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Dopl Technologies named winner of the 2024 Flywheel Investment Conference

The 2024 Flywheel Investment Conference, held from April 16-18 and sponsored by Ogden Murphy Wallace, Microsoft, and Confluence Health, concluded with Dopl Technologies being named the winner and receiving a \$150,000 investment offer from the Flywheel Angel Network.

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

The annual event awarded over \$255,000 to three promising Washington-based companies, bringing the total amount awarded since 2018 to over \$1.5 million.

Dopl Technologies, a software company based in Bothell, WA, is addressing the healthcare disparity between rural and urban areas. Rural communities often face higher mortality rates due to limited access to specialists who diagnose and treat diseases. Dopl's telerobotic ultrasound system enables specialists to perform

non-invasive exams on patients remotely, increasing access to care, improving patient outcomes, and providing financial benefits for hospitals. Led by CEO Ryan James, PhD, and co-founders Stephan Seslar, MD, PhD, and Wayne Monsky, MD, PhD, Dopl Technologies is poised to make a significant impact on healthcare delivery in underserved areas.

OneCourt, a Seattle-based robotics company, received a \$50,000 investment award

See **FLYWHEEL** Page 3



COURTESY OF FLYWHEEL INVESTMENT CONFERENCE & JP PORTRAIT STUDIO

2024 Conference Winner Dopl Technologies: Left to right: CEO and Co-Founder Ryan James, PhD and COO and Co-Founder Steve Seslar, MD, PhD

Leavenworth Art Haus celebrates one year of art and creativity



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

Owner Katie and her wife Kirstie Mieth spent one of their first dates painting pottery, and have made it a tradition to do it on every vacation, which inspired the idea for the Art Haus. **SEE STORY PAGE 20**

Wenatchee landfill receives Wildlife Habitat Council recognition for environmental stewardship

The WM team at the Greater Wenatchee Regional Landfill has again been recognized by the Wildlife Habitat Council for voluntarily managing land to support wildlife habitat and natural ecosystems.

By **QUINN PROPST** | Ward Media Staff Reporter

Environmental stewardship at the landfill is approached as a long-term commitment. It includes the conservation of shrub-steppe habitat, natural strategies to control invasive species, and nest boxes for American kestrels.

"I'm proud of our team for their dedication to this important work," said Dave Rettell, director for WM's disposal operations for the Pacific Northwest. "We live the WM core

values in our day-to-day work, and those core values include the environment. The landscape in the Wenatchee Valley is an extraordinary part of the Pacific Northwest, and we are doing our part to keep it that way."

"We've been operating there (in the Wenatchee Valley) for 30 years and a big part of that work is to make sure that the land and the environment is kept healthy and thriving," WM

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Investing in Innovation – The Flywheel Effect

By **Terry Ward** | CEO and Publisher

As I reflect on the stories featured in this month's Wenatchee Business Journal, I'm struck by a powerful common thread: the transformative impact of investing in innovation.

The recent Flywheel Investment Conference, which brought together entrepreneurs, investors, and community leaders, exemplifies this spirit.

By channeling over \$255,000 into groundbreaking Washington companies, Flywheel is not just supporting individual businesses - it's catalyzing a virtuous cycle of economic growth and positive change.

Take Dopl Technologies, the Bothell-based healthcare software start-up that won \$150,000.

Their telerobotic ultrasound system could

revolutionize access to specialized care in rural communities. Or Terrantic, the Seattle agriculture tech venture awarded \$50,000 to potentially relocate to Chelan or Douglas counties. Their AI-powered solutions promise to boost efficiency and reduce waste in our vital food industry.

These success stories are just the tip of the iceberg. With nearly half the Flywheel applicants already boasting full products, it's clear that our region is brimming with technological talent and entrepreneurial drive.

As these innovators gain funding, exposure, and credibility, they'll inspire others to turn bold ideas into thriving businesses - creating jobs, diversifying our economy, and strengthening our communities.

This flywheel effect is further amplified by companies like Confluence Health and WM, whose investments in employee well-being and environmental stewardship lay the foundation for enduring prosperity.

When businesses prioritize people and the planet, they create a rising tide that lifts all boats.

Of course, as the housing market reminds us, challenges remain.

But I believe that by nurturing a culture of innovation - one that welcomes new ideas, rewards responsible risk-taking, and collaborates for shared success - we can not only weather the ups and downs, but actively shape a brighter, more resilient future for the Wenatchee Valley.

So let's keep the flywheel spinning. Let's champion the dreamers

From the Publisher



and does in our midst, knowing that their breakthroughs have the power to transform lives and leave a lasting legacy.

Together, we can build an economy that works for everyone - an economy propelled by the boundless potential of innovation.

Terry Ward is the CEO of Ward Media and the publisher of the NCW News, Cashmere Valley Record, Lake Chelan Mirror, The Leavenworth Echo, Quad City Herald, and the Wenatchee Business Journal. He can be reached at terry@ward.media.

Empowering the Next Generation: Schools' Focus on AI and Cybersecurity Skills

Technology isn't just an asset but a necessity in education as schools across the region prepare students for the future. The Microsoft Technology Education and Literacy in Schools (TEALS) program is helping schools to make this happen.

By **Dr. Sue Kane, CEO** | NCW Tech Alliance
Sponsored by Microsoft

The Microsoft TEALS program is offered as a philanthropic initiative at no cost to schools.

The program was first introduced at Quincy High School in 2017, and has since grown to be a part of 17 regional high schools across the region.

TEALS pairs teachers with industry professionals who volunteer as mentors. These mentors, who are practicing computer scientists and experts in their fields, bring real-world experience into the classroom. They help students make meaningful connections between theoretical concepts and practical applications, thereby enriching

the learning experience.

TEALS mentors also bring authentic professional connections to hundreds of students across the region each year.

TEALS operates a unique model where professional volunteers teach the curriculum for an entire year while the classroom teachers play a supportive role.

This partnership allows for a seamless transfer of knowledge and skills, with the teachers gradually taking over the reins in the second year.

The result is a sustainable, robust teaching capacity within the schools, ensuring that the program's benefits have a lasting impact.

The program started with computer science and IT courses, but has recently added developmental skills applied to artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity as part of an ongoing commitment to equipping students with the expertise required for the technological challenges of tomorrow.

AI and cybersecurity skills are a fundamental need for all students, because the implications of these technologies extend well beyond the tech industry.

Whether it's navigating the complexities of healthcare systems, securing financial transactions, or ensuring the in-



Eastmont Teacher
Shelley Charlton



Quincy High School
student Nora Medina

tegrity of social services, the knowledge and skills imparted by the TEALS program are becoming increasingly relevant. It's about preparing students to thrive in a world where technology intersects with every facet of their lives.

Eastmont High School is preparing to add cybersecurity classes for students in 2025.

Eastmont Teacher Shelley Charlton has been working with the TEALS program for many years and she describes one of the biggest benefits to TEALS partnership is the way it supports schools to prepare for current technology demands in real time. "By working with TEALS I am able to provide my students with skills and knowledge they need to succeed after high school."

Charlton is also empowered by the teacher development model to embrace learning, "I love being the "oldest student"

in my classroom and learning alongside my students because skills students need today did not exist when I was going to college."

The TEALS program's success lies in its collaborative model, bringing together industry experts and educators to provide a comprehensive learning experience.

This synergy between the classroom and the tech industry serves as a powerful catalyst for innovation and growth, inspiring students to explore the vast potential of AI and cybersecurity.

Nora Medina, one of the first Quincy High School students to complete the TEALS computer science course, visited the high school in April to speak with current students.

Nora shared that her technology skills are giving her the opportunity to surpass her family in-

Finance

Beau Ruff

Contributor for Ward Media



Get Your Business Valuation Prior to Sale Negotiations

Oftentimes, business owners go down the path of selling their business ill-equipped.

Perhaps the owner has built a thriving business and rightfully pats himself on the back for his achievements, but what has he truly built.

More importantly, what is its precise value to a potential buyer? In other words, what is the price a buyer should be willing to pay to acquire the business? The exact value is elusive and complicated to determine.

When a business owner gets even the slightest hint of an interest in exploring sale options, he should engage a valuation expert to get a thorough, unbiased determination of value.

Who is the valuation expert?

Customarily it would be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) that has specialized training in business valuations like the Accredited in Business Valuation (ABV) designation. For ease of reference, let's call these professionals ABV CPAs.

These professionals are often engaged to provide a thorough valuation report. But, equally important, they are often called upon to defend their valuations when, for example, the client is audited by taxing authorities or when acting as expert witnesses in court proceedings that hinge on business valuations.

Timing is critical.

Expect that the valuation process will take at

least a month from the time of engagement, assuming the business owner is able to quickly provide all the requested substantiating information for the ABV CPA to review. That's why it's important that the process starts when the first hint of interest in selling arises.

Might your own CPA provide the valuation?

Maybe. If you have a longstanding relationship with a CPA, feel free to ask about his or her ability to provide a valuation similar to that of an ABV CPA.

However, more often than not, the existing CPA feels comfortable handing off that work to the ABV CPA both because of the additional expertise provided and the fact that the

engagement with the ABV CPA is limited in scope – meaning the current CPA is unlikely to lose your long-held business.

What does early engagement of the ABV CPA provide?

Not only does the business valuation provide the seller with a more thorough understanding of the value of the business for sale negotiations, but it can also provide insight into important business changes the owner can implement to increase the value of the business prior to sale. It provides an opportunity for the owner to begin to cut out the fluff to showcase a more accurate income stream from operations.

Maybe the owner or his family working in the business should have their salary modified to reflect reasonable wages. Maybe company expenses should begin excluding owner – call it, “grey area” – expenses that are often liberally deducted in small businesses and affect the bottom-line value of the company. Maybe it helps to identify and adjust budget items to match industry expense expectations more closely. The bottom line is that it can provide the tools to help the owner understand how to drive the business valuation higher over time.

A business valuation will not necessarily align with the final selling price of the business. This is a common occurrence when predictions meet the realities

of the marketplace. Nevertheless, it provides the seller with a more accurate and honest assessment of the business's value.

The seller should also understand that a savvy buyer will often go through a similar process with his or her own ABV CPA to determine the offer price. By starting the process early, the owner puts himself in the best possible position to begin negotiations with any potential buyer, armed with an understanding of valuation methodology as well as the specific valuation for his business in his back pocket.

Beau Ruff, a licensed attorney and certified financial planner, is the director of planning at Cornerstone Wealth Strategies in Kennewick, WA.



COURTESY OF FLYWHEEL INVESTMENT CONFERENCE & JP PORTRAIT STUDIO

2024 Flywheel Conference Winner OneCourt: CEO Jerred Mace in center.



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2024 Flywheel Conference Winner Terrantic: CEO Trevor Cox on right.



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2024 Flywheel Award Winners Dopl Technologies, OneCourt, and Terrantic with the Flywheel Angel Network.

Flywheel

Continued from page 1

from the Flywheel Angel Network and the \$5,000 Fan Favorite cash prize.

CEO Jerred Mace and co-founders Antysh Bollini, Andrew Buckingham, and Nick Durand have developed a haptic game-board that trans-

lates live sports gameplay into trackable vibrations, making the experience more accessible for the 250 million sports fans with visual disabilities. With a prototype ready, OneCourt aims to revolutionize the way visually impaired fans engage with live sports.

Terrantic, an agriculture technology compa-

ny also based in Seattle, was awarded a \$50,000 relocation award from NCW Tech Alliance for potentially moving their operations to Chelan or Douglas counties. CEO Trevor Cox and co-founders Krishna Srinivasan and Mahendra Rajan have developed an AI-powered Contextualization Engine that integrates disparate data sources, improving shelf-life and throughput for food industry and process-manufacturing decision-makers.

Terrantic's fully dedicated Packhouse Solution is the only one of its kind in the industry, focusing on storage optimization, labor cost reduction, and operational efficiency improvement.

The 2024 Flywheel Investment Conference showcased the innovative spirit of Washington State's early-stage companies, with nearly half of the 71 eligible appli-

cants having a full product ready.

The conference also featured Día del Fundador Latino, a startup event exclusively in Spanish, as well as workshops, keynote presentations,

and networking opportunities for the over 400 attendees.

As the Flywheel Investment Conference continues to support and invest in groundbreaking ideas and technologies,

it serves as a catalyst for economic growth and positive change in Washington State's business landscape.

The next conference is scheduled for April 16-18, 2025.



COURTESY OF FLYWHEEL INVESTMENT CONFERENCE & JP PORTRAIT STUDIO

Día del Fundador Latino Speakers: Left to right: Suleiny Altamirano, Tizana Mexicana; Sandra Velasquez, Nopalera; Mina Gomez, Edward Jones; Sebastian Garzon, Alamo Angels; Leo Ochoa, VertueLab; Rodrigo Carriedo, Propio; Ana Sofia Romero, Glostet

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Finance

When Should You Invest? A solution to timing the market

Tyler Kert

Contributor for Ward Media



Buy low and sell high. It's that simple. Master that technique, and you'll always make money.

The problem, of course, is that in order to buy low and sell high, you either have to be able to see the future or resist the urge to follow the crowd.

Warren Buffett has famously said that it's wise for investors "to be fearful when others are greedy and to be greedy only when others are fearful."

In other words, when everything is going well and the market is going up, you should be worried.

On the other hand, when your investments are plummeting in value, that is the time you should consider investing more.

This strategy sounds simple enough in theory, but it is very difficult to carry out.

If your coworkers are losing their jobs and your own investments take a dip, it takes a lot of courage to increase the amount you are investing in the market.

Usually, when your account statement shows a negative return, the first thought that pops into your head isn't, "I should put more money into that investment." It's exactly

the opposite.

When you see that your investments have fallen in value, the natural reaction is, "I must have picked the wrong investment. I should stop investing in that and move my money somewhere else."

Conversely, when stock prices are going up, and everyone you know is making money, it takes self-control to hold off on investing and wait for better opportunities.

Many people start thinking about investing after they've heard how well an investment has done. But, if you get in the habit of investing in stocks that have done really well in the past, you are buying high. If you panic and decide to jump ship when the market corrects and it seems like the sky is falling, you just sold low.

As you can see, most folks don't have the self-discipline and insight needed to buy low and sell high.

The truth is, we're wired to do the opposite. So, what is the solution? If your goal is to save for retirement over the long term, don't buy low and sell high, buy all the time.

Instead of worrying about market trends or picking the perfect stock, focus your energy



STOCK PHOTO

on building and sticking to a financial plan.

Better yet, set up automatic contributions to your investment accounts. This will remove the emotion from your investing habits and free you from the pressure of accurately timing the market.

Diversifying your investments is one of the keys to making this consistent investing strategy successful.

A well-diversified portfolio will consist of investments spread across different asset classes, industries, and geographic regions to help reduce overall risk and maximize returns over time.

The goal of diversification is to minimize the impact of any single investment's performance on the overall portfolio.

Your specific asset allocation strategy should

be tailored to your own personal situation and risk tolerance.

For example, investors nearing retirement should be actively monitoring their strategy to make sure they aren't taking on too much risk for their situation.

Usually, retirees shift to holding a higher percentage of bonds and fixed-income investments for decreased volatility. But, in some situations, it

would make sense to consider annuities, market-linked CDs, or other ways to get guarantees against potential market loss. On the other hand, younger investors should be taking more risk and have a heavier weighting of stocks to maximize long-term performance.

Another type of diversification that is often forgotten is the location of your assets. What type of account are you investing in? Is it a 401(k), a traditional IRA, a Roth IRA, or a general brokerage account?

Choosing the right investment account or mix of investment accounts is very important and should be determined based on your current tax bracket and/or the tax bracket you expect to move into when you retire.

If you commit to continuous investing through

the good times and the bad, there will be times when you buy high, but you won't compound the problem by selling low.

This simplifies the overall investment approach and puts the focus back on where it should be: your financial plan.

Every financial plan should be uniquely tailored to an individual's personal situation, risk tolerance, and time frame. Working with a tax-smart financial professional to build a financial plan can provide a great sense of security and confidence in the inherently uncertain financial world.

Tyler Kert, a licensed financial advisor and CPA, provides financial planning and tax consulting services at Tamarack Wealth Management in Cashmere, WA.




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Q & A



Meet Ruben Betancourt, Executive Director for the Chelan-Douglas Coalition for Health Improvement

By **Quinn Propst** | Ward Media Staff Reporter

With a background in business and healthcare administration. Ruben Betancourt, through his work with underserved and underrepresented communities at Columbia Valley Community Health, realized his passion for improving health and wellness for the community. This passion led him to the CHI executive director position in July 2023.

CHIs take a coordinated approach to address complex health issues that affect the health of communities. CHIs in Chelan-Douglas, Grant and Okanogan counties include community members who seek to improve whole-person health.

Recently, we caught up with Betancourt to learn more about him and

his goals for the Chelan-Douglas CHI.

Please tell our readers about the Chelan-Douglas Coalition for Health Improvement.

The Coalition for Health Improvement was started in 2011 by the Accountable Communities of Health. We are conveners and change agents of our community to improve collaboration in our systems of health and wellness. We aim to support and empower change and improvement in the seven vital conditions.

The seven vital conditions are: thriving natural world, basic needs for health and safety, humane housing, meaningful work and wealth, lifelong learning, reliable transportation, and be-

longing and civic muscle.

Tell our readers a little bit about yourself.

I'm a bit of an onion, take me a layer at a time. I've had some wonderful life experiences and love connecting with people and building long-lasting relationships. As a lifelong learner I am always curious to learn more and take the deep dive.

What led you to this position?

One of my first jobs was in quality control working for my parents. At a young age through high school I worked in the orchard of my parent's farm taking extra care to support them in all facets of their work.

I learned to care for the little things in a business. This meant having a keen

eye for observing, researching and fixing problems, no matter how insignificant they may seem at first. Fast forward several years and several odd jobs later I completed a Master's Degree in Business with an emphasis in Healthcare Administration.

I had the privilege to work with our underserved and underrepresented communities at Columbia Valley Community Health, the Federally Qualified Health Center in Chelan-Douglas counties.

After seven years and a myriad of learning opportunities my passion to improve the health and wellness for our community led me to the director position with the Coalition for Health Improvement.

What are you most looking forward to in your role as Executive Director at Chelan-Douglas CHI?

Change for the betterment of our community in our systems. As a change agent, and occasional instigator, I am extremely excited to work with the passionate individuals we have as leaders in our region.

What does a normal day look like as Executive

Director at Chelan-Douglas CHI?

There's nothing "normal" when leading change. Every day is different and every week new exciting challenges.

Our community is diverse and that translates to having diverse conversations at multiple levels in our community with a plethora of partners.

What is your favorite part of your job and why?

Helping organizations and individuals realize their goals is pretty special.

The work we do is impossible to do without the excellent leaders in our community.

Their willingness to come together and tackle the difficult issues is what impresses me the most.

There is a lot of heart, soul and love being poured into our community and I get to see that every day.

What are some of your goals for the Chelan-Douglas CHI?

We want our community to live longer, live better, and live with purpose.

To do this our goal is to support collaborative decision making that will lead to a healthier community that thrives here

in central Washington.

There are seven vital conditions that are determinants of our communities' wellbeing.

We aim to support the improvement in all seven of these conditions in our community.

Who or what inspires you?

People inspire me. I am in a unique position to have seen the world through many different lenses and it never surprises me the tenacity and drive individuals have.

What do you like to do with your free time?

I enjoy spending time with my friends and family. My grandmother is 94 and still feeds me when I visit her. When I'm not with them I'm either in my garden or spending time with my animals.

Is there anything else you want our readers to know?

Drink water, go for a walk and thank someone today for existing within your life. Gratitude is a key to a happier and longer life - spread it and give life to others.

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IF YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO SHOULD BE FEATURED IN A WENATCHEE BUSINESS JOURNAL Q&A, EMAIL QUINN@WARD.MEDIA

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Wenatchee Valley Dispute Resolution Center offers Communication and Conflict Resolution Training

The Wenatchee Valley Dispute Resolution Center (WVDRC) has announced a series of professional and personal development training opportunities for May and June.

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The courses are designed to help individuals and organizations improve their communication skills and effectively manage conflicts.

The first workshop, "Learn to Listen - Listen to Learn: An Active Listening Workshop," will be held on Tuesday, May 14, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the YWCA Event Space. Participants will gain practical experience learning invaluable communication skills, uncovering underlying issues and interests, and fostering meaningful conversations. Registration for the workshop is \$40.

The second training, "Conflict De-escalation Training," will occur on Thursday, May 16, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., also at the YWCA Event Space.

Participants will explore

conflict dynamics, active listening, and the interest-based conflict model.

They will also learn best practices for self-de-escalation and de-escalation of others and practice conflict resolution skills for peaceful problem-solving.

This interactive learning experience is particularly beneficial for business and community service organizations. Registration for the training is \$77.

Lastly, the WVDRC will offer a comprehensive "Professional Mediation Training" course from June 24 to 28 at their office.

This course is suitable for individuals interested in becoming certified volunteer mediators with the WVDRC, those seeking more effective ways to deal with conflict in various settings and professionals

in the legal, counseling, or education fields who require relevant training.

The course covers the process of mediation, communication skills, and conflict dynamics.

Trainees who complete the course are eligible to begin a mediation practicum to become certified volunteer mediators with the WVDRC.

The registration fee for the course is \$550, with discounts available for groups of three or more from the same organization.

The training is approved for Educator Clock Hours.

To register for these training opportunities, visit the WVDRC website at <https://www.wvdr.org/> or contact the WVDRC at info@wvdr.org or (509) 888-0957.

Keeping Up with people

Local Banker honored with Banner Bank's highest employee recognition

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

Banner Bank has announced that Cori Bautista, Assistant Vice President and Residential Loan Officer, has been selected as a recipient of the Banner's Best award.



Cori Bautista

This award represents the highest level of recognition within the company and is given to employees who have demonstrated exceptional performance and dedication to their roles.

Bautista was chosen for this honor based on her ability to surpass individual professional goals, exhibit excellence in her field, and consistently provide outstanding service to the bank's clients, communities, and colleagues.

The Banner's Best award selection process is rigorous, with less than five percent of all Banner employees receiving this recognition annually.

The recognition of Bautista's achievements comes at a time when Newsweek has acknowledged Banner Bank itself as one of America's Best Regional Banks.

"Each Banner's Best recipient exemplifies our value proposition - connected, knowledgeable, responsive - yet what truly sets them apart is

how they constantly strive for a higher standard in all that they do," said Mark Grescovich, Banner Bank President and CEO. "It is thanks to our many outstanding employees that Banner was just selected by Newsweek as one of America's Best Regional Banks."

Banner Bank, a Washington-chartered commercial bank, operates in Washington, Oregon, California, and Idaho. It provides a range of commercial banking services and financial products to individuals and small - to medium-sized businesses.

The bank is part of Banner Corporation (NASDAQ GSM: BANR), a \$15.7 billion bank holding company headquartered in Walla Walla, Washington.

Cascade Medical Employees receive scholarships in honor of former administrator

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

Cascade Medical Foundation has launched a new scholarship program to honor former administrator Mark Judy and support the professional growth of healthcare professionals.

The Mark Judy Memorial Caregiver Education Fund has awarded a total of \$2,500 in scholarships to three Cascade Medical employees.

Taylor Hendrickson, a certified medical assistant, received \$750 to help with prerequisite courses for the registered nursing (RN) program at Wenatchee Valley College.

Brandi Weems, an X-ray and CT tech, was awarded \$750 for education and registry exam fees for CT (computed tomography), which includes X-rays, ultrasound, and CAT scans.

Janeth Baltazar Lopez, a financial counselor at Cascade Medical, received \$1,000 to complete a national billing certification.

The scholarships, announced in late March, are the first to be awarded

from the education fund created last year by Cascade Medical Foundation in honor of Mark Judy, who passed away in March 2023.

"In his 45 years as a hospital administrator, including several years at Cascade Medical, the most important thing to him was his staff," said Terri Judy, who continues to serve on the Foundation board and is co-chair of CMP's education fund committee.

"He wanted everyone to rise up to their potential. He would be thrilled at this opportunity to help you, as the first recipients, and to the others that will follow."

The new scholarship program also benefits Cascade Medical.

"The nature of the healthcare industry, with its scarce workforce and rapidly evolving demands, means continuing education is a critical focus for healthcare organizations," Cascade CEO Diane Blake said.

"This effort, by the Foun-



COURTESY OF CASCADE MEDICAL FOUNDATION The 2024 Mark Judy Memorial Caregiver Education Fund scholarship recipients, from left, Taylor Hendrickson, Janeth Baltazar Lopez and Brandi Weems.

dation, generous donors helps us invest in highly skilled and difficult-to-recruit employees, but it also sends a message to our staff of the value our community places on them and their professional growth."

The scholarship winners were selected by a committee of four Foundation members and two Cascade Medical staff members, considering criteria such as education and career plans, financial need, and whether the training fills a strategic or personnel need for Cascade Medical.

The education fund, cur-

rently at about \$40,000, aims to provide annual scholarships in perpetuity. Contributions to the core fund included a \$6,000 Regional Improvement Grant from the Community Foundation of NCW and a \$10,000 grant from the family of Cascade Medical Commissioner Bruce Williams. The next scholarship application period will open in January 2025.

To make a donation or learn more about Mark Judy and the education fund, visit cascademedicalfoundation.org/mark-judy-memorial-caregiver-education-fund.

Manson High School Senior earns full scholarship to Johns Hopkins

By QUINN PROPST | Ward Media Staff Reporter

Manson High School Senior Alexis Villaseñor was recently accepted with a full scholarship to the prestigious Johns Hopkins University in Maryland to study neuroscience.

Villaseñor applied to Johns Hopkins after his teacher told him it is an excellent school for research and one of the top five in

neuroscience, he said.

However, he did not think that he would get in because it is a very selective school. So when he got the news he felt a lot of different emotions.

"It was like all the emotions because like you're excited for your future but you are also nervous because you don't know what's gonna happen," he

said. "And then, in a sense, you're also kind of sad, slightly too, because you cannot see your family for years, or only if you have holidays, and live in a different state."

His parents, Ruben and Olivia were excited and joyful to hear the news.

Olivia describes her son as "very responsible and very hardworking and a



Alexis Villaseñor

very nice son." "He likes to study and learn more and more," she said.

Kate Sorenson is a math

See VILLASEÑOR Page 16

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2024 APPLESOX HOME SCHEDULE

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
JUNE	1 PAL 5:35	2 RED 6:35	3 PAL 6:35	4 PAL 6:35	5 PAL 6:35	6 VIC 6:35
	7 VIC 1:05	8 BEL 6:35	9 BEL 6:35	10 BEL 6:35	11 KAM 6:35	12 KAM 6:35
	13 WWS 5:35	14 KEL 6:35	15 KEL 6:35	16 KEL 6:35	17 BEL 6:35	18 BEL 6:35
	19 BEL 1:35	FIREWORKS - JULY 3RD				

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
JULY	1 NAN 1:05	2 VIC 6:35	3 VIC 7:05	4 VIC 6:35	5 NAN 6:35	6 NAN 6:35
	7 CCL 5:35	8 EDM 6:35	9 EDM 6:35	10 EDM 6:35	11 YVP 6:35	12 YVP 6:35
	13 EDM 12:05	14 KEL 6:35	15 KEL 6:35	16 KEL 6:35	17 KEL 6:35	18 KEL 6:35

AUGUST

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
AUGUST	1 NAN 5:35	2 BEN 6:35	3 BEN 6:35	4 BEN 6:35	5 WCL PLAYOFFS	6 WCL PLAYOFFS
	7 WCL PLAYOFFS	8 WCL PLAYOFFS	9 WCL PLAYOFFS	10 WCL PLAYOFFS	11 WCL PLAYOFFS	12 WCL PLAYOFFS
	13 WCL PLAYOFFS	14 WCL PLAYOFFS	15 WCL PLAYOFFS	16 WCL PLAYOFFS	17 WCL PLAYOFFS	18 WCL PLAYOFFS

- NON-LEAGUE**
CCL: Cascade Collegiate League Showcase
DUB: Dub Sea Fish Sticks
RED: Redmond Dudes
- SOUTH DIVISION**
BEN: Bend Elks
COR: Corvallis Knights
COW: Cowitz Black Bears
POR: Portland Pickles
RID: Ridgefield Raptors
SPR: Springfield Drifters
WWS: Walla Walla Sweets
YVP: Yakima Valley Pippins
- NORTH DIVISION**
BEL: Bellingham Bells
EDM: Edmontan RiverHawks
KAM: Kamloops NorthPaws
KEL: Kelowna Falcons
NAN: Nanaimo NightOwls
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COURTESY OF WM

WM District Manager Eric Keogh educates a student tour group about the science and engineering involved in landfill management as well as WM's conservation work to enhance shrub-steppe habitat.

Landfill

Continued from page 1

Communications Manager Patrick McCarthy said.

Central to WM's stewardship work is the nurturing of 80 acres of shrub-steppe habitat, which is native across the Columbia Basin and the natural habitat for greater sage-grouse, sagebrush sparrow and the burrowing owl.

"Some of the initiatives that we've taken on through the projects that have given us this wildlife habitat certification are really focused on the local environment," McCarthy said.

"One of them is about controlling Knapweed with natural invasive species control, so we use the Knapweed weevil, which feeds on seed pods to eliminate weeds instead of using herbicides."

"We have water guzzlers for mule deer and birds that are in the area," McCarthy said. "One of my favorite ones is that we have nesting boxes for kestrels, which are a natural deterrent for invasive bird species so the European Starling is controlled with the kestrels."

Providing water for mule deer and birds is particularly important since the landfill is in the rain shadow of the Cascade Range.

"But it's really about

keeping the natural environment as protected as we can and our commitment to the Wenatchee Valley is an important thing for us as an organization," he said.

WM, formerly known as Waste Management, began the certification process through the Wildlife Habitat Council in 2010 and has consistently been recognized for their efforts since.

The Council certifies wildlife habitat and conservation education programs in 47 states, the District of Columbia, and 22 countries. Achieving certification requires active conservation programming and educational outreach.

To educate the community, District Manager Eric Keogh uses the landfill

property as an outdoor learning lab for local high school students. In 2023, Keogh hosted tours for 500 students.

The landfill is engineered with overlapping environmental protection systems and is subject to highly regulated monitoring and reporting requirements. Systems include engineered liners and covers, leachate collection and removal, and landfill gas collection and control.

The landfill can accept municipal solid waste (household waste), construction and demolition debris, industrial waste, and special waste. The landfill is not permitted to accept hazardous waste.

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



COURTESY OF WM

WM's Eric Keogh hosts 8th grade students for a tour at the Greater Wenatchee Regional Landfill. Educational outreach is part of WM's stewardship work for certification by the Wildlife Habitat Council.

US births fell last year to lowest total since 1979, report says

US births declined in 2023 to their lowest level in more than 40 years, continuing a two-decade trend of Americans having fewer children.

By Jessica Nix | Bloomberg

Total births for the year fell 2% to 3.59 million, according to preliminary data released Thursday from the US National Center for Health Statistics, a level not seen since 1979, when about 3.4 million US babies were born. The rate of US women of child-bearing age having babies is the lowest since the center began compiling statistics, said Brady Hamilton, an NCHS demographer and lead author of the report.

Birth rates in countries around the world have been declining, mainly in wealthier nations, as economic instability and uncertainty over events like the pandemic discourage people from having children. While countries including France and China have taken measures to

try to encourage couples to have children, US birth rates have been stifled by forces like lack of paid family leave and skyrocketing health costs.

Young US adults are making conscious decisions about family planning and want to wait for when they can financially support themselves and the child, said Karen Guzzo, a demographer and the director for the Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research shows that Americans cite economic strains, work instability, political polarization, student loans, access to health care, climate change and global conflicts as reasons to delay or not have children.

"People are deliberately

parenting," she said in an interview.

The report from the NCHS, a unit of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is based on birth certificates to show a snapshot of US population trends. It doesn't look at the factors behind decision-making, like the cost of childcare, Hamilton said.

The US saw a slight uptick in birth rates before the 2008 credit crunch, but they've declined overall by 11% since 2000. While the economy has improved since the Great Recession, individual financial strains – like student debt – have increased for young people, Guzzo said. The unstable working hours and lack of paid leave from gig economy jobs such as ride-sharing also decrease control over family planning, she said.

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Health

Confluence Health honored with two awards for excellence in organ donation efforts

Confluence Health Hospital Central Campus was recently recognized with two hospital achievement awards by LifeCenter Northwest for excellence in organ donation efforts.

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

LifeCenter Northwest is a non-profit organ procurement organization that serves Alaska, Montana, North Idaho, and Washington State. It is the largest geographic area of the 57 federally designated organ procurement organizations in the United States.

In this role, LifeCenter Northwest works collaboratively with more than 200 hospitals in the region to save lives through organ and tissue donation.

Hospitals meeting certain robust criteria each year are honored for their efforts in the organization's annual report.

For the 2023 annual report released this month, Confluence Health Hospital Central Campus – previously called Central Washington Hospital – was honored with two

such awards.

The first award, the Organ Donation Process Excellence Award, previously called the Donation Referral Achievement Award – Organ, is granted to hospitals with a process error rate of 5% or less.

Realizing and maintaining a low process error rate is challenging and requires a strong commitment to hospital services and staff.

Confluence Health Hospital Central Campus was one of only 29 hospitals to earn this honor in this organ donation service area. Confluence Health has been honored with this award five times before (2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022).

The second award, the Honoring Donor Decisions Award, is earned by hospitals honoring 100% of registered donation

decisions in collaboration with LifeCenter Northwest.

Confluence Health Hospital Central Campus was one of only 46 hospitals in the organ donation service area to receive this award this year, having previously received the award in 2022 as well.

“Organ donation is a sensitive, but important, area in healthcare that can literally change lives with a single decision,” remarked Kelly Allen, chief nursing officer for Confluence Health.

“We are so proud of our teams that work hard each day to honor those decisions to make such a precious gift and are grateful to LifeCenter Northwest for this recognition and their ongoing partnership to ensure those wishes are fulfilled.”

Five from Confluence Health honored with 2024 Champion of Public Health Awards

Three staff members and two providers at Confluence Health were recently honored with the 2024 Champions of Public Health Award, presented by the Chelan-Douglas Health District (CDHD). Based on nominations from CDHD staff, this new award is presented to local healthcare professionals in recognition of their profound positive impact on public health in the two counties.

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

To present the awards, the CDHD hosted an event in late March at the LocalTel Events Center in Pybus Public Market to celebrate, recognizing the honorees with speeches and a dinner.

Five individuals from Confluence Health were recognized at the event, including Amber Aiken, Carrie Bews, Jess Tyrrell, Dr. Mark Johnson, and Dr. Ahmad Musmar.

Amber Aiken, maternity support services and

infant case management (MSS-ICM) case manager, was nominated by the Nurse Family Partnership Team for dedication to connecting clients to valuable community resources. By introducing the program to clients and completing countless referrals, the team noted that she has been an exceptional advocate for the program and essential to its success.

Carrie Bews, lactation coordinator at Confluence

Health, was also nominated for the award by the Nurse Family Partnership Team for going above and beyond in her work in lactation education, providing valuable mentorship to the team in supporting clients to reach their breastfeeding goals.

In addition, Jess Tyrrell, dietitian specialist, was nominated as a Champion of Public Health by Quinn Kenoyer, public health

See CDHD Page 19

Confluence Health receives gold-level recognition from American Heart Association for employee well-being initiatives



COURTESY OF CONFLUENCE HEALTH

Confluence Health has been awarded gold-level recognition by the American Heart Association for its commitment to employee health and well-being through its comprehensive Wellness Program initiatives.

The American Heart Association has awarded Confluence Health gold-level recognition for its commitment to employee health and well-being. The recognition is based on the Association's 2023 Workforce Well-Being Scorecard™, which evaluates companies' policies and procedures in areas such as mental health support, addressing burnout, financial well-being, and health equity considerations.

By TAYLOR CALDWELL | Ward Media Staff Reporter

Confluence Health's Wellness Program encourages employees to prioritize their health by offering incentives for preventative care, health risk assessments, and participating in yearly wellness tracks.

Kiersten Burke, wellness program coordinator at Confluence Health, stated, “Our Wellness Program is all about supporting our employees to improve their health and wellness, which not only helps to align with our organization's vision of creating joy and pride in our work, but also helps our employees to be their healthiest and hopefully lessens future potential health issues.”

The program also collaborates with the Nutrition and Food Services departments to provide healthier meals on-site, runs a weight-loss support group, and shares monthly healthy recipes to promote better eating habits among employees.

“The American Heart Association's Workforce Well-Being Scorecard helps us stay on top of the latest advancements in workforce health and well-being so we can create the best environment possible for our people, while also

determining the effectiveness of our wellness program and highlighting areas for improvement. We want all staff and providers, both in and out of the workplace, to thrive and be the healthiest they can be,” Burke added.

The American Heart Association's Well-Being Works Better™ platform, which includes the Workforce Well-Being Scorecard, aims to empower employers to prioritize their employees' mental and physical health and well-being.

In 2023, 492 organizations completed the Scorecard, with Confluence Health being one of the organizations to receive

gold-level recognition.

Confluence Health serves the largest geographic region of any healthcare system in Washington State, covering over 12,000 square miles of Okanogan, Grant, Douglas, and Chelan counties.

As one of only two locally-led healthcare systems in the state, Confluence Health is committed to maintaining access to high-quality, cost-effective healthcare services for North Central Washington.

Taylor Caldwell:
509-433-7276 or
taylor@ward.media

Quick Read

Confluence Health has been awarded gold-level recognition by the American Heart Association for its commitment to employee health and well-being through its Wellness Program. The program offers incentives for preventative care, health risk assessments, and participation in yearly wellness tracks, collaborates with Nutrition and Food Services to provide healthier meals, runs a weight-loss support group, and shares monthly healthy recipes. The recognition is based on the Association's 2023 Workforce Well-Being Scorecard™, which evaluates companies' policies and procedures in areas such as mental health support, addressing burnout, financial well-being, and health equity considerations.

MEMBER MESSENGER

“Driven to Promote and Protect Small Business”

MAY 2024 ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PAGE 1



Networking with People’s Bank in East Wenatchee

Building NCW pivoted a year ago, the leadership made the decision to look at every facet of the organization and create more intentionality in the way business is done. From Events to Membership to Messaging to Networking, everything was examined.

Building North Central Washington rebranded as Building NCW and stepped out with a new logo.

Building NCW’s goal is to promote and protect small businesses. With that in mind, one way to accomplish this is to be a resource to both their members and the community.

Building NCW listened to the community and made changes to events, like the Nothing but Networking (also known as NBN) nights.

Building NCW strategically shifted their networking events from a monthly to a quarterly basis, with the intention to work better for balanced schedules and to cultivate a sense of FOMO (fear of missing out) among attendees.

If networking is a goal for you and for your business, you can plan around the scheduled events without it being as demanding on your schedule.

Our next Nothing but Networking event is on Tuesday May 21st from 5 pm – 7 pm at People’s Bank in East Wenatchee.

Building NCW and People’s Bank are excited to invite our community to the newly opened branch in East Wenatchee.

This event is open to the public and free to attend. To help you get to know him and People’s Bank, Darel Ansley, AVP and Mortgage Loan Officer, answered some questions our staff sent him.

Building NCW: *What sets People’s Bank apart?*

Darel: I have worked for National banks and mortgage brokers, and what I like about Peoples Bank, and what has kept me here for 20 years is that it’s a family-owned, community bank where I get to serve my neighbors. Because we are smaller, I have access to all the decision makers which makes it easier for me to serve my clients well.

Building NCW: *Recently we visited you in your new branch, what prompted People’s Bank to open a branch in East Wenatchee?*

Darel: We want to serve the whole community, and we used to have a branch in

the Safeway on Grant Road. We didn’t continue that lease because we wanted a bigger presence. It just took longer than we hoped to find the right location. But the new branch is amazing, bright and has very cheerful staff; that’s why we want people to come by and visit.

Building NCW: *How did the building/remodeling process go for you?*

Darel: Remodeling always takes longer than you think, but we couldn’t be happier with the result. We have a long partnership with Berry Construction who managed the project. Between the design and materials, they really created a cheerful place to bank.

Building NCW: *Can you describe your company culture and values?*

Darel: It’s a fun place to work because they hire and retain the best people. So, my co-workers are honest and professional which makes it easy to provide great service to our clients.

Building NCW: *How do you ensure customer satisfaction and maintain loyalty regionally?*

Darel: This may sound strange, but I would not work for Peoples Bank in Bellevue or Seattle, because

what we offer is community banking. Which means I need to treat you right as a client because I am going to see you in town for the next 30 years, and I am going to sit next to your brother at church and shop at the place your mom works. The majority of our business comes from referrals of past happy clients. So, it’s serving people well that maintains and grows our business. In Seattle, the guy that cuts your hair doesn’t know your CPA or your wife’s cousin- in Wenatchee they do.

Building NCW: We are excited for you to host a “Nothing but Networking” on Tuesday May 21st at People’sBank in East Wenatchee, what is something an attendee has to look forward to?

Darel: From the outside, it doesn’t look a lot different



than the bank that used to be there. But I am excited to get people inside to see the inviting space that doesn’t feel like a regular bank. So, I just want people to stop by after work and relax with a beer or glass of wine and hang out with friends.

People’s Bank and Building NCW would love to see you at People’s Bank in East Wenatchee on May 21st.

The event is an open house style, come as you are and when you can kind

of event. Doors are open from 5 pm until 7 pm.

We look forward to seeing you and for you to engage with community leaders like Darel Ansley, the East Wenatchee branch manager Tere Terry, and other staff members with People’s Bank.



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MAY 2024 ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PAGE 2

Recent Redistricting of Washington State

Washington State undertakes the process of redistricting every 10 years, the political landscape is poised for transformation.

Redrawing electoral boundaries has far-reaching implications, shaping the voices and choices of voters for years to come. From the principles guiding the process to the controversies it sparks, join us as we unravel the political puzzle of redistricting in the Evergreen State.

In 2021 Washington's map was redistricted and approved in early 2022 so it would be reviewed in 2031.

However, in March 2024, Judge Robert Lasnik determined a new version of the Washington District map.

A group hailing from Los Angeles, California sued the state of Washington stating the 2021 map diluted the

voting power of the Latino community near Yakima.

The group expressed that this map approved in 2021 violated the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The 2024 new district map moved the first and only Latina Senator in the Republican Caucus out of her district. Senator Nikki Torres (R-Pasco) has been moved out of the district that voted for her and she cannot run for reelection of her district unless she moves.

Torres does have the option to run in the district she now finds herself living in, but she would be running against fellow republican Sen. Perry Doizer.

"This map moves me out of my district," Torres said in a statement in regards to the new map. "I can stay the next two years, but then I

will be cut off from helping the constituents who I grew up with and who I love to serve."

With the unveiling of the new 2024 map, several Senators found themselves displaced out of their current districts.

Senator Brad Hawkins (R-East Wenatchee) was displaced from the 12th district into the 7th district and would need to relocate back into the 12th district to run for reelection this year.

Hawkins has chosen to not run for reelection for the senate seat and instead run for Chelan County Commissioner District 3, stating the redistricting as one of his reasons for not seeing reelection.

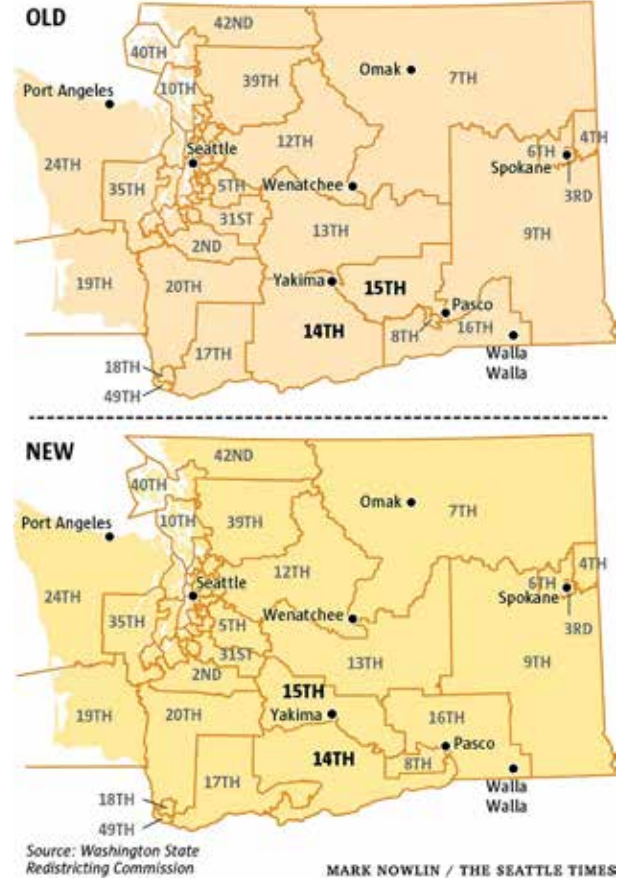
Sen. Curtis King (R-Yakima), Representative Chris Corry (R-Yakima), and Rep-



resentative Gina Mosbrucker (R-Goldendale) were affected as well.

Historically, Wenatchee and East Wenatchee have been in the 12th and 7th districts and now they are split between the 12th, 7th, and 13th districts. Wenatchee Avenue, several blocks of Princeton Avenue, Springwater Avenue, N Miller Street and Fifth Street, and parts of Sunnyslope are now in the 7th district while the rest of Wenatchee is in another.

East Wenatchee is mainly in the 7th district but from parts of Nile Road, and S Kentucky Ave are in the 13th district. Rock Island, Pangborn Airport, and Highlander Golf Course are now in the 13th district while the new Microsoft Data Centers



Source: Washington State Redistricting Commission MARK NOWLIN / THE SEATTLE TIMES

The redrawn redistricting map of Washington.

being put in across the road from Pangborn Airport remain in the 7th district. The map is set for the 2024 election, but it isn't set for the next 10 years yet. The fight is being taken to the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals to challenge and prevent the change.

Final Look of the bathroom. Morgan's final pics for the DIY



Morgan Dobbins

The before



Morgan Dobbins

The after



Morgan Dobbins

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PAGE 3



KTS Development Facebook page

2023 Home Tour People’s Choice Winner KTS Development working on another custom home.

Building NCW Out and About – On the Job Site

In the bustling world of construction, every home is not just a creation but a standing testament to collaboration, craftsmanship, and creativity.

Recently, the Building NCW staff took some time to visit some build-

ers’ work sites to engage in meaningful conversations and explore how Building NCW can support the builders of our community.

Motivated by curiosity, encouragement, and a genuine interest in their building process, the Build-

ing NCW staff took a field trip to connect with builders where it matters most – on the job site!

Visiting our builders at their locations was a new way to support our Home Tour builders, see what is put into a home build, and

meet them where they are and chat about their needs.

One of the primary objectives of these visits was to identify ways in which Building NCW could further support builders in their field.

Whether it’s through access to resources, educational programs, or advocacy efforts, Building NCW seeks to tailor its support

to the specific needs of the member.

“Each Builder, and Member, in our organization is unique in what they need from us, being able to visit them and chat is a helpful way for us to guide our services to better fit what they need.” Danielle Martin, CEO of Building NCW, said about the recent visit to 2023 People’s

Choice winner KTS Development’s construction site.

These visits were not just about checking on progress; they were about supporting our builders, understanding the needs, and encouraging them in their work.

Building NCW is currently signing builders up for the September Home Tour which will be the biggest and best Home Tour yet!

Having two anniversaries coincide on the same week is going to be exciting.

It is the Chefs on Tour’s 10th Anniversary as well as the 30th Anniversary of the Home Tour and Remodeling Expo. Builders who want to showcase their home builds or remodels can reach out to Building NCW at 509-293-5840 or by email at danielle@buildingncw.org.

You can also get more information about the Home Tour by scanning the QR code here.



Building NCW

Building NCW staff recently visited Builders on their jobsites.



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MEMBER MESSENGER

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PAGE 4

DIY Like a Boss: 6 Tips for Your Next Project

(BPT) Do-it-yourself (DIY) projects are not solely reserved for seasoned professionals. With preparation, a few handy tips and tricks, and high-quality protective gear, anyone can tackle home improvement projects like a pro. So, roll up your sleeves, gather your supplies, and get to work.

Create a Plan

By taking the time to plan and define your objectives, you'll lay a solid foundation for success.

Planning allows you to foresee potential challenges and devise solutions in advance, minimizing frustration and setbacks.

Lay out the materials, set the timeline, and strategize every move.

Use Top-Notch Tools and Materials

In the world of DIY, only the strong survive.

Borrow or invest in tools and materials that don't back down from a fight.

We're talking about the heavyweights, the reliable, the durable – gear that ensures your finished product can endure once the paint dries.

Gear Up for Safety

High-quality protective gear ensures that ev-

eryone, regardless of skill level, can confidently take charge of their projects.

For instance, products by Venom Steel redefine the DIY experience, making it accessible to all with their unmatched durability and performance.

Known for their toughness and high quality, the company's gloves can provide an added layer of protection for your hands during tasks such as priming or painting, while coveralls are recommended to protect your clothes during activities such as sanding.

The heavy-duty face mask works as a barrier against liquid and dry par-

ticles while also allowing you to breathe easily while at work.

Enforce a Budget

Establish a budget that's as solid as your determination. Account for every expense, anticipate unforeseen challenges and ensure your financial strategy is as robust as your project plan. A well-planned budget encourages resourcefulness, pushing you to find cost-effective solutions and alternatives.

Knowledge is Power

If you're facing a new DIY challenge, educate



yourself like your success will depend on it –because it does. Dive into online resources, tutorials, and guides. Don't hesitate to call in reinforcements – friends, family, or professionals.

Be Flexible

Sometimes plans just crumble, and unforeseen challenges emerge. Adaptability is key.

Embrace flexibility; it's the hallmark of a confident DIYer. Unleash your

creativity, explore alternative solutions, and turn obstacles into opportunities. Take snapshots of your mishaps – they're not just memories, they can be lessons for projects to come.

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Upcoming Events

MAY

MAY 15TH - BOARD MEETING

MAY 20TH - CPR TRAINING

MAY 21ST - NETWORKING NIGHT
HOSTED BY PEOPLE'S BANK

MAY 27TH - MEMORIAL DAY

JUNE

JUNE 21ST - ANNUAL SUMMER GOLF TOURNAMENT

JUN. 26TH - BOARD MEETING

JULY

JULY 4TH - INDEPENDENCE DAY

JULY 17TH - BOARD MEETING

JULY 19TH - BNCWAPPLESOX GAME

2024

SEPT. 19TH - 10TH ANNUAL CHEFS ON TOUR

SEPT. 20TH

SEPT. 21ST - HOME TOUR - 30TH ANNUAL

SEPT. 22ND

OCT. 7TH - RRP LEAD CLASS



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- Safety Class** Discount
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Building North Central Washington is a nonprofit trade association dedicated to promoting and protecting the North Central Washington building industry for the preservation and growth of the local economy, small business and quality of life.

LOCATED AT:
2201 N. Wenatchee Ave.
Wenatchee, WA 98801
PHONE: (509) 293-5840

Email us for more information:
Info@BuildingNCW.org
www.BuildingNCW.org

Real Estate

Top Properties Douglas County March 2024

Residential

Sale Price	Address	Total Acres	Year Built	Residential Area	Basement Area	Bedr.	Bathr.	Garage Area
\$1,074,500.00	866 NE CONNER CT	0.65	2023	2438		3	2.5	500
\$900,000.00	398 23RD ST NE	0.62	2004	4080		5	2.5	936
\$725,000.00	507 32ND PL NW	0.46	2011	2036	2036	3	2	560
\$700,000.00	401 19TH ST NE #10	0	1997	1961	1961	3	2.5	506
\$677,500.00	1061 N ALVIN CT #A	0.21	2007	2480		6	3	336
\$652,500.00	421 RIVER VALLEY VW	0.42	1999	2233		3	2.5	528
\$630,000.00	1549 HOLLY LN	0.26	2001	2194		4	2	862
\$570,000.00	1981 GRANT RD	1.95	1932	1206	720	3	1	
\$555,000.00	2556 FANCHER HEIGHTS BLVD	0.19	2007	1373	1253	4	3	616
\$549,900.00	11 ORONDO SPUR RD	1.36	1960	926	786	3	2	
\$549,000.00	260 NW CHINOOK WAY	0.15	2022	2001		3	2	506
\$505,000.00	212 SOLOMON LOOP NW	0.1		0				
\$492,000.00	560 W ENTIAT DR	0.14	2005	1080		3	2	
\$490,000.00	326 N JAMES AVE	0.47	1966	1360	1360	3	1.5	480
\$490,000.00	2531 8TH ST NE	0.43	2010	1350	1306	4	2	690
\$480,000.00	2371 FANCHER FIELD RD	0.19	2004	1301	792	3	2.5	528
\$415,000.00	1452 SALLY JEAN WAY	0.13	2019	1228		3	2	400
\$415,000.00	1725 N ANNE AVE	0.19	1964	1332	1332	3	2	702
\$406,000.00	211 13TH ST NE	0.32	1955	1600	352	3	2	
\$390,000.00	1762 GLEN ST NE	0.46	1954	1175		2	2	
\$389,999.00	1411 CAPRI DR	0.21	1972	1300		3	1	312
\$375,000.00	1594 TEDFORD ST SE	0.15	1972	1224		2	1	
\$359,900.00	190 S IOWA AVE	0.25	1956	1143	1143	2	1	484

Commercial

Seller	Buyer	Sale Price	DOR CODE	Acres
STATE OF WASHINGTON	NORTHERN FRUIT COMPANY	\$272,000.00	45 - TRANSPORTATION - HIGHWAY	0
HERNANDEZ &, MARIA	LOA LLC	\$200,000.00	39 - COMMERCIAL - MISC COMMERCIAL	0.32

Farm

Seller	Buyer	Sale Price	Street	Total Acres
CONSOLIDATED KAYLAN CRANE TRUST NO. 1	EAGLES NEST EGG TRUST	\$1,250,000.00	ZERELDA RD	16.92
GREYSTONE EQUITIES LLC	FRANSEN, JEFF EVAN & MICHELLE LYNN	\$660,000.00	Stillwater Ln	5.1
DOUBLE D VINEYARDS LLC	BRACKETT IRREVOCABLE TRUST	\$375,000.00	ORCHARD PL	16.27
BROOKS, JERI & KEITH	HAUGEN, KARI & SAM	\$360,000.00	Tunnel View Dr	1
SCHMIDT, PEGGY A	BADTEN, TYLER E & TAERRAH J	\$352,252.00		472.5
JENSEN, LINDA L	BUOB, WILLIAM J & TIFFANY L	\$30,000.00		1.38
BRATSBURG JR, ROBERT W	AMERICAN DREAM LANDS LLC	\$2,800.00		11.47
MEENACH, MATTHEW D & CAROLYN S	MEENACH, TARA	\$1.00	8th St NE	0.76

Marketing Matters

AMY YALEY

COO of Ward Media



The road to top of mind awareness: crafting a strategic marketing blueprint

In the ever-evolving business landscape, the importance of strategic marketing cannot be overstated.

A well-crafted marketing plan is the cornerstone for sustainable growth, guiding your business toward long-term success and profitability. It's not just an expense but a crucial investment in building a strong brand identity and fostering meaningful connections with your target audience.

The first critical step is defining your unique business identity. What sets your brand apart from competitors?

By answering this fundamental question, you gain profound clarity about your offering and lay the groundwork for effective communication that truly resonates with your customers. This knowledge is the foundation for every marketing effort.

Once your identity is established, the spotlight turns to creating widespread awareness around your brand.

Awareness campaigns play a pivotal role in fostering recognition and connecting with your audience on a deeper level.

However, it's not just about being known; the

objective is to secure a prime spot in the minds of your customers through "Top of Mind Awareness" (TOMA).

TOMA refers to your brand being the first and most prominent one that comes to mind when a customer has a particular need.

Achieving this means consistently occupying a space in your audience's consciousness, becoming the default, go-to option when purchasing decisions arise.

Consistency is key to building and maintaining powerful TOMA. Regularly engaging your audience across various channels - social media, email, and digital/print advertising - reinforces your brand presence.

The more frequently they encounter your brand, the more ingrained it becomes in their memory, increasing the likelihood they'll choose you when ready to make a purchase.

At Ward Media, we understand the paramount importance of TOMA for true brand success.

With our combined decades of marketing expertise, we specialize in meticulously crafting high-impact awareness campaigns that go beyond



STOCK PHOTO

mere visibility to create resonant brand memories.

Furthermore, a comprehensive marketing plan involves a deep dive into understanding your target audience - their needs, preferences, and pain points. Armed with this knowledge, you can tailor marketing efforts to speak directly to your community's desires and concerns, fostering stronger connections.

An effective plan enables you to set clear, achievable goals aligned with your overall business objectives.

Whether increasing brand awareness, driving website traffic, or boosting sales, setting specific, measurable targets allows you to track progress and adapt strategies accordingly.

Contrary to common misconceptions, strategic

marketing doesn't need to drain finances.

A well-structured plan helps allocate resources efficiently by identifying the most effective channels for reaching your audience and prioritizing high-

impact initiatives. This approach safeguards your budget while maximizing marketing impact.

Moreover, a good marketing plan remains a dynamic roadmap, able to adapt to changes in your industry, market trends, and evolving customer behavior.

Regularly revisiting and updating your plan ensures sustained relevance and resilience.

At its core, a meticulously designed marketing plan is a blueprint for success, positioning your business for sustained growth and profitability.

Recognize that every dollar invested in strate-

gic marketing nurtures your brand's future competitiveness and customer loyalty.

Let the team at Ward Media guide you in creating a customized marketing roadmap that amplifies your unique identity while cultivating powerful Top of Mind Awareness.

Our expertise will unlock your path to enduring brand salience and success.

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Amy Yaley is the COO of Ward Media and the co-owner of Apple Capital Marketing & Northwest Swag Works. She can be reached at amy@ward.media.

TEALS

Continued from page 2

come just a year after graduation, and will give her the means to return and provide for her family in the years to come.

Nora shared, "Living in a rural town and being a first generation student, I didn't know of any software engineers but through the TEALS program I was able to meet software engineers at top companies, as well as, find an amazing mentor

who supported me during the TEALS program, and still to this day."

Medina added, "Without TEALS, I don't think I would have envisioned myself working as an engineer in technology and allowed me to see my dreams were possible."

As we look to the future, the role of programs like TEALS becomes ever more impactful.

Through initiatives like these, schools are not just teaching; they are transforming education to create a world where

every student is empowered with the knowledge to build vibrant futures here in North Central Washington.

NCW Tech Alliance and the North Central Educational Services District will be hosting a panel of TEALS professional mentors to highlight the model and their efforts at the Cyber Meetup on May 1st at noon.

The event is open to the public, but prior registration is required. Register: <https://ncwtech.info/TEALS-Cyber>

Real Estate

Top Properties Chelan County March 2024

Buyer	Seller	Sale Price	Address	City	Living Area	Year Built	Bed-rooms	Bath-rooms	Garage Area	Pool	Fire-place
OLSEN ERIC	MILLER TIMOTHY J & KRISTEN B	\$3,200,000.00	45 WILLOW POINT RD	MANSON	1770	1979	4	3.25	0	N	Y
HEWITT CHAD J & RICKIE W	SKELDING KIMBERLY A & KOLLIN C HARMON	\$2,400,000.00	3900 SKY CREST LN	WENATCHEE	5510	2023	4	4.5	1089.6	N	Y
AMES TODD W & LAURA	GREEN MARY A & PHILLIP W ETAL	\$2,130,000.00	11830 S LAKESHORE RD	CHELAN	2570	2017	3	1	1440	N	N
MUELLER KEVIN & KATHRYN	17TH HEAVEN LLC	\$2,087,500.00	17333 N SHORE DR	LAKE WENATCHEE	1447	2006	3	3.5	0	N	Y
SUPREMO LLC	RIVENDELL PROPERTIES LLC	\$2,000,000.00	210 DIVISION ST	LEAVENWORTH	3234	2002			0	N	N
MUENZBERG FAMILY TRUST	FOX DEN INC	\$1,775,000.00	10590 FOX RD	LEAVENWORTH	2705	1997	4		936	N	Y
GOOD KEVIN & ANNE ETAL	HEPPER DARIN B & JULIE M	\$1,600,000.00	135 WHITFIELD CT	CHELAN	3617	2018	4	3.25	1013	N	Y
RIKU INVESTMENTS LLC	DAVY ENTERPRISES LLC ETAL	\$1,400,000.00	3025 RIVERVIEW LN	MALAGA	0	0			0	N	N
BODINE DENISE M & KEVIN B	SLETTEN CHARLES & AMY	\$1,300,000.00	140 BOGEY BLVD	CHELAN	1436	2017	3	3.5	528	Y	Y
MACK RALPH J & RENEE S	CHAMBERLIN CHRISTIAN & JENIFER	\$1,250,000.00	528 CASTLE HEIGHTS DR	WENATCHEE	2613	2008	4	2.25	1190	Y	Y
FJK HOLDINGS LLC	DOBBS LLC	\$1,025,000.00	131 E WOODIN AVE	CHELAN	2520	1912			0	N	N
TOEVS JACOB & KAI	WILLIAMS BENJAMIN R & APRIL B	\$1,000,000.00	153 WINESAP AVE	MANSON	1982	1951	3	2	752	N	Y
KADAKIA ANISH & ELIZABETH	STRUZZIERI KEVIN J & KACY	\$889,000.00	3076 FIRCREST PL	WENATCHEE	2224	2008	3	2.5	0	N	Y
ROUNDS JEFFREY B	ROBERTS CONSTRUCTION LLC	\$885,000.00	942 RACINE SPRINGS DR	WENATCHEE	2031	2023	3	2.25	746	N	Y
MURPHY ROBERT L III & JENNIFER L	ANTONIOS LANDSCAPING & ROCK WALLS INC	\$880,000.00	34 ABE LN	MANSON	2228	2023	4	2.25	264	N	Y
BRAVE WARRIOR PROJECT	MEYERS ENTERPRISES LLC	\$850,000.00	125 EASY ST	WENATCHEE	2875	1955			0	N	N
PETERSON REBECCA T & BRADY L	SORENSEN PAUL C	\$837,000.00	14576 MARSHAL PL	CHELAN	1520	2010	2	2.25	0	N	N
RASH DOUGLAS M	ALLEN BRADLEY N	\$829,000.00	2011 BROADWAY NORTH	WENATCHEE	2611	1991	3	2.5	936	N	Y
ECKERMAN RONALD R & DAE G	ISLE PHILIP L & SUSAN M	\$800,000.00	1102 W WOODIN AVE	CHELAN	949	0			0	N	N
LAUREN TALIA & TUNBERG ROGOZA BENJAMIN	PRESCOTT JOHN G & TERESA	\$799,000.00	8013 TABER RD	CASHMERE	1574	1987	3	2	1240	N	Y
STOCKER TIM & TRACY	TONDINI GARY	\$785,000.00	203 ELDORADO WAY	CHELAN	1169	1990	3	2.75	0	N	Y
JUCHMES ANGELA A & DAVIS STEVEN B	CARMICHAEL ATHENA & WESTON	\$765,000.00	340 ALLISON ST	WENATCHEE	2435	2013	3	2	958	N	Y
PAUL SCOTT & MARY	GEORGE ANN TRUSTEE	\$760,000.00	464 LAURIE DR	WENATCHEE	2016	2013	3	2	966	N	Y
MUNDAY DEAN M	YOUNG VERNON O	\$760,000.00	48 KNOWLES HEIGHTS LN	WENATCHEE	2435	1985	3	2.5	624	N	N
THIND PMR ENTERPRISES INC	APPLE STATE POWER SPORTS LLC	\$700,743.00	917 N WENATCHEE AVE	WENATCHEE	13883	0			0	N	N
HENNING JEFFREY A & LINDSAY K	MADSON BRANT & RACHEL	\$699,000.00	1354 PATSUE PL	WENATCHEE	1900	1963	3	2.75	552	Y	Y
OHRAZDA MELVIN L & KAREN M	SEBEK HENRI TRTEE	\$685,000.00	149 SUN VALLEY DR	WENATCHEE	2148	2013	3	1.75	752	N	Y
MEISSNER RICHARD J & JENI L	BAXTER MARK J ETAL	\$685,000.00	3908 BURCH MOUNTAIN RD	WENATCHEE	2695	1978	3	2.5	660	N	Y
FIROR JERRY H & J PAULETTE	WARTENBERGH PAUL F & MARIA I TRUSTEES	\$677,500.00	1710 CENTRAL AVE	WENATCHEE	2011	2016	3	2	630	N	Y
FETTERS KYLE J	GILBERT LEVI & IRENE	\$672,900.00	96 THORBURN LN	MALAGA	898	1986	3	2	0	Y	N
BRUNER NASH & KAELYN	COLWELL STEVE	\$635,000.00	100 EDGEMONT DR	WENATCHEE	1836	1979	3	2	0	N	Y
PONTANO PETER & ANEZKA M	GONZALES EMORY CREDIT SHELTER TRUST	\$630,000.00	3527 OLD BLEWETT RD	PESHASTIN	1700	1987	5	2.75	576	N	N
TRIDEN DEVELOPMENT LLC	VANGUARD DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC	\$600,000.00	UNASSIGNED	WENATCHEE	0	0			0	N	N
PRESCOTT JOHN G & TERESA	LANUZA ALEJANDRO & MARIA C	\$599,000.00	5899 LOCUST LN	CASHMERE	2145	2011	3	2	644	N	N
BORODINA LARYSA & OLEG	OSLANSKI DANNIELLE & LONDON	\$595,000.00	3015 MEMORY LN	LAKE WENATCHEE	780	1965	2	1	0	N	N
MC LAUGHLIN JAMES & PHILOMENA	KOHR THOMAS H & VICTORIA J	\$580,550.00	2504 NUMBER 1 CANYON RD	WENATCHEE	1906	1989	3	2.5	629	Y	Y
CHELAN DOUGLAS CO VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY SERVICES	FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION	\$575,000.00	900 FERRY ST	WENATCHEE	5011	1970			0	N	N
BOWIE ERIKA L & ROBERT J	BRUNO ALISA A & LANCE L	\$569,900.00	406 COTTAGE AVE	CASHMERE	1768	1923	3	2.5	418	N	Y
SANTOS MARJALENA MF & WYATT LAUREL C	BRUNNER LISA	\$560,000.00	1923 GRANDVIEW LOOP	WENATCHEE	1706	2016	3	2	484	N	N
BOYES TERRELL & ARELLANO BOYES SANDRA	JONES MASON C & CARLIE S	\$560,000.00	45 JAMEY LN	MALAGA	2162	2020	3	2	621	N	N
HEPPER DARIN B & JULIE M	SUMMIT VISTA LLC	\$550,000.00	659 SUMMIT BLVD	MANSON	0	0			0	N	N
SILVER JOSHUA O	IZDEPSKI BRIAN	\$535,000.00	3501 HANSEL LN	PESHASTIN	1581	1993	3	2.5	484	N	Y
BECKETT DEREK J & TONYA	COULTER DEVELOPMENT LLC	\$532,000.00	UNASSIGNED	LAKE WENATCHEE	0	0			0	N	N
MUHS ANDREW & GUZMAN BRENDA	ANDERSON ANNE L	\$530,000.00	403 VALLEY VIEW DR	CASHMERE	1358	1958	4	2	0	N	Y
QUEZANA ANDREINA & FEMEE GREGORY M	GAMBONI JOSEPH & SUE C	\$517,000.00	10002 NUMERAL POINTE PL	ENTIAT	1762	2020	3	2	624	N	N
SNYDER RONALD	TOV HOMES DEVELOPMENT LLC	\$514,900.00	113 FREEDOM HILLS	CASHMERE	0	0			0	N	N
ENDRESEN STEPHEN P & NEITA B	ENDRESEN STEPHEN & NEITA ETAL	\$509,765.00	563 TOPAZ PL	MANSON	1620	2006	5	3	616	N	Y
KELLY-WOLFE CAITLIN	THOMAS AND PAMELA WOLFE FAMILY LIVING TRUST	\$500,000.00	12725 S LAKESHORE RD	CHELAN	3841	1989		1.75	200	N	Y
CALAPRISTI FRANCIS T JR	CALAPRISTI FRANCIS T TRT ETAL	\$494,000.00	8795 CANAL RD	LEAVENWORTH	1088	1972	2	1	256	N	N
GRUNEWALD GUILD	DKMM LLC	\$490,000.00	19166 WESTSIDE DR	PLAIN	1900	1995	1	2	612	N	Y
GOOD ON YA LLC	COULTER DEVELOPMENT LLC	\$475,000.00	UNASSIGNED	LAKE WENATCHEE	0	0			0	N	N
HOLLAND JESSE	GOOCH CARL E & RONDA R	\$470,000.00	382 MCCLOSKEY DR	CHELAN	0	0			0	N	N
MONTES FRAUSTO JESUS ETAL	HEART FOR HOMES LLC	\$465,000.00	4640 NAVARRE COULEE RD	CHELAN	1080	1995			0	N	N
DIFFNER DANIEL H & DAWN	SAGE HOMES LLC	\$463,900.00	143 EMMA DR	WENATCHEE	2097	2022	3	2	460	N	N

Buyer	Seller	Sale Price	Address	City	Living Area	Year Built	Bed-rooms	Bath-rooms	Garage Area	Pool	Fire-place
GOLDFINCH FLYERS CLUB LLC	SLATE ROCK AND GRAVEL LLC	\$449,900.00	301 RIVER PARK AVE	WENATCHEE	1553	2019	3	2.5	240	N	N
DOW PARKER D & MADELINE J	HETTERLE JASON L	\$442,300.00	520 S WESTERN AVE	WENATCHEE	1115	1926	3	1.75	400	N	Y
DEXTER WADE & MAUREEN	JCMERZ PROPERTIES LLC	\$440,000.00	1476 MELISSA WAY	WENATCHEE	1179	2003	3	2	418	N	N
TLACHI ALVARO & AVILA JOANNA L	TILLY LEGACY LLC	\$435,556.00	1235 MONTANA ST	WENATCHEE	1590	1952		1	0	N	N
WALLACE ERIC & PHLEGER JUDITH	JANSEN ROBERT T	\$435,000.00	911 IDAHO ST	WENATCHEE	1040	1920	3	1	520	N	Y
CRAMER JUSTIN M & AMARAL DAISHA R	AMARAL KATHLEEN S	\$425,000.00	712 LAMBERT ST	WENATCHEE	2378	1984	3	2	550	Y	Y
MOEN CHRISTA B	GONZALEZ ALFONZO	\$420,000.00	212 N EMERSON AVE	WENATCHEE	1092	1928	3	1.5	324	N	Y
BOURGEOIS TY & JENNIFER	BOURGEOIS STEVEN R & SHAN S	\$410,000.00	18287 LITTLE CHUMSTICK CREEK RD	LEAVENWORTH	1774	2018	2	2	768	N	N
WEST LESTER M JR	COULTER DEVELOPMENT LLC	\$405,000.00	UNASSIGNED	LAKE WENATCHEE	0	0			0	N	N
ROBERTS LAURA ETAL	WOODRICH EVELYN	\$399,000.00	227 WHITMAN ST	LEAVENWORTH	870	0			0	N	N
HOLLAND WHITNEY M	MC RAE TOM D JR	\$396,000.00	10 S COVE AVE	WENATCHEE	1540	1967			0	N	N
SHIFLER DAVID & LISA	SMILEY RONALD L III & AMBER M	\$393,000.00	322 W WOODIN AVE	CHELAN	622	0			0	N	N
SIGNETT HAROLD N JR & MICHELLE	MANSON KENNETH	\$390,000.00	1719 LINCOLN PARK CIR	WENATCHEE	1120	1994	3	2	288	N	N
SARVIS CHRISTOPHER R & BILLER KELSEY A	MAC ISAAC WILLIAM R & ROSALEEN M	\$378,000.00	1016 VISTA PL	WENATCHEE	1440	1972	3	1.75	320	N	Y
MOORE KARLA A ETAL	STREIB GREGORY C ETAL	\$375,000.00	950 SUNRISE DR	MANSON	828	1992			440	N	N

Real Estate

Buyers trending older, with more cash

By Tom Peterson | Special to The Washington Post

With each home purchase, the portrait of the typical 2023 buyer came into tighter focus.

Income levels, other demographics, sale prices, all had an impact, but low housing inventory and higher interest rates were the primary influences, favoring older buyers with deep pockets.

"There's a couple of ways... that I think that the 2023 market looked a little different," said Lisa Sturtevant, chief economist of Bright MLS, a mid-Atlantic-area multiple listing service.

"It has been a very unusual time for the housing market over the last few years."

Cash buyers showed their clout, nationwide and in the D.C. region, Sturtevant said. Nearly 30 percent of buyers purchased a home without outside financing, up from 13 percent in 2021, said Jessica Lautz, deputy chief economist and vice president of research for the National Association of Realtors (NAR).

In September, 34.1 percent of sales nationally were cash transactions, the highest monthly share in nearly a decade, according to the Redfin real estate company.

Cash buyers enter the market with a head start and immunity to higher interest rates. The buying process, without involving lenders, moves quickly and makes their bids more attractive to sellers.

Buyers in 2023 were generally more affluent. According to the NAR profile, the typical U.S. home buyer reported an annual household income of \$107,000, up from \$88,000 in 2022.

Down payments were at high levels as well, averaging 19 percent for repeat buyers and 9 percent for first-timers.

"As interest rates rose, people weren't able to get those super-low 3 percent mortgage rates," Sturtevant said.

"We saw more cash buyers in the market. And a lot of the cash [sales] in our market are fueled by people who are cashing in on eq-

uity of an existing home."

The typical buyer also trended older. At 58 and 35 years old, the median ages of repeat and first-time U.S. buyers, respectively, are the second oldest in the four decades that the NAR has collected buyer age data.

Repeat buyers are "more likely to be retiring, more likely to be baby boomers, and they're active in the housing market," Lautz said.

"[The] median age for first-time home buyers [is] likely to be older too, because they have headwinds like student loan debt, credit cards, car loans and higher rent that is stalling them from being able to save for a home."

The NAR report also noted the impact of single women on the market. When the NAR began collecting marriage data in 1981, single women were 11 percent of the buyers, with single men at 10 percent.

In 2023, single women accounted for 19 percent of sales, or almost 1 in 5, and

See **OLDER BUYERS** Page 16

Brian Fair & Yaneli Perez

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Local real estate market continues to thrive

Despite national trends showing a slowdown in the housing market, the Chelan/Douglas area continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience and growth. While month-over-month sales slid nationally by 4.3% in March, our local market saw a 10% increase in transactions and a staggering 22.5% rise in dollar volume compared to February. This growth follows an already impressive February that outperformed the previous year by 43% in sales and 31% in dollar volume.

Year-over-year comparisons further highlight the strength of our local market. While national sales were down 3.7%, the Chelan/Douglas area saw only a 2.25% decrease in transactions and an impressive 28.5% increase in dollar volume.

Financed transactions, in particular, showed significant growth, with a 5% increase in transaction volume and a 28% rise in dollar volume compared to March 2023.

The first quarter of 2024 also shows promising improvements over the previous year. Sales by dollar volume are up 36%, driven by a 39% increase in financed transactions.

The market has seen 35 more financed transactions and \$28.5 million more in financed dollar amounts compared to the first quarter of 2023.

Demand and inflation have caused an 18.4% year-over-year price increase in the "starter home" price range of under \$500K, while mid-range properties between \$500K and \$1MM have experienced a slight softening.

The Wenatchee market, which encompasses the area from Entiat to Malaga, Rock Island to Orondo, and west to Cashmere, reflects similar trends.

March saw fewer transactions in the starter home range, more deals in the mid-range above \$500K,

and increased financing. Although transaction volume was down 12% compared to last year, the dollar amount increased by 11%.

The first quarter also showed a 10% increase in unit volume and a 30% rise in dollar volume, with 78% of transactions being financed.

These figures demonstrate the continued strength and resilience of our local housing market, despite national trends indicating a slowdown.

As we move further into 2024, it will be interesting to observe how the Chelan/Douglas area continues to adapt and thrive in the face of broader economic challenges.



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Real Estate

Existing home sales slump in March, prices continue to rise

The National Association of Realtors® (NAR) reported a 4.3% decline in existing home sales in March, with a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.19 million units. This marks a 3.7% decrease from March 2023. Despite the slowdown in sales, the median existing home price rose 4.8% year-over-year to \$393,500, setting a new record for the month of March.

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun attributed the stagnation in home sales to the lack of significant movement in interest rates. "There are nearly six million more jobs now compared to pre-COVID highs, which suggests more aspiring home buyers exist in the market," Yun noted.

Housing inventory increased by 4.7% from February to 1.11 million units at the end of March, representing a 3.2-month supply at the current sales pace. This is an improve-

ment from the 2.9-month supply in February and the 2.7-month supply in March 2023. Yun emphasized the importance of increased inventory in the current market, stating, "More inventory is always welcomed in the current environment. Frankly, it's a great time to list with ongoing multiple offers on mid-priced properties and, overall, home prices continuing to rise."

Regionally, existing home sales declined in the Midwest, South, and West, while the Northeast experienced its first sales

increase since November 2023. However, all four regions saw year-over-year price gains.

First-time buyers accounted for 32% of sales in March, up from 26% in February and 28% in March 2023. All-cash sales made up 28% of transactions, down from 33% in February but up from 27% a year ago. Individual investors and second-home buyers purchased 15% of homes in March, a decrease from 21% in February and 17% in March 2023.

The 30-year fixed-rate

The existing home sales market displayed a mixed regional performance in March, with the Northeast experiencing a notable uptick, the Midwest and South facing declines, and the West grappling with a significant slump. This disparity in trends underscored the complex factors shaping housing demand across various geographical regions. Median home prices maintained their upward trajectory nationwide, although the pace of growth differed substantially among regions, mirroring the distinct supply and demand dynamics at play in each market.

Northeast

Existing home sales in the Northeast climbed 4.2% from February to an annual rate of 500,000 in March, ending a four-month streak when sales registered 480,000 units. Compared to March 2023, home sales were down 3.8%. The median price in the Northeast

was \$434,600, up 9.9% from one year ago.

Midwest

In the Midwest, existing home sales retracted 1.9% from one month ago to an annual rate of 1.01 million in March, down 1.0% from the prior year. The median price in the Midwest was \$292,400, up 7.5% from March 2023.

South

Existing home sales in the South faded 5.9% from February to an annual rate of 1.9 million in March, down 5.0% from one year before. The median price in the South was \$359,100, up 3.4% from last year.

West

In the West, existing home sales slumped 8.2% from a month ago to an annual rate of 780,000 in March, a decline of 3.7% from the previous year. The median price in the West was \$603,000, up 6.7% from March 2023.

mortgage averaged 6.88% as of April 11, according to Freddie Mac, up from 6.82% the previous week and 6.27% one year ago.

As the housing market continues to navigate the complex interplay of inventory, prices, and interest rates, local real estate professionals remain optimistic about the opportunities available for both buyers and sellers in the current environment.



STOCK PHOTO

Villaseñor

Continued from page 6

teacher at Manson High School and has taught Villaseñor in eight college courses. She encouraged him to apply to Johns Hopkins.

"As a student, Alexis is a tireless worker," Sorenson said. "He sets high expectations for himself, and he doesn't stop working until he meets his goals. He is diligent, resilient, and intelligent. He will end high school with an impressive 3.98 GPA and over 60 college credits."

"Alexis truly exemplifies what it means to live the American dream," Sorenson wrote in her recommendation letter. "His parents have instilled in him the essence of hard

work and dedication, and he has embraced and embodied these values like no other student I have encountered in my years of teaching. His remarkable blend of diligence and intelligence sets him apart, making him a force to be reckoned with."

Villaseñor wants to go into the field of neurosurgery because he has been fascinated by the brain since he was a young child. He remembers asking his teacher for books about the brain. He is excited to research and find cures for diseases affecting the brain.

Another more personal reason he wants to study neurosurgery is because of his great-grandmother. His mother told him the story of how her grand-

mother died from a brain tumor that could have been treated with surgery. She lived in Mexico, and because she did not have the means to pay for surgery, doctors would not treat her, he said.

"Then that kind of made me realize that I wanted to help other individuals not suffer the same tragedies my mother had to witness," he said.

Villaseñor is also motivated by his parents and not afraid of hard work.

"So I guess what motivated me is especially my mom and my father when they came to this country, since they immigrated to the United States," he said.

He felt like he needed to try hard for a better education, which is how a lot of immigrants feel when they arrive to this country, he said.

"They kind of see themselves like, I guess, almost like a debt that we have to pay for our parents since they sacrificed everything for us to be here," he said.

"And then also like when my mother used to tell me to try really hard, like don't give up because sometimes in life you may not get the grade you want," he

said. "But there's always a second chance that you could. And in the middle of those times, like writing an essay at 3 in the morning or all nighters, like I knew in order for me to get my reward, I need to work hard for it."

His mother also worked hard to earn her GED through classes at Manson schools.

"As a 2nd grader at Manson, Alexis came to us as a Spanish speaker with no knowledge of the English language," Sorenson said. "In ten short years, he has grown into a remarkable young man who is fluent in English and studying neuroscience in his free time. With his acceptance to Johns Hopkins, he is reminding our entire community that with perseverance, even the biggest of dreams can be realized."

In March, the university flew Villaseñor and his mother to Maryland to visit the campus. That was his first time flying on a plane.

"I flew to Baltimore with my mother for the first time and spent an entire day at the Johns Hopkins Campus," he said. "It was then that I realized this is

where I want to spend the next four years of my life, at the world's most renowned research institution."

When Villaseñor visited the Johns Hopkins neuroscience department he was excited by all of the advanced lab equipment and machines for research that undergrads get to use.

"It was very intriguing and great for research purposes," he said.

"Beyond his academic achievements, Alexis stands out as an extraordinary friend, teammate, and son," Sorenson said. "His personality is both fun and goofy, yet he is able to be a strong leader, always encouraging others to reach their full potential. His attitude is always, 'Why be average when you can be exceptional with hard work?'"

Villaseñor will be one of 61 graduating seniors this spring. A Manson High 2024 valedictorian

will not be selected until mid-May when trimester grades are in, but due to his GPA, he will be among the students considered for the honor.

Villaseñor not only maintains impressive grades but is also active in a plethora of activities, clubs, and sports. Additionally, he assists his father with his landscaping business and taught himself marketing skills and the math necessary to manage the business.

When asked if there was anything else people should know, he offered sage advice.

"When you're struggling in life, and need to achieve something, always look at the finish line and that will motivate you to do all the hard work and stuff you have to do," he said.

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Community Action Council unveils new food distribution center and pantry in Wenatchee

The Chelan Douglas Community Action Council (CDCAC) celebrated the soon-to-be open Food Distribution Center on Mar. 28. Rep. Mike Steele and Congresswoman Kim Schrier cut the ceremonial ribbon.

By **TAYLOR CALDWELL** | Ward Media Staff Reporter

“We’re really excited because [as] Community Actions, we are the frontline staff who meet individuals who need the services that we provide. [There’s] all kinds of different things that we do. And so we’re really excited about the opportunity to serve on the level we’re going to be able to serve here with the resources that we have,” said Lonnie Walls, CDCAC Food Distribution Center Program Director.

The CDCAC distributes food to approximately 20 sites throughout Chelan and Douglas counties, making it an integral source of food security throughout the valley.

The new distribution center and pantry in Wenatchee has been four years in the making, made possible by funding

from regional, state and federal levels. “I just want to point out like when government works you get this and it’s so incredible” said Schrier. We members of Congress get to dig in on our communities and find projects that are so special, and so worthy, and so necessary, and

have so much public support, that they just rise to the top. And this one, I mean, it just couldn’t be more worthy of this kind of funding that brings your tax dollars right back home for the good of the community,” said Rep. Schrier.

Schrier helped secure \$3 million in federal ap-



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA
Rep. Mike Steele and Congresswoman Kim Schrier cut the ribbon for the new facility.

propriations, and Rep. Steele secured \$1 million in state appropriations.

The project also received funding from the county and the Cities of Wenatchee and East Wenatchee, according to CDCAC Executive Director Alan Walker.

To use the pantry, people will have to register

one-time, and will receive a set amount of points for the month based on their household size.

The pantry is set up in grocery store-style fashion, where shoppers will be able to choose their items, then check out when they’re done. The pantry will have items such as dry and canned

foods, fresh fruit and vegetables, and frozen meats.

The amount of points an item costs will relate to its nutritional value.

Points will be determined between one and three for healthy, moderate and unhealthy foods, according to Community Market Coordinator Nora Hollingsworth.

The pantry did not officially open on the day of the ribbon-cutting due to some last minute preparations, but plans to open in the next few weeks.

The center is located at 1700 North Wenatchee Avenue, Wenatchee.

More information about Chelan Douglas Community Action Council can be found at cdcac.org.



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA
Chelan Douglas Community Action Council’s Executive Director Alan Walker gives a speech during the ceremony.



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA
Federal, state, and regional supporters gathered to see the new distribution center and pantry on Mar. 28.

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High egg prices reveal rising food insecurity in Upper Valley

UV MEND’s Community Cupboard is in need of eggs. According to Food Programs Manager Rachel Bishop, the price of eggs has skyrocketed for the pantry since the beginning of 2024, putting pressure on the nonprofit that is serving more people in the community than ever before.

By **TAYLOR CALDWELL** | Ward Media Staff Reporter

“It was \$12 per five dozen, and now it’s \$21 per five dozen,” said Bishop. “It is something that our shoppers have told us they want... And it’s just such a great source of protein for folks that many families, many cultures use in their cooking.”

This could be due to Washington’s cage-free egg law, which passed in 2019 but went into effect in January of this year. The law requires that all

eggs sold in the state be from cage-free hens that have access to scratch areas, perches, nesting, and dust bathing areas.

Higher prices have also been attributed to the fluctuations of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), which has affected 85.87 million birds in the U.S. since Feb. 2022, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA confirmed one commercial case affect-

ing 1 million chickens in Washington State in 2022.

“It’s a great law for the chickens. They have more humane care. But the price increase along with everything [being] so expensive right now with inflation... This is just another thing that people have to think about when they’re shopping and feeding their families. It’s challenging,” said Bishop.

The Community Cupboard is able to pur-



COURTESY OF UV MEND
Community Cupboard and Plain Pantry are experiencing higher needs from the community, reflecting a statewide rise of dependence on food pantries.

chase eggs from Safeway through its own funding. Still, Bishop says she will have to research cheaper options or apply for grants to maintain the pantry’s bi-weekly purchase of approximately 225 dozen eggs and meet the needs of over a thousand individuals they see each month.

According to Plain Pantry Co-Director Mari Lynn

Warthen, Plain Pantry has noticed fluctuating egg prices but has not felt the financial pressures due to its smaller size and partnerships. The pantry operates out of a single-wide mobile home, serving about 30 households a week. Typically, the pantry is able to easily fill its space with donations from partnerships alone, allow-

ing the ability to afford the occasional egg purchase.

“For us, it’s just a small bump in the road,” said Warthen.

However, Warthen says she has noticed an increase in the community’s need for support in recent years. Since she and her husband started running

Egg prices

Continued from page 17

the pantry two and a half years ago, the number of households using it has grown from 20 to 30.

“Up here and I’m sure everywhere, the cost of housing and rent is very high and has jumped. Then, gas especially impacted the people that live up here, because they’re remote, and if they have a job they have to drive around quite a bit. So gas, housing big time, and then obviously, the jump in food cost, are the three, which are the basic cost of living,” said Warthen.

According to the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), the increasing need has been felt statewide.

WSDA’s Emergency Food Assistance Program reported nearly 11 million total client visits to food pantries across the state in 2023, reaching 2.6 million more visits than the year prior.

Before 2023, visits averaged around 8.2 million since 2013, with the highest year totaling 8.9 million in 2014.

Upper Valley MEND is noticing similar spikes.

According to Bishop, the Community Cupboard served 370 more households in 2023 than in 2022 and has signed up over a hundred households since the start of 2024.

“The needs are higher than they’ve ever been in the history of the community,” said Bishop.

“I think it’s important for our community to know how much food insecurity there is here... By visiting Leavenworth or just even driving through town, I don’t think you would know it.”

The Community Cupboard has a list of donations they are currently accepting at uvmend.org/food.

Both home-raised and grocery bought egg donations are welcome. Plain Pantry is accepting non-perishable and money donations.

More information can be found at plaincommunitychurch.org/thepantry.

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Quick Read

Rising egg prices, driven by factors such as Washington’s new cage-free egg law and avian influenza outbreaks, are putting pressure on local food banks like UV MEND’s Community Cupboard. The pantry has seen egg costs nearly double recently, straining its ability to meet the increasing food assistance needs in the community. While smaller pantries like Plain Pantry have been less impacted so far thanks to donated eggs, the number of households they serve has also been growing. Statewide data shows food pantry visits reached record highs in 2023 as more families struggle with housing, food and gas costs. The pantries are seeking egg and monetary donations to help them continue supporting local families facing food insecurity.

Older buyers

Continued from page 15

double the rate of single men.

“It’s pretty impressive,” Lautz said, “because they were outperforming men at a time when it was actually difficult and newly recent for them to even get a credit card.” Single women, she said, have become a “powerhouse,” second only to married couples as home buyers.

“It’s the value that single women do place on homeownership. I don’t think that’s going anywhere,” she said. “I think that they want stability. They want to know what their monthly housing cost is.”

The data-rich real estate industry also provides a clear picture of those struggling to enter the market. It’s difficult for younger, less affluent buyers, but the data set also contains insights for those trying to break through.

“We saw creativity, particularly among first-time home buyers, as being a characteristic of the 2023 market,” Sturtevant said. These buyers, she said, might have looked at neighborhoods or housing types that they wouldn’t

have considered in different circumstances. They might even have looked at homes with a rental stream such as provided by a room to rent over Airbnb or the other unit in a duplex.

“And then,” she said, “we also saw more folks, young buyers, first-time buyers, receiving down payment assistance from their parents, who frankly have a lot of equity in their homes and were able to use some of that to help their adult children buy a home.”

For some young buyers, staying in the family home for a while provided a financial edge.

“And our data shows that there is an elevated share who are moving from [the family home directly] into homeownership,” Lautz said. Not having to pay rent and being able to pay down student loan debt and otherwise improve their debt-to-income ratio seems to have smoothed the path to homeownership.

Industry leaders advise potential buyers to be prepared to act quickly as most homes sell quickly once they hit the market. Working with a knowledgeable agent and avoiding shortcuts such as waiving inspections will pay off in the

long run, they say.

“The buyers are like, ‘Hey, we’ve got to get ahead of the market and find houses that are ... not waiting for Zillow or realtor.com,’” said Creig Northrop of Northrop Realty in Clarksville, Md. “You’ve got to get with the top Realtors and get ahead of the time.”

Industry experts say major changes in the market won’t come until interest rates drop and inventory rises. But some see signs of hope.

The U.S. average housing price, which peaked at \$552,600 in the fourth quarter of 2022, ended 2023 at \$492,300. The average rate on a fixed-rate 30-year mortgage, which pushed toward 8 percent last fall, had dropped more than a point by the end of the year. Further drops could spur potential sellers sitting on low-interest home loans to jump into the market.

“Where do rates need to go... to sort of loosen up the inventory log jam?” Sturtevant asked. “I honestly don’t think they have to go as low as maybe people think. I think we’re going to find in 2024 that this year really starts to become the year of life happens.”

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Labor Area Reports

Washington State unemployment rate rises to 4.8% in March, despite job gains

According to a report released by the Employment Security Department, Washington state's unemployment rate climbed to 4.8% in March, the highest level since 2021, even as the state added 5,300 jobs. The mixed economic picture shows that while job growth is continuing, the pace has slowed in recent months, and unemployment has been steadily ticking up since September 2023.

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

"Even though Washington employers added jobs for two consecutive months, the overall trend of job growth has been declining over time," said Anneliese Vance-Sherman, the department's chief regional economist.

The state has seen six straight months of rising unemployment rates since the 3.6% mark reached last September.

In March, eight major industry sectors expanded payrolls, led by professional and business services (+2,700 jobs), wholesale trade (+1,800), and government (+2,400). The largest losses came in other services (-2,300 jobs), construction (-1,200), and leisure and hospitality

(-1,400). The information sector shed 1,000 jobs. Year over year, Washington has gained 57,800 jobs since March 2023, with the government and education and health services sectors seeing the biggest increases.

The number of unemployed Washingtonians rose by 3,510 in March to 193,580. In the Seattle metro area, the ranks of the

unemployed increased by 1,788 to 73,417.

The state's labor force, including employed and unemployed workers, grew by 5,300 to 3,640,500 last month.

Unemployment insurance claims fell in March, with the department paying benefits to 72,162 people, down 1,478 from February.

The construction, administrative and support, and waste management

and remediation services industries saw the biggest decreases in claims.

Nationally, the unemployment rate dipped to 3.8% in March from 3.9% in February.

Washington's rate remains a full percentage point higher, though still well below the 5.9% peak seen in March 2022 as the state was still recovering from pandemic-related job losses.

The latest numbers paint a nuanced picture of Washington's labor market, with steady but slowing job gains alongside persistently rising unemployment.

Policymakers will be closely monitoring the trend in the months ahead as they seek to sustain the economic recovery while keeping joblessness in check.

Wenatchee MSA experiences strong job growth amidst rising unemployment

The Wenatchee Metropolitan Statistical Area, comprising Chelan and Douglas counties in Washington state, saw impressive job growth between March 2023 and March 2024 despite an uptick in the unemployment rate, according to a comprehensive Labor Area Summary report authored by Donald W. Meseck, Regional Labor Economist for the Employment Security Department.

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As detailed in Meseck's report, non-farm employment in the Wenatchee MSA surged by 1,900 jobs, or 4.0%, from March 2023 to March 2024, significantly outperforming the statewide growth rate of 1.6% during the same period. This marks an impressive 36 consecutive months of year-over-year job gains for the MSA.

However, the report also reveals that the unemployment rate in the Wenatchee MSA rose from 4.9% in March 2023 to 5.8% in March 2024, as the number of unemployed residents grew by 580. Interestingly, this increase in unemployment coincided with an expansion of the civilian labor force by 337 people over the year.

Meseck's analysis shows that job gains were widespread across most major industries, with the mining, logging, and construction sector spearheading the growth with an impressive 11.4% increase.

Other notable sectors experiencing strong growth include leisure and hospitality (9.2%) and trade, transportation, warehousing, and utilities (7.2%).

The retail trade sector

was the sole exception, shedding 200 jobs during the period.

The Labor Area Summary report also sheds light on the evolving role of agriculture in the local economy. While still a cornerstone of the region, agriculture's share of total employment and wages has diminished over the past decade in both Chelan and Douglas counties.

Meseck suggests that factors such as automation, the shift from seasonal to year-round positions, and the increased utilization of H-2A agricultural labor may have contributed to this decline.

Despite the mixed economic signals, Meseck's report underscores the Wenatchee MSA's robust job growth, showcasing the resilience and adaptability of the local economy as it continues to bounce back from the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the region navigates the complex interplay of economic forces, the Employment Security Department remains committed to providing timely and insightful analysis to support informed decision-making and foster sustainable growth.

UNEMPLOYMENT



STOCK PHOTO

CDHD

Continued from page 8

dietitian with the CDHD.

In the nomination, Kenoyer discussed Tyrrell's commitment to educating Chelan and Douglas counties about nutrition and wellness. Offering her expertise through a weight loss support group each month along with spearheading partnerships throughout the community to promote nutrition, Tyrrell was commended as an amazing community partner.

Two physicians were

also recognized for their work in infectious disease. Dr. Mark Johnson, infectious disease physician manager at Confluence Health, was nominated by the Communicable Disease and Epidemiology Team for his dedication to bridging the gap between larger health systems and local public health jurisdictions by enhancing infectious disease services, extending telemedicine support to neighboring counties, and significantly strengthening healthcare access. His nomination also thanked him for his professionalism and col-

laboration as a valued colleague and trusted advisor.

Additionally, Dr. Ahmad Musmar, infectious disease physician at Confluence Health, was also recognized by the same team for not only managing a busy inpatient service and providing telemedicine support to neighboring counties, but also bringing his expertise and dedication to the betterment of public health. A respected figure in the fight against infectious disease, Dr. Musmar was commended for commitment to excellence and dedication to the community.

"We are incredibly proud to have five amazing individuals recognized for their outstanding contributions, rightly being honored as Champions of Public Health," commented Confluence Health CEO, Dr. Andrew Jones. "Our partnership with the Chelan-Douglas Health District (CDHD) is incredibly important as we work together for the health and wellbeing of the community we serve, and we are grateful for their recognition of the outstanding work our staff and providers contribute to support those goals."



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Leavenworth Art Haus celebrates one year of art and creativity

In April, the Leavenworth Art Haus celebrated its first year of operation, offering a space and supplies for all ages and abilities to decorate and create.

By **TAYLOR CALDWELL** | Ward Media Staff Reporter

“This was a big milestone just to make it to a year... I never thought it would get to this point and to still be excited and to still be like, this is going to be better than I expected, it's really rewarding,” said Owner Katie Miethe.

The laid-back studio is designed to provide the supplies for whatever visitors are in the mood to create.

They can choose to paint on ceramics, wood, or canvas or have more structured creativity

through paint-by-numbers or diamond art.

The price is by item, ranging from \$10 to \$50, with paint, studio time, and glaze included.

Melissa Fry and Kirian Williams, on a mother-daughter trip from Snohomish, chose a ceramic mushroom and bowl to paint during their session.

The two said they found the studio on a quick Google search and were excited to find something in town that didn't involve consumption.

“I love that it's some-

thing fun to do that doesn't involve eating or drinking, you know what I mean? We love the outdoor stuff, we love going and hiking...but it's something to do in the evening that's fun and good for every age group,” said Fry.

This aspect has favored the downtown studio by bringing in all kinds of visitors and forging unlikely scenarios.

Miethe says she's had dads who are not artistically inclined end up invested in their art, sitting alone and painting while the rest of the family has moved its attention elsewhere.

A Jordanian woman who had never painted before cried when she had finished her project, discovering an unrealized talent.

In another instance, the studio offered a seven-year-old and his grandmother quality time, and a better option than following the family to a brewery.

“When they left, [the grandmother] said, “You know what? I've never had any one-on-one time with him until today. So, thank



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

Painting at the Art Haus is a relaxing and affordable hobby for Cascade Sophomore Alexia Hughes, who comes about once a week.

you for having a space where we could come and spend some time together,” said Miethe.

The studio has attracted visitors and locals alike with events like Pass the Canvas and weekly art classes for ages six and up, as well as private events such as birthday parties and bridal showers.

Alexia Hughes, a Cascade High School sophomore, attended an Art Haus event with her family a little less than a year ago and has been returning on her own almost every week since.

Hughes has found art as a relaxing outlet, and the studio offers all the supplies she needs at an affordable price.

“It's just a great business and place to be. You don't have to worry about anything. They're completely judge free. They love everything you do. You never have to worry about cleaning up and stuff. She does it all for you,” said Hughes.

Miethe's first year in business has been challenging, as He has had to adapt to the seasons' unpredictability, learn how to manage events, and find ways to bring more business to the end of downtown.

Yet, the Art Haus has surpassed all of her expectations. Opening the Art Haus in Leavenworth was a lofty dream that became a reality for Miethe, and she's felt an overwhelming amount of support from both tourists and the community. Miethe said in just un-

der a year, she's already received repeat customers, ranging from Mount Vernon to Idaho. Just recently, it received the 2023 Emerging Business award from the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce.

“It's been so cool to see the people that have lived here for their whole lives, that have grown up here, just embrace us even though we're not from here. I feel like the community has wrapped their arms around us to help us, and the other business owners in town come and help support us,” said Miethe.

Looking forward, Mi-

ethe hopes to continue to create a comfortable and welcoming space inside the studio, but she also hopes to expand her reach within the community by partnering with school art teachers to collaborate on more events and even feature student artwork in the studio. A kiln is also on the list.

The Leavenworth Art Haus is located at 617 Front St. and is open 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day but Wednesday. More information can be found at leavenwortharthaus.com.

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TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

Kirian Williams paints a ceramic pot at the Leavenworth Art Haus.

Quick Read

The Leavenworth Art Haus, owned by Katie Miethe, recently celebrated its first successful year of operation, providing a welcoming space for people of all ages and skill levels to explore their creativity through various art mediums such as painting on ceramics, wood, or canvas. The studio has become a popular destination for both locals and tourists, offering a unique and engaging activity that doesn't involve eating or drinking. Despite the challenges of running a new business, Miethe has received overwhelming support from the community and hopes to continue expanding the Art Haus's reach by collaborating with local schools and featuring student artwork in the future.



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