



One of the first trilliums to bloom this year begins to slowly unfurl, left, and soon blooms on Saturday, Feb. 22, on a west-facing slope off of Kanaka Creek Road in Stevenson.

Photos by Sally Munoz



## News Briefs

### Administrator dies in two-car collision

HAZEL DELL – Carolyn “Suz” Clark-Bennett, 54, of Washougal died in a two-vehicle accident around 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 18, in Hazel Dell.

Clark-Bennett was an administrator for the Stevenson-Carson School District (see article, p. 10).

Four other people suffered injuries in the collision on Northeast 78th Street in Hazel Dell.

A westbound Dodge 2500 pickup driven by Kierstan Cormican of Battle Ground struck Clark-Bennett’s Ford Flex as she attempted to turn east from the parking lot of King’s Way Christian Schools, according to the accident report issued by The Clark County Sheriff’s Office.

The pickup crashed into the driver’s side of Clark-Bennett’s car, and she was pronounced dead at the scene.

Clark-Bennett was an associate principal at Wind River Middle School and Stevenson High School and the Skamania County Coalition coordinator.

### Hiking permits ready March 1

HOOD RIVER – The U.S. Forest Service will release online permits on March 1 at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) for hikers headed to Dog Mountain on weekends from April 18 to June 14.

The permits are required as part of a partnership that began in 2018 to ensure public safety near the trailhead, where congestion during the spring wildflower hiker rush created congestion and at least one fatal accident before permits were required.

Every hiker on weekends will be required to carry a permit.

A permit is included with the cost of the Skamania County West End Transit bus from Skamania Fairgrounds in Stevenson. Seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis, for \$1 per person per trip, or \$2 roundtrip. The shuttle runs about every half hour from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends.

Anyone parking at the trailhead will need to reserve one permit for each person and pay the \$1 non-refundable administrative fee (per person) in addition to paying the recreation site fee of \$5 per car. Valid Northwest Forest or interagency federal passes are accepted (but not state parks passes) to pay the recreation fee but don’t substitute for the per person permit.

## Expert crosscut saw filers share tips and techniques

By Don Sanderson  
The Pioneer

Antique crosscut saws are sought after by collectors for their hardier steel blades, but the tools and techniques to sharpen them are also harder to come by.

Even more rare is the expert saw filer who can make a saw sing as it cuts through a log standing tree.

The art of saw filing has slipped away as old-timers age and die, leaving fewer people to pass on their expertise.

That’s why a gathering in Stabler on Saturday, Jan. 25, drew the largest number of expert crosscut filers in recent memory. Saw filers from Idaho, Washington, Montana, Oregon and California filled the old historic log building bunkhouse at the former Wind River Training Center Nursery to share tips and tricks to maintain the efficiency of the crosscut saws.

Participants learned from some of the best saw filers in the region, including John Starling of Randle who has built a business around the skill. He has run a small operation from his home for the past two decades after helping his sons sharpen their saws for



Dolly Chapman of Calpine, Calif., demonstrates crosscut filing techniques. Provided photo

logging operations and sawing competitions.

Starling learned how to file saws from his father, then spent decades working in mills around Lewis county, including as head filer for Sierra Pacific.

His passion extends to owning several hundred antique saws.

Other saw filing luminaries included Bill DeMastus of La Grande, who says he never used a crosscut saw during decades of logging. But he and his brother, Jim Bob DeMastus, have won five world saw-

yer championships by filing and competing with crosscut saws.

Arden Corey, a legendary sawyer and filer who instructs crosscut saw sharpening at the U.S. Forest Service’s Ninemile training center in Husun, Mont. The Ninemile Historic Remount Depot is a historic and working USFS Ranger Station. The facility includes the Wildlands Training Center where professional and amateur students learn the age-old art of filing crosscut saws.

The skill is essential for

forest service employees who are tasked with bringing down trees in Wilderness Areas where mechanized saws are forbidden. The federal agency published its own “Crosscut Saw Manual” in 1977 and updated it in 2003.

Corey has many years of crosscut saw experience and competed in numerous lumber jack events. He once cut a 30-inch log in just 31 seconds – one of the world records he set in timber competitions.

Also on hand for the late January event was Jim Taylor of Redding, Calif., and

Dolly Chapman of Calpine, Calif. Taylor has become the go-to saw maker and filer for professional timber-sport athletes. Only four other people in the entire world are currently making “racing saws.”

“Jim has changed the tooth-and-raker patterns to where he can fit an athlete to a saw,” said Arden Corey Jr., who used his Taylor-made crosscut saw to take second place in the single buck while winning the U.S. Stihl® Timbersports® Series Championship in 2011.

Chapman retired from the forest service in 2010, then started her Chapman’s Sharp Crosscut Saws business. Well-known due to her many forest service training videos, Chapman not only trains new saw filers, as she did in Stabler, she also sharpens saws sent to her from across the country.

“I became intrigued with crosscut saws when I first realized that sharpness of saw teeth did not always make for ease of sawing,” she said.

Chapman created her website to continue making connections with people who like crosscut saws and to help saw filers share their knowledge of the tools and skills.

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## Utility woes lighten as city operates treatment plant

By Philip L. Watness  
The Pioneer

Stevenson city officials have a message for residents who are reeling from the 37 percent increase in the monthly sewer rate – it could’ve been far worse.

Public Works Director Karl Russell reported to the city council at its Thursday, Feb. 20, meeting that his staff’s efforts have resulted in a dramatic improvement in the plant’s operation.

The city averted a 70 percent rate increase by contracting with Ron Moeller Operations Services (RMOS) of Seattle to operate the wastewater treatment plant and oversee the city’s public works staff. Things have gone so well that Moeller will only work one day a week through the end of this month and check in by phone each day after then.

City Administrator Leana Kinley had warned last November that the city faced a potential 70 percent rate increase when the Jacobs firm notified the city in October that it wouldn’t renew its con-

tract to operate the plant. Jacobs is an international technical services company with an office in Portland.

Kinley began looking at less-expensive alternatives and settled on having the public works employees conducting much of the work with Moeller doing the technical analysis.

Russell said his staff has been able to reduce the amount of adverse materials by closely monitoring the plant’s functions.

“In January, we saw a 62 percent reduction in the hauling out of biosolids,” he said. “We’ll be at 88 percent reduction this month. It all comes down to staff time running samples ... taking the time to look at the solids, what’s going on in the plant, how much they have to ‘waste’ out of the clarifiers – just spending time in every process. Our digester is basically empty.”

Russell said the degree of scrutiny hadn’t been done by employees of the Jacobs firm.

“I don’t want to point any fingers, but it hadn’t been done before,” he said. “The

time was not spent doing the processes and actually doing the math and actually running the samples.”

The city purchased sampling equipment costing about \$6,000 which has allowed city workers to do better monitoring and analysis of the functions of the wastewater treatment plant.

City staff attended classes to learn the new duties. Russell said they were eager to learn the details, so much so, that the one-hour classes would often extend into a second hour.

He also said the side-streaming efforts of Backwoods Brewing, Walking Man and LDB Beverages have helped reduce the plant’s influent violations. The DOE cited the city in 2017 for repeated violations of the amount of material high in BODs, biological oxygen demand, or the amount of oxygen needed to break down the material. Beverage makers generate the highest volume of BODs, so side-streaming the material reduces the volume pumped into the plant.

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### This day in history

In 1616, the Roman Catholic Church bans Galileo Galilei from teaching that the earth orbits the sun.

In 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte escapes from Elba.

In 1993, a truck bomb explodes underneath the World Trade Center in New York City, killing six people.

In 2012, Trayvon Martin is shot and killed at the age of 17 in Sanford, Fla.

## Crosscut saws...continued from p.1

The expert saw filers credit the late Warren Miller of Missoula, Mont., who literally wrote the book on crosscut filing – the afore-mentioned forest service manual. Both Chapman and Corey learned from Miller. He, in turn, had learned the craft from Martin Winters of Olympia who had filed for the big logging camps across the Pacific Northwest beginning in about 1927.

The art of crosscut filing demands attention to details overlooked by people unfamiliar with the tool. Fewer still are familiar with the history of crosscut saws which

were first used in the 1870s in the United States. The saws were a technological advancement over axes, which had been used for tree-felling and log-bucking before their adoption.

But another technological disruption supplanted crosscut saws by the 1950s. Gas chainsaws became the tool of preference for loggers, and crosscut saws wound up being converted in pieces of art or used as “singing saw” by old-time musicians.

They’re essential for maintaining trails and structures in areas where mechanized



Participants in the crosscut saw filing workshop pose for a group photo. *Provided photo*



John Starling demonstrates repairing a crosscut saw by welding replacement teeth. *Provided photo*

equipment is prohibited. Their use in timber sports competitions mean the crosscut filers who convened in Stabler are still sought out for their expertise.

People unfamiliar with crosscut saws may not grasp the fine details of saw filing techniques but an expertly sharpened saw can cut through logs like butter.

An article written by Greg M. Peters published in the “Your National Forests” magazine in the fall of 2014, describes crosscut saws and their use:

“The saw’s large, jagged teeth cut across the wood’s grain, hence the “crosscut” name. Depending on the saw design, a group of sharp teeth alternate with the raker, a half-inch wide spout of metal notched in a V that chisels out the wood cut by the teeth. Each component needs to be

skin-slicing sharp to operate as efficiently as possible. The tips of the raker are hammered and filed so that they’re five one-thousandths of an inch shorter than the teeth. The teeth, in turn, are ‘set’ eight

one-thousandths of an inch outside of the plane of the saw. This keeps the saw from binding in the log but also maintain efficiency and ease of cutting. Too much set and the saw cuts too large a swath through

the tree, wasting energy. Too little set and the saw binds in the log, disrupting the smooth rhythm of the sawyers.”

*Editor’s note: Pioneer reporter Philip L. Watness contributed to this article.*



A collection of devices and tools required to repair crosscut saws are displayed for participants of the filing workshop. *Provided photo*

## Crosscut saw terminology

By Thomas Flinn and Co.  
For The Pioneer

### Saw terminology:

**Heel:** The end closest to the handle  
**Toe:** The end farthest from the handle  
**Front:** The side with the teeth (the bottom edge)  
**Back:** Opposite the front (top edge)  
**Teeth:** Small sharp points along the cutting edge of the saw  
**Gullet:** Valley between the points of the teeth  
**Fleam:** The angle of the faces of the teeth relative to a line perpendicular to the face of the saw  
**Rake:** The angle of the front face of the tooth relative to a line perpendicular to the length of the saw. Teeth designed to cut with the grain (known as Ripping) are generally steeper than teeth designed to cut across the grain (Crosscutting)  
**Teeth Per Inch (TPI):** A common mea-

surement if the amount of teeth residing in any one inch length of the saw blade.

**Kerf:** Width of the saw cut. On most saws, the kerf is wider than the saw blade because the teeth are flared out sideways (the “set”). This allows the blade to move through the cut easily without getting stuck (binding). However, some saws only have set on one side or non at all depending on what the saw’s intended use is, ie a Flush Cutting Saw, where the saw needs to be flat against the wood’s surface without scratching.

**Crosscut:** a cut made at (or near) a right angle to the direction of the grain of the workpiece. A crosscut saw is needed for this cut.

**Rip cut:** a cut made parallel to the direction of the grain of the workpiece. A rip saw is needed for this type of cut.

*Note: <https://www.flinn-garlick-saws.co.uk/acatalog/Terminology.html>*



One step in restoring a crosscut saw’s cutting ability includes using a grinder to remove imperfections in the metal. *Provided photo*

## Migraine and other headache patients seek relief on Capitol Hill

By Heidi Brehm  
For The Pioneer

Participants in the annual “Headache on the Hill” each February seek relief from headaches rather than being a headache for U.S. senators and representatives in Washington, D.C.

The Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy has hosted the event each February since 2007. The effort brings together health professionals, caregivers, and people who get migraine and/or cluster headaches to ask members of Congress for assistance in meeting the needs of people with headache disorders.

Faye Brehm of Underwood and her daughter, Heidi Brehm, Francine Chough of Vancouver, and Bluesette Copeland of Bothell joined 170 other advocates from around the country on Tuesday Feb. 11 for the annual “Headache on the Hill.”

The Washington advocates met with staff from seven offices, including a meeting with U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, and her legislative assistant, Rachel Thompson.

They listened compassionately and asked questions as Chough shared that she was prescribed opioids for her migraine disease despite the fact that it is not a recommended treatment. While opioids are effective in treating other chronic pain conditions, they often worsen migraine disease.

Chough and Heidi Brehm also shared that inappropriate care caused them to develop a



Heidi Brehm, left, Faye Brehm, and Francine Chough pose near the Capitol Dome in Washington, D.C., during a visit by the Headache on the Hill group. *Provided photo*

secondary condition, Medication Overuse Headache, even though they had taken medication as directed by their physicians. Consequently, their episodic migraine attacks became chronic, and, in Heidi Brehm’s case, intractable. She has had painful and disabling migraine symptoms continuously for the past 10 years. She had to quit her job as a fourth-grade teacher at Carson Elementary School, go on Social Security Disability Insurance, and moved out of the state to be closer to specialized care.

Only five certified headache medicine specialists practice in Washington State while Oregon has just two practitioners certified by the United Council for Neuro-

logic Subspecialties (UCNS).

That is in spite of the fact that migraine affects one in four households.

Bluesette shared how she will have to travel to Stanford University in California in order to get her most severe symptoms properly diagnosed. Her 10-year-old daughter, Lily, also has migraine headaches. Ten percent of children have migraine disease, and like Lily, their symptoms often do not include the head pain so often associated with migraine. Instead, she experiences severe abdominal pain. She was lucky to have her condition diagnosed early, but she, too, will have to travel for treatment. There is only one UCNS certified Pediatric Headache Medicine doctor in

all of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

Migraines often run in families. It has plagued every phase of Faye Brehm’s life – as a daughter forced to care for her mother, as an adult enduring painful symptoms herself, and as a mother unable to give her daughter the care she needs.

Primary care, emergency department, gynecology, and neurology physicians are not adequately trained to treat this complex neurological disease, even though migraine is the second leading cause of U.S. disability. In addition to head and abdominal pain, migraine can include 40 symptoms, including sensitivity to light, sound, and smells; nausea and vomiting; visual auras; cogni-

tive impairment; and vertigo.

As if they are not in enough demand, headache medicine doctors also treat 50 other headache disorders, including Post-Traumatic Headache, which military men and women are experiencing at alarming rates, and Cluster Headache, which causes the most severe pain humans can experience and is also known as Suicide Headache.

The shortage of available qualified doctors prompted this year’s “Headache on the Hill” advocates to ask their federal elected legislators to co-sponsor the Opioid Workforce Act (HR 3414/S 2892).

When people with headache disorders, substance use disorders, and chronic pain are not provided the treatment they need, their conditions deteriorate often leading to disability and sometimes to death, either by overdose or suicide.

The Opioid Workforce Act would fund 1,000 new physician training positions in ad-

diction medicine, addiction psychiatry, and pain medicine. Advocates asked that the language in the bill be amended to realize its goal of also funding physician training in pain medicine fellowships and headache medicine fellowships.

Faye and Heidi Brehm, who are also volunteer advocates with the U.S. Pain Foundation, strongly feel that only with qualified providers can headache sufferers hope to meet the health care needs of the opioid and chronic pain crises.

*For more information about Headache on the Hill, visit <https://allianceforheadacheadvocacy.org>.*

*For more information about migraine and other headache disorders, visit The Coalition For Headache And Migraine Patients (CHAMP) at <https://headachemigraine.org>.*

*For more information about chronic pain, visit <https://uspainfoundation.org>.*



Headache on the Hill group members Heidi Brehm, left, Faye Brehm, U.S. Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler, Francine Chough, and Bluesette Copeland pose in Herrera Beutler’s Washington, D.C., office. *Provided photo*