the good sense to recognize that when you're driving near a school, no matter the time or day, there might be kids there. The decision-making part of a kid's brain isn't fully developed, so it's up to us to watch out for them and choose a speed that allows us to react to an unpredictable kid.

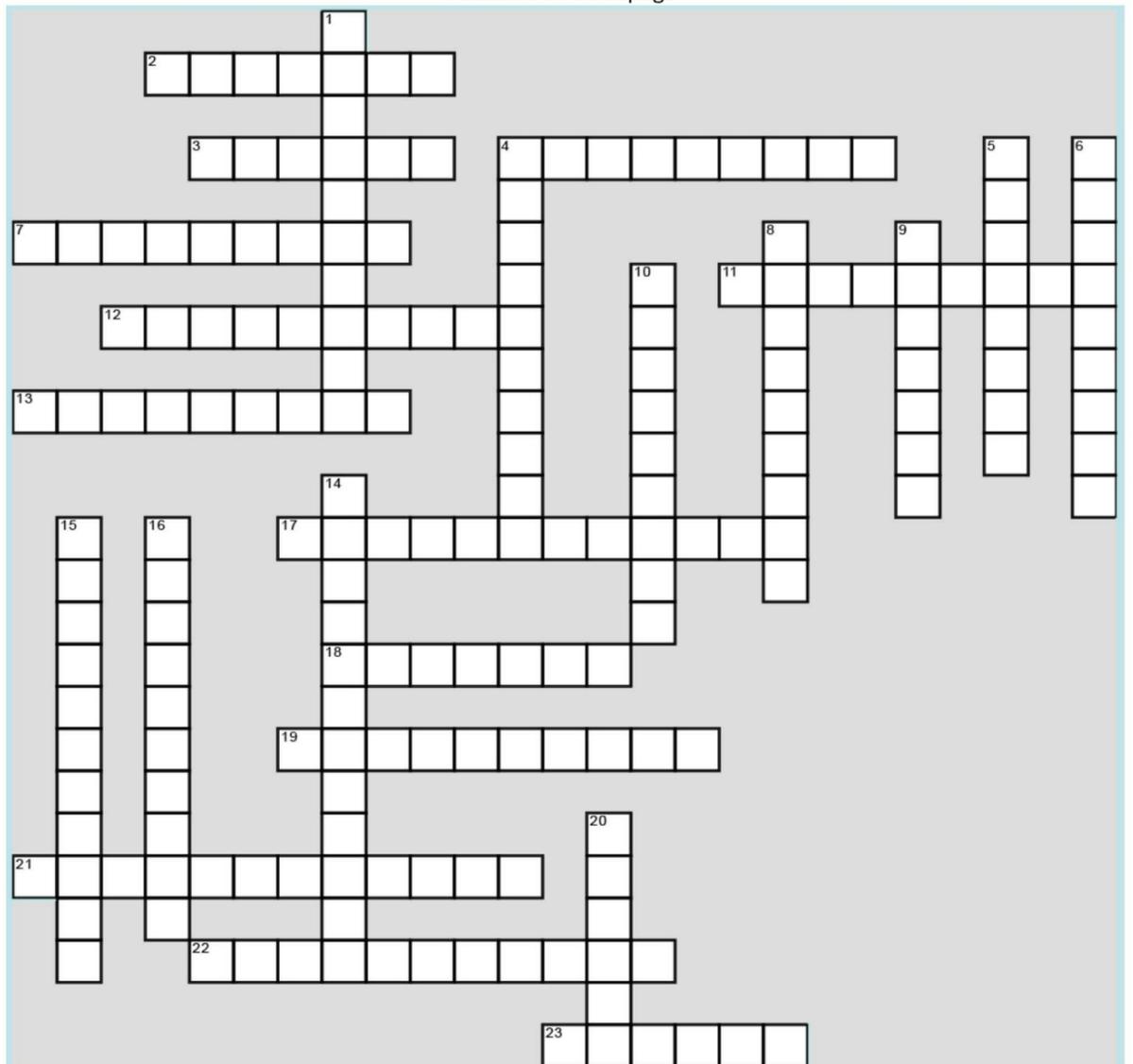


Rebus 2



OCTOBER CROSSWORD PUZZLE: CLASSIC TV WESTERNS

Answers on back page





Where Does the Buck Stop? *cont from p. 1*

Junk yard owners (also scrap yards, vehicle dismantlers, and wrecking yards), are required by law to have a license. When they don't have a license and are not subject to inspections and following any rules, who enforces the laws? It would seem like the EPA would investigate claims of toxic fluids seeping into the soil and groundwater, but they said, "Not our job." and passed the buck to the State Patrol. So does the buck stop there?

It does not. The buck continues to roll on up the hill to the county, state and even federal levels that are supposed to provide enforcement for:

- Zoning ordinances: Local jurisdictions enforce zoning laws that prohibit junk- yards or car collections from operating in residential or other restricted areas.
- Public nuisance laws: Cities and counties can classify illegal junkyards as public nuisances, which allows them to issue abatement orders and levy fines.
- Vehicle wrecking regulations: State departments of licensing often have specific rules for licensed vehicle wreckers and dismantlers.
- Response to complaints: State environmental agencies often conduct investigations into junkyards in response to citizen complaints.

Yes, there are laws on the books for dealing with all these problems, but neither the state nor the county will enforce these laws.

When dealing with properties that are squats or where there are multiple RVs serving as rentals creating problems, that is a much more difficult situation to navigate and deserves its own article.

So over the years efforts have been and are still being made to eradicate blighted properties.

Despite these efforts, garbage is something that accumulates daily in most homes and disposal options require paying for garbage pickup services or having the means and money to take the refuse to the dump 30 miles away. And that is for those who want to dispose of their garbage properly.

Live and Let Live?

While none of us want to see, smell or hear blighted properties, is it all that important to get them cleaned up?

Yes! It is very important!

It does not matter what kind of garbage is piling up; whether it's household waste or junk cars, both attract rats, mice, raccoons and possums, as well as mosquitoes and ticks, all of whom can carry different types of diseases that can impact human health, particularly children and people with poor health.



Water pooling in old tires and other objects is Club Med for mosquitoes which can carry malaria or West Nile virus, both of which are potentially deadly. And with the upsurge of ticks in our area, the potential for contracting Lyme Disease is increasing.

Rats and mice can carry diseases such as hantavirus, salmonellosis and rat bite fever although you do not have to be bitten by a rat to contract that disease. These diseases can be transmitted via the urine of feces of the vermin or by direct contact with the animal. A person may be exposed to hantavirus by breathing contaminated dust after disturbing or cleaning rodent droppings or nests, or by living or working in rodent-infested settings. Typically one to five cases are reported each year and approximately one out of every three cases of hantavirus result in death as hantavirus is a Level 4 pathogen like Ebola.

Leptospirosis has been reported in Washington as well. This is a disease that can be transmitted to humans through contact with urine or reproductive fluids from infected animals, contact with contaminated water or soil or eating or drinking contaminated food or water. You may think, "Oh, I haven't got rats or mice on my property so how can I be exposed to this." but that does not mean they have not passed through and left enough infected urine to share the disease you and your family.

Household garbage attracts bears and coyotes as fast as a Burger King on the corner and presents extremely dangerous and unpredictable situations for everyone in the neighborhood, especially children and pets. While bears can be attracted by refuse in a closed garbage can, they are far more likely to be drawn in by loose or bagged household waste. With bear sightings increasing, proper disposal of household garbage becomes even more imperative.

But the problems extend even further: what about that old fridge a child can get trapped in? Or the toxic fluids leaking, and in some cases, being crushed out of vehicles contaminating the soil and water table. The water table in our area ranges between 38 and 48 feet below the surface and provides fresh water for every household for miles. Contamination caused by antifreeze and heavy metals can cause serious health problems for those drinking water from local wells. Also, if soil contaminated by toxic fluids are not remediated properly, vegetables grown in that soil are unsafe to eat. So the effects of contamination stretch much further than most of us are aware.

Junk cars, rusting metals, broken glass and sharp objects including drug paraphernalia, present hazards for children who are often attracted to playing in old cars. Another big attraction is old refrigerators, freezers and containers large enough for them to become trapped.



Then there are the piles of tires just waiting to catch fire. If a small pile of tires catches fire, it can be smothered with dirt. But what if the pile is higher than a one story building? There is no way to put out that fire; it has to burn out on its own which puts heavy metals and other toxins into our air causing serious problems for

everyone, not just people with respiratory problems. The ash from burnt tires can contaminate the soil for decades.

This is just a snapshot of the problems inherent in allowing blighted properties to exist. But what can we do to clean them up, and how do we keep them cleaned up?

Taking Responsibility

For each property there has to be a plan developed that takes into consideration all the circumstances. And we need to ensure that tax payer dollars are not wasted, and that manpower and other resources are not squandered on a problem that may recur once the clean-up crew heads for the dump.

So who is ultimately responsible? We all are! The responsibility lies with everyone; from the people living on your street to the county, state and even federal levels, everyone has a role to play in making and keeping everyone safe and healthy. And while blighted properties may emit foul odors and be ugly, the real objective here is safety and good health.

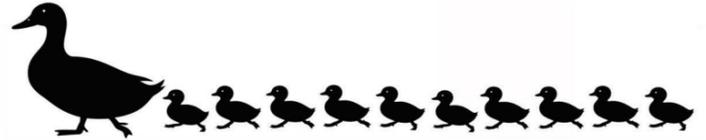
Grassroots movements led and driven by community members have been highly effective in the past. The power of a collective, a community is inestimable and is a well-proven practice. While the

community may not have the means to enforce the laws about blighted properties, we are most certainly capable of writing a letter or email to the people we elected to help manage these types of problems. How about taking five minutes to pick up the phone and call your county council member, or congress person? Or, next time you are in town, go knock on the door of the county executive.

You can even attend (both in person and virtually) county council meetings where you can express your concern over the health and safety these properties endanger. It is up to us to make sure our government officials, from the county level on up, are not just aware there is a problem, but put on notice that we will not tolerate their laxity any longer. Cries of budget cuts and understaffing, while true, are also excuses for not meeting the commitments our elected officials made to us upon election.

Cleaning up blighted properties does not take buckets of money; it takes understanding, forethought, looking at the entire picture, and tailoring for the situation. It takes people who are committed to solving the problem with proven and sustainable methods. It takes us, our neighbors, law enforcement, code enforcement, the health department and county and state officers all working together to create sensible, permanent solutions.

If you have suggestions for solutions to this problem, contact the editor at info@foothillsinfo.com and we will connect you with others working on blighted properties.



I served in Afghanistan in the U.S. Marine Corps now I need a Kidney Transplant



My name is Sean Libby. It took a while for me to get to this point, but I am ready to reach out and ask for your help: I need a kidney.

I'm a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who was deployed to Afghanistan in 2009. I am 35 years old. I was born in Long Beach, California, and spent part of my early childhood in Texas, living with my dad, who passed away when I was 13. After his death, I moved to Santa Cruz, California, where I lived with my aunt. In more recent years, I moved to Whatcom County, where some of my family now live nearby. Sadly, none of them are viable candidates to donate a kidney to me.

Until 2018, I enjoyed consistently good health and lived the active life of a U.S. Marine Corps veteran. That changed when doctors with the Veterans Administration first diagnosed me with IgA nephropathy, a chronic kidney disease. At the time, very little was explained about what this would mean for my future. I was simply told to manage my diet, watch my sodium and phosphorus, and have adequate fluid intake, which I gladly did because good health is important to me. When I moved to Bellingham later that year, local doctors began taking my deteriorating health more seriously. By 2022, I was experiencing extreme fatigue, swelling in my legs, constant itching, and feeling cold all the time. In February 2023, my blood pressure spiked, and I went into complete kidney failure. Since then, I have been on dialysis three days each week to stay alive. This requires long days at the treatment center.

My condition is directly connected to my military service in Afghanistan. Like many service members, I lived and worked near burn pits -- large open fires used to dispose of trash, plastics, metal, chemicals, even human waste. Day and night, heavy black smoke and toxic fumes hung in the air. At the time, we were told little about the risks, and there was no choice but to continue doing our jobs in that environment. Years later, medical research and veterans' reports confirmed what many of us suspected: prolonged exposure to these toxins could cause serious health problems. My illness was eventually linked to that exposure. The VA now recognizes burn pit toxic exposure as a cause of long-term conditions, including kidney disease, and my service connection was confirmed through that process. Even with all of this, I remain deeply grateful and hopeful. I end each day in prayer, thankful for the life I still have and the people who support me. This daily practice gives me strength. In some inexplicable way, in the last few months, it has put me in a state of peace. I have a wonderful girlfriend studying nursing at Bellingham Technical College, a joyful dog named Mia, and a hobby car, a 1989 Nissan 240SX, that reminds me of simpler times when I could just tinker in the garage. My dream is to build a family, settle down near the coast, and reclaim a fuller, healthier life. I really want to be a more productive member of my community, as I was before. Isn't that what we all want?

To make that possible, I need a kidney transplant. Dialysis is keeping me alive, but it is not a cure. A transplant would give me the chance to live fully again, to grow old alongside my loved ones, and to continue serving my community.

If you are willing to consider becoming a living kidney donor, or if you can help spread the word, I would be deeply grateful. Living donors can continue to live long, healthy lives with just one kidney, while giving someone like me the gift of a second chance. If I am blessed with your kidney, I promise to care for it with vigilance and gratitude every single day.

Please keep me in mind and share my story. Your kindness can give me back my health and my life as I imagined it.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Sean

To learn more about donation or how to be evaluated as a donor, contact Angie Krzysiek, dialysis social worker, 360 734 4243. If you can't donate, please share my story.

Primary Medical Care Services at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center

Medical Care will be available on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at the EWRRC from 1-5pm. Services available will include:

- Wellness exams
- Sports physicals
- Care for non-emergency acute and chronic health concerns
- Walk-in appointments as available

Appointments can be scheduled by calling **360-230-8157**

Most major insurance accepted including the following:

- Molina
- Premera
- UHC
- Lifewise, and more

If uninsured or not in our insurance network, sliding scale fees are available based on income. Patients will not be turned away for inability to pay.



Gabriel Durben, ND has been a primary care naturopathic doctor in Bellingham since 2014 and lives in rural Whatcom county. He believes that the best healthcare happens when we recognize and value our shared experience as humans.

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@wcfcd14.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.

salvationarmy.org https://

bellingham.salvationarmy.org

2912 Northwest Ave., Bellingham



Serving individuals throughout Whatcom County, DVSAS is a volunteer-driven 501(c)(3) nonprofit 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

360-392-8149

*We are always looking for volunteers!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!



THE LORD'S TABLE FOOD BANK
RIVER OF LIFE CHURCH
4037 VALLEY HWY 9, VAN ZANDT, WA
360-592-2279

FOOD BANK

FOOD DISTRIBUTION:
10:00-NOON
2ND & 4TH
SATURDAYS

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 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 1st and 3rd 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 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, call us at 360-671-4950 or email 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

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 2nd and 4th 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 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 https://www.seaswhatcom.org



Center for Independence

(CFI) is a non-residential, community-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit 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 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 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 988the 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 (800) 604-0025 https://lifelineconnections.org



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://nwsrna.org/meetings/ 360-647-3234 Webservant@nwsrna.org

AA

Find a Meeting: https://whatcomaa.org/meetings altwebservant@district11aa.org https://whatcomaa.org/ (360) 734-1688

RESOURCES

Addiction Continued

SAMHSA 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://nwrwa.org> 600 Lakeway Drive Bellingham, WA



Senior Resources

A guide to services and resources for seniors in Whatcom County 360.344.3333 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 <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

DEMENTIA SUPPORT Northwest 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 5100 Mitchell Road Deming, WA <https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mbjh> **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 <https://www.parenttrust.org>

HEALTH  **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 <https://www.whatcomclinic.com/services/education/>

northwest youth services  **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 <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 for ECEAP 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>

Rebus 5

1,2,3,4,5 **R**

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 <https://www.p2pwhatcom.org/home>

Veterans

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,

Vet Center  "Serving Those Who Served" 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>

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 (360) 685-6756 <https://www.whatcomliteracy.org/english-language-learner>

Vocational Rehabilitation  Providing vocational rehabilitation services for disabled and displaced workers. (360) 812-6610 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

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 <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>

Rebus 6



Home Owners/Utilities

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, or call: 360.778.6267.

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



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 <https://bellinghamhousing.org>

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

You can be emailed important Columbia Valley Water District News and Updates by creating a login at Xpressbillpay. Go to 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 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



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 Advisor 1-800-562-1482, 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 7



Farms that Sell to the Public Between B'ham and the Foothills

- Twin Cedars Farm, LLC** 5693 Mosquito Lake Rd, Deming, +1 360-306-8644
- Twin Sisters Farmers Market** 7506 Kendall Rd,
- Happy Chix Farm** 6110 N Fork Rd, Deming, WA
- Three Rivers Farm** 5561 N Fork Rd, Deming, WA
- Misty Mountain Farms** 5969 James Rd, Deming, WA
- Growing Washington** 8130 Gillies Rd, Everson, WA +1 206-719-0056
- Nooksack Blueberries** 102 S Pass Rd, Nooksack, WA +1 360-305-9136
- Terra Verde Farm** 2891 Massey Rd, Everson, WA
- Cloud Mountain Farm** 6906 Goodwin Rd, Everson, WA +1 360-966-5859 www.loudmountainfarmcenter.org
- Cedarville Farm** 3081 Goshen Rd, Bellingham, WA +1 360-592-5594 www.cedarvillefarm.com
- Pollen Folly Farm** 3805 E Hoff Rd, Everson, WA
- Foothills Flowers** 5979 Lawrence Rd, Everson, WA
- Bellingham Country Gardens** 2838 Kelly Rd, Bellingham, WA +1 360-223-3724 bellinghamcountrygardens.net

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@wcvwd13.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 <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 <https://whatcomskagithousing.com>



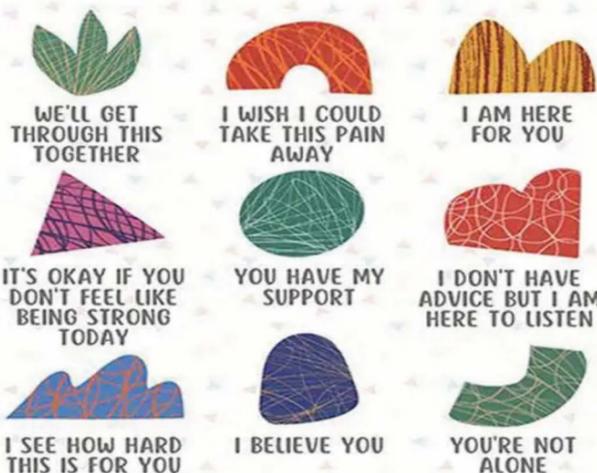
The dementia journey isn't easy. Reaching us is.

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

24/7 Helpline • 1.800.272.3900
Visit us online at www.alzwa.org

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

THINGS TO SAY WHEN WORDS ARE HARD



RESOURCES ORGANIZATIONS

Immigrants/Refugees



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>



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
 1050 Larrabee Ave. Ste. 104 #498 Bellingham
 360-935-1688
irisnw.org



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
<http://www.nwirp.org/>



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
wdrcc@whatcomdrc.org
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
<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 families in need. The Immigrant Bond Fund helps post bond for those while they are being detained. And the Immigrant Legal Defense fund helps provide funding for legal defense. 100% of donations go to those families impacted. 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
https://wcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=1523

ORGANIZATIONS



Columbia Valley Park and Recreation District

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. 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



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 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](https://foothillsinfo.com/print-and-radio/(360)230-8176)
info@kavz.org
<https://www.kavz.org>



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

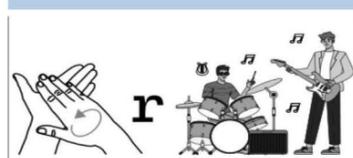
Monthly meetings held the first Tuesday of each month at the North Fork Library.
nwmaplefalls@gmail.com
 360-933-1620
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/718686472042194>



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.
info@foothillscommunityalliance.com 360-410-9114
foothillscommunityalliance.com

Rebus 8



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
<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



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](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)
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.



It's the time of year to be putting food away for the winter, but also to take advantage of the fresh foods still available to us. Often people aren't sure how to store fresh produce so it stays in good shape for more than a couple days.

Here's a good infographic on the best ways to store all that delicious produce.

How long do fruits and vegetables last?		PRODUCE STORAGE CHEAT SHEET		
PRODUCE ITEMS		Store at room temperature	Once ripened, refrigerate	Refrigerate immediately
APPLES	Store in plastic bag separate from other produce.		3-4 WEEKS	
ARTICHOKE	Sprinkle with water; seal in a plastic bag.			1 WEEK
ASPARAGUS	Place stem-end down in an inch of water.			3-4 DAYS
AVOCADOS	Leave on counter to ripen. To speed up ripening, place in paper bag.		3-5 DAYS	
BANANAS	Once ripe, they can last 5-7 days in the refrigerator. Skins will turn black, but fruit will be fine.	2-5 DAYS	5-7 DAYS	
BASIL	Trim stems and place in glass of water; cover with loose plastic bag.	7-10 DAYS		
BEETS	Store in plastic bag, in the crisper drawer. Beets can last up to 2 months if properly stored.			2 WEEKS
BELL PEPPERS	Store in reusable container or plastic bag in the crisper drawer.			1-2 WEEKS
BLACKBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES, RASPBERRIES			2-3 DAYS	
BLUEBERRIES	Store berries in a container lined with a paper towel or napkin. Wash just before using.		1-2 WEEKS	
CABBAGE	Store in the crisper drawer in a plastic bag.			3-4 WEEKS
CANTALOUPE	Cut melon pieces should be wrapped or stored in a container.		7-10 DAYS	
CARROTS	Remove green tops. Store in plastic bag with a napkin to absorb moisture.			3-4 WEEKS
CAULIFLOWER	Loosen the plastic wrap, or place in a plastic bag with a napkin to absorb moisture.			1 WEEK
CELERY	Wrap in aluminum foil before storing.			1-2 WEEKS
CHERRIES	Store unwashed and uncovered in the coldest part of the fridge.		4-7 DAYS	
CITRUS FRUITS	Store loosely, or in a mesh bag, in the crisper drawer.		2-3 WEEKS	
COLLARD GREENS	Place unwashed in a sealed plastic bag and store in the crisper.			4-5 DAYS
CORN	Wrap ears tightly in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator.			5-7 DAYS
CUCUMBERS	Rinse and dry, then place in plastic bag with a napkin to absorb moisture.			1 WEEK
EGGPLANT	Place uncut and unwashed in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator.			5-7 DAYS
GARLIC BULB	Individual, unpeeled cloves last for 7-10 days.	3-5 MONTHS		
GRAPES	Store bagged in the back of the fridge.		5-7 DAYS	
GREEN BEANS	Store unwashed in a reusable container or plastic bag in the crisper drawer.			3-5 DAYS
HERBS, LEAFY	Trim stems and place in glass of water; cover with loose plastic bag.			7-10 DAYS
HERBS, WOODY	Wrap in damp paper towel and store in plastic bag.			10-14 DAYS
KALE	Store bagged with a napkin to absorb moisture.			5-7 DAYS
KIWI	To ripen fruit faster, place in a paper bag on the counter for 1-2 days.		5-7 DAYS	
LEEKS	Store wrapped in a damp paper towel in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator.			1-2 WEEKS
LEMONS & LIMES	Should stay fresh for a week at room temperature if kept out of bright sunlight. For longer storage put in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator.		2-3 WEEKS	
LETTUICES	Wash and dry thoroughly. Store with a napkin in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.			3-7 DAYS
MANGOS	Store on the counter until ripe, then move to the fridge.		5-7 DAYS	
MUSHROOMS	Store in a paper bag.			4-7 DAYS
ONIONS	Store in a cool (45-55°F), dry area. Otherwise, store in refrigerator. Don't store near potatoes.	2-3 MONTHS		
PAPAYAS	Store in plastic bag. Can be sliced and frozen.		2-3 DAYS	
PEACHES/PLUMS	Store on the counter until ripe.		3-5 DAYS	
PEARS	Firm, unripe pears should be left on the counter to ripen.		5-7 DAYS	
PINEAPPLES	Place whole pineapple in plastic bag on the top shelf of the refrigerator.		3-5 DAYS	
POMEGRANATE	Store in a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight. Refrigerated, they can be stored 1-2 months.	1-2 WEEKS		
POTATOES	Store away from onions in cool (45-55°F), dark place. Can be refrigerated 2-3 months.	1-2 WEEKS		
RADISHES	Remove green tops. Put unwashed radishes in a plastic bag with a slightly damp paper towel at the bottom.			10-14 DAYS
SCALLIONS	Place in a cup of water with one inch of water or a storage container/plastic bag with a damp napkin.			7-10 DAYS
SQUASH (SUMMER)	Store dry, whole squash in a plastic or paper bag with one end open.			4-5 DAYS
SQUASH (WINTER)	Lasts 1-2 months when stored at 50-60°F; shorter if kept at room temperature.	1-2 MONTHS		
SWISS CHARD	Store bagged or in storage container. Rinse before eating, not before storing.			2-3 DAYS
TOMATOES	Don't refrigerate until fully ripe. Bring to room temperature before using.		2-3 DAYS	
WATERMELON	Cut-up melon should be stored in a container or wrap in the refrigerator. Whole melon can be stored 2 weeks.			3-5 DAYS

To reduce waste reuse vegetable storage bags or use reusable storage containers. Sources: Sustainable America, Imperfect Foods

stpaul.gov/foodwaste



Community Events Calendar



For more information about each event, go to 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.



October 2025 Community Calendar

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	Oct 1	2	3	4
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am Foothills Food Bank 10:30am Digital Equity E 10:30am North Fork Stor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30am Storytime @ De 6pm Good Yarns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3pm St Peter's "Thursda 4pm Foothills Food Bank 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Twin Sisters Mobile 10am Foothills Food Bar 2pm Poultrices, Compre
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1pm Whatcom Mobile M 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am Ask-a-Nurse Clinic 8am Catch Me: Teen Me 8am Foothills Food Bank 3 more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30am Storytime @ De 6pm Good Yarns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3pm St Peter's "Thursda 4pm Foothills Food Bank 6:30pm Columbia Valley 6:30pm Pacific Harvest: 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Twin Sisters Mobile 3:45pm Drawing from M
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Columbus Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am Foothills Food Bank 10:30am Digital Equity E 10:30am Firetruck Story 10:30am North Fork Stor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30am Storytime @ De 6pm Good Yarns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3pm St Peter's "Thursda 4pm Foothills Food Bank 5:30pm Foothills Comm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Foothills Food Bar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Twin Sisters Mobile 2pm Wild Fermented Br 4pm Mask Making
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1pm Whatcom Mobile M 2:45pm (No title) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am Ask-a-Nurse Clinic 8am Catch Me: Teen Me 8am Foothills Food Bank 3 more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30am Storytime @ De 6pm Good Yarns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3pm St Peter's "Thursda 4pm Foothills Food Bank 6:30pm Columbia Valley 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Twin Sisters Mobile 10am Drug Take Back E
26	27	28	29	30	31	Nov 1
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am Foothills Food Bank 10:30am Digital Equity E 10:30am North Fork Stor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:30am Storytime @ De 6pm Good Yarns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3pm St Peter's "Thursda 4pm Foothills Food Bank 	Halloween	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Twin Sisters Mobile 10am Foothills Food Bar

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Crossword Solution

- Across
 2. Rawhide
 3. Flicka
 4. Rin Tin Tin
 7. Big Valley
 11. Roy Rogers
 12. Wagon Train
 13. Gene Autry
 17. Bat Masterson
 18. Cassidy
 19. Lone Ranger
 21. Lonesome Dove
 22. Death Valley
 23. Tom Mix
- Down
 1. Winchester
 4. Robin Hoods
 5. Maverick
 6. Miss Kitty
 8. John Wayne
 9. Bonanza
 10. Chaparral
 14. Davy Crockett
 15. Daniel Boone
 16. Jesse James
 20. Laredo

Sudoku

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

Rebus solutions

- Soul music
- Submerge
- Trickle
- Eiffel Tower
- Counter
- Drain pipe
- Cargo net
- Rubber band

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



STOCKING UP FOR WINTER!

Do you have or know of an upcoming event? Let us know by the 15th of the month prior and we'll help promote it. Email the editor at info@foothillsinfo.com.