

Work begins on new campus intersection



TIM PERRY/The Current

Crews are already hard at work on revamping the intersection near Green River's main entrance. A left turn lane and traffic light will be added to ease current congestion at the all-way stop outside CCA.

Construction is in preparation for new traffic light at the 320th, 124th entrance

Hannah Ackerman
Staff Reporter

The construction outside the Campus Corner Apartments along 320th may be a pain now, but it is necessary in order to improve traffic conditions in the future. For students who are leaving Green River Community College (GRCC), the hassle won't come at any added benefit as the construction will be going on into the summer.

Students who are returning have something to look forward to, as the construction will be complete and traffic moving smoothly by fall.

"The construction you see now is preparation for an installation of traffic lights for that intersection," said Fred Creek, head of GRCC security.

Instead of a confusing all-way stop, Green River will have a couple of traffic lights. These traffic lights will be installed starting the week of June 19, easily in time for the beginning of fall quarter.

The intersection of 320th and

124th is a high-traffic area near the main campus entrance.

320th Street provides access to the Lea Hill community, and eventually leads to Harvey Road -- a main artery in downtown Auburn. Students living south of the college, including those in the Muckleshoot Reservation and Enumclaw area, take this route to campus.

124th Street also serves the Lea Hill community; Auburn Mountainview High School is located just north of the college. The route also provides access to Kent-Kangley, a major artery for students living in the Kent area and those further north.

Construction workers are currently digging up the road for the installation of water and phone lines as well as preparing to widen the road. When that's completed, the lane that you see cars parking in now along 320th will be a lane for traffic to enter campus. The current traffic lane will then become a left turn lane. These new improvements will help alleviate the traffic problem seen over the past few years.



TIM PERRY/The Current

Morning traffic may be backed up now, but officials say the disruption is well worth it. The work is scheduled to be completed later this summer. Installation of the actual traffic light will begin June 19 -- the day of Green River's commencement ceremony. This has caused some concern with the higher volume of traffic expected during that event.



Special Insert:
The Mainstream
see special section



SpringFest '06
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Da Vinci Code:
From Paper
to Screen

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Current Staff

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Photographers

Andrew Gardner

Chief Photographer

Tim Perry

Staff Photographer

Marks Dones

Staff Photographer

Contact

The Current

Newsroom

x2375

Advertising

Nicole Swapp

x2376

Email

thecurrent@greenriver.edu

John Knowlton

Newspaper Adviser

x4201

Green River Community College
(253) 833-9111

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Security Watch

Falling Branches

April 24

A tree limb fell onto a car in Lot A at about 10:30 a.m. The car, a Pontiac Grand Prix, was dented and scratched. The owner and the campus maintenance department were notified.

False Permit

May 1

Security observed a car with a staff parking permit, but suspected the owner was a student because of books in the back seat. An officer checked the license plate number and the permit number; the names did not match. A note was left on the car for the driver to see security. The following day the same car was seen in staff parking; another citation was issued. The driver never contacted security. The same car was seen again on the third day; a wheel lock was placed on the vehicle. A female student confronted the security dispatcher. She later said that a staff member had given her the permit. Action was pending.

Fake ID Cards

May 4

Security was called to the Holman Library to take a report. Staff had contacted a student about some overdue books, however he claimed he never checked them out, and was no longer a Green River student. The staff member looked up the ID card for that name; the name and picture did not match. An instructor recognized the photo as being of another student. That student's ID card showed a photo of someone completely different. Both IDs were apparently made on the same day at the bookstore. No additional information was available.

'Stolen' Vehicle

May 6

A non-student reported that he attended the high school drags May 5, and spent the night at the Campus Corner Apartments after getting drunk. He claimed that when he left the following morning, his Ford Bronco was gone. Police were already en route. The description matched that of a vehicle found earlier in the morning on the fitness trails. When police arrived, the man informed them that the car had been found in the woods. Despite claiming to have no other information, the man led officers to the Bronco's exact location. It had notable damage; however the steering wheel was still locked. Security also noticed that mud on the man's shoes matched that of footprints at the scene. When confronted, the suspect admitted driving the Bronco down the fitness trail himself while drunk the previous night.

RETRACTION

It has come to our attention that a substantial amount of an article ('May is bike to work month') in the May 12 issue of *The Current* was plagiarized. We now retract that story in its entirety.

The reporter involved admitted to plagiarizing, and no longer works for *The Current*. Plagiarism, in any form, is unacceptable and a serious offense. This publication has a zero-tolerance policy.

A reader tip alerted us to this situation. Please report any suspicious content to the editor-in-chief or adviser.



Events

Laser Tag and Buffet

May 29

\$15 students

\$30 non-students

1 p.m.

LaserQuest

Federal Way

Three games of laser tag and all-you-can-eat buffet at Mongolian Grill.

Contact: x2400

RA Forum

May 30

5 p.m.

Campus Corner
Townsend Center

This is a time for residents to stand up and speak out on concerns and problems as well as ask questions they may have to CCA staff and Resident Assistants.

Badminton Tournney

May 31 - June 2

FREE

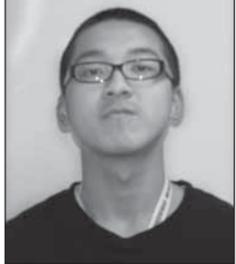
12 p.m.

Doubles badminton tournament in the main gym. Athletic shoes are mandatory. Sign up in Student Programs.

Contact: x2400

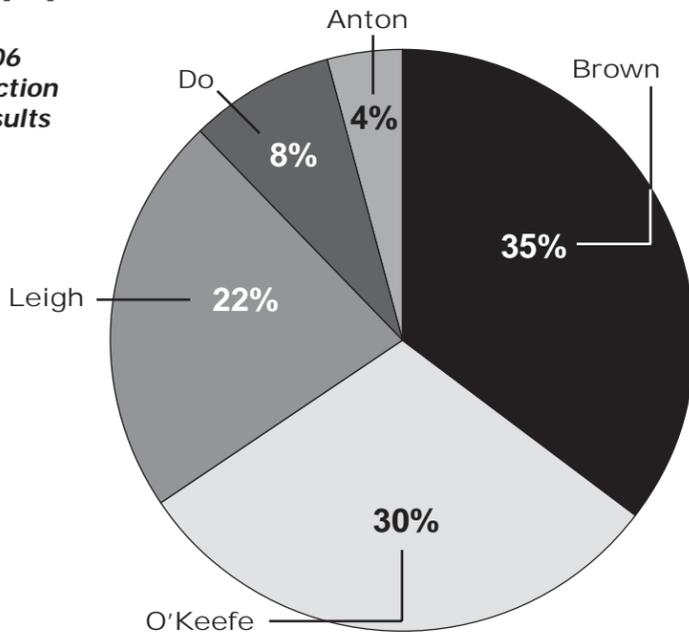


Amanda Brown



Ca\$h Chen

2006
Election
Results



Brown comes out on top in election

New president wants to maintain student involvement in '06-'07

Tiffany Richards
Staff Reporter

Future Student Government President Amanda Brown has already begun planning her agenda for her upcoming term.

"I want to continue to maintain student involvement," said Brown, "by making Springfest a couple hours longer to include Green River's exchange students in the fun and to create awareness about the parking problem to new and returning students; focusing on alternatives, such as the race-way shuttle, for now."

Student elections came to a close on May 12 with Brown

winning by a 5% margin over second place candidate Fred O'Keefe. Brown won 35 percent of the votes cast; O'Keefe had 30 percent; Jibril Leigh 22 percent; Catherine Do eight percent; and Pedro Anton III four percent. A record 1157 students participated in the election.

Ca\$h Chen ran unopposed for vice president.

A constitutional amendment concerning the way by-law changes are advertised was approved by the student body.

The May 18 student government meeting had current Vice President Johnny Gannaw congratulating Brown and pointing out that student government is

still accepting applications for the chief justice position and nine senator appointments for the 2006-2007 academic year. All applications are due by Wednesday, May 31 at 4 p.m. and are available in the Information Center on the second floor of the LSC.

In other business:

- A \$500 request from Campus Corner Apartments (CCA) to pay for a series of planned events was presented.

- A request of \$1,000 from the Asian Student Union to fund the upcoming Asian Culture Night was presented.

- The Math Club constitution was passed, making it an official campus club.

NEWS BRIEFS

Campus hosts teachers conference

Green River recently held the 7th annual Future Teachers Conference. The event was put forth by members of the Teachers of Tomorrow Club, as well as the Project TEACH Center and the Center of Excellence for Careers in Education. The conference is held as a means for those interested in the profession to learn possible teaching styles and helpful strategies. Through a variety of seminars,

students attending the conference were offered a substantial amount of information for their future career. Approximately 150 students ranging from high school to University levels were in attendance of the event. Attendees were also able to hear from those currently in teaching and advising positions, including guest speakers from GRCC and former Project TEACH students.

Blood drive to be held May 31

GRCC's Blood Drive will be held in the LSC's Glaciir Room next wednesday May 31 from 8-5. The quarterly event is sponsored by the Health Services department and Phi Theta Kappa. The club is currently looking for volunteers to assist with the event. Those that are at least 18 years old (those 16 and 17 years of age may donate

with a signed permission form), in good health, and at least 110 pounds may donate. Students interested in participating or assisting with the blood drive can contact Julie French with Health Services 253-833-9111 ext. 2430, or Amy Warren, Phi Theta Kappa's advisor at 253-833-9111 ext. 2414.

Green River cosponsors car show

The annual All-Kent High School Car Show took place Wednesday May 17 at Kentlake High School. A former graduate of Green River's automotive program, instructor David Lewis is currently Kentlake's auto shop teacher. The show brought forth vehicles from several Kent high schools, as well as cars from GRCC's Automotive Technology program. Instructors as well as students from the department were on hand to offer prospective students in-

formation on both Green River Community College, as well as the varying trade programs offered on campus. Cosponsor Pacific Raceways contributed Northwest Pro Stock driver Jason Fiorito's vehicle, in addition to having a presence at the Green River booth. Former drag racer Gordy Bonin was also present, talking with students on issues such as drag racing safety and furthering their education. The show was a success for both students and faculty.

South Asian Culture Night is May 26

The Asian Student Union sponsored South Asian Culture Night will be held in the Main Dining Area of the LSC tonight. The event seeks to bring awareness to those in the community of the varying culture's of Sri Lanka, Burma, Pakistan, and India. Those attending can expect a va-

riety of performances, including comedy and dance acts. Information on each country, as well as a presentation of the national flag will be presented throughout the evening. More information on the event can be found by visiting Student Programs.



ANDY GARDNER/The Current

How safe are the Campus Corner Apartments?

Amber Petersen
Staff Reporter

The Campus Corner Apartments have recently been the setting for a large amount of crime at Green River. Originally built two years ago, the CCA were intended as an easy and accessible way for students to attend the college without driving them to nearby apartment complexes or

compounding the parking problem. During that time however, a number of crimes have raised some concerns over student housing at GRCC.

Students living in the apartments feel that the CCA community is a safe one. There have been very few break-ins over the past few weeks and many residents feel most problems can be traced to untrustworthy roommates.

Even non-criminal infractions of CCA resident policies have declined. A few parties that had been running until late in the night came to an end with the eviction of a nineteen year old student whose parties supplied alcohol to minors. His disruption of the community was stopped because of a CCA policy that eviction follows a third infraction against the housing agreement.

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How to choose the right classes

Caitlin Estep
Staff Reporter

With spring quarter coming to an end quickly, it is time to start planning summer or fall quarter.

To make sure that the classes being taken are accurate, there are many places on campus to find help. The Lindbloom Student Center is a good place to start. Make an appointment with an advisor in educational planning located on the first floor.

If students aren't available to make an appointment in person, there are other options such as online. The schedule planner is a good place to start. It lists all the classes and what time they are available. The time grid makes it easy to choose classes for a hectic schedule because it allows students to reserve a time where they can not take classes.

To find schedule planner go to <http://www.greenriver.edu/> click online services and scroll down to Schedule planner. Online it is easy to make sure the classes you are taking are correct. A helpful source is Degree Works Audit, which is also located on the Green River website in online services.

The quarterly class schedule is a good tool for planning classes and both summer and fall issues are available.

From paper to screen, The Da Vinci Code is a must see and read

Tiffany Richards
Staff Reporter

Everyone loves a good conspiracy theory. Countless investigations, books, movies, and articles have been created on theories from UFO's to the Northwest's own Bigfoot. No other, though, has captured the attention of the world in recent years like the one dramatized by Dan Brown in *The Da Vinci Code*.

Since it made its debut in early 2003, Brown's novel has been the center of fierce debate by both Christians and non-Christians alike, one that has only intensified with the release of director Ron Howard's film, which opened in theaters worldwide last Friday.

For those who still don't know what the hype is about, Brown's novel makes the claim that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were secretly married and had a daughter together. The "holy bloodline", according to Brown, was mixed with the first ruling family of France known as the Merovingian dynasty. The bloodline supposedly has survived to this day. Brown also makes the charge that the Church, notably the

Catholic Church, has been hiding this "truth" from the world to protect Christ's divinity.

The stories main characters, Robert Langdon and Sophie Neveu, find themselves in the middle of a modern-day Holy Grail quest, which is depicted in the novel as an ancient code for the womb of Mary Magdalene. Search for clues in the works of Leonardo Da Vinci and others.

Green River art instructor Gary Olivera, who read the novel over the summer, had some interesting insights about the mystery of art, a major aspect to Brown's writing. He holds that art is opened to interpretation by both the artist and the viewer.

"I think it's interesting that art, even something as narrative-based as *The Last Supper*, is open to interpretation," Olivera commented.

The college's Christian community was by no means ignored. Josh Lynch, president of G.R.A.C.E. (Green River Active Christian Encounters) club holds that the novel is, in fact, a work of fiction. "[The] theory presented is far-fetched. If someone didn't know the true history [of Christianity], then

they'd be confused."

When asked if people of the Christian faith would easily be offended by either the novel or the movie, Lynch commented that "this is a fictional novel. If your looking to get offended, then you will."

The only problems Lynch had with the novel as a whole were the questions about Jesus' divinity. "Teabing's perspective on the divinity of Jesus never take into account the Old Testament, Paul's letters, or early Church writings," which he says prove that Jesus' early followers believed that he was divine.

This is also why many Christians, some of great influence, have denounced the novel as being blasphemous. Layman, Zach Smith, explained it this way, "The learned men [in the novel], Teabing and Langdon, hold that Jesus' wasn't divine, nor did He ever claim to be. Teabing cites that the Council of Nicea was to determine if Jesus was God. This doesn't match the half dozen or so historical documents that say otherwise. An overwhelming majority, something like 3 to 300, agreed that Jesus was God, fully equal to the Father. This also counteracts the disclosure cited at the beginning of the novel."

When asked why the novel was being so strongly attacked by a majority of the Catholic population, Smith stated that "Teabing cites that the Vatican had to have a political ally of Constantine. No Roman Catholic Church existed during Constantine's lifetime. Furthermore, Teabing refers to the 'Vatican' as the seat in the Roman Catholic Church when the Vatican wasn't build until 1378."

Smith, who also teaches a class on *The Da Vinci Code* at Calvary Community Church in Sumner, pointed out that Teabing, who is a British Royal historian in the novel, makes gross errors time and time again without being corrected by Langdon. Smith sees this as a possible focused attack by Brown on the Roman Catholic Church.

What do you know about your safety?

Some tips on how you can stay safe

Shannon MacInnes
Staff Reporter

The self defense class on May 18th not only showed students different techniques, but also showed ways to use weapons you may have on hand. The class was taught in the small gym from 6 - 9 p.m. by instructor Wu Chin.

Chin is a certified Karate instructor by the Shudokan Martial Arts Association and is a certified Master Instructor by the American Shudokan Association. He demonstrated in front of the class striking moves that included open hands, elbows, fist hammer, as well as kicks.

Chin gave detailed instructions for survival in case a real attack is ever to occur. They include:

1. Fight dirty
2. Scream and yell for help
3. As necessary, use weapons
4. Attack the vital areas.
5. Attack the attacker
6. Simplicity of attack
7. Momentum of the attack (multiple strikes)
8. Expect to get hurt
9. If at all possible, do not go to the ground with the attacker! Always think there is another attacker waiting."

Even though it gets darker later in the spring and summer; it is always a good idea to know how to protect yourself and the ones you love. Chin also teaches class at the Federal Way Parks and Recreation for anybody interested. He also suggested that if people are serious about protecting themselves, taking martial arts classes is the way to go. Many of the students that came to the class enjoyed his presentation and hope to see it again in the future.



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The game of all games, Starcraft: Ghost

John Phipps
Staff Reporter

Do you remember when Blizzard first announced the production of Starcraft: Ghost? If you don't, that might be because the game was in development for five long years before finally being scrapped.

Ghost was intended to be the sequel to Starcraft, a real-time-strategy game set in distant worlds in the future. The game was massively successful, today still enjoying a strong community and selling over 8 million copies. Starcraft: Ghost, the first-person shooter follow-up, will be missed.

To Blizzard, the pressure of producing a follow-up to Starcraft is like the pressure George Lucas felt when he made the prequels to Star Wars. There are high expectations. This pressure, combined with the company's renowned standard of delaying releases and polishing its games until they are perfect, caused Ghost to be given subsequent release dates between 2002 and 2006.

Blizzard struggled with an internal power with Nihilistic Studios, the company that was doing the artwork for Ghost. Nihilistic's team left in 2002, leaving Blizzard to find a new art team to finish the job. Fan support was still high at this point, as Blizzard claimed the

game was 65% complete. A new art team was found, and production rolled on. However, Blizzard continued to push back release dates, all the way until late 2004. At this point, critics began comparing the game to other sequels that had failed, but fans hadn't given up yet.

The showcasing of Ghost at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in 2005 was encouraging. The version displayed functional multiplayer missions and showed fans a walk through of a single player level. Blizzard quenched this excitement by pushing the release date back to 2006. They also decided not to release a version for the GameCube, limiting the game to the Playstation 2 and X-Box.

Ghost has now been indefinitely postponed. Blizzard couldn't finish up in time, and now the next-generation consoles are upon us. As far as graphics and gameplay, Ghost didn't offer anything spectacular. If Blizzard had ever released the game, it would've enjoyed success among fans, but it would've been a rotten apple if Blizzard wasn't pleased with it.

Starcraft fans are disappointed to hear that the project has been cancelled, but respect the decision and would rather wait for Blizzard to release a follow-up to Starcraft that meets their approval.



RYAN MINKLER / Student Photographer

A view of Mt. Rainier from Lake Tapps, in its serene setting around the Lake Tapps community. The history of the area can be found in *The Mainstream*, a special insert in this issue.

**Section editor positions available
for The Current '06-'07**

**Contact Ryan Gaudinier at
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Springfest 2006

Green River Community College was busy gearing up for summer during the week of May 15 - 19 with its annual SpringFest. With the weather sunny and in the 70s, this blooming season was very much alive and well during the five days of music, food and fun.

SpringFest is a solid week of festivities planned as a way of celebrating the approaching end of the academic year, as well as enabling students to have a little fun on campus before the rush towards finals begins.



ANDY GARDNER/The Current
Green River students couldn't have asked for a better forecast as they popped out of the wood work for the sunny, social atmosphere in the relocated Kennelly Commons during this year's SpringFest.



TIM PERRY/The Current



TIM PERRY/The Current

The party kicked off with a bang on the night of Monday, May 15 with Open Mic Night at the Campus Corner Apartments, emceed by current ASGRCC Chief Justice Carmeron McKee. A handful of bold and daring Green River students boasted an array of individual and unique talents to their audience, some better socially absorbed than others. Headlining the event was Los Angeles-based eclectic-rock-folk band, Raining Jane. The all-female group returned for an encore performance the following Tuesday and showcased their talents on campus while students ate up cotton candy, ice cream and snow cones.

Wednesday's festivities featured a good ole' fashion Car Bashin' fundraiser for minority scholarships, which allowed students to take out any pent-up aggression on an old boat of a used car with a sledge hammer. All for as cheap as two good body hits for a buck – more if you wanted to mutilate the interior or the door glass, of course. The car was covered from roof to rim with words like "rape" and "tuition" to give participating students a focal point for their sledged aggression. KGRG students rotated through, redundantly smacking the word "liberal" scribbled with a sharpie on the front bumper. Even Executive Dean of Student Services Jorge Ramirez got in a few swings for the event, shelling out a dollar for two good whacks on the word "bitch" painted prominently in red on the hood.



ANDY GARDNER/The Current



ANDY GARDNER/The Current

GRCC Executive Dean of Student Services Jorge Ramirez chuckled as he swung the mid-weighted sledge hammer at the word "bitch" painted prominently on the hood of the blasted old American Boat.



TIM PERRY/The Current

Thursday was a campus carnival featuring music, photo booths and a faculty dunk tank. All this alongside "bathtub" mini-kart races that allowed students and campus celebrities alike to race around the Kennelly Commons in an inflatable, barriered track. ASGRCC Vice President Johnny Gannaw was spotted in the blistering mid-day sun, racing around the portable track in one of these bathtub Go-Karts.

The festivities concluded on Friday with the second annual Sounds of Hawaii show, with artists from the Hawaiian Islands: music by Na Palapalai, entertainment by Augie T, and hula by Ke`ala `O Kamailelaili`ili`i and Manawaiopuna.

SpringFest is a Green River event with a little something for each and every student enrolled on this diverse campus. With this year's event going off without a hitch, weather cooperation and all, student turnout was high enough that Student Programs is eager to put on another fun SpringFest in 2007.

- Robert Westervelt / Andy Gardner



TIM PERRY/The Current

Current Editorial

Now is the time to stand up for student press rights

For those of us in the student media game, college life has been pretty good.

We've been free to call it like it is. We've been free to keep a watchful eye on government. We've been free to look out for the people – to “tell the people,” as the saying goes – even when others aren't so willing. On America's college campuses, arguably our greatest forums for free exchange and debate, the student media has long been free to do its job. And over the last four decades, when the going got tough, when the talk got serious, when the unwelcome face of censorship began to show itself – courts and judges came to our rescue.

“It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate,” the U.S. Supreme Court said in 1969 (*Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*).

Student speech, including controversial newspaper stories, can only be censored where it would invade the rights of others, or substantially disrupt school activities. The free speech of future generations, or so it seemed, was protected for good.

Of course, that was back in the '60s and '70s – the glory days, as the student press has come to call them. It was an era of controversy and expression, of Vietnam and Nixon. Without question we needed the First Amendment at our colleges back then. Any Googling of “Kent State University” and “Vietnam War” is proof enough of that.

Unfortunately, our friends and colleagues in America's high schools have not fared so well. In 1988, the Supreme Court ruled that administrators could censor student newspapers for any “legitimate pedagogical purpose.” It was hardly a high standard, and one quite easily abused. In the two years after that decision, reports of

censorship to the Student Press Law Center almost tripled – and the problem has only gotten worse. Far too many high school newspapers now rot in a world of watered-down, feel-good, yes-sir content. Any serious journalist would tell you that's no way to learn this craft. The Hazelwood decision severely crippled the student press; whether it can ever recover will depend largely on legislative efforts to fight censorship. It's an uphill battle, one we may very well lose.

The silver lining, if there was one, was the court's ominous footnote: the standard did not necessarily apply at colleges. They would leave that decision for another day. In over 60 cases, courts across this country continued to defend college journalists. It was thought that in closing the door on high schools, the courts had built a wall around the First Amendment at our public colleges and universities.

Almost a year ago, that wall started to come down.

Flying in the face of precedent, a federal appeals court applied the Hazelwood standard to a college censorship case. Administrators at a university in Illinois had demanded to review the student newspaper prior to publication. The students sued. They lost. The Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal. The student press was stunned.

For a brief time we thought it was simply an isolated case. A fluke. Then, not long after that decision, in another state and another time zone, it started sinking in.

The California Attorney General's office released this memo to area universities: “campuses may [now] have more latitude than previously believed to censor the content of subsidized student newspapers.”

And that has been the operative word

throughout this debate – “subsidized.”

There are some who would argue that newspapers which are supported by the school should be controlled by the school. It seems logical. The school invests in a newsroom, a faculty adviser, equipment and printing costs – and it should expect certain returns on that investment... like positive, supportive, up-beat news coverage. Yes, it would seem to make sense, until you actually think it through. Giving a donation to a school newspaper earns you little more authority than does giving money to the Salvation Army Santa Claus. The Salvation Army gets to use that money to do its job, to fulfill its mission. They get to make the decisions; after all, you gave the cash to them. It would seem illogical to get up in old Kringle's face, squint your eyes and say “listen, pal, here's what you're going to do with my \$1.85.”

It would similarly make little sense for a college to make demands of student newspapers. The school does not own the newspaper. The computers, the space, the pens and arguably even the paper it is printed on – these are indeed property of the school. But the words themselves, being written by students, belong to students. And even if the school were considered the owner, it still could not censor – so say the courts. “The university is clearly an arm of the state and this single fact will always distinguish it from the purely private publisher as far as censorship rights are concerned” (*Bazaar v. Fortune*).

We've heard the “it's my paper” argument so often we've simply learned to ignore it. The issue returns to fundamental First Amendment rights – and just how much they should apply to students.

The state of California reacted the right way. And in response, it's doing the right thing. Journalism students and educators

came out in force against the pro-censorship memo. They didn't back down, in fact they pushed forward. Just a few short weeks ago, the State Assembly unanimously passed a bill ensuring a free college press; essentially shielding student papers in that state from Hazelwood.

That was Hazelwood's other “out” – schools, and the legislatures that control them, can specifically protect their student journalists if they so choose. Even though that ruling may not apply to colleges in California, it took a proactive step in declaring a free press anyway. What will happen elsewhere remains to be seen.

We can, however, tell you this. In this state, and at this college, the battle is being joined. Green River's attorney claims that the college can censor this newspaper should it feel the need. That sounds notably familiar; though we're still waiting to see that memo. The question then: what will we, in Washington, do about it?

We've seen what happened to the high school press. We're seeing that infection spread to the college level. It is possible that not so long from now, the student media, in its entirety, will be dead... or operating under the threat of censorship, which we assure you is far worse.

That could be pre-empted, of course, if every college declared press freedom for their students – real press freedom. That's unlikely to happen without some encouragement. So, for us, the students, we have two options. We can ignore it, leave it for someone else to deal with, hope it all goes away. Or we can work at it, believe in it, and fight like hell to save it – even at the risk of rustling a few feathers or bruising a few egos. For the generations and journalists of tomorrow, this decision will prove to be an important one. But we tell you, emphatically, that the time to make it is now.

Gas prices: blame administration before oil companies

Matt Jonas

Gas is the biggest concern for Americans these days, even outweighing the continued threat of terrorism. The blame game has been in full swing, with democrats pointing the finger at republicans close ties to the oil industry and republicans blaming the price of crude oil on terrorism. It is comical that this conflict is a somewhat circular problem for Americans; you have to have gas to get to work to make money to pay for the rising cost of gas.

It is clear that this country has a severe gas addiction, as do many rapidly developing nations around the globe, but somehow this country has become the whipping post for the oil giants that call the US home. The consumption by Americans is starting to be rivaled by countries such as China and Japan, whose developing industries are starting to tap deeper into the world market of oil.

This is becoming a problem in that the oil companies are starting to pander to these growing markets over their own home town needs. I understand the concept of turning

a profit, but at what expense are an extra couple of billion dollars a quarter worth? The defense of the outrageous oil prices, according to the oil barons, is due to the rationalization of “complicated” factors that are associated with oil import. This is one of the biggest falsehoods perpetrated against the American public. If you take a closer look you will realize that the excuses that are laid off for the climbing gas prices are flawed at best. The oil companies have stated that the opening of new refineries is a driving factor in the price of oil; this is simply false. There have not been that many new refineries, and refining capacity has continued to grow over the past decade.

An honest reason behind the rising price cost is simple; this administration, when it took office, revoked a cap on the price a gallon of gas could be after being refined. This cap was instituted during President Carter's time in office as a safeguard against the actions that we currently face. The blame does not totally lie with the oil companies. If you had the opportunity to jack up prices without any recourse, I believe you would be hard pressed to say no.

The blame that the American public should place is on the administration whose has traded away responsibility for deposits in their campaign war chest. Gaining political favor through contributions has been a driving story recently with investigations such as the Abramoff and Cunningham scandals, but somehow the biggest scandal has still eluded the

American public. The ties between this administration and big oil are public, in a sense that everyone knows about them, but few really have any drive to investigate.

The President has seen fit to establish an investigation by his own state department into the matter, so I believe that this probe will not bear a substantial explanation. It is not surprising that the President is still very reluctant to implement a tax on the profits earned by the oil companies, which continue to set records with each quarter. In the developing of a national energy policy, the heads of the major oil companies in this nation were consulted regularly. These meetings to this day have still not been made public, citing reasons of nation security. The saying “where there is smoke, there

is fire” can easily sum up this blatant misuse of position. This corruption of power has gotten to the point of a Nixon scandal, but some how the outcry is still balked by major players in congress.

The solution to the gas problem in this country is not the creation of switch grass or ethanol plants as the President would have you believe, but the reinstating of responsibility to the consumer. The addiction to oil that we possess is problematic, but the irrational behavior that is done in our name is detrimental.

There does not seem to be an end to the climbing gas prices any time soon, and accountability for the issue is also up in the air. The pain that we all feel at the pump will be with us for a while.

EDITORIAL AND LETTERS POLICY

The Current considers itself a limited **public forum** for student expression, in which student editors make policy and content decisions.

Green River Community College delegates editorial responsibility for student publications to students, and therefore assumes no responsibility for the content of the publications. The College acknowledges the dual purpose of student publications as instructional tools and as vehicles for free inquiry and free expression in the academic community.

The views and opinions expressed in *The Current* do not necessarily reflect those of the College or the student body.

We encourage all students and staff to have their voices heard. *The Current* will publish **Letters to the Editor** provided they are signed and submitted in a timely manner. Letters should be e-mailed to thecurrent@greenriver.edu. We will not publish letters which demean any person because of race, gender, class or sexual orientation. We reserve the right to edit letters for conventions and taste.

Immigration debate, masking a bigger security issue



Matt Jonas

The idea of freedom from oppression is something that Americans have guarded with their lives, and now it seems that we have forgotten that identity in the stead of our own insecurities. The immigration issue has migrated its way to the forefront of the national debate, and has resulted in the unmasking of our own prejudices.

This country has been founded by immigrants that decided to come to the US to escape oppression within their own homes. Now it seems that we have forgotten that most of us came to this country at some point as immigrants. During a lot of the migration to North America, there were no legal hoops to jump through; a majority of the time you would just show up and start working. Now it seems that we have closed off our borders, which resulted in the closing off of what this country was built upon.

The arguments that have been put forward to justify the building of fences and the stationing of National Guard troops at our southern border not only fit into the racist category, but also the irrelevant one. We need to seal our borders because all of these illegal immigrants are taking away work from Americans. This philosophy is full of so many flaws; the most apparent being that the jobs that are done by a majority of illegal immigrants are ones that we have deemed beneath our skills.

The problematic situation that many Republicans use as a basis to kick out immigrants is that we are losing jobs to immigrants based off of a reduction in pay scale. If you take a long hard look at the this situation you will quickly come to the conclusion that this is a falsehood, and, in fact, the driving factor behind job loss in this country is outsourcing work to countries that do not implement staunch labor laws. To all the talking heads that demand immediate and concise action against this phantom problem, I implore them to take a look

at the corporations that give away jobs to reach a rising bottom line.

The answer to this nation's unemployment problem does not lie within the implementation of oppressive laws against those who, if not for the century that has gone by, would be welcomed into the bosom of this great nation. Instead we need to regulate what our own corporations have done to eliminate jobs while at the same time welcoming anyone and everyone into this country as we have done since our birth

I understand the passion for this debate by the American public; the fact that so many people fleeing to this country are gaining access rather easily can seem disheartening to our efforts to defend our country from terrorism. It is unfortunate that our leadership has yet again manipulated our deepest fears into their own political hay. Stopping terrorism in this country does not start with a four layer fence at our southern border, it starts with revising outdated

and detrimental policies, that, to this day, have left this country just as wide open as it was prior to 9/11. We need to take this passion that we have for our own safety and force our leaders to take up an issue that is more important than suppressing of people's opportunity to come to this country.

I am outraged at the presumptions made

"We need to take this passion that we have for our own safety and force our leaders to take up an issue that is more important than the suppressing of people's opportunity to come to this country."

by both parties that closing ourselves off from immigration in the south is the silver bullet. If they really want to get serious about border security, why are they not talking about the sealing off the north as well, or can terrorists not come through Canada? It is time to get serious about our nation's defenses and stop patting ourselves on our backs because we have not had another terrorist attack since 9/11. There are still reports of government agents trafficking chemical and nuclear devices through our airports. Our ports, at best, are laughable. We do not need to spend more of our resources and money on a program that will pander to a few key demographics within parties.

We need to start thinking about our own safety and we need to start with our ports and airports, which were supposed to be addressed a number of years ago. To this day they are still in the same poor condition, if not worse, that they were when this administration took office.

Chivalry a lost character trait among students



Kell Fearon

Why is it that good manners have become the exception rather than the norm at Green River? I have come to accept, in the past few months, doors being slammed in my face (rather than held), people holding loud conversations while sitting in the library or computer lab, and cell phones going off at least once a day during class.

What is really shocking and unusual is when someone holds a door for me. It's almost enough to make me drop my books, especially when that person is a male. That's right. More women than men seem to be extending common courtesies. I've also noticed that quite a few of the over-forty crowd at Green River are door holders. It's the younger set that seems to be completely oblivious to their rudeness.

Now, I'm more of an equal opportunist than a feminist, and I certainly have no problem holding a door for someone else. I am also no longer going to be offended if a guy holds a door for me. I don't assume he thinks I'm the "weaker sex" and therefore too stupid and/or weak to open my own door. Perhaps that's the problem. We women got so uptight about being treated

equally that we took it too far and now men are unsure what the heck they should do. Although, when someone yells "hold

the elevator," madly pushing the "close" button before they can get there is universally the wrong thing to do, regardless of your political beliefs.

Besides, most likely it's just plain old bad manners. Children generally learn by example. I learned certain social niceties from simply observing my parents, while others were drilled into me. What have parents been modeling to their children for the past few decades? Did Dad routinely let the door slam into Mom as she tried to come through with an armload of groceries? Did the kids sit there glued to the TV as she unloaded the groceries, made their dinner, and did the dishes?

My parents taught me not just how to use a phone, but how to do so with a modicum of respect and politeness. When I call someone, I announce who I am. When someone calls for an absent member of my household, I politely ask to take down a message. Yet, most of the time, I get calls from people who don't tell me who they are, and hang up before I can even ask to take a message! Phone etiquette is a long-lost art these days, and I won't even get into telemarketers and drivers with cell-phones glued to their ears.

I also offer to help people who seem to need it, regardless of whether they are elderly, disabled, male or female. I don't

"My parents taught me not just how to use a phone, but how to do so with a modicum of respect and politeness."

worry too much about political correctness. I figure if the lady in the wheelchair looking at the soup on the top shelf doesn't want my help getting it down, she'll just say "no" when I offer. Or I could not offer, and she could sit their all day too shy to ask. I've yet to have anyone, ever, rebuff my offer for assistance.

Assistance is what I needed the other day when my car wouldn't start. I stood hopefully outside the gym, sweaty and tired, with jumper cables in hand and the hood of my car propped open. The universal signal for "I need a jump." To my horror, person after person just walked on by. Then came the biggest offender of them all; a man pulled directly into the parking spot in front of my car, our bumpers nearly touching, and got out and walked into the gym without so much as a guilty glance my way! Luckily, I was not too far from home and a family member came to my rescue.

Whether or not one believes in karma, it just makes sense to help those in need, because someday you may be in their shoes. Someday you may be carrying an armload of books in one hand and a coffee in the other. You may call out, "hold the elevator!" And you may find that one bitter and jaded fellow student will jump to hit that close button while serenely pretending she didn't hear you.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

The Green River Community College Foundation would like to thank the following students who volunteered their time on May 16-18 by calling over 800 Green River alumni to raise funds for student scholarships, campus improvements and other vital needs:

*Susanne Apelqvist
Julia Chin Chee Jia
Ryan Cook
Rubai Deep
Jordan Feazell
Jasmine Garcia
Daniel Hart
Robert Kesterson
Kelsey Laroche
Gabiella Lestari
Kevin Mejilla
Anthony San Gabriel
Hsiu-Yang Tseng*

Thanks again to these students for their support! The GRCC Foundation is also grateful to Phi Theta Kappa, which helped to promote this opportunity. If you are interested in volunteering with the Foundation, please contact Matt Swenson at (253) 288-3346 or mswenson@greenriver.edu.

Matthew Swenson
Development Specialist

Correction

In the May 12 issue of *The Current*, the article on page four titled "Green River students win unique contest" has a mistake. The riders were named incorrectly. The correct riders were John Hickson and Dave Ausmus.

The Current is committed to fair and accurate coverage of campus news.



Above: The centerpiece of the art gallery exhibit. Paintings hang up on the back wall.

Below: A painting in the art gallery by Sarah Danner.

GREEN RIVER ART EXHIBIT

Student pieces featured in Smith Gallery

Ryan Gaudinier
Entertainment Editor

The student art gallery unfurled its new exhibit on May 8. The gallery features multiple types of art from many Green River Community College (GRCC) students. There are paintings, photographs, ceramics, and other unique forms of art.

Color paintings adorn the back and side walls creating a backdrop to the rest of the exhibit. The ceramics, sculptures, and other three dimensional art pieces are gathered in the middle.

The art comes from students in the variety of different art classes GRCC has to offer. The gallery is a superb way for up and coming artists to display their work to a large group of people.

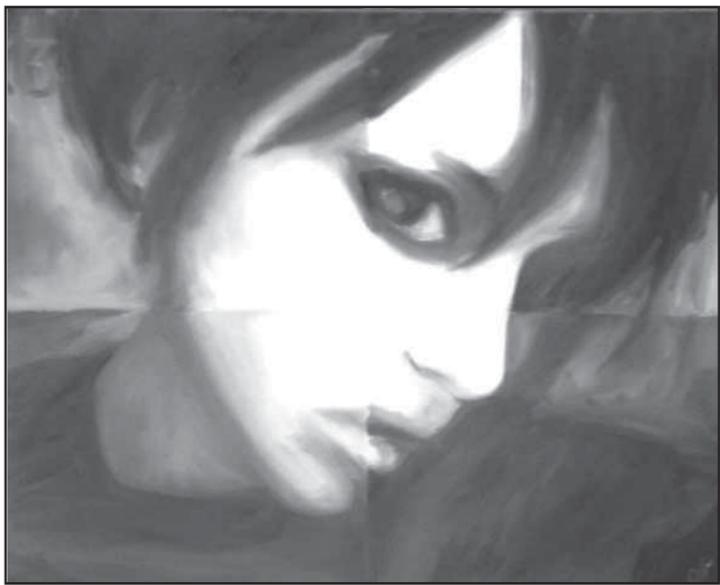
One of first aspects any visitor to the art gallery will notice is the uniqueness and creativity of the pieces. Drawings range from black and white portraits to beautiful and oftentimes frantic works of color.

There are many interesting pieces of art displayed in the front booth made out of everyday objects such as television cables, batteries, and computer chips. One creation even has an Ipod for a head.

Also in the gallery is a large display of pottery. There are vases, bowls, jars and other form of clay creations.

The one downfall of the exhibit is the lack of credit given to the artists. All of the art pieces stand alone without any information about who created the piece or how to contact the artist.

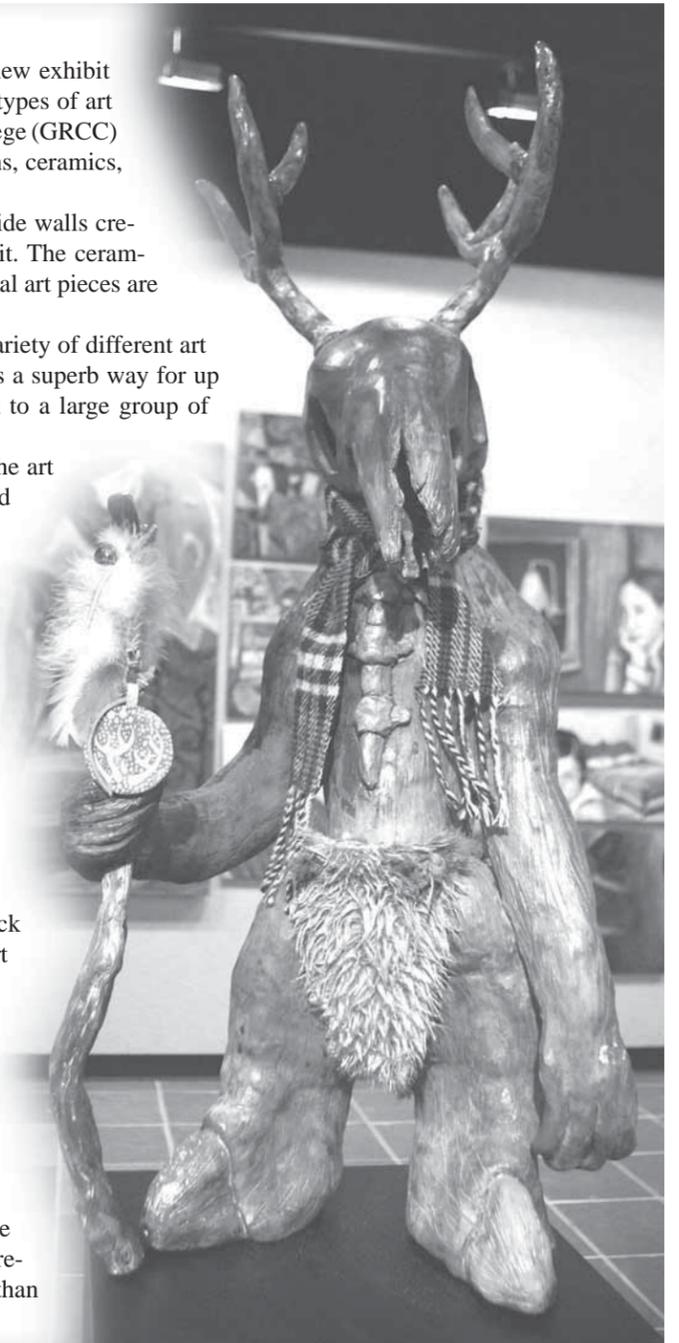
Even with this one downfall, the art gallery has put together the best exhibit of the school year. While past exhibits had a couple of interesting pieces, this whole gallery stood out. The color paintings in the background combined with the three dimensional pieces in the middle creates a visual appearance easily greater than past exhibits.



Above: A group of paintings on the back wall of the gallery.

Right: A ceramic sculpture on display in the Helen S. Smith Gallery's student exhibit.

Photos by Tim Perry / Andy Gardner



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Sounds of Hawaii a night of dancing, fun

Shannon MacInnes
 Reporter

Beautiful music and sounds of feet stomping could be heard echoing through the LSC on Friday, May 19. Not only were tickets sold out for this event, but many locals to Hawaiian culture came to watch.

The night started off with an amazing performance by Ke`ala `O Kamailelauli`ili`i and Manawaiopuna. The dancers included men, women and children who filled the stage in colorful clothing. The music was brilliant and all one could think about was going to Hawaii.

In between performances, comedian Augie T. joined the stage and had the crowd rolling with laughter. He went on with jokes that included, "The worse game is Dance Dance Revolution. Kids just follow the lights on the ground. Nobody knows how to dance anymore."

Of course, the main focus of the night was the performance by award winners, Na Palapalai. They played the rest of the night, enchanting the audience with their words and melodies. Their CD's could be purchased at the show, but they also have a new one coming out by the end of summer.

Young's Living with War a political masterpiece

Matt Jonas
 Opinions Editor

Politically driven albums have been a calling card for Neil Young and his most recent release lives up to this characteristic. Ever since his days in Buffalo Springfield, whose albums have dealt with such hot button issues as racism and the draft, Neil Young has been a conscience for American culture and has helped to open up debate about topics that a lot of Americans are hesitant to speak of.

With his most recent release, Living with War, Young has broached the issue of this administration and how they have misled their constituents. The topic selected, as always, has raised some heated debate about his patriotism. Recently on a cable news channel a commentator went as far as to call him a traitor and urged him to turn tail and run back to Canada. It is true that Young is a man from the north, but the contributions that Young has given this country, I feel, have solidified him as an American more than any other person that I know of. The controversy that the conservative right is attempting to raise around this man's work is childish and unwarranted. This album is a celebration of not only the first amendment, but also how we should be holding our representatives responsible for their actions.

The album is themed, obviously, around the war, but it touches on how this country has become dependent on what others tell us to think. The song "The Restless Consumer" points out the non-necessity of what our leader's ram down our throats as truths. A poignant part of the song comes at the end when Young belts out "don't need no more lies" repeatedly. This album is saturated in emotion; an example would be the song "Flags of Freedom", which discusses the patriotism of a brother and the cynical attitude of a sister about war. The majestic and romantic side of war comes through in this song as the brother moves toward deployment. The third song that stands out on this album is probably the most controversial since it is titled "Let's Impeach the President", but, putting the title aside, the song details all the actions that this President has taken that have hurt and mislead the nation. From taking us into a war under false pretenses to shipping a large portion of our money off to Iraq to help "rebuild" the country while the citizens here suffer.

The chastising and criticism that come with this album are all justified. The issues that Young divulges through his music are all a norm now. Being a fan of his music, I will admit it was difficult to find a flaw, which I did not. I would pass this album to every person that still believes that this government has the people's best intentions at heart. Young has taken the political debate to a new level with this release, and hopefully listeners will take that to heart as they jam out to this patriot's interpretation of our current situation.



WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT NEIL YOUNG'S NEW ALBUM

"He (Young) bashes America's president, American government, and the American war in Iraq. One song is even called 'Impeach the President.' And Neil Young, in case you didn't know, is a Canadian citizen."

Neil Cavuto, host of Fox New's "Your World"

"Young, who was born in Canada, has lived in the United States for decades. The songs he wrote for Living With War reflect criticism and concern for people living through a trying time."

Tom Moon, National Public Radio contributor

"Young and Pink are angry and sad. 9-11 is a distant memory. They don't feel threatened by anybody but our own president. This is what it has come to. They are forgetful. They have amnesia. They blame the wrong leaders, and they are proud of their opposition, and they couldn't be more wrong."

John Gibson, host of Fox New's "The Big Story"

Baseball team eliminated in first round

Robert Westervelt

Staff Reporter

The Gators 2006 baseball season came to a quick finish, when the surprising team ran out of gas during the first round of the playoffs.

After contending for second place throughout the entire year, it all came down to a regional playoff series on May 20 against their main rival from the regular season, Tacoma Community College.

Despite taking the season series from Tacoma three games to two, they were quickly eliminated by them in a two game sweep. Tacoma scored early and often, winning the two games 11-2 and 12-2 capitalizing on costly mistakes by the GRCC squad.

However, head coach Matt Acker's team has nothing to hang their heads about. This season's squad helped Green River post their best record in his 5 year tenure at the college, winning 24 out of 41 games this year. This is the most wins our team has posted in the last ten years.

After finishing up the regular season with a four and two record in its final six games including winning two out of three against Tacoma, the Gators found themselves in good position to make a run in this year's NWAACC playoffs.

Unfortunately, they played two consecutive games poorly, and at the worst time. They were played on Saturday, May 20, and the playoff losses doomed the team.

The contests featured sloppy fielding that was factor in allowing the games to get out of hand. Coupled with the teams' inability to get a rally started, the team never really had a chance as Tacoma took their game up a level and never looked back.

Pitcher Kyle Nunley, a key fac-



ANDY GARDNER/The Current

Green River's baseball team stared into the playoffs with strong pitching and solid defense; however, they subsequently looked at a sweep by the Tacoma Titans.

tor in the team's success this year with a six and one record and 2.63 ERA, was ineffective in a game one loss. Numerous errors were also a major factor in the team's struggle to get going against Tacoma.

This story continued to ring true for game two starter Joel Nelson,

as the Gators dropped yet another

game and were eliminated from championship contention.

Nelson, who finished the year with an equally impressive 2.35 ERA to go along with his 3 and 2 record, struggled to find control.

The team figures to improve further next year with a youthful infield that will have another season of experience under its belt.

Next year they will be led by a more experienced and deep team. The pitching will surely stay solid and the defense will improve after a rigorous winter preparation that will surely have the squad on point. There is always next year.

Scores Online:
www.greenriver.edu/athletics

Gronowick a key fastpitch element

Hannah Ackerman

Staff Reporter

Katie Gronowick is not only an amazing athlete, a hard worker, and a devoted captain, but she is also what's keeping the Green River Community College fastpitch team in the game.

Gronowick is currently leading the team in hits, RBIs, and is tied for home runs. She is an undeniably important aspect of the team.

"I've been playing softball since the fifth grade," said Gronowick, "but I didn't start playing fast pitch softball until I turned 13."

Gronowick attended Kennedy High School where she played for the school's fast pitch team all four years.

"I wasn't thinking I wanted to play college ball," said Gronowick. "My high school coaches were all about winning and kind of burned me out." But when she

was offered a scholarship to play at GRCC she couldn't refuse.

"I have made so many lasting friendships with the girls from my team that will carry on when I transfer next year," Gronowick said.

She will be transferring to California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, CA in the fall of 2006.

Aside from playing fastpitch, Gronowick has always had a passion for the arts. "Art is just amazing to me," said Gronowick who hopes she can use her passion for art in her future profession.

Although fastpitch won't be a future profession for Gronowick, she still plans to continue playing as long as she can. Her greatest inspirations are Brett and Tony Jamie. Ever since Gronowick was a freshmen in High School they have been their pushing her to improve her already unbelievable 403 batting average.

"In baseball there is no perfec-

tion. You can never be too good or too perfect so I'm always trying to improve. Tony and Bret push me so that I want to do my best and do better than my best," said Gronowick.

Brett and Tony are not only constructive coaches but they're also great friends to Gronowick. "I go over their house all the time to work on my swing and then play some poker," said Gronowick.

Another inspiration for Gronowick is her GRCC coach, Gary Jones. Gar Bear, a nickname the players gave him, is one of the best coaches she says she's ever had.

"He pushes us without really pushing us. He wants us to improve but he also wants us to just have a good time playing," said Gronowick.

Although the fast pitch team may not be having a winning season, Gronowick is having one of her favorite seasons yet, and no one can argue with that.

Men's tennis brings home league title

For a sport that often gets overlooked, the Gator men's tennis team turned some heads around the NWAACC this week as they won their twentieth league title. In their first league title since 2003, they secured five of nine available championship matches.

This was the first title Coach Mark Hanson has brought home since taking the reigns from legendary coach Steve Sauers. The men also impressively took home four singles titles and one doubles title. Taking home singles titles were Chris Dew, Matt Prang and Ellery Dixon. But the most impressive was team captain Adam Blackner who won the #1 overall singles title. Matt Prang and Milad Arefi combined to take home the #3 doubles title.

The final scores put Green River on top with 113, followed by Shoreline with 87, Spokane with 79, Skagit Valley with 63, and Treasure Valley with 18.

the mainstream

The Mainstream is a special project produced by Green River students. The articles are written by John Knowlton's newswriting class. The photographs are taken by Patrick Navin's digital photography class. Student newspaper staff members coordinated this special project, designed to showcase areas in King County that feed into the college.



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Covington Fred Meyer has been a city landmark for many years

By Dain Carley

Fred Meyer began discussing plans for a new store in Covington 1994 before Covington was even a city.

The people-friendly, small-town atmosphere with trees was the neighborhood Fred Meyer moved into with QFC, Safeway and Hollywood Video being its neighbors.

Covington became a city in 1997 and now Covington has exploded with new stores including Wal-Mart and Petco, as well as recently added restaurants like Applebees.

All of this retail development is good news to Covington's Chamber of Commerce.

"Covington will have a downtown that is well-designed and pedestrian-friendly with a permanent combination of commercial and residential areas," the chambers said.

Fred Meyer, located off of Kent-Kangley Road and adjacent to Washington 18, is smack dab in the middle of downtown and has customers who are evidence of it being "pedestrian-friendly."

Lisa Burnum is one who has witnessed the massive growth.

"I was supportive of Fred Meyer coming to Covington and was aware that it would bring further growth as a result," said Burnum, who has lived for 17 years a few miles up Kent-Kangley from Covington.

With gas prices sky rocketing with no end in sight, Burnum appreciates having a nearby Fred Meyer

now more than ever.

"The one-stop shopping makes it so I don't have to drive all over the place" said Burnum, resulting not only in savings in the grocery bill, but also savings at the pump.

The Covington Fred Meyer has 17 store services as well as a number of satellite stores including Tully's coffee, Hair Masters, Baskin Robbins, Cutters Point and many others.

Along with the variety and one-stop nature of Fred Meyer, this expanding chain also hires employees who care.

"Friendly, approachable, always smiling..." are a few words that 17-year-old Green River student, Naomi McHolland, used to describe the employees at the Covington Fred Meyer.

Statements like McHolland's give value to signs stating "No sale is complete until you are completely satisfied" and validation for a customer service motto stating, "If we have not met your expectations we do want to know about it."

As well as customers benefiting from having a Fred Meyer in Covington, employees also enjoy the ever-improving retail outlet. With recent remodeling and updated teller machines, Fred Meyer continues to put costumers and employees, as well as cities like of Covington first.

The top five places to make a visit to Auburn worth the time

By Andraea Branesky

Super Shopping at the Supermall

The Auburn Supermall has become a hot spot in Auburn and is appropriate for most ages. The mall has over 130 stores, perfect for any occasion, Banana Republic Factory Store, Bath & Body Works, Big Dog Sportswear- which caters to sizes from infant to 5X-, Book Warehouse and even a Sam's Club.

The mall is a popular hang out for many people. It is open everyday and remains open until 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and until 6 p.m. on Sunday. It has a soft play area for parents to take their young children and a carousel, making the mall appropriate for children as well. "Surprisingly, the biggest age group is moms and parents because of all the outlets there. They're all looking for a good deal", says Faith Yi, an Auburn resident.

The Supermall also is a host to special events. The Supermall has a variety of restaurants. Some people use the mall for their morning walk or exercise. It is at a convenient location, located right off highway 167. The mall is also a great place for people to burn time while waiting for their movie across the street to start.

Relax with a Weekend Movie

If you walk across the street from the mall you will find the Auburn Stadium 17 movie theatre. "You can spot the theater from the highway because of its bright red lights which makes it unique", said Yi. It is a very busy place Friday night until Sunday evening. This is a popular spot for teenagers to go with their friends. Many take advantage of a student discount that make movies more affordable for the young adults in the Auburn area.

From the late morning hours until the early evening they have what is called a matinee. Movie tickets during these matinee times are cut to almost half. This particular movie theatre gets a lot of business due to the fact that it is located directly across the street from the mall. Most movie goers also find the convenience of watching a movie and relaxing after shopping in the mall.

This movie theatre is able to bring in a lot of business with its 17 movie screens. The Auburn Stadium 17 theaters is a chain owned by the Regal Entertainment group. While it is true that movie-goers come in all ages, it is safe to say that the most popular age group would have to be people in their late teens to mid-20s.

"Many high school and college students find a good deal of escape from their studies by watching a movie," said Philip Jackson, an employee of another Regal Cinemas.

Old Fashioned Fun found in Horse racing

Just north of Auburn off Highway 167 you will find the locally famous Emerald Downs, a horse-racing track that is celebrating it's 10th anniversary this year. Emerald Downs has the Rainier Restaurant on site and hosts special private events such as high school reunions and wedding receptions. It is a 167 acre facility and is a six-level stadium.

Emerald Downs is popular for fun family outings. People can make money off it by placing wagers on their horse, and if it wins, they get money. Emerald Downs season is from early spring to late fall, but people enjoy full-card simulating which is where you can bet on another race at another track, year round.

This is one of the hottest spots in Auburn because it can be cheap. General parking is free, as is admission for children under 17 are free. Tickets are \$4 for everyone else. This is a fun place for most ages, but seems to attract the gambling crowd. The ages of visitors vary but the track has recently begun attracting a younger crowd, mainly people in their late-20's.

"This is the only Washington state horse-racing facility", says Jessica Gruender-Peters, who's family owns a partnership of horses. She also states that "horse-racing is a rare pastime". Emerald Downs hosts other events that bring in lots of business such as Derby Day and Sound Transit Family Day.

In the mood for a summer concert? Auburn amphitheatre attracts visitors from all over Washington

Since 2003 the White River Amphitheatre has brought many visitors to Auburn. This outdoor music center has hosted concerts of many famous groups including Cher, Jimmy Buffett, Farm Aid 2004, Blink 182, Beck and many more. It is located just six miles southeast of the Muckleshoot Casino off Highway 164.

The amphitheatre offers VIP and season tickets to those who love concerts. The nearby hotels create accommodation to travelers which helps bring in business to the amphitheatre. There is also a convenient free shuttle from the Supermall to the amphitheatre. This amphitheatre is most popular to the 20's age group. Most of the bands that perform here are popular to the young adult crowd, however many older adults show up to see their favorite group as well. This is a major hot spot to Auburn because it's an exciting opportunity for people to see their favorite band or artist perform.

Among the groups playing at White River this year are the County Crows with Goo Goo Dolls June 22, Ozzfest June 29, O.A.R. July 13, Tom Petty July 30, Kelly Clarkson August 6, and Def Leppard August 31. For ticket information go online at www.whiteriverconcerts.com.

Party Vegas style in Auburn

You don't have to travel all the way to Las Vegas for fabulous entertainment. The Muckleshoot Casino is the largest casino in the northwest with more than 2000 machines, 70 tables, live poker and much more. Parking is free in the new seven-story parking garage.

Muckleshoot is a hot hang out spot because people don't just go there to gamble. They also have five restaurants which includes the Pisces Seafood Restaurant, Island Deli, and the annual Mothers Day Brunch, to name a few. Muckleshoot is even accommodating to families. The casino has a no-smoking restarant area where children can eat with their parents. The casino also has banquet rooms to host private gatherings.

"I go to the casino because its open all night. There are always people there, and I like that fact that I have the slim possibility of winning money. If I go out somewhere else there is no possibility of coming home with money left in my pocket". says Joshua Van Deusen, a regular visitor to the Muckleshoot casino.

Muckleshoot is also home to the Club Galaxy, a popular club for people who like to dance the night away. The club has no cover charge and is open every night. This casino is perfect for the age 21 and above crowd. Muckleshoot is a popular place because people can escape from their everyday lives and relax with Las Vegas like entertainment in their own backyard.

Covington under goes many changes

By HILLARY MAJER

Covington – With a population of nearly 16,000 the city of Covington is booming with people waiting to see what business will open next. Within the last few years more than 15 new businesses have opened here.

A new Costco, proposed would be about 135,000 square feet in size and would be built on a 12.88-acre lot that is currently vacant, said Jackie Cronk, a spokeswoman for the city.

The property, which is owned by Argent Ventures of Bellevue, is located just south of the Fred Meyer store in Covington. After Costco applies for the building permit, it will be just about a year before it will be up and running.

The action doesn't stop there. Within the next year many other businesses will open. Kohl's department store, Starbucks drive thru, Rock Pizza, Executive tans, and many more will be joining the community.

"It seems like a new building is up and running every week," said Jake Adams, a resident of Covington. Within the last year Covington has brought in many new and exciting including the popular Applebee's, Cold stone, and Jamba Juice which you will see busy all day long.

Of all the new and exciting things going on in Covington, one of the latest is the remodel of the Covington Safeway. Just

a few weeks ago Safeway had the Grand Reopening of its store, which had many free samples and exciting things for customers to enjoy. The remodel of the Safeway includes adding a Starbucks coffee, which adds to the convenience of grabbing a coffee and enjoying the newly remodeled deli, bakery and floral sections.

With all of the new and upcoming business joining the community of Covington, it should keep the residents of the town busy with many different entertainment options. Pay close attention to the buildings coming in, because before you know it they will be open.



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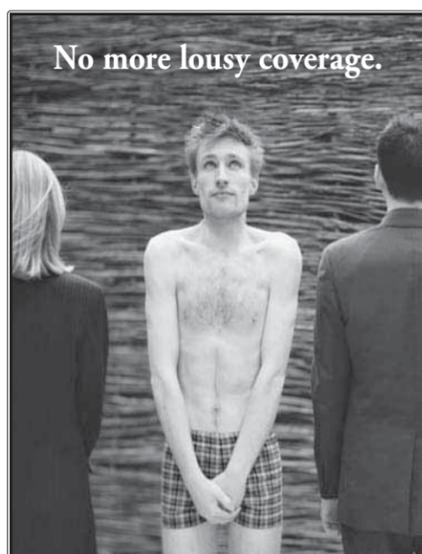
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Just outside of Kent and Covington lies a city full of adventure for all ages

By Marcus Hill

Just a couple of minutes east of Covington, down Kent-Kangley Road and nestled against the vast rolling hills and wilderness that comprises most of southeastern King County, Four Corners is a small but vibrant city that has been growing rapidly.

Interestingly, ever since its neighbor Covington has become a city, Four Corners has started to catch the industrial bug with, most recently, the renovation of the local Safeway, which is the largest business in this small area. Along with Safeway, another staple of this community is the Johnson's Do it Best tool store.

Accompanied by its larger stores, the Four Corners business district is mostly comprised of small strip malls and restaurants. Some of the most popular places to satisfy one's taste buds are the Four Corners Tavern, El Caporal Cantina, Papa Murphy's and Safeway.

"The most convenient thing about Four Corners is the options that we all have to choose from when we are hungry," said Papa Murphy's employee Rylee Baker, "If you're in the mood for pizza, come to Papa's. If you're in the mood for desert, go get ice cream at Dairy Queen. And - Hey -- who doesn't love Safeway Chinese!"

An excellent perk about Four Cor-

ners is that it has one of the only self-help car washes in a radius of at least ten miles. There is always a risk of getting a little wet, but the car wash charges by time, and lot of money can be saved, as opposed to charging extra to receive a car wash at a gas station.

A nice recreational perk is Elk Run Golf Course. This majestic 18-hole course immerses its customers in a beautiful woodsy layout along with a breathtaking view of Mount Rainier on a sunny day. Though it can run a little pricier than a run of the mill public golf course at \$22 for nine holes or \$40 for 18, the Elk Run Golf Course is a relaxing and beautiful place to golf that it is worthy of its prices.

An integral indicator of the economic success of the Four Corners area is the new housing developments that are being constructed just outside of town. It is a signal that Four Corners is in a booming process that is just beginning. Four Corners is constantly growing and becoming more popular to the public. Whether it be for recreation, a quick stop for groceries or a bite to eat, Four Corners is a thriving community on the rise that has something to offer for everyone in the Maple Valley and Covington areas.



RACHEL BAXTER/PHOTOGRAPHER



RACHEL BAXTER/PHOTOGRAPHER



RACHEL BAXTER/PHOTOGRAPHER



RACHEL BAXTER/PHOTOGRAPHER

The top places to be in Enumclaw

By Jeffrey Martin

Out past the pastures and fields on the cusp of the mountains sits your last stop before Mount Rainier. Founded in 1885, Enumclaw is a growing, somewhat hidden community that opens its arms for visitors from all over the country.

The city of Enumclaw, and its surrounding neighborhoods, has more than doubled since 1990, according to the Puget Sound Regional Council. Hundreds of thousands of people visit Enumclaw every year. But why?

Here are the best reasons to visit, according to some who live and work in what locals affectionately refer to as EnumScratch.

The first thing that people talk about is the recreational possibilities. Jeff Carlson, after getting off his bike to get something to eat, says he can't believe the variety of activities that one can do during the spring, summer, and fall.

"It's amazing what you can do here," said Carlson, who has lived there since 1995. "You can hike, bike, ride horses, or go fishing. It's an outdoorsmen's paradise." Carlson says everything you could want is down one street or the other.

One such venue is Enumclaw Golf Course, located southeast of downtown off Roosevelt Ave. It attracts people all over because of its ease and beauty, said Scott Galbraith, the course PGA professional. It is a course that all can enjoy.

The Enumclaw Chamber of Com-

merce said there are several lakes, rivers and streams for anglers of all experience to enjoy. You can fish in the spring or in the winter depending on your preference of what you're trying to catch.

You can find such places as the White River and Green River where you can fish for chinook, pink, chum, and coho salmon, as well as rainbow, steelhead and cutthroat trout in the winter. The Greenwater Lake and river can also be fished for trout and steelhead.

There are also 16 different public parks for people to enjoy, according to the chamber. Each park offers something different from basketball courts, ball fields, or a skateboarding park, according to the City of Enumclaw web site. Each has picnic areas and is open to everyone. Some of the parks include Dwight Garrett Park, which offers everything above, and Mahler Park that is 30 acres of undeveloped park for those nature lovers who want to roam and take in the scenery.

Just 45 minutes outside of town on Highway 410, you will find Crystal Mountain Ski Resort. It is one of the major ski and snowboard areas in the Pacific Northwest. It is located on the border of Mount.

Rainier National Park and offers some great skiing opportunities. In the summer, you can walk several of the trails they have and explore the mountain's beautiful scenery.

Mount Rainier is just past Crystal Mountain on Highway 410. It is one of the premier national parks, according to the National Park Service. It has numerous hiking and biking trails as well as many campgrounds.

Then there is the King County Fairgrounds. The chamber says the fairgrounds is another thing that brings in people from across the country. The various events that go on, from dog shows to the Scottish Highlander games, bring a variety of people together to enjoy something for all walks of life.

The actual King County Fair happens for the 144th time this year in July. The Fair website (<http://www.metrokc.gov/parks/fair/info.asp>) shows this year's fair runs July 19-23. Some of the events include 4-H archery contest, hypnotists, music concerts, logging competition, and magic acts.

The chamber said the fair "is a five-day old-fashioned event that has something for everyone and has for 143 years. It has animals, good food and entertainment, all kinds of vendors, and other forms of family fun." It is something that all people can enjoy.

The fairgrounds can be rented out for any event, public or private. It has been used for family reunions, car shows and various types of animal shows. If you are interested in renting, or know someone who might be, call 206-296-8888 or 360-825-7777.

Or, e-mail maureen.burwell@metrokc.gov, or check out the website <http://www.metrokc.gov/parks/rentals/fairgnds.htm> for more information.

Another popular place to visit in Enumclaw is the historic and growing downtown area. Although the major industry in Enumclaw, according to chamber, is agriculture-dairy and thoroughbred farms, the downtown area has a lot to offer. There are several restaurants and coffee shops, and many specialty shops line the main drags as you drive walk around.

Brian Timmons, a newcomer to Enumclaw, had this to say before walking into Cafe Panini for a meal: "The downtown area has a warm, family feeling to it. Everyone tries hard to make you feel at home. It is kinda like the TV show 'Cheers.' Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name."

Kim Peterson, a worker for the chamber, said the downtown area has changed a lot over the last few years. There have been new buildings built, but there is also an effort to keep the small shops open and successful. Carlson said he likes to start and finish his bike rides downtown because he loves the way the area is laid out. He said it feels like you are riding into one of the old photos you see of what old city life used to be like with the comforts of modern day life.

Finally, and the most important aspect of Enumclaw, is the greater

community. Peterson, a resident since the mid-90's, said "it has that small town feel. People feel comfortable here because of the friendliness and cleanliness. It was one of the reasons I wanted to move here."

She said people hold each other accountable and offer their support. Peterson adds that everyone tries to make you comfortable and that you are a part of everything. People welcome visitors and new members to the community with open arms.

Timmons offers this perspective: "We are the last stop to a lot of different places. There are a lot of hardcore outdoorsmen as well as families that stop here before they head out. We appreciate their business and want them to come back again."

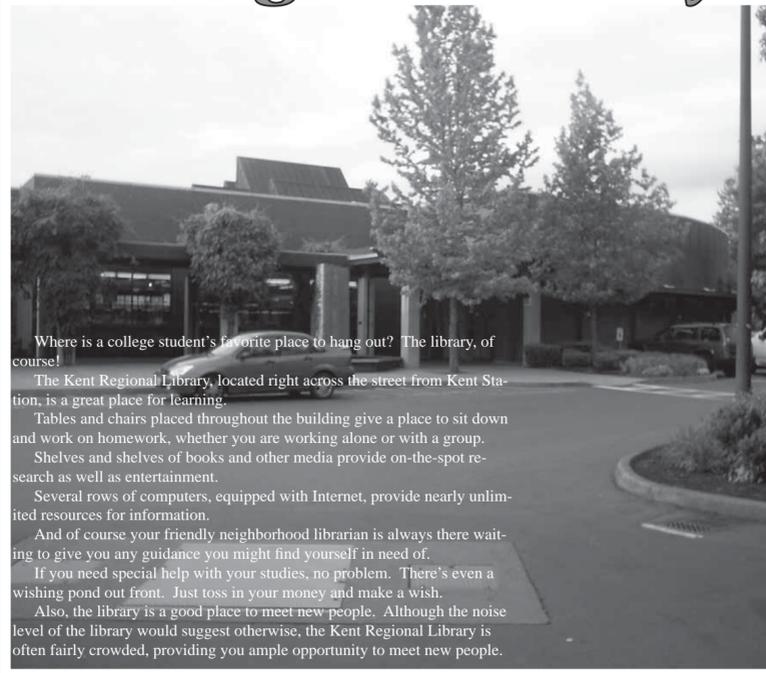
Adds Carlson "I always feel welcome here. I usually go to the same place I went to the first time I came here. They remembered who I was. I like that." He goes on to say that he was so impressed with the area, he moved there because of the connection he felt.

With an area that has so much to offer so many different types of people, it is easy to see why people flock to Enumclaw every year. A community that accepts people from all over and goes out of its way to make them feel welcome should be a place where people would want to go.

The top five places to hang out in Kent

By Kellie McGhie

Kent Regional Library



Where is a college student's favorite place to hang out? The library, of course!

The Kent Regional Library, located right across the street from Kent Station, is a great place for learning.

Tables and chairs placed throughout the building give a place to sit down and work on homework, whether you are working alone or with a group.

Shelves and shelves of books and other media provide on-the-spot research as well as entertainment.

Several rows of computers, equipped with Internet, provide nearly unlimited resources for information.

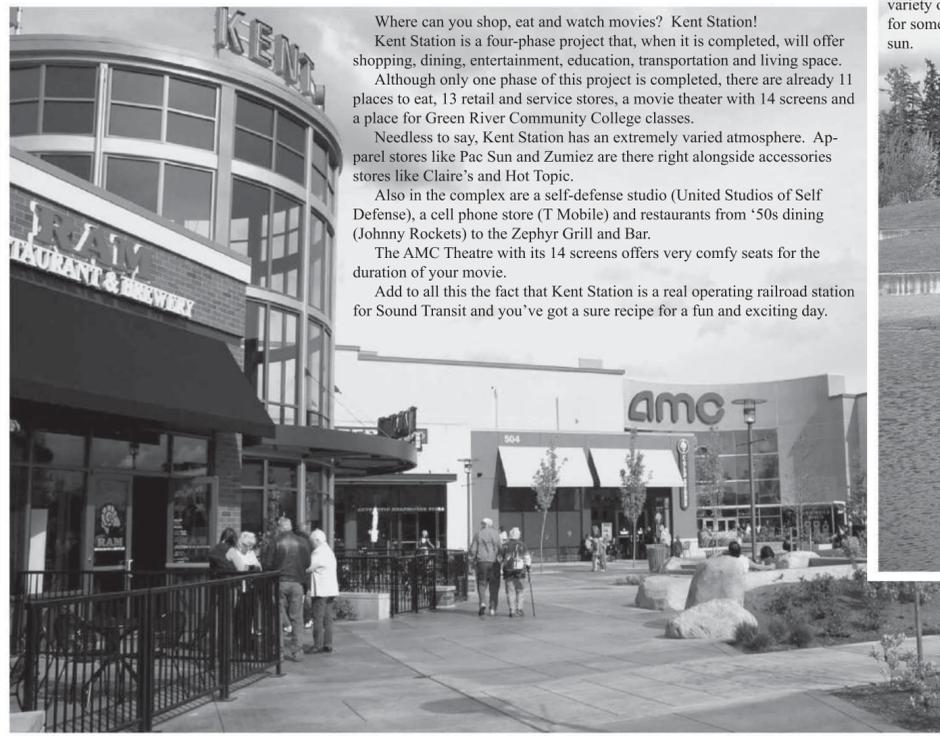
And of course your friendly neighborhood librarian is always there waiting to give you any guidance you might find yourself in need of.

If you need special help with your studies, no problem. There's even a wishing pond out front. Just toss in your money and make a wish.

Also, the library is a good place to meet new people. Although the noise level of the library would suggest otherwise, the Kent Regional Library is often fairly crowded, providing you ample opportunity to meet new people.

NICOLE SWAPP/EDITOR

Kent Station



Where can you shop, eat and watch movies? Kent Station!

Kent Station is a four-phase project that, when it is completed, will offer shopping, dining, entertainment, education, transportation and living space. Although only one phase of this project is completed, there are already 11 places to eat, 13 retail and service stores, a movie theater with 14 screens and a place for Green River Community College classes.

Needless to say, Kent Station has an extremely varied atmosphere. Apparel stores like Pac Sun and Zumiez are there right alongside accessories stores like Claire's and Hot Topic.

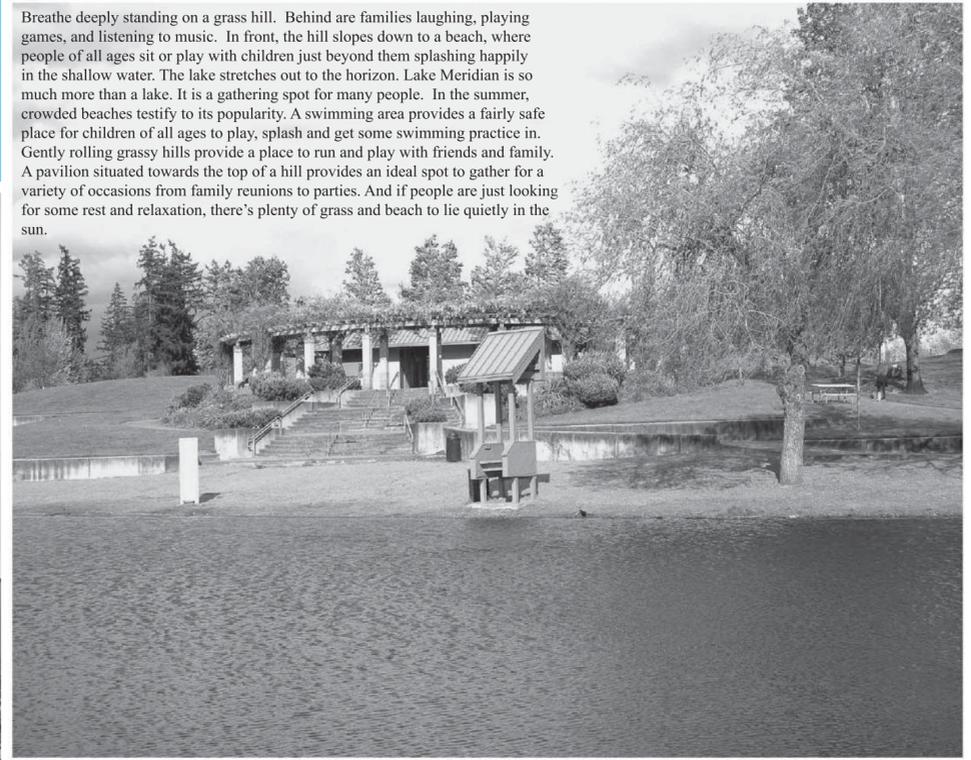
Also in the complex are a self-defense studio (United Studios of Self Defense), a cell phone store (T Mobile) and restaurants from '50s dining (Johnny Rockets) to the Zephyr Grill and Bar.

The AMC Theatre with its 14 screens offers very comfy seats for the duration of your movie.

Add to all this the fact that Kent Station is a real operating railroad station for Sound Transit and you've got a sure recipe for a fun and exciting day.

NICOLE SWAPP/EDITOR

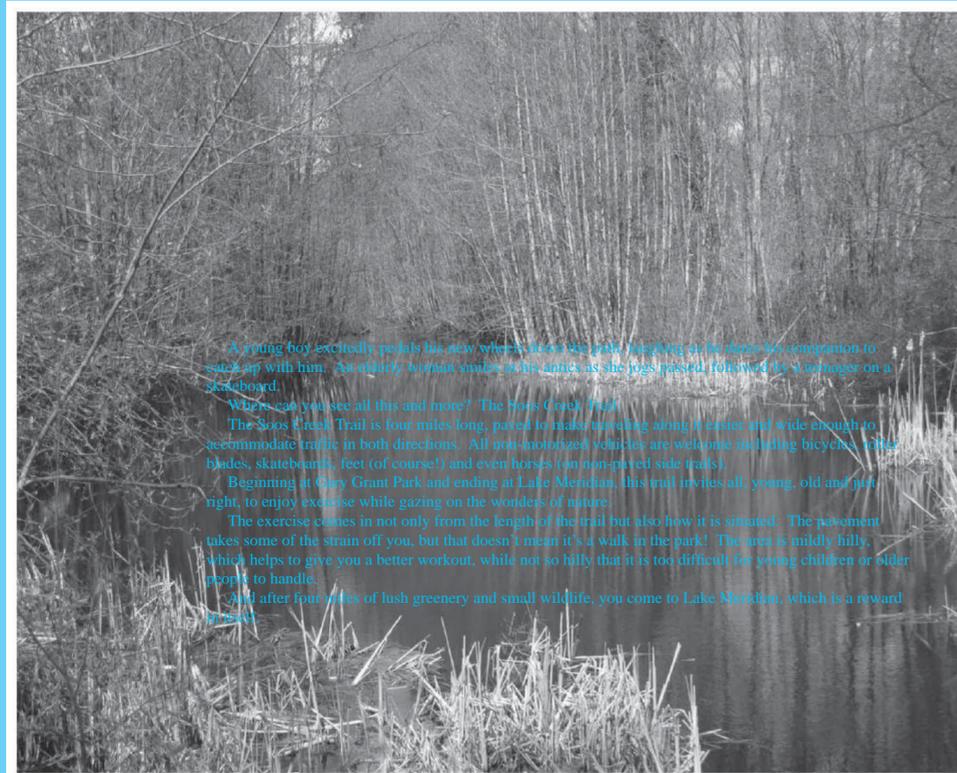
Lake Meridian



Breathe deeply standing on a grass hill. Behind are families laughing, playing games, and listening to music. In front, the hill slopes down to a beach, where people of all ages sit or play with children just beyond them splashing happily in the shallow water. The lake stretches out to the horizon. Lake Meridian is so much more than a lake. It is a gathering spot for many people. In the summer, crowded beaches testify to its popularity. A swimming area provides a fairly safe place for children of all ages to play, splash and get some swimming practice in. Gently rolling grassy hills provide a place to run and play with friends and family. A pavilion situated towards the top of a hill provides an ideal spot to gather for a variety of occasions from family reunions to parties. And if people are just looking for some rest and relaxation, there's plenty of grass and beach to lie quietly in the sun.

NORMAN ONORATI/PHOTOGRAPHER

Soos Creek Trail



A young boy excitedly pedals his new wheels down the path, laughing as he shares his excitement to stick up with him. An elderly woman smiles at his antics as she jogs past, followed by a teenager on a skateboard.

Where can you see all this and more? The Soos Creek Trail!

The Soos Creek Trail is four miles long, paved to make traveling along it easier and wide enough to accommodate traffic in both directions. All non-motorized vehicles are welcome including bicycles, roller blades, skateboards, feet (of course!) and even horses (on non-paved side trails).

Beginning at Gray Grant Park and ending at Lake Meridian, this trail invites all, young, old and just right, to enjoy exercise while gazing on the wonders of nature.

The exercise comes in not only from the length of the trail but also how it is situated. The pavement takes some of the strain off you, but that doesn't mean it's a walk in the park! The area is mildly hilly, which helps to give you a better workout, while not so hilly that it is too difficult for young children or older people to handle.

And after four miles of lush greenery and small wildlife, you come to Lake Meridian, which is a reward in itself.

NORMAN ONORATI/PHOTOGRAPHER

The city of Kent has much to offer

By Kyle Scholzen

Now armed with a brand new shopping district, Kent is quickly becoming one of the best places to live in western Washington.

Conveniently located between Seattle and Tacoma, Kent has easy access to western Washington's two largest cities. One can spend the entire day in downtown Seattle and still get home at a reasonable hour. It is far enough away from these cities, however, that it has the rustic charm of a small rural community.

The combination of the two attracts many people to the city.

"One of the things that drew us here was its location," says David Scholzen, a 14-year resident of Kent. "I love how it is close to the big city, yet is far enough away to be considered rural."

Although it has grown immensely in the last 16 years (from a population of 38,000 in 1991 to 84,500 today), Kent is only minutes away from the rural areas of Covington and Black Diamond. The proximity of those two communities give the citizens of Kent a chance to experience the serenity of a small town while staying close to home.

Despite being surrounded by rural areas, Kent is rapidly becoming a great place for people to hang out. Phase I of Kent Station, the new downtown shopping district complete with an AMC Theatre, restaurants of all kinds and various shops, was completed last fall. The completion of Phase II will bring even more shops and restaurants later this year.

Now the citizens of Kent and its outlying areas won't have to

drive to either Auburn or Tukwila to see a movie; they can just drive down to Kent Station.

"I've been down to Kent Station about a half dozen times already," says Leslie Armstrong, a citizen of Kent for 25 years.

When asked if she'd go to Kent Station more and Auburn or Tukwila less, she chose Kent Station. The convenience it offers will allow Kent Station to revitalize downtown Kent and bring with it a tremendous financial gain, making Kent an even better place to live.

If the kids don't want to see a movie, they can participate in programs from Kent Parks and Recreation. "We offer a wide range of programs," says Shawn Wilson, the program coordinator for the Parks & Recreation Department. "Cultural arts, teen programs, programs for the disadvantaged, and sports leagues, just to name a few."

The Parks and Recreation Department also offers classes teaching everything from pottery to belly dancing for people of all ages. In 2003, Sports Illustrated named Kent "Sportstown of the Year" for Washington state due to its sports leagues and recreational programs.

Kent offers something to everyone. It gives some a great place to spend time with friends while others receive a quiet and peaceful place to live. Residents of Kent can get lost in the hustle and bustle of a big city and on the various country roads surrounding it. So whether you're 9 or 90, Kent is and always will be a great place to live.

Kent Commons



Kent Commons is a place for everyone. The facility is mainly used by Kent Parks and Recreation to offer different activities to the community. There are classes in many sports, as well as dance. Basketball and racquetball courts are also available with equipment rentals. For the more musically inclined, they offer musical classes including piano lessons. There is a quiet section of the building equipped with tables and chairs, a perfect place to work on homework or just visit quietly with friends.

NORMAN ONORATI/PHOTOGRAPHER

Residents fear for their lives in local cities

By Britan Cosand

Amy Macartney's car door remained unlocked at the neighborhood Fred Myer in Bonney Lake. The blond-haired woman walked in a carefree manner from her car towards the store, with no fear of being mugged.

She had done it. She had become familiar with feeling safe on her way to work. Macartney is a store manager and has been a resident of Bonney Lake for a little over two weeks. This was a safe place for her.

Safe is something everyone would like to feel, yet how many Americans can say with certainty that their walk from their car, bus or homes are safe? Macartney transferred from the Fred Myer in Tacoma where she felt the way many citizens do all too frequently -- fearful.

According to the Buyer's Trust, the annual car theft rate in Seattle is more than 15,000 per 100,000 residents, compared to just 300 in Bonney Lake. Robberies in homes are 250 to 56.

Yet this is not the only reason for Macartney's move. Another is the town's location, featuring a killer view of Mount Rainer and being snug between two beautiful lakes. The town also boasts clean air and the sound of nature as you walk to town.

There is still another reason: Macartney is free from the smell of exhaust, traffic and busy nights. She can take her mind off the troubles of life and take in the breath-taking scenery.

"I was done with all the traffic," she said with a grin. "Plus the customers here are nicer people...certainly cleaner people."

Mayor Neil Johnson captures the

importance of this place as a place of beauty. "I want to focus much more attention on working with our local civic groups beautifying the community, its parks, recreation, trails and trees. This is a commitment that is shared by the entire council. We want to preserve and improve the livability and beauty of Bonney Lake."

According to the Chamber of Commerce this place is becoming more than a pit stop one mile off of Hwy 410. With a population increase of 48 percent in 2005, raising the population to over 12,000, Bonney Lake is currently the second-largest growing city in the state.

With this influx of people, Bonney Lake has quickly learned how to adapt. After five years of development, a new high school will be opening this coming fall. New condomini-

ums have been proposed as well as a YMCA in midtown. The city also hopes to build an 80-acre regional park

"That part of Pierce County is growing rapidly, and the need for a regional county park is great," said Council Chairman Shawn Bunney. "This particular site is ideal."

Sarah Joy Rogers has lived in the community for more than 10 years.

"I love our little town and I love that it is growing," said Rogers. "There is so much more to do than when I was a kid."

She particularly noted the city's three shopping centers, movie theater, Fred Meyer and trails she walks every morning.

Amanda Oswald is one of the many new residents of this small town. Recently unemployed from a live-in-

nanny job in Renton, Oswald had always been fond of a beautiful view. After a few short visits she was taken by the simple lifestyle and beautiful view of Mount Rainer.

"I have friends who live in the area and they seemed less busy, less stressed, less irritated," Oswald said on a recent sunny day. "My biggest fear is that there would be too little to do...I'm used to a bigger city...the community does well to entertain in moderation."

With an annual father-daughter Valentines Day dinner, many senior citizen events and youth focused activities, Oswald is right. And if these are not enough, one can stroll to the Kalamar Winery for wine tasting or take the children to the library for their annual storybook time.



NICOLE SWAPP/EDITOR



DAVID BARNEY/PHOTOGRAPHER



DAVID BARNEY/PHOTOGRAPHER



DAVID BARNEY/PHOTOGRAPHER

Federal Way has some great places to visit

By Josh Kulp

Is Federal Way a tourist town or a place you would want to raise a family or even retire?

"I think that Federal Way is a little bit of everything" said Francine Busby.

Busby has lived in Federal Way all of her life. She is a 62-year-old teacher in the Federal Way school district. She is on her way to retiring and anticipates on staying right where she is.

"Tourists come from many places and spend money at the mall and the Six Flags theme park increasing our city's revenues" said Busby.

"The increased revenue helps keep the city safe and groomed," she adds, noting that it makes the city a great place to raise a family or even retire.

Federal Way is a town of many people; the town has many things to be proud of.

It began as a logging town in the late 1800's. During the 1950's the name "Federal Way" was officially adopted.

During the 1970's Federal Way had started constructing the SeaTac Mall, which recently was renamed the Commons Mall. The city incorporated in 1990.

Pam Jones enjoys the endless supply of shopping and restaurants in the area. "I really like that Costco is so accessible and the mall is always an option" said Jones, a 36-year-old resident who has lived in Federal Way for 12 years. "Mostly, I like the unlimited amounts of choice for dining."

With a population of 85,800, Federal Way is

now the seventh largest city in Washington. There are 3,200 businesses in the city limits employing over 22,000 people. The city covers about 21.5 square miles.

Walt Smith works for Dreyers Grand Ice Cream as a sales representative in the area. He sells to Auburn, Bonney Lake, Sumner and Enumclaw grocery stores as well. "Federal Way has two of my top performing stores, QFC and WinCo," said Smith. "At these stores my ice cream blows off the shelves!"

Federal Way has the only permanent Seattle-area amusement park, Wild Waves Enchanted Village. It was purchased by Six Flags in 2000.

In asking the people of Federal Way about this amusement park the response has been good.

Lorien Busby has no children but still sees the advantage of having Wild Waves nearby. "Wild Waves is a great thing for the economy but it is also great fun," says Busby, a 35-year-old businesswoman who has lived in Federal Way for 10 years. "I love going there during the summer on my days off."

Resident Harvey Wallace echoes that sentiment. "I enjoy the freedom of my kids staying active outdoors and out of trouble while I am close by relaxing in the sun," said Wallace, who uses the summer pass available at Wild Waves.

Another attractive aspect of Federal Way is its abundance of parks and trails. There are more than

25 parks and an elaborate trail system. Celebration Park is one of the newest with tournament-quality soccer and baseball fields used for regional and national tournaments. The BPA trails are currently over a mile long with additional phases in the works.

Ron Shear is currently living in Auburn but remembers the days he used to go to Federal Way with his father fishing on Trout Lake. "My dad and I would spend our days out on this nice quiet lake -- no motor boats -- allowed just fishing in our little row boat," said Shear.

Another popular local destination is the Weyerhaeuser/King County Aquatic Center, a world-class diving and swimming facility home to Olympic team trials.

Bryce Gonzalez from Enumclaw remembers competing in diving for Enumclaw High School. "Those were the good ole days," said Gonzalez. "The facilities are amazing we were competing for state and I remember just being awed by the place."

Mayor Mike Parks has been re-elected three times to council. He is now on his last term which will expire December 2007. Deputy Mayor is Jim Ferrell, whose term also expires in December 2007.

The history of Lake Tapps

The community of Lake Tapps cares not what city they live in, but how much they love where they are

By Debi Estep

With 45 miles of shoreline, Lake Tapps is only 13 miles less than that of Lake Washington.

As the weather starts to warm up in the Puget Sound area, it's nice to know that residents in the South King County area have a place nearby for fun in the sun. Bonney Lake alone has a population of 14,000, while population for Pierce County in 2000 was found to be over 700,000. On summer mornings, residents surrounding Lake Tapps can enjoy a cup of coffee while watching the sunrise on a lake that is quiet and still like glass with Mt. Rainier in the background. Residents know that within a couple of hours, the lake will become choppy with personal watercraft.

Lake Tapps has been around since 1911, but originally consisted of four separate lakes: Lake Kirtley, Lake Tapps, Crawford Lake and Church Lake. Two and a half miles of earthen dams allowed the water level of Lake Tapps to raise 35 feet, joining the four lakes together. The lake is nestled between Auburn, Sumner and Bonney Lake.

It was originally formed as a reservoir for power generation by Puget Power Electric, and is supplied by the White River. There is eight miles of water flume that carries the water to Lake Tapps from the Buckley Diversion Dam. The White River has large runs of fish, mainly salmon. The lake surface area consists of 2,566 acres with storage capacity of 46,655 acre-feet of water.

In 1954, much of the land around the lake was purchased by Lake Tapps Development Company from Puget Sound Power and Light Company. The original intention of the company was to provide summertime recreational home sites. As part of this program, a number of local parks were created for the use of property owners.

Primary use of the lake is for summer boating, skiing and personal watercraft. There are two public parks, located at the north and south end of the lake, which allow for public access to the water. In addition, there are eight other private parks located around the lake for resident members.

Along with water sports, Lake Tapps draws people from surrounding neighborhoods with annual events. The Lake Tapps Annual Garage Sale is a huge event that is held the first weekend in June. It is so huge that there is an entrance fee of \$5, but includes a map of who is participating and what they are selling. The lake also has an annual fireworks display on July 4. The display is as big as the donations received by residents.

With a designated paved path that goes around most of the island of Lake Tapps, the community offers safety for walkers, runners, bikers and children. The island also has its own 18-hole golf course and clubhouse with restaurant, which are both open to the public. The Lakeside Grill Restaurant offers inside and outside seating with a full bar. Outside seating offers a fantastic view of the lake and a view of pool just below, where parents can keep a close eye on their children.

Shannon McGuinness, a homeowner on the island of Lake Tapps, describes the area as "a great place to raise a family." The clubhouse has rental space available for parties and weddings. With immaculate landscaping and the breathtaking view of the lake, the clubhouse is a popular choice for weddings and receptions.

The ups and downs of Renton

By Paige McDaniel

RENTON- Walking into a hardware store, it's generally expected that you'll see lumber stacked up to the ceiling. A garden section overflowing with plants is common, and the many aisles having every household item is what a hardware "toy" store is all about.

But what many don't find is an associate in every corner with an answer to any question that a customer may have or a free pancake breakfast being offered just to start off your morning in a positive way. It's with these factors that McLendon Hardware seeks to establish the most personalized customer service in the state.

Many great businesses have left great memories, but only some have left great legends. McLendon Hardware was once just a building, but now the family-owned shop has become one of the biggest names in the hardware business with six stores in the state of Washington. The store

in Renton is 117,000 square feet, the biggest in its chain.

McLendon Hardware began in 1926 in Renton as a small junk shop with the witty name of "US Junk." It sold used parts and was run by handyman Pat McLendon, one of six of the McLendon children. But when a fellow handyman bought the store, McLendon was left with \$500 in seed money to start what is now known as McLendon Hardware.

But it didn't stop there. The other five siblings also got involved and so did their children. Currently, McLendon is represented by the third generation, to reign.

Diane Kauffman, 52, is a third generation "owner by marriage." She has been working at McLendon since she was 17. While being a female working in the plumbing department is difficult, she smiles and says that as long as she can keep walking, she'll keep working here.

That same attitude seemed the suit

for many fellow employees.

Never spotted looking down or upset, each employee has made it their mission to provide the best personalized customer service possible. Every employee is required to have the answer to where a customer can find any product, even if that employee isn't working in that specific department. Also, a customer is never faced with the doubt of speaking to someone who doesn't know what they are talking about. Each employee has either worked in the actual trade before, such as electric or plumbing, or has worked at other stores. The general rule here is customer service before sales.

Tom Johnston, 33, of the plumbing department, and an ex-student of Green River Community College, has found his job at McLendon's more than simply satisfying.

"It's a good company to stay with," says Johnston. "There's job security, a good benefits package. We're all a

big family."

Johnston participated in the welding and technical class at GRCC to qualify him for a job at McLendon.

With its strong emphasis on customer service, McLendon also hopes to continue its reign in competition. Compared to Home Depot and Lowe's, McLendon soars in the availability of items. Home Depot carries an average of 50,000 items, Lowe's 56,000 items, and McLendon, 175,000 items, according to Store Assistant Manager Jack Briggs. It's almost a guarantee to find anything you need.

"You can even find a man here," says customer Susan McMullin; smiling.

Throughout the 79 years, employees and managers have made it a goal to be involved in the Renton community. Assistant manager Briggs has been involved in providing services for Carco Theatre and Renton High School Theatre. McLendon offers expertise and product at either donation

or discount prices. McLendon also participates in Boy Scout and Girl Scout programs, as well as middle schools.

When asked to identify the best part of their job, many employees replied with, "Being able to help people."

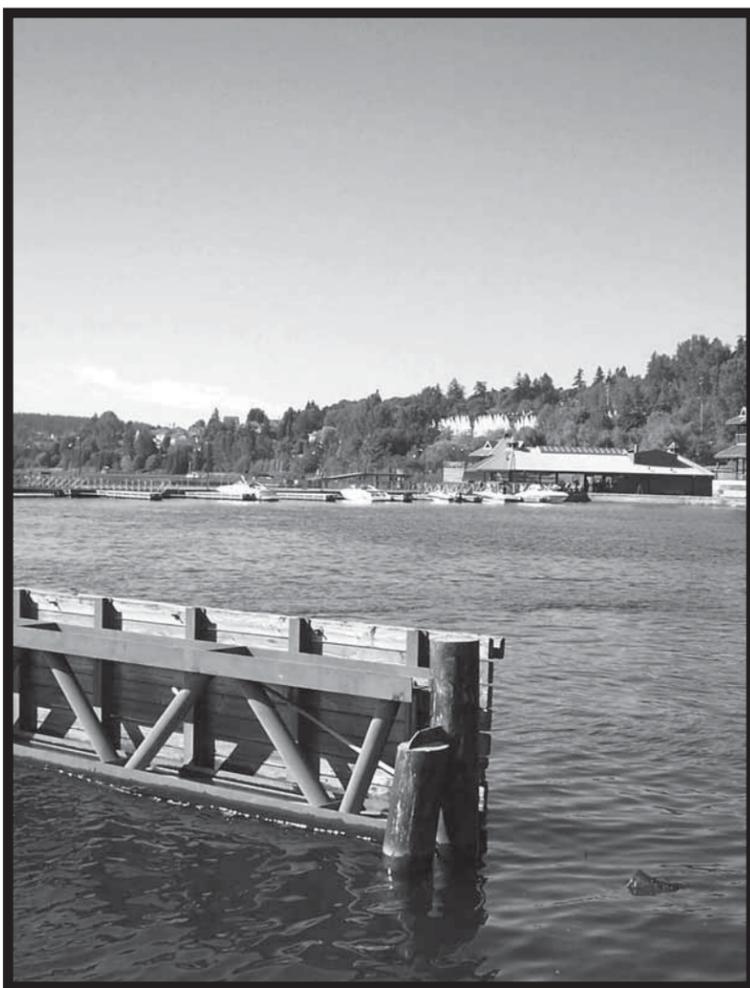
Pat Mills in the hardware department is thrilled when faced with the opportunity of helping a customer.

"When you get someone who is truly confused about what they want and you are able to determine what they want, seeing that come together is quite a bit of fun," says Mills, a new member of the McLendon family. He's worked there for six months.

Throughout the many years never has McLendon failed to remain close to the customers or employees hearts. The lack of pressure from managers and the comfort of a close knit group, McLendon Hardware is, as noted by Briggs, "Not a bad deal all the way around."



DOUG CLARDY/PHOTOGRAPHER



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The best places to visit in Sumner

By Valerie Burns

Sumner Meadows Golf Links

A chance to relax and spend time with friends is an opportunity that many would gladly take advantage of in this hectic world. At Sumner Meadows Golf Links a person can spend their day with friends relaxing while improving on their golf game and physical well-being.

Sumner Meadows appeals to people of all ages to come and play a round of golf or just practice their drive in the driving range. Golf is a game that can be played by almost all ages and skill levels.

Besides the 18-hole Scottish links-style course, Sumner Meadows also offers a practice facility. It includes a grass driving range, a chipping green, a putting green and a practice bunker. All year round they offer lessons and clinics for anybody that is interested in learning or improving their game.

It is located off highway 167 off the 8th street exit. On weekdays it costs \$27 to play a full round of golf during the day. During 3-5 p.m. it is \$19 and after 5 p.m. it costs \$15. On the weekends and holidays the daytime price is \$36, evening is \$25

and later is \$19. Seniors, juniors and military personnel get cheaper rates per game during the week.

Skate Park

The wonderful world of skateboarding has been improved by the Sumner skate park. It is conveniently located in the Daffodil Valley Sports Complex, very close to Fred Meyers and Sumner High School. The free and local park attracts the youth of Sumner and the surrounding areas including but not limited to Lake Tapps, Bonney Lake and Auburn.

It is 9,000 square feet and has two skating areas, including a bowl and a simulated street skate. The deep part of the bowl is meant for the more advanced skaters, it is 10 feet deep in the deepest part. The area surrounding the bowl and the street skate section are intended for beginner, intermediate and advanced skateboarders to do their thing.

People skating said that the skate park was one of the few places for them to hang out in Sumner that costs nothing and is enjoyable. The park is open 7a.m. to dark. It is just

for skateboards, no scooters or bikes are allowed in the park.

Daffodil Valley Sports Complex

A quality sports complex is very hard to come by these days, especially in small towns. Most will usually specialize in just one or maybe two sports. This is definitely not the case for the Daffodil Valley Sports Complex in Sumner.

It is a 12-acre facility located near Fred Meyers and Sumner High School. The sports facility offers a baseball field, basketball courts, a skate park and tennis courts. Besides sports it also has a concession stand and rest rooms. It is a great asset to the community because it gives kids and adults places to play their sports and have active lives.

The park is still being added to so that the community and sponsors will get the most out of the space. They plan on adding soccer fields, youth baseball fields, a children's play area, picnic tables and a jogging trail for everyone to use.

The park is there to serve every one of all different ages in the com-

munity and it will by giving young people a place that is drug free and part of the community that they live in.

Fred Meyers

Where is a place that one can shop, eat and see friends in Sumner? How about a place with those traits that is conveniently located near Sumner High School, a movie store, downtown and a skate park? Who would have thought that the place is simply the Sumner Fred Meyers? Walking around Fred Meyers one will see people of all ages, including toddlers with their parents to teenagers taking a break from the skate park or high school.

The store has a bakery, a deli, a bank, a one hour photo, a pharmacy and a gas station to suit the needs of all their valued customers. Next to the deli and bakery there are tables and chairs for people to sit, eat and talk with friends or rest after or during shopping. The store sells almost everything that a person would ever need to live, including basic groceries, clothes, music and movies.

Starbucks

The first Starbucks ever is in downtown Seattle. The tradition of fine coffee drinks in a cool and urban environment has extended almost everywhere around here, including the town of Sumner. The branch is located in the perfect spot, close to downtown Sumner, near Fred Meyers and Sumner High School.

Their customers consist of high school students before or after class, tired Fred Meyer shoppers and almost everybody else in the area that has a penchant for good coffee and drinks. They offer a variety of specialty drinks that most coffee stands in the area do not offer. They serve hot and cold drinks so that the customer can have a choice depending on the weather, their mood or their liking.

Inside there are comfy chairs and tables to sit and hang out. The relaxed and laid back atmosphere makes it a great place for people of all ages to sit back and get a nice cup of coffee. They can do homework, read a book, visit with friends or just relax.