

SHELTON-MASON COUNTY Journal

Thursday, Sept. 26, 2019

The Voice of Mason County Since 1886 - Vol. 132, No. 39

\$1.50

2 years later, trial is close

Belfair man accused of killing man in 2017 in shower

By Michael Heinbach
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It appears that after more than two years of court proceedings, the first-degree murder case against Belfair resident Bruce Frank Fanning is almost ready to go to trial.



Fanning During a Monday pre-trial management hearing in Mason

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Food fighters

Shelton High School assistant football coach Matt Welander has a food fight with sophomore football player Colby Smith during a pie-eating contest at the Highclimber Hoedown on Saturday at Smoking Mo's in downtown Shelton. Proceeds benefited the Shelton High School Associated Student Body. For more photos, see page A-16. *Journal photo by Shawna Whelan*



Susan Pavel, left, and Tahnee Miller are part of the statewide 2019-2020 Heritage Arts Apprenticeship Program, operated by Humanities Washington. Throughout the program, Miller will learn the art of Coast Salish wool weaving from Pavel, a master weaver. *Journal photo by Molly Walsh*

The art of weaving wool

Skokomish residents selected for apprenticeship program

By Molly Walsh
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Susan Pavel and Tahnee Miller of Skokomish are carrying on the legacy of Coast Salish wool weaving through their participation in the 2019-2020 Heritage Arts Apprenticeship Program.

The program is a statewide grant

managed by Humanities Washington and the Washington State Arts Commission. The program runs annually and for 2019-2020, 15 apprentices will learn a traditional skill or art form related to dance, storytelling, or music or visual arts from an established artist.

“The intention of the program is to first, kind of demonstrate the value of traditional arts and making sure that (the artists) can be compensated financially for that valuable work,”

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Wendy Sessoms, founder and executive director of the Crazy Love Ministries, sets up a tent in preparation for the weekly community meal Friday evening in a parking lot in downtown Shelton. *Journal photo by Gordon Weeks*

Serving people on the streets

Crazy Love Ministries brings food, clothes to less fortunate

By Gordon Weeks
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Wendy Sessoms overcame addictions to methamphetamine and alcohol before God “got ahold” of her heart while she served homeless people on the streets of Olympia.

“I realized what they did in Olympia had a profound influence on peo-

ple’s lives,” she said. “I realized Shelton could benefit from the same thing.”

In May 2017, Sessoms launched the Shelton-based nonprofit organization Crazy Love Ministries. Sessoms and her volunteers — half of whom say they’ve overcome chemical addictions — provide free food, clothing, toiletries and guidance at 6 p.m. Friday evenings in a business parking lot at Seventh Street and West Railroad Avenue. They also foot the bill for people to wash their

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Weaving: Art form holds special meaning for weavers

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said Hannah Schwendeman, program manager and communications coordinator for Humanities Washington. "But also, to create an opportunity for apprentices to gain valuable marketing and job skills."

In addition to teaching and learning an artistic craft, the program also provides participants the opportunity to turn their art or heritage skill into a profession. This includes workshops and resources for forging community connections and advice on applying for additional grant programs.

The traditional weave pattern of Pacific Northwest indigenous peoples, Coast Salish wool weaving originates from Coast Salish Territory, which runs from Vancouver Island, Canada, in the north to the Columbia River in the south and to the Cascade Range in the east.

Coast Salish wool weaving has a special meaning for master weaver, Pavel and apprentice, Miller, who both came to the art form through family and community connections.

Miller grew up in the tradition of wool weaving and participated in weaving classes before working with Pavel. Miller and Pavel, who are second cousins by marriage, did not begin weaving together until the summer of 2017, when Miller attended a wool-weaving workshop that was led by Pavel at the Skokomish Tribe Community Center.

"I have always been interested in it," Miller said. "It's part of me as a Native American."

Pavel began Salish wool weaving in the summer of 1996, learning under master weaver and Skokomish elder Bruce Miller.

"There was no sitting around with Bruce," Pavel said. "I wanted to lay around that summer, but he said, 'come here.' So that summer, I learned to do everything. Not shear the sheep, but definitely started from cleaning the wool, and spinning the wool and felting and made one weaving that summer of 1996."

When Pavel was introduced to Coast Salish wool weaving, there were only two master weavers who taught Salish wool weaving in Washington. Pavel's mentor, Bruce Miller, and Bill James, who was part of the Lummi Nation near Bellingham. A skill traditionally passed from generation to generation, Miller and James took on apprentices, but very few students gained the necessary skills required to eventually teach the art.

"You have had to have the time and the money to really sit with a master



A completed, fully twinned mountain goat wool robe titled du'kWXaXa't3w3l (pronounced duk-ha-ha-tu-wahl), which means "Sacred Change for Each Other," is on permanent display at the Seattle Art Museum and was the first Coast Salish mountain goat robe woven in more than 150 years. Courtesy photo

and learn the craft," Pavel said. "It's not just a one and done."

When Bruce Miller took Pavel under his wing as a novice weaver, Pavel said she was in the right place at the right time and with a good heart to learn. Pavel eventually transitioned from student to teacher after her mentor, Bruce Miller, recommended that she teach Coast Salish wool weaving to members of the Suquamish Tribe who were interested in learning the craft.

After weaving and teaching her craft for more than two decades, Pavel was introduced to the Heritage Arts Apprenticeship Program through her involvement at Arbutus Folk School in Olympia. When considering applying for the program, Pavel said the potential apprentice who immediately came to mind was Tahnee Miller.

"My teacher always said to me that you teach the one who wants to learn," Pavel said. "And Tahnee has been, for a few years now, one of the ones who wants to learn, so that always is the right student to teach."

Tahnee Miller accepted Pavel's invitation to apply for the program despite initial apprehension.

"(Susan) asked me if I would be interested in applying for the grant,

and of course I said yes," Tahnee Miller said. "I was nervous and hesitant, but excited, so I just dove headfirst in and I trusted the process."

Throughout the grant program, which lasts one year, Pavel said she plans to teach Tahnee Miller everything she knows about Coast Salish wool weaving. Pavel, who lives in Olympia, travels to Skokomish weekly to weave with Miller. Since Pavel's goal is to pass on the art form to a new generation, she and Tahnee Miller also plan to continue lessons beyond the length of the grant.

"In my heart and soul, I thought a long-term commitment, meaning, even when this grant runs out, I'm just going to keep teaching her," Pavel said.

The Coast Salish wool weaving style can produce different forms of regalia that are used for ceremonial purposes. Finished woven pieces are traditionally gifted to persons facing major life changes such as marriage, the birth of a child or losing a loved one.

Pavel said the intention behind the act of weaving is not lost on her or Tahnee Miller and that it is not just the art itself, but the meaning behind

the art that holds spiritual significance.

"It is not just a headpiece, regalia and leggings," Pavel said. "They're intimately linked and woven into the fabric of the community. And the intention behind all of our weavings is that it is spiritual protection."

Tahnee Miller said wool weaving has special meaning for her, since she has been surrounded by the art form her entire life, but it's easy for her to forget that not everyone knows the cultural significance. Pavel added that newer generations are not always raised with the same values and not as many young ones understand the context behind certain traditions.

"We need to actually talk about these things and say those words and let them know the significance that weaving is and the purpose of it," Pavel said.

Through the Heritage Arts Apprenticeship Program, both Tahnee Miller and Pavel hope they can continue the legacy of wool weaving and ensure that the craft can be carried on into future generations.

"I like how (Susan's) husband Michael put it," Tahnee Miller said. "It's asleep, so we're waking it up again."

DAYBREAK with JEFF SLAKEY 6-9am

THOM HARTMANN PROGRAM News, Opinion, Debate 9-12pm

AMERICA FIRST SEBASTIAN GORKA 12-3pm

THE DAVE RAMSEY SHOW 3-6pm

WEEKDAYS

FIBER ONE NEWSRADIO KMAS 1030AM 103.3FM