



Photo by Philip L. Watness/Whatnews.Ink

## Stevenson graduates celebrate commencement

Community celebrates the Class of 2026 with special salute on page 6.

## 'Surviving Summer' campaign begins in June

The Washington State Patrol, in partnership with the Washington Traffic Safety Commission and law enforcement agencies statewide, recently launched the annual "Surviving Summer" traffic safety campaign aimed at reducing serious injury and fatal collisions during Washington's deadliest summer driving months.

Historically, the period between early June and early September has marked the most dangerous stretch of the year on Washington roadways. According to the WTSC, more than 1,500 people have lost their lives in fatal crashes during the past eight summer seasons, with law enforcement responding to an average of more than 60 fatal collisions each month throughout June, July and August.

On average, this 90-day period accounts for nearly one-third of all traffic fatalities statewide. The leading contributing factors in those deadly crashes continue to be excessive speed, impaired driving, distracted driving and failure to yield the right of way.

"Everyone deserves to make it home safely this summer," Shelly Baldwin, WTSC director said in a press statement.

To kick off this year's campaign, law enforcement agencies across the state will be conducting high-visibility emphasis patrols from June 11 through June 13, aligning with high school graduation celebrations and increased summer travel. The patrols are intended to deter dangerous driving behaviors and help keep new graduates, families and communities safe during one of the busiest times of the summer.

"As families gather to celebrate graduation season, we want every student to make it home safely and enjoy the memories of this milestone for years to come," said Chief John R. Batiste, Washington State Patrol. "The launch of our 'Surviving Summer' campaign is a reminder that one safe decision behind the wheel can save a life, and our troopers will be working statewide to keep our roads safe during this critical time of year."

Traffic safety is a shared responsibility, and officials are urging all drivers to make safe choices behind the wheel this summer.

Source: Washington State Patrol

## Library features 'George's Gorge' comic exhibit

Since arriving to Stevenson late last century, Gordon Carlson has found artistic inspiration in the scenic beauty and personalities of the Columbia River Gorge. His striking landscapes, illustrations, and mixed media artworks celebrate the beauty of this area while his long-running comic, "George's Gorge," captures the humor, character and everyday moments of the people who call it home. His works are on display through June 30 at the Stevenson Library gallery.

The opening gala on Monday, June 1, featured Gordon and his wife Audrey, their three sons, Ed, John and Bill with his wife Terrie, and more than 50 friends, fans and art lovers.

Gordon's artistic legacy can be found in the pages of the Skamania County Pioneer, where his comic

ran for 18 years, and on the streets of Stevenson where his visitor map continues to guide travelers today.

### John Carlson's recollections of his dad

As a kid, I often sat in endless fascination watching my father Gordon Carlson's steady hand carefully dipping his super fine brush into the ink well, then shaping the bristles into a fine point and, finally, precisely, making three to four perfect little lines. Then do it all again, over and over.

He worked in the printing business all his life. We moved to a small town in the woods and lakes of central Minnesota when I was about 5 years old, where he built our house. There was a print shop making labels, where he ran presses until he earned a place in the art department, eventually working his way up to Plant



John Carlson courtesy photo | Skamania County Pioneer

Gordon and Audrey Carlson, June 1, 2026, at the opening reception of the display at the Stevenson library.

Manager.

A business consultant convinced the owner to

remove his position in pursuit of the bottom line but my father's reputation in

the industry was such that he received job offers from

Continued on p. 2

## Pride Fair at county fairgrounds this weekend

The 2026 Columbia Gorge Pride Festival is coming to Stevenson, on Saturday and Sunday, June 13-14. Skamania Pride, White Salmon Pride and the Columbia Gorge Pride Alliance have joined forces to make it the best Pride festival possible.

Doors open at the Skamania County Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall at 3 p.m. on Saturday, with free pizza for dinner at 5 p.m. Enjoy casual piano music during dinner and then two bands from 6 to 9 p.m.

Silk and Steel will take the stage at 6 p.m. Afterward, the punk band Ladybug Infestation will return for their third year. At 9 p.m., there will be an 18-plus performance by Hood River Burlesque.

The festival continues on Sunday morning at 8 a.m. with free breakfast and coffee and the open-

ing of our market. After speeches, the parade will leave from the Exhibit Hall at noon, travel east on Rock Creek Drive and 2nd Street, and then return via Columbia Street and Vancouver Avenue. Lunch will be available after the parade and the market will continue until 6 p.m. There is some limited space still available for vendors.

For more information, or to sign up as a vendor, sponsor or volunteer, go to the website at skamaniapride.org.

Participating vendors and community tables include: Skamania Pride Merch, Skamania Pride Free Clothing Exchange, Columbia Gorge Pride Alliance, Columbia Gorge Women's Action Network, Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette, Washington Gorge Ac-

Continued on p. 2

## Community invited to shape regional economic strategy

(CEDS) for 2027-32.

The first monthly event will take place 9 to 11 a.m., on Thursday, July 23, at the Hegewald Center in Stevenson, Washington. This session will focus on sharing the region's latest economic and demographic data and trends to ground the Strategy in a clear understanding of the current economic landscape.

Each session throughout the planning process will conclude with a tour to complement participants' understanding of local communities and economies.

Future sessions include:

- **September:** Identifying Our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (Klickitat County, Washington)
- **October:** Understanding Our Industry Sectors (Wasco County, Oregon)
- **November:** Developing Vision and Goals (Hood River County, Oregon)

- **January:** Developing Strategies (Sherman County, Oregon)
- **February:** Developing Ways to Measure Our Success (Gilliam County, Oregon)

Everyone is invited to participate in one or all of the upcoming events. To register, visit [mcedd.org/ceds](http://mcedd.org/ceds) or contact Jennifer Wright at [jennifer@mcedd.org](mailto:jennifer@mcedd.org) or 541-296-2266.

MCEDD has been developing and implementing a regional economic development strategy since its formation in 1969. Its core mission is to promote the creation of family-wage jobs, the diversification of the economic base, and the growth, development and retention of business and industry within the six-county district. To learn more about MCEDD or this planning process, visit [mcedd.org/ceds](http://mcedd.org/ceds).

Source: Mid-Columbia Economic Development District

### Stevenson Farmers Market opening day is Saturday

Stevenson Farmers market opens for the season 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, June 13 and will be open every Saturday through Oct. 10. The market is located at 140 SW Cascade Ave., in Stevenson. Volunteer shifts are available. Go online to [www.stevensonmainstreet.org/farmersmarket](http://www.stevensonmainstreet.org/farmersmarket).

### Inside:

- **Support groups** .....Page 2
- **Of interest to senior citizens** .....Page 3
- **Church Directory** .....Page 3
- **Classified Ads** .....Page 4 & 5
- **Graduation photos**.....Page 6

### This day in history

- 1692 First Salem witch hanging in Salem Village in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.
- 1752 Benjamin Franklin flies kite during thunderstorm.
- 1935 Alcoholics Anonymous founded.
- 1940 Italy declares war on France and Great Britain