

September 19, 2025 - September 25, 2025

FREE

Whidbey Weekly

Your Source For "What's Happening" On Whidbey Island

Locally Owned • Locally Operated

NEWS • BITS • WHATS GOING ON • PUZZLES

COLUMNISTS • CLASSIFIEDS

CITY OF
Oak Harbor
WHIDBEY ISLAND, WASHINGTON
Parks & Recreation



50+ RESOURCE FAIR

Wednesday, September 24 | 10am - 2pm

The Center in Oak Harbor | 51 SE Jerome St

10 am - 2 pm | Vendor Information Booths

10:30 am | Life with Mild Cognitive Impairment Presentation

12 pm | Lunch* compliments of Blue Cross Blue Shield,
Home Instead & Oak Harbor Senior Center Foundation

12:45 pm | Medicare + Open Enrollment Presentation

- DOH Care-a-Van
Mobile Health Clinic**
- Blood Pressure Screening
 - Blood Glucose Screenings
 - A1C Testing
 - BMI & Telehealth
 - Mental Health Screenings
 - Naloxone Kits
 - Health & Vaccine Education

- WhidbeyHealth
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- Flu Vaccine
 - Senior Flu Vaccine
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THANK YOU FOR READING WHIDBEY WEEKLY | REDUCE → REUSE → RECYCLE

BITS & PIECES

The City of Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation invites the community to the annual 50+ Resource Fair on Wednesday, Sept. 24, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Center in Oak Harbor, 51 SE Jerome St.

This free event brings together vendors, health resources and educational presentations to support older adults, caregivers and families in the community. Attendees will have the opportunity to connect with local organizations, enjoy a complimentary lunch and access health screenings and vaccines. Popsies will serve ice cream, compliments of Heartsong Homecare Co-op and Puget Sound Energy. The first 100 attendees will receive a complimentary tote bag, and raffle prizes will be offered throughout the event.



Event highlights include:

- 10 a.m.–2 p.m. | Vendor information booths
- 10:30 a.m. | “Life with Mild Cognitive Impairment” presentation
- Noon | Complimentary lunch (provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield, Home Instead and Oak Harbor Senior Center Foundation, while supplies last)
- 12:45 p.m. | “Medicare + Open Enrollment” presentation



On-site health services:

The Washington State Department of Health Care-a-Van mobile clinic will provide blood pressure screenings, blood glucose screenings, A1C testing, BMI and telehealth services, mental health screenings, naloxone kits, and vaccine education. WhidbeyHealth Community Pharmacy will offer flu, senior flu and COVID-19 vaccines. Memory screenings will be provided by Northwest Regional Council. Please bring an insurance card if you plan to receive vaccines or participate in Care-a-Van services.

Sponsors:

The event is made possible by Heartsong Homecare Co-op, Regency on Whidbey, Hearing Health Services, Eden Health and other community partners.

“The 50+ Resource Fair is a cornerstone event that connects our older adult community with vital services, information and wellness opportunities,” said Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation Program Coordinator Carly Larson. “We encourage everyone to stop by, learn and take advantage of these free resources.”

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation at 360-279-4580 or visit oakharbor.gov.

Whidbey Island Cider Festival

Whidbey Island Cider Festival Returns September 20

Celebrating community, music, food, and cider in support of Pacific Rim Institute

Coupeville, WA — September 2025 — The Whidbey Island Cider Festival is back on Saturday, September 20, from 12–6 p.m. at the Pacific Rim Institute for Environmental Stewardship (180 Parker Rd, Coupeville). This all-ages celebration features live music, food trucks, vendors, kids’ activities, and optional cider, mead, spirits, and craft beverage tasting for adults 21 and older.

General admission is free. Tasting in the Cider Garden is available for \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door and includes a keepsake glass and six tasting tokens. Advance tickets are available now at: <https://pacificriminstitute.networkforgood.com/events/87540-whidbey-island-cider-festival-2025>

Festival Highlights:

Live Music: Sage Haze, A Fiddle in the Forest, the Shifty Sailors, Mike Hopkins, Eathan Tang, and Kick Brass.

Food Trucks & Treats: Bearly Awake Coffee, Fulla Za Pizza, Whidbey Ice, Tacos El YoYo, Chef in the Black Bandana, Orlando’s Fish & Grill, Whidbey Pies, The Wander Asian, Deb’s Dog Haus, and NW Kettle Corn.

Tasting Garden (21+): Featuring 2 Towns Ciderhouse, 3 Dog Cider Brewstillery, Dragon’s Head Cidery, Finnriver Farm & Cidery, Greenbank Cidery, Misfit Island Cider Co., Sisters Cider House, Garden Path Fermentation, Holmes Harbor Cellars, Whidbey Distillery, Hierophant Meadery, and Anacortes Brewery.

Founded in 2017, the Whidbey Island Cider Festival is the signature annual fundraiser for Pacific Rim Institute. The event supports PRI’s mission to restore and preserve the endangered westside prairie habitat and the species that depend on it. Visitors are encouraged to explore PRI’s Native Plant Center and prairie remnant during the festival.

Community & Conservation Impact

Pacific Rim Institute (PRI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to ecological restoration through science, culture, and community partnerships. PRI has contributed to the recovery of the golden paintbrush (*Castilleja levisecta*) and is actively engaged in restoration efforts for the Taylor’s checkerspot (*Euphydryas editha taylori*) butterfly. Plant materials grown at PRI’s Native Plant Center are distributed throughout the Salish Sea to support restoration projects.

Event Details at a Glance:

When: Saturday, September 20, 2025 | 12–6 p.m.

Where: Pacific Rim Institute, 180 Parker Rd, Coupeville

Admission: Free general entry | \$30 advance tasting | \$35 day-of tasting

Website: www.pacificriminstitute.org/ciderfestival

Sound Water Stewards of Island County Welcomes New Executive Director, Florian Graner, Ph.D.

Sound Water Stewards is pleased to announce the appointment of Florian Graner, Ph.D., as its new Executive Director, effective immediately.



Dr. Graner’s leadership marks an exciting new chapter in the organization’s 35-year history of community engagement and environmental stewardship on Whidbey and Camano Islands. Formerly known as Beach Watchers, Sound Water Stewards is dedicated to its mission of protecting and preserving the coastal ecosystem of the Salish Sea through education, science, and stewardship.

With a distinguished background in marine biology, marine conservation, and science communication, Dr. Graner brings a wealth of expertise, energy, and strategic vision. His passion for ocean conservation will help Sound Water Stewards strengthen community partnerships, inspire public engagement, and address the challenges facing the health of the Salish Sea and local shorelines.

“Florian’s dedication to marine conservation and his ability to inspire and educate bring the vision and experience to guide Sound Water Stewards into the future,” said Robbin Boyatt and PaulBen McElwain, Co-Presidents of Sound Water Stewards. “We are confident his leadership will enable our community to effectively respond to a rapidly changing environment.”

“Since the beginning of my career in the 1990’s marine conservation has been at the core of every project I engaged in” Florian said. “I have crossed paths with Beach Watchers and Sound Water Stewards multiple times in the past filming volunteers at work or providing a keynote speech for Sound Waters University (The Salish Sea – A Sense of Place). I always found that our values were entirely in alignment, and I have admired the capabilities and resourcefulness of the very talented volunteer groups Sound Water Stewards manages to field year after year. When the position of the Executive Director became available it seemed like a perfect fit. I am honored Sound

Water Stewards has given me its trust to lead and inspire the organization and look forward to working with all members to advance our mission, to protect and preserve the coastal ecosystem of the Salish Sea through education, science, and stewardship.”

As the founder of Sealife Productions, Dr. Graner also is an accomplished filmmaker and cinematographer, producing award-winning documentaries that deepen public understanding of marine ecosystems and the urgent need for ocean conservation. His latest film *Orcas — Life in Black and White*, released in 2025, has received international acclaim and strong regional interest throughout the Puget Sound.

Founded in 2016 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit—following its origins as Beach Watchers through Washington State University Extension—Sound Water Stewards of Island County engages a robust network of trained volunteers and partners with organizations across Island County. Each year, volunteers contribute more than 20,000 hours through nearly 30 projects dedicated to stewarding the fragile and complex coastal ecosystem of the Salish Sea.

The organization’s flagship event, Sound Waters University, now in its 32nd year, is a one-day community conference that connects the public with leading marine science research from experts in their field. The event inspires participants to take meaningful action to protect and preserve the Salish Sea, the place we all call home. Learn more at: www.soundwaterstewards.org

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Whidbey Island



CIDER festival Sept 20, 2025

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Live ENTERTAINMENT
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Mike Hopkins, Sage Haze, and more

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12 PM to 6 PM

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[www.pacificriminstitute.org/
cider-festival](http://www.pacificriminstitute.org/cider-festival)

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What's Going On!

CORNFEST

Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 20-21
Whidbey Farm and Market, 1422 Monroe Landing Road, Oak Harbor
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Free entry; tickets required for some attractions

Experience fall at Cornfest with fresh treats, games, live entertainment, hayrides, potato digging, hay bale pyramid, and the Alice in Wonderland corn maze. Additional festivities continue Fridays-Sundays through Oct. 31, including barrel train rides, u-pick corn, pumpkin carving (Oct. 11 and 19), a scarecrow competition, fire pit reservations, and a Halloween party with haunted maze on Oct. 31. Family friendly.

WHIDBEY ISLAND CIDER FESTIVAL

Saturday, Sept. 20
Pacific Rim Institute, 180 Parker Road, Coupeville
Noon to 6 p.m.

Free admission; tasting package \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door (21+)

The Whidbey Island Cider Festival, the main fundraiser for Pacific Rim Institute, features hard cider and spirit tastings for adults, live music from The Shifty Sailors, A Fiddle in the Forest and more, local food trucks, vendor booths, and family-friendly activities. Non-drinkers and designated drivers, 21 and over, enter free. Explore PRI's Native Plant Center and prairie, and help support endangered prairie restoration. Leashed pets welcome. Smoke-free site.

HUMPBACKS

Saturday, Sept. 20
Langley Whale Center, 105 Anthes Ave., Langley
11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Free

Learn about humpback whales in the Salish Sea during this family-friendly event featuring a brief talk and hands-on crafts for kids. All ages are welcome to enjoy a fun and educational afternoon celebrating these incredible whales.

STATE PARK FREE DAY

Saturday, Sept. 27
Whidbey and Camano Islands state parks

Enjoy free entry and parking at Washington state parks on National Public Lands Day. No Discover Pass required for day use on this date, making it a great opportunity to explore the region's scenic parks, including popular spots like Deception Pass. Note: Fees still apply for overnight stays and rentals.

For more info on state parks, visit the Washington State Parks website or check with local park offices.

WASHINGTON WORKER BENEFITS- ALL ABOUT THE NEW WA CARES FUND

Saturday, September 20
2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Coupeville Library, Coupeville Library, 788 NW Alexander St

Learn what the WA Cares Fund is, how workers can qualify for the program, what kind of benefits will be available, and the importance of addressing and understanding Long-Term Care needs.

FINANCIAL FRAUD SCHEMES AND SCAMS WITH WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Sunday, September 28
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Coupeville Library, Coupeville Library, 788 NW Alexander St

They ARE out to get you! Financial Fraud Schemes and Scams - learn how to spot them and avoid them in a workshop led by Lyn Peters, Director of Communications and Financial Education & Outreach for Washington State Department of Financial Institutions.

AGING WELL RESOURCE FAIR

Wednesday, Sept. 24, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
The Center in Oak Harbor, 51 SE Jerome St.

Learn about local resources for aging well by visiting informational booths from companies and nonprofits. A complimentary lunch will be served at noon while supplies last.

UFO NORTHWEST: HOW WASHINGTON STATE SPAWNED THE MEN IN BLACK

Thursday, Sept. 25, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Clinton Community Hall

A Humanities Washington program exploring how Washington shaped today's UFO stories. Drawing on FBI records, the talk traces the story from 1950s pulp magazines through The X-Files and the Men in Black films.

LANGLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Friday, Oct 3
5:30 p.m.
Third St./Anthes Ave

Join our group of 5-7 individuals who are learning ASL American Sign Language and have a surprise within the hr meet up of joining us for some goodies.

Follow posters to back of church in Fireside Room.

Please contact Susan for info sisoileil973@yahoo.com.

LOCAL AUTHOR PANEL: INSPIRATION, INSIGHTS, AND ADVICE

Thursday, Oct. 9, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Langley Library

Meet and learn from five published local authors of children's books, adult fiction, and nonfiction: Suzanne Kelman, JingJing Tsong, Christina Baldwin, Derrick Sutton, and Sarri Gilman.



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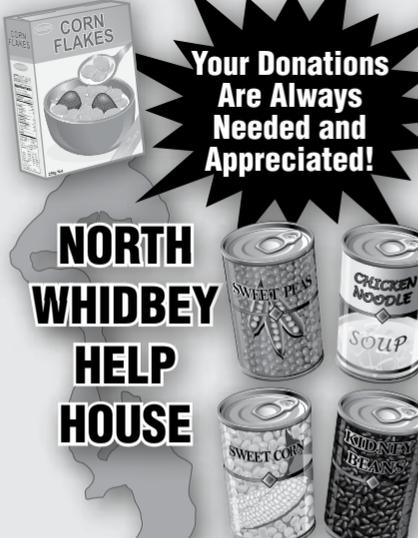
Friday, Sept. 19- Sunday, Sept. 21

Light of the World (PG) & Sketch (PG)



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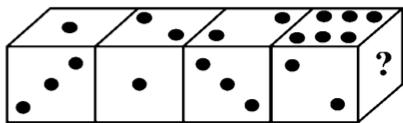
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STICKELERS [sic]

by Terry Stickels

Four normal dice are side by side.
How many dots are on the face with
the question mark?



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CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: M equals T

MRN EQCENQMU CB RYHATI
BNYMSQNW HNQU OSLR
WAOAFYQ MC ECNM M.W. CQ
TCHNFAWM INCQIN:
NFACM-TNWW.

Answer on page 11

Puzzles4Kids

by Helene Hovanec

RIDDLE SEARCH - FAIRY TALE ELEMENTS

Look up, down, and diagonally, both forward and backward to find every word on the list. Circle each one as you find it. When all the words are circled, take the UNUSED letters and write them on the blanks below. Go from left to right and top to bottom to find the answer to this riddle: **What fairy tale character is an expert on time?**

- ANIMAL
- CASTLE
- COTTAGE
- CROWN
- ELF
- GIANT
- GOOSE
- HERO
- HORSE
- KING
- MAIDEN
- OGRE
- PALACE
- PRINCESS
- QUEEN
- TOWER
- TROLL
- UNICORN
- VILLAIN
- WITCH



Riddle answer: _____

Even Exchange

by Donna Pettman

Each numbered row contains two clues and two 6-letter answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1. Sourdough, e.g. | ___ E ___ | Wide | ___ O ___ |
| 2. Design | ___ T _ | Pleat | ___ S _ |
| 3. Jolly | ___ E ___ | Take to the altar | ___ A ___ |
| 4. Burn with water | ___ A ___ | Reprimand | ___ O ___ |
| 5. Nappy | ___ A ___ | Water ladle | ___ P ___ |
| 6. 50's sitcom gal | ___ E | Page border | ___ N |
| 7. Knife edge | ___ D _ | Culpability | ___ M _ |
| 8. Code inventor | ___ R ___ | Computer clicker | ___ U ___ |
| 9. Iguana, e.g. | L ___ | Merlin, e.g. | W ___ |
| 10. Fall bloom | ___ S ___ | Change | ___ L ___ |

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HOCUS-FOCUS

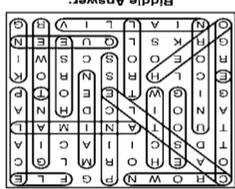
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Paper is longer. 2. Mirror is moved. 3. Man's left arm is not showing. 4. Light is lower. 5. Hood is different. 6. Pants are different.

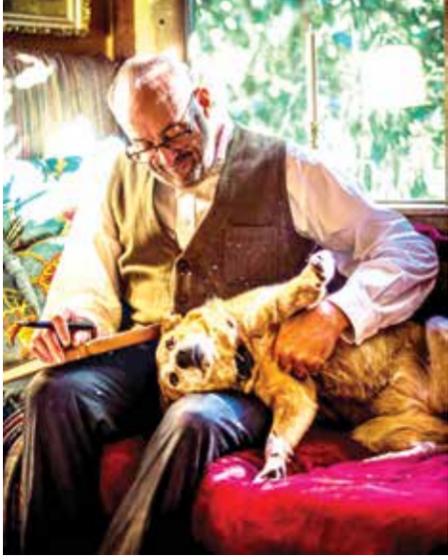


Puzzles4Kids

- Even Exchange answers
1. Bread, Broad
 2. Create, Crease
 3. Merry, Marry
 4. Scald, Scold
 5. Diaper, Dipper
 6. Margie, Margin
 7. Blade, Blame
 8. Morse, Mouse
 9. Lizard, Wizard
 10. Aster, Alter



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Reflections on life, rest, and island living

BY CHARLES LAFOND
ISLAND POTTER, AUTHOR, FUNDRAISER, AND WRITER

Driving around Whidbey Island can be a dreamy experience, full of natural beauty. From its ocean views to its mid-island plains, distant mountain ranges, and tulip fields, there is beauty everywhere one looks. Speed limits need to be considered, since they change frequently, but traffic lights are few and far between. Some turns onto the main roads, of course, cause one to take one's life into one's hands.

As I age, night driving is more challenging, what with the starburst effects of oncoming headlights. I get tired at night much earlier than I did in my younger days. Driving while exhausted slows our reaction times, erodes

concentration, and is comparable to driving under the influence of alcohol. There are many signs asking people not to drive while intoxicated, and I guess they are there marking an accident, the broken glass, blood, and shattered plastics long-since swept up by emergency personnel. Was it alcohol or exhaustion?

What troubles me the most is that our nation and culture seem to be struggling to get enough sleep. It appears to be an epidemic. Statistically, about 100 million of our 300 million Americans report struggling with sleep. About 50-70 million of us experience chronic sleep disorders caused by chronic health conditions, ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorders, routine changes, big late dinners, night-snacking, night shift work in businesses, families with tiny children, and work or family budget-related stress.

Good rest and sleep have become what feels almost "holy" to me, and I do not use that word lightly. Sleep is my "secret sauce" of life. I take sleep very seriously. In my past, I thought that, like eating well, I needed to possess resilience and willpower to go to bed on time. But now I see that the key to sleep is not that I need strength to go to bed on time. Instead, I need systems.

If I do the right things in the correct order during the day and evening, I long for bed on time, whereas I used to put myself to bed all grumpy with anxieties of FOMO that could light up a small city. Now, by starting with ending all caffeine early and planning evenings with precision, I simply do certain things in the correct order, and voilà! Sleep descends on me like a luring temptress. Here are ten of my own sleep-inducing systems:

1. Eat the last meal at 5:00 (3-4 hours before bed) so that digestion does not raise body stress hormones or heart rate.
2. Turn off all lights and devices by 7:00 pm to let my eyes rest for sleep, watching a bit of TV with blue-light-blocking TV glasses (\$10 online).
3. Have a reason to wake early (a reward) -in my case, it's the writing I love doing in morning's darkness and privacy. And walk in the early morning sun to start the sleep-rhythm clock-wind-down.
4. Blackout the bedroom for sleep with two layers of light-blocking curtains -create absolute darkness on the sunniest days and never work in your bedroom. The bedroom is for sleeping! Well, mostly!
5. Household silence is a team effort in a family, but it's possible. (It's admittedly easy for me as I live in a tiny forest.)
6. No alcohol, ever. It destroys sleep.
7. No caffeine at all 12 hours before bed. Going to bed at 8:00 pm? Last caffeine at 7:30 am!
8. No alarms -they make one nervous in anticipation, forcing the brain to anticipate the alarm. Go to bed early and sleep until you no longer need sleep, creating a wide morning window between waking and work.
9. No lights and no checking clocks if we awaken to use the toilet in the middle of the night. Keep a night-light on in the hall and bathroom. Seeing clocks cause frustration and disappointment about not sleeping, which then keeps one awake.
10. No sleep-naps during the day -only closed-eyed rest. Day sleep ruins night sleep.

These ten systems make sleep easier and more restful now. Waking at 4:00 am means I have a four-hour mini-vacation every morning for writing and reading. It's lovely. And Sugar-the-dog models sleep for me like a Gold Medal sleep athlete. (Photo: Dennis Browne)

THE WHIDBEY PLAYHOUSE COMMUNITY THEATRE PRESENTS

Calendar Girls

Written by Tim Firth

Based on the Miramax Motion Picture by Juliet Towhidi and Tim Firth

Sept. 5-28
Fridays 7:30 p.m.
Saturdays 7:30 p.m.
Sundays 2:30 p.m.

Directed by Sarah Jaye Gallella
Produced by Amy Jones

"Calendar Girls" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

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Answer on page 11

Weekly SUDOKU

		2	6		9		8	
			5			7	2	
4								
2			4	5				
		4	9	7		2	5	6
3	5			6	8			7
		5	1		6		7	2
							6	1
			7					9

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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DUB: 1:30 PM
SUB: 7:00 PM
SAT, SUN & THURS:
DUBBED ONLY: 1:30 PM & 7:30 PM

DOWNTON ABBEY: THE GRAND FINALE (PG)
1:45 PM, 4:30 PM & 7:15 PM

THE SENIOR (PG)
2:00 PM, 4:45 PM & 7:30 PM

COMING SOON:
9/26 GABBY'S DOLLHOUSE: THE MOVIE
9/26 "ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER"
10/10 "TRON:ARES"



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Tuesday, September 23 at 7:00 p.m.

NWC Volleyball

SEHOME at Oak Harbor

Wednesday, September 24 at 7:00 p.m.

NWC Volleyball

Oak Harbor at Ferndale

Friday, September 26 at 7:00 p.m.

WESCO Football

Sedro Woolley at Oak Harbor

www.soundsportsnet.com

KOVELS Antiques & Collecting
By Terry and Kim Kovel

Faux Bois

For thousands of years, artisans have found ways to make one material look like another. The history of furniture is filled with examples, like wood painted to resemble marble, metal, lacquer or other expensive or exotic materials. Sometimes, other materials are sculpted or painted to look like wood.

The faux bois ("false wood") technique was popularized in France in the mid-1800s, although its roots go deeper. Garden furnishings made of reinforced concrete sculpted into tree or branch shapes were displayed at the 1867 Paris Universal Exhibition. Since then, the fashion for faux bois has grown, and the term can now refer to any material, like ceramic, plastic or metal, painted to look like wood.

This 20th-century ceramic garden seat is decorated to look like a wooden barrel but is better suited to outdoor seating. Estimated at \$500 to \$700, it sold for \$2,394 at DOYLE Auctioneers & Appraisers in New York. It's a testament to the continuing popularity of the faux bois style.

Q: I am interested in an appraisal of this hankie along with the letter. The hankie has Franklin Delano Roosevelt's signature embroidered in one corner along with the words "Happy Days." The letter that came with it is on stationery from the White House, dated September 5, 1933, and reads "The President asks me to extend his hearty congratulations upon the birth of your son," who was named Franklin Delano, "and to send you herewith a small memento for his namesake." It is signed by M.A. LeHand, Private Secretary.

A: Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president in 1932 and won re-election three times, serving until his death in 1945. "Happy Days Are Here Again," written in 1929, was his campaign song in 1932. The phrase "Happy Days" appears on some merchandise from his first campaign. Textiles like bandannas and hankies were popular campaign items and are popular political collectibles today. Yours, along with the letter, would probably be worth about \$200 to \$350. If the letter had Roosevelt's signature, it would be worth more. If you are looking for a formal appraisal or more information, a political collectors'



A wooden barrel sold for more than \$2,000? No, it's a ceramic garden seat made to look like a wooden barrel.

club, like American Political Items Collectors (https://apic.us/) or an auction house or dealer that handles political collectibles or celebrity memorabilia, like Hake's Auctions (hakes.com) or RR Auction (rrauction.com) may be able to help you.

TIP: Wool weavings attract moths and should be turned twice a year. Some say you should also spray them with moth repellent, or at least put them outside in the sunlight for a few hours each summer and fall.

CURRENT PRICES

Toy, horse, rocking, painted, red center handle, green rockers, wicker chair back, two-sided, 19 x 39 inches, \$35.

Picture, watercolor, landscape, autumn, trees on riverbank, signed, R. Bellitti, frame, 19 x 16 inches, \$55.

Sampler, family record, flowering vine border, Philemon Draper, silk on linen, frame, 1856, 22 x 22 1/2 inches, \$1,875.

For more collecting news, tips and resources, visit www.Kovels.com

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Astrology for September 19-25, 2025

New Moon Solar Eclipse in Virgo

On **September 19**, Venus enters Virgo until October 13. The planet of values, finances, pleasure and relationships in this sign prefers to engage with these categories practically and with precision. This is a time to pay attention to the details, keep receipts, and release excess or fluff. Discernment is favored. We are looking for usefulness and if it has no use, it will wane in relevance. We will be encouraged to prune. Venus will highlight mental and physical health and the routines that we subscribe to. This transit will also spotlight our relationship with being of service, what we do for work, and where there are imbalances within those areas. We can amplify pleasure and joy for ourselves and others during this time period by simply doing the work that needs to be done. To-do list people, this is your time to shine. Remember the importance of rest.

On **September 20**, Venus in Virgo squares Uranus retrograde in Gemini at 1°. This aspect puts pressure on relationships and the boundaries of outdated agreements. Both Virgo and Gemini are ruled by Mercury, and Mercury at this time is fresh in the sign of Libra at 2° making its own trine to Uranus in Gemini. Unexpected conversations and negotiations and the topics are touchy. Venus in Virgo brings a lot of criticism, despite having good points and receipts to back it up. Uranus in Gemini wants the freedom to fly, as resentment builds around an inner storm of caged frustration. Mercury in Libra encourages we have these conversations, but can have us in mediation and nauseam. The stability of agreements are challenged. Change feels impossible to resist. Unconventionality is calling. With Uranus involved, surprise and shock are possible. Closed minds will be tested - maybe not just our partners', and probably our patience.

September 21 brings the new Moon solar eclipse in Virgo at 29°. We have a stellium, aka a large concentration of planets in Virgo, including the Sun, Moon, Venus, and South Node. We are looking at karmic wrap-ups, completions, and endings. Perhaps upsettingly, perhaps long-awaited, things are exiting the chat and making space for the new. (We may see the new show up in as early as 6 months with the next batch of eclipses.) This eclipse happens at the anaretic degree, the final degree of the sign of Virgo. It also opposes Saturn retrograde in Pisces, forcing karmic completions with finality and a very sober tone. This is not a time for manifestation rituals, but a time for release, surrender, and facing head-on what arises in both the physical and emotional realms. Saturn's presence is heavy, emotionally taxing, and impossible to ignore. There is work to be done both in our daily life and via self-reflection. Do your work for best results. None of us are exempt.

September 22 brings the Autumn Equinox and welcomes Libra season until October 22. Libra, the sign of balance, harmony, justice, and relationships, is ruled by Venus that just recently entered Virgo. Relationships of all kinds are the focus of this season and we will be looking at the status of those relationships and how they healthfully and effectively maintain balance - or not. As the Sun enters Libra, it will immediately oppose Neptune in Aries at 0° causing confusion in our assessment abilities. It will be difficult to see reality clearly at this time. Fantasy or idealism can be mistaken for the truth of a matter. Do not be fooled by illusions. Take a few days to sit with recent events before making dramatic changes if possible.

Also on **September 22**, Mars enters Scorpio until November 4. Mars, the planet of action and drive is strong in the sign of its modern rulership. Moves are made now through keen intuition and an awareness of what is running the show beneath the surface. There is more of an emphasis on behind the scenes and under the radar. This is a great time for detective work, deep dives, and investigating. Mars wants the truth and will act with great tenacity to reveal it.

On **September 23**, the Sun in Libra creates a grand trine with Uranus retrograde in Gemini and Pluto retrograde in Aquarius at 1°. Massive communications, important ideas, and the flow of mental stimulation on 11. The pace is fast and the sheer volume of communicative exchanges can be overwhelming, but so much progress is possible.

On **September 24**, Mars in Scorpio squares Pluto retrograde in Aquarius at 1°. This is yikes. This is duking up. The planet of war and the planet of destruction squaring off in fixed signs is not a light day. The Moon will also be transiting Scorpio adding an incredibly emotional weight to whatever conflicts ensue. This is transformation through conflict. Power struggles and grit. What are you really fighting for? What lies beneath? Do you want to be right or do you want to evolve?

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VETERANS ★ POST ★

by Freddy Groves

Unions are out at the VA

One wonders how this was allowed to happen in the first place: Last year the VA paid out \$45 million to employees who were working for federal unions instead of being at their jobs.

But no more. Not only are most of them no longer employed at the VA, but the ones who are still employed have been directed to be on the job -- and that \$45 million is going back into the VA coffers to be used on veteran services.

A month ago the VA terminated the union bargaining agreements for most of those employees, canceling the contracts that had kept VA managers in a stranglehold and unable to hire and fire as they wanted and needed.

To get an idea of how the unions operated (to the detriment of the VA), the VA was forced to pay out \$134 million to former employees who had been fired for misconduct (which included harassment and patient abuse). Unions opposed the MISSION Act, which had a direct impact on veterans getting health care. And unions were against whistleblower protections.

Nurses alone were paid \$1.25 million for doing union business instead of taking care of patients. VA employees were paid for working 750,000 hours doing union business instead of doing their jobs at the VA. Others being paid for doing union business included attorneys and pharmacists.

Over 187,000 square feet of VA property had been used by the unions, for free, for union business, as well as over 2,000 pieces of equipment such as computers and phones. In one VA medical center alone the unions had used 7,500 square feet of office space, 3,500 square feet at another and over 2,000 square feet at nearly a dozen other VA facilities.

Following the VA's example, several other government agencies have followed suit and terminated their contracts with unions. Those include the Health and Human Services, Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Homeland Security.

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WEEKLY HOROSCOPES

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, patience may be thin this week, but resist the urge to jump ahead too quickly. A calm and steady pace will keep things from unraveling.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, a fresh opportunity at work or in your personal life might require stepping out of your comfort zone. Trust your instincts and take the leap.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Gemini, communication could feel a little off balance. Double-check what you're saying—and hearing—so misunderstandings don't linger.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, you may feel pulled between home and outside responsibilities. A little extra planning can help you manage both without feeling overwhelmed.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, energy is high and your presence lights up every room. Just remember to leave space for others to shine, too—it will only strengthen connections.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, finances may be on your mind. Take time to review your budget and future plans. A small adjustment could bring long-term peace of mind.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, this is a powerful week for self-expression. Whether through words, art, or action, don't hold back on what you want to share with the world.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, reflection plays a strong role in your week. Listen closely to your inner voice; it's guiding you toward something you've overlooked.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, a friend or group may seek your leadership. Be bold, but flexible, and you'll find yourself bringing people together in a positive way.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, recognition for your hard work may arrive this week. Accept it with grace, and don't shy away from celebrating your accomplishments.

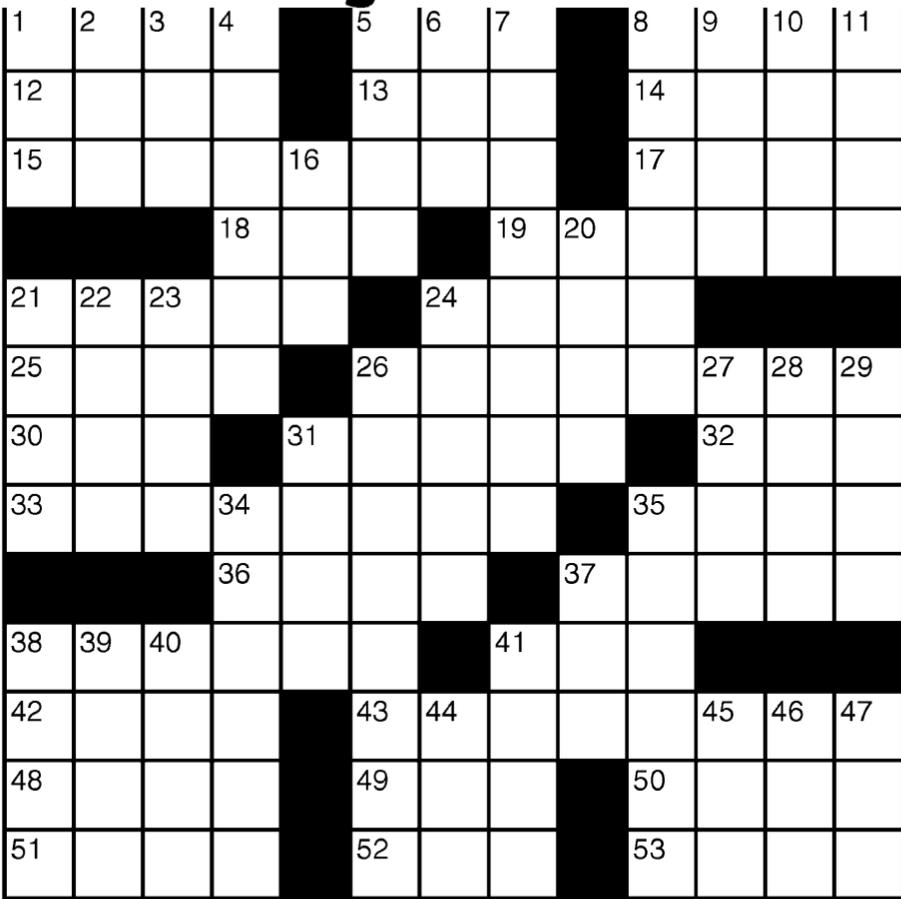
AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, wanderlust might hit strong. Whether you can travel or not, explore new ideas, cultures, or studies—it will refresh your spirit.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, emotions could run deep. Channel them into something creative or spiritual, and you'll find they become a powerful source of inspiration.

King Crossword



CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Like lemons
- 5 Rock concert booster
- 8 Farm fathers
- 12 "The Kite Runner" boy
- 13 Saloon
- 14 Buffalo's lake
- 15 Yellow-brown gemstone
- 17 Blaze
- 18 Industrious insect
- 19 Actor Karl
- 21 Entices
- 24 Small rodents
- 25 Common connections
- 26 Vision tests
- 30 Enjoy Aspen
- 31 Camper owners, for short
- 32 Yule quaff
- 33 Close watch
- 35 Blog entry
- 36 Hibernia
- 37 Trousers
- 38 Brief time
- 41 Debussy's "La --"
- 42 Author Hunter
- 43 Good-looking person
- 48 Laptop connection
- 49 Fair-hiring letters
- 50 Shabby beer joint
- 51 Feeder filler
- 52 Slangy denial
- 53 Way out

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Bit of ink
- 2 "-- Blue?"

- 3 Fix illegally
- 4 Goodies
- 5 Help a hood
- 6 Spring month
- 7 Opening night
- 8 Automatic reaction
- 9 Saharan
- 10 Swampy terrain
- 11 Viewed
- 16 ER workers
- 20 Experts
- 21 Pyramid part
- 22 "Puppy Love" singer
- 23 Beatnik's assent
- 24 "No way!"
- 26 Katniss in "The Hunger Games"
- 27 Shortly
- 28 Lion's share
- 29 Boot camp VIPs
- 31 Check
- 34 Mr. Brezhnev
- 35 Saint Patrick's Day event
- 37 Chest muscle
- 38 Stitches
- 39 Marisa's "Only Love" role
- 40 Parisian eatery
- 41 Cat call
- 44 Pro vote
- 45 Veto
- 46 506, in old Rome
- 47 However

The Spats



by Jeff Pickering



OUR Community

An Upbeat Question of the week

By Helen Mosbrooker

What is the most amazing adventure you have ever experienced?



Chief of Police of Oak Harbor, Tony Slowik, Oak Harbor

One of the most amazing adventures I have experienced was while serving in the United States Coast Guard. I was stationed on the Cutter Storis in Kodiak, Alaska. During the winter of 1998, the cutter conducted fisheries enforcement along the Aleutian Islands, extending from Alaska to Russian waters. During the patrol, there were several winter storms, and the cutter anchored in several harbors of the Aleutian Islands for shelter. I was fortunate to go ashore on the islands of Attu and Kiska, where American and Allied Forces, Imperial Japanese Army, and Navy wreckage remained from the Aleutian Islands Campaign of World War II. The experience was memorable, and the military campaign is not well-known because of other significant events of the war.



John Anderson, Oak Harbor

In 1965 after graduating from High School in Bakersfield, CA (age of 18), I enlisted in the Army with hopes of doing my basic training at Ft Ord, CA. However I ended up going to Ft Polk, in July 1965 which is another story. After basic training, I was assigned to Ft Gordon, GA for advanced training. About mid-way through my training I was summoned for a series of testing and interviewing which lasted for a couple of weeks without being told why. Upon completing all of this I was advised that I had been selected to be reassigned to the Presidential Honor Guard at FT Myer, VA (which is next to Arlington Cemetery). Lyndon Johnson was President then and I served at the White House and many other national monuments and Presidential Events. I had the honor of serving until Feb 1967 and during my time came into contact with Golda Meir (Israel), Harold Wilson (England), Charles De Gaulle (France) and many other heads of state.



Steve Jacobs, Oak Harbor

When I think about the most amazing adventure I've ever been on, it's not a trip around the world or a daring expedition—it's my career at New Leaf.

Before New Leaf, I started working young. At 13, I picked berries. Later, I was a dishwasher, and soon after, promoted to line cook. I even had the chance to cook with a catering company when the movie Practical Magic was filmed in Coupeville. But that's a story for another time.

In 1998, I began working at New Leaf as a janitor. My job was cleaning the meat room at the Commissary. It wasn't glamorous, but it paid the bills. I had just graduated high school and was grateful to be employed. At first, it was just a job-but over time, I started to appreciate more than the paycheck. It was the people I worked with, the sense of teamwork, the camaraderie. That's when I knew—I wanted to build a career at New Leaf.

Fast forward 26 years, and I now serve as the CEO and Executive Director of New Leaf.

Working here has given me the privilege to support individuals with exceptionalities— people often underestimated by society. I've watched employees receive their first paychecks and celebrate achievements many believed were out of reach. I've seen firsthand what it means for someone to proudly show off the car they bought or take their friends out to eat with their own money. These moments are powerful-especially for those who were once told they'd never have these opportunities.

This work has brought me so many life-changing experiences. I've seen people grow, take pride in their jobs, and find a sense of purpose and ownership. It's been an honor to help make that happen.

This journey has even taken me to Washington, D.C., where I've had the opportunity to advocate for people with exceptionalities. Even more inspiring, some of our employees have joined me to share their stories directly with lawmakers. We've met with Representative Rick Larsen, Senator Patty Murray, and Senator Maria Cantwell at the Capitol. One year, an employee we brought along ran into someone they knew who worked in the Hart Senate Office Building-they had gone to school together. It was a full-circle moment.

What an adventure it has been.

I don't take long vacations. I've never been on a safari. But this—this career, this mission—is my greatest adventure. And I can't wait to see where it takes me next.

YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS OURS WEATHER FORECAST

Fri, Sept 19	Sat, Sept 20	Sun, Sept 21	Mon, Sept 22	Tues, Sept 23	Wed, Sept 24	Thurs, Sept 25
North Isle H-68°/L-52°	North Isle H-65°/L-53°	North Isle H-63°/L-55°	North Isle H-65°/L-53°	North Isle H-67°/L-54°	North Isle H-67°/L-54°	North Isle H-62°/L-52°
South Isle H-69°/L-52°	South Isle H-68°/L-52°	South Isle H-65°/L-54°	South Isle H-68°/L-52°	South Isle H-67°/L-55°	South Isle H-69°/L-58°	South Isle H-64°/L-54°



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