

Community Mourns Loss of Yelm Theater Mainstay

Nancy Tribush Hillman Passes Away After Stroke

BY DANIEL WARN
dwarn@yelmonline.com

Nancy Tribush Hillman, known for her work in the bustling world of Yelm's community theater, suffered a stroke Monday, July 8, while at rehearsal for a StageStruck Youth Theater original show called "Giving."

She died Wednesday, July 10. Hillman collaborated with Lucy Turchin on writing the script for "Giving," and was the show's director.

Cameron Jayne, artistic director of the Triad Arts Theater in Yelm, said that Hillman was "the dame of theater in Yelm," and that they chuckled when the two of them were discussing "Giving," over coleslaw at Ma and Pa's Family Diner.

"I know this play was my swan song but wanted to write a play all my life and now finally

SEE MORE

Read a tribute to Nancy Tribush Hillman by Steve Klein on page A10 of today's edition.

did... and that makes me happy," Hillman had told Jayne.

Dawn Young, who goes by Dawn Emilia in her career as an artist, is active as a director and producer for Standing Room Only Theater Company and texted the Nisqually Valley News



Daniel Warn/Nisqually Valley News

From left, Isha, Ayla and Elle Bunn are directed by Nancy Tribush Hillman in "If Momma Was Married" from "Gypsy."

■ SEE **HILLMAN**, PAGE A11

Youth Homelessness Still an Issue in Yelm and Beyond, Report Finds

County Publishes 2019 Homeless Count Report

BY ERIC ROSANE
erosane@yelmonline.com

Thurston County recently published the findings from its annual homeless census.

It's titled the 2019 "Point in Time Count of Homeless Persons," and the goal was to count the number of homeless individuals, quantify their needs and assess resources through a single-day census.

The Homeless Census Report was made possible through the collaboration of dozens of volunteers along with county and city staff. The count is also required under state and federal law.

The report was able to make a number of conclusions regarding the cause and distribution of homeless individuals in the county — most notably that, for the first time in four years, the number of unsheltered individuals were among the majority of cases reported and that homelessness among youth is still an issue.

A second source for the report, based on data from all eight of Thurston County's school districts, found that nearly 1,706 students faced homelessness in the most recent school year, 2017-2018, with the numbers trending on the rise.

■ SEE **YOUTH**, PAGE A11

'I Don't Think Anyone Will Be Able to Find Her'



Courtesy Photo

Nancy Moyer

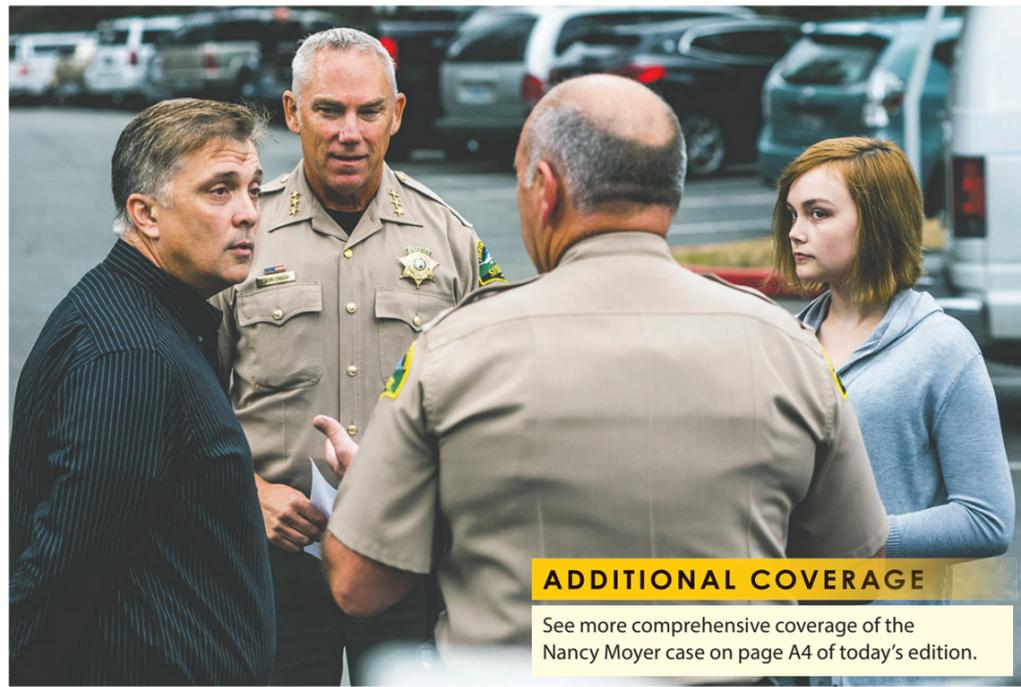
Man Calls 911, Confesses to Killing Nancy Moyer in 2009

BY NATALIE JOHNSON
For Nisqually Valley News

The Thurston County Prosecutor's Office will delay filing formal charges in the homicide of Nancy Moyer against a man who reportedly confessed to killing her to detectives last week, according to a statement posted on social media Monday afternoon just before 5 p.m.

Eric Lee Roberts, 53, called 911 dispatch on July 9 and reported that he had killed Nancy Moyer in 2009. Detectives interviewed Roberts and arrested him after he repeated his confession. He later recanted.

On Thursday, July 11, a Thurston County court commissioner found probable cause to hold Roberts in custody on suspicion of second-degree murder, but the Thurston County Prosecutor's



ADDITIONAL COVERAGE

See more comprehensive coverage of the Nancy Moyer case on page A4 of today's edition.

Jared Wenzelburger / Nisqually Valley News

A deputy briefs Sheriff John Snaza, center left, along with Bill Moyer, left, and Samantha Moyer, right, before they speak at a press conference outside the Thurston County Courthouse in Olympia.



Eric Lee Roberts, left, makes an appearance in Thurston County Superior Court via video monitor in Olympia.

■ SEE **MOYER**, PAGE A11

Bail Reduced From \$2M to \$25K for Alleged Getaway Driver in Fatal Deputy Shooting

Brenda Troyer Is Now Out on Bail Following 2018 Killing of Daniel A. McCartney, a Yelm Man

BY DANIEL WARN
dwarn@yelmonline.com

Brenda Troyer, who was the alleged getaway driver for the suspected shooter of Pierce County Deputy Daniel A. McCartney last year, received a bail reduction from \$2 million to \$25,000 on June 5.

The reasoning — put forth by Troyer's attorney, Phillip E. Thornton — was that Troyer

still had four months of incarceration left before her trial, which would amount to 22 months in state custody before she had her day in court, according to court documents.

"This court has heard the basic outline of the charge and evidence the state possesses against Ms. Troyer," Thornton said in the document. "Ms. Troyer has a



Courtesy of Pierce County Sheriff's Office

Daniel McCartney

strong case for actual innocence. She should not have to spend 22 months incarcerated pending trial in this matter."

In January of 2018, McCartney, a Yelm resident, was at the scene of a reported home invasion on the 5100 block of 200th Street East, near Fredrickson, according to Nisqually Valley News reports.

Dispatch said they heard screaming and sounds of a disturbance at the scene. When McCartney arrived less than six minutes later, gunfire broke out that would eventually prove fatal for McCartney, who died after being transported to St. Joseph Medical

Center in Tacoma.

McCartney left behind three children and a wife named Cierra, according to a Tacoma News Tribune article.

Frank William Pawul was given life in prison without the possibility of parole by Superior Court Judge Stephanie Arend, the News Tribune states. He pleaded guilty to aggravated first-degree murder, first-degree kidnapping, conspiracy to commit first-degree robbery and unlawful gun possession.

Troyer is currently living with her mother in Mossyrock, Washington, under electronic home monitoring.



HILLMAN:*Continued From Page A1*

from the hospital where Hillman passed.

"My family wouldn't be here in Yelm today if it wasn't for Nancy Tribush Hillman," Young said. "When we first drove through Yelm to look at a house, we drove past the Drew Harvey Theater. We looked at each other and said, 'This little town has a theater? It must be a great place to live.' We are her legacy, every one of us who she mentored, directed, taught and loved will continue to live her legacy and build the future theater community in Yelm."

When it comes right down to it, Hillman was all about educating a new generation of thespians. "(StageStruck is) serious

about what we are teaching children," Hillman said in a previous interview with the Nisqually Valley News. "We are teaching them to express themselves. We are teaching them to be good at what they do. So it's not just: 'Here's a song ... sing it any way you want.' We actually are an acting school."

According to the Yelm Community Blog, Hillman was instrumental person in the Drew Harvey Theater, Standing Room Only (SRO) Theater Company and the StageStruck Youth Theater.

Hillman always said she was looking for the next moment of opportunity to touch a child's life in a positive way, that theater was a teaching tool for life.

"The kids come in and they

are like little mice," Hillman said previously. "It's like Cinderella. Everything is so wonderful and they are all just little angels, and that lasts for about a week. And then they start coming out of their shells, because that is something I do teach."

She taught the kids to express themselves, to feel good on stage, to let go and entertain. These things are wonderful, but in order to fully experience the magic of theater, the kids need structure as well, Hillman said.

"We have to learn how to be disciplined and then it's really fun because you know what you're doing," she said previously.

Virginia Coverdale, a friend of Hillman, said that the community lost a legend with Hill-

man's passing on a Facebook post.

"Nancy Tribush Hillman touched so many lives," Coverdale posted. "In some families there are now three generations of people she has directed. She brought world-class theater to a tiny town in Washington state and with it, helped nurture the lives and character of all she touched. Her talent, her humor, her genius, her friendship are going to be so missed."

In another Facebook post, Rachel Martinez, who shared a love of dance with Hillman, joined others in mourning.

"Dance is how we met and from there blossomed an amazing friendship, several plays later and a ton of unforgettable memories," Martinez posted. "I

FINAL PRODUCTION ROLLS ON

"Giving," Nancy Tribush Hillman's final production, will cost a flat rate of \$10 for everyone. It will show at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and at 1 p.m. Sunday, July 19-21. The performances will be held at The Triad Theater, 102 E. Yelm Ave., Yelm.

am braver, stronger and a little wiser because of her unwavering love and faith in me over the years. I smile, cry and giggle with each thought of her as I rewind and play back in my mind our many wonderful adventures together."

MOYER:*Continued From Page A1*

Office stated that it would reserve a final decision on charges until Monday, July 15.

Court Commissioner Nathan Kortokrax ordered Roberts held on \$1.5 million bail on the probable cause for second-degree murder. Those conditions of release were set to expire Monday afternoon, according to the prosecutor's office.

During the course of the past week's investigation, detectives found evidence that Roberts was in possession of illegal firearm silencers and short-barreled rifles. He was arrested and is expected to be charged on those violations. A judge has not yet set a new bail amount for the new criminal case against Roberts.

"At this time the Prosecuting Attorney's Office has elected to delay filing any charges related to the homicide investigation until the investigation is complete and all evidence can be fully considered," the statement reads.

At 3 p.m. Tuesday, July 9, after 10 years of tracking down leads, interviewing suspects and scouring rural south Thurston County for evidence, law enforcement got a major and unexpected break in the Moyer case.

Roberts, 53, of Rochester, called 911 saying he wanted to confess to a murder — Nancy Moyer's murder.

"Roberts stated that he killed Nancy Moyer 10 years ago and he felt tired of holding it inside," according to a declaration of

probable cause filed in Thurston County Superior Court. "Eric said, 'I don't think anyone will be able to find her.'"

Roberts was arrested Wednesday, July 10, and on Thursday afternoon made his first appearance in Thurston County Superior Court on a charge of second-degree murder. Superior Court Commissioner Nathan Kortokrax found prosecutors had probable cause to charge Roberts and ordered him held on \$1.5 million bail, just less than the \$2 million requested by prosecutors.

Roberts has previously been questioned in connection to Moyer's disappearance. He lived only a few houses down from the Moyer family before Nancy Moyer moved to Tenino, and worked with Moyer at the state Department of Ecology. At the time of his arrest, there was an outstanding warrant for his arrest out of Snohomish County on suspicion of domestic-violence assault.

Nancy Moyer, 36 at the time, was last seen March 6, 2009. Her husband reported her missing two days later. Investigators determined that foul play was involved in Moyer's disappearance and she is presumed dead. Investigators have pursued a number of leads over the past 10 years, but have never made an arrest until now.

On Tuesday, July 10, after the 911 call, Det. Mickey Hamilton of the Thurston County Sheriff's Office responded to Roberts' home in the 16500 block

of Sheldon Lane Southwest in Rochester in response to the 911 call. Roberts was visibly upset, according to court documents.

"He was crying, clenching and unclenching his fists, and wringing his hands," the probable cause report reads.

Roberts made a recorded statement in Det. Hamilton's vehicle. He reported on the recorded statement, "I killed her," and said Moyer attacked him and he "reacted." He initially reported killing her near the Chehalis River. He went on to say he and Moyer had a sexual relationship. Detectives asked where to find Moyer's body, and Roberts' response was cagey.

"I'm not sure what to say right now. It's very disturbing," Roberts said, according to court documents.

Roberts then asked deputies to shut off the recorder, and according to their reports, changed both his behavior and his statements.

"At that point in the interview, Eric appeared to become more relaxed. He turned towards Det. Hamilton and relaxed his muscles as he changed his story to tell Hamilton he actually killed Nancy in his house," according to court documents.

He went on to say they had "rough sex" and that he strangled Moyer with a scarf, killing her unintentionally. He told detectives he was using drugs and alcohol and said he didn't realize at first that she was dead.

"Eric said that at first, he thought she was still alive, but then he realized she wasn't be-

cause 'She hadn't moved in a really long time and she was not breathing,'" according to court documents. He told detectives he didn't try to help her because he "freaked out."

Wednesday wasn't the first time Roberts had been interviewed or investigated in connection to Moyer's disappearance. In May 2009, less than two months after Moyer's disappearance, he told detectives she dated his nephew, and that he worked with her at the state Department of Ecology.

"Mr. Roberts stated that when he did arrive at work he would walk into the building with Nancy Moyer and would exchange pleasantries," according to court documents. "He would also visit her occasionally at her work station as she was performing various duties. Roberts claimed he had never dated Nancy Moyer and was clear she had never been to his home."

Then in 2014, Detective Ben Elkins, another detective working the case, interviewed a woman who dated Roberts for several years after Moyer's disappearance. She reported that Roberts had a "kind of weird," conversation with her mother about Moyer, and that Roberts had "choked her out." Roberts was arrested later on suspicion of domestic-violence assault.

At another point in the investigation, a "citizen informant" reported to investigators that Roberts poured a concrete slab on his property not long after Moyer's disappearance. The in-

formant reported he asked Roberts if he knew anything about Moyer's disappearance and that Roberts said, "Maybe I do know something about it," but wouldn't say more.

After Roberts' admission in the patrol vehicle, he asked if the detectives wanted to go on a walk, according to court documents. He went on to lead deputies on a walk on his property to a concrete fire pit.

"He just stood there staring at the fire pit without saying anything. When Det. Hamilton asked him about it he said, 'I don't really want to incriminate myself any further, but IF (sic) I was going to get rid of a body on my property, it would be right there.' Eric then pointed to the fire pit," according to court documents.

He then told detectives he burned the scarf but kept Moyer's clothes in his basement. Detectives obtained a search warrant and began looking for evidence on the property on Wednesday afternoon. They have not commented on what evidence has been found, but Sheriff John Snaza gave brief comments on the investigation in a press conference Thursday morning.

Snaza confirmed evidence had been discovered and would be forwarded to the Washington State Patrol Crime Lab, but said that no body had yet been found.

Roberts recanted his statements Wednesday morning, saying he didn't know why he told investigators he killed Nancy Moyer.

YOUTH:*Continued From Page A1*

According to the report, Yelm Community Schools reported a census of 119 homeless students and Rainier School District reported 25 homeless students.

The majority of the homeless population that participated in the census, nearly 21 percent, were 17 or younger.

The rising number of homeless students isn't a local problem. Statewide since 2008, the number of homeless students has nearly doubled, according to numbers from the report.

The annual census took place on Thursday, Jan. 24. Seven official counts took place around the county, including one in Yelm.

Yelm Point in Time volunteers began their count around noon and worked well into the evening. Counters took to a number of locations around Yelm, including the Yelm Community Services Food Bank and the Yelm Prairie Christian Church.

They also searched alongside other known spots where the homeless are known to seek refuge, such as the Yelm-Tenino Trail.

Along the way, census reporters distributed donated clothes, toiletries and other necessities to those who needed them.

About 7 percent of homeless individuals counted in Thurston County reported Yelm as the current city where they reside,

according to the report.

The report shows that nearly 31 out of 437 total census responses occurred in Yelm. Initial reports back in February by Yelm census volunteers tallied 35 responses.

But these numbers gathered in rural communities can sometimes be inconsistent and require scrutiny, the report claims.

"There is still a level of difficulty in capturing rural homeless, as people experiencing this struggle in rural communities are far less likely to be found in centralized locations, or be willing to answer the PIT survey

questions," the 2019 Homeless Census Report reads.

Nearly 77 percent of homeless individuals reported receiving an income, the majority of which comes from SSI/SSDI.

Causes of homelessness also varied, according to the report. Of the 500 people counted, 115 reported job loss/eviction as the cause of their homelessness. Mental illness, family rejection and physical disabilities were other major factors.

To read the report in full and for additional resources, head to the county's website, www.co.thurston.wa.us.

"Whether you are around the world or across the street ...

Let us show you the way home!"

Specializing in Single Family Homes

Here to Serve:

Yelm, Rainier, Tenino,
Roy & McKenna

Lori Delong

204 E Yelm Ave. ~ Yelm



360-955-5993

www.hometownpm.com

**Why Wait?
You Deserve a
Good Nights
Sleep!**

**Up to 60 Months
0% Interest Financing
on Serta Mattresses**

**CHRISTENSEN'S
HOME FURNISHINGS**

Furniture • Flooring • Appliances • Mattresses
Cabinets • Countertops



**Limited
Time Offer....
Minimum
Purchase Required**

Monday - Friday 9 am - 7 pm • Saturday/Sunday 9 am - 6 pm

www.christenseshomefurnishings.com

16628 Hwy 507-Yelm, WA • 360-458-3621

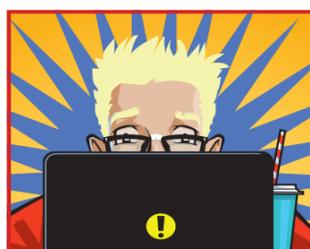
Delivery & Financing Available! OAC

VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER

FIRST REPORT

Local news as it happens!

www.yelmonline.com



Nancy Moyer Case Went a Decade With No Substantial Leads

BY CODY NEUENSCHWANDER
For Nisqually Valley News

Nancy Moyer's house in the 700 block of state Route 507, Tenino, was found empty on March 6, 2009. The door was ajar, the TV was on, a glass of red wine sat on a table and Moyer's credit cards, purse and identification were all still inside.

In the decade that followed, law enforcement, private investigators, hopeful friends and family members, TV crews and podcasters would all sink their teeth into the troubling disappearance, all vying to uncover what happened to Moyer. The Thurston County Sheriff's Office eventually dubbed Moyer's case a no-body homicide — meaning although neither a body nor remains had been recovered, Moyer was almost certainly dead at the hands of another.

Ten years later, with the arrest of a suspect who reportedly confessed to the crime before retracting his statements, many are reflecting on the past decade.

Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza said the new direction the case has taken is victory for investigating law enforcement officers.

"I was a deputy at the time and I was involved in this case

as well. I can tell you any member of Thurston County Sheriff's Office that when you have these cold cases that bring new information or new leads to the solving of the crime, you're always excited about the persistence we have in these cases," he said. "Many people tend to forget these sort of crimes. In law enforcement we don't forget any of these crimes."

Bill Moyer and Samantha Moyer — one of their daughters — made an appearance at a press conference last week. While noting that the family hasn't heard many details about the ongoing investigation, Bill Moyer thanked law enforcement for their dedication to the case over the past 10 years.

"Over the years we've dealt with a lot and they've been very good to the family and very much appreciate what they've done, because 10 years is a long time for us and it's a long time for law enforcement," he said.

John Snaza's brother, Lewis County Sheriff Rob Snaza, said any break in a cold case — even if it's that of a different jurisdiction — is an encouraging thing. Lewis County continues to investigate a number of cold cases, Rob Snaza said, referencing pieces of evidence connected to Lewis County cold cases that

were recently sent for processing at the Washington State Patrol lab.

"This is always a glimmer of hope for the rest of us that are doing these cold cases, because you hear across the nation about these cold cases being resolved. It's just a matter of going after due diligence, going after the case and working hard and submitting items into evidence to be tested through labs," he said. "...We're committed ... that all of the cold cases we have in the county, we want to work and we want to solve. We want to bring resolution, like the family does. ... It's important for the family and it's important to us that we not give up on those victims."

On March 8, 2009, Moyer's husband, Bill Moyer, found the house empty after dropping off their two children. While still married, the couple had been separated for two years. At that point, no one had seen Moyer for two days — when she carpooled home with a co-worker at her job at the Department of Ecology in Lacey, and was seen later that day buying groceries in Tenino.

It wasn't like Moyer to not be home when the kids were to be dropped off, Bill Moyer told law enforcement. Her white Honda was still parked in the driveway. Bev Poston, Moyer's former

boss at the Department of Ecology, told The Chronicle in February 2010: "I'm hoping. My gut feeling is that she is no longer with us. ... If she was, I know she would have moved heaven and earth to contact someone."

Poston, as reported in a 2019 Chronicle article, said she organized search parties throughout the area and researched searching techniques.

She was contacted by a psychic, who said she sensed a location the body might be hidden.

Leads were scarce throughout the year, until the grisly murder of a Yelm woman in August 2010 — and the subsequent arrest of Bernard K. Howell — caused some to draw connections between the two incidents, and causing some to put Howell at the top of their suspect list.

Vanda Boone, 60, was found dead in the back of Howell's truck after he was pulled over by a Thurston County sheriff's deputy. Her throat had been slit and she had suffered blunt force injuries to her head and neck, said Thurston County Coroner Gary Warnock.

Former Tenino Police Officer Adam Haggerty said he was one of the first law enforcement officers on scene, and described Howell's distant "1,000-yard stare."



Nancy Moyer

Courtesy Photo

Howell later pleaded guilty to the death and was sentenced to 26 years. While some investigators would later discard the notion that Howell was also responsible for Moyer's disappearance, the Boone murder would certainly label Howell a person of interest. However, authorities still lacked concrete leads.

In 2013, Olympia-based private investigators headed by Fred Doughty, an ex-officer and defense criminal investigator, began to reexamine the case, The Chronicle reported. Doughty said, at the time, the team would go back to interview family and extended family members in attempts to catch clues that had been missed.

"Somebody knows. Somebody knows something, but unfortunately no one has come to us and said something," said Detective Ben Elkins with the Thurston County Sheriff's Office in 2016.

Nancy Moyer's Family 'Cautiously Optimistic' After Break in Case

BY NATALIE JOHNSON
For Nisqually Valley News

Ten years after Nancy Moyer went missing in mysterious circumstances from her Tenino home, her family are the closest they've ever been to knowing what happened in March 2009, following an arrest Wednesday, July 10, of Moyer's coworker and former neighbor.

"I guess I would say the family is cautiously optimistic. We want to believe this is the end, but I think much like the press, until there's a body ... we're not there yet," Bill Moyer, Nancy's husband, said in a press conference Thursday, July 11, at the Thurston County Sheriff's Office.

Bill Moyer and daughter, Sa-

mantha, now 19, spoke briefly after Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza gave a brief update on the case for assembled representatives of the media.

At first, she wasn't sure what to say.

"It's crazy," she said. "I never expected the case to go this far after it being cold for 10 years."

Prodded by TV news reporters, Samantha, 9 years old when her mother disappeared, remembered not being worried at first that her mother wasn't home, thinking she might have been on a walk or had gone out for groceries. She also talked about all the things her mother would have missed in the past decade.

"It's just been hard since then," she said. "I've struggled a lot. Growing up without a mom sucks, especially when you don't know where she is. ... Lots of

milestones. She didn't get to see me graduate, she didn't get to see my first dance, me drive a car, any of that. It would help so much to find her to find out what happened to her."

Moyer's older daughter was 11 in 2009, and did not attend the press conference Thursday.

Moyer, 36 at the time, was last seen March 6, 2009. While the investigation went cold, in the past year, the case has been featured on the Investigation Discovery channel and a podcast called "Hide and Seek," launched by Kennewick resident James Baysinger. The 10-year anniversary of Moyer's disappearance was this March.

Snaza was clear in his press conference Thursday that the case is by no means closed. Law enforcement have a complicated investigation ahead of them.



Jared Wenzelburger / For Nisqually Valley News

Bill Moyer, left, and Samantha Moyer, right, speak during a press conference Thursday morning outside the Thurston County Courthouse in Olympia.

"The whole family needs closure, her sister needs closure, her parents need closure, the rest of the family all need closure," Bill Moyer said. "Not knowing is a hard thing and unless you're in that situation I don't really think you can fully understand it."

Creator of 'Hide and Seek' Podcast Praised for Putting Moyer Case in Spotlight

BY WILL RUBIN
For Nisqually Valley News

When James Baysinger started the drive from Kennewick to Rochester on Wednesday, July 10, he wasn't sure what he would find. He'd responded to other leads over the course of his production of a podcast investigating the 2009 disappearance of Tenino resident Nancy Moyer that didn't pan out.

Baysinger arrived in Rochester to find a literal dead end — the road ahead of him had been closed by the Thurston County Sheriff's Office while investigators searched every inch of 16546 Sheldon Lane Southwest. The property's owner, Eric Lee Roberts reportedly called 911 the day before to confess to killing Moyer a decade ago.

After failing to find a way past the roadblock to obtain more information from law enforcement, Baysinger and a Chronicle reporter received permission from the owner of an adjacent property to use his ladders to climb the side of a barn in hopes of getting a better look. It was clear at that point that this was more than a shot in the dark, and that Baysinger's podcast — Hide and Seek — had likely played some role in Roberts de-

termining to come forward.

"It's kind of a glass half-full and glass half-empty situation at the same time," Baysinger said. "One the one hand, you're wondering if this is the real deal and if, after more than a year spent investigating and talking to people for the podcast, chasing all sorts of leads, this is the big break. On the other hand, you're definitely aware that there are people, family members who have had to deal with the heartbreak of losing (Moyer) for so long, and it's going to be hard for them, even if they finally get answers about what happened."

Baysinger is reluctant to claim credit for Roberts' arrest on suspicion of second-degree murder. It was a collaborative effort between many people, including residents of South Thurston County who assisted Baysinger's efforts and the listeners of Hide and Seek.

Having been in contact with detectives and other parties close to the case while producing the podcast, Baysinger said he received a tip about Roberts' involvement in January, but chose not to pursue it at the time for fear of fouling up a potential criminal investigation.

"I have (Roberts') phone number, and he knew that I had



Will Rubin / Nisqually Valley News

James Baysinger, who created the podcast series Hide and Seek that focused its first season on the 2009 disappearance of Nancy Moyer, speaks to a Thurston County worker manning the roadblock Wednesday as law enforcement searched a property in connection with Moyer's disappearance.

his number," Baysinger said.

Baysinger's humility hasn't stopped others from praising his efforts. Thurston County Sheriff John Snaza and Tenino Mayor Wayne Fournier have stated that attention paid to the case by Hide and Seek and other wide-reaching media sources had an impact on the case.

Samantha Moyer, who was 9 years old when her mother disappeared, has worked closely with Baysinger on Hide and Seek. She said Thursday that she felt like "people wouldn't have started coming forward if not for the podcast." Her father Bill Moyer had similar feelings about recent media attention on the case, including when it was featured in 2018 on Investigation Discovery.

"It has focused a lot more attention on the case than I think has been focused on it in a great many years," Bill Moyer said.

With the case now firmly in the hands of the judicial system, Baysinger said he's likely to take a step back from the investigative nature of the podcast, at least for the time being. He plans to continue following and reporting on new developments as they are made public by law enforcement our court proceedings.

"I want to see this through to the end," Baysinger said. "If it turns out that Roberts is the one who did it, I'll be there. If he didn't, then I'll have to roll up my sleeves and get back to work."

Attention All Small Business Owners!

We are introducing an exciting way to offer dental benefits to your employees without the expense or hassle of insurance companies.

The Quality Dental Plan (QDP) saves your business thousands of dollars per employee while providing quality, low-cost, dental care to your employees and their families. With traditional insurance, employees deal with monthly premiums, complicated claim forms, limitations, and annual maximums.

QDP makes things simple, for a small annual fee of \$299.00 you can cover your employee's preventive care in full for an entire year — plus provide significant discounts on all further treatment. QDP discounts include all cosmetic and major procedures.

Best of all, there are no third parties, waiting periods or confusing restrictions. All patient and plan support is handled quickly and easily at Today's Dental Center. Feel free to call our office and discuss setting your employees up with an exciting benefit. If covering the cost of the yearly membership is not an option for your business, please feel free to let them know that can purchase it on their own as well. Call anytime to get more information!

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
DR. SARAH & DR. JUDD SHERMAN

We Are Welcoming New Patients!



502 W. Yelm Ave. • Yelm
360.458.1976
PAID ADVERTISEMENT

CH58927001



EDITOR'S NOTES

Answers at Last in Decade-Old Disappearance of Nancy Moyer

BY ERIC SCHWARTZ

Newsrooms are in many ways driven by the calendar.

Holidays, anniversaries and other annual occurrences often send reporters into a rhythmic and predictable pattern of creating local news coverage.

Every March for the past nine years, a long line of Lafromboise Communications crime reporters have asked the same question — is there any new lead or evidence in the 2009 disappearance of 36-year-old Tenino mother Nancy Moyer?

I was the third reporter assigned to cover her puzzling disappearance at The Chronicle, the sister newspaper to the Nisqually Valley News, and I had no more success in develop-



ing or learning new information than my predecessors.

Every year, the answers from the Thurston County Sheriff's Office were basically the same; nope, nada, zilch.

Moyer seemed to have vanished off the face of the earth without leaving so much as a shred of evidence. In the early years, teams would routinely comb the nearby forests to no avail. An intrepid group of private investigators would turn up from time to time, but their interest in the case always seemed to wane in the face of a daunting lack of information to work with.

Just this year, the case was featured on the Investigation Discovery channel and the podcast "Hide and Seek," which was launched by Kennewick resident James Baysinger, a man who earned the respect of locals with his dogged determination to uncover more evidence and revisit old leads.

The Chronicle and the Nisqually Valley News methodically stuck to the case even as the immediate coverage gave way to annual acknowledgments.

There was false hope at times.

When a Yelm woman was murdered on the Yelm-Tenino Trail in 2010, many immediately asked whether the suspect could have been responsible for Moyer's disappearance. It turned out he wasn't.

Year after year, Moyer's smiling face would reappear in the pages of our newspapers as we pleaded for additional information from the public, always to no avail.

It felt like a hopeless situation.

That all changed this week following the arrest of Eric Lee Roberts, a former coworker and neighbor of Moyer who, seemingly out of the blue, called 911 and matter-of-factly admitted to

murdering Moyer.

"I don't think anyone will be able to find her," he said, according to court documents.

And thus begins the next painful search, one that might never be completed. Roberts insinuated that he burned the body, according to our story on the front page of today's edition.

The lack of a body will prevent a measure of closure for Moyer's friends and family.

My thoughts especially go to her two young daughters, including 19-year-old Samantha, who spoke at a Thursday press conference along with her father.

"It's just been hard since then," she said. "I've struggled a lot. Growing up without a mom sucks, especially when you don't know where she is. ...

Lots of milestones. She didn't get to see me graduate, she didn't get to see my first dance, me drive a car, any of that. It would help so much to find her

to find out what happened to her."

While having a suspect in custody is in one way a positive milestone, it also means the grisly details of Moyer's death will now be the focus of news coverage across the region, which won't be easy for her friends and family.

Still, I'm grateful for answers that have for a decade escaped investigators, even if there are still many more questions to be asked.

As we take another trip around the sun, I look forward to another anniversary worthy of coverage — that of the day when justice was finally served after 10 years of asking the same questions with the same frustrating responses.

Eric Schwartz is regional executive editor for Lafromboise Communications. He can be reached at eschwartz@yelmonline.com.

BACK TO BUSINESS

Apollo 11 Memories: No Green Cheese, Drill Sergeant

BY DON C. BRUNELL

Shortly after Apollo 11 landed on the moon and astronaut Neil Armstrong took his famous first steps on the dusty lunar surface, some comedian in our army unit at Fort Knox, Kentucky, posted a sign in our barracks: "Sorry, Drill Sgt., No Green Cheese!"

Our basic training drill instructor was already "highly agitated" because President Richard Nixon ordered a "training holiday" so we could watch live television coverage of landing.

On July 20, 1969, our unit was supposed to take what was called "Military Stakes." That test would determine if we were qualified to graduate from basic training and move on more to our specialized schooling.

The sergeant ranted: "I don't

know why the Army in its infinite wisdom, gave you the day off? Those space guys are only going to find mice chasing green cheese around the moon. It's a complete waste of my time and taxpayer money!"

It was at the height of the Vietnam War — a time of civil unrest and national division. America needed something to bring people together. Apollo 11 accomplished that.

Meanwhile, Army drill instructors were focused on training thousands of draftees and volunteers for deployment to Southeast Asia.

Our drill sergeant was among many others questioning the wisdom of spending \$25 billion on the lunar program. However, in the 50 years since Apollo 11, many have changed their minds. "Those technology spinoffs have created trillion dollar industries and enough societal wealth finally to tackle poverty and other problems," Wall Street Journal

columnist Andy Kessler wrote.

One of the key technologies was the software. In essence, Apollo 11 became the first computerized spacecraft landing.

Apollo 11 was equipped with a computer guidance system and software developed by a MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) team headed by Margaret Hamilton.

Fred Martin, who managed software development for NASA's Apollo project, believes software saved the mission. "It is a victory for the machine, too, marking the most important 15 minutes in the history of computing," he told WSJ.

Approximately 30,000 feet above the Moon's surface, computers flashed what has become known as the "1202" error code. The saving grace was Hamilton's team programmed the computers to save the data and automatically reboot the system. The reboot took 10 seconds.

As the lunar module, Eagle,

descended, the "1202" code came up again at altitude 2,000 feet, but the system came back as Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin passed the 800-foot mark and the Eagle landed safely.

"The Apollo guidance computer — the first digital general-purpose, multitasking, interactive portable computer — laid the foundation of much of the digital world we know today, from the fly-by-wire cockpits of commercial jetliners to the multitasking smartphones we carry in our pockets," WSJ reporter Robert Lee Hotz wrote.

To get a perspective on how technology has advanced in 50 years, visit the Johnson Space Center in Houston. The Apollo control center is on the third floor of mission control. The first two stories house the computer systems for the missions to the moon.

Today, there is more computing power in our laptops, iPads and smartphones than contained

in the whole Apollo system.

Landing astronauts on the moon and returning them safely to Earth was a tremendous source of pride and accomplishment. Americans worked together and weren't afraid to take risks even though our country was deeply divided like it is today.

In subsequent lunar missions, astronauts returned with boxes of rocks and soil samples, but no green cheese. The 300,000 plus technicians working over 8 years in the Apollo program proved when people work for a common national purpose good things will happen again.

Don C. Brunell is a business analyst, writer and columnist. He recently retired as president of the Association of Washington Business, the state's oldest and largest business organization, and now lives in Vancouver. He can be contacted at the-Brnell@msn.com.

CARTOON CORNER



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS POLICY: Submit letters to the editor typed or legibly handwritten. Generally, letters should be 350 words or fewer. Deadline is noon Tuesday.

Include name, address and a daytime telephone number for verification purposes. No unsigned letters will be published. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, grammar and length. Bring letters to the Nisqually Valley News office, 106 Plaza Drive N.E., Building B, Suite 2, mail to P.O. Box 597, Yelm, WA 98597 or e-mail to yelmnews@yelmonline.com

The Office

Main Phone: 360-458-2681 Fax: 360-458-5741
Street Address: 106 Plaza Drive NE Suite B2
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 597 • Yelm, WA 98597
Email Addresses:
News: yelmnews@yelmonline.com
Ads: advertise@yelmonline.com
Classifieds and legals: class@yelmonline.com
Website: www.yelmonline.com

Corporate

Lafromboise Communications, Inc.
Chairman of the Board: Jenifer Lafromboise Falcon
President: Michael Wagar

Deadlines

SHOPPER Retail & Classified Display Ads: Noon, Wednesday
Classified Ads: Noon, Monday
NEWSPAPER Retail & Classified Display Ads: Noon, Wednesday
Classified Ads: Noon, Monday

Postal Information

The Nisqually Valley News, NVN USPS 390-860 is published by Lafromboise Communications, Inc. every Thursday with Periodical Postage Paid at Yelm, Washington, and additional mailing offices.
SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$27 per year in Thurston County, Roy, McKenna and \$40 in Eatonville and elsewhere.
POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to: NVN, P.O. Box 597, Yelm, WA 98597.

OFFICE HOURS: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday

HOLIDAY CLOSURES: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas

Circulation

The NVN is delivered to subscribers' mailboxes every Thursday. Postal regulations require all subscriptions be prepaid. Mail or drop off payment at our office with a note stating you'd like to start a new subscription. We accept cash, check or credit card. Newsstand price is 75¢.
MISSED DELIVERY: If you are a subscriber and do not receive your paper in the mail, please call so we can make arrangements for delivery.