



Connecting communities
across North Central
Washington
NCW News | B1

Leavenworth Farmers Market
returns for 17th season



COURTESY OF CASCADE COMMUNITY MARKETS

The Leavenworth Farmers Market is held every Saturday morning at the Lions Club Park, which is located between the Leavenworth Library and Howard Hopkins Memorial Pool.

By TAYLOR CALDWELL
Ward Media Staff Reporter

LEAVENWORTH – The Leavenworth Community Farmers Market will open for the season on May 31, running every Saturday at the Lions Club Park, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. until October 11. In addition to its Washington-grown produce, local art, and handcrafted artisan goods vendors, the market will return with its monthly Kids Market section, as well as live music from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The popular Olive Tree Bakery is expected to come back for its third season, with fresh baked croissants and specialty breads. Returning farmers plan to bring new

products this year, including eggs from Watkins Farm Foods. Eggs have been absent at the market in previous years, due to the required additional licensing through the Washington State Department of Revenue and adherence to WSDA Egg Handling Guidelines. “Many small farms choose not to go through these steps and to instead sell their eggs exclusively from a farm stand at their property, because in doing so they are not subject to these regulations... So we are grateful that Watkins Farm Foods has decided to do so this year!” said Cascade Community Markets Executive Director Cali Osborne, in an email to

Ward Media. In order to make the local market accessible for the entire community, the market accepts numerous currencies, including credit cards, SNAP EBT, SUN Bucks, and Senior and WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Programs (FMNP). The Market also doubles the value of SNAP EBT and SUN Bucks up to \$25 per day. “Staff spend over 300 hours a year working to ensure that we are accepting all state and federal food assistance benefits possible...The best way for customers to learn how to use food benefits is by visiting us at the Market Info Booth,” said Osborne. While the Market Info Booth will answer

questions and explain how to use different currencies, shoppers may also visit the Washington State Farmers Market Association website beforehand, which provides details about every state-wide currency and farmers market use. With an improved plan for the adjacent parking lot, the market anticipates better parking and navigability for both cars and bikes this year. It is also located at a Link Transit bus stop for those traveling by public transit. Cascade Community Markets, the nonprofit that runs both the Leavenworth and Cashmere Farmers Markets, is launching an online Limited Edition T-Shirt Fundraiser to raise

operational funds for the two markets this season. The t-shirt fundraiser will feature custom artwork by local farmer, Kim Nelson, and run until June 3. The organization will also seek support through the 10th Annual Farm to Table Dinner Fundraiser on August 22, a six-course dinner prepared by six local chefs and paired with local wines. The event will include local produce, a farm walk, live music, and a silent auction. All proceeds will support the operation of the local markets, with the first \$5,000 raised going to grants for market farms. Taylor Caldwell: 509-433-7276 or taylor@ward.media

U.S. Forest Service
and partners invite
community on
public forest tour

The Leavenworth Echo
Ward Media

LAKE WENATCHEE – Public lands partners will host a tour to highlight forest restoration and community protection efforts taking place on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land around Lake Wenatchee on May 29. The public forest tour will walk attendees through work being done around the lake in partnership with Chelan County, Cascadia Conservation District, Lake Wenatchee Fire and Rescue, NCW Forest Health Collaborative, and USFS. Attendees will get the opportunity to see some of the projects firsthand and learn about current logging operations, recreation, firewood harvest opportunities, and fuel breaks near communities. The tour will depart from Lake Wenatchee Rec Club at 4 p.m., touring places such as Meadow Creek and the Chiwawa River Pines fuel break before returning to the club at 6 p.m. Those unable to attend the tour may join attendees for a short presentation at the Squirrel Tree from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Attendees will have an opportunity to speak with project representatives following the presentation.

Changes to Peshastin
Creek expected to
impact paddlers

By TAYLOR CALDWELL
Ward Media Staff Reporter

CASHMERE – New obstacles and channels are going to be implemented on a popular kayaking run as restoration partners work to restore different segments of Peshastin Creek, an ecologically significant tributary of the Wenatchee River Basin. Cascade Fisheries, American Whitewater, and Chelan County Natural Resources met with local paddlers at Colchuck Consignment on May 22 to explain the intentions of the restoration work, as well as new obstacles to anticipate on the Class III-IV run. “In this conversation of restoration and recreation, it's always a good idea to scout to brush up on your skills when you're running rivers. Because there's this historically low volume of wood in all the rivers we know and love, we don't expect it as much as we probably should,” said Susan Elliot, a recreational liaison for Cascade Fisheries. Three different river segments will undergo significant changes on the Peshastin Creek over the next year, located at river mile 4.3, river mile 2.5, and the confluence with the Wenatchee River. The projects aim to slow flow and restore parts of the creek to its historic

See PESHASTIN CREEK Page B4



Peshastin Creek near the confluence with the Wenatchee River.

Leavenworth, Cashmere featured at Seattle International Film Festival



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

Cast and crew pose on the red carpet during the Seattle International Film Festival premiere.

By TAYLOR CALDWELL
Ward Media Staff Reporter

SEATTLE – Cashmere and Leavenworth hit the big screen as “Evergreens,” an independent movie that filmed in upper valley locations last summer, made its debut at the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) on May 19. “It was always the dream to premiere here with friends and family, and most of all, who the movie's for, which is the people

of the state of Washington,” said “Evergreens” writer and director Jared Briley. The feature length film explores young love, self-discovery, and family bonds through the experience of two young strangers, Eve and James, who find themselves on a road-trip across Washington state. The Spokane-based filmmaker describes his work as “a love letter to Washington,” showcasing some of his favorite places to visit while growing up in the state. The cast and



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

As a Washington-based film, premiering at SIFF was a goal for “Evergreens” Director Jared Briley.

crew spent 18 days filming the road trip last summer, spending time in Spokane, Grand Coulee, Cashmere, Leavenworth, Index, Seattle and Olympic National Park. Iconic Leavenworth landmarks naturally made the cut, such as Blackbird Island, the Nutcracker Museum, Front Street, and Das Thrift Shoppe, but when the main characters run into car trouble, a setting more versed with locals became an unsuspecting star: Icicle Valley Automotive.

“A guy came in here and told me and Jesus [Herrera], ‘You think there's a chance we could record a movie in there?’” said co-owner Roberto Granados. “One person recommended [it] because it's the best shop in the town.” Unsure of what to think, the shop owners said yes, moved the cars the night before, and hung out to help production with the space. “They were so accommodating...”

See SIFF Page B4

Inside The Echo this Week

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\$1.00



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509-731-4392

www.leavenworthecho.com

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\$15.00

1 Month

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1 Week

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Letters policy

The Leavenworth Echo welcomes letters to the editor. All letters must be accompanied by the author's name, a home address and a daytime phone number (for verification purposes only). Letters may be edited for length, clarity, accuracy and fairness. No letter will be published without the author's name. Thank you letters will only be printed from non-profit organizations and events. We will not publish lists of businesses, or lists of individual names. Email your letters to letters@ward.media.

Corrections

The Leavenworth Echo regrets any errors. If you see an error, please call 509-548-5286. We will publish a correction on this page in the next issue.

News tips

Have an idea for a story? Call the Echo at 509-731-4392 email news@ward.media

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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. Even if your event isn't among the top five, it will still be added to our events calendar and featured online. Don't miss this chance to make your event shine!

5 THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

For more information, visit silverawine.com or email info@silverawine.com.

Greater Leavenworth Museum Spring Tea

The Greater Leavenworth Museum will host a Spring Tea on May 29 from 2 p.m to 4 p.m. at 6221 Front St. in Leavenworth. "Join us for a charming spring tea experience while discovering the future of the Greater Leavenworth Museum Grange Project, Sip on delicious teas, savor delightful treats, and immerse yourself in a celebration of heritage and community."

For more information, visit greaterleavenworthmuseum.org.

Benefit Choir Concert

Snowy Owl Theater will host a Benefit Choir Concert on May 31 from 7 p.m to 8:30 p.m. at 330 Evans St. in Leavenworth. "If you were at last year's benefit concert, you know what a fun evening it will be with performances by local favorites, Amy Edwards, Jon Vandel along with the CHS Jazz band and much more!"

For tickets and more information, visit icicle.org.

Birding by the River

The Wenatchee River Institute will host Birding by the River on May 29 from 8 a.m to 10 a.m., starting outside the River Haus in Leavenworth. "Go birding with the Wenatchee River Institute! All birding levels are welcome, We have loaner binoculars available, and the trail is wide enough for ADA access, though it is gravel.This is a free, no-registration-needed event."

For more information, visit wenatcheeriverinstitute.org or email vshoup@wenatcheeriverinstitute.org.

Wine Hike at Icicle Ridge Winery

Icicle Ridge Winery will host a Wine Hike on May 31 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Live Music: Denny Falzon at Silvara Cellars

Silvara Cellars will host live music by Denny Falzon on June 1 from 1:30 p.m to 4:30 p.m. "A legend of Leavenworth's music scene, Denny blends Motown soul, tropical grooves, and smooth vocals with over 50 years of performing, Joined by violinist Andy Cuevas, this is a day of music and memories you won't want to miss."

For more information, visit icicleridgewinery.com/events or email info@icicleridgewinery.com.

District 12 legislators plan town hall in Cashmere for June 4

By Andrew Simpson

Ward Media Staff Reporter

CASHMERE—State Senator Keith Goehner of Dryden, State Rep. Brian Burnett of Wenatchee and State Rep. Mike Steele of Chelan are planning to convene a town hall meeting in Cashmere following a wrap-up and recap of this session's legislative efforts. While lawmakers from Washington at the federal level are reluctant to hold events like this, state legislators are more than happy to update their constituents, especially those handily elected by large majorities like Goehner and Steele. This is often the case at the state level, where lawmakers are largely able to do exactly what they're elected to do by their voters: Either advance or oppose legislation. In a joint statement, the three

legislators said, "We value transparency, accessibility, and open dialogue with the people we serve. This town hall is a chance to reflect on the legislative session, hear from our constituents firsthand, and ensure we're representing the priorities of Central Washington. We encourage everyone to attend and be part of the conversation." Topics on deck for the lawmakers themselves include the state budget, tax measures, transportation funding, education and plenty more. These topics could serve as prompts for public questions as well, but constituents may ask anything they like, of course. Interacting with state lawmakers in person is an excellent way to feel engaged in the political process,

WASHINGTON STATE SENATE

Rep. Brian Burnett of Wenatchee, Sen. Keith Goehner of Dryden and Rep. Mike Steele of Chelan pose for a 12th District photo inside Olympia's Legislative Building.

See DISTRICT 12 Page A3

Chelan County Sheriff's Report

This report is compiled from records provided by the Chelan County Sheriff's Office and RiverCom. The publisher cannot certify the complete accuracy of the information provided.

May 16

00:35:56 Noise, 321 Park Ave# H, Leavenworth

08:45:12 Assist Public, 18750 Fir Loop, Plain

09:25:20 Parking/Abandon, 12502 Chumstick Hwy, Leavenworth

10:48:07 Civil, 65 Sweetbriar Ln, Leavenworth

11:22:25 Fraud/Forgery, 9156 Icicle Rd, Leavenworth

11:51:14 Accident No Inj, 940 Us Hwy 2, Leavenworth

19:49:14 Suspicious, 12735 Prowell St, Leavenworth

21:18:09 Suspicious, 10001 School St, Peshastin

21:58:30 Suspicious, 8734 School St, Dryden

23:29:30 Stab/Gunshot, 810 Us Hwy 2, Leavenworth

08:31:30 Diversion, 12735 Prowell St, Leavenworth

09:38:14 Animal Problem, 300 Enchantment Park Way, Leavenworth

10:03:04 Trespass, 200 Zelt Strasse, Leavenworth

11:27:51 Traffic Offense, 11724 River Bend Dr, Leavenworth

15:34:30 Trespass, 9101 Icicle Rd, Leavenworth

16:52:19 Harass/Threat, 612 Cedar St, Leavenworth, Leavenworth

18:22:45 Traffic Offense, 817 Commercial St, Leavenworth

19:02:05 Welfare Check, 9301 Derby Canyon Rd, Peshastin

May 21

10:44:20 Assist Public, 308 Zelt Strasse, Leavenworth

11:20:50 Accident No Inj, Chumstick Hwy & Sylvester, Leavenworth

11:43:21 Traffic Offense, Us Hwy 2 & Chumstick Hwy, Leavenworth

12:33:23 Assist Public, 12735 Prowell St, Leavenworth

19:40:26 Harass/Threat, 16079 River Rd, Plain

21:26:22 Suspicious, 100 Ward Strasse, Leavenworth

23:27:23 Missing Person, 9017 1/2 North Rd, Peshastin

May 22

06:47:23 Assist Public, 12735 Prowell St, Leavenworth

08:20:21 Welfare Check, 728 Cedar St, Leavenworth

08:28:08 Suspicious, 810 Us Hwy 2, Leavenworth

09:04:56 Assist Public, 280 Us Hwy 2, Leavenworth

10:45:29 Assist Public, 11689 Sunitsch Canyon Rd, Leavenworth

16:04:51 911, 12862 Shore St, Leavenworth

21:39:39 Suspicious, 301 Ward Strasse, Leavenworth

23:00:16 Animal Problem, Chumstick Hwy & Sunitsch C, Leavenworth

23:54:59 Theft, 911 Commercial St, Leavenworth

May 17

02:06:30 Noise, 9825 Duncan Rd, Leavenworth

08:41:41 Accident Injury, 19015 Beaver Valley Rd, Leavenworth

08:52:17 Suspicious, Icicle Rd Mp, Leavenworth

10:17:26 Harass/Threat, 100 Ward Strasse, Leavenworth

10:58:25 Property, Snow Lakes Th, Leavenworth

11:12:59 Suspicious, 215 14th St, Leavenworth

13:48:44 Trespass, 8839 School St, Dryden

13:49:20 911, 12790 Fish Hatchery Rd, Leavenworth

15:25:23 Trespass, Chiwawa Loop Rd & Chiwawa, Leavenworth

15:32:41 Hazard, 18300blk Beaver Valley Rd, Leavenworth

18:30:13 Noise, Barneys Bubble, Leavenworth

19:08:25 Malicious Misch, Main St & Peshastin Mill, Leavenworth

21:55:35 Domestic Disturbance, 185 Us Hwy 2, Leavenworth

May 18

01:15:26 Dui, Scholze St & Enchantment, Leavenworth

ANNUAL HEALTH & SAFETY FAIR

FREE ENTRY!

11:00AM - 2:00PM SATURDAY, MAY 31

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CASCADE MEDICAL

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Community Calendar

Wednesday

Children and Youth Program, 6:30-8 p.m., 4th-12th grade, Leavenworth Church of the Nazarene, 509-548-5292.
Alpine Water District, meets at the Lake Wenatchee Fire and Rescue, 1 p.m. Contact Anne Mueller, 425-238-3935.
Ukulele Circle, 5:30- 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday at the Peshastin Library. Please come 15 minutes early to tune and get sheet music.
Senior Center, Lunch, Noon, \$8 per meal. Call 509-548-6666 by Tuesday noon to make a reservation.

Thursday

Leavenworth Lions Club, Meetings are 1st Thurs. at 6:30pm and 3rd Thurs. at 9 am at Kristalls Restaurant. For more info contact president Tony Maffey at (509)470-6743.
Peshastin Community Council meeting, 7 p.m. Peshastin Memorial Hall. (2nd Thurs.)
Caregiver Support Group, 2-3:30 p.m. For Caregivers of those with Memory Loss. The Henry Building, 120 Cottage Ave. Cashmere. Contact Carmen Gamble, 509-393-0789. (1st & 3rd Thurs.)
Parkinson's Support Group Mountain Meadows Assisted Living 320 Park Avenue Leavenworth, WA 98826. Event Date, Last Thursday of every month, time 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., Contact Cascade Medical 509-548-3420 x 3873
Find strength in community. Join our People with Parkinson's Support Group for valuable connections, shared experiences, and support. Navigate challenges, celebrate victories, and empower each other on this journey. You are not alone. Join us.
Senior exercise taught by Rehab staff FREE Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11-12 at the LDS Church, 10170 Titus Rd.

Friday

Leavenworth Rotary Club, In person at Kristall's Restaurant at Noon. Call President Mahala Murphy-Martin, 206-227-1576, for more information.
Senior Center: Bingo 6 p.m. Call 509-548-6666. Facebook & website: leavenworthseniors@gmail.com

Monday

Upper Valley Free Clinic, open every Monday to evaluate urgent health needs. Downstairs at Cascade Medical, 6:30 -8:00 p.m. Call UVMEND, 509-548-0408 for more information.
Leavenworth Mosquito District board meeting 1st & 3rd Monday of each month at 7pm via ZOOM link posted at https://leavenworthmosquitocontrol.org/notices-updates/
Cascade School board meetings, 7 p.m.. Agenda can be found at https://www.cascadesd.org/Page/166. (2nd & 4th Mon.)
Chelan Douglas Republican Women, Monthly meeting and luncheon 1st Monday of the month (unless it's a holiday). \$21. for lunch, \$8. for sitting only. 11 a.m. check in starts, noon for meeting and speaker. Wenatchee Convention Center 121 N. Wenatchee Ave. For information and reservations, please call, Angela Dye, President, 509-668-1105 (1st Mon.)

Tuesday

Peshastin Water District, 5:30 p.m. For meeting location, contact Steve Keene, 509-548-5266. (2nd Tues.)
Icicle & Peshastin Irrigation Districts Meeting Current meeting time is 8 a.m. at 5594 Wescott Drive. Call Levi Jantzer, cell 509-607-0278, 509-782-2561, or levi.lpid@nwl.net (2nd Tues.)
Cascade Education Foundation, Contact: CEF@cascade.org
LWSC Alpine Committee, 7 p.m., Ski Hill Lodge. Call 509-548-5477. (1st. Tues.)
Leavenworth Masons, 7:30 p.m., Zarthan Lodge No. 148, Leavenworth Senior Center upstairs. www.leavenworthmasons.org. (1st Tues.)
Cascade Garden Club, 1 p.m., at a member's home or other venue. Call President Claudia, 509-662-7706. (3rd Tues.).
The Chelan County Cemetery District #2 (Peshastin) meets monthly at 6 p.m., at the Memorial Hall, located at 10204 Main Street. (2nd Tues.)
Greater Leavenworth Museum board meeting 5-7 p.m. Everyone is invited as a guest. Contact info@leavenworthmuseum.org for meeting information. (1st Tues.)
Senior exercise taught by Rehab staff FREE Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11-12 at the LDS Church, 10170 Titus Rd.

NCW Libraries

Libraries will continue to offer a wide variety of resources and programs online at ncwlibraries.org and its Facebook page. Go to NCWLIBRARIES.ORG or 1-800-426-READ (7323) for more information, and updates.
Leavenworth Public Library. Located at 700 Hwy. 2, Call 509-548-7923 or online leavenworth@ncwlibraries.org
Open on Tues., 10-5, Wed., 11-6, Thurs.,10-7, Fri., 10-5 Sat.,10-2. Closed Sun. and Mon.
Peshastin Public Library. Located at 8396 Main St. Call (509) 548-7821 or email peshastin@ncwlibraries.org. Open on Tues., 2-6pm, Wed., 2-6pm. Thurs., 10am-6pm, Fri., 10am-6pm, Sat., 10am-2pm, closed Sun. and Mon.

District 12

Continued from page A2

something that concerned citizens should be comfortable with during times of political tension like we sometimes see on the national stage. While state issues never seem to get quite as contentious as federal ones, the fact is that Washingtonians are far more invested in local dealings than national ones, even if federal issues command more of our attention.
The event will be held on Wednesday, June 4, from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Cashmere Riverside Center, located at 201 Riverside Drive, Cashmere. All 12th District residents are encouraged to attend in

person. For those unable to attend, another event will be held later in the month in a location to be determined on the west side of the district.
In their statement, the lawmakers included their contact information if you have questions about the event or something specific.
Eric LaFontaine, Sen. Goehner's Public Information Officer can be reached at (360) 786-7408
Kelley Payne, Rep. Steele's Public Information Officer can be reached at (360) 786-7761
Brendon Wold, Rep. Burnett's Deputy Comms Director can be reached at (253) 973-0505
Andrew Simpson: 509-433-7626 or andrew@ward.media

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"The Professionals"

Student artists join professionals at Village Art in the Park



COURTESY OF CALLIE BAKER / VILLAGE ART IN THE PARK

CSD students tend to their booth at Village Art in the Park. The organization invites the middle and high schools to participate in the art market twice a year.

By TAYLOR CALDWELL
Ward Media Staff Reporter

LEAVENWORTH – Cascade School District students will be selling their art alongside the professionals at Village Art in the Park on May 31 and June 1.
“It’s a really exciting project, [and] a great way for the kids to not only show off their art...But also to see that there might be a possibility even for a career in art, which would be our ultimate goal,” said Village Art in the Park Board President Laura Hansen.
The Student Art Market is put together in partnership

with Village Art in the Park and CSD art teachers to provide students with the real world experience of making, marketing, and selling their work.
“I think it helps them gain a better appreciation for art and for handmade items, and what it takes to make something and to sell it,” said Icicle River Middle School art teacher Lore Smart.
As a nonprofit organization, Village Art in the Park uses proceeds from its outdoor art market to support local students in various ways, such as awarding scholarships,

providing funding for teachers and supplies, and inviting them to participate in the art market. In addition to providing the tent space, the organization also funds the supplies and materials needed for the students to create the work. In doing so, the students are able to keep all of the proceeds when their artwork sells.
“Art instruction, exposure to art in the schools... is vital to rounding out a person. You want them to be good students of the curriculum, but you want them to be well rounded and to appreciate the beauty and the wonder that is art,” said Hansen.
The project started with Cascade High School students and art teacher Teara Dillon a few years ago, but has since grown to include Icicle River Middle School students. While the high schoolers have a bit more freedom to choose their medium and design, the middle schoolers get creative within the parameters of the chosen medium for the market, which is clay. Yet, both levels are learning how to create and price pieces that show their personality while still appealing to a potential

buyer, and the vulnerability that comes with it.
“They’re already in a vulnerable place within their own bodies and just developmentally, then to also add another layer of, ‘Okay, I’m going to put myself out there with this work that I’ve created. Will anyone buy it?’... [Finding] more practice in that space is healthy. And I always tell them, ‘The best way to get rid of your fear is to face it,’” said Smart.
Located among professional artist booths in the heart of downtown, students who attend the market not only get the opportunity to interact with local artists, but also get to practice their entrepreneurial skills with visitors from all over the world.
“[I tell them,] ‘Come down, check it out, and look at all these other artists and the skills and the incredible talent that is right here in our own community...People from all over the world come to tour and visit Leavenworth, and they get to see your art as students,’” said Smart.

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



COURTESY OF CALLIE BAKER / VILLAGE ART IN THE PARK

Student art for sale hangs on display. The students receive all the proceeds from their sales.

Leavenworth Lions help to alleviate hunger with third annual food drive

The Leavenworth Echo
Ward Media

LEAVENWORTH – In order to address rising hunger in the community, Leavenworth Lions Club will host its annual food drive on May 30, in partnership with Dan’s Food Market.
The Lions Club will be collecting food and monetary donations for Upper Valley MEND’s Community Cupboard. According to previous Echo reporting, the local food pantry has seen record use this year, serving nearly 3,000 individual shoppers to date in 2025, compared to just over

1,800 individual shoppers at the same time last year.
The food drive will take place in front of Dan’s from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Shoppers may stop by the Lions Club table before making their grocery stop for a list of the Cupboard’s most needed items.
Improving food security and alleviating hunger is a main tenet of the service club’s mission. This year will be the Leavenworth Lions Club’s third annual food drive at Dan’s Food Market. Last year, it collected 844.5 pounds of food and \$209 in cash donations, according to previous Ward Media News.



COURTESY OF HEIDI SWOBODA

Lions Eric Worthen and Ed Potter and Lions' friend Lisa Worthen collect food and monetary donations outside of Dan's Food Market.

Heart patient support group to host educational meeting in East Wenatchee

NCW News
Ward Media

EAST WENATCHEE — The Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts Chapter will convene its monthly meeting on Monday, June 2, offering both in-person and virtual attendance options

for heart patients and their family caregivers across four central Washington counties. The meeting is scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Aging & Adult Care Meeting Room, located at 270 9th St. N.E. in East Wenatchee. The organization extends

its invitation to residents of Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan and Grant Counties. Dr. Jennifer Abelson, a heart surgeon with Confluence Health, will serve as the featured speaker. Her presentation will focus on "Who Should get a Catheter Ablation for AFib and the

MAZE program," addressing treatment options for patients with atrial fibrillation.
Individuals interested in attending may contact the organization by email at atthehelmsters@yahoo.com or by telephone at 509-293-1603.

Genealogy Society to host presentation on preserving family research

NCW News
Ward Media

EAST WENATCHEE — The Wenatchee Area Genealogical Society will conduct a hybrid meeting Monday, June 9, at 2 p.m., featuring a presentation

by Chicago-based genealogy educator Thomas MacEntee. MacEntee will present "After You're Gone: Future Proofing Your Genealogy Research," addressing strategies for preserving family history work for future

generations.
The meeting will be held in person at the FamilySearch Center, located at 667 10th Street in East Wenatchee. Remote participation will be available via Zoom, with connection details available

by contacting Library@wags-web.org.
The presentation is free and open to the public. General information about the event is available by calling 509-782-4046.



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PHOTOS BY SEBASTIAN MORAGA/ FOR WARD MEDIA

Cascade falls 1-0 to Raymond-South Bend in state second round



In a hard-fought match, Cascade came just short of advancing to the quarterfinals of state, losing 1-0 to Raymond-South Bend last May 23 in Tacoma.

➊ Luis Granda lets his



feelings be known about the way he's being marked by a Raymond-South Bend player during the Cascade Kodiaks' 1-0 loss in the second round of state last week in Tacoma.

➋ Benjamin Jerome in action for Cascade during

their game in the second round of state last week in Tacoma. Cascade lost 1-0 to Raymond-South Bend thanks to a penalty kick five minutes before the final whistle, and were eliminated from the state tourney.

CASCADE SCOREBOARD

Boys Varsity Soccer					
Fri, May 23	Cascade	0	Raymond- South Bend	1	Loss

Washington startup wins \$205,000 at Flywheel Investment Conference



JP PORTRAIT STUDIO/COURTESY OF NCW TECH ALLIANCE

Representatives from OoNee and MarineSitu pose with investors after the 2025 Flywheel Investment Conference awards ceremony. The two winning companies are flanked by members of the Flywheel Angel Network, displaying ceremonial checks totaling \$210,000 in investment funding. OoNee won the overall competition with \$205,000 while MarineSitu received the \$5,000 fan favorite award.



JP PORTRAIT STUDIO/COURTESY OF NCW TECH ALLIANCE

Aaron Huang, CEO of OoNee, displays the ceremonial checks totaling \$205,000 awarded to his company at the 2025 Flywheel Investment Conference on May 23. OoNee received \$155,000 from the Flywheel Angel Network and a \$50,000 relocation award from NCW Tech Alliance for its sustainable sea urchin ranching technology.

NCW News
Ward Media

WENATCHEE — A sustainable seafood company from Edmonds captured the top prize at the 2025 Flywheel Investment Conference, securing \$205,000 in funding to advance its sea urchin ranching technology.

OoNee won the overall competition at the eighth annual conference held May 21-23 in Wenatchee, earning a \$155,000 investment offer from the Flywheel Angel Network and a \$50,000 relocation award from NCW Tech Alliance. MarineSitu, a marine monitoring company spun out of the University of Washington, took home the \$5,000 fan favorite award.

The awards bring total Flywheel Investment funding to just over \$1.7 million distributed to early-stage Washington startups since 2018.

OoNee addresses overpopulation of purple sea urchins that threaten Pacific Northwest kelp forests by harvesting undernourished urchins and fattening them in land-based modular raceways housed in shipping containers. The process transforms the urchins into premium seafood within weeks.

"We're still a little shell-shocked," said Aaron Huang, CEO of OoNee. "I really appreciate the community and the investors seeing what we're trying to do for the environment. It's incredibly validating."

The company vertically

integrates harvest, ranching and processing operations, training commercial divers to collect the urchins before rapidly fattening them in proprietary systems.

MarineSitu develops underwater hardware combined with artificial intelligence-driven software that reduces marine data processing times by 20 times while delivering over 95 percent classification accuracy. The technology serves customers in energy, aquaculture, hydropower, infrastructure and environmental monitoring sectors.

Six finalists competed in the live pitch competition: Pioneer BioFuels, NewGEM Foods, Grace & Able, OoNee, LensBase and MarineSitu. Each founder had seven minutes to present their startup before a packed audience, followed by investor questions.

"We are thrilled to see OoNee win the 8th Annual Flywheel Investment Conference," said Dr. Sue Kane, CEO of NCW Tech Alliance. "Their innovative approach to sustainable seafood is exactly the kind of forward-thinking solutions we need. We're excited to support their journey and we hope that their success is an inspiration to others."

The three-day conference drew investors, entrepreneurs and business leaders from across the Pacific Northwest to Wenatchee and East Wenatchee for networking and deal-making activities.

Conferencesessionsincluded panels on university-driven innovation featuring Gliding Ant Ventures, University

of Washington and Western Washington University; deal-making insights from Alliance of Angels, FUSE Fund and Tri-Cities Angel Alliance; and a women in artificial intelligence panel spotlighting female founders from WTIA, Certifi AI, Subi and Barclo Venture Studios.

Other programming covered agricultural technology innovation with Carbon Robotics, Voyager Capital and innov8.ag, along with clean energy and aerospace innovation sessions featuring speakers from Stoke Space and Group14 Technologies.

Keynote presentations were delivered by Callie Christensen of Slumberkins and Sierra Clouse of Barclo Venture Studios.

The conference was presented by Clark Nuber and Microsoft, and directed by NCW Tech Alliance. Event sponsors included Peoples Bank, Holland & Knight, Freestone and the Salcido Group.

Past Flywheel investment award winners include Cartogram (2018), Agtools (2020), Iasis Molecular Sciences (2021), BrainSpace (2022), ZILA Works (2022), GemaTEG (2023), Gnara (2023), Alphi (2023), Dopl Technologies (2024) and OneCourt (2024).

NCW Tech Alliance, a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in 1999, serves as North Central Washington's technology hub, supporting entrepreneurs, advancing STEM education and promoting technology adoption throughout the region.



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8 NAN 1:05	9	10 KAM 6:35	11 KAM 6:35	12 KAM 6:35	13 PAL 6:35	14 PAL 6:35
15 PAL 5:35	16	17 DUB 6:35	18 DUB 6:35	19	20 EDM 6:05	21 EDM 6:05
22 EDM 12:05	23	24 BEL 6:35	25 BEL 6:35	26 BEL 6:35	27 VIC 6:35	28 VIC 6:35
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Ferguson signs budget boosting Washington state spending and taxes

By JERRY CORNFIELD AND JAKE GOLDSTEIN-STREET
Washington State Standard

OLYMPIA — Washington Gov. Bob Ferguson entered office warning that a multibillion-dollar budget shortfall would require spending cuts and, as a last resort, higher taxes.

On Tuesday, May 20, the first-term Democrat appeared satisfied with lawmakers' work to close the financial gap, signing a two-year state budget and a tax package to produce billions of dollars in new revenue to keep it in balance.

"To get a budget in a challenging situation to the finish line, it's going to require working together and a lot of compromise," Ferguson said. "I believe we accomplished that with this budget."

Ferguson's approval ended weeks of speculation about whether he would reject tax increases in favor of deeper cuts. It also capped off months of wrangling between the governor and Democratic lawmakers over how far to go in raising taxes. Republicans slammed Ferguson for agreeing to the hikes after he'd voiced support for greater fiscal restraint.

This all came in the face of an estimated \$16 billion shortfall over the next two budget cycles and uncertainty about federal funding.

Also Tuesday, the governor approved a 6-cent increase

in Washington's gas tax to ensure planned transportation projects move forward.

In the end, he only used his veto power to remove one significant piece of a tax bill, related to community banks, and to nix about \$25 million from the operating budget.

Sen. June Robinson, D-Everett, the lead budget writer in the Senate, said she was "very pleased" with the limited use of the veto pen.

"I think he's sincere and understands the difficult decisions that were made," she said. "The fact that he didn't make significant changes shows he respects our views."

The two-year operating budget signed Tuesday calls for \$77.8 billion in spending across government, including public schools and colleges, health care, social services, housing, corrections, and environmental protection. It also funds new two-year collective bargaining agreements with most, but not all, public employee unions.

It relies on about \$4 billion from new and higher taxes and transfers from other accounts into the general fund, the central pot of money used to pay for most state spending. The state will end the fiscal cycle with \$225 million in cash reserves and \$2 billion in its emergency, or rainy day, fund.

The suite of revenue bills inked by Ferguson includes a permanent across-the-board boost in business taxes, a temporary surcharge on high-

grossing firms, and higher tax rates on large financial institutions and computing giants. Sales tax would be applied to more services, some tax breaks disappear, and an existing tax on tobacco products gets broadened to include nicotine pouches, like Zyn.

A wide swath of private sector firms and health care providers urged Ferguson to reject some of the measures, insisting higher costs would be passed on to customers and patients. For the most part, he did not heed their requests.

However, he restored a tax break for community banks that allows for a tax deduction for interest they receive on loans for residential property. That exemption helps people afford housing, he said. It will trim the tax package by \$215 million over four years, a state budget official said.

Republicans panned the governor's approval of the taxes as an about-face.

"On his first day in office, Governor Ferguson spoke of fiscal responsibility, yet today he's supporting the largest tax increase in state history," Senate Minority Leader John Braun, R-Centralia, said in a statement. "That's disappointing. The majority Democrats who don't believe government can ever have enough money were unhappy with him back then; they must be elated now."

Ferguson said he planned to further scrutinize the tax

increases on businesses in the interim.

"There are some revenues there that I think require a closer look to make sure there are not unintended consequences," he told reporters Tuesday. "So I would not be surprised if you see some changes beyond technical changes to those revenue streams."

Critics of where majority Democrats landed point out that state spending with the operating budget has increased from roughly \$38 billion to upward of \$70 billion over the past decade. Spending in the current two-year budget cycle that ends June 30 is around \$72 billion.

Transportation budget also rides on tax hikes

Ferguson also approved separate spending plans for transportation and capital construction for the 2025-27 biennium that begins July 1.

The \$15.5 billion transportation spending plan funds Washington State Ferries, highway megaprojects and maintenance of state roads and bridges. Washington State Patrol and public transportation are also paid for through this budget. And there's over a billion dollars for the court-ordered removal of barriers to fish in waterways that cross under state roads.

Similar to the operating budget, transportation faced a major shortfall due to diminishing gas tax receipts

and ballooning costs for the state's already-expensive road projects.

To fill the gap, Ferguson signed a separate six-year, \$3.2 billion transportation revenue package intended to pay for promised infrastructure. While the state's first gas tax hike since 2016 anchors it, there are a number of other new and higher fees and taxes, including on rental cars, non-commercial aircraft, luxury vehicles and car sales, among others.

Washington's gas tax — already among the highest in the nation — will rise from 49.4 cents to 55.4 cents per gallon in July, then by 2% each year.

"The people of the state of Washington expect us to invest in those projects, but we have limited revenue options right now," Ferguson said. "The gas tax, unfortunately, is one of them."

The capital budget authorizes \$7.6 billion in new spending. It will drive \$760 million into affordable housing, most of it through the Housing Trust Fund. There's nearly a billion dollars for K-12 school construction, plus funds for salmon recovery and behavioral health facilities.

How we got here

In the final weeks of the session, Ferguson objected to budgets passed in the House and Senate, saying they each relied too much on taxes. At that time, he called on lawmakers to "immediately move budget discussions in a different direction."

Before that, he refused a proposed "wealth tax" on investments held by the richest Washingtonians. He felt the new tax was sure to face legal challenges that could threaten the stability of the state's budget and that it would be difficult to implement.

In response, Democratic lawmakers dropped the idea for this year. The new governor also opposed a proposal to repeal a voter-approved limit on property tax growth in Washington, so legislators abandoned that, as well.

By the time Democrats' slate of revenue proposals reached the governor's desk, lawmakers had dropped it from a total of \$21 billion over four years to \$9.4 billion, excluding the separate transportation taxes and fees.

Lawmakers are scheduled to next return to Olympia in January, when they will hash out a supplemental funding plan for the final year of the cycle.

But Ferguson didn't rule out a special session before then to deal with potential havoc wreaked by the Trump administration or cuts under consideration by the Republican-controlled Congress. He said federal funds make up about one-fifth of Washington's budget.

The state will get its next forecast for revenue estimates in June.

Washington State Standard (www.washingtonstatestandard.com) is part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity.

The Big 5

Five tax bills signed Tuesday, May 20, are counted on to bring in roughly \$3.6 billion for the next budget and \$9.4 billion over four years. Here's where those dollars would come from.

House Bill 2081, the largest money maker, is projected to generate \$2.1 billion in the next budget. It has an across-the-board boost in business taxes, a temporary surcharge on high-grossing firms and higher tax rates on large financial institutions and computing giants.

Senate Bill 5814 is relied on to raise \$1 billion for the next biennium, mostly by applying the retail sales tax to more services, such as digital advertising and temporary staffing. There is also a provision to begin taxing certain products with nicotine, like Zyn pouches.

Senate Bill 5813 will bring in \$321 million by adding a layer to the capital gains tax. In addition to the existing 7% tax on gains over \$270,000 from the sale or exchange of long-term assets, another 2.9% will be levied on gains above \$1 million.

Senate Bill 5794 aims to bring in \$148.5 million by getting rid of a variety of tax breaks enjoyed by around 4,000 taxpayers, including operators of self-service storage facilities and sellers of precious metal bullion.

House Bill 2077 is expected to generate \$54.5 million with a new tax on the sale of electric vehicle credits between automakers. This has been dubbed the "Tesla tax" because the firm is the only automaker with credits to sell in Washington



JACQUELYN JIMENEZ ROMERO/WASHINGTON STATE STANDARD
Gov. Bob Ferguson's signature on the the 1,367 page document outlining the state's 2025 operating budget.

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Wenatchee Valley College cuts programs amid state budget shortfall

By **ANDREW SIMPSON**
Ward Media Staff Reporter

WENATCHEE — When money is tight, all good things must come to an end. And unfortunately, the state budget shortfall is affecting more than just services provided directly by the state. Many colleges that get funding from Washington’s general fund or education fund are facing the same difficult choices that Wenatchee Valley College has had to contend with in light of the state’s \$12 billion funding deficit.

After collaborating with the Faculty Budget and Program Review Taskforce, administrators at the school set out a list of recommendations for suspensions of programs and courses. Those include:

- Bachelor of Applied Science program in Engineering Technology
- Music Direct Transfer

- Major Related Program
- Transitional Studies/English Language Learning Level A and B courses
 - Drama and Theater
 - Bachelor of Applied Science program for Teaching
 - Machining
 - Graphic Design
 - Natural Resources, specifically the Associate of Applied Science Transfer Degree

The college will continue to provide a “pathway” for Natural Resources within the general transfer degree program.

The school is also facing some staffing changes as a result of cost-cutting efforts. A Sustainability position that was funded by a grant that has now expired will be suspended unless further grant money can be found, and a counseling position at the school will face the same fate when the grant

for that expires at the end of the fiscal year.

Administrators took into consideration enrollment, student demand, transfer and employment outcomes, cost-effectiveness and potential for alternative pathways to serve student needs when deciding on these recommendations. Some discipline-specific courses and certificates will be retained as electives.

Coordinated efforts between programs and Deans are working to identify alternatives for already-enrolled students to ensure that they are able to complete their studies. The school is even considering some non-credit training programs to meet employment needs.

Dr. Tod Treat, the Vice President of Instruction, said in a statement, “While we have done everything we can to minimize the impact



LOGAN FINLEY/WARD MEDIA

Wenatchee Valley Community College, on its picturesque campus on Fifth Street in Wenatchee, has produced many graduates who have gone on to great things.

of program changes on faculty, staff, and students, this is a painful time for our community as these are valued colleagues, friends, mentors,

and community members.” Moving forward, Treat said, the school would set goals and improve efficiency with an eye toward increased enrollment

and improved student retention and progression.

Andrew Simpson: 509-433-7626 or andrew@ward.media

WA State issues outdoor burn safety guidelines as summer approaches

NCW News
Ward Media

OLYMPIA — The Washington State Fire Marshal’s Office released safety guidelines for outdoor burning activities as the state enters the summer season, citing concerns about increased fire risks during drier weather conditions.

According to data released

by the office, Washington State Fire Agencies reported 2,652 fire incidents in outdoor areas during 2024. Officials are urging residents to exercise caution when engaging in activities such as barbecuing, gathering around fire pits, and campfires.

“When recreational burning is allowed in your area, it is critical to follow proper precautions to reduce

the risk of accidental fires,” stated Deputy State Fire Marshal Courtney Chambers in the official release. “Be sure to regularly check for current burn bans and local fire restrictions, which may change based on weather and fire danger levels.”

The safety guidelines include maintaining minimum distances between fire sources and structures, with fire pits

to be positioned at least 10 feet from homes and other combustible structures, and campfires at least 25 feet from tents and vegetation.

Other key recommendations include:

- Checking for current burn bans before any open flame activity

- Cleaning grills thoroughly to prevent grease fires
- Keeping flammable materials at least 3 feet from heat sources
- Never leaving fires unattended
- Maintaining a readily available water source or fire extinguisher
- Fully extinguishing all fires before departure
- Monitoring weather

- conditions, especially during windy or dry periods
- Having alternative plans when burning may be unsafe

The Fire Marshal’s Office directed residents to consult the Washington Department of Natural Resources Burn Portal for the latest information on fire restrictions and burn bans in their respective counties.

Annual Discover Pass cost set to increase in October

NCW News
Ward Media

OLYMPIA — Starting Oct. 1, the annual Discover Pass will increase from \$30 to \$45, marking the first price hike since the program was implemented in 2011.

The Discover Pass is required to park vehicles at Washington’s state parks and lands operated by the

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife and Washington Department of Natural Resources.

Gov. Bob Ferguson signed the legislation into law on May 17 after the bill passed the Legislature in April. Despite the fee increase, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will not see significant new revenue in the 2025-27 biennium.

“The revenue from these fees are a core funding stream to keep state parks open, staffed and operational,” according to state officials. “Throughout the summer and early fall, we’ll be updating our website and communicating to customers about the fee and other changes.”

In response to the state’s budget shortfall, lawmakers reduced general fund

appropriations while adding new costs to the agency. Approximately 71% of the funding for State Parks will now come from earned revenue in the 2025-27 biennium, up from about 65% in the current budget cycle.

The legislation also modified requirements for off-road vehicles and made changes related to the Lifetime Disabled Veteran’s pass. Details of these

changes are available on the Discover Pass website.

Washington’s state park system, established in 1913, predates the National Parks system. It manages 124 developed parks, 1,300 miles of trails, more than 6,000 campsites and over 2,700 facilities, including more than 800 historic buildings.

Despite overseeing the smallest acreage among state-

managed lands agencies, Washington’s state parks receive the most visitors — more than 40 million annually, including 39 million day-use visitors and 2.3 million overnight guests.

Approximately 82% of State Parks staff work on the ground to maintain parks and ensure they remain “open, clean, safe and fun for visitors,” officials said.

Okanogan–Wenatchee National Forest shifting to mostly cashless payments



OKANOGAN–WENATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST

A camper scans a QR code using their mobile phone at the Chewuch Campground self-service pay station, located on the Methow Valley Ranger District, May 18.

By **ANDREW SIMPSON**
Ward Media Staff Reporter

WENATCHEE — Deborah Kelly, public affairs specialist for the Okanogan–Wenatchee National Forest, has announced that the Forest will be moving to primarily cashless fee collections at most recreation fee sites. The sites that use the new payment system will include all trailheads and day use sites that require a fee or pass, as well as nearly all first-come, first-served campgrounds, including those operated by concession stands or booths.

You can prepare in advance for this change by downloading the recreation.gov mobile app. Doing so beforehand ensures

you have a signal before trying to download it in the middle of the woods. If you forget to download it in advance, you will need to find an area with WiFi or mobile connectivity to download the app and set up an account. Once you have done so, the scan-and-pay application will work in offline mode at recreation areas with no cellular or WiFi service.

As the summer continues, the cashless system will continue to be deployed across the National Forest to eventually include all first-come, first-served campgrounds, including concessionaire sites. You can check the payment status of the campground you wish to visit by going to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

website’s campsite booking page at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r06/okanogan-wenatchee/recreation/camping-cabins>

By eliminating cash and check payment options, the USFS hopes to streamline the entire process, and thus free up staff for helping visitors and maintaining recreation sites. An automated system eliminates the need for check processing and cash deposits.

You can also still purchase and use (for all day use sites requiring a fee) the Northwest Forest Pass or America the Beautiful Interagency Pass at an office or in a store found on the agency’s website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r06/okanogan-wenatchee/passesor> simply purchase them online.

There are many developed campgrounds, cabins and lookouts operated by the agency staff or by concessionaires that are available for reservation prior to arrival in the Okanogan–Wenatchee National Forest. These sites are booked in advance through the website and will not be affected in any way by the payment system transition.

Fees and passes for recreation sites are one of the largest sources of revenue for the maintenance and operation of them, and improve the experience of visitors to the National Forest.

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TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

Cascade Fisheries Executive Director Jason Lundgren speaks to boaters at Colchuck Consignment.

Peshastin Creek

Continued from page A1

form by adding boulders, log jams, and excavating historic channels. Over the last century or so, surrounding development has straightened the historically winding, multi-channeled creek into a main stem, increasing flow velocity and scouring the riverbed. “We want to get more fish, more water out on the floodplain. The slow water habitat of the floodplain is really important for juvenile fish,” said Aaron Rosenblum, Cascade Fisheries Project Manager. Peshastin Creek is a cold water refuge for salmon, and is also the top producer of wild steelhead in the Wenatchee Basin, according to Cascade Fisheries Executive Director Jason Lundgren.

Work at the confluence, which is expected to be completed this fall, will restore a historic channel and implement channel wide log jams. Because of this, boaters will still be able to paddle up to the Dryden Dam access site, but are advised to exit upstream of the confluence, about a third of a mile. According to Rosenblum, the group will place large boulders on river right to signal the take out. Cascade Fisheries will also be restoring the floodplain on the project between river mile 2.5 and 3, which is expected to be completed next summer. While the project won’t install channel-wide log jams, log jams sticking out into the creek have the potential to rack wood, said Rosenblum. Scouting is recommended between King Bridge and Green Bridge.

The project at river mile 4.3, indicated by “a big sandstone wall that moves the river to the left,” plans to add side channels while maintaining the main stem, which will have boulders and minimal wood added, according to Chelan County Natural Resource Specialist Scott Bailey. The project anticipates completion by late fall. “Stay in the main stem. We purposely avoided putting much wood, very little wood, in the channel because we knew that Peshastin Creek was used by boaters, and we didn’t want to increase the risk to that community,” said Bailey. Paddlers can stay up-to-date on the projects by visiting the Peshastin Creek page on American Whitewater’s website.

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

SIFF

Continued from page A1

and so kind. And we couldn’t have found a better location,” said Producer Mary Russell. While awaiting a car repair, the two main characters find themselves immersed with the locals inside Cashmere’s Outpost Saloon, exchanging help for a place to stay, and eventually befriending the owners, Kathy and Larry. “When I walked in, I was like, oh my God, it’s perfect... It was the perfect setting for that,” said Doug Dawson, who played Larry. “It was a great place to film.” While the upper valley locations made their way to the big screen, the locals played an equally important role behind the scenes. The movie’s production crew, in partnership with Washington Filmworks, worked with the City of Leavenworth and Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce to coordinate filming locations, logistics, and accommodations. The Outpost Saloon owner helped arrange trucks for orchard scenes and catered lunch for the cast and crew. Local participation not only played a role in highlighting the state’s gems, it also spoke to the uniqueness of the film’s production, as it was created almost entirely by Washingtonians. Northwest Package, a Spokane-based company, produced the film using cast and crew primarily from Spokane and Seattle. “It was people who live in



TAYLOR CALDWELL / WARD MEDIA

The audience settles into their seats for a Q&A with Briley before the screening.

Washington, who care about Washington. You could just tell the crew, being homegrown, cared about where they were filming, and that comes across on the screen too,” said Russell. Due to its localized nature, the production was supported by Washington Filmworks, a private nonprofit organization whose mission “is to create economic development opportunities by building and enhancing the competitiveness, profile and sustainability of Washington State’s film industry.” The project received funding through the organization’s Small Budget Production Initiative, which supports Washington state filmmakers with projects budgeted under \$1 million. It also includes an additional 10 percent back on in-state expenditures for filming at least 50 percent of

its production in rural areas. According to Briley, the organization funded about a third of the film’s budget. “We’re hoping that these are kind of the first few of what’s going to be a lot of Washington filmmakers doing projects that [Washington] Filmworks is supporting,” said Briley. “It’s really something for every local filmmaker, whether they’re doing their first short film, or they’re doing their first feature. It’s hopefully inspiring to know we were in their shoes just recently.” According to Briley, the film will head to three to four more festivals this year, which have yet to be announced. If it’s not sold by November, it will be sold at the American Film Market.

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

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