

Grandview’s peaceful protest inspires communication

“All the supporting honks that we received, everyone raising their hands with us, it was just really cool to see. This community showed it does care.

— Alex Ruiz

■ PATRICK SHELBY
Managing Editor

GRANDVIEW — As a group of more than 30 peaceful demonstrators mobilized last Saturday morning and walked their way to the Grandview Police Department, they laid down and staged a “die-in” in the parking lot across the street for precisely 8 minutes, 46 seconds — a quiet and dramatic way of honoring George Floyd’s death in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 25.

“I feel like a lot of people don’t realize how long eight, nine minutes really is. I think it’s a powerful message that most groups should actually take the time to understand,” Alex Ruiz expressed. “A lot of us won’t ever feel that pain or won’t ever feel that pressure being used against us!”

Twenty-eight-year-old Francisco Avalos stood up from being face down on the ground for almost nine minutes and during that time, he had time to think about the powerful message he, along with the activists were seeking to send. “There’s a lot of wrong going on, you just have to want to fix it. That’s all it is,” the Herb’s Bar and Grill business owner empathetically stated.

The 27-year-old Ruiz organized a moving and symbolic dialogue to implement change within the Latino community which began at 10 a.m. on the lower valley pathway next to the intersection of Wine Country Road and Wallace Way. “I’m here like to help as much as I possibly can. Everybody’s voice deserves to be heard,” described an infuriated August Garza, 23 of Sunnyside, who is also a member of the LGBT community. “Everybody should be like one love and one equal.

COVID business grant help available

SUNNYSIDE — Yakima County Development Association is promoting a new grant program for small businesses impacted by COVID-19.

The grants can be used for making rent, payroll and utilities costs, officials said.

“Applications for the grants are available at the YCDA.com website,” Executive Director Jonathan Smith announced.

In addition, one on one assistance is being made available for businesses seeking these funds, he added. One-on-one assistance in completing applications and gathering documentation will be available in Spanish and English on these dates and locations:

In Sunnyside on Friday, June 12, from 10 a.m. – noon: 621 Grant Ave and from 2–4:00 PM: 621 Grant Avenue.

Granger and Buena on Thursday, June 11, from 10 a.m. – noon at 508 Sunnyside Ave., Granger; from 2 – 4 p.m. at 801 Buena Road, Buena.

Monday, June 15, grant assistance will also be available from 10 a.m. to noon and again from 2–4 p.m. at 500 W. Main St.



photos by Patrick Shelby/Sunnyside Sun

RAISING AWARENESS — The group of approximately 30 demonstrators laid down for 8 minutes and 46 seconds in a “die-in” across the street from the Grandview Police Department.



SILENCE SPEAKS VOLUMES — Francisco Avalos, owner of Herb’s Bar and Grill, was present at the protest and die-in. During the 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silence, Avalos reflected on the message he and his fellow activists were seeking to send – ultimately ending police violence.

It’s really frustrating that racism is still going on.”

The organized group of young people believed it was time to speak out about racism and were committed in delivering a positive message of solidarity while they traveled 4.3 miles over the course of two hours, 30 minutes.

“If we want change in the

world. You have to change your community first and you must have these discussions,” Ruiz communicated while also leading to raise awareness about the recent deaths of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. The Grandview native strives to implement affirmative reforms for educating and empowering a



YOUNGER GENERATION SPEAKS OUT — Jose Velazquez walks side by side with Alex Ruiz clad with their signs. One neon pink “BLM” sign and another with the name Breonna Taylor, a black woman who was shot in her bed during a police raid gone wrong, urging the public to remember those who have fallen to police violence.

younger generation to speak up and make their voices heard.

“Progress is made in baby steps, yes. But, there’s often this illusion I feel in today’s America where just because time moves forward doesn’t mean progress keeps going.

That’s Presentism. That’s the idea as time progresses, everything is going to get better and that’s not the truth,” Jose Velazquez stated while trekking past the Grandview monument marker overhead holding his neon pink sign

with the black outline of “BLM” (Black Lives Matter).

“Things can get worse as days go on if we don’t keep a watchful eye on what’s going on in our country,” the Washington State University History major promptly added.

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