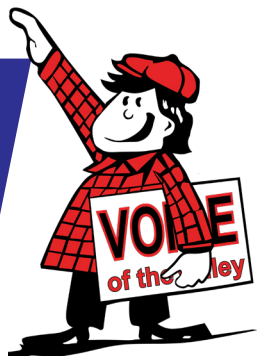


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VOICE of the Valley

57TH YEAR, NUMBER 26
 MAPLE VALLEY, WASHINGTON
 TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2026



Since 1969

Maple Valley Celebrates 250th Anniversary This Week

250th ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES

A COMMUNITY READING OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF FREEDOM & DEMOCRACY (1776 - 2026)

DATE	LOCATION
JULY 1, 2026	THE MAPLE VALLEY ARBORETUM
TIME	
6:00 PM	

JOIN US FOR A PUBLIC READING, AMERICAN FOLK MUSIC, AND COMMUNITY GATHERING. FREE EVENT & FAMILY FRIENDLY. BRING YOUR OWN LAWN CHAIRS.

Join us at the Lake Wilderness Arboretum on Wednesday, July 1 at 6:00 p.m. as we celebrate 250 years of freedom and democracy! Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy a public reading of the Declaration of Independence, American Folk Music and more.

CITY OF MAPLE VALLEY PARKS AND RECREATION

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

WASHINGTON STATE AMERICA'S 250th OFFICIAL 2026 PARTNER

JULY 3RD, 2026 | 5PM-10:15PM
 LAKE WILDERNESS PARK, MAPLE VALLEY, FREE

PIE BAKING CONTEST | FIELD GAMES | FOOD TRUCKS | FIREWORKS | LIVE MUSIC FEATURING WHISKEY RIVER

LEARN MORE

NOBLE PLUMBING | **JOHNSONS HOME CARE** | **Edward Jones** | **WARRIOR INJURY & LAW BATTLETESTED**

The City of Maple Valley's annual Independence Day Celebration Friday, July 3 at Lake Wilderness Park. Festivities begin at 5:00 p.m. and conclude with a fireworks show at 10:15 p.m.

Park Pop Ups in Covington for the Summer

Park Pop-Ups 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Throughout Summer

FREE SUMMER FUN IN YOUR PARKS!

Bubble Bash Tuesday, June 23 Town Center Lawn	America 250: Art in the Park Thursday, July 2 Covington Community Park	Nature Explorers Tuesday, July 7 Jenkins Creek Park	Friendship Bracelet Day Thursday, July 16 Friendship Park
Water Play Day Tuesday, July 21 Covington Community Park	Superhero Day Thursday, July 30 Town Center Lawn	Kindness ROCKS! Thursday, August 13 Covington Community Park	Summer Celebration Tuesday, August 18 Town Center Lawn

*No drop-offs. Children must be supervised by a parent or guardian at all times. Locations and times are subject to change.

The City of Covington's Park Pop-Up series kicks off today with Bubble Bash at Town Center Lawn from 10 a.m. to noon. Families are invited to make giant bubbles, enjoy outdoor fun and celebrate the start of a summer full of free activities in Covington parks. Town Center Lawn from 10 a.m.-noon. These are Free Events.

Upcoming Park Pop-Ups:

- July 2 America 250: Art in the Park, Covington Community Park
 - July 7 Nature Explorers, Jenkins Creek Park
 - July 16 Friendship Bracelet Making, Friendship Park
 - July 21 Water Play Day, Covington Community Park
 - July 30 Superhero Day, Town Center Lawn
 - Aug. 13 Kindness Rocks, Covington Community Park
 - Aug. 18 Summer Celebration, Town Center Lawn
- Join us all summer long for free family-friendly activities at parks throughout Covington

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An Encouraging Word Taylor Creek Church
By Pastor Jason Katen



Church Information and Services

Cost of Freedom

We who live in the United States have much to be grateful for, even in these tumultuous times. As a nation, we enjoy freedoms that others only dream about and seek. We have the freedom to pursue life, liberty, and happiness; the freedom to speak openly, worship God, and live the American dream.

How was all this made possible? It was made possible by those who believed by faith that this type of freedom could be obtained and should be obtained. The Declaration of Independence reads with such fervor and faith: "When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation."

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness..."

Fifty-six men signed the Declaration of Independence. Their conviction resulted in untold suffering for themselves and their families. Of the 56 men, five were captured by the British, twelve had their homes ransacked and burned, and two lost their sons in the Revolutionary Army. Another

had two sons captured. Nine of the fifty-six fought and died from wounds or hardships of the war. In all, 25,324 Americans gave their lives for independence.

As we think about the days we live in, it certainly is advisable to contemplate our roots and the words of our founders. But even more so, I believe we need to contemplate what God says, understanding that no person is free to do whatever he pleases. God has given His righteous law to guide us, reveal how we can know Him, be right with Him, and how to treat our neighbor. He has also placed civil authorities to uphold laws so we might live peacefully – Romans 13:1-4. The Bible says that to reject and disregard God and His law is sin. We continue to see what the world is like when it totally disregards God and His law.

Why should we care about this? Is it because of all that is going on in the world? No! It is because God tells us he will judge all sin – Romans 3:23: "The wages of sin is death." This means separation from Him for all eternity in judgment. God must judge sin if He is righteous. Gratefully, He is also loving and provides forgiveness. This forgiveness came at a great cost. Remember, freedom is never free. Jesus paid the wages of our sin and offers forgiveness. How do we receive it? John 3:16 tells us, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." Remember, sin

leads to destruction and death away from God. Jesus leads to life, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." - John 10:10.

As you think about the freedoms you enjoy in this great nation, ask yourself, "Am I free from the wages of sin?" If not, you are not truly free. God's Word is clear: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23.

Would you like to know more about making plans? Contact us at 425-432-0634 or www.taylorcreekchurch.org. We would love to talk to you about the hope we have in Christ. You can join us every Sunday at 9 AM for Sunday School and 10:15 AM for Worship. 21110 244th Ave. S.E., Maple Valley.



Black Diamond Police Reports

On 05/13/2026, Officers contacted a vehicle with suspicion of the driver possible being under the influence at the cross streets of Pinnacle Ave and Emerald ST. Officer were able to identify the driver and determine they were not under the influence.

On 05/13/2026, officers were dispatched to a suspicious subject at the 25300 block of Kanasket Dr. Officers were advised that a unknown male subject was walking door to door to houses in the neighborhood. Officers located and contacted the subject who advised officers that they were attempting to contact residents to raise awareness about religion. Officers determined no crime had been committed

On 05-14-26, at approximately 15:00 hours, an Officer attempted to park a patrol vehicle at the Black Diamond City Shops and struck the rear driver's side quarter panel against a metal pole. A small 6 inch scratch resulted from the quarter panel rubbing on the metal pole.

(Continued on page 4)

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

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 244th 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. Senior Pastor: Jason Katen

SOVREN Historics Racing Returns

This Independence Day weekend July 3rd to 5th at Pacific Raceways legendary 10 turn 2.25-mile road course the vintage racing machines of Society of Vintage Racing Enthusiasts will be competing in the 38th Annual Pacific Northwest Historics race. Taking to the track will be the likes of Corvette, Camaro, Porsche and Alfa Romeo. In addition, there will be the Triumphs, MG's, BMWs and many others. Drivers and teams are coming from in and around the Northwest, Canada and across the country.

The legendary of racing and automobile design Peter Brock will be this year's Featured Guest. There will also be the ever-popular Car Corral with hundreds of beautiful cars on display for all to enjoy. In addition, this year's event will include the Hoosier Tire 2.5 Challenge featuring historic B-Sedan racing machines. This is dedicated to celebrating the golden era of Trans-Am inspired racing. Once again there will be "Vendor's Row" with items available to learn about or purchase. Tickets are available at the gate.

An adult weekend ticket is \$35. Seniors 65+ tickets are \$20, as well as juniors 13-17. Children under 12 get in for free. First responders and Military with ID can enjoy all the excitement for free as well. This is the Premier Vintage Road Race on the West Coast, and is not one you want to miss. Our Independence Day is a reminder of what our country has been through over the years, and because of the sacrifices that have been made that allow all of us to enjoy weekends like this one.

If you need any information on this race or others this racing season then check out www.pacificraceways.com. Happy 4th of July everyone! .

Tahoma's Class of 2016 Reunion will be July 11, 2026

The reunion will take place on **Saturday, July 11, 2026 at 4:00 PM** in the commons at Tahoma High School. All alumni from the Class of 2016 are welcome to attend.

Alumni can RSVP at www.tahoma2016.com, where they can also find additional information or reach out to me directly at williamlathrop1@gmail.com with any questions.



GREATER MAPLE VALLEY UNINCORPORATED AREA COUNCIL
Working to keep the Rural Area rural

GMVUAC To Meet Monday

The Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council (GMVUAC) will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, **July 6, 2026, 7-9:30 p.m.** at the Maple Valley Fire Station 22225 SE 231st St. (across from King County Sheriff's Precinct #3).

Each meeting starts with a Public Comment period. The GMVUAC advocates with King County, State officials, and other organizations for the interests of the citizens of our unincorporated area defined by Tahoma School District No. 409, excluding the incorporated city of Maple Valley. As the meeting date approaches, please visit the GMVUAC website (<http://gmvuac.org/>) for the Agenda and Zoom information, which will be posted several days before the meeting.



Free Summer Meals 2026

For all children ages 0-18
Serving meals June 23rd - August 7th

Free meals will be served in locations around the Kent area. Meals must be consumed in designated serving areas. Please refer to the Kent School District website for serving times, dates, and location

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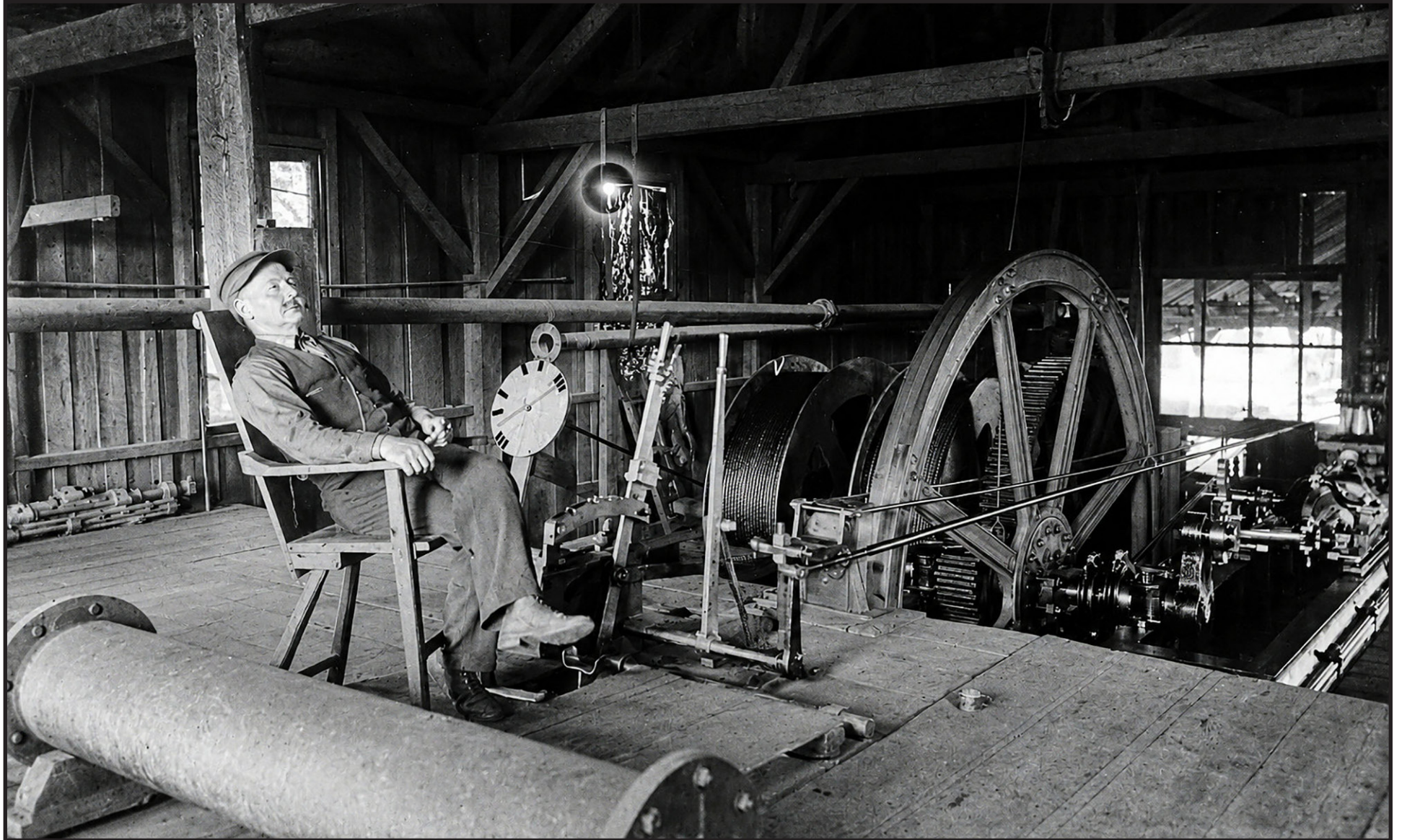
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When Coal Was King

By Bill Kombol



The late 1700s saw explosive growth in coal use, driven by the Industrial Revolution. The prime mover was James Watt's steam engine, which required massive amounts of fuel to boil water and generate steam. Coal contains roughly 1.5 to 2 times more energy than firewood, plus it's far denser, delivering four times more power by volume.

Next came Henry Cort's invention of better-quality iron with coal-derived coke replacing wood charcoal. Meanwhile, Western Europe faced severe deforestation as timber prices soared to meet demand from the booming shipbuilding industry. With the construction of new canals and the development of railroads, it became easy to ship coal long distances. Factories no longer needed to be adjacent to rivers for water power.

The coal industry's growth during the Industrial Revolution transformed Wales from a rural, agricultural society into the world's first industrial nation. By 1850, more Welsh worked in industry, primarily coal mines, than on farms. With their superior mining skills, between 100,000 and 150,000 Welsh-born people

immigrated to the U.S. during the 1800s.

William Trevylian Thomas, seen here operating the hoist machinery at Black Diamond's Mine 14 in the 1890s, was one of them. Born in Wales in 1860, W.T. or 'Bill' Thomas, as he was known, was a typical Welsh immigrant. He began working in the Welsh coal mines in 1860 at age ten. Entering the mine at 4 a.m., he labored 14 hours a day, earning "the magnificent sum of 16 cents a day." Candles cost miners four cents each, so Thomas blew his light out while eating lunch. His meal consisted of a few slices of bread without butter or meat. He had to walk a mile through tunnels, his bare feet exposed to mud and water, to reach the mine's working face.

He remained a coal miner who, through grit and knowledge, worked his way up through the ranks. Thomas arrived in the U.S. in 1885, at age 25, and two years later made his way to Franklin, Washington Territory. Thomas told of the time when he and 16 other miners were briefly entombed in a Franklin mine behind a raging fire. They all wrote farewell notes but

miraculously dug their way out.

Thomas' narrative, which reflected the experience of many Welsh miners, was published in the Oct. 1, 1925, issue of the Pacific Coast Bulletin. Thomas delivered it as a speech a week earlier during a luncheon of the Pacific Coast Coal Company's Central Council of miners and managers. W.T. Thomas concluded his message by emphasizing how much better working conditions were in 1925 than two generations prior.

Thomas moved to Black Diamond in 1895 and married Hilda Augusta Paulson Nelson, a seamstress who also raised chickens and sold eggs. A son, Albert, was born in 1897 but died a year later. A daughter, Margaret, was born in 1898.

Around this time, W.T. Thomas was the hoisting engineer, responsible for pulling coal cars out of the mine and lowering empty ones down. It was one of the top jobs in the mine. And the Black Diamond Coal Mining Company's Mine #14 was the biggest and best in the area. In the photo, Thomas is seated before a dial and a lever. To the right is the powerful hoisting

machinery, basically a giant fishing reel wrapped with a one-inch steel cable. The dial indicates the position of the coal cars on their trip to or from the bottom of the mine. The lever controls the electric current that drives the hoist. Electricity was generated from a nearby coal-fired steam power plant.

Seeking to improve his lot, Thomas trained to be an agent with New York Life Insurance. It was a strategic move because New York Life had recently pioneered the sale of policies to high-risk workers such as railmen and coal miners. Most life insurance companies refused to cover miners due to high mortality rates, ceding the market to New York Life, which found a massive, untapped market in booming industrial towns like Black Diamond. To sell these high-risk policies, they needed agents who knew the industry and could communicate with miners, many of whom spoke little or no English.

William T. Thomas moved to Seattle in 1903 and continued his career as a New York Life Insurance agent. He became a U.S. citizen in 1920 and passed away in 1938. His granddaughter, Margaret Stanley, was a longtime member of the Black Diamond Historical Society and rarely missed Welsh Heritage Days.

Details about Thomas's life were provided by JoAnne Matsumura, an Issaquah historian and former BDHS archivist. *This photo #1992-01 comes courtesy of BDHS. The original was so severely faded that much of Thomas' face was all white. Photo enhancements were performed by Boomer Burnham, who does business as <https://www.boomersphotography.com/>. Boomer explained that when a photo is "blown out," there is no information to correct or alter. Boomer admitted using Artificial Intelligence "creates a lot of new details and facts."* However, the writer of this weekly column worked in and around similar coal mine hoist rooms and can attest to the generalized accuracy of Boomer's photo upgrade.

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ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION
Dick's Towing and Road Service, Inc. 8425 1st Ave S, Seattle, WA 98108. 206-364-2000 Ext. 137. **Wednesday, July 8, 2026.** 2-hour preview @ 8-10 a.m. **Auction @ 10 a.m.** For list of vehicles see www.roadoneseattle.com
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, June 30, 2026)

ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION
Lincoln Towing Enterprises Inc., 1201 North 125th St., Seattle, WA 98133 . 206-364-2000. **Saturday, July 4, 2026.** 3-hour preview @ 7-10 a.m. **Auction @ 10 a.m.** For list of vehicles see: www.roadoneseattle.com
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, June 30, 2026)

ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION
Lincoln Towing Enterprises Inc., 8425 1st Ave S, Seattle, WA 98108. 206-364-2000 Ext. 1370. **Wednesday, July 8, 2026.** 3-hour preview 8-10 a.m. **Auction @ 10 a.m.** For list of vehicles see: www.roadoneseattle.com
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, June 30, 2026)

ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION
Payless Towing & Recovery, 33905 Pacific Highway South, Federal Way, WA 98003 253-941-4565. **Thursday, July 2, 2026 @ Noon.** Viewing @ 11:30
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, June 30, 2026)

ABANDONED VEHICLE AUCTION
Payless Towing & Recovery, 33905 Pacific Hwy South, Federal Way, WA 98003. 253-941-4565. **Tuesday, July 7, 2026 @ Noon.** Viewing @ 11:30 a.m.
(Published VOICE of the Valley, Tuesday, June 30, 2026)


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(Continued from page 2)

On 05/14/2026, Officers contacted a vehicle in the 22400 block on SE 296th ST. Offices were able to identify the subject and informed them that the hours of the boat launch were dawn to dusk. Officers also informed the driver of the vehicle of their drivers status and advised them to contact someone to pick them up.

On 05/15/2026, Officers were flagged down by a citizen and informed about possible Burglary that had occurred in the 24500 block on Roberts DR. Officers were able to determine that no crime had occurred.

On 5/15/2026 at 1046 hours, Officer's conducted a traffic stop with a vehicle after observing the driver as someone with an active felony warrant. Officer's later discovered the driver also had a suspended driver's license and failed to transfer title within 45 days. Officer's were told to advise on the warrant and the subject was later booked into a nearby correctional facility for local charges.

On 05/15/2026, Officer contacted a vehicle in the 22400 block on 296th ST. Officers were able to identify the subjects and advised them the hour of the boat launch. The subjects left without issue.

On 05/18/2026, officers were dispatched to a stolen vehicle report at the 31100 block of 3rd Ave. Officers contacted the reporting party and took a stolen vehicle report.

On 05/18/2026, officers were dispatched via the non emergency line regarding suspicious activity at the 32300 block of McKay Ln. Dispatch advised that the caller reported a possible bullet hole in the rear window of their residence. Officers investigated the incident and determined a bullet had been fired from behind the property and damaged the reporting parties rear window. Officers investigated and documented the incident.

On 5/18/2026 at 1708 hours, Officer's responded to a juvenile problem near the 30700 block of 229th Pl. Se. It was reported

multiple juveniles were riding dirt bikes in the roadway and wearing helmets. Officer's did not locate the juveniles and cleared the call.

On 05/18/2026, officers were dispatched to the 22900 block of SE Elm St. regarding a subject riding a black and orange dirt bike on the city sidewalk. Officers conducted an area check and located the subject. Officers attempted to contact the juvenile subject that fled officers who did not pursue the subject due to the risk to public safety.

On 05/19/2026 at approximately 0043 hours, officers were requested by King County Sheriff's Office to check the 31100 block of 3rd Ave in reference to a subject who called 911, due to being lost on foot and needing assistance. KCSO Deputies were checking multiple unincorporated outside north east of the city where the 911 calls were "pinging". During one of the phone calls, the caller advised they believed they were close to the address given in Black Diamond. Officers checked the area with negative results. King County Sheriff's deputies attempted to locate the subject on foot in multiple locations and with a drone with negative results. The callers phone eventually text to 911 advising they were located by family and no assistance from law enforcement was needed.

On 05/19/2026 a Driver's license was dropped off to the Police Department that was found in a roadway. Officers contacted the owner of the Driver's License and logged the license into safekeeping until the owner can retrieve their license.

On 05/19/2025 officers were dispatched to the 29000 block of 233rd Ave SE in reference to a Missing Person report. Officer conducted an investigation, identifying an area to check for the subject in Pierce County. Pierce County Deputies located the subject well not requiring police or medical assistance.

On 05/20/2026 Officers responded to a person making an in person report at the Police Department in the 25500 block of Lawson St. and took a statement from the individual regarding a potential Internet scam. No crime was found to have been committed.

On 05/20/2026, officers were dispatched to welfare check at the 32700 block of Stewart Ave SE regarding a possibly suicidal subject. Officers contacted the subject by phone and determined that they were not planning to harm themselves others, nor were they in need of any police assistance.

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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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