



Tenino Food Bank Sees Needs Triple
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NISQUALLY VALLEY NEWS

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Yelm Senior Center Reopening
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A Hidden Cost of the Pandemic? Suicides, Says Thurston County Coroner

BY ERIC ROSANE
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Five Thurston County residents have died after testing positive for COVID-19 as of Tuesday, June 23, according to county health officials.

But according to county coroner Gary Warnock, the true death toll is higher when taking into account suicides linked to the pandemic.

Since March, Warnock told the Nisqually Valley News two county residents who committed suicide left behind notes saying that they had contracted the disease.

In another case, a retired man who had to go back into the workforce killed himself after his wife's business experienced financial turmoil.

"He just couldn't handle it. It was because his wife's busi-

ness began to flounder," Warnock said, adding that they learned the information through his family.

The overall number of suicides and calls for mental health assistance have seen spikes in the months since the coronavirus



Gary Warnock

outbreak and associated government-ordered restrictions began taking its toll on the local economy and the public's health, according to Warnock and a community call center.

Warnock said his office has seen an increase in the number of suicides and noted the likely connection to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2019, the office recorded 50 deaths from suicide, and so

far in 2020 there have been 28 — including four so far in June — putting the county on track to exceed last year's count.

Data from the coroner's office shows that firearms have been used in the majority of suicides over the past three months.

Nationwide, the coronavirus pandemic, mandated business

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Yelm Community Relief Fund Adds \$27,505 to its Coeffers Local Business Grant Program Gets \$109,620 to Help With Recovery

BY PAUL DUNN
Nisqually Valley News

Thanks to the \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund established under the federal CARES Act, the Yelm Community Relief Fund has added a whopping \$27,405 to its coffers. The Rotary Club of Yelm will benefit, too: It will receive \$5,000 of that amount to help finance its summer feeding program for youth.

The relief fund — created in early April to help qualified local residents impacted by the COVID-19 crisis pay their bills, buy groceries and meet other critical expenditures — was founded as a community partnership between Yelm Mayor JW Foster and his wife Nicki Foster, the Tumwater-based non-profit TOGETHER!, and America's Credit Union Foundation (ACU).

As of Tuesday, June 16, the fund had raised \$23,000 in donations from Yelm-area citizens and distributed \$10,237 to 29 eligible applicants. Donations included \$3,518 from Jason's Greenhouse in Yelm, \$2,500 from Windermere Real

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'An Asset to the Community'

At 95, Rainier WWII Veteran Manley Goodwin Still Going Strong



Manley Goodwin, 95, spent nearly 80 years in the house-moving business, first started by Goodwin's father Pappy in 1932. Behind him on the Rainier property he shares with wife Janet Goodwin is replica of a house-moving operation partially built by Goodwin himself.

BY PAUL DUNN
Nisqually Valley News

Manley Wilbur Goodwin eats one piece of chocolate a day.

That's it: One Whitman's Sampler delight per 24 hours.

The rural Thurston County resident could eat more, one would think. After all, the World War II veteran just reached 95 years old and fully retired just seven years ago after moving houses for a living the past 80 years.

At this point, he could darn well do just about anything legal his little heart wants. Such as gorging on chocolate.

But he doesn't. He instead feasts on vegetables such as corn and cauliflower and acorn squash from the massive garden he plants with his wife Janet Goodwin on their 8-acre spread near Rainier.

"They're just good food, and I like 'em," he said last week from a covered patio next to his one-story home.



After graduating from Rainier High School in June 1943, Manley Goodwin, 95, joined the United States Army in April 1944 at age 18. He was in the service well into 1946 when he and other soldiers spent time destroying remaining Japanese military equipment after the country surrendered.

Call it self discipline from a bonafide member of The Greatest Generation — a sweet-toothed metaphor, perhaps, for the elderly man's integrity.

"He doesn't drink or smoke,

but he has to have his one piece of chocolate a day," says Janet, his wife of 39 years, with a laugh.

Manley Goodwin grins at his wife's spoiler alert.

"Caramel chocolates have always been my favorite, I guess," he adds, nodding his head.

Robert Schilt, who has

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known the former house mover for 29 years, probably wouldn't have a clue about Goodwin's eating habits, but he knows integrity when he sees it — and Goodwin embodies the trait.

Schilt, 74, who lives on State Route 507 S.E. in Rainier, shared a 600-foot property line with Goodwin's Rainier Moving Company until the company closed in 2005. Though they didn't socialize in the going-out-to-dinner sense of the word, "we did BS quite a bit across the fence line, so to speak," Schilt said.

"Manley was level headed, a gentleman, and an asset to the community," he added. "He always went out of his way to do a good job for people and as a neighbor he was always willing to help me at a decent price."

Manley Wilbur Goodwin, the level-headed gentleman, is in an elite class, and not just because he's honing in on 100 years. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, he is among a mere 299,124 World War II veterans still alive in 2020 — down from a total of 16 million U.S. men and women who fought in the war.

The department's calculations reveal, moreover, that approximately 217 veterans will die every day this year, and it projects that by 2044 the last living American from the war will die.

If Goodwin knows these facts, they probably wouldn't phase him one way or the other.

"The war was a long time ago," he said. "I kind of left it behind me. Some people dwell on it, but I never have."

Except, perhaps, in 2014, when he joined 28 other WWII veterans on an "Honor Flight" to Washington, D.C., to visit the city's many monuments and memorials. The Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization

"created solely to honor America's veterans for all of their sacrifices." The network offers top priority to WWII survivors and terminally ill veterans.

Goodwin, born in Centralia on June 24, 1925, joined the U.S. Army about a year after graduating from Rainier High School in 1943 and before long found himself in the Philippines — where the U.S. was fighting Japan.

It was a far cry from the life he had been living on his father's 180-acre rural Rainier farm his grandfather originally homesteaded in 1887. It wasn't easy by any means — just different.

"There was always plenty of work to do on the farm," he said, noting that the family's 60 milk cows and 12 beef cows routinely required 100 tons of hay per year. "I spent the mornings driving a truck and milking cows."

And then seemingly without much fanfare, Goodwin decided to join the Army in April 1944. By then, the Allies — principally the U.S., Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union and other smaller nations — were routinely defeating the Axis powers, primarily Germany, Italy and Japan, in a race to end the long war.

The German army would fall about a year later in May 1945, and Goodwin would end up spending much of his time mopping up Japanese positions even after their unconditional surrender on Sept. 2, 1945.

"There were a lot of Japanese stragglers who didn't surrender," Goodwin recalled. "We had to find them and take them prisoner."

But it didn't always work out quite that way.

Recalled Schilt: "Manley didn't talk about the war much, but I remember him telling me this one day about a time in the South Pacific: He said the company commander had ordered them to go through some almost

impenetrable bamboo thicket to see if there were any Japanese hiding in there. He said it was a major waste of time, and there were no Japanese."

Other memories linger, though, that could mist the eyes of even the toughest combat veterans.

The formal Japanese surrender on the Navy battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay sticks in Goodwin's mind as though it was yesterday. The ship he was on at the time sidled close to the Missouri just as the surrender ceremony was taking place. He and his shipmates climbed as high as they could on their own ship, but still couldn't see the Missouri's deck where American and Japanese dignitaries had assembled. Loudspeakers announced what was happening, though.

"Everybody was laughing and happy," he said. "It was a big deal."

For a year thereafter, Goodwin spent his time in the South Pacific locating and destroying Japanese military equipment. By then, he had been promoted to Heavy Equipment Sergeant for deactivation.

"The Japanese had to turn in all of their rifles at the fire station in one place, and we used their own tanks to smash every one of them," he said. "The Japanese tanks were smaller than ours, and they were a lot of fun to drive."

About six months after the Japanese surrender, Goodwin would travel on his own to observe perhaps the harshest reality of the war. It certainly wasn't fun, but was nevertheless historically mesmerizing.

By then, the military had deemed it safe to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, virtually destroyed by atomic bombs a few days apart in August 1945.

"It was quiet," Goodwin said, "nothing burning. Just piles of 5-foot-high concrete as far as

you could see. Everyone was living far away from the blast site."

By the time Goodwin returned to the United States following his honorable discharge on Aug. 21, 1946, his father's occasional house-moving business he'd christened in 1932 had blossomed into a full-time, thriving enterprise, and his son was ready for the challenge.

Father and son had already proven their compatibility early on in the life of the company when Manley helped his dad relocate all 60 houses at the Vail, Washington Weyerhaeuser Company logging camp to Yelm, Rainier and Tenino. At a rate of four houses per year, the job took 15 years to complete.

In the years following Goodwin's military service, the company — called Rainier Contractors — added several other family members to the crew and moved everything from small houses to large churches, gyms, bunkhouses, ramblers, garages and sheds.

By 1959, Goodwin's father Wilbur "Pappy" Goodwin retired from the business and the remaining owners changed the name of the enterprise to Rainier House Movers. In the ensuing years, the haulers would accept jobs big and small.

One of their largest projects helped keep Rainier's teenagers and their educators learning and teaching.

When Rainier High School burned down at 2:45 p.m. on May 3, 1974, the moving company subsequently relocated 14 school portable buildings from Seattle to Rainier until the school was rebuilt about a year later.

And there were the occasional super road trips, if you want to call them that. The company's longest haul, for instance, was a whopping 140-mile trip to relocate a house from Kosmos to Hood Canal.

Goodwin seems to have en-

joyed every bit of it.

"It surely wasn't boring, and every house was different," he said. "And I was able to make people's dreams come true by moving their houses for them."

Goodwin was also instrumental in moving the 159-foot right wing of one of the country's oddest and most intriguing machines — the Hughes H-4 Hercules, also known as the Spruce Goose — from a warehouse to the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in McMinnville, Oregon.

Rainier House Movers finally closed in 2005 when permit costs escalated, building lots became scarce, and road landscaping and new street formations such as roundabouts made house-moving prohibitive. Goodwin, though, would continue occasionally helping move garages and other small structures up until his late 80s.

And lest one surmise the venerable World War II vet was content to just move houses his whole life, guess again. Not only did he volunteer for 41 years with the Rainier Fire Department — holding every position from mechanic to fire chief — but also helped design and build the Rainier Sportsman Club, stay involved for 25 years with the Rainier Rodeo Association, and spend another 12 years with the Rainier Motorcycle Club.

And to top it off, he makes pigs.

Cutting boards in the shape of pigs, to be exact. Two Christmas holidays ago, he made 21 of them to give as presents to family members.

"I sure keep busy," he said. "There's always something to do."

Most of Manley and Janet's doings these days, though, take them little farther than their property boundaries. And given the pervasiveness of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Janet figures it's just as well.

SUICIDE:*Continued From Page A1*

and school closures, and stay-home orders have taken a toll on people's mental and physical well being.

A recent poll conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation, a nonprofit that examines health care-related issues, found that about 45 percent of U.S. adults reported their mental health had been negatively impacted due to worry and stress over the virus.

The self-imposed isolation, as well as state-mandated closures of businesses, has also led to many Americans being worried about the economic impacts and about the health of their families and friends, the study says.

Warnock, who has served in his role since 2007, said the uptick in suicides reported by his department is similar to the numbers they experienced near the turn of the last decade and the years following the Great Recession.

"It was the same thing here,

people were unemployed," he said. "The bread winners were not the bread winners anymore, and we saw those suicides."

The county coroner's office also noticed an uptick back then of suicides by Joint Base Lewis-McChord soldiers who came back from deployment, Warnock said.

Still, the trend Warnock identified isn't reflected everywhere.

Comparing calls received at TCOMM 911 during the months of March, April and May with past years, Executive Director Keith Flewelling said they haven't seen an increase in calls for suicide deaths or overdoses in Thurston County.

"In fact, the overall responses for this year were markedly lower than last year, primarily from reductions in law enforcement responses to lower level response types and the lack of vehicular traffic on the roads and freeway," he said in an email.

Flewelling said he has heard concerns from other agencies around the country about these worries, but noted that wasn't the

case at TCOMM. He said he's spoken with his call center supervisors and they told him they haven't noticed a change in the volume.

At the Crisis Clinic of Thurston and Mason Counties, a nonprofit intervention and resource referral hotline operating around the clock, leaders say they've seen an increase in the numbers of callers reaching out due to depression, isolation and drinking problems.

"People have felt really isolated from their family," said Nora Coutis, vice president and treasurer of the Crisis Clinic's board of directors, adding that there have also been many people calling in struggling with finances.

Coutis said they don't have statistics on hand to reflect the increase in need due to the coronavirus outbreak because a number of their volunteers have been working from home.

Once they can have their volunteers back in their office, the nonprofit does plan on studying

an average of \$359 per month in assistance out of a maximum possible allocation of \$500 per month for the majority of applicants.

Donations and requests have increased as the second month of the Yelm Community Relief Fund came to a close, and to Foster that's welcome news.

"My gut feeling is that people are becoming more aware that these funds exist, and we should start to see more applications coming in," he said. "It's been gratifying to see that the donations are coming in, too."

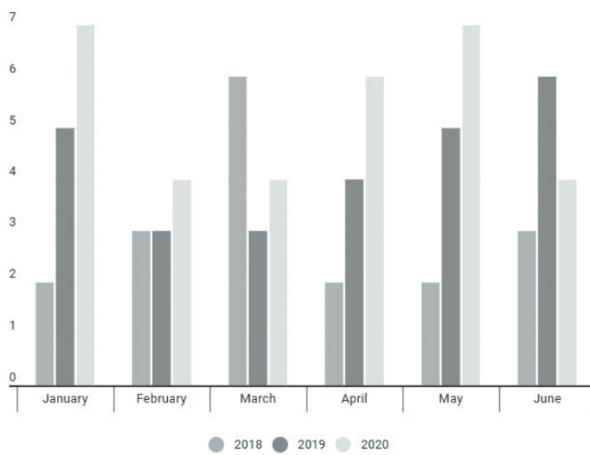
According to Ari Rogers, TOGETHER! Community Schools manager, relief fund money

has helped pay costs for housing, phone/internet, water, garbage, and utilities, among others. Along the way, funding has helped ease COVID-19-related challenges for people in a variety of professions. They've included restaurant waiters, dental care workers, home care assistants, cemetery workers, house cleaners, freight drivers, and more.

And in an unusual, but generous twist, 24 people who had been approved for a total of about \$15,000 relief fund money rescinded their requests because they subsequently received money from other sources.

"I think the program is working exactly as it was anticipated," Foster said. "And I'm glad to see the types of bills the program is helping people with. Those were the things making it difficult for people to keep pace with the cost of living while their revenue stream was adversely affected."

"The need is still great, and our capacity will always be less than the need," he added, "but with the help of the community we will continue to do the best we can to get everyone through this. When you see this kind of

Number of Suicides Over the Last Three Years in Thurston County

Source: Cases from Thurston County Coroner's Office

call log data that its volunteers have been collecting.

"We've heard from various volunteers that the calls are increasing and that some of the shifts have been pretty busy," she said.

More information on the Crisis Clinic can be found online at www.crisis-clinic.org. The clinic can be reached at 360-586-2800. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is also available at 1-800-273-8255.

YELM:*Continued From Page A1*

Estate in Yelm and \$10,000 from the Greater Tacoma Community Foundation to primarily benefit area residents who reside in Pierce County.

In addition, TOGETHER! distributed \$10,417 to 13 applicants through funding from Help Us Move In, Inc. (HUMI), a national program devoted to preventing families from becoming homeless or evicted.

To date, the program has received 143 total requests from Yelm-area residents seeking \$151,687 in financial aid, and families have so far received

support from people who just want to help, it makes you feel pretty good about living here."

Interested in donating to the Yelm Community Relief Fund? It's easy: Simply visit any America's Credit Union branch and make a tax-deductible donation to the Yelm Community Relief Fund through the ACU Foundation. If you have an ACU account, you may be able to contribute through your online banking application.

Yelm area residents in need can go online to apply at this link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfdDHBCU3CquioIWADm6jjMykae7F9T8qoHYYKVCuCVFyV6A/view-form>

At the same time it was able to invest in the community relief fund, the city of Yelm — which received \$274,050 through the CARES Act — has also infused \$109,620 into a new business grant program to help local businesses recover lost revenue during the state-mandated shutdown and offset costs to reopen under Safe Start Washington guidelines. Based on need, level of im-

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Yelm area residents in need can go online to apply at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfdDHBCU3CquioIWADm6jjMykae7F9T8qoHYYKVCuCVFyV6A/view-form>

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pact, and relief already received from other sources, Yelm businesses may be eligible to receive a grant of up to \$2,500.

"It's not a huge amount of money, but everything helps," Foster said. "The program should help our local businesses get back on their feet and get our economy rolling again."

Business grant applications may be accessed here: https://www.yelmwa.gov/document_center/News/COVIDBusinessGrantApp.pdf

(Note: Applicants must download the form and open it with Adobe Reader, save it, and email it. The form can not be filled out through a web interface.)

And for businesses worried about having enough hand sanitizer for their employees and patrons, there's good news on that front, too.

Yelm has purchased a 55-gallon drum of "the good stuff" from Sandstone Distillery in Tenino. Yelm businesses that bring their own containers may obtain one gallon of the sanitizer per week by visiting the city's Public Works building at 901 N.W. Rhoton Road.

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