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Photo by Rick Moyer

Sunset over Aberdeen on a cool winter night.

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Cover photo of Bobbi McCracken & Bette Worth by Rick Moyer

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The Story of Bobbi and Bette and the Blooming of Downtown Aberdeen

BY CHRISTINE VINCENT

It is amazing what one energetic person devoted to a cause can do. Multiply this by two and you get the recent bloom of downtown Aberdeen. As board members of the Downtown Aberdeen Association, Bobbi McCracken and Bette Worth have pumped their seemingly boundless energy into the beautification and revitalization of the Aberdeen downtown business district.

Among many other things, the ladies initiated the SummerFest and WinterFest events and are responsible for the gorgeous hanging baskets and planters framing the streets in the summer. These two friends know how to make things grow. You may have noticed them. They often wear matching costumes.

Bobbi McCracken and Bette Worth are both transplants to the Harbor. Bobbi is from Longview, Washington, and Bette from Thousand Oaks, California. They are both retired and each has two grown children. The ladies met at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Aberdeen where they worked together on the award-winning St. Andrew's Team for the Grays Harbor Relay for Life, which raises money for the America Cancer Society.

"The team was very successful," recalled Bette. "It made the most money per capita in the nation! We had a lot of fun. We wore costumes."

"Yes, we have lots of costumes," Bobbi confirmed. "Once relay was done, Bette and I needed a project."

Bette and Bobbi love their community, which has been so good to them and wanted to keep working on projects to

Left: Bette Worth and Bobbi McCracken ride the bull at Summerfest 2021 in downtown Aberdeen. Right: Bette and Bobbi pose with the downtown blooms.

Photo by Rick Moyer

improve life on the Harbor. "We were not always successful," Bette confessed. "Our ice-skating rink project is a black spot on our record. We had gotten used to success and thought it would be piece of cake to raise the funds, but we just couldn't get enough money together. Sadly, the ice-skating rink is now in Olympia."

In 2014, Cary Bozeman from Bremerton was hired as head of the Aberdeen Revitalization Movement, ARM, which had been in existence since the 1960s but had run out of steam. Bobbi and Bette were approached to join ARM, and fortunately for Aberdeen, they gladly accepted.

"These ladies are the heartbeat of DAA. They work cheerfully and tirelessly behind the scenes."

— Wil Russoul

With the help of the city, ARM obtained certification as a Washington Main Street Community in 2018. The national Main Street Program, offers an



Photo by Rick Moyer

Crowds gather in downtown Aberdeen to enjoy Summerfest each August.

"economic development model ... to revitalize historic downtown districts."

There are 37 Main Street communities in the State of Washington. The program provides funding and resources to help qualifying communities reinvigorate their historic city centers. For example, Executive Director Wil Russoul's salary is paid through Main Street funding. To better reflect the new Main Street status, the Aberdeen Revitalization Movement adopted a new face. It is now doing business as the Downtown Aberdeen Association, DAA. The Main Street Program requires that qualifying cities work in four areas: organization, promotion, design and economic development.

"Bette and I are into promotion and the people part of things," Bobbi explained. "DAA wants to support and grow the downtown business district and encourage shopping. We create a positive atmosphere that makes people want to shop here. For example, we provided two e-bikes for police officers to move around quickly and quietly. We also provided cold-weather gear for them. We are about to launch a shopping app, Distrx, for businesses. The Main Street Program offers this app for free. Wil frequently shows downtown properties to potential new business owners, among his many other tasks."

Bobbi serves as president of the DAA executive board and Bette as vice president.

"They are my cheerleaders," said Russoul. "These ladies are the heartbeat of DAA."

They work cheerfully and tirelessly behind the scenes. They start committees, recruit volunteers, obtain grants, establish liaisons with the city or other organizations. They keep volunteers happy, they organize festivals, restore electricity, pick up litter, and they make everybody smile. They wore flower costumes to promote the hanging basket project!"



Photo courtesy Bobbi & Bette

The duo pedals a tandem bike during a downtown parade.

Russoul said that the ladies also save the city a lot of money. Their volunteers work approximately 10,000 hours per quarter.

The Downtown Beautification Project is Bobbi and Bette's most visible achievement. The friends donned their flowerpot costumes and raised funds in the community. The DAA website lists the many donors and sponsors of the Downtown Beautification Project.

(continued on page 8)



Photo courtesy Bobbi & Bette



Bobbi and Bette dressed as cowboys for Summerfest.

Photo courtesy Bobbi & Bette

Bobbi and Bette *(Continued)*

The Bloom Team began its work in 2014. Bobbi described the volunteers: "They are mostly retired women who are friends. They go out every two weeks to maintain the flower baskets and planters. They help with the planting, weed, pick up trash and truly take ownership. They get very upset over vandalism on their flowers." Needless to say, Bobbi and Bette are part of this team.

Bobbi and Bette established collaboration with Aberdeen Parks and Recreation on the Beautification Project. DAA likes to transfer projects to other organizations. Stacie Barnum of Parks and Recreation is now in charge of the Downtown Beautification Project.

The baskets go up from May to

September. Watering them is a hard daily job, twice daily on hot days. The city pays two college students and provides golf carts to water the plants during those months.

Support for the Beautification Project is growing. In 2014, 60 hanging baskets and 60 planters were installed. Today, the number has

increased to 150 each. Bobbi and Bette are happy that neighboring Grays Harbor communities have been inspired to start their own flower programs. Montesano and Hoquiam already have one, and Ocean Shores is considering it.

But it's not just beautiful flowers that the two have brought to downtown Aberdeen, they've also created fun festivals that are now anticipated each year by Harborites.

"The Main Street program likes to see at least two annual events," Bobbi explained. "This is why we created the SummerFest and the WinterFest."

The DAA has also taken over the Spooktacular Halloween event. The festivals are fun, family-friendly and free. They are designed to bring people to

"The ladies are massive balls of energy ... they bring smiles to everyone with their energy and enthusiasm."

- Pete Schave, Mayor

downtown to enjoy themselves and shop at downtown businesses.

Aberdeen Mayor Pete Schave appreciates the events Bobbi and Bette have brought to the city, and, of course, the beautiful flower baskets: "The ladies



Photo courtesy Bobbi & Bette

are massive balls of energy rolling through the city. They bring smiles to everyone with their energy and enthusiasm."

The city contributes \$60,000 annually to DAA activities. The festivals as well as

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Photo courtesy Bobbi & Bette


Bobbi and Bette enjoy a festive moment with DAA Executive Director Wil Russoul.

the flower program receive funds from the city's lodging tax.

Since 2016, SummerFest and WinterFest have marked the lives and calendars of Bobbi and Bette. They start preparing for SummerFest in February. After the event on the third weekend in August, the ladies take a couple of weeks off in September. Then, they embark on the preparations for WinterFest, which takes place the first weekend in December. Then they take December and January off for a well-deserved rest.

"The two fests have grown exponentially," Bette said. "We had 2,500 people attending the 2022 Summerfest. We estimate we had 1,500 attendees at last year's Winterfest. We had 500 shopping bags donated by Q-Mart and we ran out at 11 a.m."

This year's WinterFest will take place Dec. 2 and 3. A highlight will be a visit by Santa, accompanied by live reindeer – and snow, from a machine if necessary. Bobbi and Bette are almost as excited as the children. They will wear their reindeer costumes.

Wil Russoul eloquently summed up the two friends' role in the community: "Many volunteers make the growth of our downtown happen. If we look at them as a great jigsaw puzzle, Bobbi and Bette are two of the biggest pieces." 

www.Coastal-Currents.com



Photos by Rick Moyer



Photo courtesy Bobbi & Bette

'Tis the Season for WINTERFEST December 2 and 3

Friday, December 2

From 5 to 8 p.m., Live reindeer, hot cocoa, caroling and more will be kick Winterfest at the parking lot near City Center Drug on the corner of Wishkah and Broadway.

Saturday, December 3

Breakfast and Pictures with Santa will be from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Game Day Sports Restaurant, 212 S. I St. The Central Park and Aberdeen Lions clubs will cook and serve the meal, which is free to children under 12 years old.

The Holiday Market, will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the D&R Event Center, 122 E. Heron. Various vendors and artists will offer their wares suitable for stocking stuffers and gifts. Raffle tickets for \$5 can be purchased, with the drawing set for 2:30 p.m.

Gingerbread House Contest and Entertainment will be at Go Get the Pho, 100 E. Heron St. View entries from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Go to winterfest2022.com for entry forms and additional information. Musical entertainment includes the **Aberdeen High School Goldenaires** at 11 a.m. and **Amanda Ransom** at noon.

The Ericka Corban Holiday Show Concert will be at 7:30 p.m. at the Bishop Center for Performing Arts at Grays Harbor College. To purchase tickets, go to www.ghc.edu/bishop.

Look for up-to-date information on Facebook, Instagram, and Grays Harbor Scanner and for broadcasts on the event days on Facebook Live.

In addition to the Downtown Aberdeen Association, Winterfest is sponsored by Twin Star Credit Union, the Windermere Foundation, Grays Harbor Title, Swansons, Aberdeen Parks and Rec., the Bishop Center for Performing Arts, Quigg and Co., and Q Mart.



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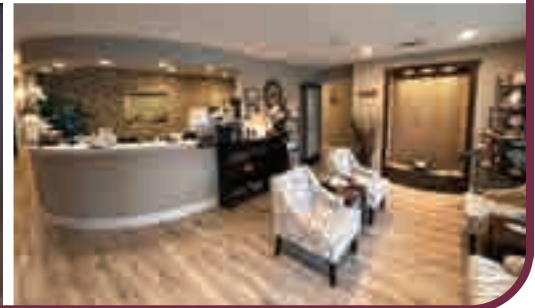
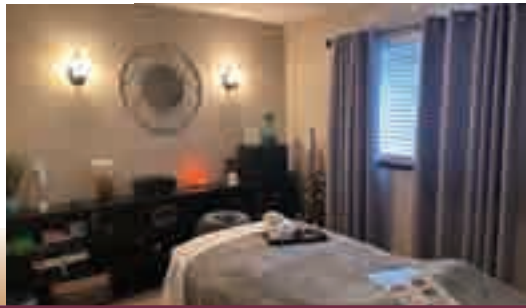
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Making memories on stage with Patty Sundstrom

BY JULIANA WALLACE

In the musical "Mamma Mia!" a young Donna Sheridan declares, "I don't know what my future holds, but the world is wide, and I want to make some memories." Patty Sundstrom, who played Donna in the 2018 Bishop Center production of "Mamma Mia!" has been making memories at the theater for decades.

"I love performing," said Sundstrom. "I've done some of my very favorite things with some of my very favorite people on stage."

The daughter of Robert and Nancy Neisinger, Sundstrom grew up in a musical household in Aberdeen. She opted for violin and choir rather than drama in high school. Then, while studying at Grays Harbor College, she acted in a musical called "The Apple Tree," her first drama production. She enjoyed performing with friends enough to sign up for the musical again the following year. But then she went off to Western Washington University and put acting on hold for a few years.

Fast forward to 1992. After college, Sundstrom returned to Grays Harbor to teach history at Hoquiam High School. And the Bishop Center stage began to call her back. She played roles such as Maria in "The Sound of Music" and Dolly Tate in "Annie Get Your Gun." Around that same time, the high school principal decided to restart the drama program and asked Sundstrom to take it over.

"It all started with the love of getting people on the stage," Sundstrom said. "I want them to love theater and form a family. I want them to gain the confidence to be themselves and take pride."

By all accounts, she has succeeded in that goal. Between Hoquiam High School and the summer theater



Play photos by
Keith Krueger



“
I love performing. I've done
some of my very favorite
things with some of my very
favorite people on stage.

– Patty Sundstrom



program at Grays Harbor College, Sundstrom has directed hundreds of students in dozens of plays through the years. Students such as Julayne Fleury and Alex Eddy, who co-founded Plank Island Theatre Company, have gone on to make the theater their life. For others, drama gave them a life experience they could not gain anywhere else.

Roger White, the former Hoquiam High School band director, worked with Sundstrom for years as the music director for the school musicals. "Patty brings a lifetime of experience with drama," he said. "She has the energy and creativity and vision to put shows together that are fun for the kids and the audiences and for everybody involved."

(continued on page 12)

Actor Patty Sundstrom performing (from top) in "Phantom of the Opera," "Mamma Mia!" and "Nunsense Vegas Review." Below, Sundstrom in her office at Hoquiam High School.

Photo by Juliana Wallace



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Patty Sundstrom *(continued)*

That talent for pulling a show together earned Sundstrom a nomination for best director in the 5th Avenue Theatre Awards, an awards program that recognizes high school theater programs throughout the state. The nomination was for her direction of Hoquiam High School's production of "Cinderella" in 2019.

For Sundstrom, much of the pull of the theater lies in the creative process of gathering with people who share a vision, investing their time and talents to create something to take pride in. However, that process can prove stressful along the way.

"But then it's opening night," she said. "You're hanging out with people that you've dedicated your life to for three months. You support them, and you want them to excel. There is nothing better than that."

For a decade, while raising her two

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children, Sundstrom left the stage to play in the pit orchestra. Her first role back in the spotlight was playing Carlotta in the 2012 Bishop Center production of "The Phantom of the Opera." Since then, audiences have seen her regularly on stage at both the Bishop Center and the Driftwood Players Theatre.



Play photos by Keith Krueger

Currently, Sundstrom is reprising her role as Sister Amnesia in "Nunsense 2: The Second Coming," which runs at the Driftwood Theatre in Aberdeen through December 11. Thirty years ago, when she returned to the Harbor, she played Sister Amnesia in the original "Nunsense." Since then, the nuns have returned for "Nunsensations!" and "The Nunsense Vegas Revue," as well as "Mechuggah-Nuns" and "NunCrackers."

Sundstrom's acting and directing career has centered on musical theater. But just last year she made her straight play debut in the Driftwood Players production of "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time." She found the experience intense, emotional and very rewarding.

Sundstrom plans to retire from teaching in a year, leaving the high school drama department in the capable hands




From top left, Patty Sundstrom in "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." Above, she receives flowers from the cast of Hoquiam High School's production of "Cinderella," in 2019.

Photo by Jeff Cook



Sundstrom (center) in "Mamma Mia!"

of Tamara Helland, her former student. But she has no plans to retire from the stage, whether acting or directing. And with a little luck, maybe the coming years will give her the chance to play Mama Rose in "Gypsy," one of the few dream roles she has yet to play. 

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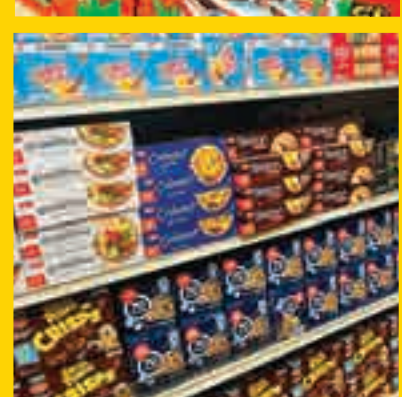
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BY GAIL GREENWOOD AYRES

It may not be Santa's workshop, but the employees inside the Olympic View Warehouse at the Satsop Business Park have a lot in common with toy-making elves. They have long hours of seasonal work that brings Christmas cheer to others. And a really great boss.

This is the second holiday season that Lynch Creek Farm, which has a national reputation for its premium handcrafted Christmas wreaths and fresh centerpieces, has operated its centerpiece production in Grays Harbor, employing some 150 people there. The headquarters of the growing company is in Shelton; that's where its famous wreaths are crafted.

After expanding multiple times in Shelton, the company's continued growth forced CEO Andy Hunter, 48, to look for more room, and he's thrilled with the space and pool of employees in Grays Harbor.

"Our products are very high-end. We produce out-of-this world quality."

- Brigida Echeverria

Kierina Spear

Susana Aguilar Mejia

In fact, Hunter said the company continues to grow 20 to 35 percent each year, so he's planning to lease even more room at Satsop Business Park for additional production there next year.

"Taking care of your customers by giving them the best product possible at a good price means that we gain more customers each year in organic, sustainable growth," Hunter said.

While most of the products are made primarily with noble fir, Lynch Creek Farm also uses Douglas fir, western red cedar, incense cedar, juniper, pinecones and salal purchased from various forest products harvesting companies. The wreaths have a reputation for being full, weighing about 7 pounds each.



The same luxuriousness and attention to detail is true of the centerpieces made at Satsop, said Brigida Echeverria, manager of the centerpiece division. In addition to the greens, pinecones and candles, the centerpieces feature a myriad of accoutrements such as snowflakes, classic red pickup trucks, lanterns, stars, owls, cardinals, dogs and seashells.

Including the wreaths, centerpieces, tabletop trees, swags, garlands and more, Lynch Creek Farm produces more than 250 distinct items that can be ordered online or by phone.

“There isn’t anyone else in the business that has 60 products at all and we have 60 products that are new each year,” Hunter said. “It’s always good to have a variety of options. This year we have several products with gnomes. Red will always sell at Christmas, but you also have to have the blues, the burgundies, the plaids and different styles of bows.”

A design team, which includes Hunter and Echeverria and about five others, works off season to create the new products for the following season.

Andy Hunter, CEO of Lynch Creek Farm



However, any employee with a fresh idea for a new design is encouraged to bring it forward, Echeverria said.

“Our products are very high-end,” said Echeverria. “We produce out-of-this world quality. We strive for perfection. We have quality control from the beginning to the end. Everyone knows that’s our thing and that’s what our customer’s expect – quality!”

“We know the quality that Andy expects,” added Ryan LeDoux, manager of the shipping department at Satsop. “And we have the same expectations.”

In fact, during the production season, CEO Andy Hunter literally works creating products nearly every day, jumping in at different places from shipping to handcrafting items himself.

“It’s like he’s kind of playing ‘Undercover Boss,’” said LeDoux. While he’s not purposely concealing his identity, often new workers wonder who this tall, cheerful man is who just started working next to them. But when they find out he’s the CEO and owner of the company, they love it, LeDoux said.

At the Satsop warehouse, groups of employees follow different posted “recipes” with one station crafting one specific item at a time -- by the hundreds. Competent fingers carefully create tiny Christmas trees and centerpieces.

“It’s a streamlined process,” said Hunter. “Each job people are working in teams of three or four people. It’s a very thought-out process that allows us to be efficient. It’s very quick work, but it isn’t exhausting work.”

“We know the quality that Andy expects and we have the same expectations.”
– Ryan LeDoux

Lynch Creek Farm has come a long way since his parents, Len and Colleen Hunter, started a little hobby farm to keep their three boys busy. No



Ma De Lourdes Ortega Ortiz



(continued on page 18)

Photos courtesy of Lynch Creek Farm

LYNCH CREEK FARM

(continued)

one would have guessed in 1980 that a company that ships holiday products throughout the U.S. and beyond would be the result. The 13-acre farm on Lynch Creek Road in Shelton largely grew organic vegetables, later adding flowers, which became the major crop. Because they already had a stall at the Olympia Farmers Market, in 1998 they added Christmas wreaths for the winter market.

"Christmas time is an emotional time ... and when we can blow somebody away with a quality product, that's meaningful."

– Andy Hunter

The youngest of the brothers, Andy earned a degree from Washington State University in hotel and restaurant management and worked both in a restaurant and at the family farm when he returned from school in 1998. He made a five-year goal to support himself with the business, and reached that goal early.

"Now here it is 23 years later," Hunter

Pamela Ceniceros Caldera

said. "Little did I know that not only would I be supporting myself and my family, but literally hundreds of people who rely on the company as either a part-time or full-time job."

About 600 people are now employed at the company. Those people include about 20 women who work fulltime year-round from their homes, hand



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tying bows to produce enough to supply the company's needs.

Now the operation can produce 80 wreaths every minute, including a label and gift message, boxed and headed to any address in the country. That doesn't include the daily output at Satsop! And while, it still operates a stall in November




Anna Jean Bachman

and December at the Olympia Farmers Market, Lynch Creek Farm now also loads up about 8 to 10 semi-trucks a day – 12 truckloads on its busiest days.

Over the years, Hunter has had to learn everything from driving a forklift to putting together a conveyor, but some things haven't changed, including his hands-on approach and rigorous attention to a quality product.

"It's easy to make one perfect product if you have all day. It's really hard to make 20,000 perfect products a day, but that's our goal."

Getting the positive feedback from customers that Lynch Creek Farm products bring joy, is something he treasures. "Christmas time is an emotional time for people anyway, and when we can blow somebody away with a quality product, that's meaningful."

For more information about Lynch Creek Farm, go to www.lynchcreekfarm.com or call 1-888-426-0781. 



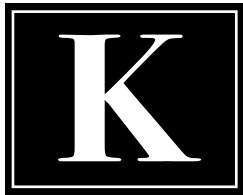
Photos courtesy of Lynch Creek Farm



It takes a whole leadership team to keep things running smoothly at the Lynch Creek Farm centerpiece division at Satsop Business Park. The managers and supervisors on site there are (back row from left) Adriana Gonzalez Merino, Brigida Echeverria, Kierina Spear, middle row, Susana Aguilar Mejia and Veronica Aguilar Mejia; and in front, Ryan LeDoux.

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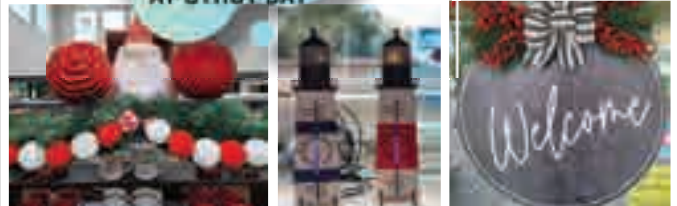
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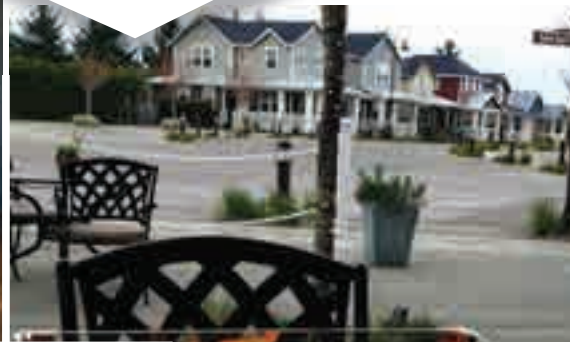
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Carrie Larson's artistic themes weave motion and nature

BY KATIE MCGREGOR

Carrie Larson doesn't limit herself to just one medium of art. Her portfolio is full of artist books, installations and 2D pieces. But the thoughtful color palettes and attention to detail make every piece in the body of work easy to distinguish as being hers.

"I shape pieces around color as I'm laying out papers or thinking about the mood of a book. Color is so influential to how we feel. Living in Grays Harbor, with blues and grays and greens ... it also permeates the work."

The 51-year-old visual artist resides in Hoquiam where she has a cozy studio in a house that has clearly been decorated by someone with an artist's eye. Larson's calm demeanor and visual tastes extend beyond just her work and into her home.

Aside from a few years spent at Whitman College in Walla Walla, where she earned her bachelor of arts degree in art, Larson has lived in Grays Harbor for most of her life. However, her work is exhibited all over the state and country.

Larson's work can be broken down into three main categories: artist's books, 2D pieces, and installations, all with reoccurring themes of abstract motion and nature.



"Mortal Coil," artist's book, 2019 Photos courtesy Carrie Larson



Artist Carrie Larson at her Hoquiam studio.

Photo by Katie McGregor

“ It doesn't always end up looking exactly like what I envisioned and sometimes that's a better direction to go in. – Carrie Larson ”

Though she balances her time between all of these mediums, Larson says she dedicates more time creating artist's books. "Artist's books are a springboard for it all." She often incorporates bits and pieces of paper from the books into her 2D work as well.

Artist's books are pieces of art in the form of books. This means that both the physical book and its contents are the art. Artist's books extend far beyond just words on pages. They're visual journeys told through writing, unique materials, and three-dimensional forms.

Many of Larson's artist's books feature delicate cutouts, all done by hand, and

stitching, not just in the binding but on the pages themselves.

Each of Larson's books generally starts with an idea. "It can be a snippet of writing, a prompt, a call for a show, a theme..." Larson explained. She considers how the subject might play into the book's overall look, structure, or binding and completes this part of the process by creating a mock up.

Visualization is key in understanding how an artist's book will function. While many mediums of art are merely looked at, artist's books are, at their core, books with real bindings and pages that can be turned.



"stance (one)" mixed media, 2021



"Crossing the Low Divide," mixed media, 2020

Photo courtesy Carrie Larson

It's a delicate process. Larson explains that sometimes a piece gets to a state where she isn't sure if the next step of its completion could ruin the progress she's made so far.

Luckily, she finds enjoyment in the process. "I enjoy that problem solving side of it," Larson said. "I like to leave enough room for the happy accidents. It doesn't always end up looking exactly like what I envisioned and sometimes that's a better direction to go in."

Larson has been making art for as long as she can remember, but her time at Whitman College was key in the development of her current creations.

"I was introduced to artist's books in college and it was this real eye-opening, resonating, experience." Larson said this was such an important discovery because artist's books are a way to combine her visual interests with her love of writing and literature.

Larson credits Keiko Hara, an artist and art professor at Whitman College, as being a very influential mentor. She fondly recalls spending a summer interning and learning through deep exposure to Hara's work and artistic process. The influences of her other inspirations, Mark Rothko, Helen Frankenthaler and Joseph Cornell can also be seen in Larson's work.

But Larson has her own special techniques that she likes to use. Stitching has worked its way into her 2D pieces. "Because it was an element in the book-making process it ended up in other pieces. It was a different way of attaching paper together, other than glue."

Of course, with nature being such a big influence on her art, Larson also

attributes some of her inspiration to Grays Harbor.

"It's one of the things I really love about being here," she said. "I can walk two blocks and be on the river. When you're standing by the Chehalis and you're looking out toward the ocean there's a color field; a beautiful wash of color between the sky and ocean."

(continued on page 25)

Carrie Larson's "Shelter" installation was exhibited at South Puget Sound Community College this year.



Photo courtesy Carrie Larson





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Carrie Larson *(continued)*

Larson also dedicates time to larger installation pieces. While she creates these with less frequency than her books, they're just as immersive.

When she first graduated from college, Larson took a short break from art. "I was finding myself and my voice and was able to come back with a more mature vocabulary," she explained.

One of the first pieces she created coming out of this break period was a large installation piece with colored fabric hanging from the windows of the Finch Building in downtown Aberdeen in 1999.

Since then, Larson has done installations at the Sitka Center for Art & Ecology on the Oregon Coast, Grays Harbor College, La Vogue Bike Shop, and most recently, South Puget Sound Community College.

"I had an opportunity because of a juried show at SPSCC in 2021. I was invited back for a smaller group show

last spring and thought it would be interesting for the show to have a 3D element."

The geometric piece explores the concept of "shelter" and what the word means. She writes in her artist statement, "With this piece I aim to suggest a tree canopy, the interplay of leaf and light, shadow and sky, and the buoying hope we can find in beauty."

Like many of her other creations, it features delicate pieces of paper. But Larson also incorporated wood, monofilament, and hardware to create the structure that is large enough to stand under.


Many artists struggle with deciding when a piece is done, but Larson is confident in the stages of her art and her problem-solving abilities.

"At this point, I have a good sense when things are done... I tend to leave work for a while. In the process of making, I walk away and come back to it so there comes a point when it's resolved."



Larson doesn't favor any pieces of her work over the rest, instead acknowledging that they are all part of the artistic process. "It's almost like it's a path or progression. A sense of closure and completion when something is finished and I feel ready to move onto the next idea."

Recently, in addition to exhibiting at South Puget Sound Community College, Larson also exhibited in an Abstract Juried Show in Chicago. She hopes to continue partaking in shows in the near future.

Right now, Carrie Larson's work can be viewed on her website carriellarson.com. Her pieces are available for purchase and she can be contacted via email at clarson3@comcast.net. 

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Montesano's Festival of Lights, December 9-11

Montesano's Festival of Lights is guaranteed to be super this year! The three-day festival is Dec. 9-11 and has "SUPER" as its theme. Many events are packed into the largest winter festival in Grays Harbor as Montesano invites festivalgoers to its gussied up downtown and light-decorated neighborhoods. Multiple events, concerts and contests are featured, climaxing with the Grand Parade set for 6 p.m. Saturday.

"The theme 'Super' can mean superheroes or it can mean extra Christmas," said Leslie Goings, parade organizer. "We like to have themes that are open to interpretation and allow creativity."

The festival includes both residential and business decorating contests with businesses judged from 3 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday Dec. 7 and homes asked to light up by 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8 for judging.

This year's schedule includes the following. (For up-to-date changes, visit Montesano Festival of Lights on Facebook.)

Friday, December 9

6:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Gingerbread House Contest – at All Wrapped Up. Pick up a gingerbread house kit and return it by 1 p.m. Sunday. Winners announced Monday.

2 - 6 p.m. – Art Show – featuring Ken Hurley at Whitney's Chevrolet showroom.

5 to 7 p.m. – Benefit for Oakley Carlson – at the Montesano Community Center. Coffee, cocoa and cookies.

6 to 7 p.m. – Live Christmas Music at the Montesano Community Center, featuring Ken Albert, Christine Hill, Gladys Whitney, Angel Damasiewicz and Steve Jacobson.

Saturday, December 10

7 to 10 a.m. – Pancake Breakfast with Santa at Montesano Community Center. \$7 a person, free for children 5 years and younger.

9 a.m. to 10 p.m. – Art Show – featuring Ken Hurley at Whitney's Chevrolet showroom.

9 a.m. – Jingle Bell Jog – Registration at Fleet Park starts at 8:15 a.m. All ages. All proceeds go to Foodbowl.

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. – Craft Fair at Montesano Junior High gym and commons.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. – Twisted Holly Reindeer Ranch and Petting Zoo on 1st Street by Fleet Park. Take pictures and pet Santa's reindeer as he preps for the parade.

Noon to 5 p.m. – Chehalis Valley Historical Museum Tours. Cookies, cider and children's activities.

1:30 to 3:30 p.m. – Kids Fun Zone at MHS gym. Kids will participate in a variety of activities in a safe environment. ASB fundraiser for Foodbowl, \$5 donation per kid.

2 to 4 p.m. – Cookie Decorating at the W.H. Abel Memorial Timberland Library.

3 to 5 p.m. – Santa's Workshop at Our Community Credit Union inside Pick-Rite Thriftway. Kids crafts, free prize drawings, cookies and cocoa.

3 to 7 p.m. – Chili Dog & Bake Sale Fundraiser with the Masons at Montesano Community Center.

3 to 8 p.m. – Free Peppermint Dusties – at Gene's Stop & Go, while supplies last.

3:30 to 5 p.m. – Scavenger Hunt by Umpqua Bank, meet at the bank.

4 to 6 p.m. – Chowder Feed by the Montesano Fire Dept. Volunteer Association. Donations appreciated.

5 to 6 p.m. – Open House with Friends of the Library. Warm up before the parade with apple cider and cookies.

5 to 7 p.m. – Free coffee and cocoa at Calvary Chapel on Marcy Street.

6 p.m. – Grand Parade – The parade begins at Spruce and Church streets, heads west on Spruce, turning south onto Main Street then west on Pioneer Street.

7 p.m. – Lighting of the Yule Log on Pioneer Street at Fleet Park with food vendors.

7:15 to 8:15 p.m. – Live Nativity at the Montesano Presbyterian Church, 201 E. McBryde Ave.

8 p.m. to midnight – Live Music at Charlie's featuring Clam Hammer. Must be 21 years or older.

Sunday, December 11

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. – Art Show featuring Ken Hurley at Whitney's Chevrolet showroom.

7 p.m. – Christmas Cantata at United Methodist Church, 401 E. Spruce Ave. 



All photos by Rick Moyer

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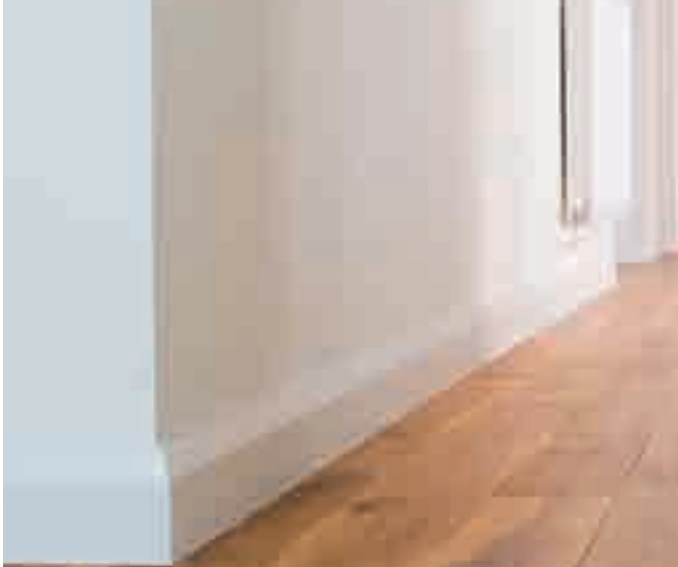
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NASHVILLE
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Alex Mabey





“Quinault and Grays Harbor will always have my heart.”

– Alex Mabey

treasures her Lake Quinault roots

BY KATIE MCGREGOR

In a world where flashy, eye-catching art is pumped out at a rapid rate for rapid consumption, Alex Mabey takes her time to create music that speaks to her and the stages of her life.

“I write music about my life and sing from the heart. Some call that singer/songwriter, folk, or Americana. It’s just honest music.”

The 31-year-old musician is currently based in Nashville, where her latest album is being produced, but she grew up in Quinault.

“So many of my lyrics would involve nature, especially being in Quinault where we were so far from everything. I was always out in the woods. It was part of my identity,” Mabey said.

With inspiration from Patty Griffin and Jackson Brown, Mabey leads listeners through the seasons of her life. To listen to her discography is to meet and grow with her.

Mabey started writing music when she was five years old and fondly recalls having bands and making up songs with her elementary school friends. But it was her first heartbreak at age 14 that made her pick up a guitar and realize she was genuinely drawn to writing music.

“Honestly, ever since I was little, even before I wrote songs seriously, I always



Photo by Adam Dobkin

felt called to music,” Mabey explained. She credits her mom for making sure she had a background in music by introducing her to the piano.

Now, as someone who has written many songs over the years, Mabey takes an unconventional approach to creating music. “I’m not someone who writes all the time,” she said. “Sometimes that goes against what the songwriting industry suggests you do. But I want to write honestly.”

At times, Mabey will go several months without writing anything. But she doesn’t put pressure on herself. “I’ve

been doing this for so long that I know the songs are going to come. I live my life and go through my seasons. Every couple of months I’ll write a handful of songs and more a few months later.”

That’s not to say that she only waits for inspiration to strike. Mabey said that she can still write a song even if she doesn’t feel anything specific. “God is a big part of that for me. Every time I sit down to write, I pray. I ask Him to give me a song and He always does.”

Mabey first moved to Nashville when she was 18. She attended Belmont

(continued on page 33)

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Alex Mabey

(continued)

University for a semester, majoring in music business. But she only lived in Nashville for one year before deciding to travel and experience different cultures. "It's like I had a choice to stay or say goodbye to what could have been," she said.

During her travels, both domestic and international, Mabey did everything from playing music on a National Geographic cruise ship to spending a couple of summers in Alaska and playing music there.

"I joked that I'd come back to Nashville in 10 years, and then I did."

But before her return to Tennessee, Mabey faced physical and emotional challenges as she dealt with severe autoimmune illnesses and a painful divorce.

Amidst her separation, Mabey got her teaching degree online and moved back to Nashville in 2019 where she taught

"You don't make a difference in the world by being shy. Artists have a responsibility to show other people some courage."

– Alex Mabey

school while also pursuing music. She returned home to Quinault during Covid-19, taught locally, saved money for her record, and has now been back in Nashville for about a year.

"I knew I had so much more to say. I knew that God had plans for me and he wasn't done with the career side of my music."

Mabey's upcoming album, "The Waiting Room," is set to release February 2023, and is about "discovering the resolve to get out of an emotionally abusive marriage and navigating the grief before and after leaving."

(continued on page 35)



Photo by Morgan Walton

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Alex Mabey

(continued)

The songs on this album were recorded as Mabey was still grieving over the marriage that she so badly wanted to make work.

"This album is different because this was, by far, the most difficult season of my life that I've written about. You can hear my heart beat in these songs."

Vulnerability is nothing new to Mabey. She said she's never released anything that isn't personal to her and her story. "For me, it's more than being called to being a singer and songwriter. I'm always called to be vulnerable with what I'm doing," Mabey explained.

Mabey says that she received the best advice of her life from a friend who told her to write like nobody is ever going to hear her music.

"You don't make a difference in the world by being shy. Artists have a responsibility to show other people some courage."

Mabey has previously produced her own albums and recorded them with Tyler Tingey at Shadowland Recording, a studio formerly based in Montesano.

"The Waiting Room" is coproduced by Mabey but also has a whole team behind its creation. "This is my dream album," Mabey says.

This album has come together with the talents of her Grammy-winning coproducer and engineer, Casey Wasner and a group of skilled instrumentalists who have worked with well-known musicians such as Amy Grant and Drew Holcomb and the Neighbors. Mabey handled a lot of the acoustic on the album herself.

A podcast, "Leaving Egypt," is Mabey's other recent project.

About six months before she recorded her first episode, she remembers a lot of people at her shows making comments about the way she talked between her songs being just as impactful as the music.

"After that I had a dream where I heard


an audible female voice say, 'You will speak on many matters and just think of the shift that will happen because of it.'"

Right after that, a podcast company contacted Mabey showing interest in her story.

The concepts Mabey speaks on are all centered around the music she writes. She hopes to do one episode for each single leading up to the release of "The Waiting Room."

Right now, Mabey plays a few shows each month in Tennessee but she always makes time for shows when she comes home to the Pacific Northwest. She hopes to return to the area and play sometime in 2023.

"Quinalt and Grays Harbor will always have my heart."

Alex Mabey can be found at www.alexmabey.com. She is also active on Facebook as "Alex Mabey Music" and on Instagram @_alexmabey. You can listen to her music and "Leaving Egypt" on Spotify. 



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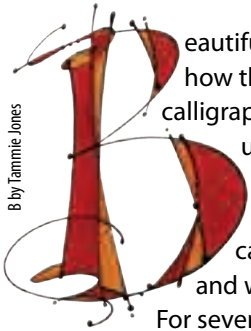
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Local calligraphers share the elegance and versatility of the art of lettering

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JULIANA WALLACE



Beautiful writing. That is how the dictionary defines calligraphy. Whether the artist uses pen and ink, graphite, a paintbrush or even a sandblaster, calligraphy turns letters and words into visual art.

For several local calligraphers, learning the art of lettering has opened the door to a practice and a community that has enriched their lives for decades.

Years ago, a friend gave Shari Jobst of Central Park the gift of a calligraphy

class for a Christmas present. In the class she met Tammie Jones of Montesano and Elizabeth Bolton and Pat Warren, both of Aberdeen.

"Weedy McCauley taught the class at the YMCA," Jobst remembered. "We all signed up for the class over and over again just to go once a week and practice."

Once McCauley quit teaching, the women branched out and took classes wherever they could find them. They formed a guild in the area for a while, meeting once a month to share ideas and take classes. And they all took a year-long intensive class taught by renowned calligraphy instructor Reggie Ezell. (Pro tip: Ezell now teaches his "26 Seeds: A Year to Grow" class on Zoom.)

The women have each developed their own styles over time. When pressed, Bolton describes her style as "refined exuberance." And through the years, she has experimented with a slew of techniques. For instance, in the early 1990s she created and sold more than 8,000 personalized coffee mugs using sandblasting. More recently, she has combined calligraphy with book binding, creating stunning handmade books.

Both Bolton and Jobst have submitted winning entries to the Graceful

"Once you know the basic rules, then you can play."
- Tammie Jones



Tammie Jones fills journals with her daily calligraphy practice.



Elizabeth Bolton creates handmade books with her calligraphy art.

Envelope contest. Created in 1995 by the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum, the contest celebrates the art of calligraphy and the part letters play in bringing people together. Now administered by the Washington Calligrapher's Guild, the contest fields entries from across the country and even internationally.

Jones has always loved to play with letters and try out different styles. She fills sketchbooks with quotes and

drawings, experimenting with different hands (the calligraphy version of a font) and techniques. And she loves to teach calligraphy, sometimes at the college, but often in private lessons to small groups and individuals.

"I like to teach the italic, because it gives a really good basis for every other style," Jones explained. "Once you know the basic rules, then you can play. But you have to follow the rules first. And you

(continued on page 41)

"You can't expect it to come in a big old whoopy ..."
- Elizabeth Bolton



Shari Jobst works in her studio in her Central Park home.



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calligraphers

(continued from page 39)

have to be consistent and legible.”

Bolton agrees and emphasized the importance of daily practice. “You can’t expect it to come in a big old whoopy,” she cautioned. “You have to be willing to do your 30 minutes a day, every day, for a long time.”

That daily practice helps aspiring calligraphers to refine both their



These decorated letters known as versals, were created by Pat Warren.

motor skills and their sight. And to that end, all of these women have joined various groups through the years to keep their hand in. Jones, for example, joined the South Sound Calligraphers guild (formerly called Nib and Inks). Jobst joined an online group called Scribbled Lives, completing weekly assignments and tapping into a wealth of information. Bolton and others from the Ezell class

worked on group projects for several years, exploring different artists and techniques along the way.

While calligraphy delivers personal benefits to each of these artists, it also provides a way to connect with and uplift others. Jones, for example, likes to create pieces based on scriptures. “It’s nice to work on, and it’s encouraging for others,” she said. “That’s a good goal.”

(continued on page 43)



Elizabeth Bolton

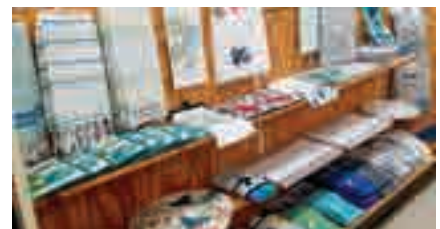
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calligraphers (continued from page 41)

Warren, like many letter artists, often creates ornamental letters to gift to friends. These decorated letters, also known as versals, give space for creativity while harkening back through the centuries to the days when scribes and monks illuminated manuscripts. Picture the large, decorative initial

Shari Jobst used snatches of song lyrics to create the sun's rays on this piece that was featured on CBS Sunday Morning.




Shari Jobst

letters at the beginning of a page of a story, for instance.

Jobst rarely does commissioned pieces. However, she fulfilled a longstanding goal when both of her children asked her to do the calligraphy for their wedding invitations and envelopes. And one of her cherished early pieces combined her calligraphy of a Shel Silverstein poem with illustrations she saved from her seven-year-old daughter.



Tammie Jones

In a world dominated by online communication and texting, beautiful writing may seem like a forgotten skill. But here on the Harbor, Elizabeth Bolton, Shari Jobst, Tammie Jones and Pat Warren are among the calligraphers keeping the art alive. 



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The Wynoochee River Winery handcrafts unique fruit and traditional grape wines

BY CHRISTINE VINCENT

It's a long way out to the Wynoochee River Winery, 13 miles from the Devonshire Road exit off of Highway 12, just west of Montesano. However, those 13 miles through the Wynoochee River Valley will intoxicate you with scenic beauty before you even taste the wine.

The road winds along the river, cutting through stretches of dense forest, opening into enchanting vistas of farmland. If you are lucky, you may even see an elk herd. At your destination, 79 Wheeler Road, you will be welcomed into the tasting room filled with the award-winning fruit wines of their labor.

Photo courtesy of Wynoochee River Winery



Since they opened their business in 2017, Denise Schupbach and Jeff Skinner have created 52 flavors of fruit wines, specializing in local berries and Eastern Washington stone fruit. They also make traditional grape wines. They currently offer a chardonnay, red blend, pinot noir and malbec.

In 1993, Jeff Skinner, originally from Seattle, purchased the farm on Wheeler Road. In 2005, Denise Schupbach joined him with her two daughters, Alexis and Madison.

The winemaking started after the farm had an abundance of raspberries growing one year. "Jeff's dad, Tom, came over and suggested we make wine. It was good," Denise recalled.

That first success hooked Jeff, who especially enjoys the chemistry of the process, Denise said. So, he soon

extended his winemaking to other fruits, such as little wild blackberry, pie cherry, cranberry, apple and peach.

"We started with 5-gallon carboys, and soon Jeff transitioned to a 300-liter stainless tank," Denise recalled. "I took some of the peach wine to a friend and she liked it so much that she suggested we produce it commercially. Soon after, we started the licensing process."

"I took some of the peach wine to a friend and she liked it so much that she suggested we produce it commercially."

— Denise Schupbach

In the fall of 2017, the long licensing process was completed and the Wynoochee River Winery opened for business. In 2019, they began selling at the Olympia Farmers Market, which required more paperwork.

Both the winery and the market were required to be credentialed by the Washington State Liquor Control Board and the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau.

Denise Schupbach with their wine display at the Olympia Farmers Market.

Photo courtesy of Wynoochee River Winery





Above: photos 1, 2, 3 & 7 courtesy of Wynoochee River Winery. Photos 4 & 6 by Christine Vincent

Denise quit her office job to sell at the farmers market four days a week during the high season. While there, she is always on the lookout for fruit to use in new wine flavors.

The winery purchases Eastern Washington stone fruit such as peaches, nectarines, apricots, and "pluots," a plum-apricot hybrid, from The Fresh Approach, and rhubarb from Ojeda Farms. Both are vendors at the Olympia Farmers Market. For their cranberry wine, the couple purchases cranberries from Quinby Farms in Grayland.

In addition to the abundant raspberries, the winery garden includes an orchard with cherry, pear and apple trees. There is a Wynoochee Early apple tree. That fruit goes into the apple wine together with another local variety, the Chehalis, as well as Honey Crisp and Akane apples. The couple has planted more fruit trees, Asian pears, mulberry and Cosmic Crisp

apples and additional varieties of berries: marionberries, loganberries, black, red, and white currants, and blueberries. They also planted chardonnay and pinot noir grapes many years ago.

Denise grew up on a farm in Lewis County and loves the garden. "We don't use chemicals, which makes it hard to keep the grass down in the spring. We are also in a constant competition with the birds and deer for the berries."

Wynoochee River Wines are handcrafted from beginning to end. Hundreds of pounds of fruit are prepped and processed by hand. The wine is hand-bottled, hand-corked, capped and labeled.

The fruit is hand peeled, pitted and chopped, washed, weighed, and placed in mesh fermentation bags.

Then bags are placed in a stainless-steel tank with sugar, water, yeast and nutrients. After the bags are removed, the liquid is transferred to another tank to clarify. The sediments sink to the bottom. The fruit pulp is composted and returned to the garden as a fertilizer. The winery now has a fermentation room holding 20 stainless steel tanks.

Denise has thrown herself into the promotion and distribution process. "I get into my car and distribute our wines to stores throughout Grays Harbor, Thurston, Pierce, Lewis and Mason counties," she said.

On the Harbor, Wynoochee River Wines
(continued on page 46)



Photo by Christine Vincent



Jeff Skinner and Denise Schubach enjoy a glass of wine.

Photos on this page courtesy of Wynoochee River Winery

River wines have won numerous awards at local and national competitions. The Raspberry Chipotle wine earned a double gold at the prestigious Finger Lakes International Wine and Spirits Competition in New York.

Another promotional success was having a KING-TV crew film a segment on the winery's lime wine. It was featured on "Evening" on June 1, 2021.

Things were going well for the winery until Covid-19 hit. Among other problems, the pandemic forced the closure of wine shows and made it difficult for the family business to obtain bottles.

Jeff and Denise went back to the drawing board to find new ways to sell and promote their wines.


Denise participated in a 10-week, five-hour-a-day business planning class funded through a grant by the City of Montesano and Enterprise for Equity.

"As part of the business plan evaluation, we diversified with grape wines and identified customer needs," she explained. Other changes included adding the Vinoshipper online purchase portal to the website and initiating a wine club membership program. The couple has also been working on beautifying the

grounds to make the site even more welcoming for visitors. Two beautiful fishponds, one with a cascading waterfall, grace the garden. The tasting room porch has chairs and tables surrounded by decorations and potted plants.

"Altogether we are doing well," Denise said. "So far, we have manufactured over 14,000 bottles of wine in 2022 – 1,166 cases."

In addition to being available at the lovely Wynoochee River Winery and Gardens, as well as many local outlets, the wines can also be found online at www.WynoocheeRiverWines.com.

Contact: 360-580-4452; 360-249-5022, wrrwinery@gmail.com. The tasting room is open 1 - 7 p.m. Thursday – Saturday; and 1 - 5 p.m. Sunday. 



Winery (continued)

are sold at many local stores, including the Thriftway grocery stores in Montesano and Elma, the Swanson grocery stores in Aberdeen and Hoquiam, the Westport Liquor Store, the Grayland Outfitters, the Ocean Shores IGA and Martin Bruni Liquor at the Front Street Market in Seabrook, which was the winery's first wholesale customer.

The bottle labels feature images representing the Wynoochee Valley created by local pastel artist Amanda Luck Baltzell. She has created labels for many wines, including a black bear, a chickadee, an owl and the former Mayr Bros. barn located on the Baltzell's Wishkah property.

Wine competitions are an important way to promote wines. Wynoochee

"So far, we have manufactured over 14,000 bottles of wine in 2022 – 1,166 cases."

– Denise Schubach



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MONTESANO

Twin Harbors Wildlife Center helps injured, sick animals

STORY & PHOTOS BY KATIE MCGREGOR

What can you do when your dog brings home a wild bunny, or you find a lame squirrel while on a walk near your home? Thankfully, there's a place in Montesano where you can take injured wildlife to heal.

The Twin Harbors Wildlife Center, at 4 Old Beacon Road, has been rehabilitating orphaned, ill, injured and displaced wildlife since 2019. The nonprofit organization helps small mammals such as eastern cottontail rabbits, opossums, chipmunks and a variety of squirrels.

"Our main goal is to rehabilitate the animals. Once they reach the proper weight, and are ready to go, we release them out to the wild," explained intern Amy Bledsoe, who recruited her best friend, Karla Kershaw, to also volunteer as an intern. Both women are working toward obtaining their rehabilitation licenses. Upon receiving these, the Wildlife Center will be able to raise its housing capacity for animals.

The animals in care of the Wildlife Center staff are housed on the property near Grays Harbor Veterinary Services, in their own building where they're separated based on their species, weight and special care needs.

When new animals are brought in, it usually starts with a phone call. Then Bledsoe and Kershaw make sure the Wildlife Center has the capacity and supplies to care for the animal in need. Once the animal is brought in, it is evaluated by the veterinarians in residence and founders of the Wildlife Center: Dr. Sonnya Wilkins and Dr. Corrie Hines. After being checked for injuries, they are prescribed any necessary medication and moved into their new temporary homes.



Wildlife Center interns Amy Bledsoe and Karla Kershaw.

"Our goal is to see 2,000 wild animals per year," Dr. Wilkins said. "There was a wildlife center about 18 years ago in McCleary and they were seeing 2,000 per year. Their closure left a big hole in our community so we want to see it filled."

Kershaw does quite a bit of one-on-one work with the animals and took on the task of rehabilitating a litter of eastern cottontail rabbits who were brought in at only a few days old this summer. With only a 10 percent survival rate because the species is so prone to heart attacks, it's a miracle that Kershaw has been able to save them.

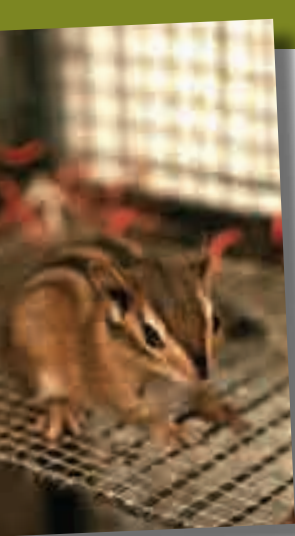
"These guys came in below the weight that we want them to be at," she explained. "But they came in happy, no sign of being attacked, and they've survived."

Animals are kept at the Wildlife Center for as long as it takes to be ready to return to the wild. The goal is to get them back to full health while keeping them wild, so human contact is limited as much as possible. Even so, Bledsoe and Kershaw have spent many shifts coming in every few hours in the middle of the night to feed and administer medication to animals.

After the animals are healthy and brought up to weight, they're moved to an outside enclosure to assimilate for seven to 10 days before finally being released.

Some animals do get extended stays. Kershaw said that they had a turtle who was brought in with a cracked shell so he took longer to heal. But the goal is always to get the animals back home.

"The Wildlife Center is always evolving.



We're always updating how things get done to stay up to date with laws and codes," Bledsoe said.

This year they've added more outdoor caging, installing fencing, and Kershaw is personally invested in

creating a holding facility for raccoons. Raccoons need special care because of the diseases they carry, so very few rehabilitation facilities have the means to care for them.

"If it weren't for the volunteers and interns, we wouldn't have a center."

- Dr. Wilkens

Also, the Wildlife Center is in the finishing stages of a flight pen for birds of prey. The current prevalence of an avian flu has stopped the center temporarily from accepting birds. However, they have previously rehabilitated eagles, hawks, falcons, and various other large birds. Property additions such as the flight pen are vital to the rehabilitation process because they mean the animals don't have to be shipped elsewhere before returning to the wild.

Along with the veterinarians and interns, an additional two to three dozen volunteers work on a variety of committees. There is something for everyone to do. There are committees for fundraising, caging, transporting and releasing animals back into the wild, and more. But right now, the Wildlife Center is especially looking for more volunteers to work with the animals.

"Dr. Hines and I are the two founders of the Wildlife Center," Dr. Wilkins explained. "But we're both full-time vets,

and if it weren't for the volunteers and interns, we wouldn't have a center. They do all of the work."

Volunteers receive a basic orientation and mammal training from Dr. Hines before starting. Even 12-year-olds kids and older can help if they have an adult accompany them.

Monetary donations are greatly appreciated as well. The Wildlife Center accepts PayPal donations, but donors are also welcome to stop by in person. There is also an Amazon wish list with specific items on it.


"Our biggest struggle is getting donations to keep things going. But it's amazing how supportive the community is of the facility. Much like the volunteers and interns, if it wasn't for them (local donors)] there wouldn't be a wildlife center," Dr. Wilkins said.

While they cannot currently accept raccoons, weasels, minks, and songbirds, staff members do their best

to refer the animals they can't house to other facilities.

"There's a whole network of centers working together," Bledsoe said. If the Wildlife Center has the ability, they'll transfer the animals to Olympia, Quilcene, Port Angeles and Bainbridge Island if needed. Twin Harbors Wildlife Center even serves as a pit stop for deer and bears before they are transferred elsewhere.

When it comes time to release an animal, location is critical. "Ideally, wildlife is released close to where they came from," Bledsoe said. "My favorite part of the job is releasing the animals," she added. "It means we did our jobs right."

To contact the Twin Harbors Wildlife Center, visit its website at www.twinharborwildlife.weebly.com or call (360) 861-4556. The facilities are located at 4 Old Beacon Road in Montesano. They are also on Facebook as Twin Harbors Wildlife Center. Monetary donations can be made via PayPal @[twinharborwildlife](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?business=twinharborwildlife). 

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DECEMBER

DECEMBER 1 . GHC Jazz Concert . Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College . 7pm

DECEMBER 2 . First Friday Art Walk . Aberdeen Art Center . Enjoy live music & food, while viewing art in the galleries. 5pm - 8pm

DECEMBER 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11 . Nunsense 2: 'The Second Coming' . Aberdeen . Driftwood Players . Friday, Saturdays 7:30 pm, Sundays 1:30pm . Musical Comedy . Directed by Brad Duffy

DECEMBER 3 . Ho Ho Hoquiam . Celebrate the holidays with many events.

DECEMBER 3 . Santa by the Sea . Westport

Marina . 10:30am. Marina & Maritime Museum

DECEMBER 2, 3 . Winterfest . Aberdeen . Holiday festivities, live music, Santa, real reindeer, holiday market, food & more. (Full schedule on p. 9.)

DECEMBER 3 . Holiday Concert with Ericka Corban . Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College . 7:30pm

DECEMBER 3 . 'National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation' . 7th Street Theatre . Hoquiam . 7:30pm . Movie from 1989

DECEMBER 3 - 4 . Harbor Dice Con . Ocean Shores . Convention Center

DECEMBER 3, 10, 17 . Holiday Market . Seabrook . At the Belfry find specialty retailers

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DECEMBER 6 . Flowers to Feathers . Hoquiam
 Timberland Library . 6pm . Attract birds to your garden.

DECEMBER 8 . Olson Brothers Christmas Concert . 7th Street Theatre . Hoquiam . 7:30pm

DECEMBER 9-11 . Festival of Lights . Montesano . Events, concerts and contests, Grand Parade 6 pm Sat., Dec. 10. (Full schedule on p. 27.)

DECEMBER 10, 11 . 'A Nutty Whoville Holiday' . 7th Street Theatre . Hoquiam . 2pm . Admission is FREE with a foodbank donation.

DECEMBER 10, 17 . Holiday Open House . Aberdeen Art Center . 4pm - 6pm

DECEMBER 11 . Grays Harbor Civic Choir &

Concert Band . Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College . 2pm

DECEMBER 15 . Glimpses Lecture Series . Ocean Shores . Sponsored by Coastal Interpretive Center . Anthony Odell, UW . Harmful Algal Blooms of the Pacific Northwest . 7pm at OS Lions Club

DECEMBER 17 . Holiday Parade . Seabrook . Fun & festive . 6pm . Begins in the Town Center.

DECEMBER 17 . 'Miracle on 34th Street' . 7th Street Theatre . Hoquiam . 7:30pm . Movie from 1947

DECEMBER 17, 18 . Christmas Bazaar . Grayland Community Hall . Gingerbread House Contest, local vendors & Community Party.

DECEMBER 17, 18 . Grays Harbor Opera Workshop Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College

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JANUARY

JANUARY 6 . First Friday Art Walk . Aberdeen Art Center . Enjoy live music & food, while viewing art in the galleries. 5pm - 8pm

JANUARY 6 . First Friday . Aberdeen Museum Exhibit . Aberdeen Art Center . Grocery Stores of Grays Harbor Historic Photos Exhibit . 5pm - 8pm

JANUARY 14 . Freaks at the Beach . Ocean Shores Convention Center

JANUARY 19 . Dmitri Matheny . Bishop Center . Aberdeen . Grays Harbor College . 7pm . One of the jazz world's most talented flugelhornist.

JANUARY 19 . Glimpses Lecture Series . Ocean Shores . Sponsored by Coastal Interpretive Center . Alex Stote . European Green Crab - Invasion and Impacts . 7pm at OS Lions Club

JANUARY 20, 21 . 'Happy Feet' . 7th Street Theatre . Hoquiam . Friday 7:30pm, Sat. 2pm . Movie from 2006

JANUARY 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29 . '12 Incompetent Jurors' . Ocean Shores . Stage West Community Theatre . Friday, Saturday 7pm, Sunday 2pm . A satiric parody of the classic '12 Angry Men.' Directed by Lori Hardin.

JANUARY 21 . Elma Winter Wine Festival Masquerade . Grays Harbor County Fair & Event Center . 3 Live bands: The Backfire Band, Jokers Wild & The Olson Brothers . 12pm to 9pm

(continued on page 53)

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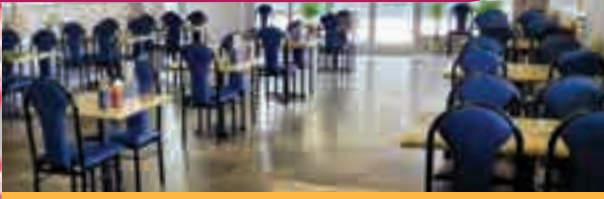


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FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 3 . First Friday Art Walk .
Aberdeen Art Center . *Enjoy live music & food, while viewing art in the galleries. 5pm - 8pm*

FEBRUARY 3 . First Friday . Aberdeen Museum Exhibit . Aberdeen Art Center . *Grocery Stores of Grays Harbor Historic Photos Exhibit . 5pm - 8pm*

FEBRUARY 5 . National Chocolate Fondue Day . Grayland Community Hall . *6pm . Live music, taco bar, desserts, drinks.*

FEBRUARY 10, 11 . 'Notting Hill' . 7th Street Theatre . Hoquiam . *7:30pm . Movie from 1999*

FEBRUARY 11 . QCED Concert . Ocean Shores Convention Center

FEBRUARY 11, 12 . Artisan Faire . Hearts & Flowers ... & Chocolate . Ocean Shores *Fair trade gift items, patisserie, local vendors, prizes. Net proceeds benefit Garden by the Sea - a community garden.*

FEBRUARY 11, 17, 18, 24, 25 . 'Proof' . Aberdeen . *Driftwood Players . Friday, Saturdays*

7:30 pm . Drama . Directed by Brad Duffy

FEBRUARY 10, 11, 12 . Burning Bear Festival . Ocean City . *Ocean City Marketplace . Watch 15 - 20 chainsaw carvers create sculptures including 1 large bear that will be ceremoniously burned Saturday at dusk. Benefit auction, 3pm Sat. & Sun.*

FEBRUARY 16 . Glimpses Lecture Series . Ocean Shores . *Sponsored by Coastal Interpretive Center . Humpback Whale Tales – Meet Big Mama in this family-friendly presentation -- a life-sized model of an actual humpback whale . Presentation by NOAA . 7pm at OS Lions Club*

FEBRUARY 18 . Ocean Shores Renewed Antique Show . *Convention Center*

FEBRUARY 18 . 2nd Annual Railroad Swap Meet & Train Show . Elma . *Grays Harbor County Fair & Event Center*

FEBRUARY 19 . The Wardens . Raymond . *Raymond Theatre . Sunday 2pm . From the wilds of Canada this trio of musicians who are Canadian National Park wardens, blend folk & western styles.*

More events to come. Spring issue will be in your mailbox around March 1. 

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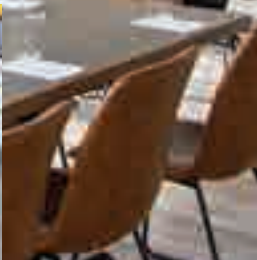
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