The
FOOTHILLS OUTLOOK
Connecting Foothills community members with vital resources, organizations and events

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October 2026

M.A.D HOPE: Bringing Hope to our Youth

by Melonie Ancheta

In communities like ours, resilience is often something we need to survive; it comes forward when we're faced with crisis such as flooding and other disasters, but there are other less obvious and more devastating issues that exist in our community that are just as destructive. But how does one apply resilience when a child is lost to suicide? And more important, how do we instill resilience in our children so they are safe, healthy, and strong?

None of us are born knowing how to be resilient; it's something we learn, practice, and strengthen over time. And for many young people in our area, learning resilience can begin with MAD-HOPE.

MAD HOPE, "Making a Difference, Helping Other People Everywhere", didn't start as a curriculum, but out of heartbreak and a desire to turn that heart break into purpose. By 2012, Bellingham High School lost five students to suicide. Their fellow students, hurting but hopeful, decided that silence wasn't an option and put together a youth-led program to help each other learn how to identify pain, communicate, and get help before they experienced tragedy yet again.

One mother shared with the students that her son, who recently had died by suicide, loved red balloons--their bright color, their buoyancy, the way they lift you. As she shared her story, three students sketched out what would become the MAD HOPE logo: a single red balloon with "hope" written across it, being held by a small figure.



Adolescence is a period when we begin struggling with complex emotions, or ambiguous feelings, but don't yet have the skills to navigate them. Developmentally youth are trying to figure out who they are, and where and how they fit into the world. They test different beliefs, social circles, styles, and even identities, and they often experience deep internal conflicts and an unstable self-image. Along with the chemical changes occurring in their brains and bodies, this can cause emotions to feel too intense and overwhelming, leading to extreme thinking, shutting down, or emotional volatility. This intense cognitive and emotional overload, along with feelings of deep isolation, and a sense of hopelessness can make suicide feel like the only way to escape the confusion. Mad Hope offers knowledge and resources to help safely make it through this period, including this one fundamental truth: "Suicide is never the only option, and there is always hope and help available"

From Grassroots to Evidence-Based Programming

Over the years, MAD-HOPE grew from a student club at Bellingham High School into a countywide prevention program supported by Whatcom Family & Community Network and the Whatcom Prevention Coalition. Under the leadership of Amy Dunham and coordination of Savannah "Sav" Hummelschell in tandem with a dedicated team, the curriculum was strengthened, standardized, and expanded. In 2025, MAD-HOPE earned national recognition as a best-practice suicide prevention program from the Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC-https://www.sprchope.org/). Today, MAD-HOPE offers a three-hour, evidence-based training that teaches youth how to identify, understand, and deal with their emotions in positive ways, support their peers, and when and how to seek help.

This certification is not easy to obtain; it requires years of data gathering, evaluation, and proof that the program truly helps young people. Hummelschell says, "The seal given to us represents that we are a program of best practice; everything we're doing is grounded in current prevention science."

This matters. It means our community is not just doing *something*, we're doing something that works.

What is Upstream Prevention

When people hear "suicide prevention," they often think of crisis intervention — stopping someone from jumping off a bridge, talking someone down from a dangerous moment. But MAD-HOPE goes to work long before someone reaches that point.

Upstream prevention teaches youth:

- What sadness, anger, fear, and frustration feel like
- How to sit with difficult emotions
- How to identify and practice healthy vs. unhealthy coping skills
- How to build resilience through relationships, pets, culture, creativity, community, and more
- How to support a friend who is struggling
- How to ask for help early, before a crisis escalates

Hummelschell says, "Upstream suicide prevention is often not actually about suicide, but rather looking at how we take care of ourselves mentally and physically; It's about strengthening the foundation, so the house doesn't collapse."

And it's needed earlier than most people realize. Research shows that children as young as two or three can experience suicidal thoughts but they lack the language to express what they're feeling and thinking. That's why early emotional education matters and why prevention education should begin when children are in elementary school.

Hummelschell hopes to expand in this direction stating, "many youth have expressed a desire to learn these skills as early as 3rd or 4th grade; If prevention education begins while children are young, they learn how to cope with feelings appropriately as well as build skills and strength for navigating life's challenges."

MAD-HOPE currently trains youth ages 12–17, with occasional sessions for younger middle-schoolers and young adults. In the Mount Baker School District, the program reaches 6th graders who are technically elementary students but are developmentally aligned with middle-school programming.

The Weight of the Work

Prevention work is deeply meaningful and deeply exhausting. Funding is uncertain. Grants come and go. Staff turnover can stall the work. Despite these challenges, the MAD-HOPE team perseveres. "You become used to being in this state of uncertainty...." Hummelschell says, "but the work continues and there will always be youth in need of these services". For suicide prevention to be successful in a community, it must be an ongoing practice.

MAD-HOPE is exploring partnerships with local businesses, faith communities, and civic organizations. The goal is simple: keep the program alive, stable, and accessible to every student in Whatcom County; suicide prevention should not depend on a budget, it should be a guaranteed part of every child's education.

Why This Matters to All of Us

Suicide touches families in every corner of our county. Many of us have lost loved ones, many of us have struggled ourselves. But for many, hope has stemmed from the smallest places; a wagging tail, a child's laughter, a familiar voice. MAD-HOPE teaches youth to recognize those lifelines, to build on them, and to reach for them when life feels heavy.

This is not just a school program; it is a way to save lives.

MAD-HOPE is strong, but it needs champions -- parents, families, educators, businesses, faith communities, elected officials, and neighbors. It needs people who believe that every child deserves the tools to navigate troubling feelings, every child deserves support, and every family deserves hope.

Let's lift that red balloon together. Let's make HOPE something our kids can hold onto and something they can offer each other.

Want to learn more about how you can be a part of the movement?To volunteer or donate, please email Sav Hummelschell at ManagerMadHope@wfcn.org or call (415) 879-8229.

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BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR

If you are a resource provider, belong to an organization, or have a local event, and wish to be included in our listings, please contact us at info@foothillsinfo.com or go to foothillsinfo.com to request an account.

Submissions Deadline: 15th of each month

Please review our **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES** under Contributor Information on our website at foothillsinfo.com

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bugwalla
by Doug Imhoff



Breathing Easier in the Foothills

by Mahalia Blue



Foothills residents know winter is rolling in when woodstoves fire up and smoke settles across the hills—sometimes so thick you can't see the houses across the street. For many families, wood heat isn't optional; it's the only affordable way to stay warm. But the same smoke that keeps homes comfortable can make outdoor air dangerous to breathe.

Air-quality expert Seth Preston from the Northwest Clean Air Agency (NWCAA) says the problem is serious, but there are practical ways to reduce smoke and its impact on our health and well-being.

Why Smoke is a Health Hazard

The biggest concern related to breathing smoke is the fine particulate matter (PM2.5)—particles 30 times thinner than a human hair that lodge deep in the lungs. The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences notes that short-term exposure reduces lung function and increases asthma and cardiac problems, while long-term exposure raises risks of:

Heart disease
Lung cancer
COPD
Dementia
Diabetes
Pregnancy complications
Childhood asthma and developmental impacts

Children, older adults, pregnant individuals, and people with heart or lung conditions are especially vulnerable.

Protecting Our Health

Smoke from woodstoves and wildfires carries the same health risks. To reduce exposure:

Use HEPA filters indoors
Keep windows closed during heavy smoke
Create a "clean room" with an air purifier
Limit outdoor activity when air quality worsens
Check on neighbors, especially elders and families with young children

During extreme heat, experts emphasize that heat kills faster than smoke. If your home becomes dangerously hot, open windows even if air quality is poor.

Why Certain Areas Are Hit Hard

Preston points to Columbia Valley (CV) as "the most impacted air quality in Whatcom County during winter." Geography plays a major role: the north–south valley traps cold air flowing down from the Fraser River Valley, holding smoke close to the ground. Dense tree cover and neighborhood layout further limit air movement. As Preston says, "There's so much wood smoke that's just not going anywhere."

How We Contribute to Heavy Smoke

Burning wet wood: Wood with more than 20% moisture produces thick smoke because the fire must evaporate water before burning cleanly. "Dry wood burns hotter and therefore cleaner," Preston says.

Burning garbage: Trash releases toxic chemicals—including plastics, metals, and treated materials—that harm everyone nearby.

Improper stove use: Each stove works differently; proper loading and operation reduce smoke.

How We Can Improve Air Quality

Cleaner air is a community effort. Households can make a big difference by:

- Burning only dry, seasoned wood
- Never burning garbage
- Maintaining stoves and chimneys
- Complying with burn bans when possible
- Applying for stove-replacement programs
- Sharing accurate information with neighbors

Better air means fewer asthma attacks, ER visits, pregnancy complications, and long-term health risks. It means kids missing fewer school days and elders breathing easier. Most importantly, it

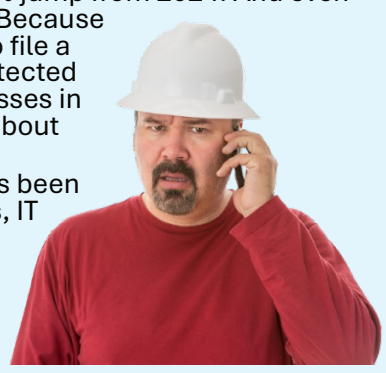
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Have You Been SCAMMED?



by Linda Kerth

The global scam industry is enormous — roughly **$1 trillion a year**. In the U.S. alone, people reported **$15.9 billion** in losses to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) last year, a 25% jump from 2024. And even that is a fraction of the real number. Because many people are too embarrassed to file a report, thousands of scams go undetected each year. The FTC estimates true losses in 2024 were closer to **$200 billion** — about **$550 million every day**.



Nearly everyone in the U.S. (98%) has been targeted. No one is immune: doctors, IT professionals, academics, retirees, and all of us simply trying to get by.

Why scams are exploding

Two forces are driving the surge:

- **AI** — Scammers now deploy deepfake videos, synthetic voice cloning, and AI-generated endorsements from celebrities or news anchors. The scale and sophistication are unprecedented.
- **Cryptocurrency** — Investment scams thrive because crypto is hard to trace, poorly regulated, and often routed through offshore exchanges. And, unlike bank accounts, crypto holdings aren't federally insured so there is no way to get that money back.

Medical scams

The most predatory scams target people dealing with serious health problems who are desperate for help. Scammers use fake websites, AI-generated celebrity endorsements and various types of ads, and fabricated "breakthrough cures" to prey on peoplewho are suffering. Victims are pressured into buying months of bogus treatments, then hit with hidden fees and unauthorized recurring charges. Scammers strike again, rapaciously grabbing more money with hidden charges or false claims.

Romance scams

The world of online dating has become a major hunting ground. In 2025, nearly **50,000 Americans** lost **$1.3 billion** to romance scams. This spans age groups, backgrounds and financial status' by emotionally manipulating people into handing over their money or other investments.

The struggle to get help

Recovering funds can be extremely difficult. Because victims often *authorized* the transactions, banks are usually not liable, and reporting to local police or the FBI rarely leads to restitution. Even if you are unlikely to get your money back, it is still vital that the crime against you is reported; this does help in shutting scammers down.

Another scam these days is scammers impersonating recovery agencies — including the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3). They call saying you are being served with legal documents for an outstanding debt then attempt to extract money by saying they'll reduce the debt if you pay it immediately. The quickest way to determine if this is legitimate is to do a reverse number lookup, or use a scam number detector such as Bitdefender (https://www.bitdefender.com/en-us/consumer/reverse-phone-lookup).

Continued victimization

Victims trying to get help may be targeted again by scammers impersonating law enforcement. Contact the law enforcement agency nearest to where you live and ask if they have contacted you. If they did not, tell them the situation.

Many people also suffer unexpected fallout: bank fees, tax bills, and IRS penalties for withdrawing money from retirement accounts to pay scammers.

What to do if you are targeted

First: don't be ashamed or embarrassed; it is vital that you protect yourself and your assets by reporting a scam. These criminals are skilled manipulators and count on your reluctance to file a report and take other action. Get angry instead: anger is more useful than embarrassment and is powerful when channeled into action.

Second: Take action as soon as you discover a problem by d reporting the incident to:

- Local Law Enforcement: Especially if money was lost or your safety is at risk
- Your banking institution--Remember: You can put a stop on withdrawals or contest charges.
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC): ReportFraud.ftc.gov
- Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3): IC3.gov
- USAGov: Guidance for reporting mail, phone, or identity theft

Immediate steps

- **Contact your bank immediately** if you shared financial information or sent money
- **Change passwords** and increase online/digital security, enable two-factor authentication
- **Keep records** of emails, texts, receipts, screenshots, notes

Protect yourself going forward

It's better to slow down and do a bit of checking before risking your money and safety.

- Be skeptical of "too good to be true" offers.
- Leave the website and google reviews for the company or product. Do not just trust reviews posted on the seller's website.
- Run the company's name through the Better Business Bureau (https://www.bbb.org/).
- Use fraud-detection tools like Amazon Fraud Detector (https://aws.amazon.com/fraud-detector/) a free service from Amazon.
- Protect your identity with Intuit Credit Karma (https://www.creditkarma.com/). They offer free identity monitoring alerts if your personal data leaks in a data breach.
- Verify sellers.
- Stick with trusted retailers.

Remember, you're not alone. Almost every adult in the US has been targeted by scammers but it takes each of us filing a report and taking other action to shut them down.

VAN ZANDT STEWARDS

Van Zandt Hall Highlighted Offerings

by Will Radecki

An Evening with Namoli Brennet – Friday, October 9 from 7pm to 9pm

Mark your calendar for this one. Namoli Brennet is an American singer-songwriter and recording artist known for her introspective folk-rock and acoustic music. This pioneering transgender musician has been touring consistently across the United States and Europe since her 2002 debut and producing and engineering her work through her own label. Her music, characterized by its lyrical depth and melodic warmth, has found a loyal audience that appreciates authentic storytelling and artistic self-reliance. We're lucky to have her perform at the Van Zandt Hall. Get tickets at tinyurl.com/VZH-Namoli. Suggested donation is $15, but no one will be turned away.

NEW! Tai Chi with Howard Holt – Every Friday at 10am

Tai chi is a popular mind-body exercise that improves strength, flexibility, balance, and mental well-being. It's also a lot better use of your time than sitting on a couch, watching TV. Howard Holt has been teaching tai chi to all age groups for many years. Donations for this 1-hour class are encouraged but not required. Come and learn something ancient and new.

And last but not least, the Van Zandt Community Hall continues its long standing tradition of supporting voter awarness with a **Candidate Forum on Saturday October 17th from 4-6pm**. All are welcome and encouraged to join us!

"Trying to be happy by accumulating possessions is like trying to satisfy hunger by taping sandwiches all over your body."
– George Carlin





Riddles for Kiddles

1. How do you fix a broken pumpkin?
2. What do you get when you drop a pumpkin?
3. How does an elephant get out of a tree?
4. What room are ghosts not allowed to enter?



A New Kind of Family Outing: Take a Virtual Field Trip

KIDTROPOLIS: Children's Museum Houston



In Kidtropolis, USA, kids get to practice real-world jobs and other activities they will encounter as adults. Kidtropolis allows them to choose where to work, where to shop, and what to do with the money they earn. It is up to them to keep this city functioning by becoming city leaders, business managers, shoppers, voters and workers to run it all. Kidtropolis features nine businesses and over two dozen job opportunities that offer fun, hands-on activities that can be done in your home.

Kidtropolis encourages kids to role-play jobs that highlight the work of city leaders, business owners, employees and citizens; earn income by working; use money in a way that model real life; and engage in trial and error to discover the importance of money management and financial planning. By taking on these roles, kids keep the city running as they participate in a sophisticated, simulated economy where they can earn and spend money on items and experiences throughout the "city."

Just go to: https://www.cmhouston.org/virtual-exhibits/kidtropolis.

Food Matters



Apple Sage Pork Chops



Need a tasty dinner that doesn't break the bank in 30 minutes? This recipe hits all the markers and will be a hit with your family!

Prep Time: 8 min **Cook Time:** 17min **Total Time:** 25min

Ingredients

- 4 bone-in or boneless pork chops (ach about ½ inch thick
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 apple, cored, peeled and sliced into thin wedges green, preferably Granny Smith
- ½ teaspoon minced garlic
- ½ cup apple juice
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon ground sage leaves *if using fresh sage, use 2 tsp
- ¼ teaspoon chili flakes

Garnish:

- fresh sage leaves optional

Instructions

1. Peel and cut apples into quarters, then slice out the core. Cut into thick wedges. (don't worry if they brown a little because you will be browning them in butter anyway).
2. Pat pork dry with paper towels and season pork chops with salt.
3. Melt butter with garlic in a large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. When bubbly, add apple wedges. Turn occasionally, until golden on both side, 2-3 minutes, then remove to a small plate.
4. Add pork to pan and cook until browned, about 3 minutes per side.In a small bowl, stir apple juice and Dijon mustard and seasonings.Once pork is browned, pour in juice mixture and add apples. Reduce heat, cover and simmer, turning pork occasionally, until cooked through for 5-7 minutes (or until meat thermometer reaches internal temperature of 145 degrees F or 63 degrees C)
5. Remove pork and apples from pan.Boil sauce, stirring often, until as thick as you desire, 3 to 5 minutes. Return pork chops and apples to pan, then remove from heat.Spoon sauce and over pork chops with apples and serve.

Store these apple sage pork chops in the fridge in an airtight container for up to 3 days.



Kitchen Hacks

by Mahalia Blue

Approximately 30% to 40% of the food supply in the U.S. goes to waste each year, according to estimates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a huge portion of that happens in our home kitchens. This translates to hundreds of dollars of waste per person each year. These tips can help reduce food waste.

1. Toss spoiled produce: Before storing, examine produce just purchased and remove items with bruises, are overripe or on the edge of spoiling..
2. Use glass storage jars: Glass jars prevent exposure to BPA; they do not stain or absorb odors, either. Storing in glassware can increase shelf life by several days.
3. Butter and wrap sliced cheese: Apply a thin layer of butter to the exposed side of cut cheese, wrap in waxed paper or parchment, and place it in a plastic bag.
4. Puncture plastic storage bags: Poke a few holes in produce bags otherwise they trap moisture that causes produce to break down faster. Adding a paper towel to bags with damp produce will help lengthen shelf life and reduce decomposition.
5. Consider the freezer: Freezing works well for most fruits and vegetables, as long as they are consumed within eight to 12 months. Most raw fruit can be spread in a single layer on a sheet pan until frozen, then moved to a storage container.
6. Shrink-wrap the crown of bananas: Wrap some plastic around the crown of a bunch of bananas to curb the release of ethylene gas. This gas makes other produce in the vicinity spoil faster. Apples also release ethylene gas. Do not store them close to other produce or in the refrigerator.
7. Bundle up herbs: Trim the ends and place in a glass of water. Refresh water daily and trim off any ends that look bad.
8. Pantyhose for onion storage: Drop an onion in each foot, tie a knot and repeat until legs are filled. This keeps the onions dry, able to breathe, separated, and suspended to maximize their shelf life.
9. Don't immediately slice and dice: Cutting up produce too long before use can hasten spoilage.
10. Wrap greens in foil: Wrapping broccoli, lettuce and celery in foil will help it last in the fridge for a month or more.
11. Stabilize the refrigerator's temperature

Aim for 35-40 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent the growth of toxic food bacteria. You don't want the temperature so cold everything is frozen. On the other hand, a refrigerator that is too warm results in spoilage.

12. Use pPaper bags for mushrooms: Plastic bags are a haven for moisture, causing mushrooms to mildew.
13. Place tomatoes upside down on the counter: If the stem is gone, placing tomatoes upside down helps keep them longer.15.
14. Tidy up and organize the refrigerator: Remove moldy items immediately as mold will spread. Leave a bit of room between items to improve air circulation.
15. Don't store milk in the refrigerator door.
16. Segregate produce and meats: All meats should be wrapped and stored toward the bottom of the refrigerator or freezer (in case they leak). To be extra safe, place meat in a bowl to catch any liquid residue.
17. Reseal prepackaged goods
18. Freeze bread

Freezing bread eliminates the onset of mold. Storing bread in the fridge makes it go stale faster and does not slow mold growth.

19. Store leftovers in airtight glass containers
20. Maximize pantry and counter space: Not all produce should be refrigerated. Here are some items that should always be stored at room temperature, out of direct sunlight:

Bananas	Lemons	Limes
Pears	Plums	
Melons (in a brown bag)	Peaches (in a brown bag)	
Pineapples (upside down	Mangos (in a brown bag)	

FROM THE MOUNTAIN

by Gretchen Woody

Hope everyone enjoyed the Fall Equinox! Chilly evenings and fabulous Fall colored leaves have been right on schedule as we welcome the Autumn Season. Take time to capture the Season's change! Here is some current information and local trail reports.



Rental cabin at Silver Lake

photo: Gretchen Woody

If you're going camping, Silver Lake Campground and Cabins will remain open for reservations until October 26, 2026, while Douglas Fir and Silver Fir Campgrounds are now closed for the season. The calm lake and the gold and bright orange colors truly set the Autumn ambiance. Be sure to watch the adorable chipmunks scurrying around the trees, eating evergreen pine cones, and collecting food to store up for winter.

As folks also scurry to hike and camp before snow falls, keep track of current conditions through the Trail Reports posted across social media from the Mt. Baker Visitor Center. For local hikes that are not too far up Mt. Baker Hwy, folks may consider Maple Creek Falls Trail, Maple Falls Park, and the Horsebend Trail.

The Maple Creek Falls Trail is a hidden gem! It is located north of the Crossroad Grocery Store on the other side of the A-Frame Church. You may park at the trailhead in the U-shaped lot, not in the Church parking lot. If those two spots are taken, please consider parking at Maple Falls Park.

Maple Falls Park is located on Second St off of Silver Lake Rd in Maple Falls. Currently, the park has exercise equipment, benches, a basketball half-court, a baseball/kickball backstop, and plenty of open field for games, flying a kite, or throwing a ball for your kids and dogs.

Please pick up after your dogs and dispose of any waste in a trash can. Updates are in the works to improve this park with a stage, bathrooms, and wheelchair-accessible pathways.

Remember to stop by the Mt. Baker Visitor Center in Maple Falls if you have questions about lodging, Sno-Parks, NW Forest Passes, as well as the WDFW Hunting & Fishing Licenses and Discover Passes.

Open daily from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. year-round. Nice bathrooms, free WiFi, local art gallery, and a comfy place to lounge while you gather information or catch up on your personal business. Happy Fall

By Gretchen Woody at the Mt. Baker Chamber of Commerce



Whatcomics 2026



Whatcom County teens are invited to submit their 2-D art to be considered for publication in Whatcomics 2026, our teen art book. The rules are simple: live in Whatcom County, be a 6th-12th grader, and submit your original artwork on or before October 31, 2026. We encourage all artistic styles, including drawing, painting, collage, comics and doodles. Due to copyright issues, fan art, AI-generated art, or art based on the work of other artists are not permitted.

To submit, upload your artwork on our website at wcls.org/whatcomics or drop off your work at any public library. Accepted artists receive a copy of the book to keep. We'll host a special celebration at the Lynden Library in January. Grades 6-12.

BRAIN Buster

An Arab sheik is old and must leave his fortune to one of his two sons. He makes a proposition: Both sons will ride their camels in a race, and whichever camel crosses the finish line last will win the fortune for its owner. During the race, the two brothers wander aimlessly for days, neither willing to cross the finish line. In desperation, they ask a wise man for advice. He tells them something; then the brothers leap onto the camels and charge toward the finish line. What did the wise man say?

answer on back page

The Book Shelf

whatcom county library system



October events at the North Fork Library

Mindfulness in Art: Handmade Cards Tues 6th, 1-3pm
Discover the calming power of creativity in this relaxing art class designed to promote mindfulness and self-expression. Space is limited. Please register at wcls.org

¡PIÑATAS! Saturday 10th, 2-4pm
Celebra el Mes de la Herencia Hispana con nuestro taller de piñatas. Decora piñatas y aprende sobre su historia y significado cultural. Trabaja solo, con amigos y/o familiares. Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with our piñata workshop. Decorate piñatas and learn about their history and cultural significance. This workshop is open to everyone. Supplies will be provided.
Space is limited. Please register at wcls.org. Please enter the total number of people joining you.

Whatcom Writes Tuesday, October 11th Submission DEADLINE - Midnight
Whatcom WRITES invites writers of all ages and experience levels to explore a theme inspired by the Whatcom READS book each year. The theme for 2027 is Light in the Dark, drawn from *I Cheerfully Refuse* by Leif Enger

North Fork Teen Corp for All About Bats Tuesday, October 13th 3:30-5:00pm
We need teens with a community spirit to help out with our programming for kids. You'll help pass out supplies and assist in the making and the doing. Teens in grades 6-12 can register at wcls.org.

All About Bats (Kids Program) Tuesday, October 13th 3:45-4:45pm
Learn all about bats with us! We'll bust some bat myths, learn about bat behavior, and come away with some love for these mysterious flying mammals. For grades K-5.

Teen Paint Night Friday, October 16th, 4:00-5:30pm Join us for a fun night of painting, music and creating something all your own. Grades 6-12.

Friends of the North Fork Community Library Monthly Meeting Saturday, October 17th 10:00- 12:00am

PSE Energy Assistance Workshop Saturday, October 17th 10:00-1:00pm
Juan Farias Torres, PSE Outreach Manager, will be helping customers sign up for income eligible PSE programs. For more info go to wcls.org.

North Fork Library Writers' Circle Thursday, October 22nd 6:30-7:45
Please register for this program at wcls.org.org.
North Fork Library Writers' Circle meets every 4th Thursday (with a few exceptions)

North Fork Escape the Library! Friday, October 23rd, 4:00-6:00pm Grades 4-7
Oh no! You've been locked in the library; can you work together to find the way out before it's too late? Join us for a Tween Program where there will be riddles, puzzles, and mysteries to unfold. Think escape room, but at the library! Please register for this program at wcls.org.

North Fork Events, continued

Ready. Set. Solve! Saturday, October 24th 2:00-3:30pm
Join the fun in the first ever WCLS speed puzzling competition! Register your team in-person at the North Fork Library or by calling (360) 599-2020. Team names are welcome and encouraged! If you don't have a team, just show up and join one already there.

Whatcomics 2026 Saturday, October 31st Submission DEADLINE: 5pm for in-person submissions at North Fork Library; midnight for online submissions
Whatcom County teens are invited to submit their 2-D art to be considered for publication in *Whatcomics 2026*, our teen art book. The rules are simple: live in Whatcom County, be a 6th-12th grader, and submit your original artwork on or before October 31, 2026. For more info: wcls.org/?s=whatcomics

October events at the Deming Library

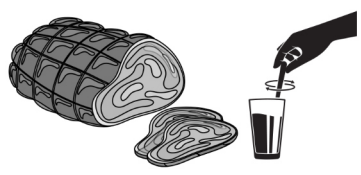
Detoxify: When, How and Why? Saturday, Oct 10, 1:00- 3:00
Curious about detoxing and what it's all about? Let's dive into 'detox' and get more clear about what is truly helpful and what is not. We will discuss herbs, foods, and choices that strengthen the body and enhance it's natural ability to detoxify, thus enhancing our overall well-being. Space is limited. Registration is required.

All About Bats Saturday, Oct. 17th, 10:30 to 11:30
Learn all about bats with us! We'll bust some bat myths, learn about bat behavior, and come away with some love for these mysterious flying mammals. For grades K-5.

Paracord Projects, Wednesday, Oct 21, 4:30-5:30
Learn basic knot tying skills good for your next camping trip and complete a hands-on project to take home: a paracord keychain or a water bottle sling. Robby Holmes, of Mountainside Nature School, leads a fun, hands-on session of practical knot-tying basics. All supplies will be provided. If you'd like to make a water bottle sling, please bring your water bottle. Disposable plastic water bottles will be available for those who don't bring their own bottle. Registration required. Grades 4-7.

Mending Your Clothes Saturday, Oct 24th, 12-2pm
Join Deming staff member Wendy to learn basic skills for mending clothes. Learn how to replace a button, sew simple stitches, and use creative ways to fix a hole in your garments. All materials provided. You are welcome to bring a garment needing mending or embellishment.
Space is limited; registration is encouraged.

Rebus 1



Primary Medical Care Services at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center

Medical Care will be available on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at the EWRRC from 1-5pm. Services available will include:

- Wellness exams
- Sports physicals
- Care for non-emergency acute and chronic health concerns
- Walk-in appointments as available

Appointments can be scheduled by calling **360-230-8157**

Most major insurance accepted including the following:

- Molina
- Premera
- UHC
- Lifewise, and more

If uninsured or not in our insurance network, sliding scale fees are available based on income. Patients will not be turned away for inability to pay.

WHATCOM MOBILE MEDICINE

Gabriel Durben, ND has been a primary care naturopathic doctor in Bellingham since 2014 and lives in rural Whatcom county. He believes that the best healthcare happens when we recognize and value our shared experience as humans.

Youth Suicide: Know the Warning Signs

by Mahalia Blue

Nationally, suicide is the second leading cause of death for 10- to 19-year-olds (accidents are number one) and it's estimated that 6,400 young people aged 10 to 24 die each year at their own hand. But most children and adolescents who attempt suicide show warning signs that parents and others should be aware of and alert for.

Key Youth Suicide Statistics

According to the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System managed by the CDC, thousands of young people in high school attempt suicide each year, averaging over 4,000 attempts per day in grades 9–12.

Teen boys are roughly 2.5 times more likely to die by suicide than teen girls, whereas teen girls are about 2.5 times more likely to result in an emergency room visit for a suicide attempt.

Suicide is the THIRD leading cause of death for college-age youth. (CDC WISQARS)

More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease, COMBINED.

Key Contributing Factors

- Mental Illness: Undiagnosed or untreated mood disorders, such as depression or anxiety, heavily increase suicide risk.
- Hopelessness: Feeling completely helpless or lacking any sense of a positive future is one of the strongest predictors of suicidal behavior.
- Interpersonal Conflict and Loss**:** Severe stress from relationship breakups, family problems, peer victimization, bullying, or social isolation often triggers an acute crisis.
- Impulsivity: Young people experience rapid brain development and intense emotions, which can lead to impulsive actions during a moment of overwhelming distress.
- Substance Misuse: Alcohol or drug abuse impairs judgment and exacerbates underlying mental health struggles.

Be Aware, Be Alert

There are risk factors and warning signs for parents, caregivers, educators, and family members to watch for. Four out of Five youth considering suicide give some sign of their intentions, either verbally or behaviorally. If we take the time to learn what these signs are and how to respond, we can potentially help 80% or more of teens who are thinking about committing suicide.

Often those signs appear to be "normal teen behavior" such as heightened emotionality, withdrawal from family and even friends, etc. But when behavior is "out of character", pay close attention.

Here are a few signs to be alert for. While it is by no means an exhaustive list, these can help in identifying a troubled youth.

Suicide Threats: Either Direct or Indirect Statements

People who talk about suicide, threaten suicide or call suicide crisis lines are 30 times more likely than average to kill themselves. Take suicide threats seriously.

- "I'd be better off dead."
- "I won't be bothering you much longer."
- "You'd be better off without me around."
- "I hate my life."
- "I am going to kill myself."

Suicide threats are not always verbal so parents should monitor digital forms of communication. Monitoring your children's social media accounts is not a violation of your child's privacy; it's a right and responsibility of being a parent.

One out of three suicide deaths is not the individual's first attempt.

The risk of completing suicide is more than 100 times greater during the first year after an attempt.

Take any instance of deliberate self-harm seriously.

Watch for a preoccupation or obsession with death or suicide

- Essays, writing about death
- Poems about death
- Artwork, drawings depicting death

Other warning signs:

- Depression
- Sudden, abrupt changes in personality
- Expressions of hopelessness and despair
- Declining grades and school performance
- Lack of interest in activities once enjoyed
- Increased irritability and aggressiveness
- Withdrawal from family, friends and relationships
- Lack of hygiene
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Final Arrangements

Once the decision has been made to end their life, some young people begin making final arrangements such as:

- Giving away prized or cherished possessions
- Putting their affairs in order
- Saying good-bye to family and friends
- Making funeral arrangements

Some triggers that can make kids who are already struggling attempt suicide are:

- Experiencing a recent loss – a loved one, relationship—particularly a first romance, job, etc.
- Increased use or abuse of alcohol or drugs
- Recent separation or divorce of parents
- Feelings of loneliness or abandonment
- Feelings of shame, guilt, humiliation or rejection

This is not an all-inclusive list of concerning signs. Anytime you notice behaviors that concern you, don't hesitate or be afraid to reach out for help.

And remember, experts advise that it's not usually a single incident, but rather a combination of factors that pushes a child over the edge.

Reaching for Help

When you see a child who is struggling with mental health, emotional distress, or suicidal thoughts, but is not in immediate physical danger, connect them with trained crisis counselors who can talk or text for free, 24/7 at **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** by calling or texting **988**.

When to Call 911

When someone is threatening to kill themself, or their physical safety is at risk, it is a medical emergency, or when

the person has a weapon, is violent, or poses active danger to themselves or others, dial **911**. Tell the 911 operator that it is a psychiatric emergency and ask for a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) officer if one is available.

Every child deserves the support and help they need so it is up to everyone in a community to help keep all of our children safe, healthy, and alive. Sometimes people outside of the family spot a warning sign that has otherwise gone unnoticed. While it's often difficult to alert parents to a problem, it is well worth saving a child's life to step up and say something.



Dear Deb

Dear Deb

I am so scared and freaked out right now. I don't know how this could be happening in my family, but I just noticed cuts up and down the left arm of my 14-year-old daughter. I gasped and asked her what happened, and she quickly pulled her sleeve down and said it was the sticker bushes from walking down the driveway to the bus stop. Do I need to take her to the hospital?

— Scared and Confused

Dear Scared and Confused,

First, take a deep breath. Good job noticing, speaking up, and reaching out for guidance. Discovering signs of self-harm in your child is terrifying, but your grounded response sets the stage for her safety and healing.

Many parents react out of sheer panic, which looks like anger to our kids, interrogations, or punishment. Punishing this behavior usually backfires as it magnifies the child's shame and teaches them to become far more skilled at hiding it.

When kids see disapproval or upset on their parent's faces, they tend to blame themselves, and interpret alarmed voices as "yelling"

Understanding Intent and Function

What you may be seeing is Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (*NSSI*). Across Washington State and here in Whatcom County, hospital data shows that emergency visits for suicidal ideation outnumber visits for physical suicide attempts, while self-harm frequently operates quietly under the surface as an everyday attempt to cope.

Understanding the Why's:

Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI): This is predominantly an emotional regulation and distress tolerance strategy. It is an attempt to externalize overwhelming emotional pain, release acute tension, or combat dissociation. When emotions or surroundings feel completely out of control, physical pain can feel like something a teen can start, stop, and see. In a paradoxical way, youth who cut to manage intense distress are often cutting to survive overwhelming internal pain rather than to end their lives.

Suicidal Ideation and Attempts: By contrast, suicidal thoughts and actions focus on ending life and escaping pain permanently.

Even though NSSI functions as an effort to cope, it remains a dangerous, self-destructive strategy that can become a habit. Some physical injuries may require immediate, compassionate clinical intervention.

Other reasons than emotional pain or distress can also be the start of self-harm behaviors, such as peer pressure, wanting to try something they heard about, boredom, trying to feel something when they feel flat or they want to feel a different way completely, or trying to show someone else how they are hurting inside.

When to Go to the Emergency Room

Seek urgent medical or emergency evaluation immediately if:

The cuts are deep, gaping, won't stop bleeding, or show signs of infection.

They say they want to die or to end their life, have a plan, or cannot promise to keep safe.

If the injuries do not require acute medical treatment and the individual denies wanting to die, an emergency room visit can often heighten panic and trauma. Instead, focus on creating immediate emotional safety at home paired with prompt professional mental health care.

Next Steps for Parents

You do not have to carry this alone, and your daughter needs your steady presence:

Open a calm, private dialogue with your child: Choose a quiet space. Say, *"I love you too much to pretend I didn't see your arm. You are not in trouble, but I care deeply about how much pain you are carrying."*

Validate the distress: Acknowledge her painful emotions directly rather than lecturing about the behavior.

Connect with local support: Schedule an assessment with a licensed mental health professional.

Keep crisis lines handy: Remind her of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (*call or text 988*).

Offering kids alternatives to being alone or isolated is helpful to their overall moods and wellbeing; groups, clubs, and other community or school activities are available here in Mount Baker School District.

Come into conversations with your teens with curiosity and support instead of judgement and fear and let them be a part of the solution. Kids often have a good handle on what might help them if given a chance to have an open dialogue.



To Your Health

'Tis the Sweets Season

by Dr Gabriel Durben

Let's be honest: sugar is delicious. It's in our morning coffee, our favorite local pastries, and somehow sneaked its way into our favorite store-bought marinara sauces. But while a sweet treat can brighten a gloomy afternoon, consistently consuming too much added sugar—the extra sweetener tossed into foods during processing—can quietly wreak havoc on our health.



This challenge becomes especially tough as autumn arrives. Starting with Halloween, we enter a months-long gauntlet of temptation. Between mini candy bars spilling out of bowls, pumpkin spice treats, Thanksgiving pies, and endless holiday cookie swaps, avoiding added sugar feels almost impossible this time of year.

Yet when we indulge in high-sugar diets continuously, our bodies pay the toll in surprising ways. Beyond dental cavities and mid-afternoon energy crashes, high added sugar intake is strongly linked to long-term health challenges. Research shows that excessive sugar consumption spikes your risk of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and chronic systemic inflammation. Furthermore, your liver processes excess fructose by converting it directly into fat, which can lead to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. Over time, that daily holiday-style indulgence stops being a minor treat and starts taxing your cardiovascular system.

The good news? You don't need to banish dessert forever or live on plain kale to make a meaningful difference, even during peak candy season. Evidence-based strategies show that small, steady adjustments yield big health wins:

~Rethink Your Drink: Sugary beverages like specialty holiday lattes and sweet teas are massive sources of hidden sugar. Swapping one sugary drink a day for sparkling water flavored with citrus or fresh fruit eliminates dozens of grams immediately.

~Become a Label Detective: Check the Nutrition Facts panel for "Added Sugars." Aim to keep your daily intake under 25 grams (6 teaspoons), per American Heart Association guidelines. Watch for hidden names like high-fructose corn syrup, cane juice, and agave.

~Prioritize Whole Foods: Whole fruits come with fiber, which slows down how quickly your body absorbs sugar. Swap processed snacks for fresh fruit paired with nuts or Greek yogurt.

~Gradual Downscaling: If you take two spoons of sugar in your coffee, drop to one for a week. Your taste buds adapt surprisingly fast to lower sweetness thresholds.

Slashing added sugar isn't about rigid perfection—especially during the holidays. By making a few mindful swaps this week, you can protect your heart, stabilize your energy, and still savor your absolute favorite holiday treats without guilt.

Keep Moving for Kidney Health

from the Mt Baker Foundation



Colder weather is approaching. Getting outside will be more of a challenge in the coming months, so while we still have good weather, let's try to get our blood flowing with some movement. Movement doesn't have to look the same for everyone.

Walking is great, but it isn't the only way to stay active. For older adults and people with disabilities or limited mobility, movement can be adapted to your abilities and comfort level.

A few ways to get moving (even better if you can do so outdoors):

Try seated or chair-based exercises. Even swinging your arms in circles, or flapping like a bird can get blood flowing, and silliness brings smiles!

Add gentle stretching and flexibility work

Incorporate strength exercises that work for your abilities

Practice balance activities when appropriate and safe

Remember that everyday activities count, too!

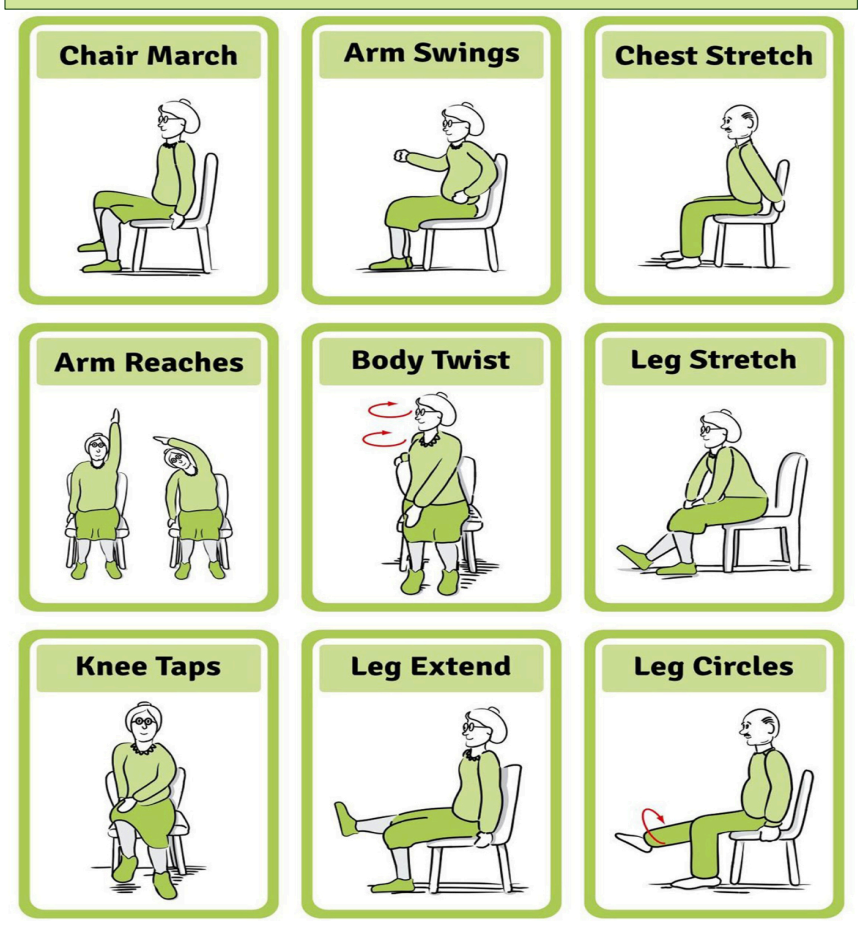
The goal isn't perfection or a certain kind of exercise. It's finding safe, enjoyable ways to move that work for you

Why it matters for your kidneys: Diabetes and high blood pressure are the two leading causes of kidney disease, so anything that helps manage them is doing double duty for your kidneys. Movement helps your body use blood sugar more efficiently, which eases the load on your blood vessels — including the tiny ones inside your kidneys that do the filtering. It also helps your heart pump more efficiently, which can bring blood pressure down and take pressure off those same vessels. You don't need an intense workout to get this benefit; consistency is what counts, so a little movement most days goes a long way toward protecting your kidneys for years to come.

So before the cold sets in, find your version of movement — chair exercises, a short walk, some gentle stretching — and make it a habit while the weather's still on your side.

SEATED EXCERCISES FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES

The excercises in the chart below can be done by anyone regardless of age or ability. If you're stuck at a desk all day for work, these are great for when you get the afternoon drowsies or you're in need of a good stretch. If you're in a wheelchair, they're perfect for working those muscles that otherwise don't get much of a workout. And for seniors, these are also helpful for improving balance, range of motion, flexibility, and reaction times.



From Kristi's Desk

by Kristi Warren Slette
Director Whatcom Family & Community Network

The Power of Positive Childhood Experiences

We all know hard stuff happens in life! Divorce, Illness, Death, Substance Abuse, Poverty, Heartache.

Not one of us is immune. How we face it and how we are supported in facing it matters.

It impacts our mental health. In previous articles, I've written, that we ALL have mental health—just like we have physical health. Some of us were born with strong health, some with complications and complexities and some of us have deteriorated across experiences and time. Again—it happens!

However, when it comes to actions that we can all take now to help the next generations of people develop strong mental health, we can look at the research on what are called **Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs).**

Positive Childhood Experiences include any interaction a child has under the age of 18 where the child feels able to:

- Talk to family about feelings
- Feel that family stood by them during difficult times
- Feel safe and protected by an adult at home
- Have at least 2 adults, who are NOT parents, who take genuine interest in them.
- Feel a sense of belonging in high school (for those who attend a school).
- Feel supported by peers/friends
- Enjoy participating in community traditions.

The more positive experiences a child has by the age of 18, the more likely it is that they will have stronger mental health outcomes by the time they are adults.

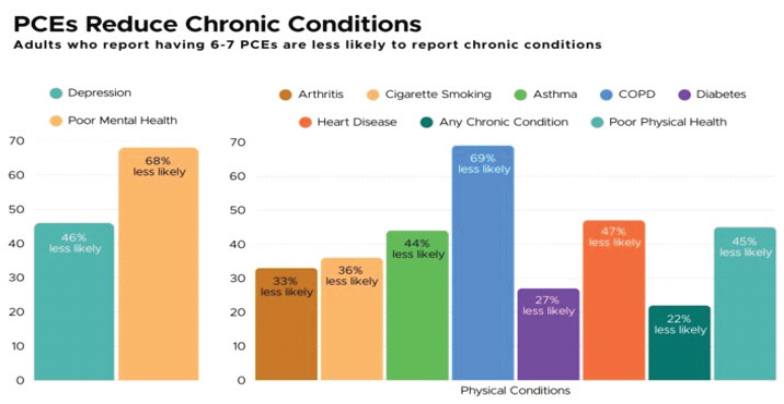
Those adults who report having 6 to 7 PCEs are less likely to report a variety of chronic health conditions, including depression and poor mental health. These individuals are 46% less likely to report depression and 68% less likely to report poor mental health!

The key point, is that if you are an adult or peer to youth—NOW is the time to do whatever you can to increase exposures to Positive Childhood Experiences.

What can you do?

- Increase your comfort talking to children and youth about FEELINGS!
- Show up for kid when they are going through hard times!
    - Send a supportive, kind note, email or text to them and their parents (if you aren't the parent, of course!)
    - If you see them getting treated unkindly or being bullied—be an upstander.
    - Acknowledge the hard time and let them know that if they need help you can connect them to resources or that you will listen.
    - Know the resources available to connect them to! www.whatcomresources.org
- Catch kids in your life doing good and just name the positive!
    - What a great catch that was in that game!
    - I notice you are a good friend to my child. I appreciate that.
    - Your smile brings sunshine into any space.
    - I noticed that you picked up that piece of garbage. Thank you for caring
- Advocate for your kids and teach them to advocate for their own needs.
- Ask about how safe they feel at home, school or community and brainstorm ways for them to increase feelings of security.
- Support kids in making and keeping healthy friendships.
    - Pay attention to the quality of relationships your children are engaged in and help them navigate dynamics in a healthy way.
    - Help make opportunities for them to expand circles of support.
- Go to community events or develop rituals that connect to community or culture.
    - School Ice Cream Socials and Open Houses; Show up for conferences
    - Community events like Trunk or Treat; Holiday gatherings; Community Meals
    - Pick one or two activities that you do every year as a ritual.
    - Choose a rite of passage for your family and make it fun and meaningful

The more positives the better!



A Strong Start at Mount Baker School District

The 2026–27 school year is well underway, and we have much to be proud of at Mount Baker School District. Our schools are filled with energy, and I am grateful to our students, staff, families, and community members for helping us begin the year so positively.

This year, we are bringing our new strategic plan to life. Our vision: **We Belong. We Persevere. We Are Prepared** reflects our commitment to ensuring every Mount Baker student feels valued, develops the confidence to overcome challenges, and graduates ready for what comes next. That vision and the rest of our strategic plan was developed after reviewing more than 500 survey responses and working with a steering team of 50 parents, staff, students, and community members.

For the most current District information, I strongly encourage community members to subscribe to our monthly **Mountaineer Moments** newsletter. Each issue includes important updates, upcoming opportunities, links to District resources, and highlights from across our schools. It also features information from our **Policy to Practice** presentations, which explain how Board policies, such as student discipline, personal mobile devices, and sexual harassment, are implemented in our schools. Previous newsletter issues are also available online.

Our newsletter is the best way to receive consistent, accurate information directly from the District. To subscribe and stay connected, visit our district website: Mountaineer Moments. (https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mount-baker/page/mountaineer-moments)

Thank you for your continued partnership and for the many ways you support Mount Baker students and schools.

Questions, ideas, and concerns are always welcome at jschenck@mtbaker.wednet.edu.

EDDIE'S SCOREBOARD



Grit and Reverence

by Eddie Whirley III

After two weeks of play, Mount Baker's football team has experienced both the positives and negatives.

The season began at home on Friday September 4th with the Mountaineers blowing out 2A school Port Angeles 56-6. The only points allowed happened during the second half when the backups got to play.

The following week, Mount Baker would fall on the road 14-31 against 2A North Kitsap in Poulsbo. With two games under the belt, the team sits at 1-1. No conference games have been played yet, so neither result affects the teams place in the standings.

Junior Tyson Barksdale is the latest to set up behind center for the team replacing the recently graduated Setoga Tigilau, Jr. Right behind him is Sophomore Trey Galbraith, the grandson of current assistant coach and junior varsity leader David Galbraith.

Of note for the Mountaineers are junior running back Enoc Smith and senior lineman Kell Reardon. Smith is currently third in the record book for three different stats: successful PAT attempts (ninety), PAT and field goal points (102 with just twelve of those points coming from the latter), and punting averages (35.3). Reardon has amassed twenty-two tackles for loss and 13.5 quarterback sacks.

Mount Baker is currently in the midst of a three game road trip. Following non-conference road games against 4A Kamiak and Omak, the team will return to Bob Tisdale Field for a Saturday afternoon game against 2B Onalaska on October 3rd at noon. The rest of the regular season will be strictly dedicated to games against fellow conference opponents.

Kendall PTA Meetings and Events

Meetings

- **September 15, 2026**
- **October 20, 2026**
- **November 17, 2026**
- **January 19, 2027**
- **February 16, 2027**
- **March 16, 2027**
- **April 20, 2027**
- **May 18, 2027**

Meetings are at 5:00 PM in the Kendall Library, with Zoom available.

Upcoming Events

The annual Scholastic book fair is Nov 3rd- 6th

Santa photos will be happening November 21st (look for more info here next month)

MBSD Numbers to Know

Jessica Schenck, Superintendent
(360) 383-2000 / jschenck@mtbaker.wednet.edu

Tammy Baisden: Assistant to the Superintendent/Substitute Coordinator
(360) 617-4614 / tbaisden@mtbaer.wednet.edu

Angie Bass: District Secretary / Transcripts
(360) 617-4602 / abass@mtbaker.wednet.edu

Mount Baker School District Office
(360) 383-2000

School Safety & Crisis Resources: Vector Alert Safety Tip Line: (360) 383-5875 (call or text)
Our district code is : 2181

Additional Safety Tip Line information: School Closures, Inclement Weather, & Transportation Updates
Inclement Weather Line: (360) 383-2070

Health Services: (360) 617-4607

Student Services: (360) 383-2012

Family Services Confidential Phone: (360) 617-4511

Mt Baker School District Extra-extra-curricular Support and Programs

If you're raising children in the MBSD, at some point you may have need of programs that exist outside the classroom and playing fields. The district offers many programs designed to help students feel supported, connected and inspired. Whether your child is just starting preschool or gearing up for graduation, here's what families should know.

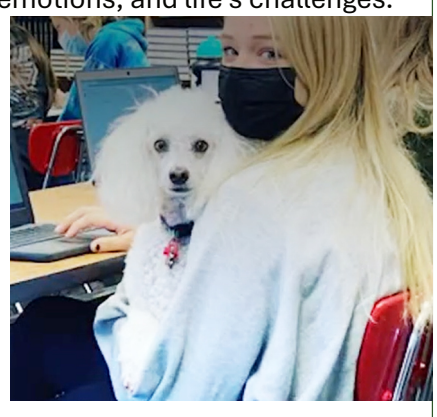
Support That Helps Kids Thrive

Every student has their particular needs and the MBSD has built a whole network of supports to make sure kids don't fall through the cracks.

Learning Support (K–8) You can find lots of support that covers various types of academic help — reading support, bilingual services, special education, and more. These programs support students at all academic levels.

Student Services includes Special Education, Title I, Title III, Title VII, Title X (McKinney-Vento), LAP, and bilingual programs. https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/page/student-services

Mental Health Support Counselors and mental health staff work to help students manage stress, emotions, and life's challenges.



Pawsitively Baker Therapy Dogs This program actually brings therapy dogs into our Mt Baker Junior High classrooms. They bring comfort, calm, and a lot of smiles. For more information contact: twright@mtbaker.wednet.edu, or visit: https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mbjh/page/pawsitively-baker-aai-dog-program

Early Learning & Flexible School Options

Families have choices, especially for younger learners or students who thrive outside traditional classrooms.

ERC Preschool & Head Start is a warm, play-based preschool where little ones learn through exploration. Families can also access free *Child Find* screenings for children from birth to age 21 who may need extra developmental support. For more information about Child Find, https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/erc/page/child-find-screenings and for the preschool and Head Start: https://www.mtbakercooppreschool.com/.

Mount Baker Academy (MBA) is perfect for families who want a more flexible approach to their child's education. Teachers partner with parents to build individualized learning plans, and students can learn remotely or in hybrid formats. Chromebooks and regular check-ins keep everyone on track. https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mba/page/welcome-to-mba

Hands-On Learning in Middle & High School

As students get older, Mount Baker offers them plenty of chances to explore interests and future careers.

Mount Baker Student Industries (MBSI) is hands-on learning at its best. High school students dive into agriculture mechanics, floral design, horticulture, laser engraving, and manufacturing creating real products along the way.

Trade Career Exploration lets students visit trade fairs and industry events to see real-world careers up close.

911 Driving School happens right at the high school, which allows our rural students to learn to drive close to home.

Smooth Transitions Between Grades

As students move from year to year, MBSD works to help them feel confident and supported as they change schools, academic settings, and social structures.

High School (Grades 9–12)

Freshman Orientation: Here ninth graders get their schedules, tour the campus, meet teachers, and connect with Peer Mentors who help them settle in.

Junior High / Middle School (Grades 7–8)

8th Grade Tours Students visit the high school, watch live demonstrations, and preview electives — a fun way to imagine what's ahead.

Learning Support Middle schoolers who need extra help continue to receive targeted academic support through the K–8 Learning Support Program.

Alternative Options for Secondary Students

Mount Baker Academy (MBA) For students who learn best outside a traditional classroom, MBA offers remote or hybrid learning with personalized plans and regular teacher check-ins.

Our student's academic success requires a wide scope of programs and supports to ensure they get the education they deserve and need to move into adulthood and the workforce. As such, Mount Baker School District strives to meet students where they are. Families can expect:

Academic and wellness support
Flexible learning pathways
Hands-on career exploration
Early childhood programs
Smooth transitions between grade levels
Inclusive services for diverse learners

No matter your child's age or learning style, there's a place for them to feel supported and inspired at Mount Baker.

New Year Resolution #10



Resources

Crisis/Emergency

The 988 Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones.

211 helps connect you to community resources tatewide.

24/7 Crisis Line
800.584.3578

The Kendall Fire Station (Whatcom County Fire District Station 92) is housed at the roundabout in Kendall Washington and has fire fighters highly trained in fighting building fires as well as wild fires. They provide a number of other emergency services including medical aid, as well as offering fire safety and prevention education to our community.
Non-emergency number: (360) 599-2823
Remember: in an emergency dial 911
info@wcfd14.org

The **Red Cross** is a registered(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing disaster relief whether it's loss of home due to fire or flood to mobilizing volunteers, supplies and services in disaster stricken regions of the world.
1 800 RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)
https://www.redcross.org

Salvation Army
For many, making ends meet is a daily challenge, forcing people to choose between things like heating their homes and putting food on the table. We understand the stress these situations put on families and are here to help.
360-733-1410
shevaun.malone@usw.salvationarmy.org https://bellingham.salvationarmy.org
2912 Northwest Ave., Bellingham

DVSAS
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services

Serving individuals throughout Whatcom County, DVSAS is a volunteer-driven 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working to heal victims and end domestic and sexual assault. With client-centered, accessible housing and support services, DVSAS empowers victims and survivors while offering safe housing and the possibility of a new life. 24 HOUR HELPLINE
1.360.715.1563
Business Line: 360.671.5714
https://www.dvsas.org

24/7 CRISIS CONNECTIONS

Care Crisis Line: Call 1-800-584-3578 for local, 24/7 crisis response and local resource connection (including the Mobile Crisis Outreach Team).
National Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor.
Veterans Crisis Line: Dial 988 then press 1, or text 838255.
Washington Warm Line: Call 1-877-500-9276 for peer support.
Washington Recovery Help Line: Call 1-866-789-1511 for substance use, problem gambling, and mental health support.
Anne Deacon Center for Hope / Whatcom County Triage Center: Located at 2026 Division Street, Bellingham, WA 98226. Offers short-term crisis stabilization and behavioral health/ substance use services.
Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT): Dispatched through the Care Crisis line for on-site mental health intervention in the community.

Food

Distribution Hours

Tuesdays
8:00 am – 11:00 am
Thursdays
4:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Home Delivery: Tuesday mornings. Enroll on our website (https://www.foothillsfoodbank.org/get-help) or call 360-392-8149
Closed 12/25 and 1/1 if these dates happen to fall on a Tuesday or Thursday
8255 Kendall Road, Maple Falls, WA 98266
(on the campus of the EWRRC)
Contact us at 360-392-8149 or director@foothillsfoodbank.org

St. Peter's Catholic Church Social Action invites our community to join us every Thursday afternoon from 3:00 -5:00pm at 6210 Mt. Baker Hwy. Deming.
We are happy to accept your donations of lightly used clothing and household items. Also shelf stable food items, feminine care items, paper products, body wash, and cleaning products for our community resources bank. Our friends have access to these items as inventory lasts each week.
On the last Thursday of each month each family receives 4 pack toilet paper and laundry soap.
If you are in need of a specific item let us try to help you!

River of Life Community
Mission: To Love God and To Love Others



Low Income Health Care

Unity Care NW provides affordable primary medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy services for children and adults.Care NW accepts Washington Apple Health (Medicaid), Medicare, and most private insurance plans. For those who do not have insurance or who have high deductibles or co-pays, we offer a Sliding Fee Discount Program that can reduce the cost of care. Eligibility for the Sliding Fee Discount Program is based on household size and income. No one is ever denied services because of an inability to pay.
360-676-6177
https://unitycarenw.org

Sea Mar Community Health Center is a community-based organization committed to providing quality, comprehensive health, human, housing, educational and cultural services to diverse communities. Sea Mar proudly serves all persons without regard to race, ethnicity, immigration status, gender, or sexual orientation regardless of ability to pay for services.
360.671.3225
https://www.seamar.org/whatcom-medical-bellingham.html

Rebus 2



Homeless Help

Bridge 2 Services is a mobile outreach program that bridges homeless people to the organizations and services they need. We help make connections to vital services like housing, medical assessments, substance treatment, case management, and more.
Supplies we offer: basic triage supplies like water, food (sometimes hot), snacks, clothing, hygiene items. Tents, sleeping bags, tarps, blankets.
info@ferndalecs.org
Text: 813-957-4935
https://ferndalecs.org/bridge-2-services/

Local Healthcare

Ask-a Nurse Clinics Health Ministries Network volunteer nurses provide free blood pressure checks, health counsel, referral and telehealth, as well as limited screening. On the fourth Tuesday of the month, the "Ask a Nurse" program is augmented by community partners that include the Family YMCA,. Baker Foundation,of Whatcom County, and Support Northwest.
8-11am—2nd and 4th Tuesday each month at EWRRC.

DON'T FORGET!

Stop by an Ask a Nurse clinic at the EWRRC on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month between 8 & 11.30 am, and get your A1C tested. It's the best way to understand your blood sugar levels and see if you're at risk for diabetes.

Whatcom Mobile Medicine

Primary care services the 1st and 3rd Monday each month from 1-5pm at East Whatcom Regional Resource Center. For an appointment, call 360.230.8157.
We take non-emergency, acute and chronic health problems.
Walk-in appointments are available.
Sliding scale or Molina, Premera, UHC, Lifewise and more.
Patients will not be refused help based on ability to pay.

Mental Health

NAMI Whatcom Mental Health Support Group meets the 2nd Thursday of each month 10:00am -11:30AM at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center, 8251 Kendall Rd, Maple Falls WA 98226.
This no-cost structured support group, facilitated by trained peers offers respect, encouragement, connection, and hope for individuals 18 and over affected by mental health conditions, including family and friends.
THERE WILL BE NO NAMI WHATCOM SUPPORT GROUP MEETING On JANUARY 8th,2026
GROUP WILL RESUME FEBRUARY 12, 2026
For more information visit www.namiwhatcom.org , call us at 360-671-4950 or email namiadmin@namiwhatcom.org
NAMI Whatcom Office
800 E. Chestnut St., Suite 1C
P.O. Box 5571, Bellingham, WA 98227 Phone: (360)-671-4950
Website: namiwhatcom.org

Deb Shawver, LICSW offers individual counseling sessions in-person and on telehealth for ages 13+, as well as support groups for teenagers and parents.
On the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month, she will be joining the Ask-A-Nurse program from 8-11 AM.
In addition, Deb is offering a free drop-in group for teenagers starting July 1st. This group will meet weekly on Tuesdays 6-7:30 PM through the summer.
Deb accepts most insurances, including Cigna (out of network) Molina, Medicare, Kaiser, Premera, Blue Cross, Regence, CHPW, Humana.
Catch-Me, LLC
360-536-1565
catchmecoachme@gmail.com
https://www.catch-me.io

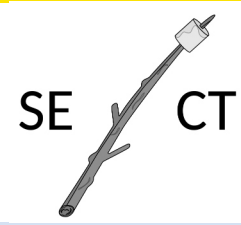
Additional Health

SEAS is a free local resource navigation service available to families in Whatcom County. SEAS provides resource navigation for all families that have a child with a disability or developmental concern under 21. Additionally, in 2022, SEAS expanded to provide resource navigation for all families with a child under 5, and expecting families. From questions about your child's development or behaviors, to connecting to services or resources, SEAS works with you to help you get what you need so your children and family can thrive. SEAS family resource navigators are experts in Whatcom County's programs for families and children. They provide confidential, judgment-free, multi-language navigation services. Staff are multilingual and interpretive services are available.
Our goal is to help every family get connected to the resources that they need.
360-715-7485
seas@oppco.org
https://www.seaswhatcom.org

Center for Independence (CFI) is a non-residential, community-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization operated by people with disabilities, serving people with disabilities ages 14 and up. We serve as a resource for individuals with disabilities to fully access and participate in the community through outreach, advocacy, and independent living skills development. We work together with participants to achieve independent living goals such as self-advocacy, self-sufficiency, and self-determination.
1-888-482-4839
info@cfi-wa.org
https://www.cfi-wa.org

Washington Connection offers a fast and easy way for families and individuals to apply for a variety of services such as Food, Cash, Child Care, Long-Term Care, and Medicare Savings Programs. Individuals that are age 65 or older, blind or disabled may also apply for medical assistance.
(877) 501-2233
https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/

Rebus 3



Addiction

Lifeline Connections is a community-based behavioral health organization that specializes in providing confidential and compassionate care to individuals who experience a substance use and/or mental health condition. Dial or Text 988the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, if you or a family member is experiencing a mental health crisis. The Lifeline is available for everyone, is free, and confidential.
info@lifelineconnections.org
(800) 604-0025
https://lifelineconnections.org

ALANON
A part of the Al-Anon Family Groups' fellowship for younger members whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.
Find an Alateen meeting: https://www.whatcomafg.org
Find an Alanon meeting: https://www.whatcomafg.org

NA
Find a Meeting: https://nwscna.org/meetings/
360-647-3234
Webservant@nwscna.org

AA
Find a Meeting: https://whatdcomaa.org/meetings
altwebservant@district11aa.org
https://whatcomaa.org/
(360) 734-1688

Resources

Addiction Continued

SAMHSA's National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP (4357) (also known as the Treatment Referral Routing Service), or TTY: 1-800-487-4889 is a confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations.
1-800-662-HELP (4357)
https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/helplines/national-helpline

Seniors

Whatcom Council on Aging, in partnership with the people we serve, offers nutritional, health, social, recreational, and educational programs that promote lifelong independence.
Vision: Lifelong empowerment through education, advocacy, and support: Independence through affordable housing, nutritious food, health care and programs that support lifetime wellness.
Connections with community Senior Centers, programs and outreach.
Opportunities for civic and community life engagement through education, recreation, and volunteerism.
Self-respect through self-determined and independent living to prevent premature non-independent living and through opportunities for seniors to maintain autonomy.
Good physical and mental health through proper nutrition, exercise, and other social activities.
Community support built through advocacy forolder adults and througha positive image of aging.
Values: Whatcom Council on Aging engages in partnerships with agencies and community groups that support the values of Accessibility, Connectedness, Involvement, Independence, Individual Respect, Health, and Advocacy.
360-733-4030
https://whatcomcoa.org/contact-us/

Northwest Regional Council connects and creates new solutions to navigate the challenges of aging and disability.
NWRC provides an extensive array of services and resource to assist the elderly and disabled improve their lives with short– and long-term solutions including health care, medical transportation, in-home care, case management, resources for veterans, housing, food, a variety of support services, and much more.
(360) 676-6749
https://nwrcwa.org
600 Lakeway Drive
Bellingham, WA

Home Owners/Utilities

Senior Resources
A guide to services and resources for seniors in Whatcom County
360.344.3333
guide@olypen.com
https://nwseniors.com/whatcom-county/

Adult Protective Services (APS) is dedicated to serving vulnerable adults. We investigate reports about abuse, abandonment, neglect, exploitation and self-neglect of vulnerable adults in Washington State. We collaborate with other agencies to offer protective services as needed. Our goal is to promote lives free of harm while respecting individual choice.
Make an APS Report: Report Online or Call 1-877-734-6277
https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/adult-protective-services

Catholic Community Services is the largest local private provider of assistance to individuals and families struggling with poverty and the most vulnerable in our communities.
(360) 676-2164
info@ccsww.org
https://ccsww.org

Medicare.gov provides information on how to get started with Medicare, with what Medicare covers, as well as information about prescription drug/dental/vision plans, has health counseling, assists in finding a provider, and other health-related resources.
1-800-MEDICARE(1-800-633-4227)
TTY users can call-877-486-2048
https://www.medicare.gov

Volunteer Chore Program provides volunteers to help the elderly (60 and over) and adults with functional disabilities remain independent in their own homes.
The Chore Program serves as a safety net, helping those for whom other resources are unavailable.
Chore assists 200+ Whatcom County residents each year.
(360) 734-5121 ext. 1172
chore@whatcomvolunteer.org

Each year we provide hundreds of hours of support to caregivers in Whatcom and Skagit County through our free programs: Adult Day Programs for scheduled caregiver respite
Support Groups for adults caring for those affected by dementia
Adult Children Support Groups for those adults caring for a parent affected by dementia
Dementia-Friendly events
Art Access Classes with Allied Arts of Whatcom County
Project Lifesaver (a partnering with the Whatcom County Sheriff) providing electronic technology to locate those who wander
All seek to provide a support to those living with dementia as well as to those providing their care.
(360) 671-3316
https://www.dementiasupportnw.org

Family Services

FAMILY SERVICES & PARENTING SUPPORT
There are four Family Services Coordinators at Mount Baker School District. Our mission is to create partnerships between families, school, and the community. All our services are confidential.
We provide support which enables children and adolescents to live in a safe and healthy environment, as well as encourages them to be present and do their best in school.
We assist families with resources, information and problem solving to help their children succeed in school.
We are available for confidential meetings by phone, at school, or at home.
(360) 383-2000
(360) 383-2009
Kendall Elementary
(360) 383-2055
https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/kendall
7547 Kendall Road
Maple Falls, WA 98266
Acme Elementary School
(360) 383-2045
https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/acme
5200 Turkington Road Acme, WA
Mt Baker Jr High School
(360) 383-2016
5100 Mitchell Road Deming, WA
https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mbjh
Mt Baker Senior High School
(360) 383-2015
https://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/o/mbhs
4936 Deming Road Deming, WA

PARENT TRUST
Because kids don't come with instructions! The Family Help Line is free call from anywhere in Washington State, available to parents, caregivers, and anyone who has an interest in or questions about a child in their community. We can help you find resources, parenting classes, community resources and so much more. We are here to talk and problem solve with you!
If you need a translator, please call and let us know – in most cases we can have a translator available in minutes!
800-932-4673
familyhelpline@parenttrust.org
https://www.parenttrust.org

Care Connect helps pregnant and newly parenting women prepare for delivery and parenthood with a series of classes. Lessons include topics such as Understanding Pregnancy, Labor and Delivery, Postpartum, Infant Hygiene, Infant First-Aid and Getting Your Baby to Sleep. At each weekly appointment, clients will meet one-on-one with a trained peer mentor for one hour. With each lesson that is completed, clients will earn "baby bucks" for supplies such as diapers, wipes, clothing and blankets.
(360)-9057
info@whatcomclinic.com
https://www.whatcomclinic.com/services/education/

NYS offers a wide variety of programs, services and support for Whatcom County youth, including housing, health care, mental health, employment and education, gender identity support, and teen court. Youth are welcome to drop in.
(360) 734-9862
hello@nwys.org
https://www.nwys.org
1020 North State St. Bellingham,

ECEAP & Head Start
ECEAP (pronounced "E-Cap") is the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program funded by Washington State for children 3 and 4 and, in some locations, infants or toddlers who are younger than 3 years old.
Both ECEAP and Head Start include:
Free early learning child care or preschool to support child's development and learning. In some locations, Head Start may also offer home-based services.
Family support and parent involvement.
Child health coordination and nutrition.
Services responsive and appropriate to each child's and family's heritage and experience. Children who attend ECEAP and Head Start learn to manage their feelings, get along with others and follow classroom procedures. They build the beginning skills for reading, math and science.
The programs work closely with parents to support their children's health and education and to meet family goals. They help families access medical and dental care and social services.eceap@dcyf.wa.gov for ECEAP
dcyf.hsco@dcyf.wa.gov for Head Start
https://dcyf.wa.gov/services/earlylearning-childcare/eceap-headstart.

Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) is a voluntary program serving runaway adolescents and youth who are in conflict with their families. The program targets adolescents between the ages of 12 through 17. FRS services are meant to resolve crisis situations and prevent unnecessary out-of-home placement. They are not long-term services. The services will assess and stabilize the family's situation. The goal is to return the family to a pre-crisis state and to work with the family to identify alternative methods of handling similar conflicts. If longer-term service needs are identified, FRS will help facilitate getting thethe youth and their family into ongoing services.
If you experience any difficulties when calling to make a referral to the FRS program, contact Hannah Merley at 253-254-3473.
For FRS Intakes call: 1-866-363-4276 and tell the intake worker that you would like "Family Reconciliation Services" to start working with your family.

Department of Children, Youth, and Families
DCYF is a cabinet-level agency focused on the well-being of children. Our vision is to ensure that "Washington state's children and youth grow up safe and healthy—thriving physically, emotionally and academically, nurtured by family and community.
Report Child Abuse and Neglect | 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276) https://dcyf.wa.gov/services/child-welfare-system/cps

Rebus 4



The Parent to Parent Support Programs provide emotional support and information to families of children with developmental disabilities, delays, and special health care needs. Personal support from another parent, who has a child with similar needs, can be helpful in coping with many challenging experiences and feelings. Helping Parent volunteers have completed a training program and are available to provide support and information to other parents. All information will be kept confidential. There is no cost for this service.
(360) 715-0170
p2p@arcwhatcom.org
https://www.p2pwhatcom.org/home

Veterans

Veterans Administration
Serving Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, and Island counties, we offer confidential help for Veterans, service members, and their families at no cost in a non-medical setting. Our services include counseling for needs such as depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the psychological effects of military sexual trauma (MST). We can also connect you with more support in VA and your community.
800-698-2411
https://www.va.gov
3800 Byron Av, Suite 124, Bellingham,

Vet Center
Serving Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, and Island counties, we offer confidential help for Veterans, service members, and their families at no cost in a non-medical setting. Our services include counseling for needs such as depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the psychological effects of military sexual trauma (MST). We can also connect you with more support in VA and your community.
800-698-2411
Hours: 24/7
https://www.va.gov

If you're a Whatcom County veteran, we can help you or your family access local, state, and federal benefits and services. Call or visit us in person to find out how.
509 Girard Street, Lower Level,
676-6724 ext. #50700
M/W/F 12:30-5pm; information for all available

Education

ESL: English Language Learning
Roughly two thirds of the people we serve are immigrants who are learning English for the first time. More than half of our learners have no high school diploma or GED, and the majority have no computer at home. Our free, customized, individual tutoring and small group classes make a difference in their lives by…
*Improving their basic reading, writing, math, computer, and parenting skills. *Helping them prepare for a GED test and/or further education.
*Helping them attain US citizenship.
*Increasing their employment opportunities.
*Enabling self-sufficiency.
*Enhancing the stability of their daily lives.
ell@whatcomliteracy.org
(360) 685-6756
https://www.whatcomliteracy.org/english-language-learner

Vocational Rehabilitation
Providing vocational rehabilitation services for disabled and displaced workers.
(360) 812-6610
DVRBellinghamReferral@dshs.wa.gov https://www.dshs.wa.gov/location/dshs-dvr-bellingham
4101 Meridian St Bellingham,

Resources

Education/Jobs

Evergreen Goodwill offers ESOL classes at basic and intermediate levels for people who want to develop English literacy and improve language skills for the workplace. Classes include ESOL Basic through ESOL Level 4 and Citizenship Test Preparation.
Digital Skills: With our different Digital Skills classes, you'll learn the basics of how to operate a computer, including file management (saving), typing (keyboarding), internet, and email. Later, you can take classes in Microsoft Word and Excel to learn to create spreadsheets for organizing data and documents for writing a resume or cover letter. We also offer online job search classes and special computer classes for non-native English speakers. No previous computer knowledge or experience is required.
Wraparound Services: Evergreen Goodwill's instructors, case managers, and employment specialists support students holistically based on their individual needs and help remove barriers to employment and education. Students can receive support for barriers like housing, transportation, legal or immigration matters, among many others.
Reentry Services: Finding work with a conviction history can be a challenge, but Evergreen Goodwill is here to help. Initially, our Employment and Reintegration Strategies class focuses on mental and physical health, stress management, the theory of change, and goal setting exercises. The second half of the curriculum helps students plan their careers, search for jobs, and prepare for interviews.
(360) 752-2080
evergreengoodwill.org

WorkSource is a statewide partnership of state, local and nonprofit agencies that provides an array of employment and training services to job seekers and employers in Washington.
We also offer assistance in applying for unemployment.
888-316-5627
https://www.worksourcewa.com

Vocational Rehabilitation
Providing vocational rehabilitation services for disabled and displaced workers.
(360) 812-6610
DVRBellinghamReferral@dshs.wa.gov
https://www.dshs.wa.gov/location/dshs-dvr-bellingham
4101 Meridian St Bellingham,

Employment Security
Agency dealing with employment/unemployment issues. Apply for unemployment insurance. Paid family and medical leave.
360-890-3500
https://www.esd.wa.gov

Home Owners/Utilities

Washington State Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) provides individual support and federal relief funds to qualified Washington homeowners behind on their mortgage due to pandemic hardship. This program is administered by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission (WSHFC).
Pre-Purchase Homebuyer Education Classes or Housing Counseling
Down-Payment Assistance Programs or other help buying a home
Foreclosure Prevention Housing Counseling
Legal Aid
Home Repair or Home Modification Assistance
Payment Assistance Programs (Availability varies. Call for information) 877.894.4663
www.homeownership-wa.org

Are you eligible for free home weatherization?
Check it out at PSE: https://tinyurl.com/t6ue8bt2

Home Owners/Utilities

We are a local government agency that serves thousands of residents in Whatcom County. **The Bellingham Housing Authority(BHA)& the Whatcom County Housing Authority** work together provide needed housing in our community.
We serve Low-Income Families, Elderly People, Those with Disabilities, & Working Families in need of affordable housing.
(360) 676-6887 ext. 1025
info@bellinghamhousing.org
https://bellinghamhousing.org

You can be emailed important Columbia Valley Water District News and Updates by creating a login at Xpressbillpay.
Go to www.cv-wd.com
On the home page you will see a button that says "Pay Your Bill Online" hit that button and it will take you to Xpressbillpay.com. Create a login by providing your email address and answering a couple of questions. It's that simple! Once you have a login you will begin to receive email updates about Columbia Valley Water District activities like: Emergency Notifications and Newsletters.Although creating a login will ensure you receive email notifications - Here you can also pay your bills online, sign up for auto-pay and/or paperless billing if you choose.
All you need is an internet connection and an email address. Once you sign up for your account and start using this service, you'll wonder how you ever got along without it! It's simple to use.
If you choose paperless billing, every month we'll send you a reminder email to let you know when your bill is online. Then, you just log into your account at xpressbillpay.com or use our mobile app to view your bill. You can also see two years' history of your account online, so you can compare your current bill to a previous bill.When you're ready to pay your bill, select a payment type. You can pay with a credit card, or debit card. Enter the information and you're done! It's that easy, and only takes you a few minutes each month. Or you can set up your bill on Auto Pay and have it automatically paid for you each month!
6229 Azure Way, Maple Falls, WA
(360)599-1699
admin@cv-wd.com

Whatcom County Water District 13 is committed to protecting the environment and the natural habitat while supplying pristine water and reliable wastewater services to our customers.
360-599-1801
admin@wcwd13.com
532 Sprague Valley Drive, Maple Falls

Whatcom/Skagit Housing
Since 1976, we have assisted over 700 families in building their own homes in Whatcom and Skagit Counties. Mutual Self-Help combines your sweat equity with technical assistance from WSH and affordable loans from USDA Rural Development.
(360) 398-0223
julia@whatcomskagithousing.com
https://whatcomskagithousing.com

Habitat for Humanity in Whatcom County provides a unique opportunity for hardworking families to help build and buy their own homes. We work closely with qualified individuals and families to build safe, decent, and affordable homes here in Whatcom.
360.715.9170
info@hfhwhatcom.org
https://www.hfhwhatcom.org

Energy Assistance
Do you need help with energy costs? Apply for Energy Assistance directly through PSE now by going to: https://www.pse.com/en/account-and-billing/assistance-programs
1-888-225-5773

PSE's Bill Discount Rate (BDR) program provides you with ongoing help on your monthly energy bill. Depending on your household income and household size, you can save 5% to 45% a month on your bill.
There is one simple application to fill out. In most cases, no proof of income is required to apply. And the application only takes a few minutes to complete online. If you've received energy assistance in the past, it's likely you qualify.
1-888-225-5773
https://www.pse.com/en/account-and-billing/assistance-programs/bill-discount-rate

PSE customers: Manage your energy usage online.
For personalized energy-saving suggestions, complete an online home assessment to update your home's energy profile in the my usage of your online account. Measure, and monitor your home's usage.
Find additional energy efficiency suggestions in our to Save library.
To learn more or receive personalized advice over the phone, call an Energy Advisor1-800-562-1482, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Whatcom County Property Tax Exemption for Senior Citizens and People with Disabilities If you are a senior citizen or a person with disabilities with your residence in Washington State you may qualify for a property tax reduction under the property tax exemption for senior citizens and people with disabilities program.
360-778-5000
https://www.whatcomcounty.us/265/Property-Tax-Exemption

Immigrants/Refugees

Supporting Families of Those Detained/ Deported
The Whatcom Community Foundation has three funds (they established them when the last ICE raid occurred several years ago) open to support immigrant families and those detained. The Immigrant Relief Fund is set to support families in need. The Immigrant Bond Fund helps post bond for those while they are being detained. And the Immigrant Legal Defense fund helps provide funding for legal defense. 100% of donations go to those families impacted.
Other organizations that are providing family support include the Immigrant Resources and Immediate Support (IRIS), school-district based family engagement specialists, and Racial Unity Now.
360.671.6463
wcf@whatcomcf.org
https://wcf.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=1523

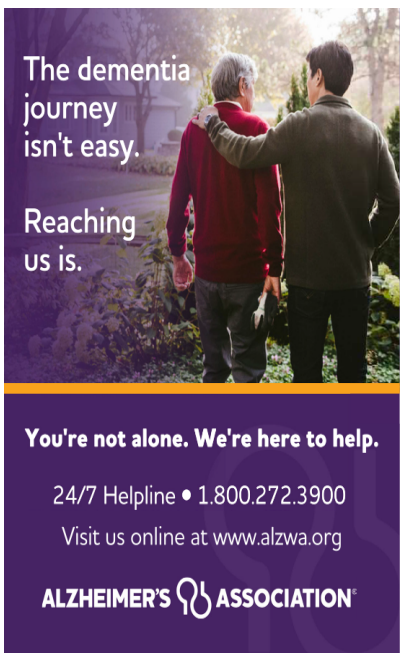
Whatcom Human Rights Task Force
The Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP) provides comprehensive immigration legal services and community education to advance the human rights and well-being of low-income immigrants and refugees.
360-389-3898
whatcomhrtf@gmail.com
http://www.nwirp.org/

Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance Resource Tool
The Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance goal is to help refugee and immigrant families and individuals succeed and thrive in Washington state.
https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=8e7e2fd0641f4f1e90bbaa36a0bc232d

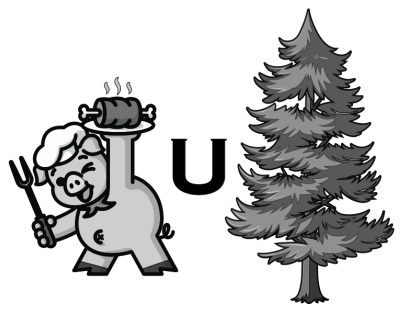
Helping Immigrant Families
IRIS primarily serves immigrant women and children who are survivors of violence. IRIS responds to the urgent and unmet needs of immigrants in our communities in Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish counties in an inclusive and comprehensive manner. IRIS connects immigrants with needed resources in our communities by acting as liaisons for our recipients. IRIS also directly provides funding for items and services that are not accessible to this marginalized population.
info@irisnw.org
1050 Larrabee Ave. Ste. 104 #498
Bellingham
360-935-1688
irisnw.org

Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center
services focus on both conflict prevention and conflict intervention and include mediation, training, facilitation, coaching, supervised visitation, and community education for youth, adults, families, organizations, and businesses throughout Whatcom County.
Services are offered in-person and virtually.
206 Prospect Street, Bellingham
360/676.0122
wdrc@whatcomdrc.org
www.whatcomdrc.org

Immigrant Rights Resources
WAISN-Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network
At WAISN, we are committed to defending immigrant and refugee communities from deportation while advocating for meaningful, systemic change. Our work focuses on both deportation defense and pushing for policies that ensure justice for all Washingtonians.
Deportation Defense Hotline (Monday-Friday; 6am-6pm) at 1-844-724-3737.
info@waisn.org
https://waisn.org



Rebus 5



Septic Systems Evaluation Rebates
Do you need your septic system evaluated? Washington State and local public health regulations require septic system owners to have a complete evaluation of their septic system performed one to three years (depending on the type of system) and to report the condition of their system to the local health jurisdiction.
Whatcom County Health Department is offering enhanced rebates for homeowners who have senior or disability tax exemptions who need their septic system evaluated.
You can learn more at: whatcomcounty.us/septicrebate, or call: 360.778.6267.

Organizations

ORGANIZATIONS

Columbia Valley Park and Recreation District is a local government body serving the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area in the East Whatcom Foothills. Learn more about our commissioners and the work CVPRD is doing on our About page at cv-prd.org. We welcome the public at our meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 6.30 pm at 8251 Kendall Rd, Maple Falls, Rm 3.
You can contact us at:
cvparksandrec@gmail.com

KAVZ Radio is Your Voice of the Valley in the South Fork Nooksack Valley and East Whatcom County. We are the only community, low-power FM radio station in East Whatcom County. Please contact us at info@kavz.org if you want to find out how you can contribute, participate and learn.
You can stream music from our website 24 hours a day at: https://foothillsinfo.com/print-and-radio/
(360) 230-8176
info@kavz.org
https://www.kavz.org

Local community-led Watch Group focused on safety in the Columbia Valley UGA area. Monthly meetings held the first Tuesday of each month at the North Fork Library.
nwmaplefalls@gmail.com
360-933-1620
https://www.facebook.com/groups/718686472042194

The Foothills Community Alliance (FCA), a 501c3 organization was formed in 2020 by local community members with the purpose of funding projects aimed at improving the lives of the residents of Columbia Valley UGA. JOIN US THE 2ND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH at the Kendall Elementary Library, 7547 Kendall Rd. Maple Falls at 5:30pm in person and via Zoom
Look for our event on our Calendar and in The Foothills Outlook and on www.foothillsinfo.com.
info@foothillscommunityalliance.com 360-410-9114
foothillscommunityalliance.com

East Whatcom Regional Resource Center
The East Whatcom Regional Resource Center Information and Referral (I&R) Team serves the East Whatcom Community as a branch of the Opportunity Council. We provide the same access to services that can be found at our downtown Bellingham Opportunity Council location.
8251 Kendall Rd, Maple Falls. Or contact us at 360-599-3944.
8251 Kendall Rd
(360) 599-3944
ewrrc-allstaff@oppco.org
https://www.oppco.org/ewrrc/

Mt. Baker Chamber of Commerce
Staff and Volunteers are on hand to answer questions and provide suggestions to travelers and locals alike. Some business support services are available including printing, laminating, and notary. Stop by, Rebecca and Sonya will be happy to see you!
The Chamber Board of Directors meets once per month on the second Tuesday at 6 o'clock in the Maple Falls Town Hall. Members and visitors are welcome. Contact Rebecca if you'd like to make a presentation.
The Mt. Baker Visitor Center in the Maple Falls Town Hall is open daily from 10 am to 4 pm,
360-599-1518
mtbakervisitorcenter@gmail.com

Mount Baker Community Coalition

Mount Baker Community Coalition: Prevention Starts With All of Us

The Mount Baker Community Coalition (MBCC) is focused on youth substance use prevention and mental health promotion in the Mount Baker School District area. Our mission is to strategically build a strong community that offers well-being to all. We bring together community members, families, schools, organizations, and other local partners to strengthen the supports and connections that help young people thrive.

Our next MBCC meeting will take place on Monday, October 19, from 2:45–4:15 PM. The meeting will be held in a hybrid format, with options to join online via Zoom or in person at the Mount Baker School District Office Board Room. All community members are encouraged to attend and weigh in! Primary prevention is the work of the entire community. When we work together, we can create environments where young people feel connected, supported, and empowered to make healthy choices.

MBCC is excited to welcome Deb Shawver as our Youth Program Coordinator. Deb is co-advising One Baker Voice (OBV) and Peer-2-Peer alongside Mount Baker Junior/Senior High School SAP Shana Axelson.

Looking for a fun way to connect with other students? Deb and Shana are hosting lunchtime games every Wednesday outside Room 315, and all students are welcome!

Students who are interested in peer education, mental health promotion, or prevention-focused leadership are encouraged to reach out to Deb at mbccyouth@wfcn.org.

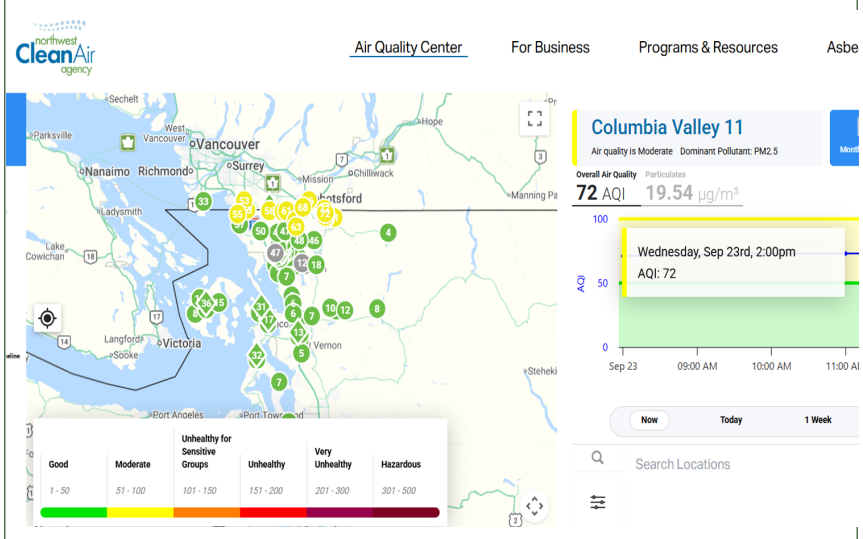
For all other MBCC inquiries—including to request the Zoom link for the October 19 coalition meeting—please contact mbcc@wfcn.org.

Mount Baker Community Coalition
Whatcom Family & Community Network
360.375.0883
wfcn.org

Breathing Easier *cont. from p2*

means staying warm without sacrificing lung health.

How to Check Local Conditions
NWCAA Air Quality Center: nwcleanairwa.gov
Burn Ban Hotline: (360) 778-5903
Whatcom County Fire Marshal: (360) 778-5900
Opportunity Council (Woodstove Change-Out Program): (360) 734-5121



The image above is from NW Clean Air Agency's website showing areas in Whatcom County that have a higher than normal amount of smoke. Visit the website to see current air quality in your area and to learn more about air quality and how we can improve it.

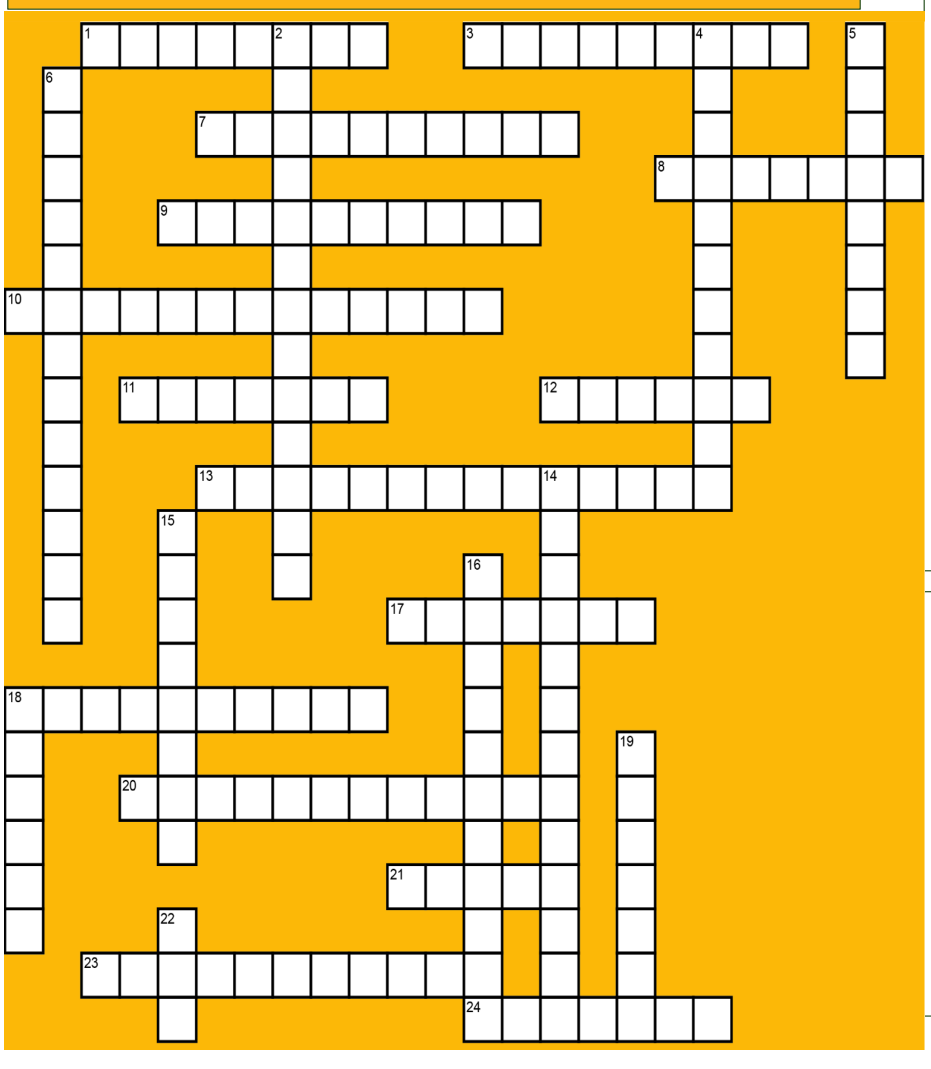
Burn Bans: What They Mean

Many MBSD households rely on wood heat, so NWCAA calls burn bans only when required by state-set criteria such as PM2.5 forecasts and weather conditions. When a ban is in place, anyone with safe alternative heating should use it to reduce smoke. Violations can result in fines of $250 or more.

Because it has such a heavy concentration of wood smoke, Columbia Valley has a Department of Ecology-funded improvement program that helps residents replace old stoves with certified wood or pellet stoves or heat pumps. The program also offers home energy assessments, education, and support. Residents can apply through the Opportunity Council.

October Crossword: 60's Trivia

See how much you remember of the 1960's.



Across
1. Protest shut this univerity down
3. Eco activist who protected WA's wild places
7. 101 of these stole our hearts
8. Protesting fighing rights violations, Native Americans did this
9. Puget Sound rocked by one of these
10. Quote first used on Dr No
11. 1st state where women could vote
12. Beatles 1st performed here
13. Neither Marvin or Eastwood awarded for their singing
17. ? World's Fair
18. Bue Meanies attack ? in Yellow Submarine
20. Turning point in Vietnam war
21. Chubby's popular song/ dance
23. Ground broken for "400-day wonder"
24. "I'm sorry Dave, I'm afraid I can't do that" from ?

Down
2. Legal decision on fishing rights
4. 1st to orbit Earth
5. Follow the ? ball
6. Group made infamouse trip south for racial equality
14. Modern take on Romeo/ Juliet
15. 500lb, 4-legged TV star
16. "Book 'em, Danno!"
18. Terrifying shower scene
19. Religion that championed equal rights
21. 1st primate in space

VAN ZANDT STEWARDS

The Van Zandt Stewards is a small but mighty 501(c)(3) non-profit, comprised of volunteers who are dedicated to building community in the Nooksack River's South Fork Valley and the Kulshan Foothills.
The Stewards manage, maintain and improve the Van Zandt Community Hall, the KAVZ Community Radio station (102.5 FM and streaming at kavz.org), and the Josh VanderYacht Memorial Park. We host a wide variety of community events and programs, including the Everybody's Market, Third Thursday Potluck and Open Mic, Third Place Sunday Coffeehouse, Summerfest, Poetry Café, and programs for seniors and children. In addition, the VZS distribute a monthly email newsletter, the South Fork Scoop (request at info@vzstewards.org). All are welcome, 4106 Valley Hwy/SR 9, Deming WA 98244. www.vzstewards.org

Do you live in the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area?
NEED A NEW WOOD STOVE? WE CAN HELP!

A major Northwest Clean Air Agency effort focuses on reducing wood smoke in the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area. We do this in part by helping people replace old, polluting wood stoves with new stoves and ductless heat pumps. This helps cut down on smoke during winter periods when stoves are in heavy use. To date, NWCAA has funded the replacement of nearly 200 wood stoves in Columbia Valley.
For more information, check NWCAA's website: https://nwcleanairwa.gov/resources/columbia-valley-air-quality-improvement-project/
Columbia Valley (Whatcom County) air quality improvement project - North West Clean Air Wood stove Change-Out Program: This program helps residents in the Columbia Valley urban growth area of Whatcom County replace old wood stoves with new, certified wood or pellet stoves and/or heat pumps. It is open to Columbia Valley residents who meet certain qualifications.

October 2026 Calendar

Dew drops shimmer on
webbing strung from gold to red
fog slowly recedes

WEEK 1

Thursday 1
10.30am Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

12-2pm Senior Lunch & Activities @ Van Zandt Hall

6-7pm Living with Bears in Washington State @Deming Library

Friday 2
10.30-11 Storytime @ Deming Library

10am Tai Chi with Howard @ Van Zandt Hall

Saturday 3
6pm Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

2-4pm, Make Pinatas @Deming Library

10-5pm Friends of the Deming Library Book sale @Deming Library

Sunday 4
10-3pm Everybody's Market
Van Zandt Hall

10-4pm Friends of North Fork Library Book and Bake Sale North Fork Library

11-2pm Third Place Coffeehouse @ Van Zandt Hall

WEEK 2

Monday 5
1pm Whatcom Mobile Medicine clinic

Tuesday 6
8am Ask-a-Nurse clinic

8-11am Foothills Food Bank (weekly on Tues)

10.30am Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

12-2pm Senior Lunch & Activities @ Van Zandt Hall

1-3pm, Mindfulness in Art: Handmade Cards @North Fork Library

Wednesday 7
10-30-11 Storytime @ Deming Library

6pm Good Yarns @ Deming Library

Crafting Community @ North Fork Library Every Tuesday, 6pm

Thursday 8
6pm Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

3pm St Peter's "Thursday with Friends"

4-7pm Foothills Food Bank

5.30pm Deming Library Writer's Circle

6.30-7.30pm Columbia Valley Park and Recreation District Regular Meeting

Friday 9
10am Tai Chi with Howard @ Van Zandt Hall

7-9pm, An Evening with Namoli Brennet @Van Zandt Hall

SATURDAY 10
10-5pm Summer Saturday Book Sales @ Deming and North Fork Libraries

10am-1pm, Mending and Knife Sharpening @Van Zandt Hall

1-3pm Detoxify: When, How and Why? @Deming Library

1-4pm Friends Over 50 Festival @ Van Zandt hall

2-4pm, Make Pinatas @North Fork Library

10-3pm Everybody's Market @ Van Zandt Hall

Sunday 12
11-2pm Third Place Coffeehouse @ Van Zandt Hall

WEEK 3

Monday 12
2.45-4.15pm Mt Baker Community Coalition Meeting

Tuesday 13
8-11am Foothills Food Bank

10.30-11.30 Digital Equity Bus @ Deming Library

10.30am Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

12-2 Senior Lunch & Activities @ Van Zandt Hall

Wednesday 14
10.30-11 Storytime @ Deming Library

6-8pm Good Yarns @ Deming Library

4pm Foothills Entrepreneurs Collective @ Van Zandt Hall

3.45-4.45, All About Bats @North Fork Library

Thursday 15
3-5pm St Peter's "Thursdays with Friends"
St Peter's Catholic Church

4-7pm Foothills Food Bank

5.30-6.30 Foothills Communication Hub meeting
North Fork Library

6pm Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

7pm Potluck and Open Mic @ Van Zandt Hall

7-8pm Qi Gong @ North Fork Library

Friday 16
10am Tai Chi with Howard @ Van Zandt Hall

4-5.30, Teen Paint Night @North Fork Library

SATURDAY 17
10-5pm Summer Saturday Book Sales @ Deming and North Fork Libraries

10am-12pm, Friends of the North Fork Library Monthly Meeting @North Fork Library

10am-1pm, PSE Energy Assistance Workshop @North Fork Library

10.30-11.30 All About Bats @Deming Library

4-6pm, Candidate Forum @Van Zandt Hall

Sunday 18
11-2pm Third Place Coffeehouse @ Van Zandt Hall

WEEK 4

Monday 19
8am Ask-a-Nurse clinic @ EWRRC

1-5pm Whatcom Mobile Medicine Clinic @ EWRRC

2:00 pm Friends of the North Fork Community Library Monthly Meeting

Tuesday 20
8-11am Foothills Food Bank

10.30-11.30 Digital Equity Bus @ Deming Library

10.30am Foundations & Flow Yoga
Van Zandt Hall

12-2 Senior Lunch & Activities @ Van Zandt Hall

Wednesday 21
10.30-11am Storytime @ Deming Library

4pm Entrepreneur's Collective @Van Zandt Hall

4.30-5.30 Paracord Projects @Deming Library

6pm Good Yarns @ Deming Library

Thursday 22
3-5pm St Peter's "Thursdays with Friends"
St Peter's Catholic Church

5.30pm Deming Library Writer's Circle

4-5.30 Teen Paint Night @ Deming Library

6.30-7.45, Writer's Circle @North Fork Library

6pm Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

Friday 23
10am Tai Chi with Howard @ Van Zandt Hall

4-6pm, Escape the Library! @North Fork Library

Saturday 24
10am to 3pm Everybody's Market @ Van Zandt Hall

10-11am Qi Gong
North Fork Library

10-5pm Summer Saturday Book Sales @ Deming and North Fork Libraries

12-2pm Mending Your Clothes @ Deming Library

10-3pm Everybody's Market @ Van Zandt Hall 2-3.30pm, Ready, Set, Solve: Speed Puzzling @North Fork Library

Sunday 25
11-2pm Third Place Coffeehouse @ Van Zandt Hall

WEEK 5

Monday 26
8am Ask-a-Nurse clinic @ EWRRC

1-5pm Whatcom Mobile Medicine Clinic @ EWRRC

Tuesday 27
8-11am Foothills Food Bank

10.30-11.30 Digital Equity Bus @ Deming Library

10.30am Foundations & Flow Yoga @ Van Zandt Hall

12-2pm Senior Lunch & Activities @ Van Zandt Hall

Wednesday 28
10.30-11am Storytime @ Deming Library

6-7.30 Orange Shirt Day & Blue Lightening Perfermance @ Deming Library

Saturday 31
5pm Deadline for Whatcomics Submissions @wcls.org

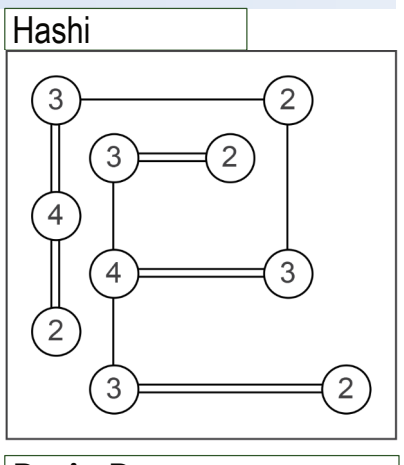
PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Crosswords

ACROSS
1. COLUMBIA
3. POLLYDYER
7. DALMATIONS
8. FISHINS
9. EARTHQUAKE
10. BONDJAMESBOND
11. WYOMING
12. CAVERN
13. PAINTYOURWAGON
17. SEATTLE
18. PEPPERLAND
20. TETOFFENSIVE
21. TWIST
23. SPACENEEDLE
24. ODYSSEY

DOWN
2. BOLDTDECISION
4. YURIGAGARIN
5. BOUNCING
6. FREEDOMRIDERS
14. WESTSIDESTORY
15. MISTERED
16. HAWAIIFIVEO
18. PSYCHO
19. QUAKERS
22. HAM

Hashi



Brain Busters

The rules of the race were that the owner of the camel that crosses the finish line last wins the fortune. The wise man simply told them to switch camels.

Do you have an idea for a feature story, Helping Hands article, or an interview with someone who is making a positive difference in the Foothills communities?

Do you have photos of the area you'd like to share with the community?

Would you like to write reviews of local events and activities?

Are you interested in writing about local history, interesting sites, local geology, and more?

LET US KNOW!

We're always interested in what you'd like to see in the paper as well as what you'd like to share.

Contact the editor at: info@foothillsinfo.com

Riddles for Kiddles

1. A pumpkin patch
2. Squash
3. He sits on a leaf and waits till it falls.
4. The living room

Rebus

1. Hamster
2. Manatee
3. Stick insect
4. Bison
5. Porcupine

Do you have an upcoming event? Let us know by the 15th of the month prior and we'll help promote it. Email the editor at info@foothillsinfo.com.