



Fog swirls over Lake Cushman as seen from a campsite halfway up Mount Ellinor.

Enhanced photo courtesy of George Stenberg

Aging: Climbing a mountain, chasing a high

In the early 1990s, when I lived in an apartment on Olympia’s west side, I loved looking west to the southern peaks of the Olympics. You had a great view of them from Budd Inlet over the marina when walking along East Bay Drive. The Olympics felt immense, yet very close, making sense of the “gateway” term often used to describe Thurston County.

Indeed, a few more years in the Olympia-Lacey area provided all the priming I needed to get me ready to leave the crowds and hustle off the Interstate 5 corridor and head toward the promise of a slower, more nature-focused life in what I call the “vast lane” of the southern Olympic mountains in Mason County, USA.

There was a transition time, the late 1990s, when I worked and stayed in Thurston County, but I spent most of my free time exploring the Olympics. I had a 1986 Honda Accord hatchback and I trusted that thing to take me on every logging road I could find. I cobbled together a decent sleeping bag, tent, and pots and pans for camping, and learned to drive around and explore each new bend in the road.

Each trail in the forest was a new adventure, and I took in everything I could with my senses, practically memorizing each distinct feature and landscape. I fell in love with moss, mushrooms and fog. I tasted the essence of adventure, reawakening that wild contagion known among teenage boys, an excitement sparking your nerves when you came upon a waterfall, swimming hole, a cliff to climb or rope swing



MARK WOYTOWICH
ON THE TRAIL

over a bend in the river.

Everything was new and endless, too. Add to that the moment I was shown my first chanterelle, and I will admit here and now that I never cared again about my “career” in advertising and marketing — simply pennies in a piggy bank until I could learn the ways of the forest and earn my living doing that.

Old cowboys never die

Today I experience a great deal of sadness centered around the pre-eminent fact that I have explored most of the trails in and around Mason County, and the youthful spark of finding something “new” out there barely flickers as I get older, more cautious, and less able to pull off the ol’ feats o’ glory.

I know it is the proud way of the American male to deny such things, to just buck up, shut up and pay my taxes. But I am a whiner, a wanker, a writer and not the kind of guy who “fights” cancer and all that heroic horse-spit.

“Coach, I can’t throw the fastball anymore,” is what I’m saying.

I’m entering the twilight

state, active only so much as going for groceries or finding my table at the restaurant. Going against my own code, I find I now prefer to stay in my car and use the drive-up lane for coffee and banking.

Stories and memories now occupy the greater part of my being; my livelihood and future usefulness depend on my ability to move around in the warehouse of my mind, and, like an Amazon employee on his fifth 5-Hour Energy drink, to quickly box up a tale to meet my next deadline.

Here’s another

Readers in their 40s and older might recall that Lacey was once home to the area’s principal shopping mall, South Sound Shopping Center. The center, which opened in 1966, stood across Sleater Kinney Road from what was to be (and still is) a Fred Meyer grocery store.

Up until the 2000s, the area was not fully developed between the mall and Fred Meyer. The Starbucks, Applebee’s and other small stores that now hug Sleater Kinney were not there. In their place were scattered berms of grass.

For years, starting in the 1970s, every third of July was marked by a fairly boisterous Independence Day fireworks show, with rockets launching from South Sound Center to burst over Interstate 5. Crowds gathered on those berms, bringing picnic meals, sodas, lawn chairs, blankets, even baby cribs. As skies darkened the anticipation would build. Children ran by, waving sparklers, and the air carried a gunpowder smell.

I remember being in the crowd, sitting on the grass for a few of those celebrations. It was easygoing, joyous fun, a bit like crowding in the back of a pickup at a drive-in movie show. Even the adults would ham it up, joining the kids with exaggerated “ooohs” and “aaahs” when a rocket ripped the sky.

Above the bursts

On July 3 one summer, I’m guessing 1996 or 1997, I found myself on top of Mount Ellinor, enjoying a late afternoon view. I had climbed the 5,920-foot peak alone and was still relishing the joy of my second summit.

With shadows growing longer, I hiked down to the upper trailhead where my car was the last. In no hurry, I veered my Honda onto a lower logging road that hugged the sheer cliffs of the mountain’s eastern face. Barely gone a minute, I hit the brakes to stare at the sudden sight of a gorgeous, ponytail waterfall tumbling into a pocket grotto. It roared right past my window.

The falls called me to explore. I parked and walked the road leading past them, now toward a series of wide, flat ledges perched 3,000 feet above Hood Canal and the flatlands beyond. Each rock shelf was perfect for camping.

Filled with wonder, I asked myself how come I didn’t know about this place? Charred fire rings told me others had spent nights here. Each bend in the road seemed blessed with another breathtaking view (similar to this week’s photo, yet higher).

In the east, Mount Rainier

loomed like a white-capped wave. I sat on a log, watching her snowy face blush orange-pink as the sun angled lower. The horizon edged pink, then slipped under shadow.

Somewhere out toward Tacoma a firework rocket puffed in the sky. A few minutes later another exploded over Union, then another, with its bang distant and delayed.

This was going to be awesome, fireworks a half-mile high! I tried building a small fire, but did not have enough paper and kindling. Sitting in the dark turned out to be just fine as somewhere toward Lakewood, sherbet smears of color erupted low in the sky. Lacey kicked in, not with individual bursts at this distance, but a glow of shifting colors that reflected off towering columns of smoke.

It stayed very quiet up there. I don’t remember if I could hear Lacey’s grand finale or not. I remember the night air getting cold on my bare arms and a very peculiar, bittersweet feeling as I stood up and walked back to my car.

I felt far apart from life down there — the “ooohs” and “aaahs” of the crowd — and now following some kind of mysterious call, bits of Morse code the mountains were sending, a breadcrumb trail leading me on.

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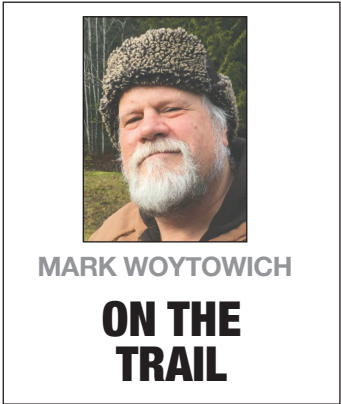
Sports & Outdoors



On The Trail columnist Mark Woytowich looks down the scope of an AR-15 while learning to shoot the gun recently. *Journal photo by George Stenberg*

Full mental jacket: facing my fear of guns

We probably all make the mistake of assuming that every item on every person’s “bucket list” is a positive, pleasurable experience. Sure, I want front-row, 50-yard-line seats for the next Super Bowl, four weeks in Spain, a month of massages, but what if some things on my bucket list don’t involve pleasure? What if, before I die, I thought it was wise to face my fears? For instance, if I was afraid of heights, then my



bucket list would prescribe that I “drink from the hair of the dog that bit me,” as they

say, and go someplace very high that scares me. But I’m not afraid of heights. I’m afraid of guns. So guess what? I’m not going to my grave without shooting one. **SINGLE SHOT, SINGLE TIME** Small caliber disclaimer here: As a 10-year-old I had a brief romance with my father’s .22 single shot rifle and his near-antique, breech-loading 12-gauge shotgun. Shooting them was to be my reward for good behavior.

Well, I had such a short streak of good behavior that my father only took me shooting once and I can’t remember a single detail about our time together, except that the shotgun kicked back when I fired it, enough to make me uneasy. You could say I never made it past second base with modern weapons. I went on to high school, a New York City liberal arts college and a writing career, immersed in the liberal culture and icons of my time — the 1970s through the 90s — before

arriving in the Northwest, eventually to a cabin on Mason Lake then an old home in Lilliwaup, very near where I live today. I was never a gun protestor or sworn enemy of the National Rifle Association. I had zero opinions about regular citizens who carried guns as I never saw any on the East Coast, other than police officers. You can bet your brass I never showed a moment of disrespect when pulled over for speeding or questioned by *see TRAIL, page A-24*

Chamberlain named Shelton athletic director

By Justin Johnson
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The Shelton School District has chosen veteran leadership to run its athletic department. The school board on Tuesday approved the hiring of Scott Chamberlain as the district’s athletic director, replacing Trevor Leopold, who is returning to

his native Wisconsin. Chamberlain, who is currently the Centralia School District athletic director, will begin July 1. “Athletics is a priority in the Shelton School District and the momentum and energy that is already created is exciting to become a part of and provide leadership within to continue,” Chamberlain wrote in a Tuesday night email

to the *Shelton-Mason County Journal*. “I’ve always stood by the belief that athletics and activities are the other half of education and believe Shelton does too.” Prior to Centralia, Chamberlain was an assistant principal and athletic director at W.F. High School in Chehalis and helped establish the 2A Evergreen League that Shelton joined this past school year. Chamberlain also coached

football and baseball at Tenino High School. He is also on the District 4 Executive Board and represents the district on the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association’s Executive Board. Chamberlain graduated from Tenino and Central Washington University, where he played football and baseball for the Wildcats.

All-American: Paller won Mountain West discus title

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Bremerton because he thought throwing would work out well to balance the load of his academic goal at the time of becoming an engineer.

That choice paid off, as Colton won the 2017 NWAC Championships as a freshman with a throw of 156-00. He finished fifth in the shot put.

Paller had a more impressive showing at the 2018 NWAC Championships. He won the discus with a throw of 44.43 meters, two meters past the rest of the competition, and won the hammer throw and the shot put to earn the High Pointe Athlete of the Meet honors.

With his success at Olympic, Division I colleges came knocking at his door to try and get him to throw. Wyoming throwing coach Carrie Lane saw his work ethic and athletic ability and thought he would be a great fit for the Cowboys.

“Colton had a lot of raw athletic talent and I think that came out just in videos that he had sent me of him throwing. I never saw him throw in person,” Lane said. “He just seemed like kind of a hard-nosed, blue collar kind of athlete. Worked hard, and that goes a long way being at Wyoming where you face a lot of different weather adversities. You’ve got to be able to just put your nose to the grindstone and work.”

Paller had offers from Washington State and Eastern Washington, but he decided he wanted to see the county and do something different, which brought him to Laramie.

When he first arrived at Wyoming, Paller filled out his workout journal and knew he was going to be a Mountain West Champion by the time he left.

“On the front of it, I put Mountain West Champion and NCAA Champion. You just gotta shoot big and know that you’re going to do it,” Paller said. “If you don’t believe in yourself, who’s going to believe in you?”

Lane said Paller had good basic fundamentals to throws, but he needed to fine tune some of the things that would allow him to throw further and compete with the best in the NCAA.

His first season at Wyoming, he was the Cowboys’ best shot put thrower, finishing eighth in the Mountain West Championships.

In the discus, he had a career-best throw at the time of 173-6 to place fourth in the MW Championships.

Paller said the competition was a little tougher than he thought it would be his first year in the Mountain West.

“I wasn’t very satisfied with how I did. I got better in the discus, I think I stayed about the same in the shot. I was going through a different school, new coach, new technical approaches,” Paller said. “There was a lot going on. It was just like breaking the house back down to the foundation to rebuild it back up again.”

His true reflection moment came at the 2019 indoor championships, when he finished in the top 10 in the shot put.

“That was probably the defining moment at Wyoming where I really needed to get better because I was going and going in my last year,” Paller said. “That was a driver because I hate losing and I felt like I did not do what I needed to do. It really drove me to really get after it for the last year.”

Right after his defining moment, the COVID-19 pandemic stopped all college sports in March. He was already considering redshirting, but the pandemic made that decision for him.

Paller came home to Shelton and had to find a way to stay in shape, hopping the fence at the high school to go throw.

“I think the defining moments for people over the COVID year was just to find the ways to train, even if it seems impossible,” Paller said. “Everybody at the higher level was doing it. It definitely wasn’t ideal, but there was a lot of uncertainty with last year. You had to roll with the punches.”

Mason County Christian School allowed him to throw on their soccer field to continue training. He was able to go to a friend’s place and continue to lift.

“We were all very excited to see we could Colton do in the 2020 season, which didn’t happen. We knew it was coming,” Lane said. “I have several kids on the team from Washington and Washington was pretty shut down during COVID. He sent me video of him throwing at a junior high. The circle wasn’t even big enough for him. It was this smaller circle, and

he would throw into an un-mowed grass field and he was just making it work.”

Even with the uncertainty of an outdoor season occurring, Paller was driven to have a good season in 2021.

“It’s pretty easy to motivate myself, but motivation is not enough, you need to be driven,” Paller said. “Once things start to suck, your motivation goes out the window. If you’re not driven, most people quit.”

The outdoor season did happen, despite a lot of uncertainty and health issues within the team. Wyoming kicked off the outdoor season in March in Las Vegas, with Paller winning the discus and taking second in the shot put.

The next two meets were in Colorado, the Spank Blasing Invite in Fort Pueblo and the Doug Max Invitational in Fort Collins. Paller won the discus at both meets.

He placed fifth at the Virginia Challenge Meet, followed by a fourth-place finish at the West Coast Relays before the Mountain West Championships.

“I knew that he could be a national level guy. I knew he could be an All-American, first team All-American. Throughout the season, I kind of coached him on the things you’ve got to do when you’re at the national meet,” Lane said. “In order to get to the national meet, you have to throw far in your first three throws, otherwise you don’t get three more. We worked on that all year. We worked on winning a lot of meets, not just throwing far...It was great to see him rise to every challenge that I gave him.”

Paller won the Mountain West Championship discus title, just like he said, with a throw of 189-0 meters, more than two meters further than the second-place thrower. He also finished third in the shot put.

The win in the discus advanced him to the NCAA West Prelims. Paller threw a 185-10 on his first throw to finish 10th and earn a spot in the NCAA Championships.

Even before he competed, Paller said he knew he was going to make the finals on Friday, June 11. Being on the national stage, he felt calm.

“I trained so much and been exposed after that first year that I treated every meet like it was just another meet. I was looking forward

to it because I just loved throwing and competing,” Paller said. “Even though it was a spectacle, it’s just another meet. I still have a job to do.”

There were 24 discus throwers vying for the title. Paller’s best throw was his second throw of 186-6, which helped him advance to the finals. The second throw ended up as his final mark for him to take seventh place.

The NCAA will not grant Paller another season of eligibility, even though he thought he might be able to due to the pandemic. Looking back on his collegiate career, Paller said he was satisfied with his career.

“I did what I wanted to do but here I am making more goals,” Paller said. “Everything is like a ladder, climbing a mountain, you set yourself a goal and my goal was the NCAA’s and I got there. But there’s always more to it, right? You could go to the Olympic trials and from the trials, you go to the Olympics and then from the Olympics, you can become the best ever to do it. There’s just always more.”

Paller graduated from Wyoming with a Bachelor of Science degree in statistics. He missed the Olympic trials by a few meters and doesn’t believe he’s done throwing quite yet.

His winning throw at the Mountain West Championships of 189-0 ranks him sixth at Wyoming all-time in the discus.

Lane believes that Paller has the ability to reach the Olympic trials. She also recognizes the legacy he left with the Cowboy program.

“We have young guys this year that are freshmen and discus throwers. They requested to practice with Colton,” Lane said. “Those guys requested to be in Colton’s shift because he’s such a good technician and he challenges them and all of that stuff. That’s the kind of stuff that builds a program, it doesn’t just build a season. We’ll miss him but he’s really the start, he’s kind of the guy that adopts sort of a new generation of throwers here at Wyoming.”

Not only the legacy, but his teammates said they will miss Paller’s dance moves between throws. With enough training and drive, Paller just might be taking those dance moves to the international stage.

“It would be awesome to represent Team USA,” Paller said with a pause. “We’ll see.”

Trail: ‘Breathe. Relax. Just squeeze,’ George says

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an officer for any reason — it seemed 10 shades beyond stupid to escalate an argument with anyone who had a gun.

That’s it, neither a foe of guns nor a friend of guns, the latter more a matter of not knowing anyone who had a gun. Nor did it ever occur to me that I needed to go out and buy one for any reason.

I slept fine at night. I still do.

HIGH CALIBER FRIENDS

My home protection weapon of choice is my neighbor, Bryan. Wiry, with a long, ZZ Top beard and a redneck accent you normally come across on a Discovery Channel show, Bryan is ex-military and the legal owner of several guns.

He sits in the crowded back seat of George Stenberg’s Toyota pickup, along

with most of the pistols, revolvers and rifles we’ll be shooting today:

- A .22-long target rifle with crosshair scope
- Kimber micro 9mm (new and unfired)
- Another 9mm, larger and heavier
- A .38 revolver, snub nose
- A .40 caliber semi-automatic pistol
- Highway Patrol Service revolver .357 magnum with 6-inch barrel
- An AR-15, semi-auto rifle with green dot scope and several 30-round clips
- Egyptian-made AK-47 with 16-round clip.

Leave it to me to announce to Bryan that I’d never fired anything beyond a .22 rifle. He not only furnishes enough firepower to bring me home from second base, he also tells me as we’re heading into the forest that he’s contacted his

Facebook friends and they’re supporting him like a jungle missionary about to perform a hands-on conversion.

It’s sunny and warm, Thursday, June 17.

We arrive at one of the many “shooters’ rest stops” in the Olympic National Forest — a forest road pullout or dead-end with a brush pile, high berm or hill for a backstop. Ours has them all, including a view over Hood Canal if we look behind.

I wear camouflage for the second time in my life.

Bryan spends more than a half-hour outlining safety practices. I already know about field of fire and never stepping into it, also about never pointing a weapon in anyone’s direction, and, as soon as George mentions it, I nod to show that I’ll always assume that every weapon is fully loaded.

From Bryan I learn an

entirely new safety practice, finger discipline; keep your trigger finger resting against the side of your weapon, placing it on the trigger only when you prepare to actually shoot.

Finally, the time comes. “Being that we have a .40 caliber semi-auto and a .357 mag to pop off,” Bryan says, “I recommend we start with the 9-millimeters and work our way up in the world of recoil.”

George laughs. “Yup,” he says, “that .357 tends to kick back a bit.”

Not a very reassuring comment, so I dismiss it. Bryan paces off about 30 feet from our targets, six blue plastic lids I took from our garage collection of former Olympic Mountain Ice Cream tubs — poor man’s Tupperware and now a bit player in a new role in a very Mason-County kind of story.

“Here you go,” Bryan says, holding out the Kimber.

I suck up and stare toward the targets, using both hands to find my “feel” for the weapon. The pistol is disarmingly light. Left foot forward, angled torso, slight spread in my stance.

I line the front site to the rear notch, then guide it to the center of the left blue lid. All the lids have been nailed into logged, discarded tree rounds of various sizes, which I’ve stacked atop each other in hopes of creating “action figures” that, when struck, fall over. (I may be liberal but I’m not allergic to fun.)

“Breathe. Relax. Just squeeze,” George says.

I do. The Kimber cooperates, recoiling back as a loud crack — a powerful “zap!” — rings against my earplugs. Thank God for earplugs.

Trail: Work on composure

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Mainly I focus on composure. I forget about each gun’s safety switch, the way they kick or how many pounds of trigger pull — too many weapons to know in too little time — but composure (or lack of it) is common to them all.

My own tip for beginners: working on composure helps address a lot of nervous mistakes that lead to poor shots. Pulling to one side or the other, jerking when you squeeze the trigger, closing your eyes — I believe these “cover” behaviors arise out of anticipation, a less-than-optimum way of handling fear.

The .40 semi-auto, while compact, is indeed a hand cannon. But by the time I am shooting hollow points with it, I am getting accurate and able to fire three or four rounds, hitting the same target. The smaller logs spin and fall.

The .357 magnum, originally owned by a small-town sheriff in the 1960s, is served to me like the final course of a French chef’s meal. The bullets are like small cigars. They seem to float from my fingers into the cylinder chambers, and the cylinder, in turn, up into the sidearm itself. It spins just like in the movies.

Though Bryan had demonstrated each handgun, taking me up each step in the “ladder of recoil,” this moment is still entirely mine, very much the same as if I was afraid of heights yet climbed to stand at the end of a 10-meter diving board.

However, no one can jump for me. I cock the .357 hammer back. Grip firmly, but also relax. Line up my target. Squeeze.

Blam!

HOME INVASION HERO

I am a survivor of a brief but rather violent home invasion. This story, while a digression, will help put in context the way I feel about guns.

Pam Green, now a Facebook friend, was a fellow student and close friend of mine when I had a small ground-level apartment on a busy one-way street in Erie, Pennsylvania.

It is summer 1980, and we are in my living room. I’m 25 and about to put Talking Heads on the turntable when I hear footsteps on the porch. I move to the screen door, record in hand, and note with some alarm that a large man is standing right before the door. He’s big enough to block the light. He doesn’t say anything, doesn’t introduce himself or clear his throat.

I push the screen door open a crack. “Can I help . . .” I start to say.

The man grabs the door and pulls it wide. His other hand reaches past my face and pulls the record free. Pam, on the couch, sits up in alarm, not sure of what she’s seeing.

I’m not certain if he takes a step forward, but I am very certain of how the synapses fire in my brain. I shoot Pam a brief look, the way a time traveler might signal goodbye to his wife before jumping in the wormhole, and I know with every cell of my body that I have to take this dude down, outside, to protect my woman. His eyes stare and his face stays stone cold. If he gets inside and we start rumbling around — kitchen knives, lamps, camera lenses — too ugly to imagine.

I draw a breath, reach back for leverage, and let go with the best right cross I can throw. My fist drives into flesh with the sound of punching a sack of flour. His face takes the blow, his feet do not move.

“Long afternoon,” says a voice in my head.

He reaches forward, clutching me, snarling. At the same time I throw my whole body at him — a paltry 170 pounds, if you can believe it — knowing that a single porch step waits behind him. If I can trip him to the ground, I’ll

have a good chance of holding him off if I can make this a wrestling match.

It works. We fly to the sidewalk with me on top as we land. His head hits cement. I throw some ineffectual punches but can’t remain on top, so the next minute or two is consumed by a blur of rolling, choking, kicking, scratching, yelling at each other.

A police cruiser idles at the light a couple blocks below and within minutes the officers pull over, separate us, handcuff the man and whisk him to the mental unit of the hospital barely another block away.

When I return to my nurse’s aide job two days later at the same mental unit of that hospital, the man is assigned as my patient.

Weird, eh? He doesn’t recognize me. I don’t mention anything either.

FIRING LINE

I ride the dragon of the .357. What a beast!

Next, the AK-47 really barks when it shoots. I love the long, curved banana clip. I grow calmer and more confident with each shot, allowing my chin to rest on the stock as I sight, despite knowing that the gun kicks — actually, it rises.

“Damn, this is fun,” I say. Smoking .762 cartridges fly off to my right. When I hand the rifle back to George, the barrel is hot.

Bryan’s AR-15 is heavier, a bit more complex, but here, too, I get into a rhythm.

“Let ‘er rip,” he says, and I marvel at how long it takes for a 30-round clip to empty. The .223 rounds turn dry logs into shredded wheat, pulverizing them to dust. I stitch blue lids until they look like colanders.

I hand it back. We’ve been shooting for more than three hours, my ears stuffed tight and my nose growing strangely fond of cordite, a chemical agent in modern gunpowder.

“Sure you don’t wanna go again? I got lots more clips,” Bryan says.

“No, I got a good taste.” Heck, I’ve already had thirds at the prime rib station.

DEADLY FARCE

In the cab I tell Bryan and George the story of my home invasion.

What I don’t say, however, is that if I had been armed when that man had opened my door and taken an object out of my hand — I have no idea if I would have shot him.

Instantly, any of these scenarios could have played out: crippling him, killing him, missing him and hitting another. What if he took the gun from me? I’m not even certain he had crossed the threshold, thus giving me a legal claim to self-defense.

As much as I enjoy shooting, I’m not certain I could live with the consequences of firing a weapon at another person. I’m prone to guilt and regret, nagging myself when my Jiffy Lube coupons expire. You think I might stew over taking a life?

Maybe there is the exact right time for deadly force, and those confident enough to know it.

However, I am not one of those. In fact, most of the big moments in my life have sprung from huge errors in judgment, with God doing an excellent job of patching things up.

I’m more like the guy who came up on my porch that day. He was certified crazy.

Thank God he didn’t have a gun.

■ *Mark Woytowich is a writer, photographer, video producer and author of “Where Waterfalls and Wild Things Are.” He lives in Potlatch with his “On the Trail” column appearing every other week in the Shelton-Mason County Journal. Reach him by email at eyefive@hctc.com.*

Your Local Tides

For the week of JUNE 24 through JUNE 30, 2021

ALLYN | Case Inlet

DATE		HIGH (FEET)				LOW (FEET)				SUN	MOON	
		AM		PM		AM		PM				
24	Thu	4:38	14.8	7:34	15.2			12:07	-4.1	5:13	9:14	☉
25	Fri	5:26	14.4	8:22	15.6	12:51	8.1	12:53	-4.3	5:14	9:14	☉
26	Sat	6:17	13.9	9:09	15.6	1:48	8.0	1:40	-4.0	5:14	9:14	☉
27	Sun	7:11	13.1	9:53	15.5	2:46	7.6	2:28	-3.2	5:14	9:14	☉
28	Mon	8:09	12.1	10:36	15.3	3:45	7.1	3:15	-2.1	5:15	9:13	☉
29	Tue	9:12	11.1	11:17	15.1	4:47	6.4	4:03	-0.7	5:15	9:13	☉
30	Wed	10:22	10.0	11:57	14.8	5:51	5.6	4:52	0.9	5:16	9:13	☉

SHELTON | Oakland Bay

DATE		HIGH (FEET)				LOW (FEET)				SUN	MOON	
		AM		PM		AM		PM				
24	Thu	5:16	14.8	8:12	15.2	12:58	6.8	1:13	-3.5	5:10	9:13	☉
25	Fri	6:04	14.4	9:00	15.6	1:57	6.9	1:59	-3.7	5:11	9:13	☉
26	Sat	6:55	13.9	9:47	15.6	2:54	6.8	2:46	-3.4	5:11	9:13	☉
27	Sun	7:49	13.1	10:31	15.5	3:52	6.6	3:34	-2.8	5:12	9:13	☉
28	Mon	8:47	12.1	11:14	15.3	4:51	6.1	4:21	-1.8	5:12	9:13	☉
29	Tue	9:50	11.1	11:55	15.1	5:53	5.5	5:09	-0.6	5:13	9:12	☉
30	Wed	11:00	10.0			6:57	4.8	5:58	0.8	5:13	9:12	☉

UNION | Hood Canal

DATE		HIGH (FEET)		LOW (FEET)		SUN	MOON					
		AM	PM	AM	PM							
24	Thu	3:22	11.8	6:36	13.2	11:02	-4.2	11:47	8.0	5:14	9:15	☉
25	Fri	4:08	11.5	7:25	13.5	11:48	-4.4			5:15	9:15	☉
26	Sat	4:56	11.1	8:13	13.6	12:43	7.9	12:35	-4.0	5:15	9:15	☉
27	Sun	5:46	10.4	8:59	13.4	1:39	7.6	1:21	-3.2	5:16	9:15	☉
28	Mon	6:40	9.5	9:43	13.1	2:38	7.1	2:08	-2.0	5:16	9:14	☉
29	Tue	7:43	8.5	10:25	12.7	3:37	6.5	2:54	-0.5	5:17	9:14	☉
30	Wed	9:06	7.6	11:04	12.3	4:37	5.6	3:41	1.1	5:17	9:14	☉

Weekly Tide Tables Sponsored by

Tide tables have been transcribed and may contain errors. Not intended for navigational use.

Tidal Information Courtesy US Harbors.com



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RIISING STARS COMBINE & FOOTBALL CAMP 2021

The Shelton High School Football Staff would like to assist football players in preparing for the upcoming season. The purpose of the Shelton Rising Stars Football Camp is to teach fundamental and advanced skills, which are necessary to help young football player’s transition into increasingly competitive levels of football. Our camp staff is comprised of Shelton’s coaching staff and varsity football players. The foremost purposes of the camp are to have fun and to teach campers new drills and techniques that will help them reach their full potential on the football field. Campers will be taught position specific skills (offense, defense and specialties), techniques, and drills. Campers will receive a Shelton Football shirt. Participants need to come prepared with a t-shirt, shorts, cleats or running shoes, and a great attitude to work hard, learn football skills, and have fun.

No football experience is necessary. It just takes a great attitude.

CAMP FEATURES INCLUDE:

40 time
Pro Agility
Vertical Jump
Bench Rep Test
Broad Jump
L Drill
Obstacle Course
Offensive / Defensive Position
Training
Punters / Kickers / Snappers /
Returners - Specialists
Training
3 Sessions Total!!!



For Athletes in Grades 2 - 8

1ST ANNUAL RISING STARS COMBINE & FOOTBALL CAMP

Camp Information:

Camp Location: Shelton High School **Camp Cost:** \$60 per athlete

Camp Dates: JULY 19th, 20th, 21st, 2021 (3 sessions total)

Camp Days & Time: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 5:30pm-8pm

Equipment: Each camper is required to wear athletic clothing Cleats & Athletic Shoes

Visit **Sheltonhighclimbersfootball.com** for online registration.

(online registration closes July 11th)

Questions? Please contact Coach Smith - MSMITH@SHELTONSCHOOLS.ORG

Sports & Outdoors



Chad Mentzer hits the ball during a game at the 23rd annual Fuddpuckers Draw softball tournament Saturday and Sunday at Callanan Park in Shelton. Mentzer was the men’s home run and batting average leader during the tournament. More photos on A-34 and A-35. Journal photo by Justin Johnson

Home Run King

Undefeated Bob’s Tavern squad wins annual softball tournament

By Justin Johnson
justin@masoncounty.com

The 23rd annual Fuddpuckers Draw softball tournament was a rousing success according to tournament co-directors, and sisters, Kacy Fladager and Chelsey Ceniza. Six teams battled through five games each during the two-day tournament, Saturday and Sunday at Callanan Park in Shelton, with a team representing Bob’s Tavern capturing the tournament title with an 18-2 win over Shelton Floor Covering

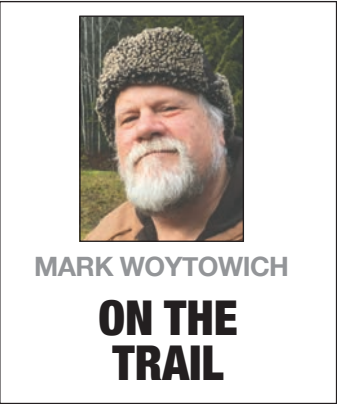
in the tournament’s final game on Sunday. Aaron Wells and Fladager were named the tournament most valuable players. Chad Mentzer was the men’s home run and batting average leader, while Fladager was the women’s batting average leader and Jo Cochran was the top women’s home run hitter. Easton Waylett and Shantell Bartell earned the tournament’s sportsmanship awards. The six teams in the tournament are named after six sponsors,

including Little Creek Casino, Jimini Paving, Hanson Excavation and Cline Constuction. Steph’s Espresso, Brady Trucking and Blondies also help sponsor the long-time tournament. “First of all, we’d like to thank each and every one of you for playing,” Caniza told the players during post-tournament award ceremony, adding that she and her sister initially thought it was the 22nd tournament. Caniza and Fladager added thanks to their mom, longtime tournament

director Scotti Crump, for keeping statistics and scoring the games over the weekend. “We would like to say a special thank you to our mom for teaching us everything and to love this game,” Caniza said. The tournament also honored longtime City of Shelton league and tournament player Dean Johnson, who was playing in his final Fuddpuckers tournament. “Thank you, Dean, for always supporting us,” Caniza said. “We love and appreciate you very much.”

Litter patrol: Picking up where others leave off

We are at the end of our interview. I collect my notebook, pens and camera as Nancy Gill tells me a final story. “One time I was picking up trash on McReavy Road,” she says, “where the road winds by the old cemetery. I was way down in a ditch, with my head barely at road level. Suddenly, a man in a pickup truck pulls off to the side, just above me. He sees me and yells, ‘Hey, lady, if you like picking up trash, here’s a nice big bag for you.’ Then he throws a big white bag full of trash down into the ditch and drives away. I couldn’t



MARK WOYTOWICH
ON THE TRAIL

react in time to get his license plate.” Tom Isbell has his own stories. Though he’s not faced a confrontation quite

as startling as Nancy’s, he speaks of the “McReavy Ice-house Litterer,” a neighbor known for tossing his particular brand of beer cans along McReavy Road. Tom also mentions certain “zones” around the gas station on McReavy, for instance, where litter is more concentrated, and portions of Webb Hill Road, where illegal trash dumping is both rampant and repugnant.

Litter carriers

When I began this week’s column, my intent was simple: Try to discover the

difference between people like you and me, who profess our hatred of highway trash and litter, and people like Nancy Gill and Tom Isbell, who go walking every day, picking up highway trash and litter. Do Tom and Nancy hate litter more than me or you? Is it hate that motivates them? Most likely not, considering their actions involve miles of walking outside in the rain, braving oncoming traffic to collect cans and bottles, to gather the stinkiest, dirtiest pieces of discarded trash, ultimately to pay out of their own pockets for a stranger’s trash to find the landfill.

So what is it they know that we don’t? What is it that we can learn to better understand why others litter, and perhaps seek solutions ourselves? **Pair of wild cards** When I proposed to Nancy that I wanted to feature her in the *Shelton-Mason County Journal*, her initial reaction was a strong one. “Do not turn me into ‘The Trash Lady’ or some creature



Mason County residents Tom Isbell and Nancy Gill stay in shape by picking up litter while walking the streets and highways along Hood Canal. Journal photos by Mark Woytowich

Trail: ‘I’ve learned to accept it. It’s like Everest; just there’

continued from page A-32

like that,” she said. “Litter plays a very small part in my life.”

Tom also expressed doubts that I would find a dramatic story behind the dashing lives of litter carriers.

I, too, worried I would come up (pun intended) empty-handed.

Well, the opposite has come true. In researching this story, I’ve discovered quite the treasure chest of endearing qualities with both of them.

Let’s start with some interesting matters in common. Tom Isbell and Nancy Gill are near in age (75 and 78, respectively), have the same letters (nine) and syllables (three) in their names, both which end in double l’s. Both live alone, have no children and currently inhabit pleasant, modest homes with large decks overlooking Hood Canal (Tom in Union, Nancy in Lilliwaup). Both have written and published books. Both have musical instruments and art objects in their living rooms, and weirdest of all, both living rooms are painted the same rosy tan color.

I almost forgot: both maintain great health and heart rates from walking about 5 miles every day.

Father forgive them

To a great extent, both have forgiven fools who toss out trash. At one point, Nancy sat down and wrote out a description of every piece of litter she had picked up one time when living in Pennsylvania.

“Why?” I asked.

Nancy shared a tale of a woman searching for her dead children in the rubble of a house fire, and how all that was left among the ashes were scraps of belongings for her to cling to.

“Those scraps were mementos for the mother, and she clung to them because they contained stories of her lost ones,” Nancy said.

“I try to think about litter individually, piece by piece, because it’s not enough to just say, ‘I’m against litter,’ and consider it only in the abstract,” Nancy said.

I try to understand why someone

could be so devoted to such a messy, endless problem. And then it strikes me that a doctor performing heart surgery, a policeman patrolling a dangerous street, a professional athlete in the throes of competition — none of these situations are going to have a positive outcome if they are experienced in the abstract, as if details or focus doesn’t matter.

If you’re going to be sharp, effective and successful as a doctor, cop or athlete, it’s your engagement in the present moment, with all its details, that makes the difference.

No sleepwalking for lives that matter.

Nancy, who grew up in Aberdeen, began teaching at Penn State University when she was 23. An accident left her in a body cast at age 26, with some of her doctors fearing she might never walk normally again. Despite her doubters, she went on to fully recover, earning her Ph.D. in English in 1979, and despite a lifetime of vision ailments and early stage osteoporosis, she walks daily against traffic, combing the narrow shoulders and dangerous ditches along U.S. Highway 101 from Lilliwaup to Hoodsport.

“Why do you think people litter?” she asks me.

“They don’t care,” I say.

“They don’t care? Why don’t they care?” she asks. “There has to be something more. Otherwise, all the people who look out from their yards and don’t pick up the litter right in front of them — is that because they don’t care, either?”

Tom, Oma, ritual

While both Nancy and Tom instinctually find the sight of litter repellant, Tom’s approach to solving the problem comes down to a simple “If not me, who?”

“I’ve learned to accept it. It’s like Everest; just there,” Tom says of litter. “The best leaders I know set examples. I think of my role as doing community service without the ankle bracelet; I did a lot of crazy things when I was younger, so this is a little bit of payback for a reckless youth.”

Tom, a Vietnam veteran and nuclear power plant operator aboard the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, spent subsequent years building custom street rod racers, then working at the Bremerton shipyards before arriving in Union about five years ago. He once rode a bicycle far and often.

Tom’s litter pickup ritual (as Nancy’s) does not stop when the weather is bad. While Nancy will occasionally do 10 miles, Tom’s “super loop” encompasses 14 miles around the town of Union.

On weekends, he walks a short route with his friend and fellow Union resident, Oma Wilcox, a middle school math teacher and popular local musician.

“I love the ritual, the companionship, the social aspect of walking the neighborhood,” Oma says. “I try to inspire my students to take up the cause.”

“Many people and businesses along the route allow us to drop off our bags with them,” Tom says.

Tom is cautious and fastidious when picking up hazardous waste. Always wearing gloves and reflective gear, he uses an extended artificial claw to pull items out of ditches and culverts.

I learned his grandparents were medical missionaries overseeing a leper colony in India in the 1920s. No surprise he won’t touch a condom and always takes syringes and prescription meds to the fire station, county health department or nearest “sharps” box for proper disposal.

Tom once climbed down on the beach and broke apart an abandoned couch with a sledge hammer before dragging it up to haul it away.

Making art backward

Inevitably, I knew we would reach this point: the more I say about Tom and Nancy, the more they seem different from you and me. We wonder at the nature and degree of their dedication.

However, this is not about

comparing, or singling out in a way that makes anyone special.

If there is a lesson here, it is for all of us to take on tasks lightly.

Because of her vision limitations, Nancy must climb down into road ditches walking backward. Instead of a stressful situation, she says she makes a game of it. All the while she is climbing backward in and out of road ditches, she is also looking at the beauty of Hood Canal, the waves or color of the water, the shapes of trees and cliffs overhead, the movement of clouds, the way the gulls fly by.

In this way the ditches with their bottles and cans are also transformed, yes, into things of beauty. It is a process of art — art lived in present tense.

Tom’s art can be found in his daily Facebook posts. Yes, there are full bag photos with comments on his “catch of the day,” but more often he posts a scenic photo of Mount Ellinor towering over the Great Bend, and wishing his neighbors a good day.

Later, he’ll post a photo of his dinner plate, describing what he’s made. Sure, it’s a cliché. But for me, in the evening, I see that same kitchen counter and think, hey, it’s Tom signing off across the water in Union. It’s ritual, like the reassuring voice of Mr. Rogers — just like the voice of my own father when I was very young and he had just put me to bed, his hand on the light switch, his lips saying, “good night,” then timing a big puff of air as though blowing out a candle when the room went dark.

Last night Tom made lasagna.

At the same time, an angry drunk in a Ford threw a Coors Light can onto Dalby Road.

Good night to you both.

■ Mark Woytowich is a writer, photographer, video producer and author of “Where Waterfalls and Wild Things Are.” He lives in Potlatch with his wife, Linda. His “On the Trail” column appears every other week in the Shelton-Mason County Journal. Reach him at his website, www.where-waterfallsare.com, or by email at eye-five@hctc.com.