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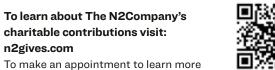
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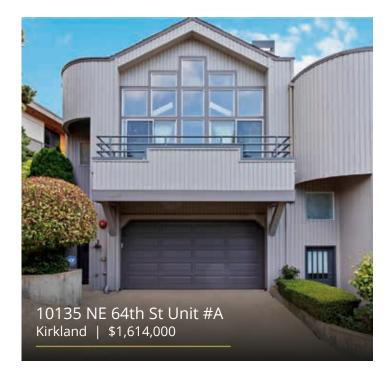
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It takes an awesome team to bring *Greet West* Bellevue to life each month, and I'm so thankful for everyone who makes it happen! From our writers and editors to our photographers, social media

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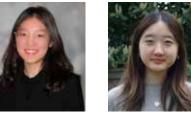
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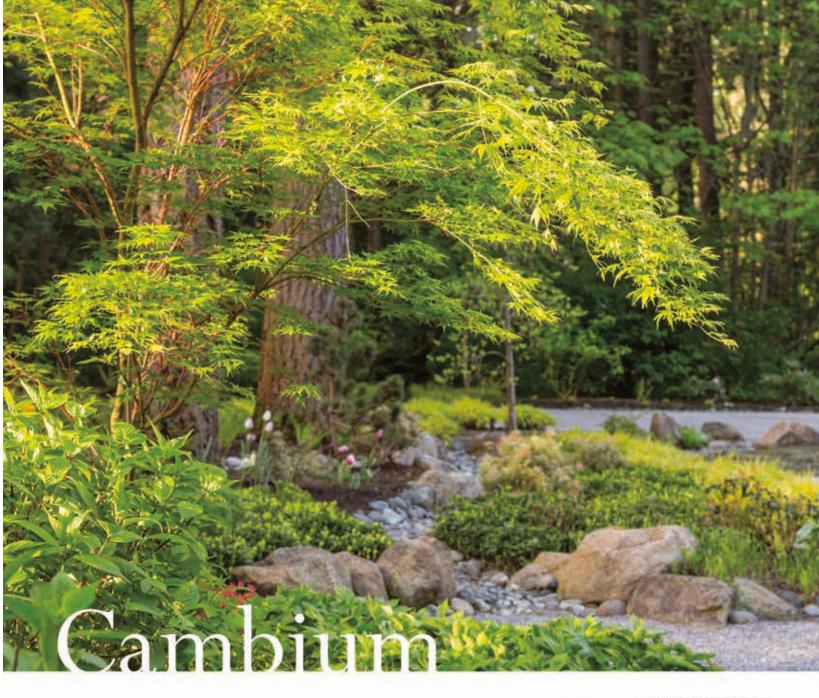




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Greetings!



ne of the things that makes our community so special is the spirit of generosity and involvement that shines through in so many ways. From organizations like the Bellevue Police Foundation, which works tirelessly to ensure safety and connection, to the Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club, where youth learn not just sailing but also teamwork and perseverance, we are reminded daily of the importance of giving back. Private residents have also shown extraordinary commitment by opening their homes to host fundraisers, dinners, and gatherings that bring neighbors together and strengthen our community.

This issue also highlights some of the remarkable young people in our community. You'll meet Parker Kono, who penned his first book by the age of 8—a feat that speaks to both creativity and determination. You'll also be introduced to Hasini and Isabel, budding entrepreneurs whose drive and imagination promise an exciting future. Their stories reflect the energy and vision of a new generation that's ready to lead.

Speaking of inspiring youth, we're thrilled to welcome Mahima, our newest teen writer. Her debut article, Sisters Remember Bellevue, Then and Now, blends memories, history, and family in a way that captures the very essence of our evolving community. We encourage you to read it and join us in celebrating the arrival of her fresh voice.

Finally, none of this would be possible without the continued support of our sponsors. Their generosity ensures we can keep sharing stories that matter stories that celebrate the people and organizations who make Bellevue such a wonderful place to live.

Your Publisher,

Lindsay Rucker

PS. Thank you to Phil Bailey with Q4 Media for taking this month's cover photo.

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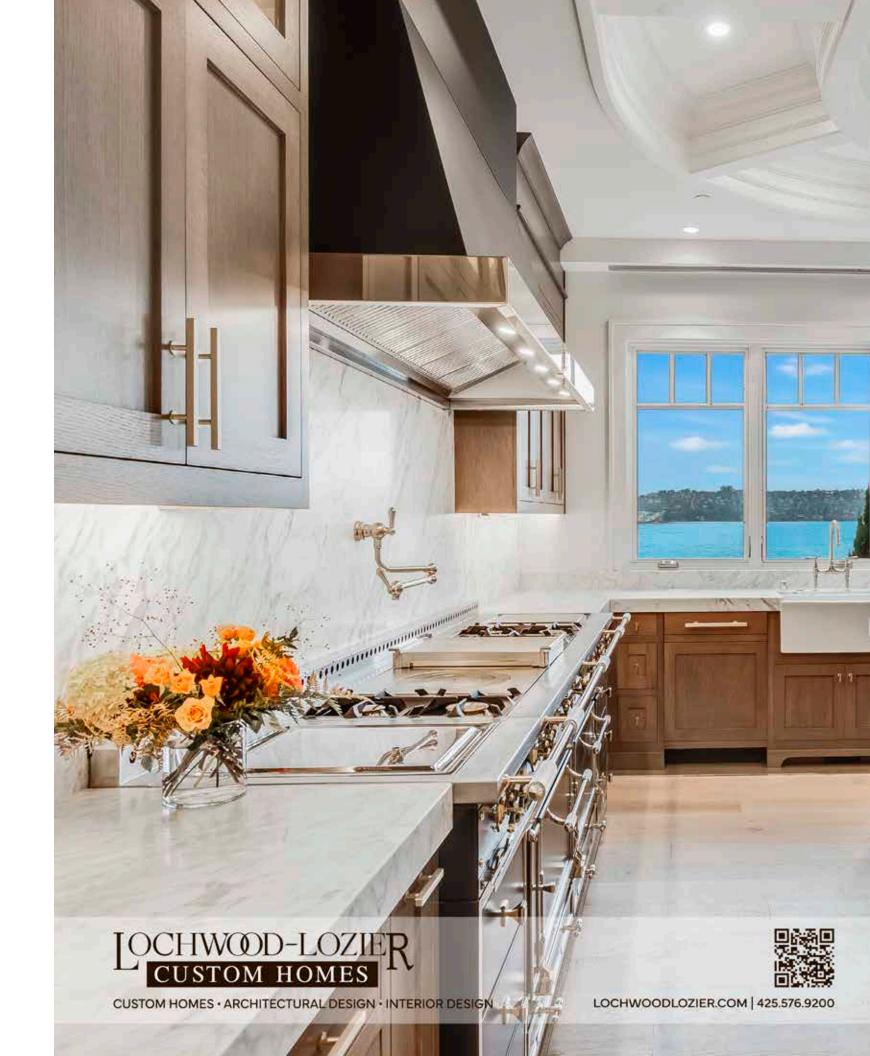
WRITTEN BY MAHIMA KOLAR

My name is Mahima Kolar, and I am a rising 8th grader at Lakeside School in Shoreline. I have always nurtured a love for storytelling, from fiction to poetry to journalism, and I have self-published two poetry anthologies to that end. I also wrote for my school newspaper for three years, and spent two of those years as a section editor. My passion for writing is just one of the many reasons why I am so excited about the opportunity to write for *Greet* West Bellevue. When I moved to Bellevue five years ago, one of the things I loved most about this area was the wonderful people in it. I am thrilled to have an opportunity to share their incredible stories with the readers of this magazine.



Outside of writing, I am a practitioner of a traditional Indian artform called Madhubani, and my work has been displayed in galleries across the Seattle area since the age of 6. As an avid public speaker, I have competed in debate tournaments and Model United Nations competitions since the age of 11, and I delivered a TEDx talk on the power of active curiosity in 2024. I am also an ardent music lover – I have been playing piano for 8 years, and recently, I have been experimenting with songwriting as a means of uniting my interests in music and poetry. I can't wait to tap into my love for my community and begin my journey as a writer for this magazine!







Bellevue Symphony Presents Rising Young Artists

SUBMITTED BY SARA WAGNER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BELLEVUE SYMPHONY



Maximilian James, the Grand Prize Winner of the 2025 Performance Arts Festival of Eastside Concerto Competition.

ellevue Symphony is set to enchant audiences this autumn with its much-anticipated Fall Concert, scheduled for Saturday, October 25th at 7:30 p.m., at the Meydenbauer Theater in Bellevue. The evening promises a masterful program peppered with works by Mussorgsky, Lalo, Chopin, and Brahms—highlighted by performances from two standout Grand Prize winners of local BelSym competitions.

The concert opens with the dramatic intensity of Mussorgsky's Night on Bald Mountain, followed by a moving rendition of the first movement of Lalo's Symphonie Espagnole—performed by Maximilian James, the Grand Prize Winner of the 2025 Performance Arts Festival of Eastside Concerto Competition. At only 15 years old, James hails from Redmond and began studying violin at age four under Sharon Wherland; he currently studies with Dr. Pasha Sabouri.



Joyce Ye, the Grand Prize Winner of the 2025 Chopin Northwest Competition.

The program further features the first movement of Chopin's Concerto No. 1 in E minor, performed by Joyce Ye, the Grand Prize Winner of the 2025 Chopin Northwest Competition. A seventh-grade student, Ye has been trained by Dr. Yelena Balabanova since 2016 and boasts a growing list of accolades from international and regional competitions—among them the Charleston International Contemporary Music Competition and the Willard Schultz First Place Prize. Please see Bellevuesymphony.org for further information on both of the featured artists.

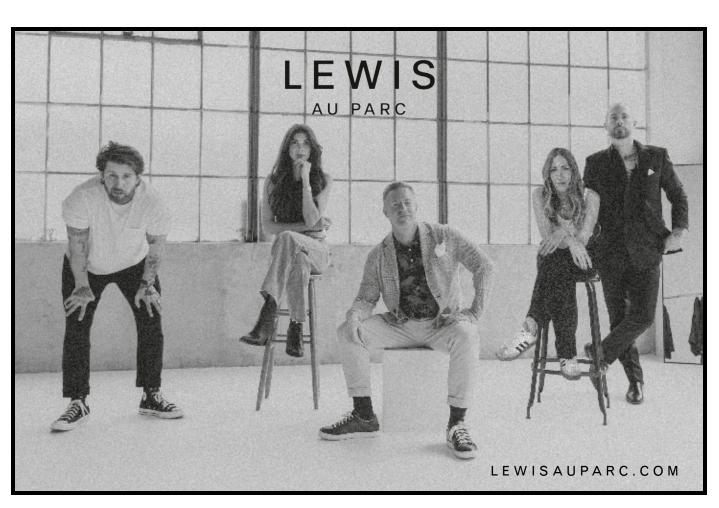
During intermission, enjoy BelSym's second ever Small Business Symposium, taking place in the Meydenbauer Theater lobby. Please say hello to the eight featured local businesses/ nonprofits and get to know your community! After intermission, the symphony turns to the emotional depth and structure of Brahms's Symphony No. 4, journeying through its four

movements—Allegro non troppo, Andante moderato, Allegro giocoso, and Allegro energico e passionato.

The Symphony, as with all the works featured at the concert, will be led by Maestro Brian Davenport, who studied music under the famous Nadia Boulange and has conducted under the tutelage of Igor Markevitch. Instrumental in starting the Federal Way Symphony many years ago, Maestro Davenport was one of the founders of Bellevue Symphony in 2019. The Pacific Northwest is honored to consider itself home to a conductor who has led orchestras in China, Scandinavia, Germany, and Ukraine. Known for his keen penetration of the repertory, Maestro Davenport brings his nuanced understanding of history and music to every Bellevue Symphony performance.

Adding to the evening's richness, Bellevue Symphony will host a Pre-Show Concert at 6:30 p.m. featuring six Grand Prix winners from the 3rd Annual International German Music Piano Competition. This addition provides a prelude of youthful virtuosity that complements the main program and underscores the Symphony's commitment to nurturing emerging performers. With a lineup that blends brilliance, tradition, and virtuosos, the Bellevue Symphony Fall 2025 concert promises to be both a celebration of local musical talent and a stirring evening of classical music. Tickets and patron support options—including donor perks—will be available via the Bellevue Symphony's website, bellevuesymphony.org.







JOSH CALLON AND ROTO-ROOTER PLUMBING & WATER CLEANUP



MEET JOSH CALLON, the dedicated General Manager behind Roto-Rooter Plumbing & Water Cleanup in Seattle. With a career spanning diverse industries and over two decades of leadership experience, Josh brings passion and community-centered service to one of the most trusted names in plumbing and water cleanup.

ABOUT JOSH

After college, Josh embarked on a professional journey that began at Enterprise Rent-A-Car, where he worked for more than 10 years. He then spent nearly six years as a District Manager, overseeing multiple storage facilities. His path led him next to Schwan's, a well-known frozen food delivery company. For the past five years, he's served as General Manager for Roto-Rooter in the Seattle market — a role that allows him to combine operational leadership with meaningful community engagement.

ABOUT THE BUSINESS

For 90 years, Roto-Rooter has supported communities with expert solutions for plumbing and water issues. With a commitment to both residential and commercial customers, the company handles everything from water-damaged buildings and clogged toilets to sewer line replacements, hydro jetting, and



excavation work. Josh is proud to lead a team that doesn't just solve technical problems — they help people in their homes and businesses, often in urgent, stressful situations.

SERVICES OFFERED

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- Emergency and general plumbing and drain services
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With a local workforce of well over 100 employees, Roto-Rooter Seattle is uniquely positioned to respond quickly, even to customers located an hour or two away.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Community involvement is a cornerstone of the Roto-Rooter mission. The Seattle team hosts a yearly food drive contest, gathering thousands of items for donation to local food shelters. They proudly sponsor local schools and sports teams,

advertise in neighborhood publications, and frequently appear on local morning news programs. From youth camps to partnerships with organizations like 2nd Chance Paws, Josh and his team are deeply invested in the community they serve.

FACING CHALLENGES AND GROWING STRONGER

Like many businesses, Roto-Rooter faced significant operational challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. With more people staying home, demand for plumbing and sewer services spiked. Josh responded by hiring additional staff to meet this increased demand — a pivotal moment that tested and ultimately strengthened the team's capabilities.

LOOKING AHEAD

Josh's vision for Roto-Rooter is simple and powerful: To continue serving the community for decades to come; when there is a plumbing or water emergency, we've got you covered! The company's ongoing presence and consistent support of Seattle/Tacoma/Olympia/Everett area homes and businesses remains a driving force.

ADVICE FOR RESIDENTS

"If you have water where it shouldn't be," Josh says, "give us a call or use our app to book an appointment. There's no charge for that, and we'll do our best to assess how we can help."

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"Jesse helped me in a desperate time, and what a lovely gentleman! He was kind, helpful, and professional. The issue was resolved quickly and efficiently, and Jesse's friendly attitude made it all the better. Thank you!"

—RACHEL C.

Greet West Bellevue 17

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- Amy K., Bellevue, accepted to Columbia Engineering

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Sisters Remember Bellevue, THEN AND NOW

In a neighborhood transformed by time, where childhood games once echoed through gravel streets, these two sisters still call the same house "home." Their memories offer a rare glimpse into the Bellevue that once was, and the spirit that still lingers today.

WRITTEN BY MAHIMA KOLAR



ver the decades, uninhabited forests have given way to the skyscrapers of downtown Bellevue, old farms have been felled for QFC's, and Bellevue Way has doubled its former modest two-lane size. "And one of the houses down 106th Avenue SE used to just be wetlands," says lifelong Enatai resident, Anita Mousseau. "We were not supposed to be over there. They were building a home, and we were all running across the two-byfours, and I fell. They couldn't get me out, so they had to call my dad," she laughs. "He was mad...but it was just a dumb mistake by a kid. I think I was right around 10 years old."

Anita's family moved to Seattle from Rapid City, South Dakota 74 years ago and came to Bellevue four years later. The family consisted of the distinguished Boeing engineer, Louis



Mousseau, his wife, Mary Ann, and their seven children – five girls and two boys. "It was like having a sorority... and we'd call the boys the 'bookends' because the oldest is a boy and the youngest is a boy," jokes Anita and her sister, Michelle Holms. "Our siblings were our friends."

Over time, Mary Ann and Louis passed away, and the rest of the family moved to other areas around the Puget Sound. However, Anita, Michelle, and their older

sister, Peggy Mousseau, still live in the family home on 106th Avenue in Enatai. Why? "It's home," says Michelle, simply. Anita agrees. "Oh yeah, it's home." It's easy to see why the sisters chose to stay. Their house has a warm, inviting air, full of rugs and comfy couches. A photograph of their late mother smiles warmly at me from a small table near the entrance of the living room, and a black-and-white picture of their father from his college days is tucked into the bottom corner of the frame. A regal brown upright piano stands across from the photographs, with the lid closed over the ivory keys. "This piano is a hundred years old," says Anita. "It was our mom's...her father gave it to her when she was 10 years old."

The Enatai community is important to the Mousseaus, who value their close connections with their neighbors. Both Anita and Michelle have warm recollections of their childhood in the community – from learning to ride their bikes on 106th Avenue SE (which used to be made of gravel) to playing in Killarney Glen Park with their friends and siblings. "There were 150 kids in a three or four block area...and we'd play from early morning until it got dark," Anita recalls fondly.

However, the truest testament to the strength of their neighborly bonds came in a time of hardship for the Mousseaus. "Back in 1966, some neighborhood boys thought it would be funny to play a trick at night," recounts Anita. "They lit sparklers and put them in a plastic garbage can...which tipped over and set our front door on fire." According to the sisters, Mary Ann had been asleep when she thought she smelled smoke, and when she got up to investigate, she noticed the flames. "She had my older brother wake all of us girls up," adds Michelle, gravely. "He whispered in my ears and said 'Michelle, there's a fire. I want you to go downstairs to the basement and out the door, and I'll meet you out front." This story,



however, did not end in tragedy. During that time, according to Michelle, "The community came together and gave us support." Within a few days, the police had tracked down the culprits, and the Mousseaus rebuilt their front door.

Over the decades, as Bellevue has expanded into a big city, longtime residents began to move away. "They don't like it here anymore, because of the way it's changed," explains

Anita. But the sisters take a different view; even if it is hard to recognize the town they grew up in at times, they have learned to accept Bellevue's transformation as progress.

One thing that hasn't changed, however, is the community's caring spirit, in part thanks to the Mousseaus. For example, a few years back, Michelle and Anita struck up a friendship with their disabled neighbor, driving her wherever she needed to go and assisting her in tasks such as buying groceries. Other neighbors pitched in too, taking out her trash and delivering her newspaper. "We used to check on her every day. She was all on her own, but Anita and I were her friends, and two other people as well," says Michelle. "The four of us were with her at the end, and she was unconscious at that point. But I knew that she could hear me, and I said to her, 'We just want you to know, you're not by yourself, your friends are here...and when you're ready to go, it's okay." A beat of silence passed. "Everybody takes care of everybody here," she concludes.



TIME TAMED



HOW TWO ENTREPRENEURS ARE GIVING BACK THE GIFT OF TIME!

fter another late night at the firm, Jenny woke to the sound of feet running down the hall and an alarm clock that always seemed to go off too early. She's a rising force in the finance industry, just named partner after fifteen years of outworking and outperforming her peers. But as her kids burst through the door and pile onto the bed, work thoughts melt away for a brief moment. Torn between supporting the firm's growth as well as her family's, she's constantly on the edge of burnout. The house needs attention and the new housekeeper no-showed, again. Every loose thread was hers to pull, draining her focus, energy, and peace. She wasn't looking for luxury; she was looking for relief.

This is an all-too-common reality for many high-performing professionals, with real solutions hard to find. That was until two entrepreneurs stepped in to give people like Jenny their most valuable asset back; time.

JUMPING INTO THE UNKNOWN

When Zoe and Dustin left the security of their jobs in the marine construction industry, they didn't have a concrete plan, just a gut feeling pulling them toward something that really mattered. They were passionate about creating a business that valued service and relationships over profit. That instinct, bold and unshakable, became the foundation of Elite Management

Concierge (EMC). The decision to leave wasn't about climbing a ladder, it was about alignment. After years in an industry they loved, but with shifting priorities, they realized their success came not just from hard work but from how deeply they cared for clients. When they stepped out on their own, they carried that belief with them: Real success comes from service with genuine intention.

The idea for EMC wasn't deliberate, it was sparked during a moment of compassion. Even after leaving their old roles, Zoe and Dustin continued to field panicked calls from past clients who trusted them, but lacked ongoing support. The relationships they built during their previous employment were ones that went beyond a contract, so despite having moved on, they did what they always do - stepped up to help however they could. After one particularly emotional call, Dustin joked, "Why don't we just do this for a living?" What started as a way to ease tension in a difficult situation soon turned into something real. They began building a company that gave people back their time, put service first, and solved problems others wouldn't touch. That moment lit the fire behind EMC.

A DYNAMIC DUO

From the start, Zoe and Dustin knew their partnership was special as both co-founders and spouses. Their personalities, while different, harmonize like an orchestra. Zoe brings the heart, building genuine relationships and lifting clients' mental loads. She ensures every detail is handled so clients feel confident that things are under control. Dustin pushes momentum forward as the engine, relentlessly solving problems and untangling challenges others avoid. He finds solutions where others see roadblocks, often uncovering needs clients didn't even know they had. Together, they've created a business where heart meets hustle, and clients feel the difference.

"We always joke about how we need one of us in our own lives to help!" Dustin laughs. That lightheartedness underscores what makes EMC unique. The work is serious, but they never lose the human touch. They show up for clients the same way they'd want someone to show up for them and their family. It's clear EMC goes far beyond a typical personal assistant or project management service. Zoe and Dustin have redefined what it means to support high-end homeowners, acting as a 24/7 single point of contact for busy professionals who value their time and peace of mind.

Their clients, like the Jenny's of the world, are industry leaders with packed schedules and priceless time. When life throws a curveball or endless to-do lists take over, EMC is there. They anticipate needs, prevent issues before they snowball, and quietly handle the details others overlook. For Zoe, the job satisfaction is visible: "You can physically see the weight of stress come off our clients. They are able to finally spend quality time with their loved ones, pick up old hobbies, and actually catch a few hours of extra, necessary rest!" That genuine care makes it easy for clients to pass along unwanted tasks, knowing EMC's standards remain consistently high.

RAISING THE BAR

Zoe and Dustin say they're not in the business of impressing people - they're in the business of delivering results. No ego, no shortcuts, just thoughtful, relentless care. Their belief is simple: The world doesn't need more services; it needs more service. After speaking with the pair, it's easy to see why they're setting a new standard for concierge support. It's not just about managing tasks, it's about elevating lifestyles, protecting time, and building trust that lasts.

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FRACTIONAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT





Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club Youth Sailing Celebrates its 30 Year Anniversary!

Thirty years ago, this summer, a small group of sailor members of Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club had a vision...









We thought we could provide a community service by training young kids ages 8 to 18 to sail and learn about boating. In the fall of 1995, the Meydenbauer Bay Yacht Club Board of Directors approved the formation of our organization and our vision was on its way. Members donated the first six 8 foot prams and dinghy for our one instructor for the start of our program during the summer of 1996. Those who donated named each boat with names like "Amigos", "Rabbit", "Huffelpuff", and "Blew By You". On April 14th, 1997, we received 501 (C) (3) IRS status, which allows for all our donations to be tax write-offs.

Over the last thirty years, a number of our members have volunteered









to manage our program, including handling our registration system, hiring staff, purchasing boats, and maintaining our equipment. Each year we gradually added sailboats and tenders for the instructors until we reached our present inventory of 37 sailboats and 6 tenders. We operate off our floating dock on beautiful Meydenbauer Bay.

We have the capacity to train up to 33 kids per week for 11 weeks from June through August, or a maximum of 363 kids per summer. During the last four seasons, we have registered over 1,800 students in all our programs. With our variety of boats, we are able to accommodate beginner, intermediate, and advance sailors with separate instructors for each group. We maintain a very low instructor/student ratio, especially for beginners.

We have built the program based on kids starting at age 8 in our Optis, our 8 foot prams. In order to keep the kids' interest, we have provided several kinds of boats for the older kids to move up to as they become more proficient with their sailing skills. We have 14-foot FJ's and 420's, both for two sailors. We also have Lasers (ILCA's), 13-foot single handed boats that are like the sports cars of sailing.

like Bellingham, Vancouver, Canada, Bainbridge, Tacoma, and the Columbia Gorge. We built several trailers to hold multiple sailboats and tenders.

Our staffing comes from local high schools and colleges. We have three levels of instructors—volunteer, junior, and senior. Volunteers are under age 16 and our paid instructors are over 16. In addition, we have a Sailing Director/Race Coach and an Assistant Director. Two of our Club members, Gary Wilson and Tim Ruhl, act as volunteer Co-Chairs of our program. We provide summer jobs for an average of 15 instructors per summer.

As part of our vision for sail training, we felt we could also be training future instructors to help with the new kids signing up. It took a few years as the original sailors aged, but now many of our current instructors started with us at age 8 and continue teaching on into college. One recent year, 100% of our instructors and directors had started as students with us. Our MBYC Youth Sailing classes are based on learning to sail, having fun, meeting new friends, and learning about safety on the water and in the boats.

Our two remaining founding members, Gary Wilson and Ed Sweo, were recently recognized by the Club by presenting them with Lifetime Achievement Awards. We thank them for all their hard work and commitment!

racers will be on the Bay through October from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

In 2022, we introduced our new registration system which has made our program management much easier and more efficient. We use Camp & Class Manager hosted by ACTIVE options are all automated. Because the Race Team travels to other clubs and venues, we found we needed

In 2020, we started our Race Team

Developmental classes for those learning

to race and our Race Team, who compete

during the summer and fall. Many of our

in numerous regattas in the Northwest

sailors have gone on to join sailing race

teams in college. We run our classes for

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summer, and 2 months in the fall. Our

trailers to transport the boats to places

Program which is made up of our

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Bellevue Police Foundation's Annual Golf Tournament Raises \$82,230!

PHOTOS BY DAN DELONG

he lush fairways of Glendale Country Club were filled with camaraderie and community spirit as the Bellevue Police Foundation hosted its annual golf tournament. The event drew 156 golfers and raised an impressive \$82,230 to support vital Bellevue Police Department initiatives. The day began with perfect late-summer weather and a warm welcome from community partners, volunteers, and officers. Police greeted the golfers with some of their most interesting crime fighting equipment on display – including a bomb sniffing robot dog! Glendale Country Club provided the perfect backdrop, offering impeccable greens and a welcoming atmosphere. Participants were well-fueled thanks to a hearty hot lunch from Chick-fil-A, paired with refreshing specialty drinks from Don't Yell at Me Boba Tea, a local favorite that was met with happy smiles.

The tournament's success was fueled by the generosity of sponsors, especially Umpqua Bank, the event's title sponsor. Brandon Fix, Retail Regional Manager for Umpqua Bank, spoke to the company's commitment, saying, "We are very proud to support this great tournament. Investing in public safety is investing in the strength of our community." Tommy Wang, Vice President Business Banking added, "We're grateful for the chance to join so many others in supporting the Bellevue Police Foundation. It's inspiring to see our community rally behind the officers who dedicate their lives to our safety." Steve Hoffmann, President of GLY Construction and Foundation Chair, shared his perspective: "Events like this show how much good can happen when business, police, and the community work together. We're not just playing golf—we're building stronger ties that keep Bellevue a safe and thriving place."







Team having fun with Bellevue Collection cannon shot.



Kimco employees enjoyed their day.

The foursome from accounting firm Sweeney Conrad won the overall tournament, but Major David Sanabria stunned fellow golfers with a hole-in-one on the challenging 15th hole. The shot was flawless—except he chose the wrong hole! On the 6th hole, he would have won a life-changing prize: a \$98,000 Land Rover Defender, offered courtesy of Build GC and Bellevue Land Rover. While Major Sanabria missed out on the luxury SUV, the cheers from his team made the moment priceless.

The awards presentation started with the Women in Leadership Scholarship established by retired Chief, Linda Pillo, four years ago. This year's recipient was Officer Amanda Jackson. Immediately after, Police Chief Wendell Shirley was on hand to witness the raffle excitement at the reception, where golfers vied for experiences such as club-level tickets to a Seattle Kraken game, luxury weekend stays at both the Westin

and Hyatt Regency Bellevue complete with dinner at Ascend Prime Steak & Sushi, and many other coveted prizes. Adding a bit of suspense and thrill, the 50/50 raffle had players buzzing. In the end, it was Kevin Falk, co-founder of Nordic Partners Investments, who walked away with a cool \$1,200 cash prize, bringing his day to a very lucky close. "Great course, great event, great people, and a great cause," he enthused.

As the sun set over Glendale's rolling greens, the tournament concluded with a collective victory for the Bellevue Police Foundation and the community it serves. The funds raised will directly support officer training, safety equipment, and community programs that help the police build stronger, more positive connections with Bellevue residents. Golf, laughter, and goodwill proved to be a winning combination—one that ensures Bellevue continues to shine as a safe, connected, and thriving city.



Teen Duo Innovates Women's Health Tech

WRITTEN BY ANGELA ZOU

ith its newest cutting-edge technology or its out-of-the-box inventions, Bellevue is home to never-ending innovation. And as a result, the city's creativity has spread and fostered a growing population of minientrepreneurs. These mini-entrepreneurs are made up of none other than the city's high school students, or as some may see it, the next generation of inventors and the future of the city.

Two of these young entrepreneurs are Hasini Juluri from Bellevue High School and Isabel Xu from The Overlake School, both juniors in the Class of











2027. In May, they placed among the Top 10 finalists in the Blue Ocean Entrepreneurship Competition 2025, the largest entrepreneurship pitch competition for high school students in the world, with participation from 12,700 students from 163 countries. They pitched a modern solution to address early breast cancer detections, and in honor of October being Breast Cancer Awareness Month, it is only appropriate to recognize their success.

In January, Hasini and Isabel entered themselves in the Blue Ocean competition and came up with the idea to find non-invasive solutions to breast cancer detection, spending the next two months researching and designing their pitch. "Early detection saves lives. When breast cancer is caught in its earliest stages, the survival rate is as high as 99%. Yet current screening methods like mammograms can miss up to one in eight cases of breast cancer. Women under 50 are also typically overlooked by standard screening guidelines. That's where our idea 'Hera' comes in," Hasini and Isabel stated in their pitch video.

Hera, a non-invasive wearable patch, is not only an alternative to

current screening methods, but also a solution to promote more accessible healthcare for women. Unlike regular hospital screenings that require patients to clear their busy schedules, Hera allows women to monitor their health from their homes. The patch works by collecting data from various sensors like temperature sensors that measure heat and microfluidic sensors that detect changes in tissue stiffness. Increases in heat and tissue stiffness are signs of abnormal cell activity which may eventually form a tumor. Therefore, with the patch and the Hera app, users

can detect these fluctuations in real time and have a higher chance of preventing and detecting signs of breast cancer.

However, from idea to pitch, Hasini and Isabel still faced challenges. "The hardest part was taking a complex medical challenge like breast cancer detection and making it a practical concept. Since we weren't building a real prototype, we also had to make sure our pitch was grounded in research and still convincing," Hasini commented. "We had to focus on building a strong pitch backed by market potential." For their visuals, Hasini and Isabel used Canva, Excel, and PowerPoint and developed their idea from the ground up. They spent the weeks sketching potential prototypes, organizing PowerPoint slides, and drafting up scripts for their pitch. They researched market trends, reasonable budgets for the project, and had to project their future revenue if the patch was produced. In the end, they earned their spot in the Top 10 out of 12,700 participants. Despite not developing a physical prototype of the patch, Hasini and Isabel have

demonstrated their ability to innovate and their potential as entrepreneurs.

"This experience gave us some insight into how powerful entrepreneurship can be when applied to healthcare. We plan to keep entering innovation competitions and exploring new ideas that combine our interest in business and impact in the women's healthcare space. While we may not pursue this exact patch right now, it's definitely given us insight on how we can be involved with preventive healthcare from an entrepreneurial perspective," they share. This sentiment of continued innovation can also be seen in 2022, where Hasini and Isabel, earned second place in North America in the Technovation App Development Competition, another entrepreneurial competition, for their pitch on an app that makes reproductive healthcare more accessible for women.

In school, Hasini and Isabel are also successful in business-based competitive clubs like DECA, an organization focused on business, entrepreneurship, marketing, and hospitality. Moreover, in

April, both Hasini and Isabel qualified for the international competition for DECA, with Hasini even placing Top 10 in the world in the Automotive Services Marketing event. Evidently, Hasini and Isabel are on their way to solidifying their position as the future entrepreneurs of Bellevue, or even the world. However, it goes without saying that the key to success is mentorship and guidance. So, if you want to jumpstart your career as an entrepreneur, take some advice from the past finalists:

"Start with a problem you care about. For us, we started looking in the women's health care space, and don't worry if you don't have all the answers. You don't need a finished product to make an impact. Instead, you need curiosity and research. Competitions like Blue Ocean are a great way to practice entrepreneurship and learn how to pitch."





Bellevue LifeSpring Circle Members Take on Summer Fundraising

WRITTEN BY DZENITA MUSABEGOVIC PHOTOS OF THE PAELLA PARTY ON PAGES 36-37 BY KATIE NIEMER. REMAINING PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BELLEVUE LIFESPRING.









ewelry in the garden. Paella by the water. Sparkling glasses raised high. This summer, local nonprofit Bellevue LifeSpring's Circle Members turned ordinary afternoons into unforgettable experiences—all in the name of supporting Bellevue kids. From Blooms, Bubbles, and Bling to paella parties with a purpose, these creative fundraisers prove that when community members come together with passion and imagination, the impact is as vibrant as the events themselves.

Bellevue LifeSpring has five membership circles primarily comprised of West Bellevue residents: The Clemmie Evans Circle, Fairweather Circle, Hunts Point Circle, One Circle, and the Yarrow Point Circle. For more than a century, the circles have carried on Bellevue LifeSpring's legacy of neighbors helping neighbors, finding new ways to raise funds and help to advocate and educate others about the high level of need that exists within the Bellevue community.















BLOOMS, BUBBLES, AND BLING

This past summer, Bellevue LifeSpring's Fairweather Circle hosted a new fundraiser: Blooms, Bubbles, and Bling. Guests spent the afternoon in Circle Member Denise Lane's awardwinning one-acre garden browsing new and gently used jewelry, sipping bubbles, and supporting a powerful cause; preventing hunger and homelessness for children in Bellevue. The Fairweather Circle has always prided itself on coming up with innovative fundraisers. From selling car CONTINUED 19



Maggie and De

wash tickets to hosting intimate gatherings at local restaurants, the group loves to dream up a variety of events that bring the community together around a common cause.

Stepping into Denise Lane's Garden, guests were greeted by yellow roses, a warm welcome from Fairweather Circle members, and an array of jewelry generously donated by different circle and community members. "We were waiting for the right time and a unique way to sell the merchandise our circle held onto from the former Bellevue LifeSpring thrift store," shared Fairweather Circle Member Maggie Vergien. "We combined those gently used pieces with new treasures donated by thoughtful community members. Denise's garden was the true inspiration for the theme!"

Denise is well-known for hosting many events in her garden, and she enjoys sharing its wonders with her community. As a former president and long-time board member of the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society, gardening and community have been central themes in Denise's life. "I open up my home for these events to share my garden with others in hopes that they will enjoy it as much as I do," said Denise. Events like Blooms, Bubbles, and Bling highlight how creativity and collaboration can spark real impact. With every piece of jewelry purchased and every glass of bubbles raised, attendees helped contribute towards vital programs that ensure Bellevue children have the support they need to thrive.









VIVA, ESPAÑA! PAELLA WITH A PURPOSE

The Bellevue LifeSpring One Circle also hosted two impactful summer paella parties, organized and hosted by Bellevue LifeSpring One Circle members. The gatherings brought together friends and West Bellevue neighbors to build community and enjoy delicious paella crafted by Chef Antonio Sanchez.

The first paella party took place in the beautiful backyard of Randi and Joseph Brazen, who bid and won the party at the One Circle's One Heart/One community gala hosted back in February 2025. The second party was hosted at the waterfront home of Schanon Odell-Ataee and Tony Ataee, who were inspired to get involved and host a party where all ticket sales went directly to Bellevue LifeSpring's mission. One Circle member and lead organizer of the paella parties, Trish Carpenter, shared, "My favorite part of the paella party is watching our guests light up with excitement as the chefs prepare the dish. And then, once the paella is complete, everyone lines up to get their photo beside it—it's magnificent!"

Chef Antonio Sanchez and his wife, Carolina Lucero, have helped bring this event to life year after year, and they remain amazed by the impact it continues to have. "It's not just a dinner, it's an experience," says Sanchez. "Guests are encouraged to stir the paella, and we make it a point to educate and include them as much as possible. This is why it's been so

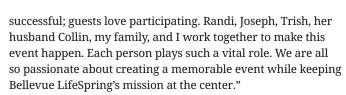












For the past two years, Spanish Consulate General Luis Fernandez Esteban has attended the event. His presence adds a special energy to the evening, reflecting his deep commitment to supporting education and strengthening the cultural connections between Washington State and Spain. Joining him this year was Oscar Garcia, a respected Spanish chef and scholar who volunteered to prepare hors d'oeuvres, assist with the paella, and mingle with guests. "Having these guests at the event makes it truly special," said Sanchez. "It's done for the right reasons, with the right people. I stay involved because I believe Bellevue LifeSpring's mission is worth investing in."

To learn more about Bellevue LifeSpring's mission, circle membership opportunities, and more, visit: BellevueLifeSpring.org



36 October 2025

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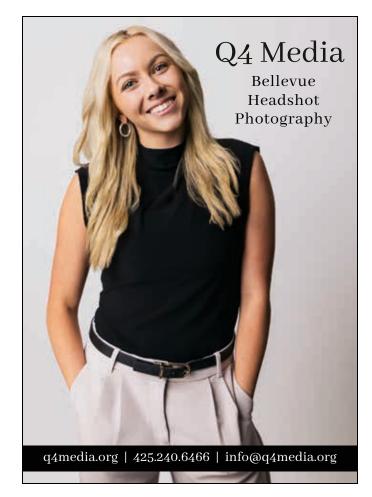








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Big Laughs, Big Heart, Big Pig – Parker's Path to Publishing!

Parker Kono proves that you're never too young to publish a book—at just 8 years old he released his very first story, showing that it's never too early, or too silly, to dream big. The future looks bright for this young author.



Parker showing off his two published books!

hat were you doing in 3rd grade? Maybe learning your times tables, chasing fly balls, or turning into a snowman on the ski slopes. That's pretty much Parker Kono's life too—except he's added one more thing to the mix: he's a published author. Yep, while most grown-ups are still saying "someday," Parker's already living the dream with two books under his belt and a whole lot of imagination to spare.

At just eight years old, Parker wrote and published *The Big Pig*, and its sequel *The Big Pig Jumps*, part of his whimsical series, *The Tales of the Big Pig*. The stories are packed with playful charm and goofy fun—perfect for kids (and their parents) who love a good laugh. And it all started with a spark of inspiration at Sacred Heart School's Young Author's Day. "I was making up a book on paper and I thought, what if I published it?" Parker said. "That's how I realized I wanted to try."

Publishing a book might sound like a big, grown-up task—but Parker made it look easy (and way more fun than homework). Step one? Ask Mom. "I wrote my book on scrap paper and then asked my mom if she could help me make it look like a real book, like the

"I was making up a book on paper and I thought, what if I published it? That's how I realized I wanted to try."

-PARKER KONO

kind you see in stores," he explained. Together, they used an app called Canva to lay out the pages and pick out illustrations. Parker says choosing silly, goofy pictures was the best part. Once everything was ready, they uploaded it to Amazon, and just like that, Parker officially became an author.

Parker's books are silly, clever, and all about animals, rivalries, courage, and (of course) teamwork.

- Book 1: The Big Pig A funny story about animals, rivalries, and working together.
- Book 2: The Big Pig Jumps The tale of a scared pig who musters up the courage to jump off a diving board at the lake... sort of.

Parker's stories might sound simple, but they're packed with heart and a whole lot of silliness. That was no accident. "I don't know, I just thought up the idea and thought it was funny," he said with a grin. Humor was a must-have from the start. Even though his books are still fresh off the press, Parker's already getting rave reviews. "I have one 5-star review on Amazon from my friend Declan's mom," he said proudly. Her review? Pure gold:

"This was a great read with wonderful illustrations. My children loved it and found it very funny and



From left: The Kono Family! Keri, Jason, Harvey and Parker Kono at a Mariners Game

entertaining. They are excited to see what other books Mr. Kono will be coming out with!"—Lauren G., Declan's Mom

So far, Parker has sold about 15 copies of each book. Not bad for a kid who's also juggling baseball practice, ski trips, golf, and reading marathons. We say, let's help him sell even more! As for what's next, Parker's keeping things open. "I'm not sure if I'll write any more books as of now," he admitted. "I'm pretty active in a lot of stuff, but if I get bored, I might write again." Still, he's got one goal in mind: finish the *Big Pig* series

with four books total. After that? Who knows. Parker says he's not planning to be a full-time author—unless, of course, the funny ideas keep coming.

PARKER'S ADVICE FOR OTHER YOUNG AUTHORS:

For kids who might want to follow in his footsteps, Parker's advice is simple (and smart). Sometimes the best ideas don't come from overthinking, they come from the things you already love. "Think of something that you like and then build upon it from there," says Parker.

WHERE TO FIND PARKER'S BOOKS

If you're curious to read *The Big Pig* or *The Big Pig Jumps*, both are available now on Amazon. Whether you're 8 years old or 80, these tales of courage, friendship, and funny farm animals are sure to brighten your day. And who knows? Maybe the next time Parker gets "bored," we'll see Book 3 in *The Tales of the Big Pig* series. Until then, we'll keep cheering him on!



Parker with his little brother Harvey enjoying some



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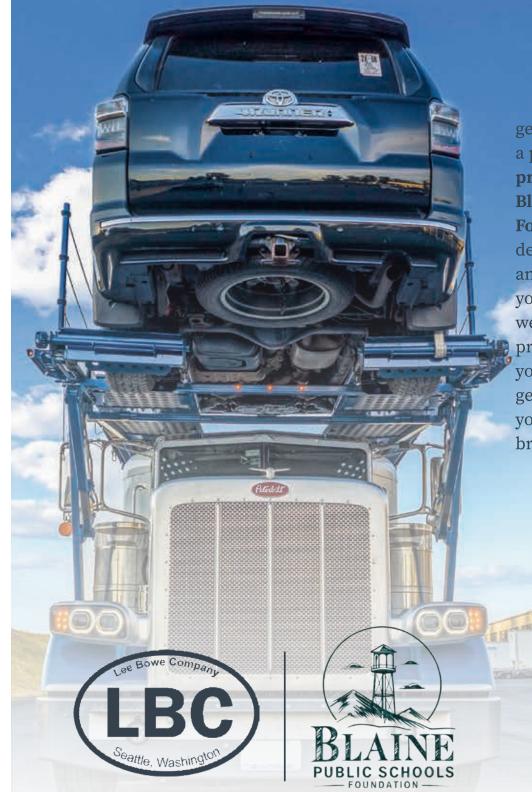
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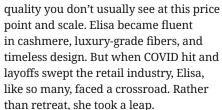
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Elisa and her husband moved to Bellevue to plant their own family somewhere that offered their young daughter the quality of life and outdoor opportunities they dreamed about in New York City. They were drawn to the Eastside community and excited by the opportunity to continue her bilingual education at Jing Mei Elementary School. Now a high schooler thriving in AP Chinese at Newport and playing for the Reign Academy Football Club, their daughter is growing up in a household built on creativity, dedication, and intentional choices.

Elisa's next career move was to Nordstrom, where she was hired to lead and grow the company's private label luxury knitwear division. Grow it she did, taking it from a modest \$1 million business to a \$24 million powerhouse centered on elevated knits with refined finishes and the kind of attention to



From her Bellevue home, in the quiet solitude of the pandemic, Elisa began SSKEIN, a luxury knitwear label rooted in timeless design, sustainability, and quality. She started small, with a four-piece capsule collection crafted in 100% baby alpaca wool. The idea was to meet the moment: to offer something for women working from home who still wanted to feel confident and look effortless without sacrificing style and comfort. Each piece was thoughtfully designed in versatile silhouettes that looked as good over Zoom as they did curled up on the couch.

Alpaca wool was a deliberate choice. "It's the definition of luxury," she explains. "Hypo-allergenic, antimicrobial, durable, water-repellent (ideal for the rainy PNW), incredibly soft, and possessing a unique sheen and drape that traditional knits just can't match." Unlike cashmere goats, alpaca grazing



more ecologically ethical and sustainable

choice. And because knitwear is created

waste. Nothing is cut away and tossed to

from a spool of yarn, there's no fabric

the landfill. Every stitch matters.

SSKEIN is celebrating their 5-year anniversary this fall, and their line currently offers ready-to-wear tops, dresses, coats and bottoms, along with a growing collection of handknits designed in partnership with women artisans in Peru. The Handknit Collection is more than just a line. It's a mission. Each garment is hand-knitted by women who are mostly single mothers earning a living wage, empowering families and reviving local craftsmanship that's at risk of disappearing in a world increasingly

driven by fast fashion. Every piece is one-

of-a-kind, wearable art enriched with

texture, story, and soul.

SSKEIN is, at its core, the antidote to fast fashion. Elisa's pieces are intentionally designed to last: timeless, versatile, and made to be passed down. Her dream is to create clothing with meaning; knitwear that feels personal, garments that tell stories. Clothing you wear, keep, love, and maybe one day, hand to your children.

And really, that's what SSKEIN is about. It's about where intentional living meets effortless style. Elisa isn't just building a brand. She's weaving together values, heritage, artistry, and innovation into every piece she makes. You can explore SSKEIN's collections and upcoming events by visiting their website: www.sskein.co











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By now, many Eastside locals have heard whispers of it: Twinkling lights, beautifully adorned homes, and a sense of magic in the air. Yes—it's true! The beloved Holiday Home Tour is making its return this December, and the Assistance League® of the Eastside (ALE) couldn't be more excited to welcome you back. The tour is more than just a winter wonderland for décor lovers, it is one of the fundraisers for the organization, and the funds raised directly support individuals and families in need throughout the Eastside. Every ticket sold helps power their five core programs.

Who is the Assistance League® of the Eastside?

Originally formed in 1997 as a chapter of the National Assistance League®, ALE has been working hard ever since to fulfill the mission of supporting individuals and families across Seattle's Eastside communities. From providing clothes and school essentials for kids to supporting survivors of assault and those transitioning out of homelessness, ALE is a lifeline for many and has made a lasting impact on the community. Here are just a few of the things they do:

• Operation School Bell® provides new clothing and essentials to







students in need in the Lake Washington, Bellevue, and Northshore School Districts.

- Assault Survivor Kits® provide personal care items and clothing to survivors of assault.
- Starting Over Support includes furnishing basic household items to individuals transitioning out of homelessness or crisis situations.
- Help4Homeless supplies hygiene kits and warm essentials to individuals experiencing homelessness in our local area.
- Women Inspired Network provides meals, clothing, and personal care items to local shelters.

There is an entire committee dedicated to the Holiday Home Tour's big comeback led by Holiday Home Tour Chair, Amanda Standley. As a lifelong supporter of the Assistance League®, Amanda's heart beats for community, connection, and making a real difference. "T've been involved with this organization for just a year on the Eastside, but I grew up in it," Amanda shares. "As a teen, I was part of Assisteens in Southern California, the League's youth program. It shaped who I am—teaching leadership, compassion, and the power of service." That early experience inspired

Amanda to continue giving back, and now she's helping relaunch one of the Eastside's most cherished traditions.

Save the Date: December 5th, 2025

Mark your calendars! The Holiday
Home Tour is not only a fundraiser—
it's also a community celebration that
brings people together in the most
festive way possible. Tour-goers will get
to stroll through some of the Eastside's
most beautifully-decorated homes,
gather holiday inspiration, and, most
importantly, support a lineup of lifechanging programs. "Whether you're
attending, opening your home to host
the tour, or just spreading the word,
your involvement fuels everything we
do," says Amanda. "We're thrilled to
bring this event back to life."

Tickets will be available this fall, and they always go fast. Be sure to sign up for our newsletter or scan the QR code to get early access and event updates. Would you like to be considered to have your home featured on the tour? If so, we'd love to hear from you! It's a unique

way to give back and celebrate the season in style.

More Than Just a One-Day Wonder

While the Holiday Home Tour is a major highlight, ALE keeps the good going all year-round. They host an Annual Gala, *Boots & Bling*, which was in March of 2025 and proved to be a huge hit! They also organize a Fall Run and, of course, continue their vital outreach programs year-round.

So Why Give Back?

"Because we can," Amanda says simply. "Giving back connects us to our community in the most authentic way. It reminds us that even the smallest actions can create lasting change. Volunteering with ALE gives people a way to plug in based on their strengths, time, and passions—and when you see the impact, it's energizing."

Want to Get Involved?

If you're inspired by ALE's mission, there are plenty of ways to lend a hand.

Whether you're ready to volunteer, become a member, open your home for the tour, or simply buy a ticket, it all makes a difference. This holiday season, do something that sparkles with meaning. Step inside the homes—and hearts—of a community that believes in showing up for one another. We'll see you on the tour!

If you would like your home to be considered for the tour or to purchase tickets, please visit our website to find out more, or simply scan the QR code.

Learn more or join the cause visit: assistanceleague.org/the-eastside email: info@aleastside.org Phone: (425) 556-5106







48 October 2025

Pumpkin Spice Coffee Old Fashioned

Who doesn't crave pumpkin spice in October? Far from tricky, this cocktail is a treat!

RECIPE BY ADAM NEVINS, BAR MANAGER AT CENTRAL BAR + RESTAURANT, PHOTO BY JACKIE PHAIROW



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 oz Woodinville Whiskey
 Co. Flagship Bourbon
- .5 Mr. Black Coffee Liqueur
- .5 oz Pumpkin Spice Syrup**
- 2 dashes Orange Bitters
- Burnt orange peel garnish

METHOD:

- **1.** Combine all liquid ingredients in a mixing glass and add ice. Stir until well chilled, about 10-15 seconds.
- 2. Strain over a large cube in an old-fashioned glass. Cut an orange peel and use a lighter and tongs to burn the peel over the drink. This will express and char the oils, adding to the aromatics. Drop the burned peel on top of the cube and enjoy!
- *To make pumpkin spice simple syrup, combine 1 cup water, 3/4 cup light brown sugar, 3 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice, and 1/3 cup pumpkin puree in a small saucepan. Simmer and whisk for 8 minutes over medium low heat until syrup composes. Fine strain and let cool in fridge. Keeps for one month.

Cheers



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20 months after the completion of our remodel and we are still loving our home! There is nothing that I would change. I give full credit to our designer. She understood what our needs were and was able to create exactly what we needed, even when we didn't know what that was. We have had a few minor things (small drywall crack, a few nail heads showing through) that needed touching up once we moved back into the house and Nip Tuck quickly repaired them. They stand behind their work which should be reassuring to anyone considering a remodel. As I had stated in my earlier review, I would highly recommend Nip Tuck. They may possibly be a little more expensive than your average design/build company but it is 100% worth it.





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Browse online for Nip Tuck Remodeling reviews.



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