

POLICE BLOTTER

SKAGIT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Monday, December 13
6:31 p.m.: Slow and fast – Report of a grey Ford F150 driving at inconsistent speeds towards La Conner. La Conner Whitney Rd / Ring Ln., Greater La Conner.

Tuesday, December 14
12:57 p.m.: Hit and ran – Un-occupied vehicle hit and run accident. Suspect vehicle was a white passenger car. Morris St., La Conner.

Wednesday, December 15
6:30 p.m.: Lost, not found – Caller reported losing her debit card in the area of the post office. Deputies walked the area of the post office and were unable to locate. S. 1st St., La Conner.

Thursday, December 16
10:08 a.m.: Not being civil – Caller initially reporting a theft of a wheelbarrow. Deputies arrived and determined there was no theft and most of the landlord tenant issues were civil in nature. Bradshaw Rd., Greater La Conner.

Friday, December 17
2:38 p.m.: Asleep at wheel – one car, non-injury accident. Deputies determined the driver fell asleep and drove into the

ditch. La Conner Whitney Rd., Greater La Conner.

5:24 p.m.: Road weaver – Report of a possible DUI driver driving in the wrong lane. The area was checked. Unable to locate. La Conner Whitney / McLean Rds., Greater La Conner.

Saturday, December 18
2:25 a.m.: Altered state accident – Car vs pole minor injury accident. The driver was arrested for suspicion of DUI and booked into the Skagit County Community Justice Center. La Conner Whitney / McLean Rds., Greater La Conner.

12:53 p.m.: State problem – Report of a dispute between duck hunters. Fish and Wildlife were notified of the call. Fir Island Rd., Conway.

8:38 p.m.: Not long gone – Caller called in to report his vehicle stolen from the La Conner Whitney Shell station. Deputies responded to the Shell station and were unable to locate the caller. The caller called back later and said he had located his vehicle at the Swinomish Casino. La Conner Whitney Rd., Greater La Conner.

Budget. . . (from page 1)

the Skagit River and there was some discussion of the usefulness of a ring dike northeast of the school campus. Mayor Ramon Hayes promised that “any study the council proposes” will be funded.

Administrator Scott Thomas covered his list, noting that the July 4 fireworks display expenditures had been increased to \$15,000 from \$10,000, which he believes will “be adequate to put the display on.” Leaver’s suggestion that funds could be saved by having an arrangement with Swinomish tribal members, who expend their inventory throughout the night, went unheeded.

V Ball. . . (from page 4)

er Makayla Herrera, senior setter Emma Keller and senior libero Rachel Cram.

Five of the nine first team 2B All-State selections – and their head coach – are from La Conner. The team swept their four

Thomas addressed the \$2,500 increase to the school district’s Braves Club program as covering additional program costs of low income youth.

Hayes’ budget statement, sent to council around Dec. 9, listed a 4.0% cost of living increase for administration staff and a 3.0% increase for public works staff.

It noted the town has a total of \$264,912 in federal coronavirus funding

Infrastructure expenditures account for 79% of the deficit, with 62.3% of it, almost \$210,000, from sewer projects. Street projects will cost \$75,756 more over its revenues and storm drainage projects will drain \$54,223 from its fund.

matches at the state tourney in November, not losing a single set in the process. During the regular season, La Conner posted non-conference triumphs over teams from the 1A-4A ranks.

“This is a special group of young women,” coach Marble told the Weekly News, “and I am very proud.”

Holding the Baby Yoda balloon at Macy’s Parade

By Bill Reynolds

Like everyone growing up in La Conner, Tristen Nelson knew each holiday season kicked off with the famed Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade televised from New York City.

Unlike most here, however, she would one day be part of the storied event.

That day was this past Thanksgiving when Nelson, associate director of marketing with the Funko pop culture collectibles company, helped introduce the giant Baby Yoda balloon to the rest of the country.

“I’m not being biased – okay, maybe a little – when I say it was the most anticipated balloon of 2021,” Nelson told the Weekly News upon her return to Funko’s Everett headquarters.

Macy’s had asked Funko to create a balloon for the parade and the firm decided upon Grogu – Baby Yoda’s official name – since the character had become a global internet sensation after appearing in “The Mandalorian,” the live action “Star Wars” television series developed by Lucasfilm.

The balloon, two years in the making, was inflated to 41-feet high and 37-feet wide for its national TV debut.

It was a huge deal on several levels, Nelson said.

“The introduction of Grogu was a pop culture moment in itself,” she said, “so to be able to partner with the team at Lucasfilm and bring this to life was a slam dunk.”

Nelson, who accompanied Baby Yoda to New York for his big moment, said it was a bonus to be enlisted into the corps of balloon holders and have a true hands-on role in a history making moment.

“Honestly,” she said, “just the experience of having the ‘on the ground’ point-of-view and feeling the energy of the city was something I really enjoyed. I love seeing how things come together behind the scenes, so learning the mechanics and even helping deflate the balloon was incredibly interesting to me.

“I had planned to be there as



Tristen Nelson

it was a large marketing initiative for us,” Nelson noted, “but my leadership asked me to help hold the balloon and I couldn’t say no!”

Nelson has been with Funko going on four years. During that time the company’s popularity and influence with toy and figurine collectors has continued to grow. One reason, said Nelson, is a work environment that encourages creativity.

“The great thing about Funko,” she said, “is that I’ve never been bored and have had the privilege of building my role and team from the ground up. While Funko is a public company, it operates like a start-up so there is no shortage of opportunities and new things to work on.”

This year alone, Nelson has helped launch both a girls’ toy line and new collectible line.

“In my experience,” said Nelson, “not many companies are set up to allow that broad of a scope. While it can be overwhelming, it has given me and other employees choices on how we grow our careers and that’s pretty cool.”

Along the way, Nelson has also helped produce a commercial that aired nationally and been part of a Triple-A video game launch team.

Not bad for someone who initially hadn’t planned to enter the marketing field.

“To be honest,” she said, “I fell right into it. I graduated with a BA in Psychology and had planned on becoming a therapist. When I graduated, we were at the height of the Great Recession so

instead of taking on more student loans for a graduate program, I went and worked for a small promotional marketing company in Burlington.

“I’ve always been interested in product and consumer culture,” said the 2004 La Conner high school graduate, “so it wasn’t surprising when I realized I could do this as a career and here we are. Not to mention, I’ve been incredibly lucky with some of the opportunities I’ve been presented with by people who believe in me.”

Now Nelson collaborates with industry leaders and sees major campaigns evolve from their design stages to finished products.

“Working with the big studios still feels surreal,” Nelson said, “and on top of that the people I work with on a day-to-day basis are some of the most creative, talented and hard-working people in the business and I’ve learned a lot from them.

“It’s also incredibly rewarding to see strategies come to life,” she said. “There are launches I’ve worked on for 12-18 months before they are public and to see those in the wild is still just so fun.”

It was certainly fun for folks back in La Conner and viewers around the globe to watch Nelson help guide the massive Baby Yoda balloon above downtown Manhattan Thanksgiving morning.

“I don’t know anyone from town who has even been to the parade, let alone be part of it,” said Russell Jensen, a La Conner classmate of Nelson’s dad, local builder Gary Nelson.

Nelson credits her La Conner roots with laying the foundation for a career that has taken her to the Big Apple and promises to continue bearing fruit going forward.

“As I’ve gotten older,” she said, “I realize how valuable having a close-knit community is and how much I appreciate that connection. There isn’t much that people in this community wouldn’t do for each other and I feel lucky to have grown up here.”

Traveling this holiday season? Get vaccinated before you go.



To find a vaccine provider:
vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov