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Marven Hansen, a 101-year-old WWII veteran and lifelong musician, continues to inspire those around him with his vibrant personality, rich life experiences, and love for singing and storytelling. From his service aboard the USS Farragut to his global engineering career and deep connection to Italian music and culture, Marven remains a cherished presence at his retirement community, where he shares his talents and memories with residents and visitors alike.

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Tutu School, owned by Meg Sakuda, offers ballet classes for children 6 months to 8 years, focusing on creativity, movement, and imagination. A former competitive dancer, she loves sharing this journey with her daughters and the community.

Cover photo by Nicholas Stratford

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Dr. Taryn Beard-Killeri

Taryn Killeri is Mrs. Mill Creek 2025, competing in the upcoming Mrs. Washington American pageant. Through her platform, "Know Yourself, Change the World," she promotes mental well-being while balancing her career, motherhood, and community service.

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Martha Damato

At nearly 85, massage therapist Martha Damato is a beloved fixture at Mill Creek Massage Envy, known for her humor, energy, and dedication to healing through touch. With a lifelong passion for learning, adventure, and service, she continues to inspire clients and colleagues alike with her expertise, positivity, and commitment to well-being.

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As we put together this spring issue, it's been truly heartwarming to see how our featured residents and businesses are following their passions and living life to the fullest.

Take, for example, Marven Hansen, our featured resident this issue. At 101 years young, Marven can still be found playing piano and singing at Cogir

Senior Living in Mill Creek. His love for music began early in life and remains as strong as ever. Learn more about Marven and his fascinating naval career starting on page 7.

Another inspiring local figure is Martha Damato, whose calming presence and zen-like aura help clients unwind and reduce stress at Massage Envy in Mill Creek. Martha's passion for her craft is evident in the many loyal clients who return time and time again to be encouraged to live their best lives. Discover more about Martha and the transformative benefits of massage on page 36.

Driven by her love for dance, Meg Sakuda has opened her third dance studio, TuTu School, in the Mill Creek Town Center. Learn more about Meg's dance journey and the inspiration behind her enchanting studio on page 27.

And did you know we have our very own Mrs. Mill Creek right here in town? We had the privilege of meeting Dr. Taryn Beard-Killari, a remarkable woman who is representing Mill

Creek in the Mrs. Washington American Pageant this March. Find out more about Taryn, her mission, and how you can support her journey through sponsorship on page 32.

This spring, our vibrant community clubs and organizations are offering a variety of exciting activities. Be sure to check our Table of Contents for information on the Garden Club, Women's Club, Library, and senior programs.

The Town Center will host its annual Spring Wine Walk on May 3rd. Don't miss out on this fun event! For more details, turn to page 24. And mark your calendars for the MCCA Garage Sale, also on May 3rd. It's always a great time! More information can be found on page 25.

We'd also like to take a moment to recognize the incredible work being done by our local volunteer organizations, including the Kiwanis Club, the North Sound Police Foundation, and the Hope Creek Charitable Foundation. We encourage you to learn more about their efforts, and if you're interested, they are always looking for new volunteers!

Mill Creek Little League's programs are kicking off once again. For more details, turn to page 18. You can also catch up on the performances of the sports teams at Archbishop Murphy and Jackson high schools this season, starting on page 42.

We hope you'll take the opportunity to enjoy these exciting events this spring. As always, we'd love to hear from you! If you or your group have ideas for future articles about life in our vibrant community, please don't hesitate to reach out. Our contact information can be found below.

Enjoy this issue, and don't forget to support the amazing advertisers who make it possible for us to bring you Mill Creek Living Magazine.

—Sue Ramback

MILL CREEK Living

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Marven Hansen: Still Singing at 101!

by Barbara Sleeper

What a treat it was to meet a person born just two weeks before my mother's own birthday in November 1923. While my mother passed away 14 years ago in 2011, Marven is still going strong. I felt an immediate connection to this living treasure from the *Greatest Generation*.

I first met Marven Hansen at his favorite place, sitting on the sofa by the fireplace in the lobby at the Cogir Retirement Community of Mill Creek. Surrounded by other residents playing cards and tackling puzzles, he had picked a cozy spot in the middle of all the social action.



"He's so friendly," said Cheryl Olson, Cogir's Business Office Assistant as she walked past us. "I love how he sings. Almost every day, Marven sits here by the fire and sings."

"He still plays some guitar and sings amazingly well as a Baritone," adds Kevin Kuhlman, Cogir's Community Relations Director. "He's the most lucid 101-year-old I know, and he carries amazing conversations. I just had a 15-minute talk with him the other day about Italy!"

"I'm impressed that as a centenarian, Marven can still sing so strongly and beautifully," says fellow Cogir resident and musician, 91-year-old Basyl Kercheval. "Often, when I walk into the lobby, Marven is playing the piano and singing songs in Italian!"

"I think he does it to entertain himself,

all the while entertaining anyone lucky enough to be present. We often play music together during *Open Mic* events at Cogir, and our favorite song is always the Italian classic, *O Sole Mio*."

That's not a surprise considering Marven's happy nature. *O Sole Mio* celebrates the beauty of a sunny day after a storm, describing the joy and festivity that comes with the clear, fresh air. The lyrics express admiration for the sun, comparing it to a beloved person who brings happiness and comfort.

"Marven is a self-taught musician, and he sings in different languages," adds Basyl. "His varied repertoire reflects his many travels and long interesting life."

Born in 1923, at Swedish Hospital in Seattle, Marven says he started singing in Sunday School when he was just three

Top right: Just about any day of the week, Marven can be found sitting at his favorite spot by the Cogir fireplace.

Left: Marven joined the U.S. Navy in 1944 during WWII, pictured here in his officer's uniform onboard the USS Farragut.

FEATURE

years old, singing solos for the parents.

He grew up at the bottom of the Great Depression with his older brother, Norman. “Unlike me, my brother was an outdoor guy who joined the Boy Scouts and loved to climb mountains. I stuck with music.

“Our parents were Norwegian, and they used to sing duets together at the Norwegian Club in Seattle. I sang Soprano at the John Muir Elementary School, performing solos with the Boys Chorus.”

In 1932, during the depths of the depression, Marven remembers attending a party with his parents on Beacon Hill. “The host bought two dozen cans of pork and beans, poured them into a big kettle and threw a party.”

Marven did a lot of yardwork as a

young boy. “When I was eleven, I got a job mowing a neighbor’s yard. He paid me \$0.35 for two hours of work! I also delivered the Sears Roebuck & Co.

Catalogue and the Buyers Guide to about 40 homes.”

In the 1930s, someone gave Marven a broken guitar, and he took it home, fixed it, and taught himself how to play. He played that guitar until he bought himself a new one in 1955, which he still owns.

“I attended both Franklin and Roosevelt high schools, and I remember going from a Soprano at Franklin to a Baritone at Roosevelt,” he

chuckles. “I also played trombone, and the Roosevelt band director bought me a new one when I transferred.”

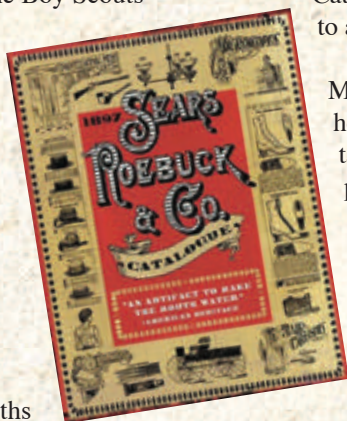
Marven continued playing his trombone in the band and singing in the Navy ROTC Chorus at the University of

Washington where he earned a degree in Civil Engineering.

Then, after completing his degree, he joined the U.S. Navy in January 1944 as an Ensign, one of the youngest commissioned officers in the maritime Navy during WWII. He served on the destroyer *USS Farragut (DD-348)*, traveling on military missions to Saipan, Guam and the Japanese Islands.

According to Wikipedia, the *USS Farragut* was named after Admiral David Glasgow Farragut (1801-1870) and was the lead ship of her class of destroyers in the U.S. Navy. Built in Quincy, MA, she was launched by President Roosevelt’s daughter-in-law on March 15, 1934.

The Farragut was berthed in a nest of destroyers at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked on December 7, 1941. She was saved by senior naval officer, Ensign James Benham, who earned the Bronze Star for quickly getting her underway while keeping up steady fire



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on the incoming Japanese fighter planes.

“In 1944, our assignment on the *Farragut* was to eliminate the machine gun threat on the cliffs of Saipan,” explains Marven. “We fired 200 six inch shells at our targets to make it safe for our troops to land.

“In Guam, we guarded our troops to keep ships from firing on them offshore as they landed. The Japanese were attempting to recapture 200 feet of beachline the Americans had taken.”

The *Farragut* guarded the carriers covering the landings on June 15, 1944, bombarded the shores of Saipan and Guam, and served as radar picket through the *Battle of the Philippine Sea* on June 19 and 20, 1944.

On July 17 and 18, 1944, she closed the beach at Agat, Guam, providing cover fire for underwater demolition teams preparing their assault on the island.

Painted in ‘dazzle pattern camouflage,’ the *Farragut* was overhauled at the Puget Sound Navy Yard before returning to military action in the Japanese Islands where she supported carriers in their operations to invade Iwo Jima and Okinawa, and later, air attacks on the Ryukyus islands.

“On one mission in the Japanese Islands, we were asked to answer the call of a U.S. aircraft carrier that had been occupied by the Japanese. Our job was to tow the carrier further away from the Japanese torpedo planes.”

Marven lived through all this remarkable WWII history and is still here to talk about it.

“After the war ended, I stayed in the Naval Reserves for several decades,” he continues. “I trained a lot during the first half, but not so much during the second half.

“I helped organize *USS Farragut* crew reunions every year. We held them in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Diego, CA. I also wrote a quarterly newsletter that included crew member news and obituaries.”

Marven began his career as a Civil Engineer after the *USS Farragut* was decommissioned in October 1945. His first job was with the Washington State Highway Department paving Highway 99 between Seattle and Midway, then building a bridge between Sultan and Gold Bar, WA.

After the Green Lake Aqua Theater was built in 1950, Marven also sang for a company called *Music Under*



Married in Naples, Italy in 1957, Giussepa and Marven had a long, happy marriage that included three children, Gioia, Paul and Jennifer.

the Stars that performed *Kiss Me Kate* and other famous musicals there until the theater was closed and repurposed in 1970.

In 1955, Marven worked

on construction projects in Norway, then was transferred to Naples, Italy to help build submarine pens with the Navy Corps of Engineers.

It was during that trip to Italy that Marven met his future wife, *Giuseppa Iole Costantino*, at the Officers Club in Naples.

Marven’s eyes lit up as he carefully enunciated her full Italian name to me, making it sound musical.

“I remember seeing her standing at the entrance. She was the first person I met at the club. There was something about the Italian language and the music that really got to me,” he remembers.

“Giuseppa was called *Giuseppina* as a child, so I ended up calling her *Pina* as a nickname. Being Italian, she loved music, but she couldn’t carry a tune,” he grinned. “But that never stopped her from singing as often as possible.”

Less than a year after that chance encounter at the Officers Club, Marven and Giuseppa were married in Naples in February 1957. A year later, their daughter Gioia was born in Italy. They had two more

children, Paul and Jennifer, both born in the United States. “After we got married, we moved to the United States. But Pina got terribly homesick, missing her mother, so I got



Marven and Giuseppa (Pina), photographed here in 1957, shared an adventurous life filled with love, romance and travel.

a civil engineering job in England for four years so she could see her mother as often as she liked.”

Marven’s career as a naval engineer took him to Saudi Arabia, Spain, France, Norway, Germany and Italy, to name just a few countries. He was also an Engineering Director for Highway and Bridge Construction in the United States.

“In Germany, I helped build primary schools. While in London, I traveled to southern Spain to find locations to send Marines around the coast and to the interior. I even worked in Bellingham for two years overseeing construction of the Nooksack River Bridge in Everson, WA.

“My mother was a very, very smart woman,” joins in daughter Gioia. “She had a doctorate in Latin and Ancient Greek, but there were no jobs in her field, so she got a job as an accountant at the Naples Officers Club.

“The night she met my

FEATURE

father, her best friend, Lena, had asked her to switch workdays, so my mom (not Lena) was sitting at the front desk when my dad asked her if he could borrow a bottle of ink (to write a letter to a girlfriend in Norway.)

“Even though there was a bottle of ink in the desk drawer, my mother said *NO*, because she didn’t understand the word *ink* in English. By the end of the evening, there was no need to write that letter because my dad was already smitten.

“According to Norwegian tradition, I should have been named after my paternal grandmother, Helga Hansen, but just before I was born, my mom was reading an

to Kristiansand, Norway to introduce my mother to his relatives and visit the home that had been in his family for many generations.”

Gioia says Marven’s relatives had never seen stiletto heels before, so they asked Pina to take them off and put them on the fireplace mantel for everyone to see.

Marven’s parents emigrated from Norway through Ellis Island, then returned to Norway when Marven was a toddler, which is where he learned some Norwegian.

“Over the years, he learned Italian quite well because he took singing lessons in Italian,” Gioia says. “He later confessed to Pina that many of his romantic Italian lines to her came from songs.

“When my father was a young boy, my grandfather, Gorman, owned a restaurant in downtown Seattle. At the end of the day, he would take

the leftover food, with Marven and Norman in tow, and give it to the needy living in Seattle’s shantytown or *Hooverville* in back of the railroad station.”

According to HistoryLink.org, the name Hooverville was a sarcastic nod to the unpopular U.S. President Herbert Hoover (1874-1964), blamed by many for letting the country slide into the Great Depression following the 1929 stock market crash.

“During the depression,” says Gioia, “Marven’s mother

would cook a meal then serve leftovers from it for the next three days. She asked her sons to call it something different each day so the neighbors wouldn’t know they were eating the same food.

“From 1962 to 1966, our family lived in London, followed by moves to Frankfurt, Germany, then Italy. My father traveled quite often on Temporary Duty (TDY) to Saudi Arabia and other places in Italy.

“During our childhood, dad told us we couldn’t have a dog, but while he was out of town, my sister Jennifer defied his orders and adopted a cocker spaniel puppy she named *Ginger*.

“I remember wondering how he would respond when he discovered the dog at our house, but his first glimpse of *Ginger* was while she was eating food from her bowl with her long ears held up over her head with a clothespin. He immediately fell in love with her, and later, a Yorkshire Terrier named *Toto*.

“My father has always been super smart and good at math and mechanical things,” she continues. “He likes to brag that when I worked for Boeing, I had to take a data management exam and received the highest score in the country.

“I was never into beauty contests, but my dad secretly entered me in one and I ended up becoming Miss Navy NW



Paul and Marven celebrated Halloween together at Cogir last October.



Oldest daughter, Gioia, was born in Italy and later became Miss Navy NW in 1978 after her proud dad entered her in the contest.

Italian romance novel whose heroine was named *Gioia*, (pronounced *joy-a*) and there went tradition. My name means *joy* in Italian.

“Not only was my mother smart and beautiful, but she was short,” adds Gioia. “The Italian fashion for women in 1957 featured tight skirts with kick pleats, cashmere sweaters and high stiletto heels.

“Soon after they were married, my dad drove them in his VW Karmann Ghia

in 1978, winning a scholarship to a modeling school. Later, I even became a Seafair Princess!

“My dad is definitely my hero,” adds Gioia. “My mom was sick for a very long time before she died in 2010, and my dad took care of her for many years.

“Initially, my parents had a lot of obstacles to overcome with different languages, upbringing and religions, but they always remained devoted to each other and made it work.”

Marven’s son, Paul, lived in the Mill Creek Highlands for 25 years before retiring as a Vice President from the Graybar Electric Corporation in 2022.

He now lives with his wife, Christine, and their yellow lab, *Cody*, in Anacortes where Christine keeps the family’s Italian traditions alive by using Giuseppa’s recipes to make specialty meals, including her *Pasta al Forno*.

“I would say that my dad is one of the most generous people I have ever known,” says Paul. “He is always in a good mood. In fact, you could say he is optimistic to a fault. If

you lose an arm, he'll tell you how lucky you are to still have one left!

"He is also one of the humblest people I've ever known. I remember being in the Indian Guides when I was eight or nine years old and my dad being in the arm-wrestling finals with another dad who was a roofer.

"My dad was always physically very strong, so he beat the other dad, but then on the way home, he told me he probably won because the other dad had just gotten off work and was tired.

"For the last 10 years of my mom's life, she had to have dialysis for kidney failure twice a day at home, and dad helped her with all of it. He was so loyal he never went anywhere or did anything; he just stayed home to take care of her."

In 2014, Marven was invited on an Honor Flight for veterans back to Washington, DC to visit the nation's memorials. According to their website, the goal of the Honor Flight Network is "to help veterans experience the honor, gratitude and community support they deserve."

"When we left our D.C. hotel by bus to visit the monuments," Marven remembers, "we were given a special police escort with sirens. Then total strangers lined up on both sides of the sidewalk to greet and thank us for our service when we got off the bus at the WWII Memorial!"

Marven lived at his View Ridge home in Seattle until he reached 100, then one day he told Paul he was ready to move.

"I met with Kevin Kuhlman at Cogir and when he told me about all the music



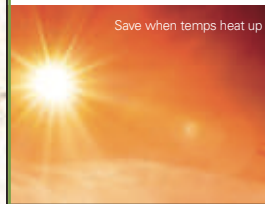
In 2014, Marven had the opportunity to visit the WWII memorials in Washington, DC on an Honor Flight for veterans.

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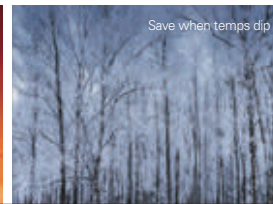
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During WWII, Marven served as an officer on the Naval destroyer USS Farragut (DD-348), that engaged the enemy in Saipan, Guam and the Japanese Islands.

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they offer at Cogir, that sold me right there,” Paul says. “I also knew Mill Creek would be a good place for dad because my daughter’s family lives there and my son lives in Bothell.”

Paul and Gioia helped Marven move and get settled at Cogir more than a year ago. Now Marven says he wished he had moved there sooner.

“He is really happy there, and he loves his TV,” adds Paul. “We got him a 50-inch, the biggest one he’s ever had. When I go see him at Cogir, I log into *YouTube* so he can watch videos of Italy and Norway.”

For years, Marven was an active member of the Norwegian Male Chorus of Seattle, the oldest continuously operating chorus in Seattle. Marven rode with a friend to rehearsal every Monday night at the Nordic Heritage Museum (now National Nordic Museum) in Ballard until he turned 99.

Renamed Seattle Mannskor in 2020, just in time for the COVID-19 shutdown, the chorus performs at

the annual *Sangerfest*, in the *Syttende Mai Parade*, at Sons of Norway Leif Erikson Lodge functions, *Julefest* and during *Tivoli Viking Days* at the National Nordic Museum.

Every year, the chorus hosts



Marven wore an apron at the annual Lutefisk dinner to raise funds for the Norwegian Male Chorus.

a fund-raising Lutefisk dinner during which Marven used to both cook and sing. He even sang with the chorus for the King of Norway during his visit to Seattle in 2015.

A Navy man through and through, Marven proudly carries his World War II Veterans hat with him on his walker, and he continues to meet once a month at Cogir with a local Navy club.

“Among his many interests, my dad also loves antique clocks,” says Paul. “He collected and learned how



Fellow Cogir resident, Tom Chrobak, sings Tenor with Marven and often sits with him by the fireplace and in the Cogir dining room.

to fix them when he lived in London.

“Now he loves watching the birds that live in the wooded habitats around Cogir. He fills the birdfeeders once a week with the 10 to 15-pound bags of birdseed I bring him to keep him well-supplied.”

And Marven’s love of dogs continues. In the middle of our conversation, an enthusiastic black and white dog named *Panda*, owned by fellow resident Marcia Bright, came running up with her leash trailing behind and nearly jumped in Marven’s lap.

“He has a special friendship with *Panda*,” says Paul. “He wraps leftover pieces of meat in tin foil from the dining room and keeps them on his walker in case he sees her. But she’s now on the lookout for him as well.”

“I consider Marven my best buddy,” shares Cogir resident, Tom Chrobak as he sat down on the sofa next to Marven. “I’m a Tenor and we often sing together when he plays piano.”

“My favorite type of music is still a brass band,” continues Marven. “I always listen for the trombones. I love listening to American jazz trombonist, Tommy Dorsey, the popular bandleader during the Big Band era. He inspired me to play the trombone, which I did at all the dances during high school.”

Dorsey, known as the ‘*sentimental gentleman of swing*,’ also set the musical tone for WWII. From *Boogie Woogie*, *Marie*, *Opus One* and *Royal Garden Blues* to *Tea for Two* and *On the Sunny Side of the Street*, Dorsey’s trombone kept happy feet dancing.

“I also love Glenn Miller’s music, including his 1942 hit, *I’ve Got a Gal in Kalamazoo* and the wartime favorite, *In the Mood*,” says Marven.

As a self-taught musician who still plays by ear, Marven’s advice to young starts is, “Learn to read music and play an instrument like a guitar, banjo, clarinet or



Basil Kercheval accompanies Marven on the mandolin as Marven sings during an Open Mic performance at Cogir.

piano. With an instrument you can do so much more than just with your voice.”

“I don’t really play piano,” he admits. “I know chords but not the notes. It’s the same way I play the guitar. I play by ear.”

When asked how often he performs at Cogir, Marven said, “Not often enough!”

Marven claims he isn’t on a special diet, that he eats everything *except poured apple juice!*

“I used to walk a lot when I lived at my View Ridge home in Seattle, but now, not so much. The only workout I get now is to go down to the Cogir exercise room and weigh myself!”

He thinks his secret for living so long was doing a lot of physical work and lawn care when he was young.

“My dad is ethical and honest, not materialistic, a truly happy person,” says Gioia. “I think that’s part of the reason he’s lived to 101; he doesn’t sweat the small stuff. If there is an emergency, he’s the one you want there.”

Marven says he is blessed with two grandchildren, Jacki and Michael, and three great-grandchildren, Rory, Gia and Mia, and that lucky for him, he has regular contact with all of them.

Gioia and her husband Kem just built a home in Utah a couple years ago and

snowbird there from Seattle during the winter months.

Jennifer recently moved to Laguna Beach, CA with her husband Steven and their rescue dog, *Valentino*, one of a series of dogs she has rescued over the years. She sang in musicals during high school, still loves Karaoke and is also a great Italian cook.

“Jennifer and I are both blessed to have our brother Paul,” adds Gioia. “He’s really been instrumental in our dad’s care. Our number one priority is making sure dad gets the best care possible and that he is safe and happy. Paul makes sure that happens.”

“My favorite thing about the very musical Marven,” concludes Cogir resident, Ann D. Benjamin, “is his ability to play the trombone through his lips, no

instrument needed! He can play entire songs that way.”

After learning about Marven’s many talents and wonderful, music-filled life, it’s hard not to end with the Dorsey melody, *I’m Getting Sentimental Over You*.

Play any Tommy Dorsey song, and you’ll immediately resonate with Marven’s happy head-state.



Celebrating his 100th birthday in 2023, Marven is surrounded by his great-granddaughters, (L-R) Mia, Rory and Gioia.

AROUND THE MILL

Mill Creek Garden Club

The arrival of March often brings poetic words of piercing winds, colorful kites, spring showers, and ... *"Daffodils, that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty."*

Sorry, we do not mean to



get highbrow with that William Shakespeare quote, but we do hope, as you read this, it coincides with the blooming of Mill Creek Garden Club's much ballyhooed daffodils. Look for our cheerful yellow blossoms at the MCCA sign on 164th and Bothell-Everett highway, and in Library Park, near Veterans Monument. Our club's volunteers planted more than 800 bulbs in the autumn of 2023, in hopes they would bloom by March 14, 2024, our 40th Anniversary, and they did! Today, we are a youthful 41 years old, full of spunk and ready to spring forward with

Garden Club's anniversary daffodils brighten the community.



Nina's watercolor painting is the logo for this year's Mill Creek Garden Tour.

thrilled to roll out "Sunflower Splash," by our own artist, Nina Durfee, whose artwork will grace the Mill Creek Garden Tour & Artisan Market's 2025 poster, tour guide, and note cards. If you attend our garden tour, you can buy a pack or two of these beautiful note cards. If you still use a paper calendar, please save Saturday, July 19, for the Mill Creek Garden Tour or for the techies out there, enter the date on your device. You will notice the splash of sunflower posters around "the Creek" in June. Be sure to check out the details.

A little about the artist: Nina, when instructed in kindergarten to draw a horse,

our rallying cry, "Changing lives through gardening."

In the fall, we put out an official "Call for Art" to our members and they responded with truly lovely floral-themed paintings. What a tough decision to select just one! Mill Creek Garden Club is



The winning artwork of the talented Nina Durfee.

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clearly drew what was a sawhorse. Any dreams of an art career were dashed at age five! Many years later, during the Covid lockdown, Nina got brave or bored enough to try her hand at watercolor painting, picking up the brush every single day. Her early work harkened back to that sawhorse, but occasionally something appeared on paper that took her breath away. She discovered the purpose of art is joy—for the artist. Nina commented, “*Question any idea that you might not be creative. Try your hand at art—in any form—to get the juices flowing.*” We are all the beneficiaries of her blossoming creative side. Who knew we had such talented people in our midst?

Because of our community’s support for last year’s Garden Tour, we garnered \$10,000 for our Grants Program. Although the grant application process is just begin-

ning, we have awarded two scholarships of \$1,500 each to students enrolled in the Horticulture Department at Edmonds College. Edmonds College has a renowned horticulture program, and we are proud to work with this Snohomish County school. These scholarships often produce a second career for older adults. Last year’s scholarship recipients sent heartfelt thank you notes which inspired our mantra, “*Changing lives through gardening.*”

Mill Creek Garden Club comes together September – May in Shawn O’Donnell’s

Everett conference room. Our meetings feature a brief business session followed by an educational, informative, and often humorous guest speaker followed by a delicious “Shawn’s style” buffet lunch. Visit our website to learn more about us: www.millcreekgardenclub.com and “Think Dafodils,” as we brighten our community.



Thanks to Garden Club, we all get a warm welcome to Mill Creek.

WSU Snohomish County Master Gardener Foundation presents the 22nd Annual Sustainable Gardening 2025 WINTER SPEAKER SERIES

March 7 Candy Brown
“Gardens for Birds”

March 14 Mark Turner
“Wildflower Photography”

March 28 Dee Montpetit - “Garden Journeys:
Before & After Transformations”

April 4 Linda Chalker-Scott, PHD
“Myths and Gardening Folklore”

All are invited to attend!
Fridays 9:30am-11:30am
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at the door

All lectures held at NEW location!
EVERETT STATION, Weyerhaeuser Room,
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Please visit our website, www.gardenlectures.com,
for a complete listing of dates, speakers and topics.



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AROUND THE MILL

Get to know our Kiwanis Club as we spring into the summer fun



Kiwanis International is a global network of clubs and volunteer members who partner with each other and organizations to serve kids and families who need support. The Kiwanis Mission is to create a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world by one child and one community at a time with a vision of being a positive influence in communities worldwide.

Mill Creek is one of those communities. The Kiwanis Club of Mill Creek (KCMC) was founded in 2017 by two Kiwanians, Jack LaPoint and Jim Garcia, whose own club had become defunct. They wanted to continue with the Kiwanis mission



and contacted the local representative from Kiwanis, Kathleen Moylan, to approve of the Mill Creek Club and get it started. There was a need to create a charter group of members to get the club off the ground. They used their contacts and drew from the community the first group of about twenty volunteers. Many of those members are still with the club today.

The Kiwanians represent your neighbors, friends, and folks who work in the community or are connected through other means. They are active and retired, young and experienced; people who are educators, small business owners, application engineers, public safety officers, military veterans, professional voice and stage actors, public officials, utility workers, stay at home spouses, and more. Some of the members are second generation Kiwanians, and many volunteer or have volunteered in other organizations in addition to Kiwanis. One of the members, Kathryn, tells the story on why she joined Kiwanis: “My father, Wallace Young, was a member of the Kiwanis Club of East Hawai’i serving Hilo and the Big Island of Hawai’i. He wore his club’s tee shirt with pride, even outside of the club events. The camaraderie among members of his Kiwanis club was infectious, but even more so was the pride in the

club’s service to benefit the next generation of leaders which, at that time, was the Key Club (boys) and Keywanettes (girls) at Hilo High School. Dad always came home energized from his Kiwanis club’s events. He was at ease helping in the community wherever it was needed. It was as much of a social club for him while also doing good. Back then, Kiwanis was a men-only club by invitation until 1987 when, by an over-



whelming vote at the Kiwanis International Convention, Kiwanis clubs welcomed women to its membership. When I heard of the formation of the Kiwanis Club of Mill Creek, the door opened for me to continue the legacy of Kiwanis service in my family. And, it couldn’t have come at a better time because my youngest had graduated from Everett Public Schools, closing a chapter for me volunteering in the school commu-

nity.”
The new Kiwanis Club had lofty ideas for a small club with few funds. One of the first moves was to sponsor a Key Club at the new North Creek High School and then take over sponsorship of the Jackson High Key club who up until then had been supported by the Kiwanis Club of Snohomish. The Key in Key Club stands for *Kiwanians Educating Youth*, and KCMC provides advisors to the clubs (in addition to their school faculty advisors), and partners with the Key clubs on events. They also provide the Jack LaPoint Memorial Scholarship to selected senior members of each club at the end of the school year. Both Key clubs have

grown and prospered, are highly active, and have developed outstanding young leaders in our community. In 2024, the Jackson High School Key Club started sponsoring a Builder’s Club at Gateway Middle School in partnership with the Kiwanians, expanding their impact in the schools.

The Kiwanians decided that in the first few years they would focus primarily on events that directly served the Mill Creek community and hopefully raise funding through donations. Some of those early events included volunteering at the Run of the Mill and the Mill Creek Festival, support for the Mill Creek Library, offering weekly educational activities and face painting at the Power of Produce @Mill Creek Farmers Market, participating in Eggstravaganza, and even holding a rubber ducky race!

In 2020, at the start of the pandemic, the Mill Creek club provided Literacy Totes that provided support to students at Woodside Elementary and Mill Creek Elementary with totes of books, workbooks on First Aid for Feelings to better understand managing emotions during the pandemic, and deck of cards with game instructions. The



club also helped create a Graduation Parade for our high school seniors that year.

Today, the two main fundraisers that have continued to thrive are the annual Electronic Waste Recycling event (Spring),



outside of meetings and events. They also have social events such as holiday parties and informal gatherings and, most recently, Bingo Night with KCMC members, Key and Builders club, friends, and family. Another member, Suellen, explains she was talked into joining the club by a friend who later left the club. She decided

to stay *“because I enjoy the friendships and the fun things we do for the community.”*

Everyone has their personal reason for why they join Kiwanis. Most people join Kiwanis because they know kids need adults who care about them in addition to and outside their family support system. One of the members, City councilmember John Steckler, was one of the founders. He says this about his reasoning: *“After a long career of raising two boys from babies to manhood here in the city of Mill Creek, I decided to devote my retirement years to being a public servant to the city that gave my family so much. First, I applied for and was appointed a councilmember for the city of Mill Creek, nine years ago. It was also about 8 years ago that my wife Lisa heard about Kiwanis starting its own Mill Creek Chapter. I remember my wife saying, “this is a rare chance to become a Charter Member of a Kiwanis club dedicated to our city and the children in it.” Both of us joined and never looked back. There are*

two reasons I have stayed with the club, 1) This club is not a donation/meeting club. We are a club that rolls up its sleeves and serves the community we all know and love, and 2) the other reason I stay is because of the WONDERFUL people in the membership that I get to know and now call my friends”.

Mill Creek Kiwanis is always looking for additional like-minded community members from Mill Creek and neighboring communities to join us to expand their efforts, whether it is through

fundraising, volunteer work, or partnerships with local organizations. Kiwanis meetings are held at 6:00 pm on the first and third Wednesdays in the small community room on the first floor at Mill Creek City Hall North, 15720 Main St. If you have any questions or are interested in attending a future meeting, please email kiwanisofmillcreek@gmail.com.



and the Documents Shredding event (Fall), both in partnership with the City and People’s Bank. The E-Waste Recycle event is held the day after the Mill Creek Garage sale and is scheduled for May 4th this year. KCMC continues to sponsor and attend community events with their signature tent and numerous services: National Night Out, City sponsored Parties in the Park (face painting, kid tattoos, the Wall of Kindness), Kiwanis One Day of service, supporting the local food bank and the Family Resource Center, supporting blood and platelet donations for Bloodworks Northwest, and participation in City parades like the Veterans Day Parade. The most recent big event was the Santa Parade and Tree Lighting ceremony. The club used its connections to ensure Santa would be riding in the parade for all the children and families to enjoy.

The Kiwanis Club of Mill Creek does not just serve the community – they have fun while doing so. There are opportunities to socialize and get together before, after, and

Free e-Waste Recycling Day

Sunday, May 4, 2025
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Mill Creek City Hall North
15720 Main Street - Parking Lot

Items We DO Accept

Computers, Laptops, Cell Phones, Tablets, Flat Screen TVs & Monitors (LCD, Plasma), Printers, Fax Machines, Scanners, Servers & Networking Equipment, Keyboards, Mice, Remote Controls, Telecom Equipment, AV Equipment (DVD, Blu-ray, VCR, Stereos, Gaming Consoles), Microwaves, Holiday Lights, Wires, Cables

Items We CANNOT Accept

Refrigerators and Large Appliances (washers/dryers, stoves, dishwashers, etc.) Tube TVs/Projection TVs, CRT Monitors, Water Heaters, BBQs, Patio Furniture, Exercise Equipment, Vacuum Cleaners

It’s Free to drop off items, DONATIONS ARE ENCOURAGED.
Donations benefit Kiwanis Club of Mill Creek and used in our community.

Info at: kiwanisclubofmillcreek.org



Find us everywhere!
Instagram @KiwanisofMillCreek
Facebook Kiwanis Club of Mill Creek
kiwanisclubofmillcreek.org

AROUND THE MILL

Mill Creek Little League

Let's play ball! With the spring season in full swing, we are excited to be back on the fields and playing ball again. The Little League season is full of growth, development and most importantly, lots of fun! From the players to the coaches to the families, Little League brings a season of ballpark hot dogs, cheering from the dugouts, community events and fingers



crossed, sunny days on the ball field. Last year we were able to enjoy more than just ball games together. Mill Creek Little League's events team put together some incredible opportunities for the community. We are looking forward to more events like Little League Day, Pink the Creek, Jackson Softball Night, Mariners and AquaSox games, 12's celebration and much more. Remember, none of this could happen without the support of our amazing volunteers. Please



be sure to watch for opportunities to help. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates on Freedom Field schedules and events. Be sure to tag us in those posts so we can share your photos on our story. Go Creek!

For more information go to millcreeklittleleague.com



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Mill Creek Women's Club

The ladies of the Mill Creek Women's Club have had a productive and enjoyable few months. In November our



evening fundraiser at the Mill Creek Country Club was well attended. We were able to donate to donate \$20,000 from personal donations, raffles, and auctions to Esther's Place, which provides meals, showers and a safe place to stay for Snohomish County homeless women.

December's meeting featured comedic hypnotist Jim Kellner, who demonstrated his skill with hilarious results. Our ladies also collected hats, gloves, and scarves for the clients of Esther's Place. The red and green decorations at the Country Club were beautiful and the buffet lunch was delicious.

Detective Christine White from the Mill Creek Police Department spoke to us during our January



Detective Christine White

meeting about scams and how to protect ourselves from predators. Many of the women shared personal experiences of times they or their loved ones have been targeted. Takeaways from her talk included: not giving personal information over the phone, don't click

on e-mails that claim to be from your bank or say you have won a prize requiring bank information, don't comply with any call that says a loved one

is in trouble with instructions not to call parents or police, or anyone who wants you to send them a gift card or cashier's check to settle a financial dispute. Advice was given to call the police if you have been a target of a scam. We continue to enjoy the fabulous food at Shawn O'Donnell's, the lovely flower arrangements from Stadium Flowers, and raffles to help support the YWCA's Women's Working Wardrobe. A January happy hour was hosted at Joyce Watson's



Sandy Stamato

home for new members, with some members of the board available to answer questions and to welcome them to the group.

Upcoming programs include Sandy Stamato,

founder of Limb Dweller Transitional Coaching, for our February meeting. She is compassionate, funny and doesn't hold anything back in her coaching, podcasts, and speaking engagements.

March will feature our own MCWC member and treasurer,

Pennie Whitish, who will give a presentation on her "Majestic Mountain Adventures". Come and hear about her exciting world travels.

Robin Layton, award

winning photojournalist and photographer will be our April guest. *Seattle Magazine* voted her one of the most influential people of 2020. She will speak about her career, photos, and books. Those of us who heard her a few years ago were very impressed with her presentation.

The May program will bring us Kelli Estes, local best-selling author of *The Girl Who Wrote in Silk* and *Today We Go Home* will speak about her new book *Smoke on the Wind*. It will be released in May, and she plans to have copies available for sale.

Members continue to enjoy the variety of clubs and socials within our organization which deepens friendships. We recently had a tour of the Schack Art Center followed by lunch at Lombardi's in Everett. Our next outing is to explore specialty food markets in Lynnwood and Mountlake



Pennie Whitish

Terrace. In March, an outing to the Edmonds Driftwood Players – Clue the Musical with an optional after play gathering is planned. Events continue to be for members and their guests only. For more information or to join email membershipm-cwc@gmail.com. We look forward to meeting you!



Kelli Estes



Robin Layton

AROUND THE MILL



Community Support
for Those Who Serve.

K9 Police Units
Volunteer Citizen Patrols
Memorial Funds
Public Safety Equipment

www.northsoundpolicefoundation.org



Why a Foundation?

by Sally Dagna, NSPF Founder

Recently I was told that a question had come up concerning the foundation. The question was critical in tone, asking if the city's budget was not adequate. The conversation was related to last year's medical emergency of the Police Department's K9, Hondo. The situation had been urgent, unexpected and exactly the type of emergency the foundation was equipped to help with.

That question reminded me that not everyone knows

what police foundations are or what role they play. Most cities throughout the U.S. have police foundations, the majority of which were created to help add and support the city's K9 program.

To clarify the relationship between the cities served by the North Sound Police Foundation and the foundation itself it is important to remember that the foundation is a nonprofit organization. It currently serves two area police departments, Lake

Forest Park and Mill Creek, and very soon we look forward to including Lake Stevens. The foundation's purpose is to bridge the gap between a city's budget and a current need not fully covered in that budget.

Having that resource available like so many other cities does not mean the Mill Creek budget is lacking. What it does mean is that we have a welcome resource where the residents of the community can come together to show their respect and appreciation for the quality service Mill Creek's police department provides and to help financially should a need arise.

Our first fundraising campaign helped build a state-of-the-art kennel for MCPD, and the next was to help raise money for the family of fallen Bothell Police Officer Shoop killed in the line of duty. Then, Lake Forest Park Police asked to join us, so we changed our name from Mill Creek Police Foundation to North Sound Police Foundation. Now, we have been able to help them re-start their K9 program with a beautiful young Malinois named Bella.

Basically, the thought behind the question was that the city has a budget and if it can't



Brand new LFPD K9 with her handler, Officer George Coleman.

Huge congrats to Corporal Lerma and K9 Hondo on their incredible achievement! After 200 hours of intensive training, this dedicated team has officially certified in narcotics detection, meeting the rigorous standards of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission and Washington Administrative Code. Trained to detect cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and fentanyl, they're ready to make a difference in our community. This accomplishment is even more inspiring considering Hondo recently overcame a tumor that nearly took his life. What an incredible testament to his strength and Corporal Lerma's dedication! Way to go, Corporal Lerma and Hondo! We're so proud of your hard work and dedication to keeping our community safe.



take care of a dog without help for an unforeseen emergency then we shouldn't have a dog. Why would a successful city want to have help from a foundation? The answer is easy. Just like Bellevue, Edmonds and Seattle, along with so many other successful cities around us, a foundation provides a way for people to help.

Most cities are not allowed to accept donations to be used for specific purposes, but charitable foundations can. They provide a way for people to donate for a cause and possibly see a tax benefit. For more information please visit our website at www.NorthSoundPoliceFoundation.org We'd love to hear from you!

Mill Creek Police Department Police Citizens Academy



Spring Session

Tuesdays & Thursdays
April 15 - May 15, 2025
5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.



Scan to Register

Have You Ever Wondered...

What Happens When You Call 911?

Join the Mill Creek Police Department's Police Citizens Academy, and get a first-hand look at the work of our local police and the ways they serve our community. Each week, officers will share insights into their work. Interactive class sessions will cover:

- SWAT
- Criminal Law
- Patrol Procedures
- Police Records
- Police Support Officer
- Traffic Enforcement
- K9
- Criminal Investigations
- School Resource Officer
- Community Outreach

Must be 18+ and successfully pass a background check!

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY

MillCreekWa.gov/PoliceCitizensAcademy

AROUND THE MILL

Hope Creek Charitable Foundation: Nourishing Bodies, Empowering Lives

by Tom Sweeney

As spring blossoms in Mill Creek, Hope Creek Charitable Foundation continues to evolve its approach to community support through the Mill Creek Food Bank.

Now eight months into my role as Executive Director, I'm amazed at how quickly time

has flown and how much has transpired locally and globally.

At Hope Creek, we believe in going beyond simply providing groceries. We're reinventing the traditional food bank model, embracing Dr. Katie S. Martin's research-based approach to treat our guests with utmost respect and dignity. We strive to connect with each individual who comes through our doors, asking, "What's your story?" We see you, and you matter.

More Than Just Food

While meeting basic nutritional needs is crucial, we aim to peel back

the layers and understand our community members' deeper challenges. We're empowering individuals by offering food choices and developing life coaching programs to help them navigate obstacles and rediscover their purpose.

Our partnership with the AARP Title 5 program has added four new trainees, and we're creating a curriculum to train volunteers as life coaches. This initiative aims to build relationships with guests and encourage voluntary participation in life coaching sessions.

Expanding Our Reach

We recognize that we can't solve the world's problems alone, but we can make a sig-

nificant impact together. We've expanded our reach through various programs:

1. Approved as a work site for Snohomish Connect, offering internships to 15-24 year-olds interested in non-profit management and food insecurity issues.
2. Distributed 800 complete turkey or whole chicken meals during our Box of Love campaign.
3. Provided Backpacks of Hope to 500 students weekly across 20 schools, thanks to a County Grant.
4. Continued Grocery Express drive-through on Mondays and Assisted Shopping Day on Wednesdays.



MAY 17TH, 2025 | 5:30 PM



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An Event and Auction to benefit the MILL CREEK ROTARY FOUNDATION

McMenamins Anderson School, Haynes' Hall | 18607 Bothell Way NE, Bothell, WA 98011
Purchase tickets or sponsorships at millcreekrotary.org

5. The Market Place, held every Thursday from 4 pm to 7 pm, now serves and schedules appointments for 350+ families.

Community Support and Volunteerism

Our success stems from the generosity of our communities in Mill Creek, South Everett, and Bothell, as well as our dedicated volunteers. One standout volunteer is Mitra, a cancer survivor who fled Iran years ago. She exemplifies resilience, transitioning from a guest to a contributor through the AARP job training program.

The diverse group of volunteers, including high school students from various backgrounds, gives hope for the future as



we set aside differences to address hunger collectively. It's truly inspiring to see so many cultures working side by side with the common

goal of helping our neighbors.

With over 100 volunteers needed each week and more than 360 volunteer hours required to run our programs, we're grateful for the ongoing support that makes our



mission possible. The generosity of Mill Creek and Gold Creek Community has been instrumental in making all of this possible.

Looking Forward

As we move forward, we invite you to join us in this mission. Whether through volunteering, donations, or simply spreading the word, together we can continue to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors.

At Hope Creek Charitable Foundation, we believe it's not about "us and them"



but also hope and support, we're working to create a vibrant, inclusive community where no one goes hungry and everyone

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No gymnastics experience needed to attend
our camps are perfect for beginners, new friends will have a great time!

Ages: 3-10 years

Half-day and full-day enrollments are available

Come away from school break with new skills and new friends!

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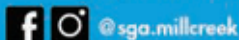
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MILL CREEK TOWN CENTER

Spring into Mill Creek Town Center

Spring into Mill Creek Town Center and see what fun we have in store for you in 2025! Our first event this year is our **Spring Wine Walk** on Saturday May 3rd from 4 to 7pm. Come enjoy a fun evening out with friends as you stroll Main Street discovering some of the Northwest's finest boutique wines. Live music and noshes at some locations. Tickets for this event will go on sale in March. Find out more information



at MillCreekTownCenter.biz/upcoming-events.

As we go into summer, Mill Creek Town Center is planning to host another **Art Walk** in early June. Meet local artisans and musicians while



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Mill Creek Spring Garage Sale



The Mill Creek Community Association Spring Garage Sale will be held on Saturday, May 3rd. Plan to empty your garage of all those unused “treasures” that take up so much room. If you have never attended, you’re in for a treat! Each participating homeowner runs their sale individually in their garage or driveway. Sales generally open around 8 am and close by 3 pm.

strolling through our beautiful community.

Mill Creek Town Center has lots of activities to come in 2025! Wine Walks, Art Walks, KidsFest, the Summer Concert Series and more! Thank you for your continued support of our local businesses and restaurants. We look forward to seeing you in Mill Creek Town Center!



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Spring

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Seattle Met
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BUSINESS PROFILE



Meg Sakuda's Tutu School Keeps Kids Twirling by Barbara Sleeper

"Every child should know what it feels like to dance. This is the founding principal of Tutu School," says Meg Sakuda, owner of three Tutu Schools located in Mill Creek, Shoreline and Sammamish.

"We believe that motor skill development is infinitely enhanced by Tchaikovsky and Bach, that young imaginations benefit immensely from exploring the enchanted worlds of swans and sugar plums, and that twirling should be a fundamental part of any childhood," explains her website.

"Our mission is simple: We believe that exposing children at the earliest possible age to creativity, movement and classical music will serve them well in whatever they choose to do with their lives. Dancing not only exercises little bodies, but it also nurtures big imaginations."

Top left: Meg Sakuda holds the sign that every new Tutu School student is photographed with at their first class.

Top right: Step through the front doors of Tutu School Mill Creek, and a magical world of fantasy and fun awaits both children and adults.

Right: The boutique-style ballet school offers dance classes for children ages 6 months to 8 years old.

"You are never too young to dance," adds Meg. "Our boutique-style ballet schools cater specifically to children ages 6 months to 8 years-old."

Meg began her entrepreneurial adventure 13 years ago. "I first became a business owner in 2012 when I opened a beauty salon called Dulce Lash Lounge Seattle. I went on to open Dulce Lash Lounge Puyallup, MOX Beauty Company Edmonds and MOX Beauty Company Mukilteo.

"My experience with these businesses gave me the confidence and the ability to take on Tutu School as a new venture. In 2024, I sold my beauty salon businesses and decided to focus solely on Tutu School."

Tutu School Mill Creek is nestled between Cold Stone Creamery and The Northern Public House Restaurant on Main Street in Town Center. The studio has entrances at both the front and back of the building and is surrounded by ample free parking.

"Throughout my years as a professional ballet dancer, opening a network of schools like this was always a dream of mine," explains Genevieve Weeks, Founding Director of the Tutu School.



BUSINESS PROFILE



At Tutu School, students are encouraged to exercise their imaginations as well as their bodies.

“In that dream, I envisioned a quaint community ballet school that would provide a creative dance education experience for children, and a place where students would be encouraged to fully

exercise their imaginations as well as their bodies.

“We never take for granted the significant role we play in introducing children to the beauty and intrinsic magic of ballet,

and that remains at the heart of everything we do.”

A dancer herself, Meg Sakuda is enthusiastic about running a business that promotes creative child development.

“I first discovered Tutu School by bringing my then 18-month-old daughter to a trial class at the Seattle location,” explains Meg. “As we left, I wasn’t sure who loved it more! It was fun, a little bit silly, undeniably adorable and truly magical.

“That same day I reached out to the Tutu School corporate office in Chicago to learn how I could become part of their mission to introduce whimsical ballet to even the tiniest dancers!

“Just six months later, I opened Tutu School Shoreline in November 2021! Then, about a year later, I opened Tutu School Sammamish in January 2023, and now two years later, I just opened the doors of Tutu School Mill Creek!”

“We have two daughters that have been dancing with Tutu School for three years,” says pleased parent, Lisa W. “We were

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previously at the Shoreline school but transferred to Mill Creek since it is closer to us.

“The Mill Creek studio is so beautiful. We love that we can sit in the studio and watch our girls’ class. The teachers have all been so sweet, patient and really great with kids. It truly has been the best experience for our entire family. The weekly classes, parties and recitals are the cutest thing I’ve ever seen.”

“Nothing beats seeing the huge smiles on the kids’ faces as they twirl in their fluffy tutus while popping bubbles with magic star wands,” adds parent Caroline G. “My ballerina loves coming to class and thinks her teacher is a Disney princess.”

“The second I walked into my first Tutu School, I knew it was going to be a complete

departure from the extremely strict ballet training I received as a young dancer,” continues Meg.

“I grew up dancing ballet, jazz, lyrical and hip hop. I danced competitively through high school and cheered in college. After college, I was a choreographer and a judge for dance competitions.”

In describing what she loves most about running her ballet business, Meg says “Tutu School came into my life because of my children, and now, I run a business not only for my children, but with them.

“My daughters are always with me as we prepare the studios to open and host all our fun events! They are up on stage with me presenting at the recitals and both attend their own ballet classes.

“Experiencing Tutu School as a business owner, a community member and a mother, not only keeps me motivated and inspired but amazingly fulfilled.

“When you walk into our Tutu studio, you feel as if you have been transported right into a storybook. The walls are pink and purple, and there are sparkly chandeliers, fluffy tutus and oodles of dancing props!

“Creating a magical place where we help little dancers fall in love with ballet and classical music, one bunny-hop and flamingo pose at a time, has been incredible,” she adds.

“We start with the youngest of dancers and each week we see them grow their ballet technique, learn classroom etiquette, become braver, more independent and even speak

some French.

“I first found Tutu School by bringing my oldest daughter, Sloane, to class when she turned one and a half. She is now five and still attends



A rack of pink tutus awaits young party guests lucky enough to celebrate a catered Birthday Party at the dance studio.



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BUSINESS PROFILE

classes.

“My youngest daughter, Skylar, is now one and a half and she attends our Tutu Toddler division with parent participation which is a very special and adorable thing we get to do together.

“Recently, we piloted our newest division, *Baby Ballet*, when my youngest was one, so she got an even earlier start!

“The most memorable part of it all is being able to experience the fun and discovery alongside my daughters and to see the magic we are creating through their eyes.”

“I’m incredibly proud of Meg for opening Mill Creek,” shares her husband, Kevin. “She has always had an incredible entrepreneurial spirit



School owner Meg Sakuda, believes that twirling should be a fundamental part of every childhood.

and when she dreams about something, she works tirelessly to make it happen. Her passion and commitment to sharing the joy of dance with children inspires me every day.”

“Opening our Tutu Schools

has been more rewarding than I ever expected,” adds Meg, “and I had high expectations! I love seeing the tiny twirlers’ eyes light up when they walk in the studio. It truly is a space where dreams are created.

“The Mill Creek community is second to none. It is truly a pleasure to be able to have our Tutu School in the Town Center and we feel so fortunate to have been selected for the space.

“Even before we opened, we were able to participate in the *Trunk or Treat* event and the *Veterans Day Parade*. We also had a grand opening party and ribbon cutting with the Mayor and the Chamber of Commerce.

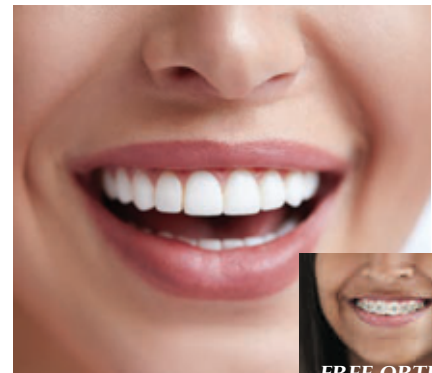
“I am so grateful for all the families who trust us to provide their children with a whimsical experience and I will always go above and beyond to ensure their expectations are continuously exceeded.

“As a mom of two *littles* myself, it has been additionally rewarding being part of the Tutu School fam-



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ily by making friends with other parents and watching my daughters with their ballet buddies. To be in the same walk of life with everyone who is signing up for Tutu School really is the cherry on top.

"In addition to ballet classes, we also offer private birthday parties at the studio," she adds. "Every party includes a brief ballet class, a special birthday story featuring the guest of honor, a delicious cupcake picnic and delightful party favors.

"We take the stress out of party planning. All you need to do is show up and enjoy the magic!

"Membership at Tutu School could not be easier or more convenient," she continues. "Registration is always ongoing, and we offer free trial classes at Tutu School Mill Creek if your child would like to experience the school before enrolling full time.

"As we say at the end of every Tutu School class, *Thank you for the music. Thank you for the dancing. Thank you for the magic!*"

Happy Twirling!



Meg Sakuda enjoys a dance class with her two daughters, Sloane and Skylar, as she happily juggles motherhood with entrepreneurship.

Available Classes:

Baby Ballet: 6 months – 18 months (with parent participation)

Tutu Toddlers: 18 months – 3 years (with parent participation)

Exploring Ballet: 3 – 5 years

Primary Prep: 5-8 years

To fully enroll or register for a free trial class go to:

www.TutuSchoolMillCreek.com

For questions:

Call or text: 425-659-5060

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Meet Mrs. Mill Creek: Dr. Taryn Beard-Killeri

by Barbara Sleeper

What a delightful surprise to learn that we have our very own Mrs. Mill Creek!

To help spread the word, here are some fun facts about the talented woman who is representing the City of Mill Creek in the upcoming Mrs. Washington American pageant in Olympia this March.

“I was born in Southern California and grew up there,” says Taryn. “I attended a private, all-girls high school, Cornelia Connelly in Anaheim, CA. The motto of this Catholic college preparatory school was ‘Lead, Serve, Inspire,’ and inspire it did.

“While in high school, I participated in cheerleading, national honor society, and


led a UNICEF Tap Project.”

Taryn went on to earn her undergraduate degree in Psychology with a minor in Studio Art from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. This private research university teaches the Jesuit, Catholic tradition of *respect and care for all*.

“I completed my Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology in San Diego, CA. I now run my own private practice in Mill Creek, but I see patients virtually all over Washington State. My specialty area is Psychoanalysis.


“The Catholic schools I attended em-

As Mrs. Mill Creek, Dr. Taryn Beard-Killeri will proudly represent our city at the Mrs. Washington America Pageant in Olympia this March.



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phasized service to others, so service hours were always an important part of my education. Everything I learned emphasized the important value of the individual.

“I began by helping with food drives and assisting older people with tasks. In high school, I started a project with UNICEF to help children have access to clean water. In college, my sorority sisters and I read to children and raised money for those in need.

“Today, my career and private practice includes offering therapy to those who cannot afford it. Annually, I provide more than \$18,000 worth of therapy for free.”

Taryn is happily married to data scientist, Daniel Killeri. They met in 2015 when they bonded over sci-fi, a great love of food and a shared wonder about the world. Together they have a two-year-old daughter named Lavender.

“Taryn is an amazing mother, doctor, and wife,” adds her husband, Daniel. “I am always



In addition to being a licensed psychologist, wife, mother and Mrs. Mill Creek, Dr. Taryn Beard-Killeri is also a talented artist.

in awe of her ability to take on all that she does with a smile and positive attitude. She always puts others before herself and makes you feel like you’re the most important person in the room.

“She is selfless, kind, and loving while also being strong, resilient and determined. I appreciate all that she does for our family and feel like the luckiest person ever that she is my eternal life partner.”

Taryn is a pro at time management balancing her professional life with a wide range of personal interests and hobbies.

“I love cooking for my family, exploring Washington’s beautiful surroundings, reading prolifically and painting,” she explains. “I love watercolor as an art form. I am drawn to images of women, nature, and all things whimsical.”

Taryn is also a certified yoga teacher who believes empathy for others can change the world. “I am not currently teaching yoga right now, but I use my training to practice yoga every day and to teach my daughter.”

Taryn came up with the idea to apply to become Mrs. Mill Creek when she saw the current *Mrs. Washington American*, Heidi Stephens, on an Instagram feed. Heidi went on to win the title *Mrs. American*, and in January, she competed in the international *Mrs. World* pageant held in Las Vegas.

“I had been in a postpartum cocoon nurturing my toddler for a while when I started to feel ready to do more,” she explains. “I had never heard of a Mrs. Mill Creek. I’m not sure there has ever been one.

“I became Mrs. Mill Creek by contacting Kama Montermini, Director of the Mrs. America



Taryn enjoys time with her family, pictured here with husband Daniel, daughter Lavender, and their Morkiepool dog named Leo.

Washington Pageants. I applied and then did a phone interview with Kama who appointed me Mrs. Mill Creek.

“I pursued this opportunity because I am really interested in making a difference and sharing a message of mental well-being. The title allows me to do that with the community, and hopefully, with Washington State at large.”

The Mrs. America Pageant started in 1938 and is the longest-running Mrs. Pageant program in the United States. The whole focus is on making a difference. It allows married women to make a difference in their community by giving them a larger platform.

“I feel really honored to be a part of this large network of goal-oriented women and to continue this legacy,” adds Taryn.

“My platform is *Know Yourself, Change the World*. It’s about creating and sustaining mental well-being for all. I advocate for a stronger sense of self, for everyone to under-

stand their origins and to have self-compassion. By focusing on these three things, I think it can empower people to have sustainable mental strength and greater life satisfaction.

“When people feel confident in who they are, with both their strengths and their flaws, and they have an acceptance of how they came to be, and love themselves, they interact differently, not just with themselves but with their communities. I think this is very important.

“My goal is to guide all of us in our lives to have a stronger sense of self and community.”

According to their website, Mrs. America is a national pageant featuring the most accomplished married women of America. Each year, 51 delegates (from all U.S. states plus the District of Columbia) compete for the coveted title which remains the first, and still the foremost competition for married women!

This renowned national competition is devoted to emphasizing that America’s 70

PROFILE



In her role as Mrs. Mill Creek, Taryn helped place the wreath at the Mill Creek Veterans Memorial last November.

million married woman are extraordinarily beautiful, poised, articulate and versatile.

Each of the 51 contestants, ranging in age from their 20's to 60's, earns the right to participate in the national event by winning her state competition. These state events are under the direction of Mrs. America State Directors, a network of respected and talented community and business leaders reflecting one of the largest systems of its genre in the world.

The Washington state First Runner-up will go on to compete at the national level for the coveted title of Mrs. American. This competition was created to recognize the First Runner-Up in all U.S. states plus the District of Columbia. The winner of Mrs. American will go on to compete for the title of Mrs. World.

The concept for Mrs. World has its roots in one of the oldest and most respected of all competitions, Mrs. America. All married women, young wives, mothers and even grandmothers, are eligible to participate. By providing this unique forum, delegates from around the world can come together to share a common purpose.

"Our mission is to empower and mentor women to make a difference in their communities," explains Washington State Director, Kama Montermini. "There are fun, complimentary workshops and opportunities that include appearances at community events, socials and parades throughout the state."

For example, the Mariners Family Night Out with the reigning Queens and contestants is an annual family favorite. A portion of all ticket sales goes to the national charity called *Victoria's Voice*.

On June 6, 2015, a drug over-

dose took the life of Victoria Siegel in her parents' home near Orlando. She was only 18. Victoria was one of 129 Americans to die from a drug overdose that day in 2015, which rose to 200 Americans a day by 2017.

"This number continues to rise at unprecedented levels," says Kama. "The Mrs. America Pageants have partnered with others to support Victoria's Voice to reach kids to help *Save a Life, TODAY*, before it is too late.

"Under late director Pamela Curnel's leadership, the Washington America Pageant Queens and contestants attended the Moses Lake Spring Festival and Moonlight Parade each year, and during a choreographed routine, they tossed more than 200 Teddy Bears and several Beach Balls to hundreds of spectators.

"We still participate at Moses Lake, but Washington America Pageant contestants have many other opportunities for charity



Taryn and her two-year-old daughter, Lavender, visited Taryn's grandparents' home in Southern California.

work. For example, the Queens and contestants consider it an honor to volunteer to help construct affordable homes for Habitat for Humanity. Their vision is "a world where everyone has a decent place to live."

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Other charities Washington Mrs. America contestants and winners participate in include: the *Moses Lake Food Bank*, *Bellevue Hope Heart Institute*, and *Cycle for Survival* to raise money for rare cancers, in honor of Pamela Curnel, a former Mrs. Washington and director of the Mrs. Washington Pageants.

“Since becoming Mrs. Mill Creek,” says Taryn, “I’ve participated in our local Veterans Day ceremony honoring veterans and the Penny Creek Elementary School Veterans Day assembly. I’ve spoken to Mill Creek City Council Members at City Hall, and participated in a Coat Drive, Santas Coming to Town, Wreaths Across America, raised money for rare cancers and donated books to local organizations for children.

“Overall, my dream is to bring more unity and compassion to our world, starting with the individual and then working out from there to encompass the world at large.”

The Washington State Mrs. America Pageants will be held this year on March 22,

2025, at the Capital High School Performing Arts Center in Olympia, beginning at 4:30 pm.

“Right now, I am looking for local businesses willing to sponsor me for the March pageant,” says Taryn. “This includes everything from banks, real estate firms and restaurants to aesthetic businesses like dress shops.

“I received a generous donation from Washington children’s book author, Rosemary Wells, famous for titles such as *Unfortunately Harriet*, *The McDuff Stories*, *Morris’s Disappearing Bag* and *Benjamin & Tulip*.

“I am grateful for any help, whether it is through word of mouth, or through direct sponsorship. All sponsors will receive recognition and ad space in the *Washington America Pageant Program* book. The deadline to be included in this publication is March 1.

“I am proud to be Mrs. Mill Creek 2025. We have a wonderful community that I’m excited to represent.”

To help sponsor Taryn, email her at: tarynabeard@gmail.com

To learn more about the Washington Mrs. America pageants, go to www.washingtonamericapageants.com, or contact:

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Washington America Pageants
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Martha Damato: Massage Therapist Extraordinaire

by Barbara Sleeper

"I want to be just like Martha when I grow up," says veteran massage therapist, Derek Curtner at the Mill Creek Massage Envy. "She's funny, energetic and mentally sharp, and always ready to dish it right back if you drop a joke on her."

"She creates a *good vibe* at our clinic," adds Assistant Manager, Adelei Clark, "for both the staff and our clients. She has a great attitude and is always positive. We love working with her."

So, who is this wonder woman getting all the raves? It's licensed massage therapist, Martha Damato, who looks 60 but is about to turn 85 in April. With no plans to retire, this spry octogenarian is still pressing the flesh for her happy clients.

"Martha is the most experienced and mature therapist we've had the pleasure of working with in my 20 years owning Massage Envy clinics," explains Rick Davis. "She transferred to us from Oregon and made Mill Creek her home."

"Martha has a wonderful sense of humor and loves engaging with new clients. She thrives on building meaningful relationships and has a deep passion for learning about different cultures, languages and our local community."

"She is our relaxation and tension specialist, helping both staff and clients

unwind. Martha's positive energy and calming presence bring joy, happiness and 'zen vibes' to the clinic."

This is high praise from Rick Davis who opened Massage Envy Mill Creek in 2007, one of the first businesses on the newly expanded Main Street in Town Center. He also owns Massage Envy clinics in Redmond, Federal Way and Tacoma.

"After leaving high-tech, I wanted a health-focused business where people leave feeling better than when they arrived," he says. "Since opening our first clinics in 2004, we have helped hundreds of thousands of people feel their best."

"Arriving just over a year ago, Martha has turned into our massage ambassador. She actively connects with people in the Mill Creek Town Center, inviting them to experience our services and share in the wonderful atmosphere we've created here."

Martha was born in April 1940, near the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, MN. "I lived with my grandparents in South Dakota for the first two years of my life, then moved with my mother and stepfather to Richmond, CA in the San Francisco Bay Area."

Martha is the oldest of four siblings that include sister Donna and twins, Leanne and Leo. Donna and Leanne live in Oregon, and Leo lives in Texas where he has run a community theater for many years.

"It was after a two-ton truck backed into me and caused a serious neck injury when I was 43 years old that I saw a Chiropractor who told me I needed a massage."

"His advice changed my life. That first massage was life transforming. When it ended, I told him that I wanted to learn his relaxation techniques. He happened to be the instructor at the Anaheim School of Massage, and the rest is history."

"I started my training there and became



Seated at the front desk, Martha lifts the spirits of both Massage Envy staff and clients with her positive attitude.

a Registered Massage Therapist (RMT) in 1984. I worked for the Chiropractor for a couple of years before moving to Oregon.

"For the next 15 years, I worked part-time as an RMT, then in 2001, I went to Massage School in Eugene, OR to become a Licensed Massage Therapist (LMT). I've been working full time as an LMT ever since."

To earn LMT status, one must complete 625 hours of education and training in anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, pathology, theory, and basic principles including massage practice with student clinic hours.

To maintain the LMT license, one must complete 24 hours of massage therapy-related continuing education units (CEU's) every two calendar years, approved by the Washington State Department of Health.

"In addition to maintaining my license, I am trained in Cranio-Sacral, Trigger Point Therapy, Pressure Point, Tapping Technique, some stretching, Stress relief, Hot Stone Massage, Reiki and Energy Work," adds Martha.

"The techniques I use are many and varied and depend on each client's needs. Throughout each session, I use a light to firm pressure."

Eager to work with Martha, I signed up for a 60-minute massage. It was a delightfully relaxing experience that included a



The oldest of four siblings, Martha sits by their family Christmas tree in 1950 with sister Donna and twins Leo and Leanne in Richmond, CA.

dimly lit room with a flickering candle, aromatic fragrances and a heated massage table.

Starting with a gentle scalp massage, Martha quickly identified my body parts under duress and used different massage techniques on tight muscles while offering helpful suggestions for home therapy.

“My passion is to assist my clients in their healing process by relieving their stress so they can make the best possible choices in their lives. Activities like *Tai Chi*, *craniosacral therapy* and *meditation* can also help decrease the negative effects of stress on the body.

“I have had a private practice, worked in a major hospital as a massage therapist, volunteered in hospice care and worked with many chiropractors. I have now worked with Massage Envy in Oregon and Washington for nearly 20 years.

“Melanie Winckler, my

manager, has been great and I enjoy the clinic, my clients and the people that I work with. Best of all, I live just four minutes from the Massage Envy clinic, so it’s a quick commute, on foot!”

Martha has gained a lifetime of valuable experience that now shapes her life philosophy and optimistic outlook on life.

“I have met the Dalai Lama, repelled down mountains and rock climbed in Joshua Tree National Park on my 40th birthday.

“I have explored the Swiss Alps, touched the antiquity of ancient castles in Germany, and climbed mountains in Peru with the descendants of the Incas.

“I am a member of the Lakota Nation, famous for the phrase *Mitakuye Oyasin*, which means ‘we are all related.’ It reflects our world view of interconnectedness. This is why I try to bring a

sense of kindness and compassion to every person I meet.

“I have experienced a spiritual *vision quest*, participated in *sweat lodge* ceremonies and danced with the Lakota for six years as a *Sun Dancer* at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.

“I learn from everyone I meet. One of my most memorable clients was a young man I worked with weekly for three years, starting when he was 35. He had nearly drowned when he was three years old leaving him completely immobile and unable to speak.

“His parents devoted their lives to him, providing him with the best care possible, including taking him traveling with them across the U.S. and abroad. It took a while for

him to know me, but when he did, I could see in his eyes how much every massage meant to him.

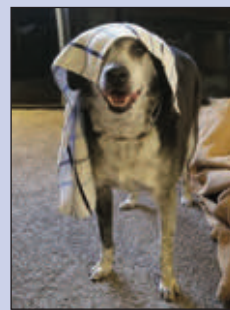
“The most valuable thing I learned from this young man was a different form of communication. To watch his eyes and body move gave me a new perspective on communication, which it turns out, is not always verbal.”

Martha has had lots of experience with children.

“I raised my four children (now all grown) as a single mother. I was then honored with the opportunity to raise three grandchildren, also now grown.

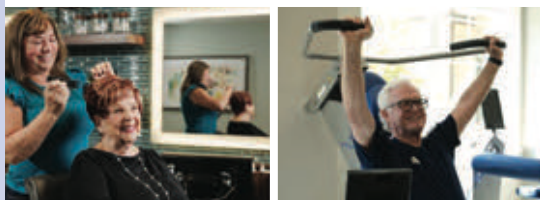
“If you live long enough,” she says, “miracles happen!

A year ago, I became a great, great grandmother!”



Martha's 18-year-old dog, Rosie, is as fun-loving as her playful owner.

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Massage therapists, Derek Curtner and Martha Damato, are relentless teasing buddies at Massage Envy Mill Creek.

Martha is an inspiration to young and old alike.

“The clientele I especially like to work with are the elders. It used to be that massage was considered a luxury, but not anymore. It’s so important for elders to understand how

therapeutic massage can benefit them in so many ways.”

According to the American Medical Association: *“It has been verified through scientific exploration that more than 80 percent of all diseases are due to stress and strain that originate in the mind and reflect on the body.”*

Common health problems associated with chronic stress include headaches and migraines, increased muscle tension, depression, anxiety, gastrointestinal problems, hypertension, arthritis and diabetes.

From stroke recovery, increased flexibility and improved balance to arthritic pain relief, the benefits of massage therapy for seniors can’t be overstated. It’s a versatile therapy that helps increase blood flow to the limbs and

supports the body’s immune and nervous systems.

“Each time I apply pressure, I push all your blood through your heart, so it’s filtered,” says Anthony Lima, a licensed massage therapist with Judson Senior Living. “It’s almost like getting an oil change.”

“Massage options for seniors at Massage Envy Mill Creek include gentle massage, therapeutic massage, and much needed touch and social connection for those who are single or may have lost partners,” adds Martha.

“I really would like to devote more time to the elders in our community. I love learning about their lives and engaging with them. I enjoy listening to

In 1998, Martha’s travels took her to Lima, Cuzco, Machu Picchu and climbing in the Andes Mountains of Peru.

their stories.

“I give my clients the opportunity to enjoy the massage quietly or to engage in conversation. Before we begin, I ask what they would like from the massage and then make them as comfortable as possible. Depending on their needs, I can pretty much assist with most issues.”

“Martha has soft hands that are filled with strength,” says a happy client. “She takes away my chronic pain for an hour every week, and she listens to my troubles.

“I am truly grateful for her



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presence in my life at this difficult time and only wish there were more people like her. Martha has a kind and caring soul, and her massage is better than any anti-inflammatory.”

“I’m very happy I moved to Mill Creek,” says Martha. “The people are friendly and smile a lot. I love the trees and mountains, and the rain, wind and wild storms make me feel alive.”

When asked about her secrets for staying so energetic and young-at-heart, Martha says she loves to walk. “I used to run five miles a day, but that’s tough to do working full-time. When the weather warms up, I hope to eventually get back up to walking three miles a day.

“My philosophy on aging is probably a little different than most. As I continue to get older, I try to be kinder to myself, to indulge myself more in a healthy way.”

Martha follows a KetoFLEX diet that involves eating highly nutritious whole foods, including many that are plant-based. The diet is good for aging, the brain and overall good health.

“Food is my medicine,” she explains. “If I eat cruddy food, all kinds of junk food loaded with sugar, I’m shortening my life. So, why not eat the best food you can? I’m still learning.

“In fact, our dog *Rosie*, a border collie from the Lakota reservation, is now 18 years old. She is still feisty, especially when she sees a squirrel. We have always fed *Rosie* with high-quality food we make for her, never processed kibbles!”

Martha inspires everyone she meets. The staff at Massage Envy love her, and I felt my own spirits lifted after my 60-minute stress-reducing massage with her.

“Part of what brings me joy,” she shares, “is I believe you are never too old to learn or try something new. I am currently learning two languages, the Lakota and Irish, and I hope to volunteer for a good community cause, as soon as I find the right niche.

“Every day, I work at letting go of past thoughts and habits that do not serve me now. It’s not easy to do, but it is very rewarding when it happens. I also laugh a lot.”

When asked who inspires her the most, Martha said the Dali Lama, and the spiritual leader of the Lakota Tribe.

“Our spiritual leader always tells the truth and believes that making an excuse is just another way of telling a lie. He and his wife have been wonderfully supportive over the years when I have asked for advice.

“One of my favorite quotes that helped shape my own life philosophy is from my mother. She would always say, ‘For every

negative there is a positive, just look for it.’

“The other quote I really like is, ‘I am a Spirit Being living in a human body.’”

Regarding future goals, Martha says, “I just want to keep myself as healthy as I can so that I can follow my passion of service. Making it to 110 wouldn’t be bad either.”

Massage Envy provides massage, facials, skin care and total body stretch services which are an integral part of total body wellness. To book an appointment, call: 425-341-2200

<https://locations.massagenvy.com>

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS TO OUR

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We are grateful for the continued support of the community and look forward to seeing you soon – we’ve got a seat at the table ready for you.

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MILL CREEK LIBRARY

Forage a Good Read @ Your Library This Spring!

Looking for a dandelion recipe? How to sauté fiddlehead ferns? The history of logging? Mysterious tales of the Pacific Northwest? Whatever you are looking for, we can help you find it at the Mill Creek Library!

Grandparents, parents, and kids in Mill Creek are invited to **storytimes** on Tuesdays to Fridays. Plus, every other Friday afternoon, ages 5 and up can create with **LEGO®** at the library. You bring the imagination, we provide the LEGO®!

Who let the dogs out? Readers did! On the last Wednesday of each month, kids ages 6 to 12 can join us at **Reading with Rover**. Pick out a book (and a dog), sit down, stay, and read. This program increases children's confidence and proficiency in reading aloud, empathy, and social skills.

Twice a month, part of the library becomes a teens-only space to study, play games, craft, or chill. Teens are also welcome to stop by the library every other Saturday for a quick chess game with a friend or someone

new! Players are welcome to bring their own chess set and the library will have some available too.

Interested in learning more about long-term care and the WA Cares Fund? Join us in person on Thursday, May 8, from 1 to 2 p.m. for a presentation on **WA Cares Basics: What Washingtonians Need to Know**.

Connect with your community as we read the same book. The selected title for our community reading program, **Sno-Isle Reads Together**, is "Accordion Eulogies" by Noé Álvarez. We planned complementary programs and opportunities for book discussion across both counties in which you can have

a great time even if you have not read it yet. This year's title and related books can be found on our

website, sno-isle.org/reads-together. Our community will also have an opportunity to meet author Noé Álvarez in person or online on May 8, 6 to 7 p.m. (en Español) or May 15, 6 to 7 p.m.



SNO-ISLE READS together

We are excited to help you find everything you are looking for this spring at the Mill Creek Library!

Library Hours

Monday:	10 AM-8 PM
Tuesday:	10 AM-8 PM
Wednesday:	10 AM-8 PM
Thursday:	10 AM-8 PM
Friday:	10 AM-6 PM
Saturday:	10 AM-6 PM
Sunday:	1-5 PM



FRIENDS OF THE MILL CREEK LIBRARY

Spring Update

by Mary Howisey

As a group, the Friends of the Mill Creek Library actively support the library, its programs, and literacy in the community. Using funds raised through the sale of books donated to us by members of the community, we financially support several library programs for adults, teens, and children, including story time, the summer reading program, workshops through Silver Kite, and the Writer's Series. All of these programs are popular and very well attended.

We've written before about the idea that libraries create and foster a sort of "third place" in the community, a social space that is separate from home and work; a place that brings together people from a variety of backgrounds for a variety of reasons. The programs and activities sponsored and supported by the Friends offer a great example of "third place" activities.

It has been easy for us to consider the connection these activities create between the library and members of the community. But recently, a new type of connection was pointed out to us when the Friends gained a new member after she attended several of the Mill Creek Library's Writers' Group workshops. This is a discussion group for beginning and amateur writers that allows for sharing new and in-progress work in a friendly, low-pressure, supportive environment. Writers develop and hone skills, technique, and inspire one another. Perfectly third place.

Tracey says she decided to join the Friends of the Mill Creek Library after attending several of the writing workshops where at the start of each session it was announced that it was being sponsored by the Friends. These workshops have been really great, well-attended events. In addition to helping Tracey with her novel-in-progress, they have been "instrumental in fostering a writing community in the Mill Creek area." In what feels like a full-circle moment, Tracey says she "thought that was pretty cool, so I wanted to become a part of the Friends because the group is making a difference." We are so thankful



to hear that what we do is making a difference in the community. It's why we're here!

Would you like to participate and contribute to making a difference? There are many ways to do that: Join us! You can pick up one of our membership flyers at the library. If you happen to see one of us there, please say hello and ask any questions you might have. Your book dona-

tions, large or small, are always welcome. Give small donations to the librarian at the circulation desk; contact Friend Kurt Layman if you've got more than one box to donate (425-577-8214 or kurtlayman@gmail.com). And we would love to hear from you if you have had an experience with one of the library programs we sponsor. Drop us a note at friendsmillcreeklibrary@gmail.com.

SPORTS NEWS



BOYS BASKETBALL

The Wildcats celebrated a hard-fought 55-54 win over Bellingham High School on February 15 to advance to another game in the 2A District 1 Tournament. They lost their first round game to second ranked Lakewood 42-80. They will face Anacortes in a winner advances, loser out game at Mount Vernon High School on February 18. Some notable wins for the Wildcats this season included 62-40 win over 3A Stanwood, a 51-38 win over 3A Meadowdale and a 72-63 win over 4A Cascade.

The Wildcats will miss seniors Mateen Usui and Mateo Love next season, but look forward to having huge role players Carter Hagen, Jack Sievers,

Jordan Rife, Wille Sears and Orion Belleza back. The Wildcats also have some young players who will see more minutes next year including William Wilson, Quinn Cribbs, Cole Sievers, Jack Burns, and Koah Esguerra.

BOYS SWIM

The swim team is excited to send 4 swimmers to the State Championships in various events February 21-22. Senior Evan Wold won the 2A District 1 championship title in both the 100 butterfly and the 100 breaststroke, making him a back-to-back district champ in the breaststroke! This sent him to State for both events. The team will also compete at state in the 200 Medley and the 200 Freestyle with swimmers Grant Jensen, Parker Burgess, Evan Wold and Quinn Sievers. A notable accomplishment was that the team placed 5th out of 9 total schools at Districts with only 6 total swimmers on the team. Sophomore Grant Jensen finished 4th in the 100 Backstroke with a big personal record. Freshman Quinn Sievers swam an amazing time in his 50 free to place 7th, beating out many upperclassmen. AMHS is very proud of this team and can't wait to cheer them on at the State Championships!



CHEER

One of the biggest highlights for our cheer team this year was the summer camp they attended.

They came home with 1st place in the Camp Routine, 2nd place in the Cheer, 2nd place in the Spirit Routine, 8 All-American nominees with 5 who made the All-American Team, 3 pin-it-forward awards, and 3 spirit sticks.

The team was also named the 2A State Academic Champions for having the highest team GPA of all 2A cheer teams in the state!

We are so thankful and proud to have our cheer team with us every step of the way for post season basketball. They travel to all of the away basketball games and cheer their hearts out each game.



WRESTLING

Our wrestling team has had a great season. We have 2 wrestlers who have advanced to the State Wrestling Tournament that will take place at the Tacoma Dome February 21-22. Senior Graciela Garibay will be the first girl to compete for Archbishop Murphy at the state tournament, which is a phenomenal and historic accomplishment! She came in 4th place in the 155 lb. weight class at the regional tournament to send her to State. Another notable win for Gracie was her 3rd place finish at the Mountlake Terrace LadyHawk Invite.

Our other wrestler who advanced is junior Hakeim Smalls, who has wrestled at State every year since he was a freshman. He placed 1st in regionals in the 285 lbs. heavyweight class. We look forward to cheering him and Gracie on at State!

There were a lot of new faces who joined the team this year after the big senior class that graduated from the program last year. The program is excited about their growth and the success that will come from it the next few years and beyond.



Photo credits: Lifetouch Photography

ARCHBISHOP MURPHY HIGH SCHOOL



GIRLS BASKETBALL

As of February 15, the Wildcats have a 21-1 overall record and are heading to the 2A District 1 Championship. They defeated the Burlington-Edison Tigers 54-39 to advance to the district championship for the second year in a row. They will face the #1 ranked team in the state, and defending state champions, in the Lynden Lions.

The Wildcats claimed the title of Wesco South 2A/3A Champs after finishing the season with a perfect 12-0 conference record. Some notable wins on the season include two conference wins against 3A Meadowdale, a 61-58 overtime win against 3A Snohomish, and a 73-67 overtime win against 3A Stanwood.

The team hopes to make it back to the State Tournament in Yakima and take home a higher placing than their 6th place finish from last year.

All 12 players on the varsity team contribute to the Wildcats' successes. The team is made up of seniors Ava Marr and Taylor Cushing, juniors Kayla Hookfin, Brooke Blachly, and MJ Ramirez Hernandez, sophomores Ashley Fletcher, Celine Wright, Kyla Fryberg, Olivia Miller and Kani Cham, and freshmen Bella Ives and Skylar Cohen.

Photo credit: Moriah Hawkins Photography

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SPORTS NEWS



BOYS BASKETBALL

Head Coach Steven Johnson: Despite returning one of our least experienced teams in recent years, the 2024-25 boys basketball team continued the program's long tradition of success. For the 20th year in a row, Jackson achieved a winning record and for the 19th year in a row we qualified for the post season (there was no post season in 2021). Jackson earned a third-place finish in Wesco and will host their first-round game in the Bi District tournament. Junior point guard Seamus Williams led the team in points, assists, and steals per game, while senior Drew Pepin was second on the team in points and rebounds. While we will lose some key seniors off this year's team, we are excited about the large number of underclassmen that stepped up and played key roles this season, which we hope bodes well for continued success. *Photo credit: Scott Williams Photography*

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Head Coach Andrew Grinaker: We spent this year focused on building a foundation and a culture for the future of Jackson Girls Basketball. We experienced ups and downs with our young team this year. At the time of this update, the girls are 8-11 overall and 4-7 in league -- narrowly missing the district playoffs. Highlights of the season include a road win at Ferndale and traveling to Portland as a team for the Nike Interstate Tournament in December. We wish the best to our one graduating senior Sophia Giordano and we are excited about what the future brings with our young core of talent including junior Callie Wirkkala, sophomores Makena Devine, Hayden Andrina, Alexis Eichhorn, Avery Cooke and freshmen Abby Ruiz.

Photo credit: Scott Williams Photography



BOYS WRESTLING

Head Coach Matt McClinchy: The Jackson Boy's wrestling team has had a strong season in both tournament and dual competitions. The team finished with a dual record of 7-3, and great tournament performances at the Pacific Coast Championship where freshman Jaden Nguyen placed 6th out of 64. At the Snohomish Panther Classic the team

finished 3rd, and at the Marysville Premier the team finished 5th. At the district tournament held at Jackson, the team qualified five wrestlers for state, and Brian Nguyen (120 pounds) and Grayson James (175 pounds) both placed first becoming district champions.

Photo credit: Scott Williams Photography

GIRLS WRESTLING

Coach Eric Hruschka: The Jackson Girl's Wrestling team had the best season in school history! New thresholds were reached in number of student athletes turning out for the team with a total of 17 girls. The team was made up of mostly freshman and sophomores that were led by a pair of juniors and seniors. The bigger team also led to great success on the score board this year. At all scrambles, Jackson athletes would win at least one out of the two matches in their respective weight class, resulting in a strong team score finishing in the top three out of six teams. At the Kamiak's scramble, the team scored 140 points, resulting in a 1st place finish. The larger team also gave Jackson girls' the opportunity to have our first ever home dual, where the team won vs Monroe 40-24. In post season competition the team placed 4th at the WESCO dual championships. Jackson hosted the state qualifying tournament and set new school records by qualifying six individuals, thus besting last year's school record of three state qualifiers. Emily Marquez-Ortiz earned a district title for the third consecutive year and will lead freshman Harini Sasikumar, sophomores June Webb, Elise Perkins, Chloe Phillips and junior Harvinder Kaur to the Tacoma Dome Mat Classic State Championships. *Photo credit: Scott Williams Photography*

HENRY M JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL



BOYS SWIM & DIVE

Head Coach Drew Whorley: Jackson boys' swim and dive had a great 2024-2025 season. They finished the regular season with 6 wins and 2 losses. All of the athletes, including our divers, showed much improvement over the course of the season. Their dedication to the team, to each other and to themselves was demonstrated each time they showed up in practice, swam at a meet and cheered on their teammates. As we enter into post season with JV Champs, Districts, and State, Jackson already has several state qualifying times to boost their position. Great job athletes.

Photo credit: Scott Williams Photography



GIRLS BOWLING

Head Coach Stephanie Ross: The Jackson Lady Timberwolves had a great season with four returning athletes and six who were new to the sport. Although the team was small in number, they were pretty mighty. The team was led by two captains this season -- 2nd year for Emmaline Beatty and 1st time Ashley Shim. With this joint effort it did not deter them from fighting hard and winning some clutch matches, including the WIN at Districts which put them in the State Tournament. The girls all had great attitudes and loved just being part of the bowling team as it was like a sisterhood.

Photo credit: Stephanie Ross



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SENIOR NEWSLETTER

Mill Creek Senior Center

Branch of the Northshore Senior Center

Spring 2025 - March-May

For more information, call 425-948-7170 or

Visit NorthshoreSeniorCenter.org

Email MillcreekAdmin@MyNorthshore.org

4111 133rd Street SE Mill Creek

(Located in Vintage Mill Creek, across the street from Penny Creek Elementary School)

Mill Creek parking courtyard is located in back of the building. Park in any space marked "Commercial".

The Mill Creek Senior Center is a branch of the Northshore Senior Center organization. Any activities, dates and fees are subject to change throughout the calendar year. To verify anything printed in this magazine is still valid please visit our website at northshoreseniorcenter.org, refer to our catalog or call us at 425-948-7170.

CLASSES AND EVENTS

NEW ENHANCED FITNESS

Enhance Fitness is an evidence-based exercise program to help older adults of all fitness levels to become more active, energized and able to sustain independent lives. Chairs are provided as an option for Level I exercises and instructors will demonstrate appropriate exercises for participants using a chair.

Instructor: Suzanne Meyers-Hubner & Pam Jacobs

Monday/Wednesday 10:00-11:00AM

Members: Monthly \$30

Non-members: Monthly \$60

FINE ARTS SHOW

Join us to celebrate the accomplishments of our NSC artists, Mill Creek, Kenmore & Bothell. A wonderful event that the whole community is invited to. Enjoy a special evening program with music,

food and drinks on Friday evening from 5-8 pm. You can pick your favorite pieces in each category for "People's Choice." Admission to the show is Free – Bothell Location

Friday May 2nd 5:00 -8:00 pm

Saturday May 3rd

8:45 am – 3:30 pm

SEATED YOGA

Move through a complete series of seated and standing yoga poses. Chair support is available, making accessible a variety of postures designed to increase balance, flexibility, and range of motion.

Restorative breathing exercises and final relaxation are also included. Excellent for all levels of exercisers.

Instructor Maria Borella

Tuesday/Thursday 10-10:45AM

Members: \$43 per month

Non-members: \$86 per month

TAI CHI

Designed to introduce students to the slow and graceful art of

Enjoy discounts at all 3 branches of the Northshore Senior Center (Bothell, Kenmore & Mill Creek) by becoming a member!

Annual Membership:

Individual..... \$48 • Couple..... \$85

Chinese Tai Chi. It involves a series of movements performed in a slow, focused manner. It has been considered a form of 'meditation in motion' which promotes serenity and inner peace. Located at North Creek Presbyterian Church (621 164th St SE, Mill Creek) Instructor Mike Lucero Thursdays, 1:30-3PM – pre-registration required Call 425-948-7170

Members: Monthly \$32

Non-members: Monthly \$64

CARDIO DRUMMING

Not interested in traditional exercise classes? Give cardio drumming a try! Utilizing fitness balls and drumsticks cardio drumming combines cardio exercise and drumming to the rhythm of music in an easy but effective workout.

Instructor: Becky Mowry

Call for schedule (425-948-7170).

Monthly: \$32 members/ \$64 nonmembers

Transportation provided to and from Bonaventure, Cogir and Brookdale!

WATERCOLOR CLASS

Learn the basics for creating an outstanding painting in watercolor. Projects will emphasize the use of color, value, line and composition. Instruction

of special techniques will be offered to enhance work produced each week. New subjects are offered for every class building on a student's knowledge and success in watercolor painting.

Instructor: Candace Carson

Wednesdays, 10AM-12PM

Members: Monthly \$35

Non-members: Monthly \$70

BINGO!

The more players the bigger the pot!

Tuesdays 1pm-3pm

\$5 per packet

FOOT CARE CLINIC

Many seniors are unable to care for their feet adequately because of poor vision, and/or poor flexibility, and other health-related problems. Each visit will include a thorough assessment, and nail trim. Please call as early as possible to cancel a scheduled appointment.

Jennifer Sereda RN, Certified Foot Care Specialist

2nd & 4th Monday 9:30-4pm

By Appointment ONLY Call 425-948-7170 to schedule

Members & Non-members: \$45



IMPACTFUL EMPATHY - UBUNTU PHILOSOPHY

Most of us would agree that it is important to have empathy. But do you feel confident in



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SENIOR NEWSLETTER

how to practice true empathy that creates real change? Join us for a compelling talk, through the lens of Nelson Mandela's life, on impactful empathy and learn how to use understanding and compassion to heal while strengthening our communities.

Presenter: Izak van Rensburg
3rd Friday each month
10:30a-12pm
Free

ROCK PAINTING

Explore rock painting while spreading joy. Leave your work of art and encouragement in public places or give as gifts. This is a great activity to share with the whole family, so all ages are encouraged to participate!



Rocks and limited art supplies available. Bring any personal supplies to help you achieve the level of artistry you desire.

2nd Friday each month,
12p-2pm
Free

MEMOIR WRITING

We all have life stories to tell that are interesting and can become a written legacy. This class gives encouragement, affirmation, structure, writing strategies, and a chance to share one's stories. One does not have to be an established writer to attend. The purpose of this class is to get in

touch with personal memories and enjoy the experience of writing about them. Please bring paper and writing materials

to the first class.
Instructor Barbara Masterson
Members \$20
Nonmember \$40
Wednesdays during the month of April 10a-12pm

KARAOKE

Warm up your vocal cords and join us for a fun filled afternoon of singing.
Wednesdays 1pm-3pm
Transportation provided to and from Bonaventure, Cogir and Brookdale!

MEATLESS MONDAYS

Join us in sharing your favorite meat-free dishes. Or come and try some and see what you think. Choosing to eat plant-based meals on Mondays, or "Meatless Mondays" (first started in WWI by Woodrow Wilson), has become a way people can explore the world of plant-based eating. You don't have to be a vegetarian. No judgement, just good food and hopefully some recipe swapping.

Bring a plant-based dish to share with the group.
Ongoing 2nd Monday
Noon-1pm
Free for members and non-members

BOOK CLUB

A chance for avid readers to get together and discuss new and exciting reads. All Book Club books will be available at the Mill Creek Library for the participants to check out.



Volunteers: Molly K Barry & Sandy Fairchild-Miller
4th Thursday of each month
Noon-1pm
Free for members and non-members

LEARN MAHJONG

Interested in learning how to play Mahjong? Join veteran player Marlene Kurpiewski as she teaches the basic principles of the game to get you up and running!

1st & 3rd
Monday,
1-2pm
Free for members and non-members



AMERICAN MAHJONG

Interested in learning how to play Mahjong? Join veteran player Marlene Kurpiewski as she teaches the basic principles of the game to get you up and running!

Tuesdays 12-2p
Free for members and non-members
Card Games Punch Card for 8 visits (\$20 members / \$40 non-members)

WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP

Join a great group of ladies for coffee and conversation. This is a long-standing group and if you are new to the area, it's a great place to meet new people!

Weekly Thursdays 11am-1pm
Free for members and non-members

MEN'S COFFEE GROUP

A long-standing group of men who get together to discuss current issues.

Discover what's right for you.

The first step towards determining the right senior living option is to understand the needs of you and your family.

We'll help you navigate the complex choices of senior care.



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Monthly speakers on a host of different topics.

Fridays 10am-12pm
(2nd & 4th Friday)

Free for members and non-members

MUSIC FOR FUN

Our music group has expanded to two hours, our library has grown to several dozen old songs, almost all with lyrics and chord markings, or bring your own favorite piece of music for us to try out. Bring your stringed instrument or just bring your voice for the lyrics.

Mondays 1pm-2:30pm

Free for members/\$10 monthly for non-members

CROCHET SOCIAL CIRCLE

Bring your current crocheting or knitting project or get inspiration from others to try something new. We are a low-key group who enjoy working as we visit.

Tuesdays 1pm-3pm

Free for members/\$10 monthly for non-members

NATURE WALKING WITH eBIRD

Would you like to partner with Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology? Dedicated to advancing the understanding and protection of the natural world, the Cornell Lab joins with people from all walks of life to make new scientific discoveries, share insights, and galvanize conservation action. eBird is an app installed on your phone that takes birdwatching to a whole different level. As you explore



your natural surroundings you can capture critical data for science that is sent directly to Cornell's Lab. It helps track species, numbers and migrations of birds throughout the globe. Even if you don't have a smart phone, join us as we explore the marsh lands near the Mill Creek Senior Center for walking, bird watching and contributing to science. Please wear appropriate footwear for comfortable walking. Bring your binoculars if you have

them! (During inclement weather call to make sure group is walking, 425-948-7170) 8 visits (\$20 members / \$40 non-members)

Thursdays 10am-11am

Free for members/\$10 monthly for non-members

PINOCHLE

Mondays 12:30-3pm

Single deck

Wednesdays 12:30-3pm

Double deck

Card Games Punch Card for



HOMAGE RESOURCE ADVISOR

A staff member who can perform a basic assessment of your needs. From there, they will help determine which programs and services you are eligible for, make referrals to the programs you choose, and

SENIOR NEWSLETTER

assist you with completing the appropriate paperwork and applications. Thursdays, 10am-1pm (1st and 3rd). Walk-ins welcome!

Free for members and non-members

MEDICARE COUNSELING WITH SHIBA

Individual, confidential, and impartial personal counseling to individuals regarding available options for health care and health insurance benefits. SHIBA counselors are not affiliated with any insurance company or product. Counseling topics: Medicare Program choices, Individual Health Insurance plans, Military Veterans' Health benefits, Insurance options

for those with disabilities, Government Health benefits, Long Term Care insurance and medical billing.

Thursdays, 9am-12pm (1st and 3rd). Walk-ins welcome!

Free for members and non-members

PERSONAL CONSULTATIONS

The opportunity to explore concerns, problems and options through individual sessions. Issues may include life transitions, depression, anxiety, grief and loss, or other family or personal issues. Please call for an individual appointment.

Georgia Rigler, MSW, LICSW; 425-286-1047; georgiar@mynorthshore.org

4th Wednesday of each month 9am-3pm

VOLUNTEER AT MILL CREEK SENIOR CENTER

We'd love to have you volunteer with us! Front desk volunteers are needed Monday through Friday from 9am-12pm & 12-3pm and office volunteers are needed for various support around the center. If you have a skill or knowledge you would like to share with your community, let us know!



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES WITH NORTHSORE AT MILL CREEK PLEASE CONTACT: volunteer@mynorthshore.org or 425-286-1032

did you know?

Long-term hearing deprivation can impact cognitive performance.

Hearing loss places you at a greater risk for cognitive impairment.

Using well-fit hearing aids can help improve long-term outcomes.



We will never stop providing the best hearing care for our neighbors in Mill Creek and Snohomish county. It is my commitment and the entire Eastside Audiology team to always provide the best and most scientifically sound hearing care solutions because we believe our patients deserve the best.

Nichole Kingham
Doctor of Audiology



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Keep this ad to claim your
FREE PREPARATION PACKAGE
services when you are ready to sell your home.

“Darren and Gwen were great to work with. They clearly explained the process start to finish and kept us well informed through every step. Even before we decided to work with them, they were incredible resources. They advised on which projects should be completed prior to listing and equally important, which ones shouldn't. They have an extensive network of highly skilled craftspeople that made the entire process easy. Ultimately, we listed our home for more than we expected, sold quickly, and sold for our full listing price. Thanks again Darren and Gwen. We would not only recommend you to our friends and family, but we would work with you again!”

-Gary & Pam G

“Darren and Gwen Munson did a fantastic job in representing my wife and me in the recent sale of our home in Silver Firs. They gave us great advice in prepping our home for sale, marketed it expertly, and were professional and supportive throughout. The result was that we were able to accept a fantastic offer very quickly that exceeded our expectations! Thanks again to Darren and Gwen for the great service!”

- Larry and Rita M

“Darren and Gwen are the absolute best. They walked us through to get our house ready to sell, attracting as many buyers as possible. They priced it right and negotiated the best outcome. They communicated excellently and were always there for questions; they earned our complete trust. After this wonderful experience, we consider them friends, and we will recommend them to everyone.”

- Jeri T

“Darren and Gwen handled everything from beginning to end through the whole process. They are extremely experienced and professional and made selling our home stress free. I would recommend them to anyone!”

- Linda D

“We cannot say enough good things about Darren & Gwen!! They are experts in their field, have a high degree of professionalism yet easy to correspond with, and thoroughly explained the selling process. We felt we were in very good hands!”

- Kay H



WINDERMERE REAL ESTATE/MILL CREEK, INC.



When a client
decides to sell
their home, they
don't hire us.
They unleash us.



All in, for you.

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