

Lake Chelan Mirror

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Connecting communities
across North Central Washington
NCW News | A5, A6



Chelan Valley nonprofits unite for first-ever open house

By QUINN PROPST
Ward Media Staff Reporter

CHELAN – Nonprofits in the Chelan Valley will have the opportunity to come together to network, foster partnerships, and raise awareness of available services at the first-ever Chelan Valley Non-Profit Open House on Wednesday, October 16, from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Chelan Senior Center.

Nonprofits may still sign up to participate by emailing lccscouncil@gmail.com or online at <https://Nonprofitopenhouse.rsvpify.com>.

The event, co-sponsored by the Lake Chelan Community Services Council

and the Chelan Senior Center, is free and open to the public.

At the open house, community members can connect with local nonprofits, explore volunteer opportunities, and learn about available services.

The Lake Chelan Community Services Council's mission is to provide leadership and resources to address significant community needs.

Over the years, the Lake Chelan Community Services Council has donated to a large number of organizations. The council invites organizations to come and talk to them about what they do, what project they need

help with, what their budget looks like, etc. longtime volunteer Mary Murphy said.

Then, the council deliberates and decides if they can give to the project and how much.

"And we thought, well, you know, a lot of these nonprofits need to know what each other is doing so they can partner with them," Murphy said. "You know, do projects together, support one another, refer people to them. And so that's what we started talking about."

"So many people say, 'Oh, I didn't know about that,' or 'I didn't know that they did this,'" she said. "And so

we think this is a great opportunity for people to just come, like a big shopping mall, and they can see, you know, people that are doing all these wonderful things in their community."

At the beginning of the event, Council President Kathy Miller will introduce each organization and share its mission, what it does, and its location in the room.

"So it's a way of just introducing these organizations to each other without having each of the members come up and do that on their own," Murphy said. "Because that would take a lot more time, and we want people to be able to mingle in the com-

munity, to mingle and talk with these organizations. Because I think that's where really the magic happens."

The council hopes to make this an annual event because organizations change and leadership changes. Collaboration and support between the nonprofits is critically important, Murphy said.

"And having just an in face, you know, in person experience doing that rather than email and phone, we think, is great," she said. "Just much more personal."

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or quinn@ward.media

Chelan opens applications for 2025 Community Benefit Grants

Lake Chelan Mirror / Ward Media

CHELAN – The City of Chelan opened applications for its Community Benefit Grant program for the 2025 fiscal year. The program, previously known as Community Agency Funding, supports local non-profit organizations enhancing the quality of life in this rural lakeside community.

The grant opportunity is part of the city's annual budget process, providing financial support to projects and programs aligning with Chelan's goals of fostering a vibrant, connected, and sustainable community.

The city encourages eligible organizations to apply and present proposals demonstrating their contributions to community well-being and development.

Key deadlines for the application process include:

- October 2 at 5:00 p.m.: Deadline to contact Cailey Couch to schedule a presentation during the City Council Budget Workshop.
- October 9 at 5:00 p.m.: Deadline for online submission of completed applications.
- October 15 at 4:00 p.m.: Scheduled time for presentations.

City staff and legal counsel will review applications to ensure they meet the city's objectives and legal restrictions regarding the use of public funds. Interested organizations can find more information and access the application form at www.cityofchelan.us/grants. Additional inquiries can be directed to Cailey Couch at (509) 682-8010 or deputyclerk@cityofchelan.us.

The grant program supports organizations sharing the city's vision of creating a thriving, safe, and welcoming environment for all.

Chelan County Fair seeks applicants for next rodeo queen

By QUINN PROPST
Ward Media Staff Reporter

Calling all cowgirls, the Chelan County Fair and Rodeo is seeking applicants for the 2024-2025 Rodeo Queen.

"The rewards for competing in the Chelan County Rodeo Queen Pageant are substantial," Chelan County Fair representatives said in a social media post.

"Each participant has the opportunity to garner one of the richest experiences of her life and, at the same time, create a solid foundation for her future endeavors. Lifelong friendships are made, and many doors are opened to participants."

"It's a great experience to have, and it helps you grow as a person," Queen Coordinator Kristen Mattson said.

To be considered, applicants must be between the ages of 17 and 23, reside in or attend school in Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan, or Grant counties, have riding and horsemanship skills, and have knowledge of Chelan County, rodeo, and the western lifestyle.

Applications can be found on the Chelan County Fair website at chelan-countyfair.com. The application deadline is Oct. 1 by 3 p.m.

Applicants must attend a two-hour, mandatory orientation at 7 p.m. on Oct. 1 at the Tillicum Riders Club House, which is adjacent to the Chelan County Fairgrounds in Cashmere.

Applicants will compete in the Oct. 13 pageant at the Tillicum Riders Club House in Cashmere.

Prospective queens will compete in several segments, including personal interviews, horsemanship skills, modeling presentations, speech delivery, and impromptu questions.

A panel of judges will evaluate contestants in these categories.

Mattson said the judges are looking for someone who is proud to represent



Current Chelan County Fair Rodeo Queen Austyn Robinson represented the fair and the sport of Rodeo in the community and beyond. The Chelan County Fair is now seeking applications for the next Rodeo Queen.

the Chelan County Fair and Rodeo.

The 2024-2025 queen will be presented with a variety of awards, sponsored items, and royalty accessories to be worn during the year of her reign.

She will participate in a year of community events, public speaking, parades, luncheons, and rodeos while serving as a goodwill ambassador for the Chelan County Fair and Rodeo.

The new Rodeo Queen will be only the second queen to represent the Chelan County Fair and Rodeo. Austyn Robinson is the first-ever Chelan County Rodeo Queen and has represented the county for the last year.

Mattson said Robinson did an amazing job and should be proud of her accomplishments.

The first year of the program was a success and Robinson was well re-

See **RODEO QUEEN** Page A6

PHOTOS COURTESY OF
SWOBODA PHOTOGRAPHY

Austyn Robinson is the first-ever Chelan County Fair Rodeo Queen for 2023-2024. The Chelan County Fair is now seeking applications for the next Rodeo Queen.



Manson Grange Youth Fairs Program celebrates fair success



By QUINN PROPST
Ward Media Staff Reporter

MANSON – The Manson Grange Youth Fairs program had a successful showing at the Chelan County Fair, with 27 students participating.

This was the group's second year of going to the fair. They brought 20 animals and numerous still life entries,

COURTESY OF THE MANSON GRANGE YOUTH FAIRS PROGRAM
Manson Grange Youth Fairs member Denali Lewman won several ribbons for her still life entries and for showing her Lavender Orpington chicken at the Chelan County Fair.

Manson Grange Youth Fairs Program Leader Norm Manly said.

"We received many positive comments from FAA and 4-H leaders as well as fair visitors on how well our kids represented the Manson Grange," Manly said. "We are very proud of our students."

The event provided an educational platform for young members, preparing them for future participation in 4-H and FFA programs.

Denali Lewman won several ribbons for her still life entries and for showing her Lavender Orpington chicken.

"I enjoyed learning about how to show the different types of animals and all the different exhibits; it was fun hanging out with the FFA kids

and learning about judging produce," Denali said.

Janell Lyman has three children in the Youth Fairs program, Andrew, Hunter, and Lilly.

"I think fair went really well," Lyman said. "I know my kids learned from participating this year."

"All three worked really hard on decorating the display board that went above their pig's stall; they received a 2nd place award for their work," Lyman said. "Our kids won a 2nd place Barn Herdsmanship, that award is given to livestock exhibitors to recognize the care of their animals. Hunter won Reserve Grand Champion for "showmanship", Andrew won Reserve Grand Champion in "market showing"

and Grand Champion "fitting and showing".

Robin, Nick, Katelyn, and Lucas Pittman had to pivot when, two days before the fair, they lost part of their flock of ducks to a dog attack.

Their lead duck, Miss Popcorn, was injured and could not be entered in the fair.

"For Katelyn, being in the Grange Youth Fairs program has given her confidence to work through the disappointments and last-minute changes," Robin said. "It wasn't easy bringing Speedy, an angry feral duck to fair, but she did it and she did it well. Speedy, appropriately named, escaped several

See **MANSON GRANGE** Page A2

Inside Lake Chelan Mirror this Week

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Get your event in the spotlight with Ward Media!

If you have an exciting event to share, email Reporter Quinn Propst at quinn@ward.media. We'll showcase the five most captivating events of the week, giving your event the recognition it deserves...

Author Teri Fink visit

The Chelan Public Library will host Teri Fink's author visit at the Lake Chelan Book Club on Thursday, September 26, from 3 to 4 p.m.

For more information, visit nculibraries.org.

Craft Night at the Cove

The Cove Wine and Games will host a craft night with Scandinavian on Thursday, September 26, from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

"Whether you're working on a painting, drawing photos of

your cat, or want to try something new. Craft Nights at The Cove are the place to be.

For more information, visit insidethecove.com.

Lake Chelan Chamber Gala

The Lake Chelan Chamber will hold its Member Gala on Friday, September 27, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at Cider Press in Manson.

"The Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce is proud to host their Annual Member Gala at the brand new Cider Press at Manson Growers," the event page states.

"This event is held for the membership to honor their year, hard work of the community and the contributions made from all. The Lake Chelan Chamber invites their

members and guests to join in the celebration."

For more information, visit lakechelan.com.

Twisp Fest

The annual Twisp Fest will be on Friday, September 27, and Saturday, September 28. "Join us for an unforgettable celebration of community and harvest season at Twisp Fest in Twisp's Downtown Creative District," the event page states.

"This vibrant two-day event is packed with activities for all ages, including live music and dance performances, an art market featuring regional creators, fun games, shopping specials, and a wide selection of seasonal food and drinks."



5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

For more information and a schedule of events, visit twispwa.com.

Hydrofest in Manson Bay

The Manson Chamber of Commerce will host the Hydrofest in Manson Bay on September 27-29.

"This is an exciting, family-

friendly event that draws hundreds of people to the Lake Chelan Valley for two and a half days," the event page states. "Mark your calendars for the last weekend in September of 2024!."

For more information, visit mansonchamber.com.

Letters to the Editor

A Fresh Choice for Chelan County Commissioner

In today's politically uncertain climate, the decisions you make about who represents you in local government have never been more critical. Many people may not fully understand the role of a county commissioner or the significant influence he hold.

Having served as your county commissioner for the past four years, I am confident that Flint Hartwig is the right choice for Chelan County Commissioner. I'd like to take a moment to share just a few of his impressive endorsements: Chris Willoughby and Brandt Cappell, primary candidates for Chelan County Commissioner, District 3; Selland Construction; Shiloh Burgess; longtime past PUD Commissioner Ann Congdon; the Goodfellow Brothers; Building North Central Washington; and myself. While I could simply urge you to trust us and vote for Flint, it's essential that you take the time to meet him and make your own decision.

Don't just vote for a familiar name. We do not need another career politician. Vote for common sense, for someone who truly represents the people. Flint is a local businessman who understands the perspective of those he

serves. He won't be beholden to Olympia or special interests. Flint is the kind of person who'd give you the shirt off his back. A man that can engage respectfully in a debate, even if you disagree. He's a straight shooter, hoping to earn your vote with his down-to-earth, no-nonsense approach.

If you've already made up your mind but haven't yet met Flint, he's worth a conversation. You can text or call him directly at 509-264-8204. Prefer to meet him in person? Join us at one of his upcoming meet-and-greet events, hosted by some of our community's wonderful businesses:

- September 30 from 6 p.m.-8 p.m.: Blue Spirits at 1310 Hwy 2 in Leavenworth
- October 8 from 6 p.m.-8 p.m.: WineGirl Wines at 222 E Wapato Way in Manson
- October 10 from 6 p.m.-8 p.m.: Columbia Valley Brewing at 538 Riverside Drive in Wenatchee

There will be delicious food and drinks available for purchase, so come by, say hello, and see for yourself why Flint is the best choice for Chelan County Commissioner.

Your voice and your vote matter. The future of Chelan County is in your hands.

Tiffany Gering
Chelan County Commissioner, District 3

WSU Extension opens applications for 2025 Master Gardener training

NW News
Ward Media

WENATCHEE - The Washington State University Extension Chelan-Douglas Master Gardener Program is accepting applications for its 2025 basic training course, beginning in January.

The program combines online learning modules through Washington State University with weekly in-person classes. The curriculum covers botany, plant identification,

soil science, entomology, lawns and herbaceous landscape plants, plant health care, integrated pest management, and plant diagnosis.

Classes run every Friday from January 17 to April 18, 2025, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Douglas County Transportation & Land Services building in East Wenatchee.

The training costs \$185, with an application deadline of October 15.

Participants who complete the course and fulfill internship requirements receive cer-

tified WSU Master Gardener status.

The volunteer group promotes environmentally responsible gardening practices and healthy living through gardening.

Interested individuals can find information and application forms at www.bit.ly/trainingMG. For details, contact Marco Martinez, coordinator for the WSU Master Gardener program for Chelan and Douglas counties, at marco.martinez@wsu.edu or (509) 667-6540.

Manson Grange

Continued from page A1

times, scratched, and bit her hard."

"Katelyn carried on and had a fantastic time bonding with her Grange friends, making new ones, and experiencing many new things," Robin said. "She can't wait for Chelan County Fair next year."

"My daughter, Anya and I had a great first experience at the fair, she can't wait to attend next year," her mother Diane Tsao said. "I'm glad we were able to participate in the fair together this year," Tsao said. "It was definitely one of the highlights of our summer."

Kendal Alanis won several ribbons and had a great time at the fair, her mother, Kourtney Alanis, said.

"It was heartwarming to watch all the kids work together, get along, and have lots of fun," Kourtney said.

Kenna Hie was proud to win several ribbons for her artwork, her grandmother Kim Ustanik said. "This was Kenna's and my first year participating at the Chelan County Fair," Ustanik said. "At only six years old, it's quite the experience."

The Youth Fairs program, similar to 4-H and FFA, focuses



COURTESY OF THE MANSION GRANGE YOUTH FAIRS PROGRAM Kim Ustanik is pictured with her granddaughter Kenna Hie, Hie, a member of Manson Grange Youth Fairs, participated in the Chelan County Fair for the first time this year.

on preparing students ages five through eight for future participation in FFA programs at Manson and Chelan High Schools. Its mission is to provide a supportive, educational environment where young Grange members can build confidence, strengthen character, develop life skills, and learn self-discipline. The Manson Youth Fairs group meets monthly on the

third Monday at 6:00 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

For more information about the Youth Fairs program contact Norm Manly, Program Leader at 509-293-0225 or email normmanly@yahoo.com.

Norm Manly contributed to this report.

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Fall Sports

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SCOREBOARD VOLLEYBALL GIRLS		
Tues, Sept 17	Chelan 3, Omak 0	Win
Thu, Sept. 19,	Chelan 3, Brewster 0	Win
Thu, Sept. 19,	Entiat 3, Waterville-Mansfield 2	Win
Thu, Sept. 19,	Manson 3, Lake Roosevelt 0	Win

ENTIAT ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Michelle Gomez
Freshman Volleyball



Freshman Michelle Gomez is making waves as a varsity outside hitter for the Tigers, proving that age is just a number when it comes to clutch performances. In an exciting match against Waterville-Mansfield, Gomez stepped up when it mattered most, delivering several crucial kills in the pivotal fourth and fifth sets. Her offensive prowess was on full display as she finished second on the team in overall kills, an impressive feat for a first-year player. Gomez's timely attacks were instrumental in securing a hard-fought victory, with her team edging out a 15-13 win in the decisive fifth set. Her ability to perform under pressure and contribute significantly to a varsity squad as a freshman marks Michelle Gomez as a rising star and a worthy Athlete of the Week.

SCOREBOARD FOOTBALL		
Fri, Sept. 20	Chelan 0, Blaine 27	Loss
Fri, Sept. 20	Entiat 66, Touchet 6	Win
Fri, Sept. 20	Manson 0, Liberty Bell 53	Loss

SCOREBOARD SOCCER GIRLS		
Tues, Sept 17	Chelan 4, Manson 1	Win
Tues, Sept 17	Manson 1, Chelan 4	Loss
Thu, Sept. 19	Chelan 0, Othello 1	Loss
Thu, Sept. 19	Manson 0, Omak 9	Loss

SCHEDULE FOOTBALL			
Fri, Sep 27	7:00 PM	Chelan vs. Liberty Bell	Home
Fri, Sep 27	7:00 PM	Manson vs. Cascade	Away
Sat, Sep 28	6:00 PM	Entiat vs MLCA/CCS	Away

SCHEDULE SOCCER GIRLS			
Thu, Sep 26	4:00 PM	Chelan vs, Liberty Bell	Home
Thu, Sep 26	4:30 PM	Manson vs, Okanogan	Away
Tue, Oct 1	4:30 PM	Chelan vs Bridgeport	Away
Tue, Oct 1	4:30 PM	Manson vs Tonasket	Home

SCHEDULE VOLEYBALL GIRLS			
Thu, Sep 26	6:30 PM	Chelan vs Tonasket	Home
Thu, Sep 26	6:00 PM	Entiat vs, Cascade Christian	Home
Fri, Sep 27	6:00 PM	Chelan @ Linda Sheridan Classic In Spokane	
Sat, Sep 28	10:00 AM	Chelan @ Linda Sheridan Classic In Spokane	
Sat, Sep 28	12:00 PM	Entiat vs Bridgeport	Away
Mon, Sep 30	6:30 PM	Chelan vs Cashmere	Away
Tue, Oct 1	6:30 PM	Chelan vs Cascade	Home
Tue, Oct 1	6:15 PM	Entiat vs Moses Lake Christian	Away

Girls Varsity Soccer

Chelan Goats fall 1-0 in hard fought battle against Othello Huskies

Lake Chelan Mirror
Ward Media

OTHELLO - The Chelan Goats fell to the Othello Huskies 1-0 in a hard-fought non-league soccer match on Friday.

The Goats, coming off their first win of the season against Manson Trojans earlier in the week, showed resilience against a well-coached Othello team.

Chelan's defense, anchored by junior Denali Corrigan at

centerback, proved formidable throughout most of the game. The Goats' backline managed to catch the Huskies offside 19 times, frustrating Othello's attacking efforts.

The match remained scoreless until the 75th minute when Othello made a strategic move, shifting their senior goalkeeper to a forward position.

This change proved decisive as the converted keeper found the back of the net with a well-placed shot, breaking the dead-

lock. Despite the loss, Chelan showed significant improvement, particularly in midfield and defense.

The return of sophomores Natalia Granados and Evelyn Sanchez from injury provided a noticeable boost to the team's performance.

Chelan's midfield, led by sophomore Madeline Cowan and freshman Jazmine Valdivinos, displayed growing cohesion. Juniors Leilani Avila and

Reagan Puryear demonstrated poise and game awareness in their roles.

The Goats' ability to limit scoring opportunities against a strong Othello side that has challenged top programs in the state marks a step forward for the developing team.

Girls Varsity Soccer

Lady Trojans drop road game to Pateros, 8-1

By **MIKE MALTAIS**
Ward Media Staff Reporter

PATEROS - The Manson varsity girls' soccer team is still looking for its first win of the new season following losses to Pateros, 8-1, on the road, Sept.

14, and 1A Chelan of the Caribou Trail League, 4-1, on Tuesday, Sept. 17.

The Lady Trojans did not have an answer to the aggressive offense of the 1B Nannies.

Pateros pressed its home-field advantage with repeated

shots on goal, keeping senior goalkeeper Nefer Zarate on her toes as she caught or deflected many scoring attempts.

The Nannies scored the first of their five first-half goals about five minutes into the game and added the fifth inside the two-

minute warning. It was more of the same, with three more in the second half, until Bethzy Quiarte came through with a score for the Lady Trojans to avoid a Manson shutout.

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



MIKE MALTAIS/WARD MEDIA
Manson's Bethzy Quiarte, center, pursues the ball flanked by Pateros players Stevie Simmons, left, and Jaylee Gonzalez.



MIKE MALTAIS/WARD MEDIA
Manson senior goalkeeper Nefer Zarate prepares to block a goal attempt by Pateros player Dulce Vincente.



Girls Varsity Soccer

Four different scorers lead Chelan to 4-1 win over Manson

Lake Chelan Mirror
Ward Media

MANSON - The Chelan Goats secured a 4-1 victory against the Manson Trojans in a cross-town rivalry match on Tuesday, September 17.

Four different players contributed to the scoreboard, marking the Goats' first win of the season.

Junior Ashlynn Espana opened the scoring in the 8th minute, giving Chelan an early advantage.

Manson equalized before halftime with a penalty kick

following a handball in the box.

The Goats maintained pressure in the second half, with senior Lizbeth Sanchez capitalizing on a deep punt from junior goalkeeper Avari Barker to score the go-ahead goal.

Sophomore Madeline Cowan extended the lead with a direct free kick, while freshman Lily Peterson sealed the win, redirecting a cross from Cowan into the net.

Chelan's depth was tested as several varsity starters were sidelined with injuries, requiring all JV players to contribute to the match.

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CONNECTING COMMUNITIES ACROSS NORTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON

Rocky Reach Discovery Center honored for Dahlia Garden excellence



COURTESY OF CHELAN PUD
Chelan PUD dedicated a bench at Rocky Reach Park to Tony DeRooy, pictured, in 2004 for his outstanding work creating beautiful and innovative public spaces.

COURTESY OF CHELAN PUD
The Rocky Reach dahlia bed, planted by Tony DeRooy, was the first public dahlia garden in North Central Washington. Rocky Reach Discovery Center and its grounds crew were honored with a Commemorative Medal by American Dahlia Society.

NCW News
Ward Media

WENATCHEE – The Rocky Reach Discovery Center and its grounds crew have been awarded a Commemorative Medal by the American Dahlia Society for their contributions to Dahlia cultivation and pro-

motion. The award recognizes the center's 37-acre garden complex, which includes a dedicated Dahlia garden originally planted by Tony DeRooy, a local horticulturist. "Rocky Reach has really increased the visibility of dahlias beyond what could

have been," said Linda DeRooy Holmes-Cook, past-president and trustee of the North Central Washington Dahlia Society. Holmes-Cook is the daughter of Tony DeRooy, who was instrumental in establishing the gardens at Rocky Reach. The dahlia garden at

Rocky Reach holds historical significance as the first public Dahlia garden in North Central Washington. It continues to play a vital role in the local horticultural community, with volunteers from the local Dahlia society maintaining the tubers annually. Parks Foreman Todd Shales

leads an eight-person crew responsible for managing the extensive grounds. The team cultivates between 30,000 to 50,000 plants annually in three greenhouses owned by the Chelan County Public Utility District. The American Dahlia Society also presented a Presi-

dent's Award in memory of Tony DeRooy, acknowledging his contributions to Dahlia cultivation in the region. Rocky Reach Discovery Center's recognition highlights the ongoing importance of public gardens in promoting horticultural education and community engagement.

Legislative candidates to discuss STEM Education at Wenatchee forum

NCW News
Ward Media

WENATCHEE – Legislative candidates from three Washington state districts are set to participate in a forum focused on the future of STEM education and career-connected learning for youth. The event, organized by the Apple STEM Network in collaboration with North Central Educational Service District (NCESD) and NCW Tech Alliance, will take place on Monday, October 7, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the NCESD office in Wenatchee. The forum will feature candidates from Districts 7, 12, and 13, providing an opportunity for the public to hear their perspectives on these critical educational issues. Senator Shelly Short is scheduled to

offer insights on STEM education and career-connected learning before the candidate panels begin at 5:00 p.m. Dr. Faimous Harrison, President of Wenatchee Valley College, will moderate the District 7 panel, which includes candidates Andrew Engell, Hunter Abell, Rocky Dean, and Soo Ing-Moody. The District 13 panel, moderated by Dr. Sara Thompson Tweedy, President of Big Bend Community College, will feature Representative Alex Ybarra and Representative Tom Dent. Dr. Tracey Edou, Superintendent of Cascade School District, will lead the District 12 panel with candidates Brian Burnett, Daniel Scott, Heather Koellen, Representative Keith Goehner, and Representative Mike Steele.

The event is free and open to employers, educators, parents, and community members. Attendees can participate in person, with registration required, or virtually via a Zoom webinar link. The organizers aim to accommodate a wide audience, recognizing the significance of these educational topics for the community. Before the candidate panels, attendees will be introduced to the Apple STEM Network and current policies related to STEM education and career-connected learning. This background information is intended to provide context for the discussions that follow.

Event Schedule:

- 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.: Welcome and Introduction to Apple

STEM Network and Policy Overview

- 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.: Insights from Senator Short on STEM Education and Career Connected Learning
- 5:00 - 5:45 p.m.: District 7 Candidates Panel, moderated by Dr. Faimous Harrison, President of Wenatchee Valley College
- 5:45 - 6:10 p.m.: District 13 Candidates Panel, moderated by Dr. Sara Thompson Tweedy, President of Big Bend Community College
- 6:10 - 7:00 p.m.: District 12 Candidates Panel, moderated by Dr. Tracey Edou, Superintendent of Cascade School District
- 7:00 - 7:30 p.m.: Networking Session

The Apple STEM Network, part of a statewide effort supported by Washington STEM,

represents a diverse region with significant potential for STEM industry growth in agriculture, energy, and innovation. The organization works in partnership with the North Central Educational Service District and NCW Tech Alliance to promote STEM education and opportunities in North Central Washington. For those interested in attending or learning more about the candidates, detailed information and registration links are available on the NCESD website at <https://www.ncesd.org/event/legislative-forum-2024>.

The virtual attendance option via Zoom will be accessible on the NCESD website on October 6, the day before the event. This forum comes at a time when STEM education and career-connected learning are increasingly recognized as crucial components of preparing students for the evolving job market. The event offers a platform for candidates to share their visions and for the community to engage in discussions about the future of education in their districts.

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NCW Libraries to host virtual talk on Latina struggles in U.S.

NCW News
Ward Media

NCW Libraries will host a virtual presentation on September 26 at 6 p.m. exploring the challenges faced by Latinas in the United States.

The program, titled "The Firsts: Latina Struggles in the United States," features Maria Chávez, a professor of political science at Pacific Lutheran University.

Chávez will discuss the unique hurdles many Latinas encounter in their personal and professional lives.

The talk will focus on the experiences of Latinas who are often first-generation college students navigating higher education while balancing traditional Latino values and family responsibilities.

Chávez will draw from interviews with Latinas across various professions and her own experiences to highlight these challenges.

The virtual event is part of the Humanities Washington Program.

Interested participants can register on the NCW Libraries



COURTESY OF NCW LIBRARIES
Maria Chávez, professor of political science at Pacific Lutheran University, will present "The Firsts: Latina Struggles in the United States" in a virtual program hosted by NCW Libraries. Chávez, an expert on Latino politics and first-generation college experiences, will discuss challenges faced by Latinas in their personal and professional lives.

website at www.ncwlibraries.org to receive the Zoom link.

Chávez specializes in American government, public

policy, and Latino Politics.

As a first-generation college graduate herself, her work centers on the progress of and barriers to Latinos in the U.S. She has been twice awarded the American Political Science Association's Best Book in Latino Politics for her works "Everyday Injustice" and "Latino Professionals in America."

Following the virtual presentation, Chávez will deliver in-person talks at three NCW Libraries communities in October:

- October 16 at Wenatchee Valley College, in partnership with Wenatchee Public Library

- October 17 at Leavenworth Public Library

- October 18 at Moses Lake Public Library

All in-person events are scheduled for 5:30 p.m.

For more information, interested parties can visit the NCW Libraries website at www.ncwlibraries.org or the Humanities Washington information page at www.humanities.org/speaker/maria-chavez-2.

New food storage rules aim to curb bear encounters in Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest

NCW News
Ward Media

The Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest implemented new food storage regulations on September 16 to reduce human-wildlife conflicts, particularly with bears.

The rules require visitors to store food and other attractants in a "bear-resistant manner" and properly dispose of garbage and food remnants.

The decision comes in response to an increase in bear sightings and bear-human interactions at established recreation sites in recent years.

Forest officials hope these measures will prevent wildlife from becoming habituated to human food sources.

Deputy Forest Supervisor David Farmer explained the rationale behind the new regulations. "Bears and other wildlife that begin to associate people with easy food sources can become habituated to areas such as campgrounds where food or other smellable items like toothpaste, or food wrappers, are accessible," Farmer said.

"These food-conditioned animals often cannot be scared away or successfully



USDA FOREST SERVICE
Bear cubs search for picnic remains at a developed campground.

relocated to other areas. They continue to return to areas occupied by humans in search of food, at best becoming a nuisance, and at worst becoming a threat to human safety, and resulting in the animal being euthanized."

The Forest Service plans to focus on educating visitors about the new rules in the coming months. Farmer added, "We are also continuing our own efforts to install food lockers and wildlife resis-

tant dumpsters at developed recreation sites."

He noted that while these rules are new to the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, they are commonplace in many western regions and align with best practices for responsible recreation.

For complete details on the new regulations, visitors can check the Forest Service website at www.fs.usda.gov/detail/okawen/alerts-notices/?cid=fsepr1204206.

Rodeo Queen

Continued from page A1

ceived by everyone she encountered, Mattson said.

"Everyone was extremely welcoming to having a rodeo queen," she said. "During this fair, we had an autograph session, and the kids absolutely loved it."

The new Queen will serve alongside the Chelan County Fair Ambassador.

For more information, contact Queen Coordinator Kristen Mattson at kristenmattson7@yahoo.com or at (509) 630-5369.

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



Current Queen Austyn Robinson is the first-ever Chelan County Fair Rodeo Queen.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SWOBODA PHOTOGRAPHY

Robinson worked with other rodeo queens to represent the sport and Chelan County throughout the region.

Chelan, Douglas counties seek proposals for Opioid Settlement Fund projects

NCW News
Ward Media

WENATCHEE - Chelan and Douglas counties, along with the cities of Wenatchee and East Wenatchee, are seeking proposals for projects aimed at combating substance use disorder, with a particular focus on opioid and fentanyl abuse and addiction.

The funding for these projects comes from the national opioid class action settlements.

The four governments have issued a call for projects that may be eligible for funding, with a deadline for proposal submissions of October 11 at 4 p.m.

Potential grantees are required to demonstrate how the funds will be utilized and the expected impact on local

communities. Proposals must include a detailed project description, an explanation of how the funds will address opioid and fentanyl abuse, information on the project's duration, and a breakdown of proposed expenses.

The region's funding allocation is substantial, with Chelan County set to receive \$2.9 million, Douglas County \$1.5 million, and the cities of Wenatchee and East Wenatchee receiving \$1.1 million and \$320,644, respectively.

These local governments, along with Grant County, Moses Lake, and Okanogan County, have formed the North Central Washington Opioid Abatement Council.

The council has partnered with Carelon Behavioral

Health of Boston, Massachusetts, to manage the distribution and reporting of the opioid settlement funds.

The initiative is part of a larger statewide effort, with Washington set to receive \$371.8 million from five companies that produced or sold opioids.

The funds will be distributed over the next five years, with annual calls for projects expected during this period.

Proposals should be emailed to [Jill FitzSimmons@co.chelan.wa.us](mailto:Jill.FitzSimmons@co.chelan.wa.us). A

fter the submission deadline, all proposals will be reviewed, and finalists may be required to prepare a presentation for the board of the city or county impacted by the proposed project.

Loup Loup Ski Bowl unveils new pass options and free skiing for kids

NCW News
Ward Media

WINTHROP - Loup Loup Ski Bowl, a community ski hill in Okanogan County, has announced several new initiatives for the upcoming season.

The ski area is introducing a Kids Ski Free Program, allowing children 12 and under to ski free with the purchase of a parent's or guardian's lift ticket.

This program, made possible through community fundraising, is available to all eligible children, both local and visitors.

Loup Loup has expanded its Reciprocal Partner Mountain Program. Season pass holders now have access to 45 days of skiing or snowboarding at 18 different resorts across several states and British Columbia, totaling 21,250 vertical feet of mountains to explore.

For the fourth consecutive

season, the ski area is offering the Indy AddOnPass, which provides access to additional independent ski resorts at a discounted rate for Loup Loup pass holders.

Loup Loup has also introduced a limited number of Loup Loup Legacy Passes.

These passes represent a lifelong season pass, valid for as long as Loup Loup Ski Bowl operates.

Loup Loup Ski Bowl operates as a non-profit organization under the Loup Loup Ski Education Foundation, focusing on winter sports education and providing a safe, affordable, family-friendly mountain destination.

For more information on these programs, interested parties can visit the Loup Loup Ski Bowl website at www.skitheloup.org or contact Jon Brown, the Executive Director, at manager@skitheloup.com.

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
COUNTY OF CHELAN
IN PROBATE
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The Personal Representative named below has been appointed as Personal Representative of this estate. Any person having a claim against the decedent must, before the time the claim would be barred by any otherwise applicable statute of limitations, present the claim in the manner as provided in RCW 11.40.070 by serving on or mailing to the Personal Representative or the Personal Representative's attorney at the address stated below a copy of the claim and filing the original of the claim with the court.

Public Notices

Road Closure Notice
Pedoi St will be closed from Wapato Way to Harris Street including McLaren Ave and Nequilekin St
September 27th - 29th 2024
The Manson Chamber of Commerce and The PNRBA will be closing Pedoi St.

NCW NEWS

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Legals

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Public Notices

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Public Notices

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF CHELAN
WILLIAM BRAYTON, Plaintiff, v. THOMAS W. BURNETT, an individual; Also All Other Persons Or Parties Unknown Claiming Any Right, Title, Estate, Lien, Or Interest In The Real Estate Described In The Complaint Herein, Defendants.

CAUSE NO: 24-2-00590-04
SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION PER RCW 4.28.110
The State of Washington to the said Persons Or Parties Unknown Claiming Any Right, Title, Estate, Lien, Or Interest In The Real Estate Described In The Complaint Herein.

You are hereby summoned to appear within sixty days after the date of the first publication of this summons, to wit, within sixty days after the 28th day of August, 2024, and defend the above entitled action in the above entitled court, and answer the complaint of the plaintiff William J. Brayton and serve a copy of your answer upon the undersigned attorneys for plaintiff William J. Brayton at their office below stated; and in case of your failure so to do, judgment will be rendered against you according to the demand of the complaint, which has been filed with the clerk of said court.

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Solve the code to discover words related to cats. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 14 = E)

A. 21 14 16 12
Clue: Sound a cat makes
B. 6 22 19 19
Clue: Cat's vibration
C. 12 26 23 2 11 14 19 2
Clue: Sensory hairs
D. 6 16 22 7 5 14
Clue: Jump on suddenly

Answers: A. meow B. purr C. whiskers D. pounce

Fall HOME & Garden

Signs a roof must be repaired or replaced

The exterior components of a home, such as the siding and the roof, help to protect its occupants from the elements.

While many roofing materials can last for decades, at some point in time homeowners will likely have to repair or replace the roof on their home.

Roof wear and tear may not always be so evident, particularly because most homeowners do not make it a point to get on their roofs very often.

The first sign of roof damage typically is a leak that is noticeable from the indoors. It may include a browned spot on the ceiling or even pooling water in the attic.

A leak from storm damage or something minor like a water intrusion through a nail hole or from a lost shingle typically can be repaired easily enough.

However, additional indicators may necessitate a complete roof overhaul. Here are some signs a roof needs repairs or replacement.

Sagging roof: If the roof is sagging, it could be due to excess loads, such as water-damaged shingles or even weakened roof structure. A professional will need to restore the integrity of the roof.

Cracking and buckling: Shingles will likely have to be replaced if there is cracking or if shingles are buckling and warping.

Exposed nails: Exposed nails may rust and contribute to a leaky roof, says Family Handyman. How long the nails were exposed could indicate if the



roof can be repaired or if everything should be redone.

Lost granules: Asphalt roofing shingles have small granules on the surface. Over time these granules will slowly degrade and fall off. If there are many granules in gutters or if one can see that portions of the shingles are bare, it is likely time for a

Visible light: Homeowners who can see light streams coming into the home need

roof repair. This is indicative of holes, cracks or spaces in the roof.

Growth on the roof: Mold and mildew on the roof is a sign that the roof needs to be repaired or replaced. Such growths contribute to rot that jeopardizes the integrity of the roof.

A durable roof protects a home from the elements. Various symptoms signal that it is time to repair or replace a roof.

Maximize outdoor spaces this holiday season

The holiday season comes at a time when the weather can be anywhere from cool to frigid. But even if the weather outside is somewhat frightful, holiday entertaining in outdoor spaces can still be delightful.

Making the most of outdoor spaces during the holidays and the rest of the winter can enable guests to spread out, which should make things more comfortable for them.

With that goal in mind, the following are some tips for putting outdoor areas to good use when hosting loved ones this holiday season.

Decorate first. An easy way to make outdoor entertaining spaces more welcoming is to coordinate the decor with the interior of the home.

Greenery wrapped with lights around railings and fencing can create the perfect ambiance. Candles, wreaths and small, decorated Christmas trees can finish the effect.

Consider a fire or heating element. Unless you live in a temperate climate, you'll need some way to keep guests warm. Center the outdoor entertaining space around a fire pit, outdoor fireplace or an outdoor heater. Make sure to illuminate the outdoor area so that guests can find their way around with ease.

Host an early gathering. The sun sets early in fall and winter, so it may not only get colder, but also darker at a



time when guests typically arrive.

Think about moving up the start time of your holiday event if you'll be having an outdoor area, so guests can see one another and stay a little warmer.

Use the grill. Keep foods warm by using the grill or an outdoor griddle; otherwise, set up the food buffet-style inside so guests can make their plates and gravitate where they feel comfortable.

Provide blankets or fleeces. In addition to warming elements around your entertaining space, stock a large basket with cozy throws, blankets or fleece jackets that guests can use to warm up.

Hats and scarves also may be appreciated.

Invest in waterproof furniture. Upgrade your exterior seating with plush outdoor

couches and lounges that are decked out in weather-resistant fabrics. Make them more comfortable with throw pillows that coordinate with a holiday entertaining theme.

Set up two drink stations. Set up beverages both inside and outside the home so guests can easily refill their drinks wherever they are relaxing.

Think about having some warm drinks outside, such as mulled cider or hot chocolate, so guests can be warmed from the inside as well.

Use a wireless speaker. A Bluetooth-enabled wireless speaker placed outside allows guests to listen to holiday tunes while they are enjoying themselves.

Using well-equipped outdoor areas for entertaining can expand the possibilities and guest list for holiday gatherings.

Tips to help houseplants thrive over the winter

Winter can be harsh. Frigid temperatures and fewer hours of daylight can take a toll, and many people prefer to stay warm inside as much as possible during winter.

Indoor air also can take a toll, leading to dry skin and increasing individuals' exposure to viruses such as those that cause the common cold.

Warm and dry indoor air also can affect houseplants, which underscores how important it is to change your indoor plant care routine in winter.

Outdoor plants might not bloom or thrive once winter arrives, but houseplants can make it through the season with a few simple strategies.

Cut back on watering, if necessary. The relationship between sunlight and water in regard to houseplants is simple: the more light plants get, the more water they need.

Because there's less daylight in winter, houseplants may not need to be watered as frequently as they will during other times of year. But that could depend on where the plant is located in the house.

If it's near a window with substantial sunlight exposure, then it might need as much

water as it requires during other times of the year.

Soil conditions may provide clues as to how frequently houseplants need to be watered in winter.

Touch the soil before watering. If it's wet or feels damp, the plant does not require watering.

Mobilize your houseplants. Some houseplants may be too large and heavy to move. However, smaller plants may benefit from being more mobile. When moving houseplants, move them to a spot where they can get ample sunlight during the day, especially if they're typically located in areas of your home that do not get much exposure to sunlight in the winter.

Keep plants away from vents. Anyone who lives in a region where winter temperatures get very cold knows that conditions sometimes require bumping up the temperature on the thermostat. That can make a home more comfortable for humans but less comfortable for houseplants. It's always best to keep houseplants away from heating vents so they won't dry out and potentially die. If the ther-

mostat needs to be adjusted to warm up the house, confirm all plants are away from vents to ensure they don't dry and out and potentially die.

Check for uninvited guests. Summer might be the season most synonymous with pests, but houseplants are not invulnerable to uninvited pest guests in winter.

The pest control experts at Terminix dispute the popular notion that spiders flock to home interiors in fall to avoid the coming winter cold. However, the experts at Better Homes & Gardens note that spider mites are common winter pests because they like warm and dry conditions.

BHG urges individuals to inspect the tops and undersides of houseplant leaves and stems for signs of pest infestation.

Treat small infestations with an alcohol-soaked cotton ball, which can be used to wipe pests off the plants. Large infestations may require the use of insecticidal soap.

Winter is harsh on humans and can be hard on houseplants as well. Some simple strategies can help houseplants get through the season unscathed.

Senior-friendly interior renovations

Home is where the heart is. That sentiment may be especially true for seniors who have spent decades living in their homes. A lot of hard work goes into home ownership, and seniors who have lived in the same space for a while undoubtedly have countless memories within the walls of their homes.

A lifetime of experiences in a home can make it hard to leave, but many seniors experience diminished mobility as they age. Mobility issues can make it hard for seniors to traverse their homes, but aging homeowners can make various renovations to make a home more accessible.

Revamp entryways and staircases. A 2020 study of 1,000 adults in the United Kingdom found that 28 percent of individuals age 65 and older who don't exercise regularly struggle with activities like walking up stairs. The study, commissioned by Total Fitness, also found that 14 percent of men and women over 65 who regularly engage in moderate exercise still find it challenging to climb up and down a flight of stairs. Seniors facing similar challenges can install a ramp at their home's entryway so they can comfortably go in and out. Inside, a chair lift can ensure seniors are not struggling to move from one floor to another.

Raise the outlets throughout the home. They're easily overlooked, but outlets, particularly

those outside the kitchen, tend to be close to the floor. AARP notes that's no accident, as outlets are generally placed at a height equal to the length of a hammer to save time with measuring when buildings are being constructed. Outlets close to the floor can be difficult for seniors with mobility issues to reach. Relocating the outlets a little higher off the floor is not an expensive renovation, but it can make a home more accessible for seniors who have difficulty bending down or getting down on one knee.

Install door knob extensions. Verywell Health notes that nearly half of all people age 65 and older have arthritis or another rheumatic condition. Arthritis can make it difficult for seniors to grip and turn door knobs. Door knob extensions can make it easier for seniors with arthritis to open the doors in their homes. Such extensions are roughly five-inch levers that can be installed over an existing door knob, making it easier to grab and pull down. Extensions save seniors the hassle of

turning the knob, which some may find painful and almost impossible.

Renovate the bathroom. Bathroom renovation projects can be costly, but seniors with mobility issues should know that bathrooms can pose a particularly dangerous threat. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that roughly three million older adults are treated for fall injuries in emergency departments each year. A 2019 analysis published in The Journals of Gerontology noted that 22 percent of in-home falls resulted in a change in the person's walking ability. Replacing a step-over shower with a zero-step alternative can make it easier for seniors with mobility issues to get in and out of the shower, thus reducing their risk of falls. Grab bars along shower walls and a chair inside the shower can make it easier to bathe and towel off safely.

Seniors with mobility issues can make their homes more accommodating through an assortment of simple, yet effective renovations.



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Tips to make guest rooms more welcoming

Millions of celebrants welcome family and friends into their homes as overnight guests each holiday season.

Hosting loved ones during the holiday season is a selfless act that enables families to create the kind of lasting memories that make December such a special time of year.

As hosts prepare their homes for loved ones this holiday season, they can consider these tips to make guests' rooms as welcoming as possible for friends and family.

Check the bedding and replace it, if necessary. It's easy to overlook the comfort of bedding in a guest room, particularly since hosts may never sleep in their guest rooms.

When furnishing a guest room, it's not unheard of to repurpose an existing mattress from an owner's suite or another room and use it for guest room bedding.

Though that's acceptable,

it's necessary to periodically inspect a guest room mattress to make sure it's still comfortable and supportive. If not, replace the mattress. A mattress topper, a new comforter, and a new set of soft sheets also can make guest room bedding more comfortable.

Clear out the clutter. Guest rooms can easily become depositories for old furniture and other items, which can create a cluttered and less-than-welcoming atmosphere in a space. Give each guest room a thorough once-over before guests arrive, removing pieces that might be creating a claustrophobic vibe.

Keep in mind that guests will bring luggage, so a less cluttered space with ample room for their bags can make it easier to settle in.

Take a cue from hotels. Hotels ensure guests have ample creature comforts at their fingertips.

Holiday hosts can do the same when welcoming loved



ones into their homes. Provide ample bed and bath linens, ensure the room has ample lighting so guests can read at bedtime, and get dressed in plenty of light in the morning.

A foldable luggage rack is another nice touch that can keep guests from having to dig through their suitcases on the floor.

Add an armchair where possible.

A spacious guest room allows hosts to provide some extra creature comforts.

If the room allows, place a comfortable armchair and side table in the space so guests

can read a book or catch up on the news on a tablet or smartphone.

A comfortable, quiet, and secluded place to sit provides guests a respite from the hustle and bustle of a home filled with holiday guests.

Install window coverings, if necessary. A feeling of privacy is another important creature comfort guests will appreciate.

Replace existing window treatments if they do not provide adequate privacy or if they do not keep the elements out in the morning.

For example, a room that is sun-soaked by early morning each day may make it hard for guests to get sufficient sleep. Some blackout curtains or a new set of blinds allow guests to determine the amount of natural light that will greet them each morning.

Some simple tips can help holiday hosts turn their guest rooms into welcoming spaces for their loved ones.

Warning signs a bathroom needs work

Homeowners know that the work involved in maintaining a home is never done. The end of one project has a tendency to roll into the planning of another, and so it goes for years on end.

Fortunate are the homeowners who get to choose when to begin a renovation project, but it's far more common that homeowners spot an issue and then realize it's time to renovate. When it comes to bathrooms, which can be among the more expensive spaces to renovate in a home, homeowners can keep an eye out for various signs suggesting the room needs a remodel.

Mold and mildew: Mold and mildew are perhaps the most glaring signs a bathroom needs to be renovated or remodeled. Mold and mildew pose a notable threat to human health, as the United States Environmental Protection Agency reports that molds can cause allergic reactions. Individuals sensitive to mold may develop symptoms that mimic reactions to outdoor allergens like pollen, including sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and dermatitis (skin rash). Mold also can trigger asthma attacks in people allergic to mold who have the condition.

Mold can grow in poorly ventilated bathrooms, such as those without a fan or ones in which fans are not working properly. Mold and mildew will return if it's merely scrubbed away, so the underlying cause of mold must be addressed to prevent its return.

Small signs of fading: Stains, peeling paint, cracked paint, and gaps in grout are small signs of fading that indicate a bathroom needs renovation if not a complete remodel. These issues also can serve as warning signs of larger issues, such as water issues and structural problems,



so they should not be merely written off as minor problems or eyesores.

Rising water bills: Some signs a bathroom could use a little TLC are not necessarily confined to the room itself. If water bills are rising significantly and do not align with price increases or an uptick in water consumption, homeowners may have leaking pipes. Such pipes might be beneath a bathroom sink or behind tiled walls. Discoloration on the walls, peeling paint or wallpaper and/or a musty odor may indicate leaks inside a bathroom wall. If coupled with rising water bills, these signs could be indicative of a significant issue that requires immediate attention.

Issues with tiles: Cracked or damaged tiles in the shower and bathtub or even on the floor are unsightly and also pose a safety hazard. Cracked floor tiles can lead to slips and falls, which can be especially harmful to older residents. Cracked tiles within the shower and tub area can indicate water problems behind the walls or general disrepair. Such issues should be addressed before they escalate into something larger.

A dated vibe: Of course, some issues affecting a bathroom are not necessarily health or safety hazards but more an affront to

homeowners' grasp of current styles and trends. If walking into a bathroom unintentionally feels like stepping backward into a bygone era, then it's probably time to consider a renovation or remodeling job.

Various signs can indicate to homeowners it's time to consider a bathroom renovation.

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Electrical fires are more common than one might think.

The Electrical Safety Foundation says home electrical fires account for an estimated 51,000 fires each year, nearly 500 deaths, and more than 1,400 injuries. Certain conditions can lead to electrical home fires.

The National Fire Protection

Association indicates home fires can result from overloading electrical outlets and inadequate distribution of lighting equipment. When this occurs, these fires most often originate in a bedroom.

Another common cause of electrical home fires is faulty wiring and related equipment

malfunction.

Homeowners need to be aware of potential electrical issues and remedy them quickly to avoid home fires.

Ensuring electrical systems are up to code and addressing issues with the help of a qualified electrician can reduce the risk of electrical fires.

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4 things to know about kitchen renovations

Kitchens are often described as the most popular room in a home, and that's not mere conjecture.

A 2022 survey from House Digest asked participants to identify the room they consider most important in their homes, and roughly 41 percent chose the kitchen.

Residents tend to congregate in kitchens in the morning and then again in the evening when meals are prepared and, in homes without formal dining rooms, eaten.

With so much time spent in the kitchen, it's no wonder that the 2022 U.S. Houzz & Home Study: Renovation Trends found kitchens to be the most popular interior room to upgrade. With so many people interested in kitchen renovations, the following are four things homeowners should know about these popular improvement projects.

1. Expect to spend some money. Most home improvement projects require a significant financial investment, but kitchen renovations are among the more expensive undertakings.

The overall cost of a project will depend on a host of variables unique to each home, including homeowners' preferences, but HomeAdvisor estimated the average kitchen remodel in 2023 cost between \$14,611 and \$41,432. Homeowners considering an upscale kitchen remodel may receive six-figure estimates for such projects.

2. Expect a good return on investment. If sticker shock settles in when receiving an initial kitchen remodel estimate, perhaps it can help homeowners to know that such a project may provide a strong return on investment (ROI). According to Remodeling

magazine's 2024 Cost vs. Value Report, a minor kitchen remodel provides a 96 percent ROI. A major kitchen remodel mid-range (49 percent) and a major kitchen remodel upscale (38 percent) did not provide as notable a ROI.

3. Expect the project to take some time. Kitchens are large rooms with a lot of components, so renovating these spaces can take some time.

Estimates vary depending on the size of the room, the scale of the remodel, and the materials chosen, but Angi reports a kitchen remodel for most homes takes six weeks to four months. That's a sizable window, and it reflects the likelihood that unforeseen issues like supply chain interruptions or the discovery of mold will arise at some point during the renovation. Though it's impossible to determine precisely how long



a project will take before it begins, homeowners renovating their kitchens may want to plan for the project to take two months if not longer.

4. Expect to use your kitchen during the renovation.

If the timeline of a renovation is scary, homeowners should know they will likely

be able to use their kitchen even after the project begins.

Though the room might not remain a popular gathering space once the work starts, Angi notes kitchens are typically out of commission for around six weeks during a renovation. That still requires some pre-

planning in relation to meals, but it also suggests homeowners won't be without a kitchen for months on end.

Kitchen renovations are popular projects. Homeowners who know what to expect before such projects commence can make it through a renovation more smoothly.

Questions to ask your renovation contractor

Individuals looking to renovate their homes typically reach out to several professionals for estimates before choosing a contractor.

Once that decision has been made, it's customary to sign a contract to ensure all parties are protected during and after the work.

A renovation contract outlines the details of a remodeling job.

The construction company or the general contractor will create this legal document, which will list the steps of the

job and how issues will be resolved should problems arise.

Before signing a contract, however, homeowners should engage in a conversation with the contractor and ask key questions.

How long have you been in business? Verify the information that the contractor and/or company provides by doing a search with the Better Business Bureau and perusing online reviews to confirm the company is dependable.

Are you independently owned? Some companies are

independently owned businesses while others are franchises. Franchised businesses may have to follow a strict set of rules, while independent contractors may have more leeway in terms of policies.

What is your licence number? Obtain the licensure information as well as the contractor's insurance details. A contractor's general liability insurance protects your home and property in the event of an accident.

Are you familiar with local building codes? Check to see

if the contractor has worked in the area before, and if he or she is familiar with the permit process. Make sure a contract documents who will be securing the permits.

How will the project be supervised? Some contractors sub-contract out the work and may only stop by to check on progress. Understand how often those drop-ins will take place, and how to get in touch with the person in charge should a problem arise.

Is there a warranty? Certain contractors will stand behind

their work for a period of time, even coming to make repairs if there are any issues. Check to see if a warranty policy is in place.

What is the policy for home protection and clean-up? You'll want to ensure the rest of your home doesn't become damaged or soiled due to the construction.

Have the contractor spell out plans for mitigating mess during demolition, and whether the construction company will be responsible for removing the debris.

What is the final price? One of the more important questions to ask is if the price stated on the contract will be the final price, or should incidentals be expected if issues are unearthed during construction?

Some contractors may need to tack on charges for extra materials, and that can stretch homeowners' budgets.

It's important to touch base with the contractor and ask key questions about the project, which will be reflected on the contract both parties eventually sign.

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