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## Rustic Rise Cafe & Bakery catches on with customers

Looking back on it now, perhaps a more appropriate name for Rustic Rise Café & Bakery might have been Rustic Rise on the Run because that is much of what owner Holly Vejar has been doing since she started her bakery business just five short months ago on April 4.

By **MIKE MALTAIS** | Ward Media Staff Reporter

**R**ustic Rise specializes in baked goods, especially sourdough, and delivers her orders for free.

“Most of my breads except for one are sourdough,” said Vejar.

Busy – “but loving it,” said Vejar – features orders and deliveries not only for customers in the surrounding cities but also as distant as Tacoma.

After seeing and tasting her eye-catching creations, it’s no mystery to understand why.

Together with the skills she picked up from her grandmother, Vejar has a talent for incorporating local ingredients

into some of her delicacies. Consider:

- Blackberry scones made with local blackberries from Lone Point Cellars in Brewster.
- Salted caramel coconut macaroons,
- Sourdough cinnamon roll focaccia.
- Mini chocolate cake donuts with blackberry glaze.

“My grammy inspired me,” said Vejar. “I grew up watching my grammy cook.”

Not only did she watch her, but she also now uses those same tools to make lefsa, one of her specialties.



COURTESY OF DAKOTA BUCHMANN PHOTOGRAPHY  
More and more customers are learning about Rustic Rise Café & Bakery.

“During the holidays we have lefsa. It’s hard to find traditional lefsa,” said Vejar.

“When I make it, I use my

great, great, grandmother’s lefsa iron and turning sticks.”

See **RUSTIC RISE CAFÉ** Page 5

## Outdoor hydrotherapy spa slated to open in Leavenworth this fall



COURTESY OF MARCO SCHEUER

The Springs will feature a sauna, cold plunge, and pools in an outdoor setting. **SEE STORY PAGE 19**

## Friendship sparks health tech venture in Downtown Wenatchee

**In the heart of Downtown Wenatchee, two best friends work in an emerging industry to help community members better understand their bodies and identify health issues at early stages. Taking their shared passion for helping people across the world, Sole Sisters Thermal Imaging brings affordable medical awareness to the Wenatchee Valley.**

By **WILL NILLES** | Ward Media Staff Reporter

**M**arian Leone-Lambert and Brandi Darnell, the founders, operators, and namesakes of Sole Sisters, use specialized heat-sensitive cameras to detect irregularities in the body. Though the process is often fast and simple, thermal imaging can detect the signs of a wide variety of early health conditions.

“It’s an infrared camera,” Leone-Lambert shared, explaining

the capabilities of the thermal imaging process. “And it reads temperature on the skin, which gives an indication of what’s going on inside the body. So it can show inflammation. It can show vascularity patterns. It can show some nerve issues.”

This wide range of visibility allows technicians to specifically identify the crucial early

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**Lake Chelan Mirror**

131 S. Apple Blossom Dr.,  
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**Brewster**

Quik E Mart #2 (Exxon)  
26048 U.S. Highway 97

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## The heartbeat of innovation in North Central Washington

By **Terry Ward** | CEO and Publisher

**A**s I reflect on the stories featured in this month's Wenatchee Business Journal, I'm struck by the vibrant pulse of innovation and community spirit that courses through North Central Washington.

Our region is not just growing; it's evolving in ways that honor our roots while embracing the future.

Take Rustic Rise Café & Bakery, where Holly Vejar has turned her grandmother's culinary legacy into a thriving business.

In just five short months, she's gone from a credit union branch manager to a full-time entrepreneur, delivering artisanal sourdough and unique local treats across the state.

Holly's story is a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit that thrives here – one that blends tradition with innovation and isn't afraid to take risks.

Then there's The Springs, set to open this fall in Leavenworth.

Marco Scheuer and Vincent LaBelle's outdoor hydrotherapy spa is more than just a business venture; it's a love letter to our region's natural beauty and outdoor lifestyle.

Their commitment to creating an experience that's "of this place" showcases how new businesses can enhance our community's character rather than dilute it.

Boulder Bend Glassworks in Peshastin offers another facet of our region's creative economy. Jori Delvo and Craig Sorensen's studio isn't just producing art; it's inviting the public to witness and appreciate the craft of glassblowing.

Their work embodies the intersection of art, science, and education that can set our region apart in the broader economic

landscape.

Perhaps most inspiring is Upper Valley MEND's mobile food pantry initiative.

By bringing fresh, local produce directly to migrant worker camps, they're not just addressing food insecurity – they're building bridges between different parts of our community and ensuring that our region's bounty is shared more equitably.

These stories paint a picture of a region that's not content to simply grow, but is determined to grow thoughtfully and inclusively.

From artisanal bakeries to high-tech spas, from ancient crafts to innovative social programs, we're seeing a diverse tapestry of enterprises that are making North Central Washington an even more vibrant place to live and work.

As we navigate the chal-

## From the Publisher



lenges and opportunities ahead, let's continue to support and celebrate these local innovators.

Their success is our success, and their creativity is the heartbeat of our economic future.

Together, we can ensure that North Central Washington remains not just a beautiful place to visit, but a thriving, dynamic

community to call home.

*Terry Ward is the CEO of Ward Media and the publisher of 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.*

## Tech and trailblazers unite to celebrate North Central Washington's Digital Equity Month

**This September, communities across North Central Washington will come together to celebrate Digital Equity Month. The regional awareness campaign is being spearheaded by the NCW Digital Access and Equity Coalition. The coalition's commitment campaign is a call to action, spotlighting the digital disparity that leaves one in four community members without essential digital skills, devices, or connectivity.**

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

**D**igital skills and connectivity are now essential for access to news and information, employment, healthcare, and education.

The lack of access is more than an inconvenience – it's a significant social and economic barrier.

The coalition's efforts are a testament to the region's resolve to not only raise awareness of the issue locally but also carve out pathways to digital inclusion.

Local municipalities, including Brewster, Entiat, George, Omak, East Wenatchee, Quincy, Moses Lake, Wenatchee, and Leavenworth, have stepped forward to make official proclamations de-

claring September as Digital Equity Month.

This collective endorsement underscores the widespread recognition of the issue and the shared dedication to addressing it.

The NCW Tech Alliance, Unidos Sin Fronteras, and NCW Libraries are a few organizations contributing programs, resources, public connections, and even devices as part of the regional strategy to bridge the digital divide.

Several local School Districts, such as Quincy, Wenatchee, Cascade, and the North Central Educational Services District, have pledged commitments and services as well.

A number of local busi-

nesses, such as Confluence Health, Bigfoot Telecommunications, Fiooen, Microsoft, and others, have joined the effort, and community-based organizations are also rallying to the cause.

liance are just a few of the nonprofits making efforts with dedicated programs and specific outreach initiatives that prioritize digital equity.

These cross-sector pledges tell a powerful story of community engagement and the spirit of collaboration that drives this campaign.

There will be several digital equity events around the region this month, but the Tech and Trailblazers event on September 10 at the LocalTel Event Center at Pybus Public Market in Wenatchee will honor all of the regional digital equity commitments makers.

Thriving Together NCW is sponsoring the event, which is intended to celebrate this year's progress and cast a vision for continued action.

The central hub for com-

munity members eager to join the movement is the NCW Tech Help website. It offers a gateway to learn more about Digital Equity Month activities and the broader regional coalition's objectives.

The website also includes a toolbox of resources for individuals seeking support and upcoming training for digital navigators.

The shared message behind September Digital Equity Month is clear: - connectivity is not a luxury; it's a necessity.

Through concerted efforts and shared commitments, community leaders are working together to ensure that every individual has the tools and opportunities. For more information, visit the NCW Tech Help website [www.ncwtechhelp.org](http://www.ncwtechhelp.org).



# Finance

**Beau Ruff**

Contributor for Ward Media



## The FTC, Washington State, and Non-Compete Agreements

**O**n April 23 of this year, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued a final rule banning non-compete agreements throughout the nation.

In 2020, Washington State enacted its own prohibitions on non-compete agreements (with a pending update set to be enacted later this year).

How do the two rules (from Washington and the FTC) line up, and what are the applicable exemptions to the general rule that bans non-compete agreements?

### Washington Rule (contained in RCW 49.62)

Today in Washington state, non-compete covenants are not enforceable unless: (1) the employee makes over ~\$120k a year (for 2024), and (2) the terms of the non-compete are in writing and disclosed prior to the employee's acceptance of employment OR the employer provides independent compensation if entered into during the term of employment.

Additionally, the employer must agree to compensate the employee his or her base salary if the employee is laid off for the term of the non-compete (with adjustment based on the employee's subsequent employment compensation).

Further, non-compete agreements over 18 months in duration post-employment are presump-

tively unreasonable and unenforceable.

The Washington rule specifically excludes from its coverage any non-solicitation or non-disclosure agreements.

### FTC Rule (contained in 16 CFR Part 910)

The FTC rule appears to provide even broader protections for employees than does the Washington law.

It becomes effective 120 days after the date of publication in the federal register (published on May 7, 2024) and makes all existing non-compete agreements unenforceable, with an exception for non-compete agreements for Senior Executives.

A Senior Executive is an employee that earns more than \$151,164 annually (a higher threshold than Washington's law) and who is in a policy-making position.

A "policy-making position" is reserved for those who "exercise the highest levels of authority in an organization..."

Further, a policy-making position means a "business or entity's president, chief executive officer or the equivalent, any other officer of a business entity who has policy-making authority, or any other natural person who has policy-making authority for the business entity similar to an officer with policy-making authority."

Importantly, the FTC estimates that only about



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.75% of workers qualify for this designation.

Title alone is insufficient to place an employee in a policy-making position. So, not only does the FTC rule require a higher earning level to enforce a non-compete, it also requires that the employee hold a policy-making position that the FTC has determined will not apply to over 99% of workers.

But, the FTC rule goes even further in its definition of a non-compete.

It includes in the definition of "non-compete" any term or condition of employment that (1) prohibits or (2) penalizes a worker from competing.

But, more broadly, it includes any term or condition of employment that "functions to prevent" a worker from competing.

It's that last clause that might pull in other types of agreements that are not technically classified as a non-compete agreement from the face of the document.

For example, although a non-solicitation agreement may not prohibit or penalize competition,

it might be included in the definition of a non-compete if it "functions to prevent" competition.

The FTC has provided: "the term 'functions to prevent' clarifies that, if an employer adopts a term or condition that is so broad or onerous that it has the same functional effect as a term or condition prohibiting or penalizing a

worker from seeking or accepting other work or starting a business after their employment ends, such a term is a non-compete clause..." and would be prohibited by the rule.

Employers should also note that the new FTC rule requires affirmative action by the employer to provide notice to employees that the employee's "non-compete clause will not be, and cannot legally be, enforced against the worker."

### Taken Together

Between Washington's current law, the updates scheduled for later this year, and the new FTC rule, there are a lot of nuances to parse when putting together any restrictive employment clauses.

Non-disclosure agree-

ments and non-solicitation agreements appear to still be effective, but for the fear that the restrictions might meet the "function to prevent" clause under the FTC's definition.

More than ever before, it is vital for business owners to consult with their attorneys to put in place the agreements necessary to protect the business, but also to look to other employee benefits or compensation structures to further incentivize employees to remain loyal to the company.

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

## STCU to acquire Community Bank, expanding footprint in Oregon and Washington

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

**S**TCU announced in August it has entered into an agreement to acquire Community Bank, expanding its presence into northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington.

STCU announced in August it has entered into an agreement to acquire Community Bank, expanding its presence into northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington.

The purchase and assumption agreement, which is subject to regulatory and shareholder

approval, would see STCU acquire substantially all assets and liabilities of Community Bank. The transaction is expected to close in early 2025.

Community Bank, headquartered in Joseph, Oregon, operates 10 branches across six counties in Oregon and Washington, with total assets of \$550 million. Following the acquisition, STCU would grow to approximately \$6.4 billion in total assets and 49 branch locations across Eastern Washington, the Columbia Basin,

Tri-Cities, North Idaho, and Eastern Oregon.

"Since our founding in 1955, Community Bank has been proud to support the communities of our region, and the many neighbors who are our customers," said Tom Moran, Community Bank President and CEO. "As the banking and business environment of our region grows increasingly competitive, this transaction with STCU will ensure expanded product offer-

See **STCU** Page 19

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# Finance

**Tyler Kert**

Contributor for Ward Media



## Why the 2024 Presidential Election shouldn't dictate your investment decisions

As the election in November approaches, many are wondering how it will impact their IRAs and 401ks.

Some prospective investors don't want to act until they know who is going to take office.

I have heard so many people say, "Shouldn't I wait to make a decision until after the election is over?"

It's a valid question because the market typically does not like uncertainty. In addition, political policies can and do have an impact on businesses in the United States and this can flow through to the underlying shareholders.

However, investors should not allow the upcoming election to determine their investment decisions.

While it's natural to be concerned about how po-

litical changes might affect the market, allowing election results to dictate your investment choices is risky.

Here are three reasons why you should build a financial plan and maintain a disciplined investment approach, regardless of the political landscape.

### 1. Market Volatility Does Not Affect Long-term Goals

Presidential elections have been known to cause volatility and uncertainty in the market. In the run-up to an election, market fluctuations can be driven by speculation and voter hopes. However, this volatility is usually short-lived.

In addition, contrary to popular belief, historically election years have been profitable years to be invested in the market.

Out of the past 24 elec-



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tion cycles going back nearly 100 years, 20 out of 24 of those election years were positive returns for the S&P 500 Index.

Of the four election years which had negative returns, two of them were largely the result of the dot-com bubble bursting in 2000 and the '08 financial crisis.

As you can see, historical evidence alone does not support sitting out of the market until an election is over.

Investment strategies should be based on long-term goals rather than short-term political events.

Whether you're saving for retirement, a child's education, or other future needs, your investment plan should be specifically designed to accomplish those goals.

If your plan is set up correctly, you won't need to worry about the kind of short-term volatility that an election might cause.

Basing your investment decisions on an election is just another way of trying to time the market.

For the vast majority of investors, time in the market is the key to success, not timing the market.

In other words, invest now and give your money time to grow. Don't wait around for the perfect entry point.

### 2. Policies don't Change Overnight

Regardless of the election outcome, major policy shifts take time. New administrations may promise changes, but the process of actually executing new policies is often slow.

This means that the immediate impact of an election on specific sectors

or investments is typically less pronounced than expected.

Yes, there will often be short-term uncertainty and volatility, but lasting change takes time.

Long-term investment strategies should account for gradual policy changes rather than trying to take advantage of immediate electoral results.

### 3. Diversification and Risk Management – Psychological Biases

Diversification and correctly managing risk is more important than your own personal opinions about the market.

When you sit down to design your financial plan, you should use diversification and your current life situation to align your investments with your own personal risk tolerance.

A well-diversified portfolio is designed to mitigate risk and withstand various market conditions, including political uncertainty.

Rather than shifting investments based on election outcomes, focus on maintaining a diversified portfolio and sticking to a plan.

Not every investor will be able to stomach the same kind of volatility.

But every investor can construct a personalized plan they are able to stick to even in the face of an election.

Political events often trigger strong emotions and biases, leading to fear-driven decisions rather than rational analysis.

This behavior is known as emotional investing, and it can cloud judgment and result in investment choices that lack a solid financial foundation. By adhering to a well-considered investment plan and avoiding decisions based on temporary political events, you can reduce the negative impact of biased, emotional investing.

### Conclusion

While the outcome of the 2024 presidential election may influence market sentiment in the short term, don't let it dictate your investment strategy.

A disciplined approach focused on long-term goals, diversification, and, if needed, professional advice will serve you better than making reactive decisions based on political events.

Some people like to guess what the future holds or invest based on their feelings; others use the uncertain future as the primary reason to put off investment planning until "things settle down."

Neither of those options are optimal. Instead, stay committed to your investment plan and avoid the pitfalls of short-term thinking.

You'll find you're better positioned to achieve your financial objectives, regardless of the political climate.

*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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### Composting: The secret ingredient for a thriving local economy

Composting is a powerful way for our community to leverage both economic pragmatism and sustainability.

Far from being just a way to reduce waste, composting has proven to be a powerful driver for local economies.

By creating jobs, supporting agriculture, and reducing waste management costs, composting

isn't just good for the planet – it's good for North Central Washington. And at its core, it's simply the right thing to do.

Let's start with job creation. The composting industry is a growing sector that creates family-wage jobs in the communities it serves.

From collection and transportation to processing and distribution, com-

posting operations provide a variety of employment opportunities.

These aren't just any jobs – they're green jobs that contribute to environmental sustainability while providing meaningful work for local residents.

Consider the example of Winton Manufacturing. This local composting



# Q & A



## Meet Mike Proirier, Mayor of the City of Wenatchee

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

**P**oirier was elected in 2023 and began his term as mayor in 2024. Before that he served on the Wenatchee City Council from 2016-2019 and again from 2022-2023.

Poirier, who grew up and raised his family in Wenatchee, is dedicated to guiding the city's growth while preserving its unique character.

We caught up with Poirier recently to learn about his insights on Wenatchee's future, the challenges it faces, and his commitment to community service.

From fostering economic development to tackling homelessness, Mayor Poirier is focused on making a positive impact on his hometown.

### What makes Wenatchee unique, and how do you plan to leverage these qualities for the city's growth?

Wenatchee is unique in that we enjoy big-city amenities in a small-town environment.

Wenatchee is fortunate to have organizations such as the Chelan County PUD, the Chelan-Douglas Regional Port, and all of the numerous non-profit agencies that actively invest and steward the resources of this valley.

The city is growing, and my job is to ensure we are planning for the future with the same care and thoughtfulness as those who came before us.

The City recently completed the Reimagine Wenatchee Target Area Master Plan, which identifies opportunities for investment in our down-

town and waterfront areas in a way that is responsive to the community's needs and builds on past investments.

### What specific sectors or industries do you believe hold the most promise for Wenatchee's economic future, and how do you plan to support their growth?

Agriculture continues to be a strong backbone of this community, but tourism, education, and technology are trending upwards.

We are on the map for organizations such as Microsoft and other ancillary or supporting services; Wenatchee Valley College is a big asset to this community by providing accessible education, and we have become an outdoor destination for visitors.

The key plan here is partnerships – the City is not the only agency that provides services to the public, and our tax dollars are limited to how we can spend them; however, when we partner with local agencies, we can make those resources go much further.

### What motivated you to pursue a career in public service?

I was raised in Wenatchee and raised my family here, too. I want to help our community grow and I will do what's needed to help Wenatchee be the best Wenatchee it can be.

### What's the most important lesson you've learned so

### far in your role as mayor?

Investing in our community members and especially our young community members is crucial to the growth and future of the collective.

I really enjoy meeting members of the community and encouraging them to become more civically involved.

### What does a normal day look like as mayor?

Every day is different in this role. It ranges from meetings with staff on priority projects to meeting with community members.

I start each day by checking my emails and phone calls to determine my plan, which includes consulting with my wife, Maureen, on what to wear.

My schedule ranges too, sometimes I have late evening meetings or weekend events, but I try to keep in touch with my family throughout the week and leave time to catch up on all my favorite shows.

The running joke from my family is that if there is a new movie or a series or a show, I've probably already seen it.

### What is your favorite part of your job and why?

I really like getting to know the people who I work with and meeting new people.

There is just so much to learn, I won't ever know everything, but I get to know a little bit of everything that everyone knows.

### What are the biggest challenges

### you're currently facing in Wenatchee, and how do you plan to address them?

The biggest challenge in the community is homelessness. This is a very complex topic that we're facing as a nation and is not unique to Wenatchee, however, we have to tailor a plan that fits our needs.

My plan is to address the issue with compassion and accountability.

The City of Wenatchee and East Wenatchee partnered on a housing sales tax and we've had a lot of successes with the program so far.

We've set up two Safe Parks, funded several low-barrier shelters, and are working on hiring personnel that will focus on this effort full-time. We've also enacted codes that help protect the public at large from the negative impacts of vandalism, theft, and drug use.

We want to support

those who live in our community to engage with community and offer them services, but not at the expense of our quality of life.

### What are the key goals you hope to achieve for Wenatchee in the near future?

Homelessness is my number one priority. This is an issue that affects all of our city departments, economic development, quality of life, safety and more. My overall goal is that we get those living in homelessness on path of self-help and sustainability and they become active members of our community, reducing the impact and strain to our local businesses, residents and public amenities.

### Who or what inspires you?

My family is my inspiration, they remind and inspire me to do better

every day and to make the best out of each day.

### What do you like to do with your free time?

I spend most of my time with my children, in-laws, and grandchildren.

I like spending time outdoors as well, fishing, crabbing, or just taking walks through all of our beautiful outdoor areas.

### Is there anything else you want our readers to know?

I invite the community to learn more about their local governments, nonprofits and education agencies.

When community participates in these organizations, they can be a part of the planning and solutions. It is hard work but it is very rewarding.

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## Rustic Rise Café

Continued from page 1

Vejar is a Chelan Valley native and 2005 Manson High School graduate.

She and her husband, Dan, now have three teenage children, two girls and a boy.

Vejar was a credit union branch manager when her new business venture came together.

"I started doing everything online," said Vejar. "Online orders, free delivery."

If she needed that little push to pursue her dream, Dan provided it while Vejar was going stir-crazy recovering from hip surgery.

"In March, my husband said, 'Do a business,'" said Vejar. "This is what you love."

Fast forward four months, and Vejar's last day working for someone else was August 5. She has already found a location on Manson's main drag where a storefront will later house the business and provide room for expansion. Even with that, however, she intends



Sourdough bread is a Vejar specialty.



Holly Vejar



Vejar is using more locally sourced ingredients like blackberries in her recipes.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAKOTA BUCHMANN PHOTOGRAPHY

to continue her free deliveries,

"It helps a lot of the families," Vejar said.

She said she was very surprised at how quickly her business took off.

"I thought this was just going to be a side gig," Vejar said.

Word is spreading fast, reorders are increasing, and support is growing.

Vejar posed one of those cosmic questions that she soon hopes to solve: If

there were a Manson muffin, what flavor would it be?

Check her website at [rusticrisebakery.net](http://rusticrisebakery.net) or Rustic Rise Café & Bakery's Facebook page to weigh in on the answer.

*Mike Maltais:*  
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## Quick Read

Holly Vejar, owner of Rustic Rise Café & Bakery, launched her business just five months ago and has quickly gained popularity with her specialty sourdough breads and baked goods. Inspired by her grandmother's cooking, Vejar incorporates local ingredients into unique creations like blackberry scones and sourdough cinnamon roll focaccia. Starting as an online business with free delivery, Rustic Rise has grown rapidly, prompting Vejar to quit her previous job and secure a storefront location in Manson. Despite the expansion, she plans to continue free deliveries to support local families. The bakery's success has surpassed Vejar's expectations, transforming from a side gig into a thriving full-time business.



# Health

## Patients win big in Confluence Health shift

**As options expand in other industries, healthcare has had a lot of catching up to do. The desire for ready access, diverse availability, easy scheduling, and a variety of options has become increasingly available, if not expected. At Confluence Health, they recognized that there were areas to improve.**

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

**“W**e pride ourselves on being the local option and providing the service our community needs right here at home,” explained Dr. Andrew Jones, CEO of Confluence Health.

“We value this so much that it became our new mission: ‘Local care by

and for our community.’ We know that care is best when it is not only provided by someone in and from this community but when the decisions for the organization are made locally too.”

But keeping care local comes with its challenges in an industry that is rapidly changing, with many

healthcare organizations opting to simply become part of larger, multi-state systems. To meet community needs while remaining relevant and independent, Confluence Health recognized it wasn’t enough to just make a few tweaks here and there. They were going to need to completely redesign how primary care



Tracy Corgiat



Dr. Andrew Jones



Dr. Elizabeth Avena

is delivered to the residents of North Central Washington.

Partnering with former Harvard Business School professor Dr. Richard Bohmer and with various experts with experience in the transformation of healthcare, Confluence Health launched a bold series of initiatives to prepare its leadership in all areas to become an organization nimble and capable enough to meet these goals and to begin experiments on new ideas on how to better provide the access, ease, and outstanding care to the community they were committed to serving.

One major and central effort in this wider transformation is collectively known as ‘Primary Care Redesign’: an effort to rebuild and reimagine care. After 18 months of hard work, process improvement, experiments, and change, the effects are starting to ripple across the organization and making dramatic improvements.

“One major change that many have likely seen is the transition from walk-in clinics to DirectCare, which allows for patients to schedule same-day and next-day appointments rather than having to just show up to the clinic and wait for availability,” remarked Dr. Elizabeth Avena, core medical director for primary care. “Previously, you would have seen full waiting rooms but if you go there now, the waiting rooms are nearly empty, but we are seeing and providing care for more patients than ever. It’s important to note that the spirit of the ‘walk-in’ hasn’t gone away but has just been improved: you can still get the care you need that can’t wait for a primary care appointment. The difference is that now patients have an appointment that they either scheduled online, over the phone or by coming to the clinic and then can wait in the comfort of their own home rather than in a waiting room, all without losing their place in line.”

Though early on, there were worries that this transition might lead to more

patients needing to go to the ER or patients foregoing primary care visits, this isn’t what has happened, Dr. Avena went on to clarify. Demand for those other services has held about the same, but the number of patients getting prompt appointments has increased through the rollout of DirectCare, leading to more care and convenience. Initially piloted in a limited way at the East Wenatchee walk-in clinic prior to the launch of DirectCare, in July 2024, the clinic saw 49.7% more patients than the same month the previous year. Since DirectCare launched at the Wenatchee Mares Campus in April of this year, a similar increase has been seen, with 15.6% more patients seen in July 2024 than in March 2024, the month prior to going live.

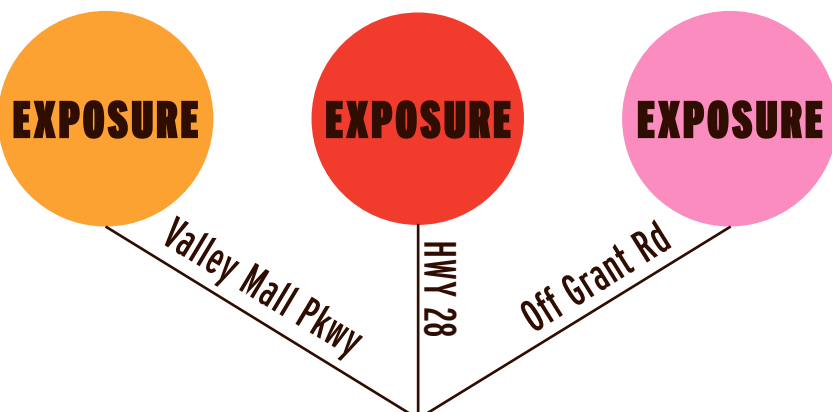
Overall, the number of patients seen has increased by 13.8% across both clinics since the April go-live and, due to other efforts that are ongoing as well, the former walk-in clinics have increased the number of patients seen in July 2024 by 26.7% from the same month the previous year.

A crucial part of this success has also been the increase in the ability to schedule online, another component in the vast Primary Care Redesign project. Not only has online scheduling been opened for patients using DirectCare, but also for regular primary care visits, most commonly using MyChart which allows patients to have everything related to their care all in one convenient location through an online app. Over the course of a year, the percentage of appointments scheduled online more than doubled by July 2024, with almost 7,000 appointments made online in that month alone. This shift has also been seen with MyChart sign-ups – using the electronic medical record to make appointments, view test results, and talk with providers – with over 8,000 new users on Confluence Health’s platform in the past 12 months. To further

this push towards convenience and extension of care, some departments have even started serving patients as primary care provider (PCP) pools or pods rather than single practitioners. By having a team working together, patients have more options on who and when they can schedule care with and still have the benefits of care with a traditional PCP.

These options for patient care will be supplemented even further with the upcoming rollout of KeyCare – a new virtual care option that will allow Confluence Health patients to seamlessly access care 24/7 from their home or while traveling across the country while ensuring the visit notes end up in their chart for their care team – and Care Companion, a digital option for patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes, to help monitor vitals, learn about how to manage their health better and communicate with their care team digitally. These options – part of a new initiative called Patient Digital Engagement that dovetails with and expands upon Primary Care Redesign – are still in development but are slated to be available before the end of the year in certain areas, expanding to others as the rollout continues.

“While these new avenues for care are coming soon, we’re extremely excited as well about another option which is already up and running: expanded patient care provided by clinical pharmacists,” added Tracy Corgiat, vice president of primary care at Confluence Health. “We currently have two clinical pharmacists who are seeing patients both locally and virtually, and they help bridge a very real need in care by working with patients with hypertension or diabetes, for example, to fine-tune their medication dosing or other needs to optimize their health. In addition to their profound expertise in these areas, this also frees up family practice or primary care



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# Health

## Cascade Medical Center and Foundation equip Leavenworth businesses with potentially life-saving AEDs

**Businesses in downtown Leavenworth received eight new automated external defibrillators (AEDs) thanks to a collaborative initiative between Cascade Medical Foundation (CMF) and Cascade Medical.**

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

**A**EDs are potentially life-saving devices that can be used to treat a person whose heart has suddenly stopped beating. In total, over 30 AED devices are available in locations across the community.

Some of the businesses to receive their first, or second, AED were Wenatchee River Institute, Der Sportsmann, Mountain Modern Supply Co., München Haus, J5 Coffee, and Gustav's.

The new Physio Control CR2 AEDs were available to businesses free of charge, with the option to add a cabinet for the device, a window sticker, and a response kit, which includes items such as gloves and a pocket mask. Cascade Medical handles the installation, maintenance, and annual inspection. Those receiving the devices can also arrange a First Aid/CPR class with Cascade Medical for their employees.

"There's a plethora of different types of AEDs out there. The [Physio Control] CR2's are kind of just the new latest and greatest AEDs. They're Wi-Fi capable. They do updates automatically because they're Wi-Fi capable," said Erin Adams, Medical Supervising Of-

ficer at Cascade Medical. In addition to automatic updates, the new AEDs can alert Adams when one has been used and track data. This information can help Adams better understand resuscitation performance and apply it to training.

"If the AED was used prior to the ambulance getting there, I can take the AED data and I can take the ambulance data and put them together, and you can see this whole chapter of the event, start to finish," said Adams.

CMF's efforts to expand the number of new devices available began in 2021, with the goal of replacing 15 old devices and then adding more, according to CMF Administrator Nevonne McDaniels. With the help of the city's Lodging Tax Grant, Leavenworth Rotary, Cascade School District, and the Chamber of Commerce, it was able to fundraise over \$40,000 for the purchase of 21 AEDs.

"Having AEDs made available to the public is extremely important to me," said CMF Board Chair Shannon Keller.

Keller joined the board once AED efforts were already underway, but has supported the continuation of it for personal

reasons. In 1980, Keller's father was playing basketball with her 15-year-old brother when his heart stopped beating. A nearby medical student performed CPR on him, and others called an ambulance, but her 49-year-old father had passed away.

"Of course, the technology for AEDs wasn't available back then - but it is now. I can't help but wonder if having an AED in the gymnasium might have saved my father. It's possible that others will be saved, now that we have access to public AEDs," said Keller.

For this round of AEDs, CMF provided \$15,737 for the purchase of the AEDs via grants and donations. CMF utilized a \$6,500 lodging tax grant from the City of Leavenworth and over \$3,600 raised during last year's Community Foundation of NCW's Give NCW online fundraising campaign. The remainder was provided by other CMF donations. Additionally, Cascade Medical purchased cabinets and response kits for the AEDs, totaling the project to \$17,000.

CMF plans to continue working with Cascade Medical's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department to expand the number of AEDs in the community while replacing old devices. Fundraising from this fall's Give NCW campaign will likely go towards the purchase of more AEDs.

"Fortunately, we can do that one device at a time, if needed. Or if we come across a grant, or some opportunity to pay for a bunch, we can do that, too. If anyone is interested in donating funds, give me a shout!" said McDaniels.



COURTESY OF ERIN ADAMS / CASCADE MEDICAL  
A new AED recently installed by Cascade Medical sits at München Haus.

Cascade Medical and CMF are currently making a list of businesses and organizations interested in obtaining an AED. To be added to the list, email [aed@casademical.org](mailto:aed@casademical.org).

"It's better to get it and not need it, than to not get it and need it. Don't be afraid of it, and learn how to use it," said Adams.

Adams said those interested in arranging a First Aid/CPR Class can contact the Ambulance Department at Cascade Medical.

A map of AED locations in the community and an instructional how-to

video are available at [casademicalfoundation.org](http://casademicalfoundation.org), under 'Projects.'

Taylor Caldwell:  
509-433-7276 or  
[taylor@ward.media](mailto:taylor@ward.media)

### Quick Read

Cascade Medical Center and Foundation have equipped Leavenworth businesses with eight new automated external defibrillators (AEDs), part of a community-wide initiative placing over 30 such devices across town. Funded by grants and donations exceeding \$40,000, the project provides state-of-the-art, Wi-Fi-capable AEDs to potentially save lives during cardiac emergencies. The organizations plan to continue expanding AED availability in the area through future fundraising efforts.

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# Mobile food pantry brings fresh produce to migrant workers

Last year, Upper Valley MEND's food programs took a significant step in expanding its impact by adding a Mobile Food Pantry to its services. Now, it's providing fresh produce to migrant worker camps across the valley.

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

**"I**t's one of my favorite programs. You can just feel the appreciation and gratitude from folks that we're just, you know, giving free produce to. And they're always so thankful and surprised it's free," said Food Programs Manager Rachel Bishop.

For years, Upper Valley MEND's gleaning program has harvested surplus produce from local farms for the Community Cupboard food pantry.

In recent years, the program received a refrigerated Sprinter van through a grant from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, allowing it to mobilize its pantry.

"We are often gleaning so much produce it's too much to give away just at the Community Cupboard," said Bishop. "So with the refrigerated van, we created this new program called the Mobile Produce Pantry."

Last year, the mobile

pantry served 742 people and distributed over 3,400 pounds of produce. It partnered with a series of organizations across the valley to distribute produce, such as Small Miracles and CAFÉ.

However, its largest partner was Columbia Valley Community Health (CVCH), serving migrant worker camps.

From about May to October, CVCH makes rotational visits to approximately 20 camps housing seasonal agricultural workers, or H-2A workers, providing medical and dental care out of a mobile clinic.

"I invite other community partners to attend as well, because a lot of times maybe not every one of the 200 H-2A workers that are in one camp, maybe they all don't need just medical or dental services, but maybe they could really benefit from getting free food, or from getting other community resources," said CVCH Outreach Co-

ordinator Bryan Cadena.

Last year, the mobile pantry served 376 workers and distributed nearly 2,000 pounds of produce.

"Locally grown organic produce is one of the more expensive things you can buy at a grocery store, so [we're] being able to provide that to people who definitely wouldn't have access otherwise," said Bishop.

At the site, the mobile pantry mimics a farmers market setup, placing the produce in nice baskets with signage, to make people feel welcome.

UV MEND provides grocery bags, and people are able to take as much as they want.

"We try and make sure that we're bringing, if it's available, culturally important produce to the people, so that they're actually used when they're cooking. So for a lot of the migrant camps, we're trying to bring onions, and cilantro, and tomatoes, fruit, peppers, zucchini, potatoes, all that kind of stuff," said Bishop.

In situations where the gleaning program has har-



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

The mobile pantry provides fresh produce at a migrant worker camp. The migrant camp in Monitor is the largest camp in the area, housing up to 300 people.

vested a large amount of an unpopular vegetable, the pantry will try to provide a familiar recipe.

For kale, UV MEND staff member Natalie Valdez was able to provide a kale-chimichurri recipe in both Spanish and English for people to take home.

"[For] a lot of people here, Spanish is their main language and you know, you really want to be able to communicate with them and make them feel more comfortable," said Valdez.

Due to seasonal chal-

lenges this year, UV MEND has had less produce to glean, causing it to scale back its mobile pantry. Because of this, it's focusing on migrant camps when it has produce available.

Fortunately, the program is able to supplement through its Farm to Food Pantry program with the state, in which it can buy produce from local farmers.

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TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

UV MEND staff member Natalie Valdez and volunteer Robin Moser.

## Quick Read

Upper Valley MEND's new Mobile Food Pantry is delivering fresh produce to migrant worker camps in the valley. Using a refrigerated van, the program distributed over 3,400 pounds of produce to 742 people last year, focusing on seasonal agricultural workers. Despite recent challenges, it continues to serve migrant camps, offering culturally relevant produce and recipes.

## Sole Sisters

Continued from page 1

signs of life-threatening illnesses like breast and thyroid cancer.

"And for women's health, which is a lot of what we do," she added, "it can show some of the precursors to breast cancer such as inflammation, such as neovascularity, which is when new blood supply is created in sort of an unusual way, because tumors need blood supply."

Co-founder Darnell agreed, further explaining the direct benefits that thermal imaging offers to those with breast cancer concerns.

"This is a preventative and detection tool," she commented. "So women can, especially if breast cancer runs in their family, they can get this done and see changes in their blood patterns which might indicate that their chances of cancer or something growing are at a higher risk. So it's a proactive tool



WILL NILLES/WARD MEDIA

Brandi Darnell (left) and Marian Leone-Lambert (right) stand in their Sole Sisters office, ready to provide simple and easy thermal imaging services with smiles on their faces.

for women to use."

Before starting their business in October of 2022, Leone-Lambert and Darnell met through their children, who shared a 1st-grade class. The two quickly bonded through their faith-based love of helping suffering communities, eventually traveling to Africa together on a mission.

As they worked together to help those in need, the duo found their shared

passion as well as a catchy new nickname.

As Darnell explained, "We went to Uganda in 2019 and served at a place called Sole Hope where they work on feet. They make shoes for people, they take jiggers out of their feet. And so we became known as the Sole Sisters."

Enjoying their work so deeply, the Sole Sisters refused to leave behind their passion for helping others.

"And we loved it," Darnell shared. "We developed a passion for serving in third-world countries and for underprivileged people. So, we came back, and we desperately wanted to serve here... and so it was not long after that when the [Washingtonian thermal imaging] practitioner, Lynn Chad, asked us if we wanted to take over and start our own thermal imaging business, and because we'd had a good experience with it and we wanted to serve, we jumped on it."

After extensive training and studying, the Sole Sisters established their business and began pursuing their mission of serving the local community. In doing this, they centralized much of their effort on providing crucial, comfortable, and welcoming options for women.

Sole sister Darnell explained the importance of such options for women in the local community.

"Women's breast health is our specialty," she said,

"because we feel like women need a safe place to go that doesn't feel like a clinic but still works alongside conventional medicine."

Additionally, Darnell expanded on the overall benefits they hope to provide with thermal imaging for all members of the community.

"What we love about thermal imaging is that it's a way to help people get healthier before they're too sick," she revealed. "It's proactive; we care about helping people from the core, and so spreading the word and getting people to see that there are other options outside of the box has been a challenge."

Though they take great pleasure in helping people find healthy medical options, the Sole Sisters especially love being able to connect directly with community members.

As Leone-Lambert explains, "Part of it is just connecting to people, hearing their stories... just being able to listen to people's stories and

connect to them and help them feel cared about."

Darnell agreed with her sole sister, sharing one word that drives her passion in thermal imaging, "relationships."

"Almost everybody that leaves gives us a big hug. We could schedule people back to back, and we don't. We schedule an hour for each person because we want them to feel cared about. And we end up sharing their life with them, and they learn about ours."

In providing friendly, welcoming care for Wenatchee residents, the Sole Sisters hope to continue spreading their love for helping others, from Uganda all the way back to North Central Washington.

To learn more about Sole Sisters and their work in thermal imaging, visit their website at mbsolesisters.com.

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# MEMBER MESSENGER

“Driven to Promote and Protect Small Business”

SEPTEMBER 2024 ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PAGE 1



## Meet the Home Tour Builders!

Building NCW is honored to host the 30th Annual Home Tour and Remodeling Expo presented by Banner Bank.

What started as a two-day event with four homes has grown and adapted to be what it is today. 11 years ago, the Chefs on Tour was added the night before the Tour and is still going strong.

This year's Home Tour boasts a total of 12 homes on display all weekend long and a special Thursday ONLY home for Chefs on Tour.

Chefs on Tour will have an after party at Union Hill Cider Co. starting around 7 pm and going until 10 pm. This gives the attendees a fun place to gather after visiting a Thursday Only Chefs on Tour Home.

Sweeney Construction's ADU will be open for the night and will be next door to Union Hill Cider and the after party.

The Home Tour proudly showcases homes from the following builders: Pinnacle Custom Builders, Carlisle Classic Homes, Lange Construction, KTS Development, Lexar Homes, Village Life, Real Homes, Lenssen Homes, Roberts Construction, Triad Skyridge Homes LLC, and Sweeney Construction.

Read on for more information about the builders in their own words.



**Pinnacle Custom Homes** is locally owned and operated.

Travis Hofstetter brings you the Peak of Excellence in Custom Home Building with over 30+ years' experience in the Pacific Northwest.

Pinnacle specializes in building Custom Homes and Luxury Estates in

Chelan & Douglas counties.

With a dedicated and knowledgeable team as well as exclusive sub-contractors Pinnacle Custom Homes brings you top of the line services & materials with ever-evolving building methods that will meet and exceed your standards.

Pinnacle Custom Homes believe in quality craftsmanship and strive for excellence in everything that they do whether it be design, attention to detail, or knowledge of the home building process.

Having personal philosophies of gratitude and humility, Pinnacle brings those values into the world of custom home building, facing challenges head on and steadfast to keep our customers stress free with builders and a team they can trust.

It is an honor and a blessing to help turn families dreams into reality.

We hope to not only build you a beautiful home, but also build great relationships and lasting friendships



**Lange Construction LLC** – SMART HOMES. SMART LIVING. Yep, you guessed it. We build stuff. Homes, mostly. And we like doing it.

We like it for the same reasons that you like stuff. It's exciting (for us anyway). And buying a new home is an exciting step for most people.

It usually marks the start of a new chapter in your life, and we feel lucky we get to share in that excitement.

We build houses because your memories are going to live in the houses we build

and because our homes will be alive in someone's memories.

We value innovation and endurance in materials and construction techniques to build houses and communities that will last.

Our homes become the storage places for some of your very best moments in life. Being a part of that is important and rewarding to us.

Whether it's your first home, second home, vacation home, or final home, Andrew Lange, owner of Lange Construction LLC and his talented team will make it a home worthy to hold your memories.

Andrew will focus on what makes your life convenient, exciting, relaxing, happy, fulfilling, and simply enjoyable. Then, he'll design that into your new home with his natural ability to create original concepts in construction. He doesn't build just any home... it's your home.

Some homebuilders just want to be the biggest, or to build the most houses the fastest. Not us. When designing a new home, we like to give it our full attention to the details and ensure that we build quality homes that are tailored to the people we build for and today's lifestyles. That's our credo: innovative homes and enduring communities. In other words... living designed smart.



**Carlisle Classic Homes** is an award-winning remodel and custom home builder with over 20 years' experience in the greater Seattle, Leavenworth, and Wenatchee area.

With over 1,200 beautiful homes and remodels, we delivery quality craftsmanship and exceptional

client experiences.

Our projects run on a state-of-the-art software platform that provides anytime, anywhere access to project schedules, costs, photos and more. Our clients benefit from a building process that is understandable, predictable and fully transparent.

We are also mindful of the environment we live in and offer green building services ranging from a simple energy efficient solutions to full certified passive homes.

At CCH we are in the business of building beautiful homes and long-standing relationships.



Kyle Steinburg started **KTS Development** with his two sons in 2019. Kyle thought it was important to work with his kids and teach them a valuable skill and how to work.

We are proud to have been selected as the People's Choice winner both in 2021 & 2023.

We feel we always put forth a great representation of our company, our attention to detail and thoughtful touches always shines through making our house one not to miss.

We pride ourselves on being vertically integrated throughout the building process from the excavation to the final landscaping.



We look forward to meeting you at the tour this year.

**Lexar Homes** is happy to celebrate our 12th year of being featured in the Building NCW Home Tour &

our 14th year of calling the Wenatchee Valley home!

Owner Tyler Eldred and GM Shawn Larson have put together a team that is experienced & knowledgeable to help you through the home building journey and achieve your ultimate goal of building a home.

At Lexar Homes we feel that our customers deserve a home that works for them in every way, including size, style, amenities, and maintenance while being cost-effective. Just as important, your home should provide a safe, healthy, comfortable and sustainable environment for your family.

We are passionate about having our homeowners involved in designing & building their custom dream home, giving them every opportunity to move into their new Lexar home with thousands of dollars in equity.

We've also put together packages for those of you with busy schedules, who want to leave the details to our knowledgeable Lexar team.

Visit us on the web at [www.lexarhomes.com](http://www.lexarhomes.com) or stop by and see Shawn Larson or Pedro Pulido at 147 Easy Way Ste.104, Wenatchee.

A Lexar Home isn't just a decision to Choose Right; it's a choice to Live Right!



At **Village Life**, our legacy as a local builder spans over 40 years with expertise in home building, land acquisition, entitlements, and neighborhood development.

Guided by an unwavering commitment to quality, homeowner satisfaction, and a responsibility to give

back, we endeavor to add value with each new home and community we create, offering residents a place to gather, a place to create dreams and most importantly a place to call home.

Our mission is to positively impact families and communities through building thoughtful communities that enhance the lives of our homeowners as well as our employees.



**Real Homes** is the Wenatchee Valley's premier homebuilder with over 40 years of experience and a dedicated mission to provide quality and affordable homes.

Locally owned and operated, we understand the needs of our customers as well as our overall community.

It's no secret the local housing market needs more affordable housing, that is why we specialize in building homes people can afford and developing communities people will enjoy for many years to come.

Real Homes has multiple developments in the Rock Island and Malaga areas, and we offer a unique process where our customers can choose from multiple floor plans, interior and exterior finishes and an array of upgrade options.

We take great pride in building quality and affordable homes while also providing our customers with a personal and efficient home building experience.

Real Homes is led by Jon Port, Austin Port, Javier Lopez & Morgan Port and we have an amazing team of 23 full-time employees and a group of the best subcontractors in the area!

See **HOME TOUR BUILDERS** Page 10

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# MEMBER MESSENGER

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### Home Tour Builders

Continued from page 9



**Lenssen Homes** is a premier home building company renowned for its commitment to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction.

Founded by brothers Kent and Kevin Lenssen, the company has grown to include Kent's son, Caiden as well.

The Lenssen's have established a strong reputation in the residential construction industry.

With a keen eye for detail and a passion for excellence, Lenssen Homes specializes in creating custom homes that reflect the unique tastes and lifestyles of its clients.

The company's team of skilled professionals ensures that every project is executed with precision and care, from initial design to final construction.

Known for their use of high-quality materials and sustainable building practices, Lenssen Homes is dedicated to building not just houses, but homes that families can cherish for generations.



**Roberts Construction LLC** has been a dominant force in the Wenatchee Valley for over 40 years.

With Mike at the helm of this three generational operated company he has driven his brand to be recognized as a premier builder within the community.

One of the highly recognized attributes of selecting a Roberts home is seeing Mike involved with

every step of the building process.

The pride implemented from Mike shines through his attention to detail and quality in his product.

One of the cornerstones of Mikes devotion is to implement new creative concepts, ideas & designs with each home he creates.

Roberts Constructions trend-setting styles, client dedication & high product standards has generated a dedicated following & repeat clientele.

Mikes creativity and passion throughout his career has culminated into his current endeavor, Swift Springs.

This brand-new development that Roberts Construction is supplying the community is conveniently located at the top of Springwater Ave in Wenatchee WA. Here you will see the cohesive and distinct Roberts Construction designs and styles throughout the complete neighborhood.



### SKYRIDGE

**Triad Skyridge Homes LLC** presents this 350+home master planned community overlooking the Columbia River.

It will offer a variety of home sizes, styles and design possibilities for all ages and desires – many on lots with spectacular views.

Skyridge honors Washington's landscape of fruit trees and outdoor recreational pursuits.

Residents will enjoy a relaxed, yet active lifestyle with parks, pool/spa, tennis, pickleball, bocce and even a snow-sledding



hill. Neighborhood trails connect to the adjacent Sage Hills trail network. Skyridge Community truly is the envisionment of luxury homes with no hassle lifestyles.

Do you want to meet the builders, ask them questions about your dream home, or experience their incredible home?

Attend the Home Tour on September 20 – 22!

Tickets can be purchased at any Home Tour home, just pick a home and start!

Home Tour magazines can be picked up from the Building NCW office after September 5 up until the start of the Home Tour or you can grab one at any of the Home Tour sponsors or any Home Tour home!

For more information, Chefs on Tour tickets, or to see the times of the Home Tour, visit BuildingNCW.org or find us on Facebook!

**Friday Sept. 20 12pm - 7pm**    **Saturday Sept. 21 9am - 7pm**    **Sunday Sept. 22 10am - 4pm**

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# MEMBER MESSENGER

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## Focus on these 4 areas to protect your home's exterior

(BPT) – While you probably know your deck needs waterproofing, did you know many other materials outside your home like concrete, masonry and fabrics also need protection?

To help keep exterior parts of your home in good condition, waterproofing is key.

Here are tips from the experts at Thompson's WaterSeal to help safeguard your home.

### 1. Maintain exterior wood

Whether for your deck, fencing or siding, wood sealer provides durable protection from water and sun damage.

When wood absorbs water, it swells, and as it dries, it contracts. Repeated cycles of expansion and contraction cause small cracks that grow over time.

In cold climates, this cycle is worsened by seasonal freezing and thawing.

Without protection, excessive moisture in wood also supports fungi that causes wood rot.

While sunlight doesn't structurally damage wood, it will turn the upper layer of wood silver over time.

Sunlight also affects stains and finishes, leaving wood more vulnerable to water damage. This is especially true in warmer, southern climates.

### How to waterproof wood

High-quality wood stains protect decks for four to six years, and fencing and siding for five to 15 years.

To see if re-application is needed, try the “splash

test”: Sprinkle water on various sections of the wood. If water absorbs and darkens the color of the wood within five seconds, the surface should be treated.

If water beads up on the surface, it doesn't need treatment. Reapplication timing depends on climate, deck use and sealer opacity.

More opaque stains like solid color wood sealers provide the longest protection.

Select a product with minimum required coats to provide year-round protection.

You can choose solid color wood sealer, which adds the most color and shows the least wood grain, or transparent wood sealer, which adds subtle color and shows the most wood grain.

Before applying wood sealer, use deck cleaner to remove contaminants like dirt, oil and mildew.

The wood surface should be completely dry before sealing, so it's best to wait at least 48 hours after rain or cleaning.

The air temperature should be above 50 degrees Fahrenheit during and for 48 hours after application. For best results, follow all instructions on the product.

### 2. Consider your concrete surfaces

Although you might think concrete is indestructible, over time, weather conditions can take a toll.

Waterproofed walkways and patios are stronger and last longer – reducing the need for costly maintenance and repairs.

Especially in climates experiencing freezing and

thawing, waterproofing safeguards against moisture and helps prevent cracks.

Waterproofing also helps protect against oil stains and other spills.

Well-maintained concrete looks better, with minimal effects from weathering, fading, cracking, fungus and mold growth.

### How to waterproof concrete

The length of protection varies depending on where you live. You can perform the “splash test” once a year to see if reapplication is necessary.

Choose a high-quality multi-surface waterproofer that can tackle exterior waterproofing needs including concrete.

As with wood sealer, the surface and air temperature should be above 50 degrees Fahrenheit during and for 48 hours after application.

Concrete should be thoroughly cleaned and dry for 72 hours before applying sealer.

Concrete with a smooth, flat finish must be opened first, using a concrete etch product.

Follow instructions carefully for using and removing the etching product, as well as the concrete sealer.

### 3. Protect brick and masonry

With brick or masonry (including stone), waterproofing helps protect it from environmental damage over time.

Due to their porous nature, bricks are susceptible to water damage, including cracking or spalling (flaking or chipping

due to subsurface cracks).

Waterproofing also protects against mold.

### How to waterproof brick and masonry

The length of protection from waterproofing will vary, depending on your climate.

As with concrete, perform the “splash test” once a year to see if reapplication is necessary.

Use a high-quality, multi-surface waterproofer designed for exterior surfaces like brick.

Your brick or masonry should be thoroughly cleaned and dried before applying sealer, and the outside temperature must be above 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

Read and follow application instructions on your product.

### 4. Safeguard outdoor fabrics



If you use fabric elements for your outdoor spaces including cushions, pillows, umbrellas, canopies or shade sails, you'll want to keep them looking great as long as possible.

Waterproofing fabric helps prevent water damage and reduces color fading from the sun. It can also repel spills and stains, while allowing fabric to breathe.

### How to waterproof fabrics

Reapply waterproofing annually, after every cleaning, and use a waterproofer designed for fabrics. First try a small

patch, as waterproofer can darken fabric, and apply only on colorfast fabrics.

Fabric must be clean and dry before applying waterproofer. Be sure to check the manufacturer's care and warranty information before using on furniture and follow all product instructions carefully.

Caring for outdoor surfaces is crucial for maintaining your home's appearance and value.

Waterproofing helps keep all the elements of your home's exterior – and the outdoor spaces you love – looking beautiful for years to come.



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- Triad Skyridge Homes LLC




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# MEMBER MESSENGER

"Driven to Promote and Protect Small Business"

SEPTEMBER 2024 ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PAGE 4

## Upcoming Events SEPTEMBER

- SEPT. 2 - OFFICE CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY
- SEPT. 19 - ANNUAL CHEFS ON TOUR
- SEPT. 20 - 22 - HOME TOUR
- SEPT. 26 - NOTHING BUT NETWORKING  
HOSTED BY MOONLIGHT STONE WORKS

## OCTOBER

- OCT. 4 - 3RD ANNUAL FALL CLASSIC GOLF TOURNAMENT
- OCT. 7 - RRP CLASS
- OCT. 16 - BOARD MEETING

## NOVEMBER

- NOV. 5 - ELECTION DAY
- NOV. 20 - BOARD MEETING
- NOV. 28 - 29 OFFICE CLOSE FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY



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## RRP Lead Class OCTOBER 7<sup>th</sup> AT BNCW OFFICES

This class is a full day training taught by N.I.C.A Training. The course covers new regulations by the EPA for renovating, repairing or painting a home built before 1978. Businesses that are involved with Home Improvement and Renovations, Remodelers, Painters, Plumbers, Electricians, Maintenance Personnel, Property Mangers.

Space is limited Pre-Registration is required

DANIELLE MARTIN  
MORGAN DOBBINS

Danielle@BuildingNCW.org  
Morgan@BuildingNCW.org  
509-293-5840

## Need a Meeting Room?

As a valued BNCW member company, you're welcome to utilize the BNCW conference room if you require a place to meet with clients or prospective clients, or simply need access to a meeting room. The room will seat up to 16 people comfortably, has wireless internet access and other amenities.



Please contact Morgan Dobbins at 509-293-5840 to make the necessary arrangements.

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.



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# Marketing Matters

**AMY YALEY**

COO of Ward Media



## The hidden power of B2B marketing - new levels of growth for NCW businesses

**W**hile consumer marketing often takes the spotlight, B2B marketing is the unsung hero driving innovation, efficiency, and collaboration among local businesses.

For small and medium-sized enterprises in our region, mastering this approach can open doors to new partnerships, increase market share, and boost overall profitability.

In North Central Washington, we're used to seeing billboards and digital and print display ads targeting individual consumers. However, behind the scenes, a different kind of marketing is quietly shaping the local business landscape.

Business-to-business (B2B) marketing supports our local business ecosystem and fosters relationships that drive growth and innovation.

B2B marketing is a powerful catalyst for innovation in our region. When businesses market their products or services to

other companies, there is a need to develop tailored solutions. This process encourages creativity and pushes companies to think outside the box.

For instance, a local software company might create a custom inventory management system for orchards, addressing unique challenges faced by our agricultural sector.

Efficiency is another key benefit of strong B2B marketing. By fostering better communication between businesses, it helps streamline supply chains and operations.

A construction company that effectively markets its services to local real estate developers might secure more consistent work, allowing for better resource planning and potentially reducing costs for both parties.

One of the most significant advantages of B2B marketing is its ability to open doors to new partnerships.

In North Central Washington's close-knit busi-



STOCK PHOTO

ness community, these relationships can be game-changers.

Networking events, chamber meetings, industry conferences, and even well-crafted email campaigns can lead to collaborations that benefit multiple local businesses.

These partnerships often extend beyond simple vendor-client relationships, evolving into strategic alliances that drive mutual growth.

For businesses looking to increase their market share, B2B marketing offers unique opportunities.

By identifying and targeting niche business markets within our region, companies can establish themselves as go-to pro-

viders in specific sectors.

A local IT support firm, for example, might focus on becoming the preferred provider for wineries, addressing their specific technology needs.

B2B marketing can also significantly boost profitability. While consumer markets often involve smaller, one-time purchases, B2B contracts tend to be higher in value and longer in duration.

An office supply company that secures a contract with a large local employer could see stable, recurring revenue for years.

Moreover, the cost of acquiring and retaining B2B customers often decreases over time as relationships strengthen, further en-

hancing profitability.

For businesses in North Central Washington looking to harness the power of B2B marketing, here are some practical steps to consider:

**1. Assess your current B2B marketing efforts.**

Are you actively reaching out to other businesses, or primarily focusing on individual consumers?

**2. Identify key B2B targets in the region.**

Which businesses could benefit most from your products or services?

**3. Craft a B2B marketing strategy tailored to local business needs.**

This might include creating content that addresses industry-specific challenges, attending local business events, developing a referral program, or creating a drip campaign.

**4. Leverage digital tools for B2B marketing.**

LinkedIn, email marketing, and even targeted online ads can be effective in reaching business decision-makers.

**5. Don't neglect the**

**personal touch.** In our community, face-to-face meetings and personal relationships still play a crucial role in B2B success.

While B2B marketing may not always grab headlines, its impact on our local economy cannot be overstated or underestimated.

By driving creative thinking, enhancing efficiency, fostering partnerships, and boosting profitability, it plays a key role in the success of North Central Washington businesses.

As we look to strengthen and fortify our local economy, investing time and resources into effective B2B marketing strategies could be the key to unlocking new levels of growth and prosperity for businesses across our region.

*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](mailto:amy@ward.media).*

### Health

Continued from page 6

physicians to see other patients since clinical pharmacists are able to provide the ongoing aspect of care they specialize in as a part of a care team. It's a win-win for our physicians and our patients."

Availability has also been increased through smaller, more day-to-day standardization that has been implemented incrementally across Confluence Health as a part of the overall Primary Care Redesign vision. Recognizing the variability in how scheduling templates were handled for physicians in different departments, the team worked to standardize, allowing for the maximum number of appointments while still allowing for unexpected, acute needs that might arise and keeping an eye on not lessening the standard of care by rushing appointments during their appointments. Efforts have also been underway to lessen the number of unused appointments since no-show appointments or appointments canceled close to the date that go unfilled

exacerbate the availability issue. Teams have worked hard to implement new processes, such as using MyChart to send out notices to patients with similar needs to offer to change to an earlier appointment when one becomes available to ensure each slot is filled and patients are seen as fast as possible.

This standardization has extended even to new patients who need to establish care or people who need to establish care right away after a hospital stay but do not have a current PCP.

"Previously, there wasn't any set, agreed-upon standard for when a physician's panel - the group of patients that a doctor cares for - would open or close, and this led to some closing prematurely or some not opening as readily as they could have, which makes it more difficult to establish care," explained Dr. Avena. "Working with committees and our fellow physicians, we established a set of norms for when and how this would happen, which will make it much easier to see our capacity both today and down the road to ensure patients have the

availability they need."

"Especially as this access is improving, we also recognized that for some cases, such as when someone is being discharged from the hospital but doesn't have a PCP that can take up their ongoing care needs, there needed to be an option to provide care until a PCP could be established," added Corgiat. "We've begun using transitional care providers to bridge this gap. Often through either retired or soon-to-be-retired physicians who are looking for lighter workloads, these providers can help provide that continuum of care right after the patient is discharged to when they establish care with their new PCP, making sure no one is left behind or without that ongoing need met."

And while the Primary Care Redesign project is still very much underway with much left to do, not to mention all the other ongoing efforts such as Patient Digital Engagement and more, this work is already bearing dividends.

When looking at a particularly impressive increase to a single site, a

recent Press-Ganey survey given to gauge patient satisfaction found that, at the Confluence Health clinic in Cashmere, 20% of all appointments were now being made online, and 93% of patients surveyed reported that they were able to get the appointment time that they preferred or was convenient for them. Overall, across the entire Confluence Health health-care system, nearly 87%

of patients reported being able to get the appointment they had wanted in June 2024, the last month for which finalized data was available.

"We're in it for the long haul at Confluence Health, and we want to be providing superb care for our community in a way that meets needs for decades to come," summarized Dr. Jones. "Our work in Primary Care Redesign and

all the other initiatives is about ensuring we actually meet these aspirational visions rather than just talking about them. It's not always easy, but we care so much about North Central Washington and the people who call this place home that we are putting our full effort into making sure our mission of 'local care by and for our community' is exactly who we are, and who we will continue to be."

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# Real Estate

**Adam Rynd**

Contributor for Ward Media



## North Central Washington's Changing Real Estate Market

This year's residential real estate season began with optimism, improving inventory as sellers grew more comfortable with current pricing.

Buyers also re-entered the market after slow demand since 2022's rapid rise in interest rates.

Summer 2024 formally ends in late September, and now is a great time to assess current residential real estate market dynamics.

The housing market in North Central Washington, and across most of Washington State, is in a transition period, with continued inventory growth, gradually decreasing interest rates, and a slow improvement in the number of active buyers shopping for homes.

### Shifting Market Dynamics

The real estate market in North Central Washington has experienced notable shifts in 2024, reflecting broader trends in the housing sector. This year has seen a significant increase in residential inventory, a fluctuating pace of market sales, and evolving interest rates, all of which are shaping

the region's real estate dynamics.

For the past five years, since the summer of 2019, North Central Washington's availability of homes on the market has been limited. A strong 2019 market kept transactions flowing, and homes sold fairly quickly, preventing any significant buildup of homes for sale.

The COVID pandemic shutdowns starting in March 2020 stopped nearly all listing and selling activity across the United States, and the NCW market was no exception.

When selling activity resumed, we saw a surge in activity that fueled a brisk market from mid-2020 through early 2022. Rapid increases in borrowing costs starting in spring 2022 quickly suppressed the market, and we've essentially been working through a real estate recession for nearly 2.5 years.

### Increasing Housing Inventory

Life doesn't stop, and markets continue to adapt.

Buyers who put off shopping and sellers who put

off listing seemed to reconsider their plans starting in Spring 2024 when we saw more active home buyers and a substantial increase in real estate inventory.

The number of homes for sale in Washington state rose 19.8% year-over-year, creating a surge in inventory that offers buyers more options and supports a more balanced market. In North Central Washington, new listings have created more opportunities for prospective homeowners.

Most inventory added to the market in 2024 simply came from homeowners choosing to list their properties, encouraged by improving market conditions.

This influx of homes is helping to alleviate some of the pressure from the previously tight market, offering buyers a wider selection and reducing the intensity of bidding wars.

For example, the sales of homes in Wenatchee and East Wenatchee priced from \$400K - \$800K have been very active this year.

Unfortunately, very little new housing inventory has been added to this market in recent years, largely because the regulatory cost of

building in Chelan County is among the highest in Washington State. Many of our firm's developer and builder clients simply don't see favorable conditions for construction.

Regulators apparently don't understand that increasing regulatory hurdles and hookup fees mean fewer homes can be built, which means all housing becomes less affordable. We simply need more types of all housing.

City and county administrations in NCW can help with that by lowering the barriers to build new homes.

### Pace of Market Sales

Despite the increase in inventory, the real estate market has been slow to recover, except for pace of market sales remains brisk.

In North Central Washington, the market is similarly active, with well-priced homes often receiving multiple offers shortly after listing.

This rapid pace is driven by several factors. The region's natural beauty, combined with its appeal as a desirable place to live and

work, continues to attract buyers.

Additionally, the influx of remote workers seeking more spacious and scenic living environments has bolstered demand. As a result, sellers are benefiting from a competitive market, while buyers need to act quickly to secure their desired properties.

### Shifting Interest Rates

Interest rates have been a critical factor influencing the real estate market in 2024.

The Federal Reserve's actions starting in 2022 to combat inflation pushed mortgage rates higher and they have only recently begun to fall, now at an average around 6.5% for a 30-year fixed mortgage.

While that is higher than in recent years, it's still lower than the average mortgage rate over the past 50 years, which was close to 7.0%. Mortgage rates are expected to fall more with the Fed indicating a rate cut in September.

The question remains how quickly and how far rates will fall.

Higher rates have sup-

pressed the pace of price appreciation, making homes more affordable for some buyers. On the other hand, increased borrowing costs led many potential buyers to reassess their purchasing power and budget constraints.

### Conclusion

The real estate market in North Central Washington to date in 2024 has seen a significant increase in residential inventory, an improving pace of sales, and falling interest rates.

As the year progresses, staying informed about these trends will be crucial for buyers and sellers alike.

For those interested in exploring the opportunities in North Central Washington, now is a great time to work with local real estate professionals who have the expertise to provide valuable insights and guidance in this ever-changing market.

*Adam Rynd, a licensed real estate Managing Broker, is the Owner and Designated Broker of Coldwell Banker Cascade Real Estate.*

# Real Estate

## Residential

Sale Price	Address	Total Acres	Year Built	Residential Area	Basement Area	Bedr.	Bathr.	Garage Area
1,075,000	2649 FANCHER LANDING	0.36	2007	2863		3.00	3.00	1080
1,065,000	845 S LAMPLIGHT LN	0.4	2019	3950		4.00	2.50	801
1,020,000	1716 COUNTRY CLUB DR	0.21	1975	1785	1785	3.00	3.00	520
935,952	827 S MARY AVE	0.34	2020	2104	2104	6.00	3.50	824
929,990	664 S Juli AVE	0.41	2023	2365	1497	5	3.5	693
926,000	200 RIDGE RD	2	2013	2334		3.00	2.50	650
897,850	440 W BEACH DR	0.24	2002	2856	1428	3.00	3.50	952
849,900	847 BRIARWOOD TER	0.32	2014	2687		4.00	2.50	857
810,000	410 STONERIDGE DR	0.31	1999	2240		3.00	2.00	768
790,000	411 19TH ST NE #9	0.12	2017	3114	1154	3.00	3.50	440
790,000	4577 SE COLOCKUM VIEW DR	2.05	2022	1920	1920	5	3	
775,000	516 N COLUMBIA AVE	0.71	1995	1820	1400	5.00	3.00	720
760,000	834 N NEWPORT LOOP	0.3	2022	2196		3	2	630
749,990	2092 LEGACY PL SE	0.19	2021	2564		3	2.75	759
703,000	2888 BLUE HERON LN	0.12	2006	2422		3.00	2.50	484
699,000	700 UPPER DANIELS DR	0.46	2006	2488		4.00	3.00	550
699,000	2166 INGLEWOOD DR	0.37	2006	2438		4.00	2.50	680
684,900	1912 NW BATES AVE	0.11	2022	2712		6	5	456
678,000	2556 1ST ST SE	0.29	2022	2325		1	1	576
675,000	2262 BRINLEY CT	0.22	2022	2380		4	2	736
660,000	1645 HOLLY LN	0.26	2001	2196		3.00	3.00	1264
629,900	344 N NEWARK AVE	0.22	2009	2109		3.00	3.00	724
620,000	470 W EMERSON DR	0.14	2009	1524		2.00	2.00	
610,000	191 N LYLE AVE	0.43	2001	2314		1.00	1.00	338
549,000	4 RIVERSIDE PL	1.39	1985	1568		3.00	2.00	384
519,000	836 N KENTUCKY AVE	0.36	1956	1566	1325	4.00	2.00	475
515,000	1380 EASTMONT AVE #1408	0	2006	1796		3.00	2.00	448
515,000	103 GRAND VALLEY RD	6.23	2014	1518		1.00	2.50	1850
514,000	343 N NEWARK AVE	0.21	2011	1670		3.00	2.00	506
505,000	1416 EASTHILLS TER	0.18	1978	1100	1008	6.00	3.00	480
505,000	1405 COPPER LOOP	0.16	2007	1878		3.00	2.00	601
489,900	301 S MARY AVE	0.13	1998	1740		3.00	2.75	400

## Top Properties Douglas County July 2024

## Farm

Seller	Buyer	Sale Price	Street	Total Acres
WELTON ORCHARDS & STORAGE LLC	FOURTH STREET STORAGE LLC	2,600,000		13.77
PACIFIC PROJECTS CHELAN LLC	SOMERS, JEFFREY & KERI	530,000	20 Abbey Rd	1.4
CHAPMAN &, STEPHANEE L	CHAPMAN-EHLERS LLC	342,800	997 SR 174	571.68
NELSON, JOHN A	DACKSON BROTHERS LAND LLC	267,000		312.25
HARDUNG FAMILY FARM TRUST, KURT L	DELRIO FARMS INC	260,000		720
DOWNES, MICHAEL G	PACIFIC PROJECTS CHELAN LLC	250,000	20 Abbey Rd	1.4
SANCHEZ, JUAN M & MARIA A	SANCHEZ, JESUS J & ANALI	210,000		2.03
PETERS, KACIE MARIE & KYLE ANTHONY	ANDERSON, PAUL S & LORI A	200,000	US 97	5.02
ZANOL, JEFFREY E & TAMARA L	FORMO, NORMAN P & CAROL L	62,000	17 Orondo Point Ln	8.32
AMERICAN DREAM LANDS LLC	SNOOK, CHRISTOPHER M	21,500		19

487,000	108 19TH ST NE	0.13	2006	2135		3.00	2.50	576
469,900	193 HAMMOND LN	0.2	2021	1414		3	2.5	484
464,000	1104 S NEVADA AVE	0.12	2021	1352		3.00	2.00	440
455,000	1435 TERRACE CT NE	0.18	1972	1265	1173	3.00	1.0	529
450,000	1494 EASTMONT AVE #51	0	2004	1913		2.00	2.50	460
430,000	805 N LADD AVE	0.18	1975	1138	1092	3.00	1.50	294
430,000	461 N KANSAS AVE #A	0.21	1986	1512		4.00	2.00	
423,000	478 S KANSAS LOOP	0.08	2019	1443		3.00	2.50	439
405,000	519 N BAKER AVE	0.18	1972	1484		4.00	2.00	
400,000	601 15TH ST NE	0.29	1960	1612		3.00	1.50	520
395,000	661 S LARCH AVE	0.35	1993	1848		3.00	2.00	576
389,000	19 FRENCH AVE	0.11	1950	1344		4.00	2.00	
380,000	215 GOLDCREST ST	0.16	1971	1056		3.00	1.50	
374,900	832 GARDEN PLZ	0.18	1997	1232		3.00	2.00	324
350,000	8 GLENDALE ST NE	0.29	1987	1344		3.00	2.00	
350,000	506 NAHALEE RD	0	1996	1896		3.00	2.00	492



# Real Estate

## Top Properties Chelan County July 2024

Buyer	Seller	Sale Price	Address	City	Living Area	Year Built	Bed-rooms	Bath-rooms	Garage Area	Pool	Fire-place
ICICLE FUND PROPERTIES LLC	SLF PROPERTY HOLDINGS LLC	9,736,500	7520 ICICLE RD	LEAVENWORTH	540	1989		1	0	N	N
EAT TWENTY FOUR LLC	GLASER ROBERT D	5,900,000	358 HYACINTH RD	MANSON	4759	2001	3	4.5	742	Y	Y
STRIZHAK PETER P & YELENA	BERGEN JOHN O & KATIE M	4,500,000	2902 S LAKESHORE RD	CHELAN	2523	1999	5	4.5	1040	N	Y
YOUNG SHELLEY E ETAL	TERWEDO FAMILY TRUST	2,155,000	270 BENE VISTA LN	CHELAN	3632	2007	3	3	828	Y	Y
CHELAN LUXURY GARAGES LLC	TAIT JAMES W	2,050,000	UNASSIGNED	CHELAN	0	0			0	N	N
TEMER RICHARD D & MAKAYLA	WELLNITZ MICHAEL J & AMY	2,000,000	228 PORCUPINE LN	CHELAN	1728	2017	4	3.25	325	N	Y
CRAMPTON ANDREW & ANDERSON ANGELA	POTTER DEBBIE K	1,800,000	3555 YAKSUM CANYON RD	CASHMERE	2573	1999	4	3.5	0	N	N
COOMAR ASHVIN R & SARAH D	JOHNSON GLADE C & SARA H	1,725,000	419 KARMA KANYON DR	CHELAN	3265	2008	4	3.25	693	Y	Y
ZUTTER BOBBY L & HEIDI N	SMART SHAFER & TAYLOR	1,685,000	624 MAJESTIC VIEW DR	WENATCHEE	3514	2021	4	3.5	1396	Y	Y
CASCADE PROP LLC	WALKER THOMAS D	1,500,000	3020 GS CENTER RD	WENATCHEE	10000	1993			0	N	N
GARVEY ELISSA A & ROSS ETAL	FOX SUSAN K	1,465,000	56 FIRWOOD LN	MANSON	2393	2022	6	2.5	1292	N	Y
EDELBROCK KYLE & JENNIFER	MAGNUSSEN ROBERT O	1,310,000	15125 N LAKESHORE DR	ENTIAT	440	2001	1	1	484	N	N
MC KINNON LODGE LLC	SWARTZ RICHARD & CRISTI	1,300,000	UNASSIGNED	STEHEKIN	4783	1986	1	1	0	N	Y
KISELEVA VERONIKA ETAL	CHIWAHA RIVER LODGING LLC	1,225,000	108 CHIWAHA LODGE LN	LAKE WENATCHEE	4512	1974	2	2.5	0	N	Y
THIELING JOHN W & BEAUVAIS JENNIFER	SMITH CAROLINE & CHARLES H COX	1,170,000	9471 E LEAVENWORTH RD	LEAVENWORTH	2285	1983	4	2.5	286	N	Y
WOLF MACK H	MEAD TIM & ALLISON	1,100,000	939 RIVER ROCK LN	CHELAN FALLS	1518	2000	3	1.5	0	N	Y
RED APPLE ROAD TOWNHOUSES LLC	RASH DOUGLAS M	1,100,000	1075 RED APPLE RD	WENATCHEE	1848	1977			576	N	N
SILVA MANZANO DANIEL A & MELISSA J	DENMAN ROY D & JANET F	1,062,500	14528 US HWY 2	LAKE WENATCHEE	2237	2009	5	3	576	Y	N
GOESER TYLER	BECKLEY VIRGINIA R	976,000	625 BOYD RD	CHELAN	1152	1977	3	2	0	N	Y
SHAPIRO DARIN	HEALEY BRIAN A	929,900	3625 WESTRIDGE PL	WENATCHEE	1740	1996	4	2.5	768	Y	N
CROSBY LAKESIDE LLC ETAL	CROSBY LAKESIDE LLC	885,606	2037 W WOODIN AVE	CHELAN	6048	1930			0	N	N
MILLER WAYNE A & ADINA G	STUDHAM TERI A	885,000	159 BRIGHT CT	MANSON	2122	2019	3	2	616	Y	N
ARANDA NAJERA SAMUEL & VEGA ELIZABETH	OLIVER ALISA & MICHEAL	875,000	2811 NUMBER 1 CANYON RD	WENATCHEE	2587	1984	3	2.75	1080	N	Y
STEELE JILL GIFT TRUST	BLATTMAN THERON	872,000	2540 SUMAC LN	LAKE WENATCHEE	1870	2014	4	2	1080	N	Y
ABEL NICHOLAS	WHALEY RODNEY D & VICKI S	869,900	1145 PITCHER CANYON RD	WENATCHEE	1561	1996	3	2	766	N	Y
LUCAS TERRENCE & MICHELLE	TAM SCOTT GEOFFREY W & ANNA A ETAL	859,900	3140 BERMUDA ST	MALAGA	3196	2009	3	5	672	N	N
SALMON MICHAEL J & SARAH J	ROBERTS CONSTRUCTION LLC	849,900	938 RACINE SPRINGS DR	WENATCHEE	0	0			0	N	N
KLEEBERGER RICHARD & JULIE	BELL DANIEL & NANCY	845,000	2630 GOLF COURSE RD	MALAGA	1918	2007	4	2.75	788	Y	Y
BRIONES NAOMI F	RHYNER JOEL & MICHELE	810,000	2226 SANDY BROOKE	WENATCHEE	3208	2006	4	2.5	724	N	N
KOCH KATHERINE L ETAL	BREMER BRYAN & MAKENZIE	805,000	76 WILD ROSE LN	LEAVENWORTH	2554	1995	3	2	0	N	Y
WILDER SHANE & AMY	GUINTEH JONATHON H	800,000	11770 PEAR TREE CT	LEAVENWORTH	2000	2004	4	2.5	576	N	Y
RYBOLT CASSANDRA L	GREENE SHERRY B & JOHN W	795,000	5618 MOUNTAIN LANE RD	PESHASTIN	1534	1994	3	2	720	N	Y
SMITH TRACIE	ZIMMERMANN AMBER R ETAL	776,000	123 PARK AVE	LEAVENWORTH	1368	2000	3	2	504	N	N
OLSON CATHERINE T & RANDY L	CLEVELAND JOHN F & LORA PARKS (H/W)	776,000	201 CRESCENT ST	CHELAN	1708	1997	3	1.25	484	N	N
MEYER DANIELLE R & GREGORY M	ROCHE JAMES & ELISSA	759,000	2102 CHIWAHA CT	LAKE WENATCHEE	2052	1995	2	2.25	700	N	N
HELLENSTELL JOSHUA & DESIRE	PERRICONE THOMAS J & LAURIE J	729,000	18590 KARL RD	LAKE WENATCHEE	1695	2004	1	1	900	N	N
ROESNER FAMILY REV LIVING TRUST	FREDERICK ARIS M	724,000	1339 MAPLE ST	WENATCHEE	3384	1961	1	1	432	N	Y
LAMAR MELVIN D & DIANA L	FAULCONER ROBERT & CAROLYN	689,900	305 N WESTERN AVE	WENATCHEE	2924	1966	4	2	460	N	Y
MCALLISTER MICHAEL V & LYDIA M	HARDIMAN BRETT M ETAL	680,000	UNASSIGNED	WENATCHEE	0	0			0	N	N
ODELL BRIAN & PAULA K	DAHLGREEN MATTHEW C	676,500	917 IDAHO ST	WENATCHEE	1488	1921	3	1.75	368	N	Y
PETTIT FAMILY TRUST	BONNEY GEORGE W & KRISTI ANN N	668,000	210 VILLAGE DR	MANSON	1987	2012	3	1.75	484	N	Y
MARTIN CONNOR M & TORRI L	KOCH KATHERINE L & SIMONPIETRI BOLAND MARC-ANDRE	650,000	12069 CHUMSTICK HWY	LEAVENWORTH	1645	1977	4	2.5	0	N	Y
ALVARADO EFRAIN J	WORLEY JEREMY & DANIELLE	649,950	925 STEVENS ST	WENATCHEE	1383	1964	6	2.75	348	Y	Y
KISER KATHY A & DON P	BARTON JAMES	649,000	69 SUN VALLEY DR	WENATCHEE	1921	2013	3	2.5	859	N	Y
MEHELICH RONALD J & CHRISTINA M	RLJC REVOCABLE TRUST	644,000	194 LILLY LN	WENATCHEE	2529	2008	4	2.5	801	N	N
THORNTON JASON W & KELLY L	HANKINS DONNA L	636,000	3184 HEDDING ST	ENTIAT	1287	2001	3	2.25	480	N	Y
TORRENCE DANIEL S & KATHERINE Y	THOREEN HAROLD A JR	635,000	732 N GOLF COURSE DR	CHELAN	1537	1989	2	1.5	470	N	Y
CHELAN COUNTY HOSPITAL DISTRICT NO 2	COURTNEY CLIFFORD G & KERRY L	629,000	334 5TH ST	CHELAN FALLS	1544	1929	3	1	216	N	N
GALVIN ANDREW J & ALYSSA M	SUTHERLAND JERID M	607,000	4826 SKY MEADOWS RD	CASHMERE	1768	2000			600	N	N
CAMARADERIE FARMS LLC	CHELAN VIEW ORCHARD LLC	595,000	UNASSIGNED	MANSON	0	0			0	N	N
THOMAS MICHAEL J & JENNIFER G	STONE SARAH	589,900	2015 WESTHAVEN	WENATCHEE	1505	2017	3	2.5	780	N	N
ROSEBURG SHARON	LOS DOS BROS LLC	585,800	183 PERSHING CIR	WENATCHEE	0	0			0	N	N
LOOMIS COLTON M ETAL	RUOTSI ROBERT J & JOANNA R	585,000	304 ANGIER AVE	CASHMERE	1482	1943	5	1.75	400	N	Y
SIMS IAN R & ASHLEY M	BEESON JAMES A & ANGALENA M	580,000	912 WOODWARD DR	WENATCHEE	2452	2005	3	2.5	400	N	N
FEENEY SCOTT	SUMMIT LAKE INVESTMENT LLC	580,000	1324 ROSEWOOD AVE	WENATCHEE	1475	1956	3	2.75	0	N	Y
HJELVIK BRIAN & FELDT TAYLOR	PIEPEL DAVID & TRACY	565,000	414 RIVERSIDE MEADOW	CASHMERE	1684	2020	3	2.5	228	N	N
SSPH LLC	DURR DANIEL T & LORI J ETAL	550,000	112 N APPLE BLOSSOM DR	CHELAN	0	0			0	N	N
ASHFORD EVA & BALDWIN JOHN	DERRING DAVID & KATHIE	549,000	1534 SONGBIRD LN	WENATCHEE	2150	1998	3	2.5	480	N	Y
ROJAS NELSON A ETAL	A HOME DOCTOR INC	540,825	30 ARLINGTON PL	MALAGA	0	0			0	N	N



Buyer	Seller	Sale Price	Address	City	Living Area	Year Built	Bed-rooms	Bath-rooms	Garage Area	Pool	Fire-place
JOHNSON CLAIRA & NOAH	GOMES JEFF & M IRENE	535,000	222 CHAPEL ST	CASHMERE	1488	1928	3	2	0	N	N
REDON NATHAN R ETAL	NIELSEN CHRIS & NIKOLINA	525,000	3404 CAMAS WAY	PESHASTIN	804	1976	2	.75	0	N	N
CASTLETON JOHN & JENNIFER	STENSRUD KENNETH LEROY FAMILY TRUST	525,000	2429 SALAL DR	LAKE WENATCHEE	480	1971	2	1.5	432	N	Y
WELDY THOMAS J & CHRISTINA N	RADKO PAVEL S & VERA M	525,000	547 SADDLE ROCK LOOP	WENATCHEE	2010	2009	4	2.5	484	N	Y
MC LOUGHLIN JACLYN & WYNN WILLIAMS HARRY	COLELLA MARCO J	515,000	6380 CAMPBELL RD	PESHASTIN	1555	2012	1	.75	0	N	Y
LOPEZ SALVADOR JR	JIRSA JOHANNA	512,000	1036 VISTA PL	WENATCHEE	1008	1961	4	2.25	480	N	N
BAERLOCHER BRUCE A & KYRA M	CHAVEZ JULIO C	506,000	360 EMMA DR	WENATCHEE	1803	2023	3	2	472	N	Y
CHIN HUI ETAL	GAUTHIER RICHARD	492,500	21104 LARIAT RD	PLAIN	728	1984			440	N	N
PURDY WILLIAM & CLIFTON KELLY	HANSON LOIS J	492,000	117 RIVERFRONT DR	CASHMERE	1304	1963	3	2.25	0	N	N
TEJEDA GUADALUPE A & HERIBERTO	MOE TABITHA	474,900	10008 SASKA WAY	ENTIAT	1655	2021	4	2	484	N	N
WATERHOUSE JOSH & KATIE	HOLLINGSWORTH CYNTHIA L	470,000	2126 N WESTERN AVE	WENATCHEE	1348	1991	3	2.5	792	N	Y
BOOTS ROSS E & CATES ROXANNE E	SAND JULIE A	465,000	1020 VISTA PL	WENATCHEE	1262	1959	3	2	504	N	Y
AVENDANO LEON LEONARDO & ANDRADE MARTINEZ MARIBEL DC	ADAMS CAROLEE R & BRETT V	458,500	1040 FULLER ST	WENATCHEE	962	1951	3	1.75	312	N	Y
SEBEK HALEY & KENNETH	MURRAY WILLIAM J & IRMA C	455,000	1028 WASHINGTON ST	WENATCHEE	1122	1930	3	2	0	N	Y
BELL NANCY	SMITH DONALD N	454,999	1233 GILCREST ST	WENATCHEE	1692	2002			576	N	N
GAVIN SUSIE J	MOXLEY MARGARET	454,000	144 QUAIL RUN	WENATCHEE	1134	0			0	N	N
DAIGLE ANASTASIA & TRENTON	ROGERS KATHLEEN L	453,799	2352 JEFFREY CT	WENATCHEE	1616	1993	3	2	400	N	Y
RODRIGUEZ CASTANEDA MARIA G & RODRIGUEZ SOLIS NICOLAS	GOYNE JONATHAN L	450,000	1422 PERSHING ST	WENATCHEE	1490	1920	3	2.25	0	N	N
LINN SAMANTHA D	JACOB LOPES ANA G & HOLT BRIAN H	445,000	218 VINE ST	CASHMERE	1604	1953	3	1.5	0	N	N
PENTON KAY	GOHL SUSAN G	435,000	205 S WILSON ST	WENATCHEE	1676	1975	3	1.75	660	N	Y
MACISAAC WILLIAM R	ROY LAURIE E	429,900	1412 2ND ST	WENATCHEE	1196	1958	3	1	480	N	Y
WRIGHT BOWE & EMMA	A HOME DOCTOR INC	429,500	22 ARLINGTON PL	MALAGA	0	0			0	N	N
KELLER GRANT P & DAVENPORT ANNA K	QUINN GINA A	427,050	5733 LOCUST LN	CASHMERE	1064	1960	2	1	0	N	N
GULLICKSON DALE E & CANDY L	BROMILEY STANLEY R	425,000	816 RED APPLE RD	WENATCHEE	3324	1910	5	2	196	N	Y
VETTER JONATHAN P & ALEXIS D	CAPPER DIANA	424,000	7401 US HWY 97	PESHASTIN	1414	1920	2	1	900	N	Y
MENDOZA RANGEL ANGELICA ETAL	VANDEWAY JAMES & DARLA	415,000	210 N EMERSON AVE	WENATCHEE	1248	1926	3	1	0	N	Y
GRATTAN GREGORY S & KIMBERLY K	KERLEY VICTOR & JUDITH	415,000	1000 SR 150	MANSON	880	2005			0	N	N
DEMPSEY ELLEN & UMMATOV ALIJON	HILLSBERG SUNNY	410,000	100 SKI BLICK STRASSE	LEAVENWORTH	1156	0			0	N	N
EPOCH AMANDA J	BURT CAMERON B & HANNAH E WALTERS	407,500	2969 RIVIERA BLVD	MALAGA	1081	1992	3	2	272	N	N
FRANK LUMBER INVESTMENTS LLC	REYES RYAN & NEOLANI	398,703	214 RIVERSIDE DR	CASHMERE	1392	1936	4	3	200	N	Y
HARLAN EZEKIEL & NELSON HANNA	HAUGEN JOY I	395,000	1009 KITTITAS ST	WENATCHEE	988	1951	2	1.75	240	N	Y
JOLLEY HADLEY D	LUCAS TERRENCE & MICHELLE	390,000	1520 HISTORIC LN	WENATCHEE	1168	2015	3	2.5	0	N	N
ZAMAITES MORGAN	DECKER RICHARD L	386,400	119 WHITE BIRCH PL	CASHMERE	972	1975	3	1.5	324	N	N
MEADOWS JEFFERY & ALISON	SMITH JOAN P	385,000	UNASSIGNED	MANSON	0	0			0	N	N
HUGO 24 ENTERPRISES LLC	HMJD-COLLINS LLC	385,000	24 HUGO RD	CHELAN	1596	2007			0	N	N
KKPB LLC	0912215 B C LTD	384,900	2220 W WOODIN AVE	CHELAN	884	0			0	N	N
SHIRINZADEH BEHZAD & DASHTESTANI FATEMEH	SAGE HOMES LLC	379,900	312 EMMA DR	WENATCHEE	1710	2024	3	2	400	N	Y
FLORES SANCHEZ GONZALO ETAL	PARRY MARY ANN	357,500	2114 SAGE ST	ENTIAT	1188	1997			480	N	N

**Composting**

Continued from page 4

facility is bringing new jobs to our community. From drivers who collect food waste, yard trimmings, wood scraps, and other materials to technicians who monitor the composting process, to sales representatives who work with our local businesses to operators who load and deliver the finished compost, the job creation potential is significant.

But the economic benefits go beyond the composting facility. By producing high-quality compost,

these operations support our local agriculture in a big way.

Compost improves soil health, increases water retention, and helps to reduce the production of methane gas.

For our local farmers, orchardists, and gardeners, this means more nutritious and vibrant foods and flowers, lower water bills, and less reliance on chemical fertilizers.

The agricultural benefits translate into economic ones. Healthier crops mean more profitable farms and orchards throughout our valleys. More profitable

farms and orchards can hire more workers, invest in their operations, and contribute more to the NCW economy. It's a virtuous cycle that starts with what many might consider waste.

Compost works for businesses too. Local landscaping businesses, garden centers, and even home gardeners benefit from having a local source of high-quality compost.

Builders can benefit by having a facility to accept excess dirt and brush from a building site or provide topsoil blends for the building site. This keeps money circulating within

the community rather than being spent on imported soil amendments. Composting programs in restaurants can significantly reduce waste, save money, and contribute to a healthier environment.

Additionally, there is the potential to reduce county waste management costs. Landfills are expensive to operate and maintain.

By diverting organic waste to composting facilities, we can extend the life of existing landfills and delay or even prevent the need for new ones.

We can also keep the operational cost of landfills

and transfer stations lower by removing heavier organic waste from the waste stream. This can help keep our tax burden lower over the long run.

But beyond all these tangible benefits, we must remember that composting is, at its heart, simply the right thing to do.

Our current waste management practices, which often involve sending valuable organic materials to landfills where harmful methane gas is produced, are unsustainable.

Composting offers a way to close the circle on a valuable organic resource,

returning nutrients to the soil and mimicking nature's own recycling process. So the next time you hear about a local composting initiative, remember that it's not just about reducing waste.

It's about creating jobs, supporting local agriculture, saving money on waste management, and doing the right thing for North Central Washington and our planet.

Composting might just be the secret ingredient our local economy needs to thrive in the 21st century. Learn more at [wintonmfg.com](http://wintonmfg.com).



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# Real Estate

## Existing home sales inch up 1.3% in July, breaking four month decline streak

**The U.S. housing market showed signs of stabilization in July as existing home sales increased for the first time in five months, according to data released by the National Association of Realtors (NAR). The 1.3% rise in sales volume brings a halt to a persistent decline that began in March, offering a tentative positive signal amidst ongoing market challenges.**

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

The seasonally adjusted annual rate of existing home sales climbed to 3.95 million units in July, up from June's figures.

However, this improvement comes with a caveat: sales remain 2.5% below the levels recorded in July 2023, when 4.05 million units were sold, indicating that the market is still grappling with long-term pressures.

NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun provided insight into the current market conditions, stating, "Despite the modest gain, home sales are still sluggish. But consumers are definitely seeing more choices, and affordability is improving due to lower interest rates."

The median existing home sales price continued its upward trajectory, reaching \$422,600 in July.

This represents a 4.2% increase from July 2023's median price of \$405,600, marking the 13th consecutive month of year-over-year price appreciation.

The consistent price growth underscores the ongoing demand-supply imbalance in the housing market.

Inventory levels saw a slight improvement, with the total housing stock at the end of July standing at 1.33 million units. This represents a marginal 0.8% increase from June and a more substantial 19.8% rise from the previous year when inventory stood at 1.11 million units.

The months' supply of unsold inventory at the current sales pace was 4.0 months, down from 4.1 months in June but up from 3.3 months in July 2023. This gradual increase in available housing stock may provide some relief to buyers facing limited options.

Regional performance varied across the country. Three out of four major U.S. regions registered sales increases, while the Midwest remained steady.

Year-over-year comparisons revealed a mixed picture, with sales rising in the Northeast and West but declining in the Midwest and South.

This regional disparity highlights the localized nature of real estate markets and the varying economic factors affecting different parts of the country.

The REALTORS® Con-

fidence Index, a key metric tracking market conditions, showed that properties typically remained on the market for 24 days in July.

This represents an increase from 22 days in June and 20 days in July 2023, suggesting a slight deceleration in the pace of sales.

The extended time on the market could provide buyers with more opportunity to consider their options and negotiate terms.

First-time homebuyers continue to face challenges in entering the market. They were responsible for 29% of sales in July, unchanged from June but down from 30% in July 2023.

This figure remains below the annual share of 32% reported in NAR's 2023 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers, released in November 2023, indicating persistent barriers for new entrants to homeownership.

All-cash sales accounted for 27% of transactions in July, showing a slight decrease from 28% in June but an increase from 26% one year ago.

Individual investors or second-home buyers, who often make cash purchases, bought 13% of homes in July, down from 16% in both June 2024 and July 2023. This shift in investor activity could potentially create more opportunities for primary residence buyers.

Distressed sales, including foreclosures and short sales, remained a minor factor in the market, representing just 1% of sales in July. This figure has remained virtually unchanged from both the previous month and the prior year, suggesting stability in this segment of the market.

The mortgage rate environment continues to play a crucial role in shaping buyer demand.

According to Freddie

## Regional variations

The existing home sales market in July showed a mixed picture across regions, with three areas experiencing growth and one remaining steady. Year-over-year comparisons revealed increases in the Northeast and West, while the Midwest and South saw declines. Median home prices continued their upward trajectory in all regions, reflecting ongoing demand despite varying market conditions.

### Northeast

Existing home sales in the Northeast climbed 4.3% from June to an annual rate of 490,000 in July, representing a 2.1% increase from July 2023. The median price in the Northeast reached \$505,100, marking a substantial 8.3% increase from the previous year, the highest percentage increase among all regions.

### Midwest

In the Midwest, existing home sales remained unchanged from June at an annual rate of 920,000 in July. This figure represented a 5.2% drop from

the previous year. The median price in the Midwest stood at \$321,300, up 4.5% from July 2023, indicating continued price appreciation despite flat sales volume.

### South

Existing home sales in the South increased slightly, rising 1.1% from June to an annual rate of 1.79 million in July. However, this figure still represented a 3.8% drop from the previous year. The median price in the South was \$372,500, up 2.3% from one year earlier, the most modest price increase across regions.

### West

In the West, existing home sales rose 1.4% from June to an annual rate of 750,000 in July. This figure also represented a 1.4% increase from a year ago, making it the only region with both monthly and yearly gains. The median price in the West reached \$629,500, up 3.4% from July 2023, maintaining its position as the most expensive region in the country.

Mac, the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 6.49% as of August 15. While this represents a slight increase from 6.47% one week prior, it marks a significant decrease from the 7.09% rate seen one year ago. This reduction in borrowing costs may be contributing to the improved affordability noted by NAR's chief economist.

In the condominium and co-op segment, sales in July remained steady at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 380,000 units, unchanged from June. However, this figure represents an 11.6% decline from the 430,000 units sold in July

2023. The median existing condo price was \$367,500 in July, up 2.7% from the prior year's \$357,900.

Commenting on the condominium market's performance, Yun noted, "The median home price of condominiums is cheaper, yet the condominium market is underperforming compared to the single-family market. Rising maintenance and insurance costs have lessened the appeal for condominiums."

In contrast, single-family home sales showed more resilience, growing 1.4% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.57 million in July. This figure, how-

ever, still represents a 1.4% decrease from the previous year. The median existing single-family home price reached \$428,500 in July, up 4.2% from July 2023.

As the housing market navigates through economic uncertainties, including inflation concerns and shifting monetary policy, the July data provides a nuanced picture.

While the break in the sales decline offers a positive signal, the year-over-year decrease in sales volume and the continued rise in prices suggest that challenges persist for both buyers and sellers in the current market landscape.



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# Keeping Up with people

## Cascade Medical Foundation board names new Vice Chair

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

Cascade Medical Foundation board member Wade Nash has been selected as the new vice chair of the volunteer board.

Nash will be finishing out a two-year term previously filled by former vice chair Shari Campbell, who was recently appointed to the Cascade Medical Commission.

Nash and his wife Kathi both served on the CMF board for six years. After taking a required one-year leave in 2023, they rejoined in 2024.

Prior to the CMF board, Nash served on Cascade Medical's non-resident advisory board for three years.



Wade Nash

The couple has lived in Leavenworth for over 15 years. He is a retired small business owner, and she is a retired teacher.

"We both felt the board was a very worthwhile outlet for our desire to support the local com-

## Peoples Bank promotes three to Regional Commercial Directors in Washington

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

Peoples Bank announced the promotion of three veteran bankers to newly created Regional Commercial Director positions.

Jon Ensich, Mike Fredlund, and Alex Sansoni will oversee commercial banking operations in different regions across the state, according to a statement from the bank.

Ensich will lead commercial operations in Whatcom County, while Fredlund will be responsible for Skagit, Island, Chelan, and Douglas counties.

Sansoni will oversee Snohomish and King counties, as well as the bank's Small Business Administration team.

Andy Riddell, Executive

Vice President and Chief Lending Officer at Peoples Bank, praised the trio's expertise and track record.

"Each of these accomplished leaders brings 20-plus years of local and commercial banking experience," Riddell said.

The appointments come as Peoples Bank, which boasts \$2.4 billion in assets, strengthens its commercial banking services across Washington.

The bank, founded a century ago, currently operates 23 locations throughout the state.

Peoples Bank has received recognition for its financial management practices, including a five-star rating from BauerFinancial, an independent



COURTESY OF PEOPLES BANK

Newly appointed Regional Commercial Directors (from left) Jon Ensich, Mike Fredlund, and Alex Sansoni stand in front of Peoples Bank headquarters in Bellingham, Washington. The bank, established in 1921, announced their promotions as part of a strategy to strengthen commercial banking services across the state.

bank rating firm.

The promotions are effective immediately, enhancing the bank's com-

mitment to community and relationship banking in an increasingly competitive financial landscape.

## Labor Area Reports

### Local sectors show mixed results as Wenatchee area employment dips

The Wenatchee Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) faces economic challenges as employment declined in July, according to a labor area summary released by the Washington State Employment Security Department.

Ward Media | Wenatchee Business Journal

The report, compiled by regional labor economist Donald W. Mesek, details job losses and economic shifts in Chelan and Douglas Counties, which make up the Wenatchee MSA.

Total nonfarm employment in the area fell by 2.9% year-over-year, a loss of 1,500 jobs.

The MSA provided 49,600 jobs in July, down from 51,100 in July 2023.

This decline contrasts with Washington state's overall employment trend, which saw a 1.7% increase in nonfarm jobs over the same period, adding 62,500 positions to reach a total of 3,678,000 jobs.

The report shows that while Washington has experienced 40 consec-

utive months of year-over-year job growth, the Wenatchee area has seen contractions since May 2024.

The unemployment rate in the Wenatchee MSA rose to 4.4% in July, up from 3.2% in July 2023, an increase of 1.2 percentage points.

The civilian labor force contracted by 2.8%, with 1,942 fewer residents participating compared to the previous year.

**Key industries in the region showed mixed results:**

Construction employment decreased by 2.4%, losing 100 jobs year-over-year. Despite this down-

turn, the local real estate market showed some positive signs.

The July Real Estate Snapshot newsletter reported a 10.9% increase in closed sales of single-family homes and condominiums in the Wenatchee market area from January through July compared to the same period in 2023.

The median sales price also rose by 5.8% to \$505,000.

The leisure and hospitality sector saw a 5.3% decline, shedding 400 jobs.

The report notes that recent wildfires in central Washington likely contributed to this downturn.

The private education and health services sector provided a bright spot in

the local economy, adding 500 jobs for a 6.1% increase over the year.

This sector emerged as the largest job creator in the Wenatchee MSA between July 2023 and July 2024, continuing a 40-month trend of year-over-year growth.

The report also examined long-term trends in agricultural employment.

Both Chelan and Douglas Counties have seen declines in agricultural jobs over the past decade:

Chelan County lost 12.2% of its agricultural workforce between 2013 and 2023, with the number of jobs falling from 9,327 to 8,187.

The agricultural share of total covered employment in the county decreased from 23.5% to 18.0% during this period.

Douglas County experienced a 21.0% drop in agricultural employment, with jobs decreasing from 2,939 in 2013 to 2,323 in 2023.

The agricultural share of total covered employment fell from 26.9% to 18.7% over the decade.

Despite these job losses, agricultural wages have shown modest growth in both counties.

In Chelan County, agricultural payroll increased at an annualized rate of 3.5% between 2013

and 2023, while Douglas County saw a 3.4% annualized growth rate.

The report suggests several factors potentially contributing to the decline in agricultural employment, including automation, the gradual conversion of seasonal jobs to year-round positions, and increased use of H-2A agricultural labor.

As the Wenatchee MSA addresses these economic challenges, the contrast with the state's overall job growth underscores the regional nature of employment trends and the ongoing transformation of the area's economic landscape.

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# Leisure

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## Outdoor hydrotherapy spa slated to open in Leavenworth this fall

**An outdoor spa named The Springs is slated to open this fall, as one of the latest developments getting built behind Safeway.**

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

In 90-minute time slots, visitors will be able to rotate between a sauna, cold plunge, medium and hot pools, and an outdoor lounge area, often referred to as a hydrotherapy circuit.

The Springs will stay open year-round, with pool temperatures adjusted to suit each season.

“We’re trying to provide a great place to hang out after you spend the day in Leavenworth. You go on the river, or you go mountain biking, or you go Nordic skiing, or whatever it is you do, and we want to just be this place to come back to and hang out and socialize,” said co-owner Marco Scheuer.

Designed to emulate the experience of a natural hot spring, The Springs will be set around granite boul-

ders and native plants, facing the Enchantments.

The location’s building, which was built by Scheuer and co-owner Vincent LaBelle, features European-style, hand-crafted details, such as scalloped edges and arched windows.

“We’re really trying to make something here that is for this place, and is kind of, of this place... We’re not trying to ram some business in here and maximize profits. We’re trying to make a really nice experience that sort of captures this lovely spot and hopefully services locals and the people who like to recreate out here,” said co-owner Vincent LaBelle.

The Springs is Scheuer and LaBelle’s first entrepreneurial venture.

The duo met while working at a small boul-

dering gym in Seattle.

LaBelle, who has eleven years of experience building climbing gyms, was the gym’s Director of Design and Experience.

Scheuer started doing maintenance at the gym and later worked on programming, using his previous outdoor education experience.

Both LaBelle and Scheuer grew up in Washington state, with some of their earliest childhood memories occurring in Leavenworth, from climbing to attending summer camps.

When Scheuer came up with the idea for The Springs in 2019, Leavenworth was top of mind.

“Leavenworth was one of the top places on my list of perfect [places] to put something like this.

Both institutions’ boards of directors have unanimously approved the agreement. Upon completion of the transaction, Community Bank and its holding company, Community Bancshares, Inc., will dissolve, with remaining assets distributed to Community Bancshares, Inc. shareholders.

Founded in 1934, STCU currently serves more than 280,000 members across Eastern Washington, Tri-Cities, the Columbia Basin, and North Idaho. Community Bank, established in 1955, has been serving local communities in Oregon and Washington for nearly seven decades.

branches and has committed to offering positions to all Community Bank employees. The credit union emphasized that the acquisition would provide Community Bank customers with an expanded suite of products and services while maintaining local access.

The transaction requires approval from multiple regulatory agencies, including the Oregon Division of Financial Regulation, the Washington Department of Financial Institutions, the National Credit Union Administration, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

### STCU

Continued from page 3

ings, more locations, and a continued high level of services.”

STCU President and CEO Ezra Eckhardt said the proposed transaction aligns with the credit union’s commitment to serving rural communities. “We are committed to making this transaction as seamless as possible for Community Bank customers,” Eckhardt stated. “We look forward to continuing Community Bank’s long tradition of supporting the communities it serves.”

STCU plans to retain all current Community Bank



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

The Springs co-owners Marco Scheuer and Vincent LaBelle (left to right) are designing the outdoor spa to be a place for people to relax and socialize after their activities.

And because neither Vince [or] I had the capital to purchase land or build this thing, I sort of wrote off Leavenworth as not an option, because we didn’t have any access to land. You know, commercial land here is really, really expensive,” said Scheuer.

Scheuer looked in other locations and even started developing the idea for Sultan, WA. Then, his friends started building a climbing gym in Leavenworth and told Scheuer about the adjacent land for lease with a landowner who loved the idea.

Around that time, LaBelle had come on board, and everything started to fall into place.

In 2023, the two hit the ground running and started fundraising, designing, and permitting the project.

“Basically, I’ve never raised money before. I’ve never worked a corporate job before. Like, I was working as a maintenance guy in a climbing gym, right? That does

not equate to starting a business. So I had to ask a lot of questions and we went around to other businesses, like, “How did you get your start? What did you do?” said Scheuer.

Scheuer and LaBelle broke ground last fall, and have been slowly building out the site themselves.

The two plan to open The Springs in two phases, offering three pools and a sauna this fall, then adding additional pools in a

second phase.

Eventually, they hope to add on class programming in the lounge and lawn area, as well as alcohol sales.

“Have beer, have a soak, look at the mountains, hang out,” said Scheuer.

The Springs is located at 200 Zelt Strasse, Leavenworth.

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### Quick Read

A new outdoor hydrotherapy spa called The Springs is set to open this fall in Leavenworth, behind Safeway. Co-owners Marco Scheuer and Vincent LaBelle are developing the facility, which will offer a sauna, cold plunge, and hot pools in a natural hot spring-inspired setting with views of the Enchantments. The spa will operate year-round, providing 90-minute sessions for visitors to enjoy the hydrotherapy circuit after outdoor activities. The owners, who met while working at a Seattle bouldering gym, chose Leavenworth for its recreational appeal and their personal connections to the area. The Springs will open in phases, with plans to eventually include class programming and alcohol sales.

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# Boulder Bend Glassworks demonstrates art at 2,000 degrees

**Tucked along US-2 in Peshastin, Boulder Bend Glassworks welcomes passersby to stop in and witness art being carefully crafted at over 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit.**

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

**“W**e want them to kind of have an appreciation for how things are made and that it takes a lot of equipment, it takes a lot of time and dedication and skill to make things. It’s a unique situation to be able to invite people in and hopefully educate them about this craft,” said Delvo.

Boulder Bend Glassworks is owned and operated by Jori Delvo and Craig Sorensen, who work as a team to create intricate, glass-blown artwork. After building out their space over the course of ten years, the two opened the studio in 2020. The duo works together to create anything from simple ornaments to complex murrine mosaics and cane work.

The two must work

swiftly and harmoniously on each piece to ensure the molten glass is warped at the right time and temperature. Careful consideration must be given to how different colors will affect viscosity or how cooling too fast may ruin the work.

“Every step is critical. An analogy I frequently use is, you can think how complex an airplane is, right? We have Boeing in our backyard, but they can go back years later and fix a part to make it work. We don’t get to do that in glass. If we mess up at the beginning as an artist, we’re always going to see that,” said Delvo.

In glassblowing, making something as small as an ornament may take minutes, but learning how to do it well can take a lifetime.

“As an industry like we

like to say, that takes us, you know, 30 years, plus 10 minutes,” said Delvo.

Sorensen started his glassblowing journey back in college, during his first quarter as a chemistry student. He took a class on laboratory glassblowing and was hooked. He later moved on to glassblowing for art and never stopped.

“I enjoy making things, and I enjoy making things that are challenging,” said Sorensen.

Sorensen went on to study at The Studio at the Corning Museum of Glass, Kurashiki University of Science and Art in Japan, and California State University Fresno.

“There’s nobody who has completely mastered glass in all aspects. There are definitely people who are



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

Craig Sorensen and Jori Delvo create handmade glass in their high-tech customized studio along US-2.

extremely talented with certain things, and for me, myself, I want to learn as much as possible,” said Sorensen.

Delvo, who has a background in business, came to glassblowing more recently. After owning a German restaurant in Leavenworth for over a decade, Delvo learned how to build the glassblowing hot shop from the ground up, then became a full-time glassblower once it was complete.

Delvo and Sorensen’s work is often inspired by nature, such as salmon, owls, and the night sky. Their favorite work, however, is their tedious murrine work, which creates detailed designs of fine lines of colors within the glass. The process of completing a piece typically takes about 14 days.

“We try to dedicate a portion of our time to making the things that we love, and the things we

love are the more challenging pieces,” said Delvo.

Boulder Bend Glassworks is located at 8210 US-2 in Peshastin. The studio typically does live glass-blowing demonstrations on Saturdays, and make-your-own glassfusing workshops on Sundays. Visitors are welcome to stop by anytime during business hours.

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