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Living

IN THE COUVE

APRIL 2024

The Columbian

Living

IN THE COUVE

What is The Couve?

The Couve geographical name

\ 'thē cōv \ rhymes with 'move'

(noun)

1 —Nickname for Vancouver, Washington.

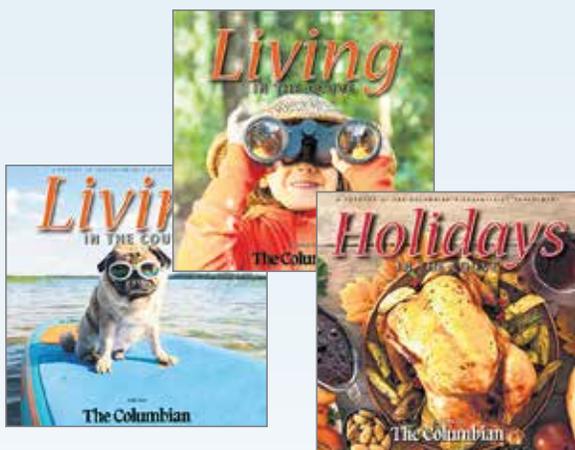
2 —The original Vancouver.

3 —A small city with vibrant communities, urban attractions, and natural recreation areas.

See Also: Greater Couve, Clark County, Southwest Washington

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Find past issues archived online at
www.livinginthecouve.com



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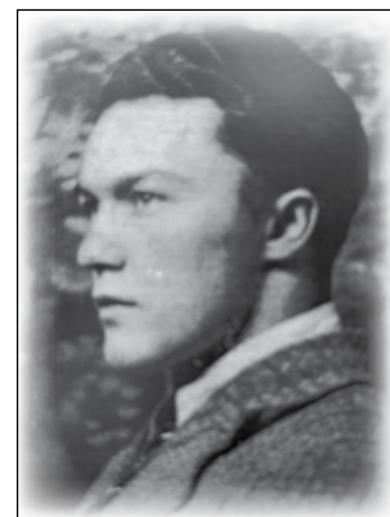
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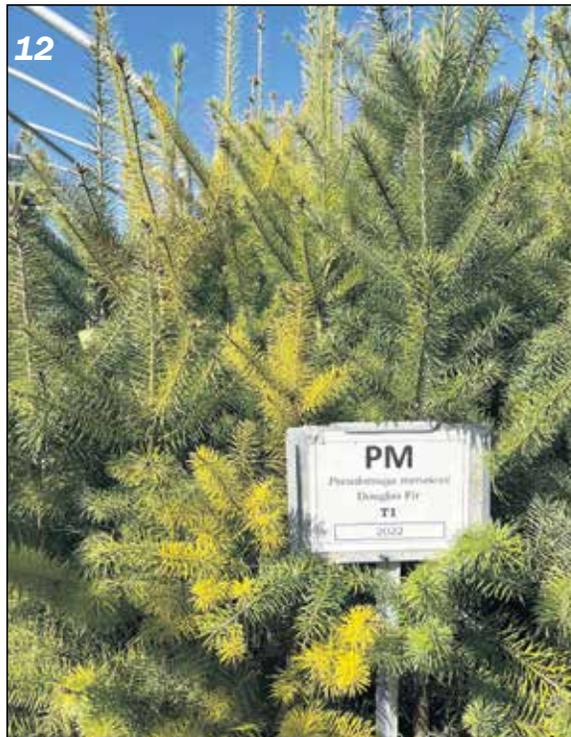
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EVENTS

APRIL 2024 - MAY 2024

SAKURA FESTIVAL

April 25

Over 25 years ago, the City of Vancouver received a gift of friendship: 100 Shirofugen cherry trees. They were planted at Clark College, creating an enduring reminder of the bonds between our region and Japan. Over the years, those trees have grown and blossomed—as has that friendship, creating traditions like the establishment in 1995 of a sister-city relationship between Vancouver and Jojo, Japan. Join Clark College, City of Vancouver, and Vancouver Rotary on the Clark College main campus for the annual Sakura Festival. Opening remarks to take place at 1:00 p.m. in the Royce Pollard Japanese Friendship Garden* with music. Celebration begins at 2:30 p.m. in Gaiser Student Center. *If weather prohibits the opening ceremony from taking place outdoors, it will be held in the Gaiser Student Center. The event is free and open to the public. For additional information please contact Michelle Golder at 360-992-2543.



KLINELINE KIDS FISHING DERBY

April 12 & 13

Over a two-day period each spring kids and their families and friends gather at Salmon Creek Park/Klineline Pond in Vancouver, WA to help children experience fishing, playing outside, and learning about our natural environment and water safety. **Special Needs Friday, April 12: LIMITED TO SPECIAL NEEDS PERSONS AGES 5 AND UP. FIRST 800 REGISTRATIONS ACCEPTED. All Kids Saturday, April 13: OPEN TO ALL YOUTH AGES 5 - 14. FIRST 2,000 REGISTRATIONS ACCEPTED.** Go online for registration and event details. klineline-kf.org



NW'S LARGEST GARAGE SALE & VINTAGE SALE

April 20, 8am-5pm

Clark County Event Center at the Fairgrounds
Ridgefield: 17402 NE Delfel Rd.
General Admission: Adults \$8, Early Birds (7am) \$20, Kids under 12 **FREE**. Tickets are available at the ticket booth starting 1 hour prior to opening. nwgsales.com



LILAC DAYS

April 20 - May 12

Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens - Woodland: 115 South Pekin Rd
The Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens are a restoration project to honor the work of famed lilac developer Hulda Klager. The National Historic Site contains an 1800s house and surrounding buildings and Gardens. Annually, Lilac Days celebrates the site, Hulda's work, and raises funds to maintain the site. Check online for current hours and admission information. lilacgardens.com

**2024 MASTER GARDENER FOUNDATION OF CLARK COUNTY
AND WSU EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM
PRESENTS MOTHER'S DAY PLANT SALE**

Friday May 10th and Saturday May 11th from 9am to 2:30pm

By Appointment Only: Sign-up for appointments will be available
in early April at www.mgfcc.com

Sunday May 12th 10am to 1pm

No Appointment Needed.

78th Street Heritage Farm

1919 NE 78th Street, Vancouver, WA 98665

This yearly plant sale includes perennials, annuals, vegetables, shrubs, herbs, houseplants, hanging baskets, mixed flower pots and Microna Prilled Lime, 20 lb bags, while supplies last. Your purchase supports the WSU Master Gardener Program, horticulture education and healthy food growing grants in Clark County. Bring your own carts or wagons. Free entry and free parking, but limited, so carpool if you can. ADA parking available and no trailers, please. No pets, but service animals are welcome. Visit www.mgfcc.com to schedule your appointment and find out more information about the Master Gardener Foundation of Clark County.



**CAMAS PLANT &
GARDEN FAIR**

May 11, 9-4

Downtown Camas
Explore the selection
of plants, trees, garden
art and supplies, and
much more provided
by dedicated local
growers and vendors.
Kids' activities, live
music, entertainment,
fresh food, and the
shops and restaurants
of Downtown Camas
all add to the
community experience.
cwplantfair.org



FARMERS MARKETS



VANCOUVER FARMERS MARKET

April - October; Saturdays 9am - 3pm; Sundays 10am - 3pm
November - March, Saturdays 10am - 2pm;
(Closed December 21st & 28th, 2024)

Downtown Market, 8th & Esther St. Downtown Vancouver
You'll discover fresh and local produce, flowers, plants, baked goods, delicious food, pet treats, and accessories for yourself, home, or garden. The Vancouver Farmers Market is a pet friendly place where you can chat with people who have grown or created your purchase, grab a bite to eat, listen to music, stroll through the park, watch the kids play, and enjoy a wonderful, relaxing day. 8th & Esther St. Downtown Vancouver. vancouverfarmersmarket.com

EAST VANCOUVER MARKET

June - September, Thursdays 10am - 2pm
17701 SE Mill Plain Blvd Vancouver

CAMAS FARMER'S MARKET

June 5 - October 2, Wednesdays, 3pm-7pm

4th Ave between Everett and Franklin in Downtown Camas
A celebration of our region's agricultural bounty. Freshly harvested seasonal produce, flowers, natural products, and a hearty variety of prepared and hot foods fill the market. Enjoy chef demos, healthy living and gardening information, kids' activities, and live local music. Chat with a farmer, fill your basket, grab dinner and relax on the library lawn. camasfarmersmarket.org/

RIDGEFIELD FARMERS MARKET

Opening day June 1

The Ridgefield Farmers Market begins June 1st, 2024, and will run each Saturday. The Market is a revival of the heritage of farmers markets of a time long ago, where on summer weekends the freshest produce and homemade products would be proudly displayed on tables early in the morning before becoming a meal, a decoration, or a centerpiece in someone's home later that same day. Vendors offer a great selection of products to choose from including local produce, plant starts, baked goods, flowers, soaps, jewelry, home décor items, clothing, and more. Come down to Overlook Park to enjoy all the market has to offer.
ridgefieldwa.us/305/Farmers-Market

HOSTING

MASON BEES

by TODD KAPRAL, Backyard Bird Shop

Spring is in the air. Our flowering trees are blossoming and our early pollinators are busy at work. Late winter and spring is a perfect time to set your yard up to host Mason Bees. These amazing insects are one of the first pollinators that visit our trees and flowers in spring. They don't produce honey and they don't sting. All they do is pollinate and make more bees.

Mason Bees (*Osmia Lignaria*) are a species of solitary bee that are native to most parts of North America. They generally emerge in spring when daytime temperatures consistently reach the mid-to-upper- 50's and they are active from late March through June. During this time, they pollinate and lay eggs for next year. They are iridescent black in color and can sometimes be mistaken for a fly. The males are smaller than the females and emerge first, about a week or so before the females.

Scopa that collect and mix pollen as they visit different flowers. As a result, they can visit many more blossoms than other bees in the same period of time. They primarily pollinate fruit trees, but almost any plant that blooms between March and June is fair game. Don't worry if you do not have fruit trees in your yard because they will travel up to the length of a football field to find food.

Second, they don't sting. The female Mason Bee has an ovipositor that could serve as a stinger but there is no venom involved. The smaller male Mason Bee has no ovipositor. Since these are solitary insects and have no queen to protect, they are very mellow and I have actually had them hatch out of their cocoon in my hand!

Mason Bees are very easy to host in your yard. Their houses generally consist of individual tubes or nesting trays that, when stacked, form holes for the bees to nest in. Since they aren't excavators and don't make their own nesting holes, they look for existing holes

and spaces to nest in which is why they readily use manmade houses. Mason Bee houses should be located where they will get morning sun. An east or southeast exposure is ideal, preferably on the side of your house, shed or outbuilding. The holes should be 5"-6" deep and 5/16" in diameter. Many folks just starting with Mason Bees may purchase tubes of bees or loose cocoons to get things jump-started in their yards. Additionally, bees already out there may find the houses as well.

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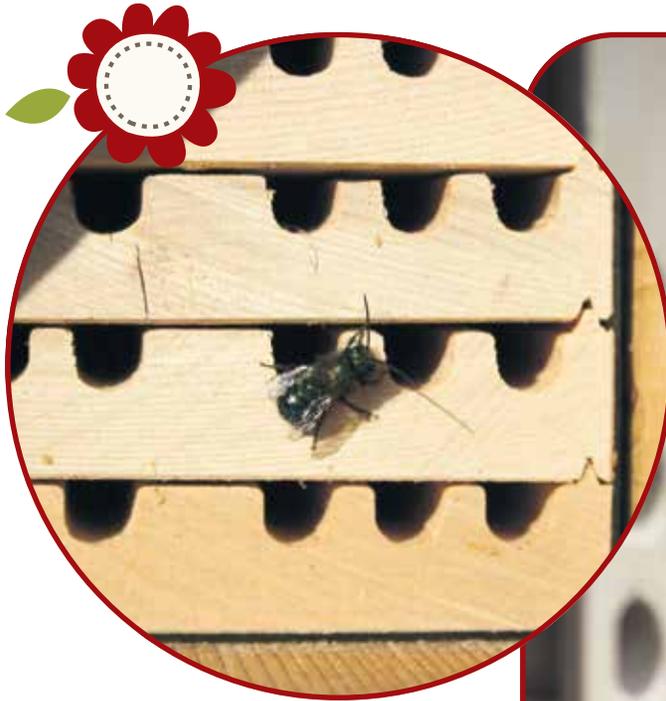


A female Mason bee emerges from its cocoon. All photos courtesy of MICHELE DUPRAW

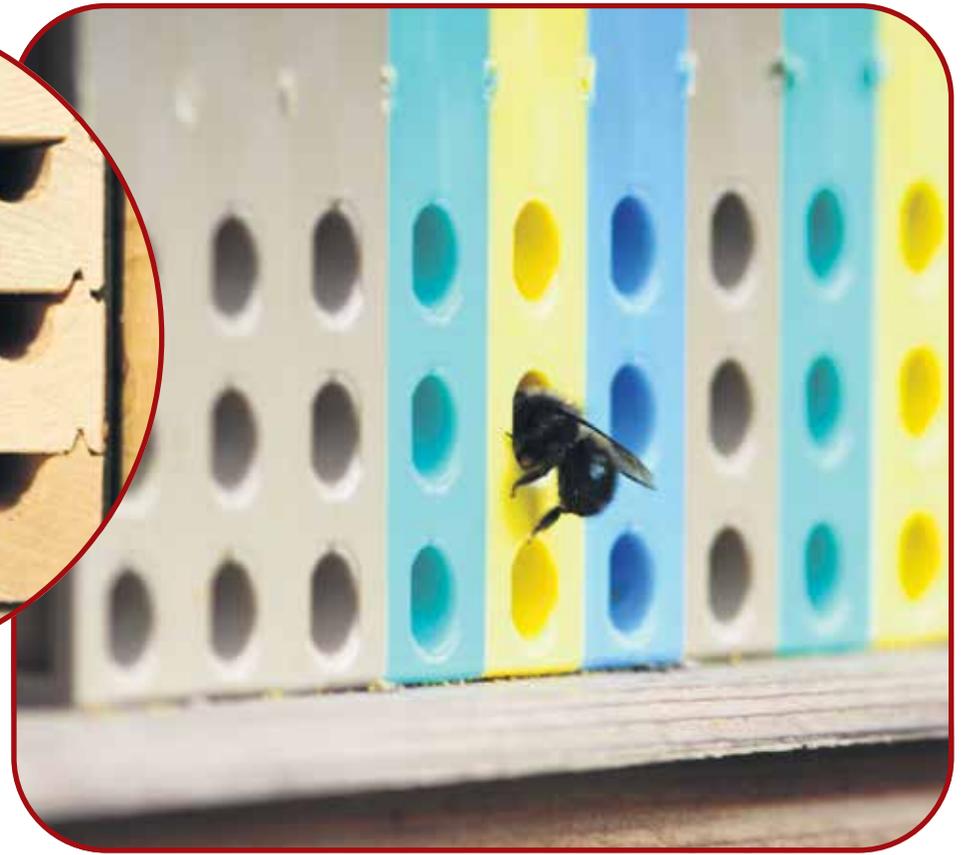
There are a number of reasons why people like to encourage Mason Bees. First and foremost, they are very efficient pollinators, much more so than the honeybee or bumblebee. Instead of collecting pollen on their legs, they have little hairs all over their abdomens called



As the bees pollinate, what they are also doing is gathering food for the eggs that they are going to lay in the nesting tubes. The pollen they gather provides the protein and the nectar provides the sugar. They bring this mixture to the nest and deposit individual piles of it in the nesting tubes with an egg in each little pile, separated by a mud wall. You can even go as far as providing a source of mud for the bees to use. The bees typically lay 6-9 eggs per tube. Since they can control the sex of the egg they lay, female eggs are deposited first in the back of the nesting hole and males are laid last in the front. This is why the males are first to emerge in spring. In a Mason Bee house, there is no queen bee. Each female is her own bee and will lay 30 or so eggs in her short adult lifetime. After all the eggs are laid and the adults die, the eggs develop over the summer into an adult bee, inside a cocoon, waiting in



A female Mason bee with a wooden block.

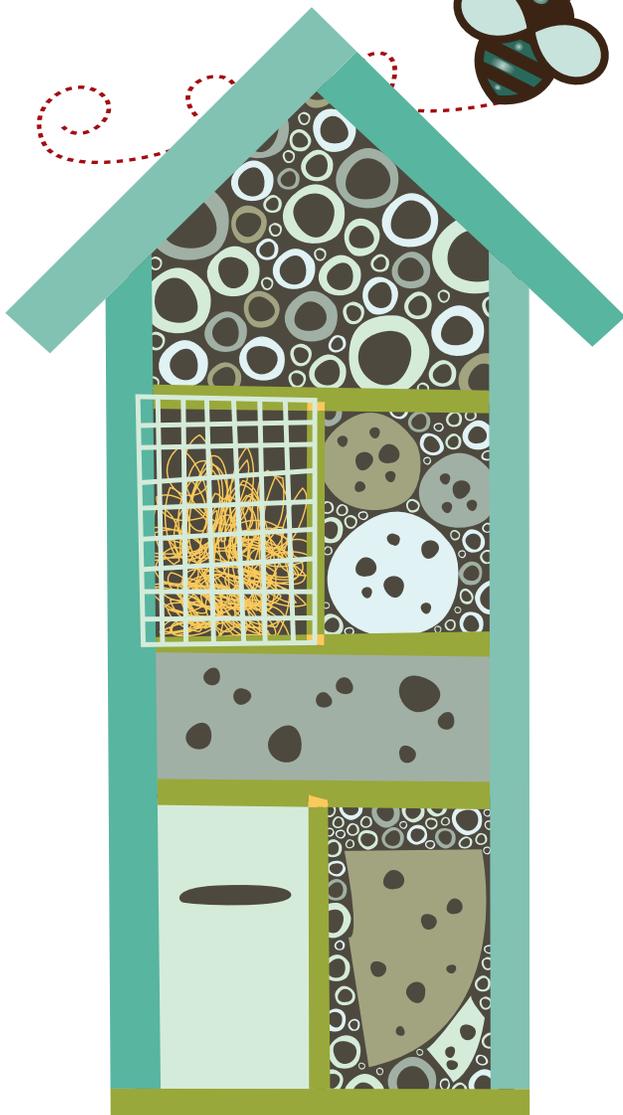


A female Mason bee enters a nesting tray made of corn plastic.



hibernation for the following spring and the cycle starts all over again.

In the fall, you can harvest the cocoons out of the nests and get things cleaned and prepared for next year. This process isn't necessary, but it can really help your backyard population along. Store the loose cocoons in a cool garage or shed in a small container. An empty pill or vitamin bottle works nicely. Refrigerator storage isn't recommended due to the risk of dehydration. The cleaning process sounds daunting but it's not. More information about the cleaning process can be found online or at your local backyard bird feeding supply store. Hosting these bees can be lots of fun and you can be as involved or not as you like. Bottom line is that they are tremendously beneficial and safe to have around.



LIVE MASON BEES & SUPPLIES IN STOCK NOW!

BACKYARD BIRD SHOP



We have a wide selection of bee housing, bee blocks, shelters, tubes & liners, books.



Nominate us Best Collectible/Hobby Store

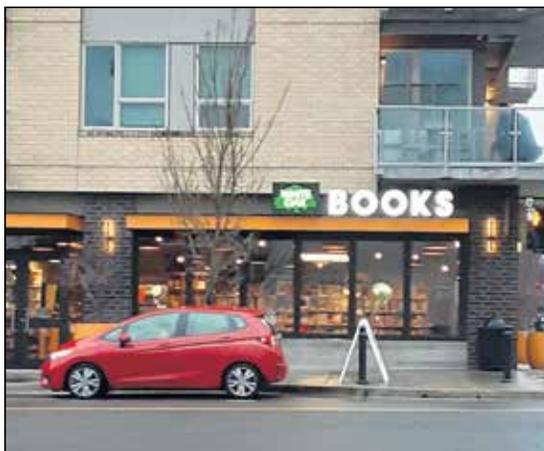
Vancouver | 8101 NE Parkway Dr. | 360-253-5771 ext. 5

BACKYARDBIRDSHOP.COM

READING IS **RAD**

Check out some of these local bookstores in the Greater Couve!

by EILEEN COWEN, for *The Columbian*



White Oak Books, a great spot for new books in Uptown Village, Vancouver.



White Oak Books 1700 Main St, Ste D Vancouver

White Oak Books recently opened in what had been a vacant retail space for almost a decade. To say that the store is an exciting addition to Uptown Village Vancouver would be an understatement. The shop is beautiful, welcoming, and locally owned. It has a wide array of new titles on hand and the ability to special order books to be shipped to the store. White Oak has a lively book club that meets every couple of weeks and hosts storytime for the preschool crowd. They even have a small coffee bar to keep you toasty as you sit in their reading nook. They are open every day until 7pm, making a great spot for a quiet and relaxing evening.

signings. It is truly a lovely destination to spend an afternoon browsing the stacks. While there, be on the lookout for the store cats, Maisie and Dickens, who are beautiful if elusive.



The Romance Era Bookshop 1701 Lincoln Avenue Vancouver

If romance books are your thing, this is the place for you. It is nestled in The Lincoln Warehouse Project building, which is a collaborative space for artists, masseurs, yogis, and body-positive exploration. The Romance Era Bookshop sells romance, erotica, and even some more racy content. (It should go without saying that The Romance Era Bookshop is an 18+ space.) This store is a great shop that fills in the gaps from which some more traditional bookstores shy away.

Some people are just book people, and I am one of those people. I love everything about books: the smell of the paper, the tangible weight that rests in one's hands, reading and being able to immerse myself in someone's version of life's stories. Plus, there is really nothing like curling up with a great read on a chilly spring afternoon. In addition to regular trips to the Fort Vancouver Regional Library to borrow books, everyone in my family loves physically owning books, which makes for some chaotic bookshelves throughout our home. In my family, books are more than just decor; they are beloved and read over and over until the binding cracks and pages yellow with age.

When we first moved here over 18 years ago, there were a few shops that could satisfy our thirst for books both old and new. Some have closed while others consistently thrive. In the last few years, a solid handful of creative book shops have opened in our region. Some of those booksellers focus on new books while others sell used novels and paperbacks, and most of these locations have the ability to special order titles. Here are a few of those shops that you may have missed, as well as some of the more established booksellers that continue to provide the Couve with amazing material.



Literary Leftovers 813 W Main St, #105 Battleground

Literary Leftovers is a must-stop place in Downtown Battleground. The shop is cozy and hosts a wide array of new and used titles. What sets this shop apart from others is their dedication to homeschool families. Not only do they sell curriculum books and educational aids, they also have daytime events such as a Lego club and communal study hall.

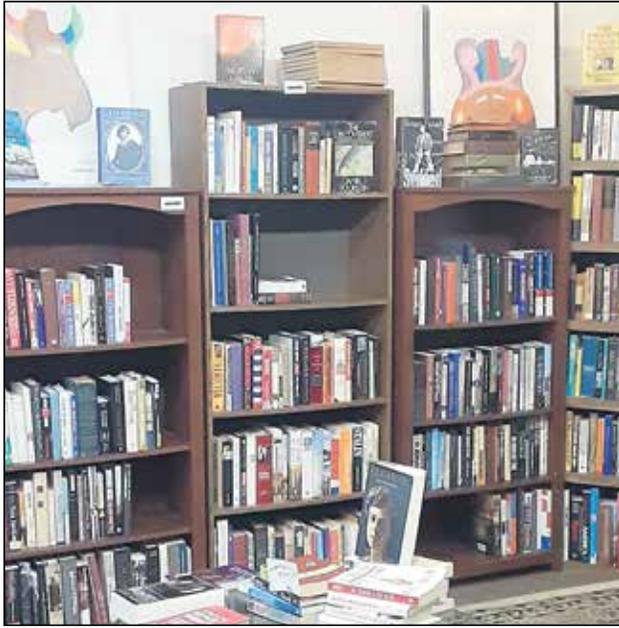


Vintage Books 6613 E. Mill Plain Blvd Vancouver

Since 1975, Vintage Books has been the gold standard for bookshops in the Couve. It checks all the boxes: it sells new and used books, children's and teen titles, SciFi, cooking, antique books, and more. I could browse the store for hours, searching for books I never knew I needed. Vintage Books even sells fair trade and ethically sourced gifts and calendars. I especially like their dedication to selling books written by local authors, and they often host book



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The eclectic bookshelves at Birdhouse Books are sure to have a fun title to pique your interest.

 **Birdhouse Books and
Epic Quest Books**
1001 Main Street
Vancouver

Birdhouse Books is a funky book resale shop that is fun to browse for vintage, local, and hard to find titles. They host some great events such as poetry and slam readings, art shows, and writer workshops. The owners are highly engaged in the thriving Downtown Vancouver community and the shop is an extension of their dedication to our town.

Birdhouse Books is a two-for-one shop because they currently house another independently owned store, Epic Quest Books. Epic Quest is a seller of new and used SciFi and fantasy books. They are a small but mighty addition to the amazing booksellers in our area and are hoping to open their own brick-and-mortar soon. Thanks to the generosity and community driven work of Birdhouse Books, we get to watch Epic Quest Books grow!

 **Autumn Leaf Books**
334 NE 4th Avenue
Camas

Autumn Leaf Books is a brand new shop in Downtown Camas. They have books for people of all ages, literary themed gifts, and more. Although the shop just opened in January, they already have a lively book club. The shop is very cute and it will be amazing to watch Autumn Leaf Books grow over the next few years.

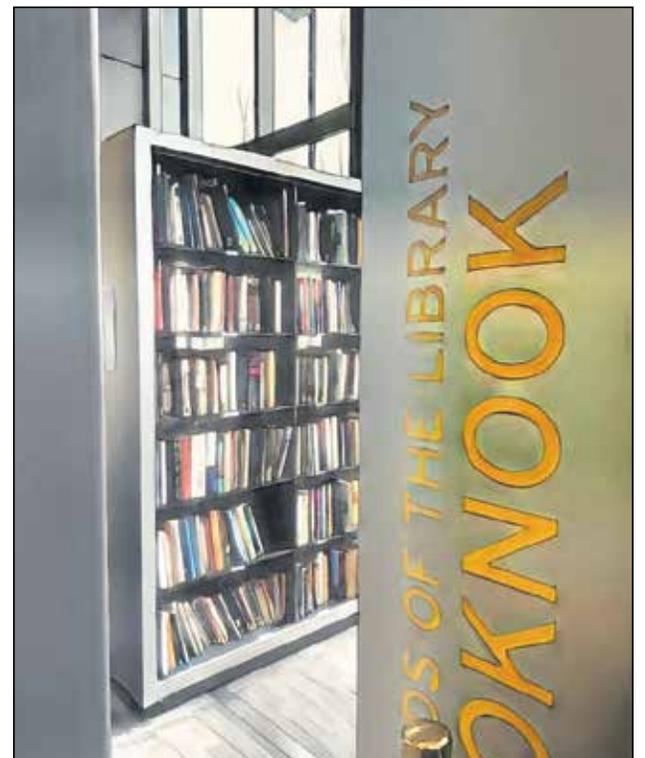


 **Bookish**
335 NE 5th Ave
Camas

Bookish is Camas' best stop for books for children and teens. They have a lot of new and used titles and also host book clubs for high school aged kids. Parents can even book parties at Bookish, complete with various crafts. The shop is a special place for kids to explore reading.

 **Book Nook**
901 C Street
Vancouver

You may be thinking, what is the Book Nook and why haven't I ever heard of it? If you've ever been to the Vancouver Community Library, you've surely walked past it. Located in the atrium, the Book Nook is a small extension of the Friends of the Library bookstores that are located in many locations of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library District. They sell books that are surplus to the library, and most titles are a dollar. I always check out the Book Nook when I stop by, and like many others, wait with baited breath for the annual FVRL Friends of the Library sales. Check out the FVRL webpage for details on sales and locations. Sometimes, the best books are the ones that have already been loved by those in our community.



The Book Nook, one of the Vancouver Community Library's best kept secrets.



Weight-loss medications can be life-changing

by VALERIE WEISS, MD Vancouver Clinic

The way clinicians care for children and teens with an obesity diagnosis is changing dramatically. Previously, doctors took a “wait and see” approach, hoping that time and lifestyle changes would allow kids to outgrow the condition.

Today, we know that doesn’t work. Children with an untreated or undertreated obesity diagnosis can develop hypertension, diabetes, high blood pressure, liver disease, depression, and anxiety. These are serious medical issues with physical, emotional, and social impacts.

PROACTIVE APPROACH BENEFITS PATIENTS

The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends a proactive approach—one that can include the same types of medications that are making weight loss successful in adults.

As a physician who is board-certified in pediatrics and obesity medicine, I’m excited about this change. Obesity is a chronic, treatable disease. Using weight-loss medicines helps kids and teens live well today and protect their health in the future.

I see the positive results every day in Vancouver

Clinic’s Pediatric Wellness Program, which I have the honor of leading. The program uses nutrition education, behavioral therapy, physical activity, and medication options to help individuals improve their health and even reverse their diagnoses.

Typically, by the time a patient is referred to this program, the individual has tried to make diet and lifestyle changes with limited results due to factors beyond their control, such as genetics and an environment that makes healthy choices difficult. They might have a diabetes or prediabetes diagnosis, high blood pressure, attention difficulties, and academic or social struggles in school. If, after a thorough health evaluation, I think that they would benefit from medications, I open up that conversation with the patient and their family.

The idea of using weight-loss medicines for kids can be startling at first. We want to make sure we’re sending kids and teens the right messages. And we absolutely don’t want them to develop disordered eating. The good news is that, when used under the ongoing guidance of a pediatrician, medications can

be a safe and positive option.

MEDICATIONS CREATE MOMENTUM

Many adults have been in the frustrating position of trying to improve their health with little success. It’s hard to make lifestyle changes, even under the best of circumstances. Kids and teens are no different. When they start a medication and begin seeing changes in their bodies, they feel motivated to continue on their health journey.

When their body composition improves, key health measures do too. I see blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol numbers go down. Meanwhile, their mental health improves. These physical, metabolic, and psychologic improvements can be life-altering.

Patients who have a good response to the medications typically lose 10 percent of their body weight. Those who are most successful combine medications with lifestyle changes such as regular physical activity, healthy nutrition, and adequate sleep. A patient of mine cured his diabetes without medicine by walking an hour a day and giving up soda.

COST, ACCESS IMPACT TREATMENT OPTIONS

One of the challenges with prescribing weight-loss medications for kids and teens is that the drugs aren’t often covered by insurance. Few families can afford the thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket costs. In cases where the medications are approved, there’s no guarantee that pharmacies will have them in stock. Increased demand has led to a nationwide shortage. Additionally, the FDA has not yet approved any weight-loss medications for children under the age of 12.

For these reasons, instead of prescribing the name-brand options in the news, I often prescribe Phentermine (available for about \$25 a month) and Topiramate (often covered by insurance). Individuals with a diabetes diagnosis are more likely to have their

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insurance approve the newest, most effective weight-loss options. I anticipate that, in the next several years, more prescription options will get approved and access will become easier.

WHOLE-PERSON, INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH CRITICAL

Notably, sometimes the right medication for a patient is actually an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medication. That's because ADHD and obesity often occur together. Kids who struggle with impulse control are prone to overeating. Once their ADHD is properly controlled, physical health improves. Looking at a patient's whole health and finding a tailored solution for their needs is what the Pediatric Wellness Program is all about.

SAFETY AND HEALTH GO HAND-IN-HAND

For parents and clinicians alike, two of the most important considerations for using any medication are its safety and side effects. Physicians use multiple safeguards to protect patients. For example, I order an EKG to confirm a patient's heart is healthy before prescribing Phentermine, a stimulant. I also monitor kidney function. Additionally, I watch weight loss to ensure change is happening at an appropriate pace and track body composition to ensure a patient is losing little to no muscle mass. Side effects tend to be few or easily manageable. I worry far more about



leaving obesity untreated than about prescribing a medication.

Most patients who start a weight-loss medication will plan to stay on it long-term. Obesity is a chronic condition, and stopping medication causes the weight to return. That said, as new medications become available, patients may switch to different options. It's unlikely they will stay on the same formulation long-term.

When working with kids and teens, one of my priorities is to make sure they always have the vitamins and minerals their minds and bodies need to grow. For patients taking weight-loss medicines, I strongly recommend a daily multivitamin to fill in

any gaps. I also encourage plenty of water, protein, fruits, and vegetables. When patients eat fewer calories, it's particularly important that meals are nutritious.

WELLNESS HELPS KIDS REACH THEIR POTENTIAL

I love celebrating with and supporting patients as they improve their health. I always explain the lab results that I'm seeing, emphasizing how important changes are happening within. And I remind them that small habit modifications matter. Every time someone chooses to walk instead of sit or to eat fruit over a dessert with added sugar, they are doing something healthy for themselves.

I believe that kids and teens deserve to live in a healthy body. They deserve the chance to be able to move freely, feel good about themselves, and reach their full potential. Medications can be a helpful tool to get them there.

Dr. Valerie Weiss leads the Pediatric Wellness Program at Vancouver Clinic. Using nutrition education, behavioral therapy, physical activity, and optional weight-loss medications prescribed to improve health, this wellness program helps patients prevent or reverse obesity and its complications.



 **VANCOUVER CLINIC**[®]

**Extended-hours
Urgent Care
at Salmon Creek 2**

Walk-ins welcome. Appointments available.
Open **7 a.m. to 11 p.m.** every day.

tvc.org



From Fish Habitat to Home Weatherization: How Clark Public Utilities Embraces Conservation and Environmental Stewardship

by **DAMEON PESANTI**, for *Clark Public Utilities*

More than 60,000 plants flicker in the chilly morning breeze of early March in the Clark Public Utilities Native Plant Nursery. Each of the dozens of varieties represented in the nursery is native to Washington and destined to be planted at one of the many restoration sites where Clark Public Utilities is rebuilding healthy natural habitat for local wildlife.

Once they've established themselves at their new homes, these plants won't need more water than what the skies provide. But until then, Clark Public Utilities employees tend the plants with regular watering to stimulate growth.

"Part of the utility's mission is being a good steward of our customers' resources and our natural environment," said Environmental Sustainability Manager Michael O'Loughlin, who leads the department that recently celebrated planting 1 million

trees over 30 years across Clark County.

"The native plant nursery and all it provides very much aligns with that mission, and now a new opportunity has presented itself that allows us to be even more efficient with our resources and carry that stewardship mission even further," he added.

The Clark Public Utilities' Operations Center in Orchards relies on the city of Vancouver for all its drinking water as well as irrigation needed for the native plant nursery. But now, work is underway to transfer the nursery's primary water supply to that produced by the geothermal well the utility uses for the building's heating and cooling system.

That change will save significant quantities of drinking water every year, and add an additional beneficial use to the utility's geothermal well system.

"Instead of relying entirely on treated municipal water, we'll primarily use our own water from our well that we're already pumping to heat and cool the

buildings," O'Loughlin said. "It's a great conservation opportunity."

The nursery project is just one way departments across Clark Public Utilities are looking for and capitalizing on opportunities to reduce waste, lower consumption and cut back on unnecessary emissions. Doing so means getting more value out of every customer-owner's dollar the utility is trusted with, making the most of the resources the utility has already paid for and reducing impacts on the environment wherever possible.

Another example is in the utility's vehicle fleet. Switching fuel types and embracing hybrids and electric vehicles when possible has decreased fuel and maintenance costs and reduced emissions across the board.

All diesel vehicles run on renewable diesel, which

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is chemically the same as traditional diesel, but is made from fats and oil that otherwise might go to landfills. Not only does renewable diesel run cleaner in the trucks, which reduces maintenance, but the California's Air Resource Board shows renewable diesel reduces carbon intensity on average by 65 percent when compared with petroleum diesel.

The fleet also uses several electric SUVs and vans for light-duty jobs and trips around the service territory.

“Because renewable diesel is easier on the engines and electric vehicles require very little service, we’re saving quite a bit on maintenance costs,” said Clark Public Utilities Fleet Services Manager Jeff Carter. “Like everyone else, we’ve felt the increase in fuel prices, but incorporating the electrics and hybrids have improved our fleet’s overall fuel mileage and reduced those impacts.”

Clark Public Utilities is committed to helping customers achieve similar savings and reductions in their own lives. That’s why the utility offers numerous programs to help them save energy, reduce waste and live comfortably in their own homes, businesses and community organizations.

“The cheapest and greenest kilowatt is the one never used,” said Manager of Energy Services Debbie DePetris. “Energy efficiency is such a powerful tool for utilities that it’s often called the invisible power plant. It’s an extremely cost-effective way to keep energy demand at manageable levels and energy prices and



Clark Public Utilities raises plants native to Washington in its native plant nursery. The utility plans to convert the nursery’s water supply to one that significantly reduces its reliance on the city of Vancouver’s water supply.

emissions from energy production low.”

When customers use less electricity, it’s that much less energy Clark Public Utilities must purchase or produce. When that savings is extended over time, it’s that much less costly infrastructure the utility must

build and maintain around the county.

For residential customers, Clark Public Utilities offers a variety of rebate programs to make energy-saving improvements in the home and electric vehicle ownership more affordable. Utility staff knows it can be hard to find clear and regionally specific information about home solar and energy efficiency improvements. That’s why it has a team of energy counselors who can offer free, unbiased and personalized energy savings advice. The utility also offers self-service energy calculators at MyAccount.ClarkPublicUtilities.com.

For those customers who consume large quantities of power on a regular basis — such as business and industrial customers, local governments and special districts — the utility has a team of key accounts managers who specialize in helping them save energy. The energy efficiency programs specific to those customers can produce tremendous energy savings, and key accounts managers help them navigate the process of identifying and applying for the incentives that can reduce their consumption and lower their bills.

These are just some of the ways Clark Public Utilities is working to increase its efficiency and reduce its environmental impact. **To learn more about the utility’s conservation efforts or ways customers can begin their own, visit clarkpublicutilities.com.**



EqualPay makes your utility payment the same every month!

EqualPay makes monthly budgeting easier by averaging your annual bill into equal monthly payments, and you never pay for more than you use. For even more convenience, add AutoPay and have the same amount deducted monthly from your bank account or card. And with both EqualPay and AutoPay, you can choose the date each month that’s most convenient to make your payment.

It’s easy to sign up. Just go to ClarkPublicUtilities.com

**Clark
Public
Utilities** 

A customer-owned nonprofit utility

CLARK COUNTY ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE 2024

by CELINA MONTGOMERY AND SAMANTHA SPRINGS LECAIN,
for Clark County Public Health Solid Waste Education and Outreach

CLARK COUNTY
GREEN SCHOOLS

Green Awards



The dedicated crew at Jacobs! Photo provided by Jacobs.

Clark County Public Health is celebrating Earth Month by recognizing the winners of the 2024 Green Awards! The annual awards are presented to individuals and organizations in our community that are working to create a greener, more environmentally sustainable future for Clark County. Award winners will receive trophies made entirely from recycled materials by students at Washougal High School.

GREEN APPLE AWARD

The Green Apple Award recognizes an individual involved in school sustainability programs or projects. This year, two recipients were chosen for their commitment to improve green practices at their schools and inspire the next generation of environmental leaders.

One of our Green Apple Award winners is Jennifer Baybado, a third-grade teacher at Sacajawea Elementary School in Vancouver who is a true sustainability champion in her school. She and her green team implement programs to help students reduce waste, properly recycle and compost their food scraps. She is taking the lead in creating an outdoor learning area with raised garden beds, work bin benches and outdoor seating for students to learn and grow. Jennifer truly walks the walk and talks the talk; we are so lucky to have her be a part of our amazing school community!

Our other Green Apple Award recipient is Linda Kubes, a teaching assistant at the Washington State School for the Blind. Over the last few years, she has led the green team, otherwise known as the Green Beings, in completing sustainability projects around campus. Those projects include



Jennifer Baybado with 4th grade student, Connor Wynn, after an outdoor planting event at Sacajawea Elementary School. Photo provided by Sacajawea Elementary School Parent Teacher Association.

organizing litter clean ups, composting using worm bins, starting a school garden and improving recycling. Last year, Linda helped the Green Beings receive the 2023 Green Team of the Year Award. Student Charles Johnson perfectly describes Linda: "Ms. Linda sees the potential in all students who are part of the Green Beings and even though we may not all have perfect sight, she sees that we can all be part of a sustainable future." Thank you for being a true leader, Linda!

GREEN BUSINESSES OF THE YEAR

Recognizing Green Businesses in a world increasingly focused on sustainability is paramount. As we dive into 2024,



Linda Kubes poses with the Washington State School for the Blind's green team, the Green Beings, and their worm bin. Photo provided by student Charles Johnson.

it's our pleasure to unveil the winners of this year's Green Business Awards. These Clark County businesses stand out for their sustainable practices and their engagement with the local community. Amidst a pool of exceptional applicants, these champions have raised the bar, demonstrating that profitability and environmentally responsible operations can go hand in hand.

Green Business of the Year (fewer than 25 employees): KINDRED HOMESTEAD SUPPLY

Kindred Homestead Supply is a beacon of sustainability for the Vancouver community. Offering more than just retail goods, it serves as a gathering point for those dedicated to

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Bulk refillery at Kindred Homestead Supply. Photo provided by Kindred Homestead Supply.

conscious living. With thoughtfully stocked shelves full of eco-friendly home supplies and locally sourced products, Kindred echoes a commitment to reduce our collective environmental impact. They empower patrons with the tools and knowledge to embrace sustainable practices like waste reduction and composting through various community workshops and events. Inclusivity is at the core of their practices, inviting individuals from all walks of life to join the movement towards a greener, more connected world. Kindred Homestead Supply

isn't just a store—it's a testament to the power of collective action in nurturing both the planet and our community.

**Green Business of the Year (over 25 employees):
JACOBS**

In partnership with the city of Vancouver, Jacobs spearheads solutions in wastewater treatment and demonstrates their commitment to environmental stewardship and community engagement. Through a blend of operational excellence and engineering ingenuity, they deliver cost-effective and award-winning utility services, ensuring regulatory compliance while prioritizing employee and community well-being. Jacobs' initiatives span waste reduction, energy conservation and water reuse, underpinned by a company-wide culture of sustainability. Their community outreach efforts, including educational tours and beach cleanups, inspire environmental awareness and inclusivity. Jacobs' dedication to sustainability sets a benchmark for the industry.

**Green Business of the Year (Non-profit/Government):
COLUMBIA SPRINGS**

Columbia Springs, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in Vancouver, offers a remarkable 100-acre urban natural site that serves as an expansive outdoor classroom, drawing in thousands of students and community members annually. Through diverse educational programs, walking trails and events, Columbia Springs fosters a community of lifelong learners and land stewards. From the Salmon in the Classroom initiative to public events like guided hikes and nature fun days,

Columbia Springs engages diverse audiences, emphasizing the importance of sustainability and environmental stewardship. Additionally, their Repair Program exemplifies sustainability by repairing broken household items, thus reducing waste and fostering a sense of community around re-use practices. Through education, outreach and active stewardship, Columbia Springs serves as a vital local resource, empowering individuals to connect with nature and embrace sustainable living practices.



Columbia Springs' site is a beautiful community asset, and their programs are sources of excellent educational and volunteer opportunities. Photo provided by Paul Peloquin.



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4/17 | 6/1
- 24 Apr **Lasagna Composting**
- 01 May **Low Waste Living**
- 08 May **Green Cleaning**



Georgianna Heinz Luken & The Ballad of Theodore Herbert



by *AVERY GARRISON*

An avid writer and poet, Georgianna Heinz Luken is the author of 7 books and still writes poetry and beautiful works of free-verse to this day at Van Mall Retirement. Sitting around the table during a meeting with Van Mall's writing club, Georgianna shared a beautiful free-verse poem she had written that very week, called Clicked on Comfort. The poem embodied the language, sights, and sounds of a fireplace, something seemingly simple sounding, but rather more meaningful. She described her inspiration for the poem as being "the fireplace on YouTube" which in all honesty was quite a surprise to me. However, the more she described it, the more I understood

why she grasped inspiration from this YouTube replication of a fireplace.

She described the fireplace as being one of the many things you could discover on YouTube with the wide range of videos, concepts, and rabbit holes one can go down when on the hunt for something interesting. The fireplace, however, struck something different inside of her. It made her feel as if the fireplace was there, and listening to the crackles, pops, and other sensations coming from the audio, she could almost feel heat glazing upon her skin. It is amazing what the mind can make one feel and what the mind remembers. Perhaps the most significant of all to her that draws her to the YouTube fireplace are the childhood memories she associates with having a fireplace, described as one of "the best things" remembered from her childhood. A place of warm sentiments, sipping hot chocolate by the fireside on a cold winter's day, her mother's cinnamon rolls, and memories of family.

While her mother was in hospice and died shortly after, Georgianna began to let others read her thoughts for the

first time. She had always loved to write, it was her way of trying to understand the world, a concept many try to reach, but are never fully able to. She wrote many things, from stories about her grandmother and other family to the workings and structure of a garden. However, one of the most beautiful books she has published, which she gave

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A Senior Service Project
What is Golden Voices?

Hi there, my name is Avery Garrison and I am a current senior at Seton Catholic in Vancouver, WA. I am very excited to introduce my senior project. For the duration of this project, I will be interviewing senior citizens at Van Mall Retirement and Bon-adventure Salmon Creek, then sharing articles based around their life stories, aspirations, and what they would like to leave behind as a message to younger generations. These residents have lived for a much longer time than what we typically reflect upon and oftentimes it is a struggle of the younger generations and even adults nowadays to ask for advice from the elderly. I'm fearful of these things being forgotten and hope we can all learn to respect these individuals, embrace the beauty in traditional values, and understand their important life experiences. The overall message of this project is to spread greater awareness throughout our community about the importance of listening to the older generation, while growing in retrospect to taking time for others and being sympathetic towards the shared human experiences of others.



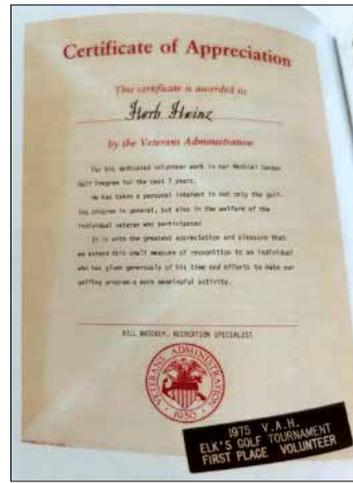


church choir with her, but was able to build a new home, volunteered his time, traveled, and boldly carried on. Georgianna recalls learning to drive, as she was maturing into her own, then having to care for her father as his illness worsened, playing an organ whilst he hummed along. The free-

verse ends in a their career and not even having a car, and had to live in a tent for three months before finding a house to rent out for \$10 a month. Herbert then began to work at the Douglas County Creamery where he would make deliveries along the same route at a pay of \$60 a month. Eventually, he left the creamery, in part because of the birth of their first child, Tom, and worked at Western Battery Separator Co. until 1959. The first official property they owned was The Mulholland House, which they built themselves.

Holidays had meant a lot to her father, as Georgianna recalled in the novel, as he would make whatever effort necessary to gather family together, and even visit her when she was in nursing training and couldn't make it home for Christmas. Summers were also important times, memories of going up to North Umpqua for picnic lunches and of grandchildren eating vanilla ice cream and custard on the Fourth of July. Her father loved his Mercedes and refused to give it up, even after his heart attack, but persisted in driving it with "a crushed roof" through a "freak storm" in the winter. During his last days, Theodore and his wife became members of the "Audubon Society," found interest in the hobby of Rock Hounding, and volunteered at a golf shack.

One of the greatest struggles that Georgianna has encountered in this later chapter of her life has been the transition from being someone prone to always care and help others with an independent spirit, to being someone who has to be entirely reliant on others. This shift began primarily when Georgianna was diagnosed with a brain tumor and had to go through surgery, as well as a recovery process. Although she has mostly recovered now, the diagnosis took a major strain on her life and forever changed her outlook on things. She now writes about her experiences at Van Mall Retirement, not the same as being in one's own home, but the next best thing, with a place of support, and community, where she can continue writing and interpreting concepts and ideologies surrounding the journey of life.



nearly heartbreaking way, when "the world quaked" and Theodore was gasping for air and the doctors said there was only a matter of time left for him to live. Georgianna and her mother gave a loving goodbye, and he quietly left the next night.

Theodore Herbert dearly loved sports in high school, competing in basketball, football, and track, Georgianna's mom even came to point out that "ladies came to the basketball games just to see his legs." The Great Depression put a stop to his dreams of becoming

me a copy of, is a book dedicated to the life of her father, called "The Ballad of Theodore Herbert." Her purpose for writing the book, as she put it, was that she did not want him, "this man who lived life as best as he knew how to be lost in time." So out of a way to pay homage to him before she also becomes "only a memory," she dedicated a handwritten work to his livelihood.

At the start of the book is a series of poetry, with expressions in German, regarding the beginning of her father's life, the ninth child to his parents, being baptized. Then she goes on to write about his childhood and teenage years, how he eventually left Nebraska and his affiliations with German, to move to Oregon. The poem goes on as if foreshadowing the rest of the memoir, touching on Georgianna's experience growing up with Theodore Herbert. Their memories in the church choir together, her confirmation, picnics upriver, the passing seasons, and even up to the time when he grew older.

As years carried on, Theodore was diagnosed with a terrible illness, and eventually lost his ability to sing in the

an athletic coach, but it certainly didn't put a stop to his ability to sing or his joining the Civilian Conservation Corps. He often won music contests in Clay County during high school, a tenor, whose voice was "clear and powerful." An outspoken man, Herbert was firm in his beliefs, for example, never understanding "why anyone would refuse the offer of food," especially because of the hospitality and commonality he associated with it.

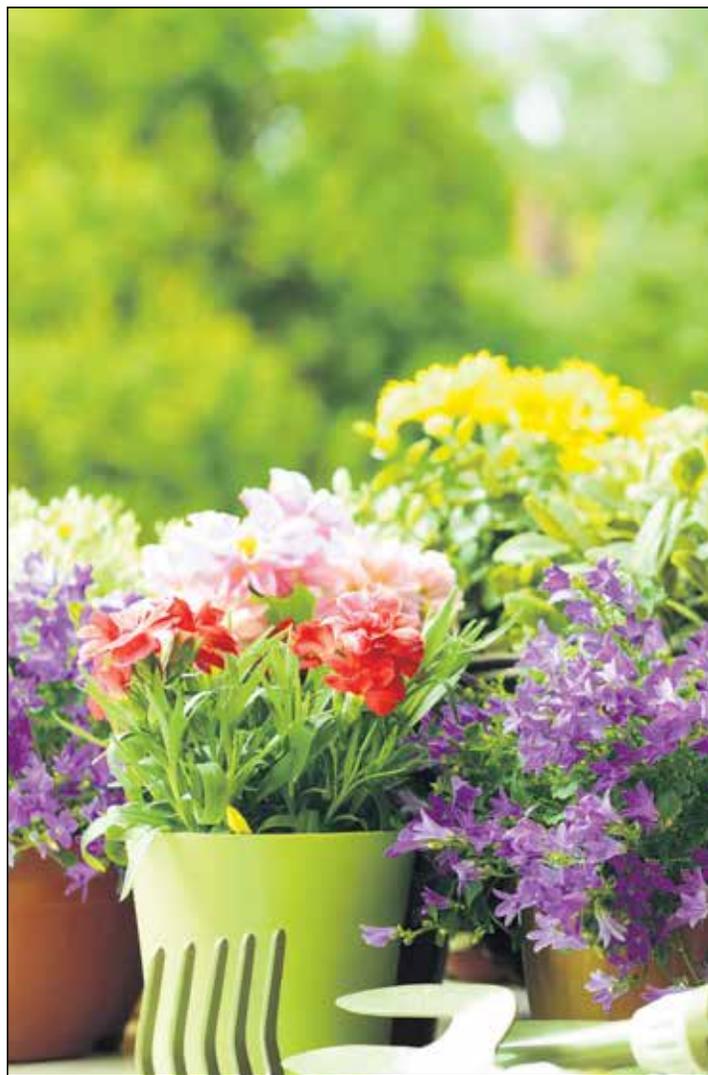
Theodore had met Georgianna's mother at a social evening when his youth group from a Methodist Church was out for the evening. They were married in 1936, despite uncertainty with



10 THINGS I WISH I'D KNOWN WHEN I FIRST STARTED GARDENING

by WSU Extension Clark County
Master Gardener EMILY SHUE

When I first moved into my Vancouver home nearly four years ago, little did I know that I would be bitten by the gardening bug. It was the first time in my adult life that I had access to a small bit of my own land. The prior owners had done a beautiful job with landscaping and had several empty raised beds. The idea of maintaining these gardens was intimidating given my lack of experience, but through the seasons (and trial and error), I found that a few basic rules apply. These are simple things that work. Here at 10 tips I wish I'd known when I first started gardening.



1. Consider what to plant. Have you ever heard of the term “right plant, right place” coined by author/gardener Beth Chatto? Never a truer gardening sentiment has been uttered, but it is all too common for gardeners (myself included) to pick a gorgeous plant from a nursery or catalog without understanding its growing needs. Inevitably, that plant is placed in a suboptimal location and it either dies or fails to thrive. So, a little planning is needed. Understand your plant’s needs (how much sun it needs or can tolerate, its watering requirements, where it comes from, whether it has a dormancy period, what size it will grow to, and its temperature hardiness). Give your plant a fighting chance by understanding its needs and finding a location in your yard that can sustain it.

2. Soil preparation. Good soil is the most important part of your garden and by far the best investment you can make, especially if you have raised beds. The best soil additive is organic matter such as garden compost and manure. If you can enrich your soil with organic matter here and there throughout the season and definitely once per year, then your soil quality and structure will improve. Composting is easier than you think – there are multiple methods for composting and they’re a good place to put kitchen scraps and lawn clippings until they break down and are ready to be put back into your soil. Consider having a soil test done to determine what nutrients your soil may lack.

3. Spacing. Here’s another often-quoted expression: “Sleep, Creep, Leap.” Meaning, the first year your plants will sleep (stay small); the next year they will creep (grow a little); and the third year they will leap (expand). Read the plant’s label and allow it the room it needs to expand when it leaps on its third year after planting. Additionally, have patience while your garden matures. You don’t want to crowd your plants, as that forces them to compete for water, nutrients and space and generally makes them unhealthy. This tip mainly applies to perennials. It can be different for raised beds and vegetable gardens where spacing can be more compact as the soil is more fertile and you can easily hand-tend each plant.

4. Mulch. It is essential in controlling weeds by removing their access to sunlight. Mulching also helps keep moisture in the ground by slowing down evaporation, so you don’t have to water as much. It also reduces soil compaction. Mulch takes on many forms: wood chips (most common), leaves, straw, compost, pine needles, lawn clippings, and shells.

5. Create a space that reflects your style. It’s important to establish your style rather than try to copy someone else’s. Which plants make you happy? Which ones thrive in your garden? Don’t hesitate to make changes, move plants, or start anew. I learned that I like a garden that looks like

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barely contained chaos. That said, I needed symmetry in that chaos and opted for three perennials that I repeat throughout in groupings (Catmint, a yellow Yarrow, and Shasta Daisy). Just plant what you love, and your garden will be beautiful.

6. Make it easy on yourself. If you don't have loads of time to spend in your garden, here are a few tips with convenience in mind. Mulching: I realize I am repeating myself here, but if you apply a layer of mulch, it will suppress weeds, retain moisture, and help regulate the soil temperature, which will reduce the need for frequent irrigation and may reduce your weeding by 75%. Drip irrigation: If you opt for a drip irrigation system, you can ensure efficient and focused watering which will save time compared to manual watering. Plant selection: Consider native, low maintenance, and disease resistant plants that thrive in your climate, reducing the need for excessive care.

7. Take notes/keep a journal. No matter how much you think you'll remember which bulbs you planted in what location, what seed variety was successful the year before, and which date you applied fertilizer, if you're like me, you will invariably forget. Try keeping a journal that keeps track of where, when, and what you grew, including your successes and failures.

8. Start small. When I first started gardening, I scoured the internet for advice on creating the perfect grids in my raised beds to maximize space, and I envisioned a perfect, bountiful harvest full of dozens of vegetable varieties. I got caught up in trying to understand seed starting, companion plants and succession planting. It became overwhelming. My advice is to start small, and your knowledge and expertise will grow from season to season.

9. Pruning and deadheading. Stay proactive about pruning which keeps plants healthy and controls their growth, but most importantly it prevents the need for a big cleanup session later. Deadheading is the removal of dead or fading flower buds from plants by pinching or cutting the stem below the dead flower and just above the first set of full leaves. Deadheading encourages production of new buds. Consider both to be regular maintenance and part of your daily or weekly chores.

10. Jump right in. Go for it and see what works for you and your garden. You'll find over the course of a few seasons what you enjoy growing, what grows best in your garden, what you most like eating from your garden, and what you enjoy from a visual perspective.



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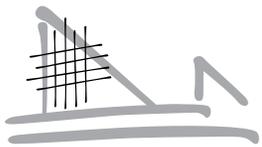
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SPRING IS Asparagus Season!

by KRISTIN DORSETT, for *The Columbian*

Not everyone is a fan of asparagus. I remember my dad calling it, “spare guts.” He was not a fan. I wasn’t either until well into my adult years when I finally tasted fresh spring asparagus.

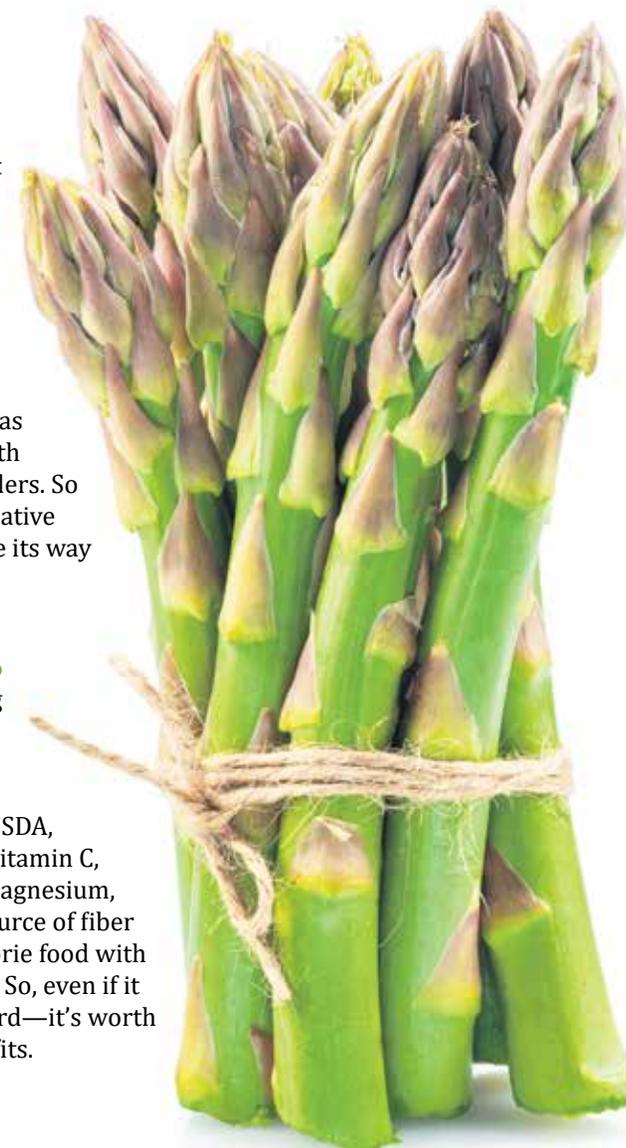
Spring is the best time for fresh picked asparagus. It has thin crisp stalks you can easily bite into or cut with a fork, rather than the thicker stalks of off-season asparagus that are stringy and not enjoyable.

History...

So who ever thought of eating this weird looking plant? It doesn’t look appetizing. I didn’t dig too deep into the research but found out that asparagus is a distant relative of the onion and garlic. Around 2,000 years ago it was discovered and cultivated for medicinal purposes in many regions of the world. Asparagus was eventually brought to North America by European settlers. So even though this is not a native perennial, I’m glad it made its way here for us to enjoy.

Nutrition...

There’s a lot more going on with asparagus than I knew (other than making some people’s pee smell weird.) According to the USDA, asparagus contains iron, vitamin C, vitamin B-6, potassium, magnesium, and calcium. It is also a source of fiber and protein. It’s a low calorie food with many nutritional benefits. So, even if it makes your pee smell weird—it’s worth it for the nutritional benefits.



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Recipes...

I don't have any. I'm not much of a cook. But I know from experience asparagus is easy to prepare (even for me!) and goes well as a side for any meal. It does well in a stir fry or raw in a salad or steamed. I've learned the texture is better if you don't steam or stir fry too long. Just a few minutes to release the flavor. Too long then it's soggy. I like my asparagus with squeezed fresh lemon and dill. But there are so many options. I love Burgerville's deep fried asparagus with garlic aioli, but that might detract from some of the nutritional benefits. Still tasty though!

How to grow it...

I don't know. I'm not a gardener. Asparagus just sort of appears in stores and restaurants. If you're interested in growing your own batch of spring asparagus this is what I found out: Asparagus is a perennial! I didn't know that until now. You can start growing your own from seed or one-year-old roots, called crowns. According to The Farmer's Almanac, asparagus beds that have been established can produce for up to even 30 years! The hard part here is patience. Apparently, it takes a couple seasons to get your asparagus properly established before harvesting. But in the meantime, this plant makes a nice ornamental feature for your garden.



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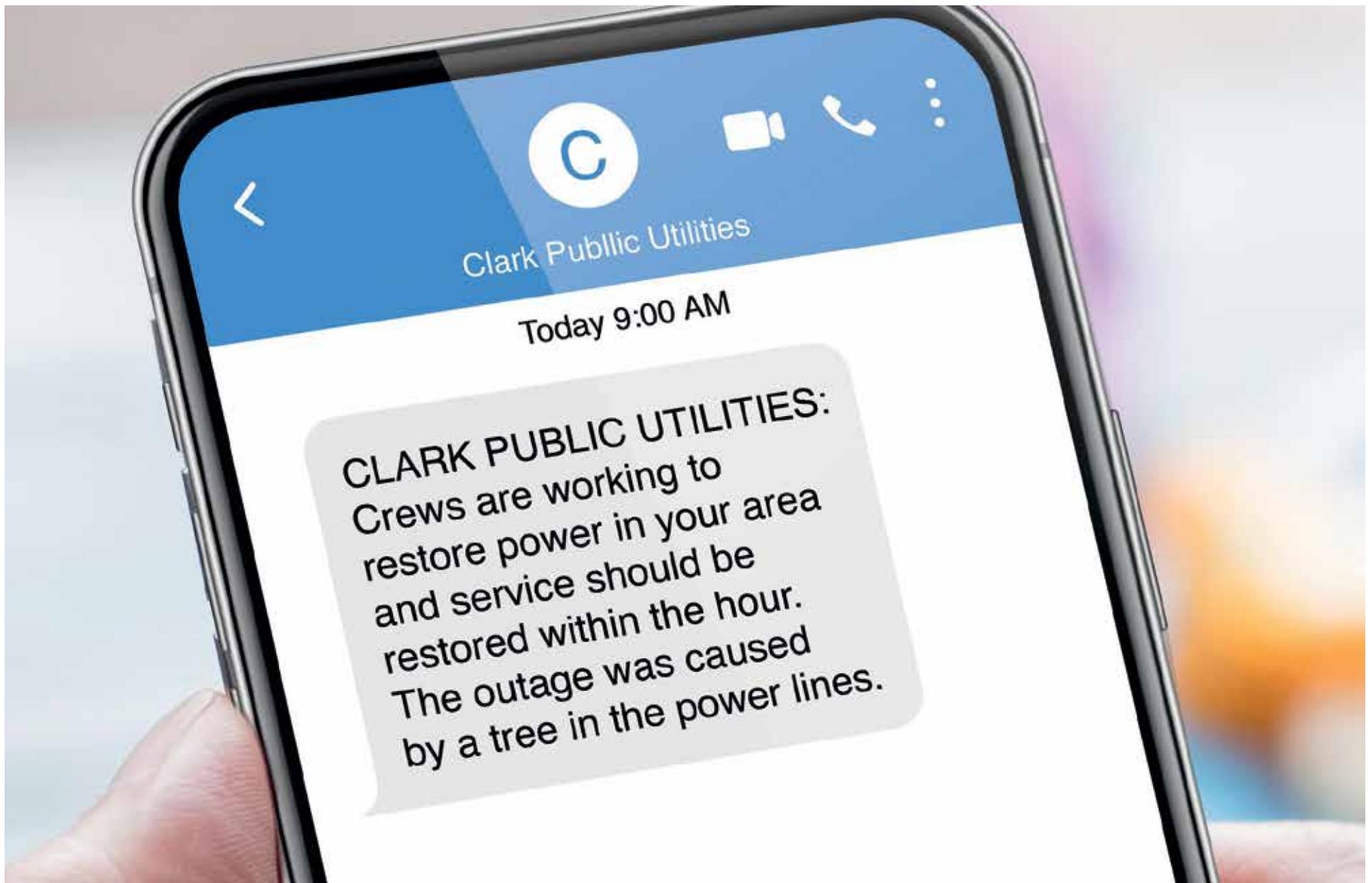
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