

whatcom Independent

www.whatcomindy.com Your reliable, independent news for Whatcom County.

ISSUE 205



October 25 - 31, 2007



FREE EVERY THURSDAY

NEWS AT A GLANCE

Ski to Sea gets first full-time coordinator

■ *Monkelis looks forward to working with staff, volunteers*

by SARA L. GEBALLE

sara@whatcomindy.com

COUNTY – Mel Monkelis, 51, was recently named Ski to Sea Race Coordinator by the Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce. Monkelis becomes the first full-time professional coordinator of the famed event. In prior years, the event was coordinated by numerous chamber staff with invaluable help from many volunteers.

“This is my dream job,” Monkelis said in a recent interview, “because it allows me to work with volunteers in the community and build partnerships.”

Mel Monkelis, previously employed by Whatcom Community College and Work Source, has been named Ski to Sea coordinator.

Photo by Sara L. Geballe

MEL MONKELIS • 2

Growing Slavic community takes root

■ *Slavic community finds ways to adapt*

by SARA L. GEBALLE

sara@whatcomindy.com

COUNTY – As many as 12,000 Slavic immigrants now live in Whatcom County. They have come from the various republics of the former Soviet Union to create new lives for themselves here.

Many have come as refugees fleeing religious persecution. Some are sponsored by friends or family already living here. But as other immigrant groups before them have discovered, adapting to American life has its ups and downs.

Lybasha Boyko moved to Bellingham two

IMMIGRANTS • 14

Members of the local Slavic community include, from left to right: Len Boyko, Lybasha Boyko, Sergey Belyy, and Larisa Samusenko.

Photo by Sara L. Geballe

whatcom
Indy
www.whatcomindy.com

MALAYSIA - p4

BLACK WIDOW - p9

TAYLORSCOPE - p17

Courtesy photo

Want to feel better about yourself?

BELLINGHAM - You, too, could be having this much fun! Join the annual Make a Difference Day this Saturday. Sign up for a few hours of work, contribute to your community, meet some new people, have a few laughs and get a free breakfast, compliments of the Whatcom Volunteer Center. *See the calendar on p. 12.*

Another charade of public process

BELLINGHAM - The library board has apparently watched, listened and learned from the port, and has started a series of “public input meetings.” Like the port, whose every option included a marina, the library board also has a predetermined “correct” decision in mind – a downtown central library with parking garage. So let the “public” process begin. *See our editorial on p. 7.*

The truth about tarot

COUNTY - “All decks are not created equal,” according to a local tarot card reader. Get the insider’s scoop from a 20-year professional and find out what it really means if you turn over the Death card. *Check out our special Halloween center-spread on pp. 10-11.*

Call for energy assistance

BELLINGHAM - The Opportunity Council will be open Saturday, Nov. 3 from 8 a.m. to noon for people to call and schedule appointments for low-income home energy assistance. Call 255-2192 or 1-888-586-7293 during those hours. Appointments are available on a first-come first-serve basis to provide help with energy bills. **WI**

Apathy or diabolical plan?

BELLINGHAM - Myron’s on fire again! This time he’s lashing out at the “willfully ignorant” among us. *To find out if you are guilty of the charges, read the latest of his stinging editorials on p. 8.*

THEY SAID WHAT?

“Here’s hoping that the voters send these concrete-footed politicians for a swim with the fishes in Bellingham Bay.”

– Check out this and other reader suggestions in “Letters” on pp. 7-8.

BRIEFS

— Whatcom Indy Staff

Solar project to be dedicated

BELLINGHAM – Mayor Tim Douglas and Cal Shirley, vice president of Energy Efficiency for Puget Sound Energy (PSE) will dedicate a new demonstration solar power project at the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) in Maritime Heritage Park, 514 W. Holly St., on Thursday, Oct. 25 at 10:45 a.m. Twelve solar panels, which form a 2040-watt power system, have been installed on the ELC and will help offset a portion of the facility's electrical use. PSE donated the solar power system to the city, along with a \$20,000 grant to install another renewable energy facility.

Grant expands domestic violence services

COUNTY – A two-year federal grant of \$270,685 was awarded to the Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission against Domestic Violence and the City of Bellingham. The grant will provide funding for a full-time domestic violence advocate to serve the small cities in the county: Blaine, Everson, Nooksack, Ferndale, Lynden and Sumas. The advocate will ensure that domestic violence victims are well-informed and involved in their criminal cases, as well as linked with community services and resources.

Saturna Capital tops \$1 billion

BELLINGHAM – Saturna Capital Corporation, a local investment firm, announced that its fee-paying investment assets topped \$1 billion recently, fueled by new accounts and market appreciation. The current milestone represents the investments of almost 30,000 fund shareholders. Saturna President Nicholas Kaiser said, "The performance of our funds speaks for itself, so new investors keep coming. While we are excited by reaching this milestone, we are cautious of the recent volatility plaguing the markets." Saturna is the investment adviser and administrator to several mutual funds, including Amana and Sextant Mutual Funds.

Kids 4 Kids to benefit Amy's Place

BELLINGHAM – Amy's Place, a drop-in center for street youth, will be hosting a benefit concert, "Kids 4 Kids," on Saturday, Nov. 3 at 7 p.m. at Assumption Gym, 2116 Cornwall Ave. The concert will feature musical performances by local middle school and high school students. Amy's Place, which opened last December, strives to provide a caring, supportive place for homeless teens. Tickets are available at the Community Food Co-op and Village Books, or by calling 671-5567. Adult tickets are \$15, students and seniors tickets are \$8.

MALAYSIA COMMUNIQUÉ



by **LAWRENCE KLEPINGER**

writers@whatcomindy.com

Lawrence Klepinger is a former resident of Whatcom County who has been visiting several countries with an eye to retiring or investing there.

There is a new paradigm that is rapidly forming and apparently many people in the United States are totally unaware of what is going on. Baby-boomers are "coming of age" and are starting to vote with their feet.

No longer are Americans simply resigning themselves to the idea they are going to retire and be relegated into an old folks home and left to rot. They are slowly waking up to the fact that the whole world is opening up to them - along with their retirement pensions and accumulated savings.

More and more Americans are opting to move "off-shore" for at least part of every year to avoid confiscatory taxes and astronomical medical expenses, not to mention cheaper housing and the overall cost of living.

But there is also another part of this phenomenon just starting to make itself known. And, that is what is being loosely referred to as Activist Tourist Writing. In other words, people who write about other places to live - "warts and all."

Thanks to the WI's foresight in seeing this demographic shift coming, I am able to let readers know what is happening outside the confines of Whatcom County, while at the same time point-

ing out both the good and bad aspects of the places I visit and write about.

As a new breed of Activist Tourist Writer, I make it a point to tell you both the good and bad points of the places I travel to. With that in mind, Welcome to Malaysia, "warts and all."

I spent a total of 30 days in Malaysia and found the people easy to get along with and extremely friendly. For the most part they would go out of their way to be cordial and polite.

Since Britain had such an influence on the country, language was not a big problem, as it sometimes is in other countries. We had no trouble being understood in English anywhere we went.

The food is one of the main selling points of Malaysia. It's delicious and very cheap. Two people can eat all sorts of seafood, drink good Malaysian beer and top everything off with a bottle of wine for \$40 in a restaurant. But if you eat at the "hawkers" area in Penang, that cost is cut in half.

We primarily went to Malaysia to check on real estate investments but found the cost was becoming more and more prohibitive. It seems speculators from Singapore are coming in and driving prices out of reach for the locals.

However, I found out the government of Malaysia tends to take care of its people very well. When I inquired about a few homes that seemed well priced, I was told "as a foreigner" I was not able to purchase them. The cheaper price range was only for the "locals," not outsiders.

I also discovered the government has price controls on electricity, gas and milk, among other items. I know there are those of you who will automatically scream SOCIALIST! But when

MALAYSIA • 6

"All Sides Agree - Time for A Change in City Government"

J. Kaye Faulkner
Mitch Friedman
Doug Starcher
Cy Lindbergh
Rod Elin
Seth Cool
Norma Mae
Barbara Woods

Bob Hall
Art Runstrand
Don Soderquist
D. Malcolm Woods
Adoline Brown
Don & Joy Hale
Fred Haskell
Bob Morse

Dr. Grant Deger
Gene Bell
Dr. Gary Goldfogel
Naida Deitsch
Nick Kaiser
Don Hansey
Lynn Carpenter
Bob & Susan Plumb

for a City Councilor that Listens, Weighs the Facts, Makes informed Decisions

Bill Geyer
for Bellingham
City Council 5th Ward

Paid for by Citizens for Bill Geyer • PO Box 31836 Bellingham, WA • 98228-3836

www.billgeyer.com

49th Unparallel

by **ben mann**



"No costume this year, Cory?"



4 • MALAYSIA

you consider what is happening in the United States today, with the cost of living going through the roof, it seemed to make pretty good sense to me – and to the many other “expatriates” I ran into. These lower prices on food items and other commodities are available to everyone – not just the locals.

The food is one of the main selling points of Malaysia. It's delicious and very cheap.

We spent most of our time on the island of Penang – the much-touted “Pearl of the Orient.” Quite frankly, we were disappointed the description didn't match reality. Although the island was very nice for a week or so, there really wasn't much to do. And the beaches were a total letdown. In my opinion, they would qualify as sketchy tourist traps – not clean and very limited in size and accessibility.


However, the real “selling point” of Malay-

sia is its new policy of “My Malaysia Second Home” (MM2H). In a nutshell, it gives retirees who can verify their retirement income and obtain proper medical clearance discounts on all sorts of purchases, including huge savings on top-notch healthcare services. In addition to this, once you are approved, you can receive up to a 10-year unrestricted visa, which allows you to come and go as you please. For more information, go to the Internet and check it out. You will be amazed at what this country is offering retirees from around the world.

If this type of living sounds interesting, you might want to consider moving “off-shore” to one of the many countries making it easier for middle class retirees to enjoy the rest of their life in comfort and dignity. It is truly a new paradigm whose time has come. =WI



RE-ELECT
Louise
BJORNSON
FOR BELLINGHAM CITY COUNCIL AT LARGE



A PROVEN RECORD FOR OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

- Clean Water for Today and for the Future
- Safe, Livable Neighborhoods
- A Dynamic Downtown
- Waterfront Revitalization
- A Diversified Economy and Fiscal Responsibility
- More Parks & Trails

Louise's Many Endorsers Include:
NW WA Central Labor Council
Whatcom County Democrats
Bellingham Firefighters
Bellingham Police Guild
AFSCME #114
Democratic Women's Club
Rainbow Coalition
Electrical Workers Local #191
Teamsters Local #231

2007 Environmental Hero Award from RE Sources
Paid for by Citizens to Re-Elect Louise Bjornson • 2829 Birchwood • Bellingham, WA 98225
733-7756 • www.louisebjornson.org

Whatcom County Democrats Women's Club Endorsements for the 2007 Election

Mayor of Bellingham: Dan McShane and Dan Pike

Bellingham City Council:
Ward 1: Jack Weiss
Ward 3: Barry Buchanan
Ward 4: Stan Snapp
At Large: Louise Bjornson

Whatcom County Executive: Pete Kremen

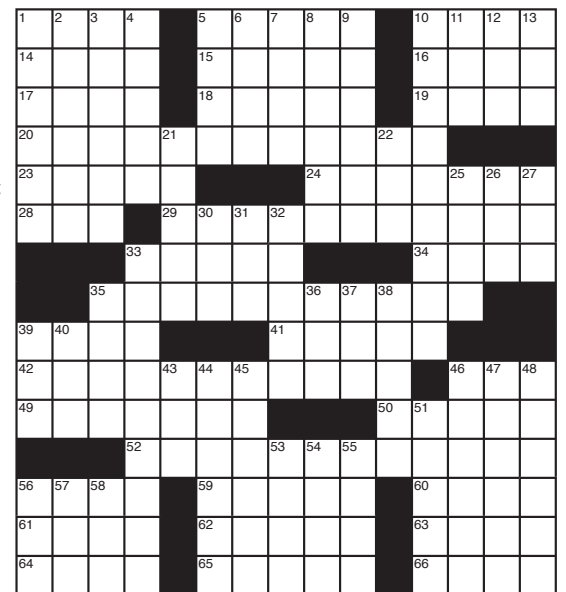
Whatcom County Council:
District 1: Bob Kelly
District 2: Ken Mann

Whatcom County Auditor: Shirley Forslof
Whatcom County Treasurer: Steve Oliver

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz No. 0912

- Across**
- 1 Mountain goat's spot
 - 5 Letter-shaped fastener
 - 10 Shake up
 - 14 Hold sway
 - 15 "Socrate" composer
 - 16 Co. bigwig
 - 17 "You said it!"
 - 18 Dress design
 - 19 "Jaywalking" personality
 - 20 Smash
 - 23 Pipe type
 - 24 Once-common skyline sights
 - 28 Head of state?
 - 29 Athlete seated at a table, maybe
 - 33 "Shrek" princess
 - 34 "It's Impossible" crooner
 - 35 Advice to a Harley passenger
 - 39 Cracked a bit
 - 41 County near Tyrone
 - 42 Fits perfectly
 - 46 Jiffy
 - 49 Soccer forward
 - 50 Put on
 - 52 Sprint to the tape ... and a hint to this puzzle's theme
 - 56 Pacific retreat
 - 59 Like any of seven Nolan Ryan games
 - 60 Similar
 - 61 Tom Joad, for one
 - 62 With 57-Down, 1950s campaign slogan
 - 63 Hawaii's state bird
 - 64 Does a dog trick
 - 65 Break off
 - 66 Windsor, for one
- Down**
- 1 Tarzan portrayer
 - 2 They spread fast
 - 3 Joan's "Dynasty" role
 - 4 Salami variety
 - 5 B-1 letters
 - 6 Hope/Crosby "Road" destination
 - 7 Ear-related
 - 8 Going from A to B, say
 - 9 [Giggle]
 - 10 Suffered from an allergy, maybe
 - 11 Send packing
 - 12 Meditative sect
 - 13 "Foucault's Pendulum" author
 - 21 Hardly robust
 - 22 Employer of many auditors: Abbr.
 - 25 Plenty
 - 26 Apollo vehicle, for short
 - 27 Good sign for an angel
 - 30 Retinal cell
 - 31 Phone trigram
 - 32 Fish in a John Cleese film
 - 33 Enriches with vitamins



Puzzle by Alan Arbesfeld

- 35 "Aquarius" musical
- 36 Asian holiday
- 37 High dudgeon
- 38 Destined for the record books
- 39 Onager
- 40 Stick out
- 43 Do moguls, say
- 44 Court action
- 45 A.L. East player
- 46 Not tacit
- 47 Cause of weird weather
- 48 Young swan
- 51 Short-sheeting, e.g.
- 53 Weapon in a rumble
- 54 Scout outing
- 55 Poll closing?
- 56 Watch attachment
- 57 See 62-Across
- 58 Energetic dance

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

BALE SPEAR SCRAP
ALAN AISLE TRASH
SORT FETAL AORTA
IFVEGETARIANSEAT
STARE MELDS
OSLO DLI MOO
EVEL WAIL OSWALD
VEGETABLESWHATDO
ISAIAH SAKE DEER
LTD LIP FIDO
MELON WALES
HUMANITARIANSEAT
EVENT ABOMB PAGE
LEASE TOTAL ISLE
PALED OBESE CHER

Headlines we're glad we never ran:
THE REST OF THE YEAR MAY NOT FOLLOW JANUARY
- WALL STREET JOURNAL