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# VOICE of the Valley

56<sup>TH</sup> YEAR, NUMBER 31  
MAPLE VALLEY, WASHINGTON  
TUESDAY, JULY 29, 2025




The weekend of July 18-20 was nothing but amazing as Pacific Raceways hosted the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Muckleshoot Casino Resort NHRA NW Nationals. Fans were privileged to see records broken all weekend long including the fastest pass ever recorded in NHRA history as Brittany Force turned an amazing 341.85 MPH in her Top Fuel dragster. Along with all the Pro excitement in their four classes were the local drivers in their classes. Pictured above was Robert Smyth from Hobart driving his 1997 Oldsmobile (Upper Left), and Greg Hehr of Ravensdale in his 1990 Camaro (Lower Right). Both drivers competed in the Super Gas class. In the Super Street class from Maple Valley was Jim Mabry competing in his 1975 Chevy Vega (Top Right). Rounding out the local competitors was Maple Valley's Giovanni Collecchi in the Super Comp class piloting his "23 M&M dragster (Lower Left).

Three days of absolutely ground shaking racing was enjoyed by all the fans. The racing isn't over just yet as there is more to come. Need any information on the rest of the season? Check out [www.pacificraceways.com](http://www.pacificraceways.com). Photo by Bill Archer



Lake Wilderness Arboretum Foundation A Place to Visit, Volunteer, Learn and Enjoy  
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## The Emerald Theatre Brings Oscar Wilde's Wit to Local Gardens This August

Emerald Theatre is thrilled to present a charming outdoor production of Oscar Wilde's timeless classic, *The Importance of Being Earnest*. This sparkling comedy of manners will delight audiences with its wit, whimsy, and a delightful dose of satire — all set under the summer sky in scenic local gardens and parks. Set in Victorian England, *The Importance of Being Earnest* follows the escapades of two affable bachelors, Jack Worthing and Algernon Moncrieff. Both lead double lives and conveniently adopt the name "Ernest" to escape their social obligations and pursue romance. But as their stories unravel, mistaken identities and elaborate deceptions lead to hilarious consequences, revealing Wilde's sharp commentary on the absurdities of high society. With crisp dialogue, unforgettable characters, and clever twists, this production promises an evening of laughter and lighthearted fun for all ages.

Tickets are available now at [emeraldtheatre.org](http://emeraldtheatre.org), with several Pay-As-You-Can performances and dates — making this a perfect opportunity to enjoy live theatre in a welcoming, community-centered way.

Bring a blanket, pack a picnic, and enjoy classic theatre in the great outdoors at the Lake Wilderness Arboretum on **Aug. 9 at 6 p.m.** or **Aug. 10 at 2 p.m.**. Don't miss your chance to experience Oscar Wilde's most beloved comedy — alfresco!



At the Museum

## Those Good Old Days?

Susie Thompson, holding a hair dryer, demonstrates to Jillian Curtiss how to manually defrost Black Diamond Museum's General Electric refrigerator, circa 1920. Museum volunteers keep their lunches cool in the 105-year old fridge. On top of it sits the motor. Embroidered towels hang above; each towel represents one day of the week and tells which household chore should be performed that day.

The fridge is one of the most popular artifacts at the museum although the towels seem to encourage visitors to take notes in order to get their own household chores done on time. **Black Diamond Museum is open Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. and on weekends from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.**



The Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council (GMVUAC) will hold its regular monthly meeting on **Monday, August 4, 7-9:30 p.m.** at the Maple Valley Fire Station 22225 SE 231<sup>st</sup> Street, Maple Valley, WA 98038 (across from King County Sheriff's Precinct #3). One major topic to be discussed will be the recent Agreement to not site a proposed Asphalt Facility on SR-169 between Maple Valley and Renton. Visit the GMVUAC [website](http://gmvuac.org/) (<http://gmvuac.org/>) for the agenda and Zoom information, which will be posted several days before the meeting.

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The Kent School District is offering free breakfast and lunch for kids in the district from 0-18 years of age at five Covington locations from Now to August 8, and various other locations as well. Covington locations include Covington Elementary, Kentwood HS, Polaris Apartments, the Timberlane Club-house and Real Life Church. Get times, all locations and meal options (breakfast and/or lunch) at <https://www.kent.k12.wa.us/page/summer-meals>

An Encouraging Word Taylor Creek Church

By Pastor Jason Katen

## When We Don’t Know the Whys

Sometimes the situations we find ourselves in, or the things that happen to us, no matter how big or small, can be real discouragements. Yet, we must always remember that though we may not always understand, God is always purposeful in them. I think the following story illustrates this truth quite well.

“A young woman by the name Brenda was invited to go rock climbing. Although she was scared to death, she went with her group to a tremendous granite cliff. Despite her fear, she put on the equipment, tied into the safety rope, and began to climb the face of the rock. When she got to a ledge where she could take a breather, the safety rope snapped against her eye and knocked out her contact lens.

Here she was on a rock ledge with hundreds of feet above her. She looked and looked, hoping that it had landed on the ledge, but it was nowhere to be found. She was far from home, her sight now blurry. Desperate and upset, she prayed to the Lord to help her find it.

When she reached the top, a friend examined her eye and her clothing for the lens, but there was no contact lens to be found. She sat down, despondent, as she waited for the rest of the climbing party to make it up the face of the cliff. As she waited, she looked out at range after range of mountains, thinking of the Bible verse that says, “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth.” - 2 Chronicles 16:9. She thought, “Lord, you can see all these mountains. You know every stone and leaf, and You know exactly where my contact lens is. Please help me.”

Finally, they walked down the trail to the bottom, where there was a new party of climbers getting ready to climb. One shouted out, “Hey you guys! Anybody lose a contact lens?” If that wasn’t startling enough, what was even more startling was where the climber found it. An ant was moving slowly across the face of the rock, carrying it.

Brenda’s father was a cartoonist. When she told him the incredible story of the ant, the prayer, and the contact lens, he drew a picture of an ant lugging that contact lens with the words, “Lord, I don’t know why You want me to carry this thing. I can’t eat it, and it’s awfully heavy, but if this is what you want me to do, I will carry it for You.”

It would probably do some of us good to occasionally say, “God, I don’t know why You want me to carry this load, but...”

If you like to know more about God’s Word and love for you, call us at 425-432-0634 or contact us at [www.taylorcreekchurch.org](http://www.taylorcreekchurch.org). You may also join us each **Sunday 9 a.m. for Sunday School, and 10:15 a.m. for Worship**. We are located at 21110 244<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.E., Maple Valley.

Church  
Information  
and Services

### HOPE FELLOWSHIP

Are you wondering if there’s a God and what place He should have in your life? Join us Sundays! Sing to contemporary music. Hear the Bible explained simply. Keep your money. Wear normal clothes. Nursery and children’s program provided. Did we mention coffee? Visit either at 9 a.m., 10:45 a.m. or 6 p.m.

Hope Fellowship, 21115 Kent Kangley Road just past Sawyer’s Village. 425-432-5114. [www.HopeFellowship.net](http://www.HopeFellowship.net)

\*\*\*\*\*

### TAYLOR CREEK CHURCH

A place for you to grow in your relationship with the Lord and fellowship with His people. We invite you to join us each Sunday for Sunday School Classes for all ages at 9 am, and for our Worship Service with verse-by-verse teaching of the Word of God at 10:15 am. (Children’s Church and Nursery are provided through Kindergarten) A cry room is provided for nursing mothers with a video feed of the service.

We invite you to also join us throughout the week for personal encouragement and spiritual growth through Adult Small Group Bible Studies, Studies for Men, Studies for Women, as well as Youth Ministry (grades 7-12) and Adventure Club (ages 3 through grade 6).

We are located at 21110 244<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE (right off Hwy 18). For more information about our church or other activities, please call the church office at (425) 432-0634 or visit our website at [www.taylorcreekchurch.org](http://www.taylorcreekchurch.org). Senior Pastor: Jason Katen

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# Obituaries



## Stevie Roberton

Stevie was raised on a ranch in the Pasadena hills with her parents, two sisters, and brother. She had wonderful stories about the animals - Christine the burro, Quack 1 and Quack 2, and her favorite pet, Flower, the skunk. She ran wild in the hills plucking fruit including avocados and pomegranates from the trees and trying not to get caught playing in the ravine.

She went to college in Boulder, Colorado because her dad said he would pay for her to go out of state to get her away from a boyfriend he disapproved of. She loved college, but she came back for the summer, got a job at AllState, and she said she found her place. She would work in insurance the rest of her career, including getting a surplus Lines International Brokerage license, making her one of the few people in Washington state to acquire this license.

She met future husband, Thomas “Scotty” Roberton, in 1977. They married in 1978. They both had daughters from previous marriages - Alissa from hers, Christinia from his - and they made their first home briefly in Osborne, Idaho where they had a daughter together, Janette. They then moved to Spokane for a couple of years, and finally made their way to the Renton area to settle and raise their family.

Stevie found a rewarding position with an insurance broker in Seattle that she loved. In an effort to keep Scotty from having to travel so much for work, they started a residential bricklaying company; Stevie was the president and Scotty was the brick-layer.

Both of them were gregarious and loved to meet and talk to people. They joined Bet Chaverim in 1989 and were very involved in the sisterhood and board. They made lifelong

friendships there.

Sadly, Scotty passed away far too young in 1995. Stevie, now with only one daughter left in the home, moved to Maple Valley and changed jobs to a brokerage in Tacoma.

Eventually she retired to take care of grandchildren and volunteer at the Maple Valley Community Center. She loved reading books, watching football (go SeaHawks), and enjoyed spending time with her friends and family. In 2007 she informally adopted Alissa’s best-friend and neighbor, Jonelle.

Her grandchildren were always a priority in her life and she loved spotlighting their accomplishments.. She was always ready and willing to listen to them talk about anything and they weren’t afraid to tell her! She made them feel safe in confiding in her.

Gathering with her sisterhood friends monthly was an outing she always looked forward to. She was happy to get together to catch up and excited to find a new restaurant to explore with them.

A stroke in 2015 really put a damper on her freedom, but after a lot of PT and moving to an independent living facility, she was back meeting friends, and becoming a huge fan of the Outlander books. Jonelle and Alissa brought her to the pool for water-walking - with headphones on, lip syncing to John Denver while she walked in the pool about three times a week.

A few years later, a bad case of pneumonia, and an incompetent GI doctor, forced her to move into Mill Ridge assisted living facility. Again, she made friends quickly and earned the love from all the staff. We know this, because after she broke her ankle in March, we found out that her kidneys were no longer working, and she decided to go on hospice, the staff at this facility moved heaven, earth, and Apria to get her back home to spend her final time with them and the friends she had there.

Stevie has said she lived a good life. She lived longer than both her parents and she outlived her husband and her brother. When Alissa asked her if there was anything she would miss, she said she would really miss seeing how her amazing grandchildren turned out. She saw them as her greatest gifts and the most amazing people.

Stevie is survived by her daughters, Alissa, Christinia, and Jonelle, her grandchildren, her great-granddaughter, and her sisters.

For information on memorial services, please email [sroberton@gmail.com](mailto:sroberton@gmail.com)

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# When Coal Was King

By Bill Kombol



Fifty years ago this week, a film crew landed in Black Diamond to shoot scenes for a television series designed to tell the story of Black miners recruited to travel halfway across the country to break coal strikes in Washington. Many of those who came to Roslyn and Franklin planted roots and stayed.

Most of the early college courses on Blacks ignored the plight of African Americans in the Pacific Northwest, focusing instead on those from southern states and urban centers. In the early 1970s, Quintard Taylor, a professor of Black Studies at Washington State, arrived in Seattle to gather oral histories of African Americans and heard how some came to Washington to mine coal. Taylor soon realized, “This is a story that needs to be told.”

In 1974, Taylor helped win a quarter-million-dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to produce a five-part docudrama about the Black experience in Washington. It was called “South by Northwest” and came out two years before the sensation stirred by the 1977 Alex Haley miniseries “Roots.” In fact, Joseph M. Wilcots, who directed “South by Northwest,” also served as a director of photography during the filming of “Roots.”

Wilcots, who died in late December 2009, was the first African American to join the International Cinematographers Guild, where he worked on camera crews for TV series such as “The F.B.I.” and “Mission: Impossible.” The president of the Guild, Steven Poster, proclaimed in his Los Angeles Times obituary, “Joseph Wilcots could be considered the Jackie Robinson of cinematography.”

On set in Black Diamond during the last week of July 1975, Wilcots was accompanied by sound man, Jim McGavick; engineers, Ken Julian and Leon Skidmore; plus, a cast of actors, mostly from Black

Arts West, Seattle’s first black theater. The set for that week’s filming was Palmer Coking Coal Company’s Mine 11 preparation plant, located west of Highway 169 in Black Diamond. Palmer was in the final months of operating the last underground coal mine in Washington State, Rogers No. 3, located in nearby Ravensdale. Raw coal from that mine and a surface mine on Franklin Hill were trucked to the Mine 11 site for processing.

In southeast King County, 84 years earlier, a train full of African American men recruited from the Midwest arrived at the nearby Palmer rail station on May 17, 1891, then walked the final few miles to Franklin. They came from Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee with offers of good-paying jobs and free transportation, all promised by Mine Superintendent, T.B. Corey of the Oregon Improvement Co., which owned the Franklin mines. They were actually hired to break a strike by White miners and their Knights of Labor union.

For about six weeks, peace was maintained, but violence broke out on June 28, when a Black guard, Ben Gaston, 26 years old, was killed. A riot ensued as two more men were killed and two women seriously wounded before the Governor mobilized the National Guard, and peace was restored. One of the descendants of the Black coal miners who came to Franklin that year, Ernie Moore, later wrote a book about his life, “The Coal Miner Who Came West.”

Palmer’s office manager, Carl Falk, shot this photo in late July 1975 for the scene depicting a mine portal that was scripted for disaster. Photo enhancements were performed by Boomer Burhnam, a Tahoma photography instructor. Towards the end of the long, last day of filming, a dynamite blast blew up the replica mine opening with a fantastic explosion that startled all who were present and some that weren’t . . . including the Black Diamond Police, whom the film crew forgot to notify.

The film documentary, “South by Northwest: Blacks in the Pacific Northwest,” was eventually broadcast on local public television in September 1975. The scenes shot in Black Diamond were included in part five of the series, entitled “The Roslyn Migration.” Video copies of the broadcast were once available from the Seattle Public Library ([www.spl.lib.wa.us](http://www.spl.lib.wa.us)) under call number VHS-978-South-B-v.5. Today, access to the series is available at the American Archive of Public Broadcasting, ID # [cpb-aacip/296-86b2rm78](https://www.aapb.org/cpb-aacip/296-86b2rm78).

This column was informed by articles from the July 1975 WSU Hilltopics magazine and the Sunday, Aug. 3, 1975, issues of the Auburn Globe News, Kent News Journal, and Renton Record-Chronicle.

## VOICE Welcomes Letters

The VOICE of the Valley welcomes letters to the editor on any subject, although we reserve the right to edit for space, potential libel, and/or political relevance. Letters addressing local news will receive priority.

We prefer letters to be typed and E-mail is preferred. Letters must be signed and have a daytime phone number and address to verify authorship. Deadline for letters is 3 p.m. on Thursday each week.

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MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
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**A1 Right Towing and Recovery**  
18451 Des Moines Memorial Dr, Seatac, WA 98148. **Saturday, August 2, 2025.** Viewing starts: 11:00 a.m. **Auction starts: 12:00 p.m.**  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, July 29, 2025)  
\*\*\*\*\*

ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
**AMPM Towing** - 14315 Aurora Ave, N., Seattle, WA 98133. **Thursday, July 31, 2025 @ Auction at 10 a.m.** [ampmseattle21@gmail.com](mailto:ampmseattle21@gmail.com)  
(Published at [www.voiceofthevalley.com](http://www.voiceofthevalley.com), Saturday, July 29, 2025)  
\*\*\*\*\*

ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
- **Dick's Towing and Road Service, Inc.** 8425 1st Ave S, Seattle, WA 98108. 206-364-2000 Ext. 137. **Wednesday, August 6, 2025.** 2 hour preview @ 8-10 a.m. **Auction @ 10 a.m.** For list of vehicles see [www.roadoneseattle.com](http://www.roadoneseattle.com)  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, July 29, 2025)  
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ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
**Easy Towing, LLC**, 648 Elliott Ave W, Seattle, WA 98119. **Thursday, July 31, 2025** Viewing 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. **Auction at 11 a.m.**  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, July 29, 2025)  
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ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
**Lincoln Towing Enterprises Inc.** 1201 North 125th St., Seattle, WA 98133 . 206-364-2000. **Saturday, August 2, 2025.** 3 hour preview @ 7-10 a.m. **Auction @ 10 a.m.** For list of vehicles see: [www.roadoneseattle.com](http://www.roadoneseattle.com)  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, July 29, 2025)  
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ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
**Lincoln Towing Enterprises Inc.**, 8425 1st Ave S, Seattle, WA 98108. 206-364-2000 Ext. 1370. **Wednesday, July 30, 2025.** Preview 8-10 a.m. **Auction @ 10 a.m.** For list of vehicles see: [www.roadoneseattle.com](http://www.roadoneseattle.com)  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, July 29, 2025)  
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ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
**Payless Towing & Recovery** 33905 Pacific Highway South, Federal Way, WA 98003. 253-941-4565. **Thursday, July 31, 2025 @ Noon** Viewing @ 11:30 a.m.  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, July 29, 2025)  
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ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION  
**Payless Towing & Recovery** 33905 Pacific Hwy South, Federal Way, WA 98003. 253-941-4565. **August 5 @ Noon** / Viewing @ 11:30 a.m.  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, July 29, 2025)

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LEGAL NOTICE

**Court of Washington County of King In re the Estate of Phebe Sharlene LaTurner, Deceased.**  
**No. 25-4-04736-6 KNT Probate Notice to Creditors (RCW 11.40.030) PLEASE TAKE NOTICE**  
The above Court has appointed Patricia LaFleur as Personal Representative of Decedent's estate  
Any person having a claim against Decedent must present the claim:  
•Before the time when the claim would be barred by any applicable statute of limitations, and  
•In the manner provided in RCW 11.40.070:  
•By filing with the Court the original of the signed Creditor's Claim, and  
•By serving upon or mailing by first class mail to me at the address provided below a copy of the signed Creditor's Claim.  
The Creditor's Claim must be presented by the later to occur of:  
•Thirty (30) days after I served or mailed this Notice to you as provided in RCW 11.40.020(3), or  
•Four (4) months after the date of first publication of this Notice.  
If the Creditor's Claim is not presented within the foregoing time period, the claim will be forever barred except as provided in RCW 11.40.051 and 11.40.060. This bar is effective for claims against both the Decedent's probate and non-probate assets.  
Date of First Publication of this Notice: Tuesday, July 22, 2025. Dated: July 14, 2025  
/s/ Jennifer A. Gellner: Jennifer A. Gellner, Gellner Law, Attorney for Personal Representative, WSBA #30701  
Address for Mailing of Service: Jennifer A. Gellner, Gellner Law, 8407 S. 259th Street, Suite 203, Kent, WA 98030-7536  
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesdays, July 22,29 & August 5, 2025)

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## Black Diamond Police Reports

On 7/1/2025 at 0053 hours, the Black Diamond Police Department conducted a traffic stop with a vehicle near the 29500 block of Maple Valley Black Diamond Rd SE after observing a traffic violation. Officer's later discovered the driver also had a suspended driver's license. The driver was issued a citation for the offense and released on scene.  
\*\*\*\*\*

On 06/30/2025 Officers responded to assist the Snoqualmie Police Department as part of the CSPA Major Crimes Task Force. Investigators performed a forensic examination of a cell phone pursuant to a search warrant in a Child Abuse case.  
\*\*\*\*\*

On 07/01/2025 Officers were dispatched to the 32300 block of Botts DR in regard to a request for assistance to Fire Department personnel conducting a river rescue of trapped boaters on the Green River.  
\*\*\*\*\*

On 7/2/2025 at 0455 hours, the Black Diamond Police Department responded to a malicious mischief incident at the 24300 block of Roberts Dr. It was reported a political campaign sign and a Black Diamond Miner's Day banner was damaged. Officer's took a report and took possession of the damaged items. There is no suspect information at this time.  
\*\*\*\*\*

On 07/03/2025, Officers were dispatched to an administrative detail to confirm a domestic violence no-contact order. Officers confirmed the order and sent a copy of the order via email to South Sound 911.  
\*\*\*\*\*

On 07/04/2025 and Officer was dispatched to a juvenile problem at the 25200 block of Park St. Juveniles were in the skate park that is not yet open to the public. Upon arrival, the Officer had the subjects leave the park.  
\*\*\*\*\*

On 07/05/2025, Officers received and information exchange notification that there was a vehicle heading south on 3rd Ave that was unable to maintain their lane. The vehicle was last seen at the 30600 block of 3rd Ave. Officers responded to that location and found the vehicle parked on the west side of 3rd Ave at the 30600 block. Contact was made with the driver who advised that she had been discharge from the hospital earlier that night. The driver was wearing a Hospital wristband and had a bandage on the back of her neck just below her head. The driver advised that while driving she became dizzy and thus pulled off the roadway. Fire responded and the driver refused to go to the Hospital. The driver made a call and was picked up so she would not have to drive.

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