



THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024
YAKIMA CONVENTION & EVENT CENTER

Create Hope
in the World

RAUL MARTINEZ & LIZ SMITH
DIVERSE LANDS, UNIFIED VISION: THE EXPANSIVE REACH OF DNR



Raul Martinez and Liz Smith are two dedicated professionals from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), where each brings a unique perspective and set of experiences to their roles.

Raul joined the DNR in 2021 as a strategic advisor, focusing on land management and policy. His journey in public service began in the Yakima County Elections office, where he honed his skills in community engagement and governance. Raul, based in Yakima, is deeply involved in his local community, contributing to non-profits, and embracing active living through golf, travel, and home remodel projects.



Liz has been with the DNR since 2003, starting her career as a seasonal firefighter in the Central Region before becoming a permanent employee in 2007. Her extensive experience spans Wildfire, Forest Practices, and Forest Resilience. Liz, a proud Central Washington University alum and former cross-country team member, serves as the Forest Regulation and Resilience Assistant Region Manager out of Ellensburg. Her commitment to the environment and community safety has been unwavering throughout her career.

Together, Raul and Liz exemplify the dedication and passion that drive the Department of Natural Resources. Their combined expertise in policy, land management, and environmental resilience contributes significantly to the department’s mission, while their personal interests and community involvement reflect their commitment to a balanced, engaged lifestyle.

FOR THURSDAY’S MEETING

Greeters – Kaylene Stiles, Molly Neal
Invocation – Sheri Bissell
Sergeant-at-Arms – Steven Gustafson
Program – Drew Harris
Attendance – Matt Crow

FUTURE PROGRAMS

March 14th – Noé Álvarez, Author, Spirit Run (Yakima Valley College)
March 21st – Steve Hobbs, Washington Secretary of State
March 28th – Amy Behrens, Maryhill Museum of Art
April 4th – Mike McMullen & Antone Miller, Emergency Preparation

ROTARY HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, March 20th
5:15pm at YVC Conference Center


Our featured speaker will be Bree Black Horse, an enrolled member of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma. A gifted attorney based in Yakima, she was just hired as an Assistant United States Attorney dedicated to prosecuting cases involving Missing and Murdered Indigenous People.

The topic of the Historical Perspective is Land Acknowledgements. It seems they are being done everywhere. Bree will share with us why they are being done, should they be done at all, and if so, how they could be done correctly. The event is open to the public. Mark your calendar and invite a guest to join you.

IMAGES FROM FEBRUARY SECOND CHANCE SOCIAL



Next one will be held March 27th from 5pm to 6pm at a location to be determined.

**Yakima Rotary Trust**
Making Our Community A Better Place To Live.

The Yakima Rotary Trust is pleased to announce the

Mollie Davis Scholarship Program

Renewable Scholarships up to



\$7,500 / \$30,000

a year and / overall

Awards are based on financial need, academic achievement and leadership

Each qualified applicant must be:

- A US Citizen
- A resident of Yakima County (You may be away attending college)
- A high school senior, a high school graduate, a GED recipient or a current postsecondary student
- Enrolled in fulltime undergraduate study at an accredited two or four year college or university and pursuing a first associate's or bachelor's degree



The application period is
January 15 to February 28, 2024

To begin your applications, please visit
our website at
yakimarotarytrust.org

Mollie Davis
SCHOLARSHIP
YAKIMA ROTARY TRUST

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE EXTENDED TO MAY 1st

REVIEW

There was no better way to celebrate a day that happens once every 4 years than to be at Rotary. Our greeters for the day were Shawna Masters and Joshua Shockley. Music was provided by Nancy Leahy and Bob Hamilton who led us in singing the Battle Hymn of the Republic. Kurt Labberton's invocation included a message about transition, a blessing on our meeting, and a donation to Rotary Charities in honor of his retirement. Kathy Miller raising additional funds for Rotary Charities with a leap year themed sergeant-at-arm.

President Erin welcomed our guests and extended an invitation to an upcoming community conversation sponsored by the Yakima Valley Community Foundation on Tackling the Overdose Epidemic. Free to the community, it takes place on Wednesday, March 13th at the Seasons Performance Hall from 5pm to 6:30pm and will include a panel of dynamic women working to solve the overdose epidemic in our community and includes Megan Tweedy who spoke to us back in October. Quinn Dalan followed with a Save the Date for the next Historical Perspective happening on Wednesday, March 20th featuring Bree Black Horse as our speaker. The Topic is Land Acknowledgements. Details are listed on the front of this edition. It is open to the public.

Peter Finch had the honor of serving as the facilitator on a panel discussion about Registered Apprenticeships in the Yakima Valley and introducing our panelists Mark Cheney, Javier Arce, and Steven Sanchez. Mark is the Director for South Central Washington STEM Network at ESD 105; Javier was in attendance to represent Pexco Aerospace as a participating employer; and Steven went through the program as a student at West Valley High School. Apprenticeship programs allow apprentices the opportunity, whether they are in an in-school or out-of-school environment, to participate in a hands-on work-based environment learning skills they need and get paid at the same time, all while earning high school and college credits. Interest in the program has increased significantly since it began in 2016 with three apprentices at West Valley High School to 40 apprentices today. The program is not limited to West Valley; there are students from all throughout the Valley. At one time Toppenish had 33 apprentices at Washington Beef.

From the business perspective, Javier shared that participation in the apprenticeship program has been beneficial to Pexco and allowed them to hire some employees full-time.

Steven, who served as one of their apprentices, worked for them during high school, every summer, and during breaks from college. After the experience with Steven, they expanded the number of students they take in. They take one to two per department; last year because of the quality of candidates they increased the number to 3. Today one of them is now a full-time employee. It is hard to find good employees; apprenticeships give them an opportunity to train them when they are young. As a company it also gives an opportunity to raise their profile in the community. What does Pexco do? 95% of what they do is aerospace plastic extrusion. They have approximately 120 employees; they don't outsource anything; and most of their business is with Boeing manufacturing interior parts.

As shared previously, Steven Sanchez participated in the apprenticeship program. As a freshman at West Valley he struggled in math, the pre-Algebras. He was looking for an alternative way to gain that knowledge. He found out about the machining program and filled out all the paperwork to get started. Through the program he was able to visualize and see trigonometry in a different way; it made a whole lot more sense working directly with his hands. He applied for an apprenticeship in his junior year and was chosen by Pexco. It inspired him to become an industrial engineer. He graduated from West Valley in 2019, enrolled at CWU, and completed his degree in 3 ½ years thanks to the college credits he earned. Today he works for Geanie Industries as a tool designer and is working on developing a new production line in Mexico.

Apprenticeship takes a village; it takes a whole lot of people coming together to make it work. Here locally that includes YV-Tech, South Central Workforce, AJAX, and ESD 105. There is no other place in the state that is as organized as the Yakima Valley region. Our local STEM Network is also the Career Connect Washington Regional Network, a statewide initiative where every region is represented. Apprenticeships are business leadership driven. They look to industry to drive the development of new programs. An example is healthcare professionals who are currently in high demand. College is not for everyone. Apprenticeships provide an opportunity for businesses to develop a qualified workforce. If you are interested in more information, contact information can be obtained by emailing or calling the Rotary office. It was a great program!