

Lake Chelan Mirror

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Lake Chelan & Entiat Valley News Since 1891
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Commissioners, county directors plan March community meetings | **A2**

Point of view
My "Walking Start to Running Start" bill will provide more options for students and families | **B1**



Land use hearing considers 38-home Lookout subdivision in Chelan

By **MIKE MALTAIS**
Ward Media Staff Reporter

CHELAN – A land-use hearing held at city hall on Tuesday, Feb. 20, concerns the latest 38-home subdivision in The Lookout community.

Hearing Examiner Andrew Kottkamp heard a report from community development director John Ajax, who summarized the main points contained in the city's recommendation for approval.

Among those points were the critical areas review, project review,

public and agency comments, and conditions of approval.

Kottkamp asked if Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) concerns regarding site distance were addressed in the public works comments. Kottkamp said he did not see that in the proposed approval conditions.

Ajax said that despite some initial confusion the final traffic report issued through public works did provide an analysis of and answer to WSDOT concerns.

Ted Schroth, one of The Lookout

developers, testified on behalf of the subdivision.

Kottkamp asked if Schroth had the opportunity to review the city staff report and the proposed conditions of approval.

Schroth said he did.

Kottkamp asked if Schroth had any objections to either.

Schroth said he had no objections. "Our latest phase, 38 lots, is generally smaller on average than our previous phases," said Schroth. "We are targeting a lower price point than we have before, which is more afford-

able. The location... is a pile of rocks and dirt between the Rec center and the hillside and is more or less where this phase is going."

Schroth said the subdivision will include 16 cottage-style lots with homes of about 1,000 square feet and 22 slightly larger homes of 1,300 or 1,400 sf with more open space than in previous phases.

"We did receive three letters from homeowners within the Lookout side of erosion issues being experienced," added Schroth. "We had a meeting with our geotech, builder,

landscaper, and facilities contractor. The issues raised in the letters are actually being addressed, and we will have a fix drainage system constructed within the next couple of weeks, well before we initiate construction for the new phase."

Kottkamp said he would have a written decision within 10 working days and that, with the exception of an appeal his decision is final and conclusive.

Mike Maltais: 360-333-8483 or michael@ward.media



COURTESY OF PATRICK BENNETT
Founding winemaker Mike Wade and his wife and co-owner Karen Wade, crushed their first grapes from their estate Riverbend Vineyard in the Wahluke Slope AVA in the fall of 2000. 2024 marks 25 years of wine making at Fielding Hills Winery in Chelan.

Celebrating a quarter century of winemaking excellence: Fielding Hills Winery

Ward Media / Lake Chelan Mirror

CHELAN – As Fielding Hills Winery marks its 25th anniversary in 2024, founders Mike and Karen Wade reflect on a journey that began with the crushing of grapes from their estate Riverbend Vineyard in the Wahluke Slope AVA in the fall of 2000.

What started as an extension of a family business rooted in apple and cherry cultivation has blossomed into a renowned winemaking endeavor, deeply embedded in the fabric of Washington State's wine industry.

Originating from a lineage of third-generation growers, packers, and shippers, Mike Wade ventured

into winemaking, driven by a desire to "make something and see it all the way to the consumer."

This marked a pivot from traditional agriculture to the art of winemaking, inspired by Mike's early experiences with wine and food pairings.

The transition saw the planting of Riverbend Vineyard on land formerly dedicated to Red Delicious apples in 1998.

The winery's debut commercial production in 2000 yielded 400 cases of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Red Table Wine, with the Cabernet Sauvignon securing 91 points from Wine Spectator.

This early success catapulted Mike Wade to the status of Washington

State's Rising Star winemaker.

For 13 years, the Wades, alongside their children, family, and friends, operated from an orchard warehouse in East Wenatchee before expanding to a tasting room and production facility on the shores of Lake Chelan in 2014.

This growth reflects not just in location but in recognition, with accolades including placement of two wines on the top 100 Best Wines of the World list, the 2013 Merlot being named Best in Washington State, and their tasting room's distinction by "Sip" Magazine as a must-visit location.

Reflecting on the rewards of

See **FIELDING HILLS WINERY** Page A2

Shoreline restoration starts in March

Ward Media / Lake Chelan Mirror

CHELAN – Starting March 4, Chelan Public Utility District will begin a project at Riverwalk Park aimed at restoring the shoreline and enhancing waterfront access for non-motorized recreation.

The initiative is set to address three specific areas: near the sewer lift station between W. Okanogan Ave. and W. Woodin Ave., from the wooden viewing area at S. 1st St. and W. Okanogan Ave to the boardwalk west of Webster Ave., and across the parking lot at E. Farnham Ave.

Visitors of the park should anticipate temporary closures of the Riverwalk Trail during the construction period, which is expected to conclude

in late April, weather and conditions permitting.

The project's focus is to stabilize approximately 520 feet of riverbank by introducing boulders, river cobble, native trees, and shrubs. This effort aims to protect the area against ongoing erosion, which is attributed to various factors including wind, reservoir fluctuations, boat wakes, and human activities.

Ryan Baker, Chelan PUD Parks Manager, highlighted the urgency of the project: "On the south shore especially, the bank has receded close to 20 feet, and that's valuable park land we will never get back. We're really excited to start this project."

In addition to shoreline stabilization, the project will improve water-

front access for stand-up paddleboards (SUPs), canoes, and kayaks and will include the addition of new picnic tables and benches.

A notable feature will be a flat-rock staircase leading into the water near the end of First Street. Upon completion, split-rail fencing will be installed to protect the rehabilitated shoreline, support the growth of native plantings, and direct visitors towards the enhanced access points.

Baker also emphasized the district's commitment to minimizing the project's impact: "We want to be good stewards of Riverwalk Park, and we'll try to keep any short-term impacts of this work to a minimum. This is a well-loved park, and we want to thank the community for their patience."



COURTESY OF CHELAN PUD



COURTESY OF THE CHELAN COUNTY FAIR AND RODEO
Pictured left to right are: Benton Franklin Fair & Kennewick Rodeo Queen Lexi Hagins, Moses Lake Round Up Rodeo Queen Alexis Shoultz, Othello Rodeo Queen Milie Cobb, Center Chelan County Fair and Rodeo Queen Austyn Robinson, Coulee City Last Stand Rodeo Kaylee Stump, Appleatchee Riders Queen Izzy Black, Caribou Trail Junior Rodeo Queen Camri Peterson (not pictured Omak Stampede Rodeo Queen Eryne Anderson).

Community celebrates Austyn Robinson's crowning as Chelan County Rodeo Queen

By **QUINN PROPST**
Ward Media Staff Reporter

CHELAN COUNTY – Chelan County Fair and Rodeo Queen Austyn Robinson was officially crowned on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024. The Chelan County Fair and Rodeo Queen Fundraiser and Coronation Kickoff Party was held at the Mission Creek Community Club Building in Cashmere.

Kristen Mattson, a member of the Chelan County Fair Board and the Chelan County Rodeo Queen Committee, said the event was a success.

"It was a packed house," Mattson said. "Filled with local supporters, friends, and family who came to support Austyn."

Other area rodeo queens attended the event to support Robinson. Rodeo queens in attendance were Benton Franklin Fair and Kennewick Rodeo Queen Lexi Hagins, Moses Lake Round-Up Rodeo Queen Alexis Shoultz, Othello Rodeo Queen Milie

Cobb, Coulee City Last Stand Rodeo Queen Kaylee Stump, Appleatchee Riders Queen Izzy Black, Caribou Trail Junior Rodeo Queen Camri Peterson and Omak Stampede Rodeo Queen Eryne Anderson.

As a rodeo queen, Robinson serves as an ambassador for the sport of rodeo, the fair, and her community. With this role there will be a lot of travel to promote the fair and rodeo and support other rodeo queens.

"Funds were raised to help Austyn travel to other rodeos this year representing the Chelan County Fair and Rodeo," Mattson said. "There was a 50/50 raffle, silent and live auction, and also a desert dash."

On Feb. 16 and 17, Robinson and her horse Cookie attended the first rodeo in the Columbia River Rodeo Circuit, the Yakima Showdown at the Sundome.

Quinn Propst: 509-731-3590 or quinn@ward.media



COURTESY OF THE CHELAN COUNTY FAIR AND RODEO
Chelan County Fair and Rodeo Queen Austyn Robinson and her horse Cookie attended the first rodeo for the 2024 Columbia River Rodeo Circuit, the Yakima Showdown at the Sundome on Feb. 16 and 17.

Inside Lake Chelan Mirror this Week

5 things to do this week.....	A2	Community Bulletin Board.....	B3	Legislative Coverage.....	A4&B1
Church Guide.....	A4	Death Announcement.....	B3	Obituary Announcement.....	B3
Classifieds.....	B2&B3	Kid Scoop.....	B4	Sheriff Report.....	A3

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COURTESY OF PETERSON'S WATERFRONT

For 33 consecutive years, Peterson's Waterfront located on the shores of Lake Chelan was among a select number of RCI affiliated resorts to meet the requirements for this annual distinction as part of the RCI Resort Recognition Program®.

Peterson's Waterfront secures RCI Gold Crown Resort designation for 33rd year

Ward Media
Lake Chelan Mirror

CHELAN – Peterson's Waterfront has been awarded the RCI Gold Crown Resort® designation by RCI®, the global leader in vacation exchange, for the 33rd consecutive year.

This achievement underscores Peterson's Waterfront's commitment to providing high-quality vacation experiences.

The RCI Gold Crown Resort designation is given to resorts that meet the highest standards in resort accommodations, hospitality, and member experience.

RCI rigorously evaluates these standards through guest feedback and an assessment of the resort's amenities, unit amenities, and guest services.

Peterson's Waterfront has consistently fulfilled these requirements as part of the RCI Resort Recognition Program®,

establishing itself as a preferred vacation destination.

"Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall, we are blessed to have you enjoying your time at the Best Kept Secret on the Lake," the resort stated, emphasizing its appeal throughout the year to visitors looking for a memorable stay.

The RCI Resort Recognition Program identifies affiliated resorts offering exceptional vacation experiences to owners and guests of timeshares. It features three levels of distinction: RCI Gold Crown®, RCI Silver Crown®, and RCI Hospitality®, awarded based on the ability of resorts to meet or exceed the program's strict standards. These awards reflect the resorts' commitment to quality and customer satisfaction, measured by customer feedback.

Richard Ruff, senior vice president and managing direc-

tor of RCI North America, commended Peterson's Waterfront for achieving the RCI Gold Crown designation, saying, "We are thrilled to recognize those who have attained the RCI Gold Crown designation, and we are proud to be affiliated with Peterson's Waterfront."

He highlighted the role of the RCI Resort Recognition Program in ensuring that affiliated resort properties consistently offer high-quality vacation experiences to RCI subscribing members.

For further information about the RCI Resort Recognition Program and its standards, visit www.rciaffiliates.com.

The continuous recognition of Peterson's Waterfront by RCI confirms its status as a leading vacation destination, committed to delivering excellent hospitality and an unforgettable experience to guests.

Manson Grange receives \$6,000 grant for restroom renovations to boost accessibility

Ward Media
Lake Chelan Mirror

MANSON – The Manson Grange has received a \$6,000 grant from the Community Foundation of NCW to support its Restroom Renovation Project, aiming to enhance universal accessibility.

This financial support will facilitate participation in various community activities hosted at the Grange.

The grant is part of the

Foundation's Regional Impact Grant, targeting nonprofits in Chelan, Douglas, and Okanogan counties for core operations and project-specific support, and is awarded on an annual competitive basis.

Claire Oatey, the Foundation's Director of Community Engagement and a member of the grant awards committee, stated, "We believe that the Manson Grange Improvements will create greater opportunity to utilize the build-

ing to strengthen the community through the many affordable social, educational, and recreational events they provide."

The Manson Grange is dedicated to establishing a cost-effective and sustainable center that offers programs and activities aimed at reinforcing community bonds.

Further details on the project and donation information are available at manson-grange.com.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church to host Sheriff Cy Bowthorpe for Elder Fraud Prevention Seminar

By TERRY J. LABRUE

CHELAN – According to local law enforcement officials, senior citizens are frequent targets of fraudsters who prey on the unassuming and the unwary.

Making the situation more difficult to spot, modern technology can permit phone, text or email messages to mimic a wide range of companies and organizations, sent from fraudulent players.

"Elders are particularly at risk because they can be duped to wrongly believing they are talking to an actual child or grandchild, the local utility, bank, or some other trusted party," Senior Warden Linda Cox said.

"Every week seniors are fraudulently contacted and are requested to purchase gift cards, or transfer funds to correct a supposed situation."

Deputy Sheriff Bowthorpe will address the audience and

reveal tell-tale scams that are operating in the Chelan Valley and how to cope with scam artists. He heads the local consumer fraud task force and has a wide range of relevant information to share.

The fraud prevention seminar will be held on Monday, March 4, at 1:30 p.m. in the historic St. Andrews Parish fellowship hall, at 120 East Woodin Ave. in Chelan. For more information, call the parish office at (509) 682-2851.

Chelan County Sheriff Report



February 16

- 9:16:46 Suicide Threat, 530 N Cedar St
- 9:37:09 Noise, 157 Dietrich Rd
- 9:47:56 Cps/Aps Refer, 360 Hesperian Way
- 14:26:46 Drugs, 215 W Webster Ave
- 15:42:57 Welfare Check, 418 E Woodin Ave
- 18:06:05 Accident No Inj, 2100blk Cagle Gulch Rd
- 18:59:57 Traffic Offense, 1002 E Woodin Ave
- 21:11:27 Warrant, 455 Wapato Lake Rd; 12 Tribes

- Lake St
- 5:08:15 Suspicious, 490 5th St, Chelan Falls
- 12:20:53 Theft, 108 N Apple Blossom Dr
- 15:35:49 Abuse, 2441 Sr 150 # 5, Manson
- 16:35:36 Theft, 618 E Woodin Ave; Town Tub
- 18:50:57 Welfare Check, Wapato Lake Rd Mp 1, Manson
- 20:13:17 Traffic Offense, N Apple Blossom Dr & Us Hw
- 21:34:22 Hazard, S Navarre St & E Wapato Ave

- 14:40:08 Parking/Abandon, E Highland Ave & N Markeson
- 20:14:07 Trespass, 315 E Wapato Ave

February 22

- 8:26:04 Am Accident No Inj, Us Hwy 97a Mp 215, Entiat
- 11:03:12 Am Fraud/Forgery, 102 Waterslide Dr; Slidewaters
- 12:04:20 Parking/Abandon, 70 Boetzkes Ave, Manson
- 1:49:46 Harass/Threat, 1000 Totem Pole Rd; Manson
- 2:05:00 Vehicle Prowl, 14425 Olin St# As, Entiat
- 2:07:49 911, 503 E Highland Ave; Lake Chelan
- 2:28:30 Drugs, 215 W Webster Ave
- 2:50:18 Accident No Inj, 2500blk Washington St, Manson
- 3:22:05 Fraud/Forgery, 418 E Allen Ave
- 3:54:20 Assist Public, 4625 Navarre Coulee Rd
- 5:23:28 Theft, 108 N Apple Blossom Dr
- 6:36:48 Accident Unk, Winesap Ave & Corkscrew Ln
- 8:26:27 Traffic Offense, E Johnson Ave & W Manson Rd
- 8:35:42 Disturbance, 315 Chase Ave, Manson, Wa
- 11:54:08 Welfare Check, 104 W Woodin Ave; Campbell's

February 20

- 0:45:39 Assist Agency, Sr 971 Mp 11
- 7:37:58 Suspicious, 15035 N Lakeshore Dr, Entiat
- 9:17:44 Trespass, 8847 Entiat River Rd
- 9:47:55 Accident No Inj, Entiat River Rd Mp 1, Entiat
- 9:48:01 Assist Public, 721 E Woodin Ave# Ofc
- 11:18:49 Traffic Offense, 128 E Woodin Ave; Kellys
- 15:07:16 Accident No Inj, Walnut St & 3rd St
- 15:20:45 911, 104 W Woodin Ave; Campbell

February 21

- 11:06:11 Parking/Abandon, Apple Acres Rd & Washington
- 14:36:34 Parking/Abandon, 135 E Farnham Ave; Chelan

February 17

- 2:09:35 Dui, Sr 150 Mp3, Manson
- 8:13:07 Traffic Offense, Sr 150 Mp 5
- 10:27:48 Welfare Check, 2200blk Entiat Way, Entiat
- 11:29:15 Fraud/Forgery, 104 Spader Bay Rd# 49
- 11:32:27 Suspicious, 2521 Washington St, Manson
- 11:48:15 Assist Public, E Woodin Ave & Us Hwy 97a
- 13:06:23 Assist Public, Sr 150 Mp 4, Manson
- 13:43:19 Welfare Check, 485 W Manson Rd; Don Morse
- 21:04:01 Traffic Offense, 200blk E Farnh Ave

February 18

- 2:02:28 Alarm, 307 Butte Rd
- 2:49:23 Dui, W Gibson Ave & N

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LEGISLATIVE Coverage

Holocaust education bill dies

By MARY MURPHY
Washington State Journal

OLYMPIA - An effort to make Holocaust and genocide education mandatory in Washington public schools has failed to win enough support to pass in this year's Legislature.

"We've been trying diligently to reach out to stakeholders to get agreed upon wording that would make this workable and fundable," said Sen. Lisa Wellman, D-Mercer Island, Chair of the Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee. "This bill just needs more time to be worked through."

Sponsored by Rep. Travis Couture, R-Allyn, HB 2037 and its companion bill in the Senate received a lot of testimony during public hearings.

Over 2,000 people registered to testify in its early days. Survivors of genocide, activists, and students spoke in general support of the idea but voiced concern about a lack of inclusivity.

On Feb. 10, the bill was debated on the floor of the House, and an amendment was introduced by Democrats, which caught Couture and his Republican counterparts off-guard.

The amendment called for



COURTESY OF WASHINGTON STATE HOUSE REPUBLICANS
Prime Sponsor of HB2037 Rep. Travis Couture, R-Allyn, speaks on the House floor.

collaboration from non-profit groups beyond the Jewish community and the inclusion of other genocides.

The bill said any curriculum should include "diasporic communities with lived experiences of surviving, being made refugees by, or otherwise being directly impacted by genocide."

"Jewish people were already removed from their homeland when they were in Europe and then systematically destroyed during the Holocaust," Couture said, referring to Israel. "So, they were not 'made refugees by' anything."

Rep. Drew Stokesbary, R-Auburn, said that while he supports the goal of inclusivity by Democrats, he worried this could unintentionally have negative impacts, presumably referencing current events.

"I'm concerned about the potential politicization of the concept of the bill," Stokesbary said. "My concern is that the policy contained in the bill could inadvertently lead to folks being accused of genocide who have not actually committed genocide."

After the amendment was adopted, Stokesbary urged a

vote yes on the bill but re-emphasized his opinions about the amendment.

"Jewish people deserve a homeland, but the Holocaust is not what drove them from that and my concern is that this amendment detracts from that important and historical fact," Stokesbary said.

Wellman said many people did not feel comfortable voting in favor of the bill without "agreeable language."

"I tried to shut down any discussion of current events relating to the bill," Wellman said. "When you get into politics that may happen in the classroom, that was not the intention of running this bill."

Wellman said that she spoke with Sen. John Braun, R-Centralia, who introduced the Senate version of the bill. She said lawmakers intend to continue this work.

"We intend to work through it, and hopefully bring back a solution that better addresses the issue," Wellman said. "Part of the problem with a bill that is both an important topic to be discussed in education, but it's also something that is very much happening in the moment. And getting those conflated can be challenging, dangerous and uncomfortable."

Legislature to hear three citizen-led initiatives amid debate on Police Pursuit, Parental Rights, and State Income Tax

By MARY MURPHY
Washington State Journal

OLYMPIA - Three citizen-led initiatives will receive hearings in this session of the Legislature, said Senate Majority Leader Andy Billig, D-Spokane, and Speaker of the House Laurie Jinkins, D-Tacoma.

The Legislature will debate I-2113 on reasonable police pursuit, I-2081 on restoring parent's "right to know," and I-2111, on prohibiting a state income tax.

"Washington voters will hear a lot between now and November on any initiatives that end up on the ballot," Billig and Jinkins said in a press release. "It will be up to them to decide what sort of state they want to live in."

If not adopted by March 7, lawmakers could propose alternatives to be put on the ballot in November.

Three other initiatives won't get hearings in the Democrat-controlled Legislature and instead will go straight to the ballot this fall. They are I-2117, a partial repeal of the Climate Commitment Act, I-2109, a repeal of the capital gains tax; and I-2124, which allows people to opt out of Washington's long-term care retirement program.

Rep. Jim Walsh, R-Aberdeen, helped write the initiatives and advocated for hearings throughout the session. On his Facebook page, Walsh said:

"Resist tyranny. Do it happily. Our beautiful state deserves to be defended by free people. Peaceful non-compliance with bad government action is a powerful tool for change."

Walsh and other Republicans are not satisfied with hearings on just three of the initiatives.

They said they believe the public deserves to hear the arguments by lawmakers both against and for the other three initiatives, particularly with capital gains and the Climate Control Act.

"We are not going to have a hearing on the capital gains tax or the Climate Commitment Act repeal. Both of those will take our state dramatically in the wrong direction," Billig said, adding the Democrats think that repeal of those two initiatives would be "devastating to the people of Washington State."

Democrats say the capital gains tax repeal could take away \$5 billion from early K-12 education.

Republicans reject that view.

"They're trying to fearmonger," Braun said. "They're counting on you only hearing the word devastating, \$5 billion, and not being experts."

For the initiatives to become law, Gov. Jay Inslee does not need to sign them. Despite this, Inslee offered his opinion on what he would do if initiatives came to his desk.

"Life is too short to have to think about those difficult things," Inslee said. "Obviously there are some I would not sign... there are some I possibly could sign... Is that sufficiently obscure?" Inslee joked.

The Washington State Journal is a non-profit news website funded by the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation.

State proposes pesticide ban despite current research

By ASPEN ANDERSON
Washington State Journal

OLYMPIA - Neonicotinoid pesticides are known for their harmful effects on the nervous systems of insects, and a proposal in the state legislature calls for them to be banned for household use.

"About 1/3 of our agricultural sector needs pollination to thrive, and our pollinators, bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds in this state are under more and more threat," said prime sponsor Sen. Marko Liias, D-Edmonds.

Others, however, say that blaming household use of pesticides for a decline in bee populations mischaracterizes the current research.

Allan Felsot, a professor of Environmental Studies at Washington State University, said focusing on habitat restoration is essential to save pollinators, arguing that allocating taxpayer dollars to this bill would be a waste as it fails to address the impacts on bee populations.

Neonicotinoids are toxic to pollinators, Felsot said, but he added: "Not a single study published today can link species population declines to insecticide use unless one conflates a hazard identification study using artificial forced feeding experiments with what happens in real habitats."

Felsot said the EPA has invested significant time, spanning several years, and taxpayer funds in conducting neonicotinoid risk assessments. The fact that these products are still available on the market suggests that there's justification behind it, he argues.

Neonicotinoids are the most popular insecticide class in the nation, while insecticides are also the number one cause of acute pesticide illness. Imida-

clopid, Thiamethoxam, and Clothianidin are some of the most common.

They're commonly used in farms, lawns, and gardens and for controlling fleas and ticks in pets. While scientists are still studying the impact on human health, experts say that just how they affect bees and other pollinators is uncertain.

If SB 5972 is approved, the use of neonicotinoid pesticides would be restricted except when an application license is obtained or during the "production of an agricultural commodity." The bill also grants authority to the Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture to permit the use of these pesticides in cases of urgent pest threats.

"User error," Liias said, is the primary issue this bill addresses. He claims people in urban areas are not following the instructions on the label and potentially harming nearby pollinators.

Again, Felsot disagrees. "Misapplications are under regulation of the product labels, but why anyone would think infrequent 'misapplications' have anything to do with pollinator population declines is crazy," he said. "Misapplications can kill a colony, but a colony of honeybees is not like wild populations of pollinators."

In 2019, Liias created the Pollinator Health Task Force, which, after four years of examining scientific data and making recommendations, advocates mainly for the scrutiny of neonicotinoid pesticide usage in non-agricultural settings.

The Washington State Department of Agriculture recommends using extreme caution when using these kinds of pesticides as it can cause massive bee deaths if bees collect con-

taminated pollen and bring it back to the hive.

Kelly McLain, the legislative liaison for the Washington State Department of Agriculture, didn't question whether the bill would be effective but said the governor's budget did not contain funding for this bill. Through 2029, state costs for implementation of these new regulations is estimated at \$1,637,000.

Billy Olesen from the Washington State Pest Management Association and Ben Buchholz, representing Washington Friends Farms and Forests, cited a local study from Washington State University that found little to no impact from neonicotinoid pesticides on bee populations.

In this study, researchers cooperated with 92 Washington beekeepers, and they found no concentrations that exhibit detectable harmful effects on bee populations. However, lead author Timothy Lawrence, still recommended accurately following label directions, and not using these insecticides when bees are likely to be foraging or in plant flowering stages.

Buchholz also said this bill language needs to be more specific. He believes these rules should only apply to retail sales of pesticides, not agricultural applications.

"I don't know that neonicks is the problem," Buchholz said.

Dr. Rosemary Malfi, from the Society for Invertebrate Conservation, said neonics are a particular cause for concern because plants absorb neonicotinoids and spread throughout all parts, including pollen and nectar, exposing bees and other pollinators. They are highly toxic, so even small amounts can kill insects, making user mistakes dangerous.

According to Malfi, these chemicals can linger in the environment long after their use stops, building up in the soil with repeated application over the years.

Washington was the first state in the nation to develop a statewide strategy to conserve bumblebees. Rosemary emphasizes that other states are now looking to us for guidance. Washington would join 10 states that have introduced legislation to regulate these pesticides.

If passed, this law would take effect January 1, 2026.

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"With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

- Matthew 19:26

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Foster parents rally for change in state law amid rising fentanyl crises



PHOTO BY ASPEN ANDERSEN

A handful of foster moms and foster kids came to the state capitol's north steps in Olympia, urging legislators to put foster children first.

By **ASPEN ANDERSON**
Washington State Journal

OLYMPIA – As the prevalence of fentanyl rises, so too does the frequency of critical incidents related to parental substance abuse among foster children, often resulting in fatalities or near-fatalities. This alarming trend spurred foster mothers from across the state to gather and protest on the steps of the capitol.

They say a recently adopted state law makes it harder to remove children from homes for the evidence of substance abuse alone, and that is putting children in danger. They are backing a new law that would allow children to be removed from homes where the use of high-potency synthetic opioids like fentanyl are used.

“The bill’s goal was to keep families together, said foster parent Tristan Fujita, referring to the current law. “But you are permanently severing the ability for a family to be together.”

The Keeping Families Together Act went into effect in July 2023. Known by its bill number 1227, It prevents the state from removing children from their families due to substance abuse alone. The law was adopted with strong bipartisan support and was vetted by foster parents on both sides

of the aisle and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCYF).

“Before 1227, there have been child fatalities, and after 1227, there will be child fatalities,” Prime sponsor of the act, Lillian Ortiz-Self (D-Mukilteo), said. “And that is a shame on us.”

Fifteen foster parents and two foster kids came to the capitol steps in Olympia with their umbrellas, rain jackets, and colorful signs that said things like, “HB1227 belongs in the grave, not our kids,” and “It’s a grown-up’s job to keep kids safe.” They were always planning to testify against HB 1227, but felt after several tragedies, they needed to act now.

According to Fujita, the recently adopted bill’s goal was to reduce the removal of children in foster care by 25%, and it was successful in doing that. However, she said that the number of “critical incidents,” where there is a near fatality or fatality, has increased by 54%.

According to DCYF’s 2023 report on the Keeping Families Together Act, since 2018, there has been a 35.6% decrease in the number of children in foster care. However, since 2020 they have reported an increase of high-risk cases, with 48 fentanyl related critical incidents in 2023, compared to 41 cases in 2022.

Ortiz-Self said a disproportionate number of Black, brown, and Native American children are removed from homes statewide, and that’s another reason to be careful about removing children from families.

“The generational trauma that has been caused to families is irrevocable,” Ortiz-Self said. “We cannot continue to operate on a 100-year-old child welfare law that removes children without proving they are in danger.”

Fujita said race is not the issue. Individuals of any race or economic status can safely parent their children if they aren’t using drugs. However, she emphasized that if parents are using drugs, they cannot safely care for their kids.

Fujita noted that while Ortiz-Self argued the newly adopted law didn’t alter everything, after attending all of the training sessions from DCYF, she said she believed it “changed everything.”

Fujita usually picks up children and babies from hospitals while their parents are getting help for substance abuse and has had the delight of returning them to their biological parents when they are ready. She says sometimes this can take days and other times years. “Imagine trying to parent a newborn that is not sleeping, when you do not have any healthy coping mechanisms – when your coping mechanism has been [drug] use,” Fujita said.

Ortiz-Self argues that removing children from homes without proving imminent danger constitutes government overreach. She highlights that one-third of the children removed from home are returned within 30 days. That suggests there was insufficient danger initially. She said it is not the government’s role to predict potentially dangerous situations.

Tracie Jefferson, a foster mom and key event organizer, opposes family separation but said families are not being kept

POINT OF VIEW

My “Walking Start to Running Start” bill will provide more options for students and families

The Washington State Legislature is quickly approaching its adjournment date of March 7. I’m pleased to share that my Senate Bill 5670, expanding the state’s Running Start program, is successfully moving through the process. It was unanimously approved by the Senate on Feb. 2 and received a public hearing on Feb. 15 in the House Education Committee.



SEN. BRAD HAWKINS

funding is retained by their high schools.

Senate Bill 5670 approved by Senate

My Senate Bill 5670, first introduced during the 2023 session, would expand Running Start opportunities for high schoolers by allowing students who have completed 10th grade but haven’t yet begun their fall term in 11th grade to earn up to 10 credits during their summer term. The bill took a major step forward on Feb. 2. As amended, the Senate approved the bill unanimously.

I’m a member of the Senate’s Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee and support the Running Start program because students can complete their two-year degrees while also earning high school diplomas. This opportunity saves the students money, reduces their likelihood of debt, and advances them closer to earning a four-year degree.

Bill advancing in House of Representatives

My bill received House Education Committee hearing on Feb. 15. It was great to return to the committee room, as a former committee member,

to advocate for my Senate bill. Wenatchee Valley College President Faimous Harrison testified in support of the bill along with Running Start seniors Ella Crawford from Eastmont and Anthony Zavala from Cashmere.

The bill would make permanent a summer term funded temporarily in the 2023-2025 budget. I strongly support the Running Start program as an option for students and families, especially for students of middle-class families who may not otherwise qualify for financial aid. The program provides a proven way to build credits and put students on a degree path.

For new Running Start students starting the program as juniors, a full load of college classes can shock the system and be very stressful. Allowing students to gradually begin the program during the summer months would help ease them into college and help them experience success. You have to walk before you run, so I’m calling my bill a “Walking Start to Running Start.”

Brad Hawkins is State Senator for the 12th District. He serves on both the Senate’s Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee and the Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee.

together when kids are dying.

Jefferson reports that in the past six months, DCYF documented 45 critical incidents, mostly linked to substance abuse, placing children under two, our most vulnerable, in high-risk situations without advocacy.

Stacy Hulse, a foster mom of 15 years and protestor, recently adopted a little girl after a two-and-a-half-year case, the girl, sporting a pink puffer

coat, held a sign that read: “Kids first every step.”

“Habitual illegal drug use plus parenting equals not safe for kids,” Hulse said. “It’s like a math equation. You add those two things together, and it’s a disaster waiting to happen.”

Ortiz-Self admits judicial ambiguity exists regarding the dangers of fentanyl, prompting the drafting of a new bill this legislative session to provide clarity on when children

should be removed from families due to this drug.

SB 6109 clarifies child removal procedures for high-potency synthetic opioids, linking child abuse and neglect to parents using opioids to assess imminent physical harm. It mandates services for affected children, with a 90-day enactment period after passage. Having passed the Senate, it awaits a public hearing in the House.

2024 APPLE BLOSSOM MUSICAL

**[MAY 1-4, 8-11 @ 7:30pm
MAY 5 & 11 @ 2:00pm]**

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Kid Scoop Together

High-Flying Frogs

Felix and Finn Frog are seeing who can jump highest. Color in the spaces that add up to an even number. The frog with the most colored spaces is the winner.

FELIX FINN

$3+2=$	$7+4=$
$3+6=$	$1+2=$
$6+5=$	$4+4=$
$7+2=$	$6+2=$
$5+2=$	$1+1=$
$2+2=$	$3+5=$
$4+2=$	$2+8=$
$3+3=$	$6+6=$
$2+6=$	$1+3=$
$9+1=$	$5+5=$
$3+5=$	$4+4=$
$4+8=$	$6+8=$
$8+8=$	$7+7=$
$4+4=$	$2+6=$

Fun With Money!

Finley, Fabian and Fiona Frog each have \$30 to spend at the Spring Blossom Festival. They each made a list of things they want to spend money on at the Festival.



Take a look at the prices of the items each frog wants to buy. Then, use your math skills to answer the following questions:

1. Which frog will have the most money left over after buying everything on their list?

2. Which frog won't have enough money to buy everything on their list?

3. What items could this frog remove from their list to stay at or under \$30?

How many blossoms can you find on this page?

The Spring Blossom Festival is lots of fun, but you have to watch your spending! Help your froggy friends!

Fiona's List	Finley's List	Fabian's List
Lily Pad Launch \$5.00	Lily Pad Launch \$5.00	Tulip Train \$4.00
Honey Cookies \$3.50	Dragonfly Hat \$4.50	Honey Cookies \$3.50
Tulip Train \$4.00	Puddle Coaster \$6.50	Daisy Wheel \$6.50
Pond Popcorn \$2.75	Muddy Maze \$5.25	Pond Popcorn \$2.75
Swamp Cocoa \$2.50	Leafy Boats \$6.50	Dandelion Shake \$4.50
Buggy Balloons \$3.25	Pond Popcorn \$2.75	Petunia Chips \$3.25
TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$	TOTAL \$

Muddy Money Maze

Do the math to find out which path has the highest value.

Standards Link: Math: Calculate sums and differences.

Spending Spree

Frankie Frog LOVES munching on pond popcorn at the Spring Blossom Festival. A box of it costs \$2.75. Circle the coins that add up to that amount.

Look-Alike Ladybugs

Faye Frog won a bunch of cute stuffed toy ladybugs at the Spring Blossom Festival. One of them is different from the rest. Can you find it?

Standards Link: Find similarities and differences in common objects.

Signs of Spring

Look through the newspaper and find five things that let you know it is springtime. Write the name of each in alphabetical order.

Standards Link: Language Arts: Follow written instructions.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Frieda Frog wants to buy a treat at the Spring Blossom Festival, but she can't remember how much is in her piggy bank. Can you count it for her?

Frieda has \$ _____ in her piggy bank.

Standards Link: Math: Calculate money amounts.

Double Double Word Search

- BLOSSOM
- BOATS
- BUY
- DANDELION
- FROG
- HAT
- HONEY
- LIST
- MATH
- MONEY
- MUDDY
- PRICES
- SPRING
- TULIP
- USE

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

X	B	H	A	T	F	C	J	W	N
H	L	Y	P	O	F	R	N	M	O
B	O	G	V	R	Y	L	O	W	I
O	S	N	S	C	I	N	V	G	L
A	S	I	E	T	E	C	T	L	E
T	O	R	T	Y	U	B	E	I	D
S	M	P	Y	X	T	L	Q	S	N
J	D	S	M	A	T	H	I	T	A
U	S	E	Y	D	D	U	M	P	D

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE LESSON LIBRARY

Costly Headlines

Assign a money amount to each letter of the alphabet: A = \$1, B = \$2, C = \$3, etc. Select three newspaper headlines and add up the letters. What is the most "expensive" headline you can find? Which is the least expensive?

Standards Link: Mathematics: Calculate sums and differences.

Why is it a really bad idea to give dollar bills to a frog?

ANSWER: Because they'll rip it, rip it, rip it.

Write On!

Kids Help Families Save

Write three to five ways that kids can help their families save money.

MEDIA PARTNER

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