

Celebrating the Holidays

VOL. 2

NISQUALLY
VALLEY NEWS

Over the Hills and Through the Woods
Do It Yourself:

Gifford Pinchot Offers Excuse for Christmas Adventures

BY JORDAN NAILON
For Nisqually Valley News

After five hours in the backcountry, the spirits in the truck were dropping quicker than the near-solstice sun on the horizon. We'd been all over, traversing roads of buckled pavement and pothole gravel, but to no tangible end.

Like a rabbit in the brush or a mouse in the pantry, there is hardly anything as hard to find as the perfect Christmas tree in the forest.

While perfectly pruned trees are readily available at lots all around town, there's just something about the idea of heading to the woods and chopping down your very own Yuletide conifer that makes an overgrown kid get excited like so many Christmas mornings. That's why permits are offered up for sale by the national forests around the Evergreen State, so that more families might enjoy the misadventures and associated memories of amateur lumberjacking.

Christmas tree harvest permits for the Gifford Pinchot National Forest cost \$5 each, with a limit of five permits per household.

With that knowledge in hand, on Tuesday I packed up the old truck with supplies and brought along my 3-year-old son Nokona as well as Nisqually Valley News' trusty photographer Jared Wenzelburger, just to keep things interesting.

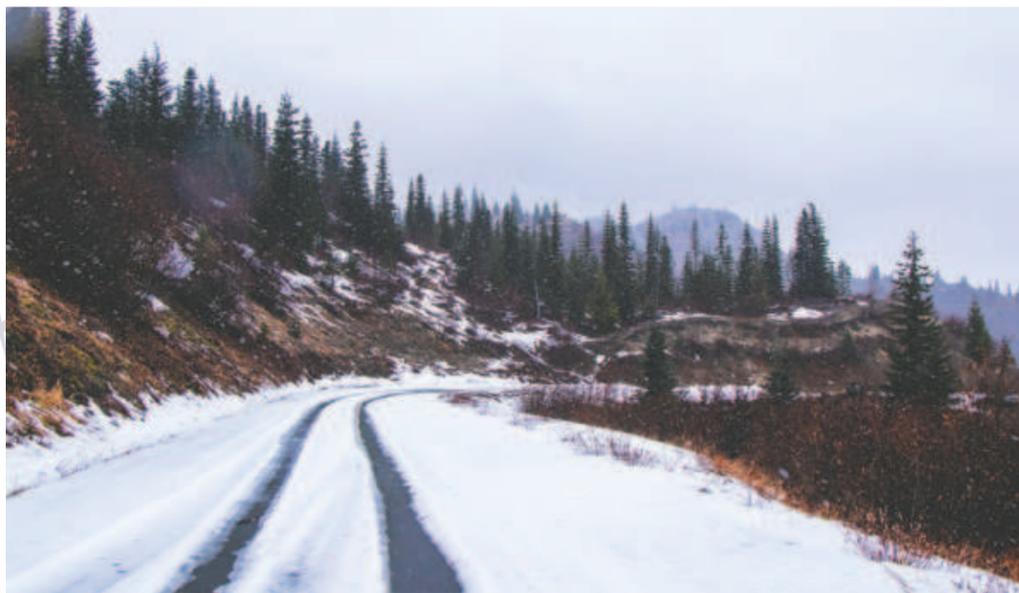
The sojourn to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest certainly lived up to its billing on that end.

After picking up a pair of permits at Fischer's Market in Randle, we headed south on State Route 131 and continued motoring toward mountain country once the path turned into Forest Road 25. After a disappointing attempt to secure a stately tree two years ago, in which I returned home exhausted, berated and in possession of a pair of flimsy Hemlocks,



Jared Wenzelburger / jwenzelburger@chronline.com

Reporter Jordan Nailon passes the saw used to cut down a Christmas tree to his son Kona Tuesday evening in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest near Randle.



Snow covers the roadway Tuesday evening in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest near Randle.

I knew one thing for sure — the good trees are way up high, so the best bet is to gain altitude until you can't go anymore.

So that's what we did.

Of course, there are accept-

able places to cut trees and there are places where the practice is exclusively prohibited, so you've got to pay close attention to the map that comes with your permit

purchase. We learned this lesson a

little later than we would have preferred after venturing beyond the Mount St. Helens National Monument boundary and continuing for nearly a dozen snow-slicked miles toward Windy Ridge. It was only

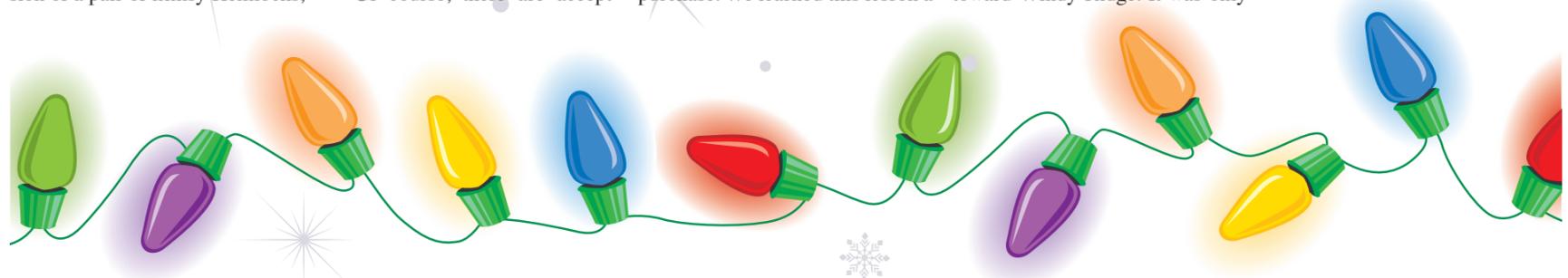
after our progress was stopped by the arrival of fresh snow and a father's caution that we decided to check the map and realized we needed to turn around in order to put ourselves back on the right side of the line. We were just 3 miles shy of the awe-inspiring vista of Windy Ridge when we turned around, but alas, we were in search of Christmas trees, not magnificent vantage points, so we gathered our druthers and loaded back up in the mechanical wagon.

It's a funny feeling when you know you've got to head uphill as far as you can go to find what you're after, but once you've arrived you still haven't obtained your quarry. As the snowfall turned to rain, we traversed each and every spur road that seemed to exude even a modicum of promise. However, since the map provided by the GPNF does not include altitude markings, this endeavor resembled a wild goose chase at best as time and time again the roads wound up taking a sharp turn toward the bottom of some shady valley where mostly moss and ferns grow. Even worse, as each drainage pulled us toward its terminus we found ourselves repeatedly winding up in the worst territory of all — Hemlock country.

As roads undulated up and down, and forked left and right, and turned to shady dead ends time and time again, the conversation inside the truck became a nightmare nursery rhyme of repetition. "Whoooa, there's the color we're looking for!" one of us would exclaim until we crawled up on the promising patch of trees.

We had our eyes tuned into the bluish green of Noble firs so as to avoid the look-alike issues that come with Douglas firs, hemlocks and a myriad of other tree species. But again and again, we would hop out of the truck and examine the woodline only to find that they were the right color but the wrong size once again.

Continued on PAGE 2





Jared Wenzelburger / jwenzelburger@chronline.com

Meta Lake is seen frozen over Tuesday evening in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest near Randle.

Continued from PAGE 1

After dozens of fakeouts, Nokona had lost his vigor and tucked in for a nap in his carseat. The two fellows on assignment had no such luxury though and we were forced to carry on even as our morale plummeted parallel to the temperature outside.

In our lighter moments, we wondered how on earth there could be an entire forest full of the wrong trees. In our more paranoid moments, we pondered whether the powers that be were simply selling permits for something that didn't even exist. Not that there's any precedent for that sort of thing.

All along we had planned on stopping to interview other Christmas tree cutters but those plans were scuttled when we failed to bump into anyone else in the forest. The only other person we saw all day was when a hatchback whizzed by us heading uphill near the turnoff to the Green River Horse Camp, but they were in a hurry and so were we. The encounter did leave us wondering though. What exactly did the driver of that two-door car know that we obviously didn't, and how on earth are they going to get their tree home?

As time grew short on our daylight, we had all but given up hope on returning with a tree for the office. Our minds wandered and worried. I wondered how we'd be able to explain our failure this time around.

That's when I hung a hard rick down an unmarked spur road that was promising only be-



A Christmas Tree Permit for the Gifford Pinchot National Forest sits around a tree in the back of a Volkswagen near Randle.

cause it wasn't the road we were already on. Within a couple hundred yards, both Jared and I had already perked up as 6-foot conical evergreen dotted the shoulder of the gravel road. With authentic glee we took turns pointing out trees that looked like they might do the trick, but we weren't careful not to get too confident. After all, trees have a way of looking different once you get out of the truck.

But this time around our luck had changed. When we found a spot to pull over, our patience was rewarded with a smorgasbord of strong limbed Douglas firs between 5 and 7 feet tall that would fit the bill. Waking up Nokona from his nap, we grabbed cameras and saws and hopped off trail to hunt our pick of the forest. Within 15 minutes we'd picked out two perfectly adequate specimens, chopped them down, tagged them and loaded them in

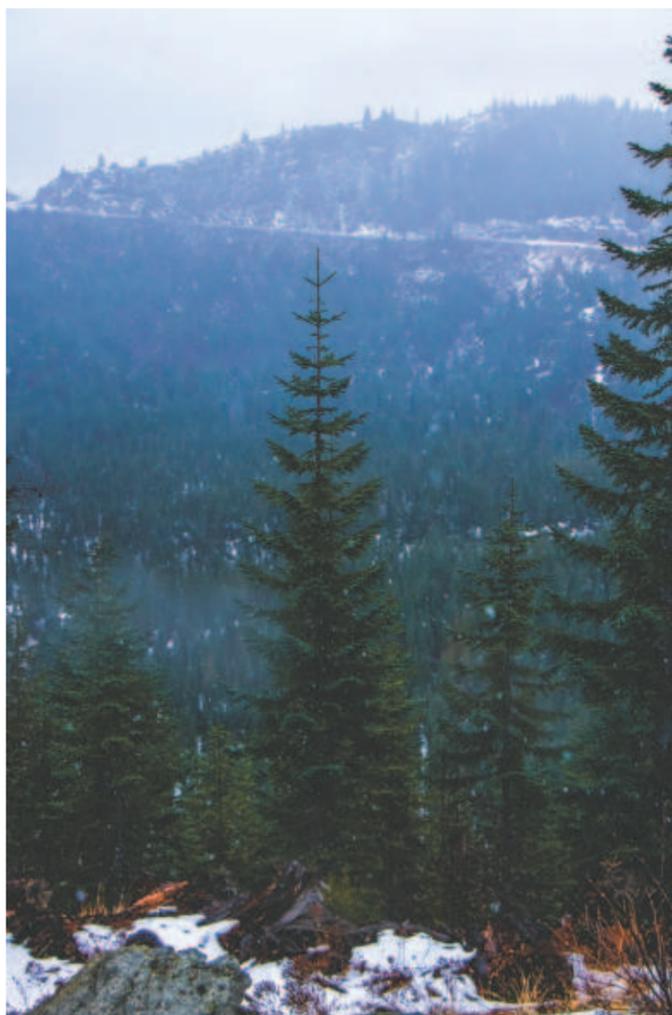
the back of the truck with a heady mixture of relief and accomplishment coursing through our veins.

With our Christmas trees in possession, we took a few moments to enjoy a roadside picnic and congratulate one another on a job well done. Mostly, we were grateful to each other for maintaining relatively positive attitudes and avoiding any breakdowns of either the mechanical or mental variety.

As we wolfed down our turkey sandwiches and animal crackers, I realized that our saving grace may have been the cache of snacks and the thermos of coffee I had wisely packed in the morning. This is especially true when adventuring with a toddler. If you do it right, you'll probably think it's too many at some point on the trip, but it may very well wind up being your saving grace later.

Better safe than sorry. As an admittedly amateur Christmas tree hunter, I will offer just two more morsels of advice.

First, remember that it is easy to get "tree drunk" inside your automobile. With trees whipping by for hours on end the scenery has a tendency to conglomerate into



Trees protrude from the ridge Tuesday evening in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest near Randle.

a homogenous sea of green that makes it near impossible to proffer accurate guesses about where the "good" trees are. It's imperative to retain the perspective that every sprout and shrub is different. You must see the difference.

The other side of that coin is that the only way to fail at your mission is to lose patience and hope. There is no doubt that the right tree is waiting out there for you, and you will find it in time. The only way you'll come out a loser in this game is if you give up entirely or opt to settle for a subpar specimen.

According to a press release from the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, the most pragmatic step you can take to ensure success is to leave early in the day and to make sure you are prepared for any number of unforeseen circumstances.

"Winter weather in the forest can change rapidly," according to the National Forest. "Most forest roads are not maintained for winter driving. Forest staff recommend bringing traction devices and a shovel, extra food, drinking water, winter clothing, blankets, a flashlight, and a first aid kit. Don't forget a tool for cutting the tree and a rope or cord to secure it to vehicles. Tree cutting and travel may take longer than anticipated, so let a friend or family member know where you're going, get an early start, and leave the woods well before dark."

Permits can be purchased in person or online (openforest.fs.usda.gov) and utilized through Dec. 24.

Locations where Christmas tree permits for the GPNF can be picked up include:

National Forest Locations

- Gifford Pinchot National Forest Headquarters
- Fort Vancouver Visitor Center
1501 E Evergreen Blvd.,
Vancouver, 98661;
360-891-5001.
Hours: Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Mt. Adams Ranger District
2455 Highway 141, Trout Lake, WA 98650; 509-395-3400
Hours: Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Cowlitz Valley Ranger District
10024 US Hwy 12, Randle, WA 98377; 360-497-1100
Hours: Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Closed 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.)
- Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument
42218 NE Yale Bridge Rd.,
Amboy, WA 98607;
360-449-7800
Hours: Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Vendor Locations

(Call for hours of operation and information):

- Amboy — Amboy Market, 360-247-5421
- Amboy — Chelatchie Prairie General Store, 360-247-5529
- Cougar — Lakeside Country Store, 360-238-5202
- Cougar — Cougar Store, 360-238-5228
- Cougar — Lone Fir Resort, 360-238-5210
- Kalama — Kalama Spirits and Tobacco, 360-673-4991
- Carson — Wind River Market, 509-427-5565
- Home Valley — Home Valley General Store 509-427-4015
- Trout Lake — Little Mountain (True Value) Hardware, 509-395-2773
- Stevenson — Main St. Convenience Store (open 24 hours) 509-427-5653
- Ashford — Ashford General Store, 360-569-2377
- Ashford — Ashford Valley Grocery, 360-569-2560
- Elbe — Elbe Junction, 360-524-7707
- Elbe — Elbe Mall, 360-569-2772
- Packwood — Blanton's Market, 360-494-6101
- Randle — Fischer's Market, 360-497-5355
- Randle — Randle One Stop, 360-497-3261
- Kelso — Sportsman's Warehouse, 360-423-2600
- Vancouver — Sportsman's Warehouse, 360-604-8000

We care about you and your loved ones getting home safely.

B&H TOWING

Been in business for over 30 yrs.
We are here to serve you.

360-458-2555

15846 123rd Ave SE
Yelm, WA 98597

NORTH POLE

We Offer Competitive Pricing!

CH603502bb



Kona Nailon rejoices as he sits on an old stump Tuesday evening in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest near Randle.

Bliss Experience
Because it should be.

Color / Cut / Waxing / Massage / Facial

Walk-in Appointments Available!

360.458.4247

35025 90th Ave. S.
Suite 7 / Roy, WA

Open: Tues. - Sat. 9am - 6pm
Thurs./Fri. 9am - 8pm

www.blissexperiencesalon.com

CH603480bb

PRESTIGE SENIOR LIVING ROSEMONT

FREE RESOURCE GUIDE!

Are you worried about your loved one?

We're here to help.

The holidays are a great time to visit with family and friends. If you notice changes in your loved one, you might wonder if the shift is age-related, or something more concerning. If you worry about their safety when you're not around, you are not alone.

That's why we've developed a resource guide that addresses common concerns that come with aging like: **memory loss, fall reduction and social isolation.**

Visit www.PrestigeCanHelp.com to download your **FREE** guide today!

Prestige Senior Living Rosemont
215 Killion Rd. SE
Yelm, WA 98597
(360) 458-1800 • www.PrestigeCare.com

Prestige Senior Living, L.L.C.

CH603480bb

Giant Menorah Comes to Yelm for Second Year to Dispel Darkness, Bring Hope

BY ERIC ROSANE
erosane@yelmonline.com

Religious members of the Chabad Jewish Center of Olympia will deliver a 9-foot-tall menorah candle to Yelm City Park for a second consecutive year for a weeklong celebration of the eight days of Hanukkah.

This is the second year the large candles will grace the grounds of Yelm City Park to dispel darkness. Yelm made history last year as the city hosted its first-ever lighting of a metal menorah in celebration of the Jewish Festival of Lights.

The menorah is expected to go up Monday, Dec. 23, on the second day of Hanukkah, said Rabbi Yosef Schtroks, of Chabad Jewish Center of Olympia. An event will be held at 5 p.m. at Yelm City Park where two candles will be lit.

"There's a universal message that I think everybody, even if you're not Jewish, can enjoy, which is the idea of adding just a little bit of light," Schtroks said. "That light can be little acts of good and kindness in our community, in our workplaces, in our schools that can make a world of a difference. The darkness is not chased away with a broom — it's a little bit of light that can extinguish a lot of darkness."

This now-annual event was kindled, as light usually is, from moments of darkness. Last year, after the horrors of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting that left 11 people dead, Schtroks said he and his congregation set out to bring about more light to Thurston County.

For the last 10 years, the Chabad Jewish Center held a giant menorah lighting celebration in Olympia. Impacted emotionally by the events that occurred mere weeks before, the congregation decided to expand to include events at the Evergreen State College and in Yelm.

Schtroks said the support they've received, especially from the city, has been overwhelming.

"The feedback we have received from people in the community has been incredible and we've had the chance to bring the Jewish community together in a really special way around something which is joyous," Schtroks said. "It was really special to be joined with people across Yelm, Rainier, Roy, even as far as Graham, to come together and celebrate."

Last year's experience was a great one to take back to his fellow friends in family in the northern county, Schtroks said.

Yelm Mayor JW Foster said he prides himself on how intertwined and collaborative the area's faith organizations are. From Christmas in the Park to the lighting of the giant menorah, Foster said there are moments of spirituality that can be appreciated by all walks of life.

"(Rabbi Schtroks) is great. Yelm prides itself on being an inclusive community and this is a great representation of that. We had so many people of different faiths come together to celebrate the lighting of the menorah," Foster said. "We have another example of how our community shares and supports each other."

Schtroks said he hopes people will come out again this year to share in the warmth of the menorah and holidays.

"Judaism teaches that matters of good and holiness always need to be going up ... Our goal with this year's celebration is to reach more people, bring more people together and to have a stronger level of joy and excitement and happiness around the holiday," Schtroks said.



Eric Rosane / Nisqually Valley News

Rabbi Yosef Schtroks of the Chabad Jewish Center of Olympia poses for a photo with a small menorah as an example of the celebration of Hanukkah. The Jewish Center will host a giant menorah lighting celebration Monday, Dec. 23, at 5 p.m. at the Yelm City Park.



File Photo

Mayor JW Foster speaks of the importance and significance of a Yelm menorah lighting during the event last year.

USE IT OR LOSE IT!!

Yelm Prairie Dental Health and Wellness

Get on our schedule now while you still have insurance benefits for 2019!

360-458-7645

www.yelmprairiedental.com

Merry Christmas from Premier Collision CARSTAR

Locally Owned & Operated
Quality Repairs
Lifetime Nationwide Warranty

CARSTAR
Auto Body Repair Experts

Premier Collision CARSTAR Yelm
103 1st St. N., Yelm, WA 98597
carstarofyelm@carstarusa.com
360.458.2599



20% Discount with this Ad!

Take her breath away

ELIE DESIGN
JEWELERS
JEWELRY DESIGN & REPAIR
www.eliedesign.com
210 E YELM AVE
YELM, WA 98597
360.458.5758

Just around the corner... so you can relax and enjoy your holidays!

Our extended hours staff will be here for you and your family!

9am - 9pm Mon-Fri
9am - 5pm Sat & Sun
Open til noon on Christmas Eve
Closed Christmas Day
Open 9am - 5pm Dec. 31
Closed New Years Day

YELM FAMILY MEDICINE, PLLC
Committed to your health and our community.
www.yelmfamilymedicine.com

360-458-7761 • 201 Tahoma Blvd SE, Suite 102 • Yelm, WA 98597

Tamara Bunn MD	Erin Flynn MD	Chelsea Unruh MD
Robyn Davies MD	Andrew Larsen MD	Monica Wilhelm MD
Cheri Dorhauer MD	William Penn MD	Cynthia Wilson DO
	Bethany Sweet MD	



Eric Rosane / Nisqually Valley News

Kevin Farley's yard is always filled with the type of holiday cheer that'll make you giddy.

Finding the Best Christmas Lights in the Nisqually Valley

BY ERIC ROSANE
erosane@yelmonline.com

Residents around the Nisqually Valley have been radiating with Christmas joy this year, and if you haven't caught the holiday bug through smiles and family-fun activities, maybe now's a good time to load up the kids in the car, throw in some blankets and take an evening cruise through local neighborhoods to see these dazzling displays.

The following are just a few of our favorite houses, neighborhoods and parks that we'd recommend for a joyous night out on the town.

You can add to this list by emailing photos and locations to erosane@yelmonline.com. We will update this story at yelmonline.com as submissions are made.

Yelm City Park

What the Yelm City Park display has going for it is its simplicity — its organized and warm displays of carolers, reindeer and trains fill your heart with joy.

Kudos to city staff on such a fine display. And with the addition of a giant, 9-foot-tall menorah making its way to the park on Dec. 23, the park is sure to be Christmas destination.

The Farley Residence off Wilkensen Road

For the third year in a row, Kevin Farley has gone all out.

The local blow mold and Christmas fixture aficionado has added more than 200 fixtures to his 5-acre plot just north of the Centralia Canal on Wilkensen Road. And if his fixture displays blew you away last year, you won't want to miss what he has in store this year.

From a giant 15-foot-tall inflatable of Olaf from "Frozen," to a quaint plastic collection of carolers that flash in-sync with Christmas classics, Farley's displays run the gambit.

New additions this year include a 1940s-era foam chorus display, an expanded gingerbread village and a sleigh for families to take pictures on.

Farley also installed a donation box near the epicenter of his Christmas donations. Donations will go toward his electric bill, he said. Farley said he plans on continuing to expand every year and hopes to eventually become skilled enough to be featured on ABC's "The Great Christmas Light Fight."

Rainier's Holiday Park

Not only is Rainier's downtown gleaming with fun light displays, but Holiday Park is just a few steps off State Route 507.

A large, 20-foot tall fir tree is the centerpiece and offers a peaceful reprieve from Christmas shopping in Rainier's downtown corridor. You can also take a seat in the well-lit gazebo just nearby.



More than 700 light segments line the house of the Flott family.



Communities along State Route 507 offer quite the myriad of displays.

The Flott House at Ridgeline

Each year, mere hours after the Thanksgiving shenanigans are

wrapped up, the Flott family takes to decorating their house off Carter Loop near Ridgeline Middle School.

Their feature is comprised of

more than 700 segments and tens of thousands of Christmas lights that will be hard to miss if you drive by as they light up the whole neighborhood.

But the Flott's neighbors this year didn't hold back — lined with blue and red lights, the neighboring family fashioned a giant "DITTO" sign with an arrow pointing to the Flott's residence. Now, that's just good sportsmanship.

West Road

Candy canes and gumdrop lights line the yard of one yard out on West Road near Yelm Cinemas. If you've walked or driven the State Route 510 alternate route past town, you've probably seen this display.

Speaking of 510, there's also a great display between the first roundabout out of town and Southworth Elementary. A number of commenters on the Nisqually Valley News Facebook page recommended it.

"The house just after the traffic circle leaving town toward Southworth is my brother's," wrote Nelson Mathis, the brother of the decorator, on Facebook. "I'm not being biased when I say he knocks it out of the park. He puts in a ton of time and effort getting all the lights up. It's always one of my personal favorites in Yelm."

Everyone's Favorite Gift!

Check out our website!
AttwoodAutoSales.com

Attwood Auto Sales

SERVICE DEPARTMENT 360-458-4322

Happy Holidays! **1507 YELM AVE. • YELM**
360.458.4887

Merry Christmas!

- Dec. 19** - Exclusive Dog Food \$5 Off
- Dec. 20** - Tank Deicers, Heated Waterers, Salt, Ice Melt, Fire Starters, Sleds All 10% Off
- Dec. 21** - Wood Stove Pellets \$199/ton
- Dec. 22** - Dog & Cat Treats, Toys, Collars, Leashes, Sweaters, Engraved Tags 10% Off
- Dec. 23** - Propane 15¢ Off per gallon, X-Cell Barnyard Buffet 50 lb \$1 Off, X-Cell Pig 16% & 14% Off, X-Cell Layer Feed \$2 Off
- All Gifts 15% Off Dec. 20-23rd** (Yankee Candle, Toys, Breyer, Himalayan Salt Lamps, Traeger Rubs, Sauces & BBQ Pellets, Books & Home Products) *excludes soap & wood signs

11242 Bald Hill Rd. • 360-400-4141

The Real Farm Store - 12,000 Items in Stock!
Closed Dec. 24th, 25th & Jan 1st. Dec 31st - Open Until 3:00 pm

BUILD IT BOYS

- Remodels
- Decks
- Garages
- Fences
- Additions
- Equestrian Facilities

Build It Boys Construction is a family run, veteran owned business that has been in the South Sound for 27 years. From the simple to the lavish, we have the experience to take your dreams from ideation to creation with skill and efficiency. No job is too small or too big for our knowledgeable crews.

We specialize in decks, siding, equestrian facilities, and remodels and are fully capable of tackling every aspect of your home or farm improvement needs.

360-259-0450 • www.build-it-boys.com

FUNTIME TOYS & GIFTS

- Toys
- Books
- Games
- Gifts
- Decor
- Collectibles

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Find us on Facebook

303 First St. S., Suite 3 • Yelm, WA • 360-557-4648 • www.funmetimesandgifts.com





The Hunter family has grown Christmas trees since 1948.

Hunter Family Farms Is All About Tradition

BY WENDY TINKER
For Nisqually Valley News

The Hunter family has been growing Christmas trees since 1948.

Today, the Thurston County farm is managed by Greg Hunter, his brother and their families. It was opened to the public as a u-cut tree farm in 1978.

Serving the Nisqually Valley for more than 40 years, the Hunter Family Farm has become a tradition for many and draws customers from all over Western Washington. Not only do they allow u-cut trees, but they have dozens of pre-cut trees that you can choose from. With 147 acres of trees on site there are plenty of Douglas firs and noble firs to fit every home.

When guests arrive at the farm, they are welcomed by a variety of farm animals that set the

tone of the visit. A family of goats, alpacas, pigs, a donkey and llamas are happy to meet visitors. Then, guests are offered a hand saw and they can walk or take the tractor ride out into the trees. After selecting their tree, clients return to the barn to have it shaken (to remove dirt and loose needles) and wrapped. Farm employees will even help you load it on your car. Douglas firs are \$5 per foot and nobles are \$9.50 per foot.

In addition to the acreage at the farm, the Hunter family grows another more than 300 acres of Christmas trees, which they sell wholesale to stores around the country and even overseas.

In the late summer and fall, the farm is opened for the public to enjoy their corn maze and their pumpkin patch.

The Christmas shop opened the day after Thanksgiving where

they offer bright holiday trinkets and decorations.

“The Hunter Family Farm has created traditions and memories for many families and we welcome and thank our loyal customers for coming back each year,” Greg Hunter said.

Visit www.hunterfamilyfarm.com or call 360-456-0466 for more information.



Hunter Family Farms has a number of animals on site.



Courtesy Photos

In addition to its u-cut operation, Hunter Family Farms also ships trees overseas.



Hunter Family Farms has a number of animals on site.

Christensen's Annual Angel Tree to Fill Holiday 'Needs' and 'Wants' for Area Teens

BY ERIC ROSANE
erosane@yelmonline.com

Christensen's Home Furnishings' annual Angel Tree went up on Friday, Nov. 29. The program looks to satisfy one “want” and one “need” for teenagers who otherwise might not see much cheer this holiday season.

This project matches up teens ages 13 to 18 along with their needs and wants list with an individual in

the community. Those individuals will then shop for the child and return the gifts to Christensen's Home Furnishings where they'll be wrapped and shipped out by Santa to children within the Nisqually Valley.

Yelm Community Schools and the Nisqually Valley News are partnering with Christensen's Home Furnishings for this effort. This is the third year the local home furnishing store has facilitated the exchange.

“We try to give back to the community. We're a small town and whatever we can do to create a community event or service towards the people that live in the area. It's always a positive thing for everyone who lives there,” said Tim Baublits, co-owner of Christensen's.

Christensen's Home Furnishings has hosted this charitable event for the last three years and it has helped bring hundreds of gifts to kids

throughout the community.

Last year, about 75 teens were the recipients of an Angel Tree gift. The year before, in 2017, around 100 kids received gifts.

Baublits said he and his wife, Lyndi, got the idea for the tree after noticing that a number of older teenagers' needs were going unnoticed in the community.

Holiday programs at the Yelm Community Services, for example, only catered to children up to 12 years old.

At that point, they knew there was a gap to fill.

“A lot of the kids were being turned away over the age of 12. We felt there was still a need for the teenagers in the community who still needed assistance,” he said.

The gifts will be distributed to families by Dec. 20.

Christensen's Home Furnishing is located at 16628 State Route 507 in Yelm.

May the new year bring peace and goodness into your lives!

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:20-21)

1507 YELM AVE., YELM
WWW.ATTWOODAUTOSALES.COM
360-458-4887
SERVICE DEPT. • 360-458-4322

Attwood Auto Sales

MERRY CHRISTMAS
from
B&H Towing

Been in business for over 30 yrs.
We are here to serve you.
360-458-2555
15846 123rd Ave SE
Yelm, WA 98597

Happy Holidays from Bliss Experiences

Come, Relax with Us!

35025
90th Ave. S.
Suite 7 / Roy, WA
360.458.4247
www.blissexperiencesalon.com

BUILD IT BOYS

- Remodels
- Decks
- Garages
- Fences
- Additions
- Equestrian Facilities

Build It Boys
360-259-0450
www.build-it-boys.com

We Wish You a Merry Christmas!

CARSTAR
Auto Body Repair Experts

Premier Collision
CARSTAR Yelm
103 1st St. N., Yelm, WA 98597
360.458.2599
carstarofyelm@carstarusa.com

Wishing you a happy & beautiful holiday season.

ELIE DESIGN JEWELRY

20% Discount with this Ad!

JEWELRY DESIGN & REPAIR
www.eliedesign.com
210 E YELM AVE
YELM, WA 98597
360.458.5758

FUNTIME
Toys, Books, Games, Gifts, Decor, Collectibles

www.funmetoysandgifts.com

303 First St. S.
Suite 3
Yelm, WA
360-557-4648

BEST WISHES
During this Holiday Season

J&J Power Equipment Inc.
360-400-6000 • 360-491-2022
YELM OLYMPIA

Are you worried about your loved one?
We're here to help.

Visit www.PrestigeCanHelp.com to download your **FREE** guide today!

Prestige Senior Living Rosemont
215 Killion Rd. SE • Yelm, WA
(360) 458-1800

Prestige Senior Living, L.L.C.

Warm & healthy wishes to all!

YELM FAMILY MEDICINE, PLLC
Committed to your health and our community.

www.yelmfamilymedicine.com
360-458-7761
201 Tahoma Blvd SE,
Suite 102 ~ Yelm

Together, Christensen's Home Furnishings, Yelm Community Schools and the Nisqually Valley News bring you the Angel Tree project. The effort is joined by local businesses which each generously donated \$50 to the Angel Tree project. This program helped match people willing to give needy area teens \$50 each to supply listed "wants" and "needs" for Christmas.

Happy Holidays!

YELM FARM AND FEED

OPEN: M-F 8:30-6:30
Sat. 8:30-5:30 • Sun. 9:00-4:00
11242 Bald Hill Rd.
360-400-4141

Happy Holidays!

New Patients Welcome!

Yelm Prairie Dental
www.yelmprairiedental.com
202 First Street South
Yelm, WA
360.458.7645

FROM THE HILLS

Transforming the World's Darkness Into a Truer Light

BY SYLVIA PETERSON

I often experience the holidays as oddly discordant. Amid all the festive preparations and the taped music looping over and over, it's easy to gloss over the poignant words. The sacred lyrics describing Jesus' miraculous incarnation don't really fit with hundreds of men dressed up like Santa Claus, bright flashing tree lights and enough tinsel to create a battery-powered car.



"Long lay the world in sin and error pining, Till he appeared, and the soul felt its worth."

When I listen with my heart to the beautiful carols instead of by rote, I'm struck with the true

"reason for the season."

In a scene from Garrison Keillor's "Leaving Home," he captures my own sense of seasonal discord in the words of his Aunt Marie.

"She knew that death was only a door to the kingdom where Jesus would welcome her, there would be no crying there, no suffering, but meanwhile she was fat, her heart hurt, and she lived alone with her ill-tempered little dogs, tottering around her dark little house full of Chinese figurines and old Sunday Tribunes. She complains about nobody loving her or wanting her or inviting her to their house for dinner anymore.

"She sat eating pork roast, mashed potato, creamed asparagus, one Sunday at our house when she said it. We were talking about a trip to the North shore and suddenly she broke into tears and cried, 'You don't care about me.

You say you do but you don't. If I died tomorrow, I don't know as you'd even go to my funeral."

"I was six. I said, cheerfully, 'I'd come to your funeral,' looking at my fat aunt, her blue dress, her string of pearls, her red rouge, the powder on her nose, her mouth full of pork roast, her eyes full of tears."

Keillor has wrestled his readers into the sad, human, earthly reality that the world is waiting, groaning, longing for something more. Even on the best of days we hope to be released from the darkness of sin and the disillusionment that is entwined with loneliness.

The world continues to pine in sin and error, desperately needing a savior, not another plastic Santa.

The season of Advent that precedes Christmas is meant to be reflective. If we take time to genuinely listen to our own

discordant waiting, we find that it is not dehumanizing or dispiriting like Aunt Marie's experience. Rather, it is the excited waiting of a child who knows this year's gift will be special.

Eugene Peterson wrote, "Waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy."

The celebration of Christmas is the assurance that we wait with purpose. "The word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

God didn't just come near to us, He became us. He experienced our weakness, our loneliness, and our rejection. He worked within us so that He

could work through us.

Theologian Frederick Buechner writes, "That is what incarnation means. It is untheological. It is unsophisticated. It is undignified. But according to Christianity, it is the way things are. All religions and philosophies that deny the reality or the significance of the material, the fleshly, the earthbound, are themselves denied."

God became one of us, not to deny our pain, but to share it; not to ignore the world's darkness, but to transform it by being a truer light — Oh, Holy Night.

Sylvia Peterson is a former co-pastor for Bald Hill Community Church and an author. She and her husband are chaplains for the Bald Hills Fire Department. You can email her at sylviap7@comcast.net.

FINDING REASON

Buying Gifts for the Hard-to-Buy-For and Celebrating a Wonderful One

BY JEFF ADAMS

One thing I've learned over the years counseling couples is that men like gifts that do things and women like gifts that mean things.



Now, this is not universal, but it's true in general.

Certainly men and women both like gifts that do things and mean things, but I'm just saying this is what I've seen as a safe and general rule. If you have not finished your Christmas shopping and you still need to buy for people who are typically hard to buy for, keep in mind the aforementioned general rule.

Let me explain.

Let's say a couple is about to celebrate their first wedding anniversary. She has walked by that expensive vacuum cleaner several times in the store and actually said, "Oh, I would love to have that!" If he buys that for her for their anniversary, it will not be good. She will take it like, "So, you think I'm a maid?"

Now, let's say the same couple saw a commercial with a shop vac that was so strong it can launch bowling balls if flipped in reverse as a blower. He said, "Man, that's a great shop vac!" If she buys that for him for their anniversary, it will be good. He will open it up and play with it right away — even if nothing needs vacuuming.

If a woman is in the hospital and you know she has no allergies, as you go to see her and pass by the floral and gift shop,

you might do well to buy her flowers with a nice, meaningful little card. However, if it's a guy, flowers are not the best. No, if you're going to get him a plant, get him a Venus fly trap, and no card is needed.

You see, as a general rule, guys like gifts that do things and gals like gifts that mean something.

Fortunately, Christmas is really more than buying gifts for people. It's about celebrating the birth of baby Jesus — God, coming to earth in the form of a human. We celebrate this time of year this world-changing event. It's a big deal.

God didn't have to do this, but He loves us. So, Jesus came in a miraculous way, as predicted and documented hundreds of years prior to His arrival. Angels and people celebrated. People traveled from many

miles away to see. It was a grand event.

Jesus grew to fulfill even more ancient prophecies. He performed miracles, taught with authority like no other and demonstrated genuine love that we are to emulate.

However, only a few would love Him back. He was tortured and killed out of His unflinching love for us. As predicted, He rose to life on the third day and later ascended to heaven, and enthroned as King of Kings. He has prepared a place for those who choose to love Him back, demonstrating that by living for Him.

We might have differences in genders in our preferences in gifts. You might even disagree with me that guys like gifts that do things and gals like gifts that mean things. That's OK.

It's my opinion to use that

general rule when you struggle to get gifts for people. Trust me, as I get older, I often find myself liking gifts that mean things as well. It's not a universal rule.

The cool thing is God gave us all a wonderful gift that does something and means something. His gift of Jesus means He loves us. His gift does something, too.

It gives us the opportunity to live forever with Him in a place with no more pains or sorrows!

Celebrate the greatest gift this Christmas! (John 3:16-17)

Pastor Jeff Adams is a professional Christian counselor who travels the world teaching but serves our community. His column appears weekly. He can be reached by email at jeffreydadams@hotmail.com.

STIHL

HARD TO WRAP. EASY TO GIVE.

REAL STIHL. FIND YOURS.

SAVE \$20*

BGA 56 BATTERY BLOWER SET

Includes AK 20 battery and AL 101 charger.

★★★★★ **\$179⁹⁵**

*The new blower has plenty of power and long battery life.

- Turner C

PLUS

GET 1/2 OFF 2ND BATTERY

WITH AK BATTERY SET PURCHASE

Buy a battery set and get a second battery of the same series at half price. Battery set includes power tool, battery and charger. Half price battery offer is valid through 12/25/19 at participating dealers while supplies last. Not available in all markets. See dealer for details.

MS170 Chain Saw

\$179⁹⁵

MS 211 CHAIN SAW

18" bar*

★★★★★ **\$299⁹⁵**

"I love this saw, easy to use, well built, and a good price."

- wrm6897

FREE

WOODSMAN CARRYING CASE AND STIHL HAT**

WITH PURCHASE OF SELECT SAWS

A \$44.98 SNW-SRP value.

*Offers valid through 12/25/19. All prices SNW-SRP. All prices SNW-SRP. Available at participating dealers while supplies last. †The actual listed guide bar length may vary from the effective cutting length based on which powerhead it is installed on. Check out these reviews and others on the product pages at STIHLdealers.com. ©

jandipowerequipment.net

RIDE IT OFF THE LOT. WRITE IT OFF YOUR TAXES.

SAVE UP TO \$12,000 OR PAY 0% FINANCING FOR 60 MONTHS

Kubota Construction Equipment

- **Compact excavators** with conventional tail swing for heavy lifting stability or minimum tail swing for tight spaces
- **Wheel loaders** with up to full-yard bucket capacity and over 10,000 lbs. loader breakout force
- **Skid steer loaders** with best-in-class bucket breakout force and lifting capacity
- **Compact track loaders** designed for easy maneuvering in tighter areas

Lower your taxes when you buy new Kubota construction equipment by Dec. 31 with the Section 179 tax deduction.*

See your tax advisor for details. Learn more at KubotaUSA.com.

J&I

POWER EQUIPMENT INC.

"Serving Southwest Washington Since 1974"

Quality Power Equipment You Can Depend on from a Service Dealer You Can Trust

2019 BEST OF SOUTH SOUND

HOURS
MONDAY - FRIDAY:
8:30 AM - 5:30 PM
SATURDAY:
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
SUNDAY: CLOSED

WWW.JNIPE.COM

16510 106th Ave SE • Yelm, WA
360-400-6000

3729 Pacific Ave. SE • Olympia, WA
360-491-2022

CH030304b