



THE GCA GRAPEVINE

The Monthly Newsletter of the Grapeview Community Association

MONTH AT A GLANCE

The Port Commission is meeting in person with a remote option via Zoom – please visit their websites or contact them directly for the information. The Grapeview School Board Meeting is currently scheduled to be held at the School Library or with a Zoom option – please check their website.

- Oct 2 Board Study Session 10AM (Horton Center)
- Oct 15 Central Mason [Fire Commission](#) Meeting 5:00PM; 122 Franklin St, Shelton
- Oct 21 Grapeview [Port Commission](#) Meeting 7:00PM
- Oct 22 [Grapeview School Board](#) Meeting 5:00PM
- Oct 23 Boys Breakfast at Burger Claim (8:30am – NOTE NEW DAY – THURSDAY)
- Oct 31 A “SPOOKTACULAR” Event for October... Note the date change!**



FROM OUR PRESIDENT’S DESK...

Fall is here and I bet we’re all looking forward to those beautiful leaves changing colors, although the raking of leaves is not so much fun! We had a great time at our Fall Kickoff on Sept 12th – there were about 60 of us gathered around the campfire pit sharing yummy appetizers and playing fun games. Always a fun way to start a new season, and our many thanks to Bob & Marge Doremus and Mike & Linda Fish for their hospitality. **Our next event is going to be really SPOOKTACULAR, FUN, and DIFFERENT! We’re shaking things up a bit and skipping our regular 2nd Friday event and replacing it with an actual Halloween Party on Friday, October 31st!** You can trust our friend, and Treasurer, Christine Bal and our trusty Event Coordinator – Debbie Black, to throw an awesome party for sure! So get out your “sense of adventure” and a fun costume (totally optional!) and join in the fun for a thrilling and spooky (not really) evening! See more details below.

As this year is rapidly closing, I am once again humbled and honored to reflect on a year full of challenges, opportunities, and most of all strengthening of friendships within our community. On a very personal note... My family and I are so very grateful to have the support, love, and friendship we’ve received from many of you this summer... it reminds me why I love living here so much, and why GCA is a safe landing spot for so many of us.

See you all on October 31st for a SPOOKTACULAR EVENT!

Bonnie Townsley





WAS THE TAILGATE PARTY FUN?? YOU BETCHA!



Our annual Tailgate Party at Rauschert Field was nothing short of a blast!

The weather gave us a little sprinkle, but you'd never know it from the laughter, music, and good cheer. (Okay... maybe just a few extra trips to Louise's table for "liquid warmth"). The food spread was unbeatable, with everyone bringing their tailgate favorites to share. And the karaoke? Let's just say Annie Bell, Jim Hanson, and Pam Mueller could have their own tour after those performances!



Huge thanks to Bob and Marge Doremus for sharing their gorgeous property, and to the Fishes for being the ultimate hosts with their popups, hospitality, and—yes—the all-important bathroom. The photos say it all—smiles, music, and memories. Can't wait to do it again next year!



The Great Spooktacular Halloween Party

Friday, October 31, 6pm - 9pm



Mark your calendars for our first Spooktacular Halloween Party! Come for a traditional Halloween party and gorge on Pizza, "Sandwiches", Salad, snacks, games (Halloween Bingo anyone?), scary videos, movie clips, and Halloween themed music! We'll supply the food and table settings, but please bring a beverage of your choice to enjoy throughout the evening, or sample our "*Grapeview Witches' Brew*", a suspiciously delicious Halloween cocktail!

Costumes are encouraged but **not required**. Our costume contest will have awards for the Most Original, Most Outrageous, Best Homemade, Scariest and more!

EXTRA EXTRA for our creative crowd: Enter our Halloween Pumpkin Carving Contest!! Entrees can be dropped off on the day of the party at the Hall between 10-12pm. Prizes will be awarded, along with member admiration! We will provide the (flameless) candles to light them up. Please text or call Debbie Black, at 253-229-8450, by Wednesday, October 29 if you are participating!

See you there!
Christine Bal, your ghostess with the mostess!



NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS.... Community Outreach News



Grapeview School

Thanks to our successful fund-raising efforts, we had the pleasure to help the school send two students to Camp Seymour this fall. Thank you!

Please call me if you are interested in helping at the school. Reading help will be conducted from 9-10 Tuesday thru Friday. Let's get a group together! Other help is also welcome: hanging student pictures in the cafeteria, tuning instruments etc. Let me know what interests you!



Halloween Party: October 31. In lieu of candy, why not gather some school supplies for our Grapeview school? There are always kids who need them! I will be glad to collect and deliver them!

Helping the Community with donations for the North Mason Food Bank:

Great job so far! The donations have slowed down a bit this summer except from wonderful regular donations from our favorite gardeners! Tis the Fall season and Tara, the NMFB Director, is looking ahead to the Holiday season to see what she needs to order to enrich our neighbors holidays with wonderful food. If you still have some of those very bright green bags, please bring them back (even empty) so that I can do an inventory. They can be dropped off at my house on the porch (first house on the right after the Stretch Island Bridge) or at the Halloween Party. I will also have them available if you are eager to take another one home! Our neighbors need us more than ever! Checks are of course always welcome too!

Thank you!
Michele Hecht
Outreach Coordinator
(410) 598 7258



WANT TO BE A PART OF THE GCA LEADERSHIP TEAM?

WE NEED YOU!

November marks the month to elect our 2026 GCA Board. We are looking for people who love making a difference – big OR small! If you are that person, please contact **Jim Hanson (206-972-1829)** or **Bonnie Townsley (360-801-5040)** right away, or simply **reply to this newsletter and we'll get in touch with you.** ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN IN THE FUN! Everyone has talent... we just need you to take a small leap of faith and help us make GCA even better than it already is! Thank you!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS - IMPORTANT!!!!

We had a very successful year for GCA Membership renewals and new members. Please look at the current Membership Directory and if you have any updates or changes to your information please send them to Membership4GCA@gmail.com so that we can update the Directory information for next year.

2026 is just around the corner (can you believe it?). If you want to get a jump on it and pay your next year dues now – that is great!!! You can do it by check or **you can [pay your renewal online with your credit card](#), and** let us know of any changes to the directory information. **THERE IS NO FEE to pay online.** There IS an option to donate to Zeffy (the company who makes this function possible). **[When the donation amount comes up, click on “OTHER” and put AN OPTIONAL DONATION AMOUNT in that space.](#)** Simply [click here](#) right now to make that payment!

Now let’s celebrate our NEW MEMBERS!! Please extend a warm welcome and reach out to these new members to welcome them to our family. Invite them to the Halloween Party and our November event – get to know them and help them feel the GCA Spirit!

Daniel & Rachel Aleyone

Claudia Martin

Gary & Michelle Ratterree

Les Okonek & Theresa Vendetti

**We Love
Our New
Members!**



Thank you for your continued support and participation.

Dan Peel, Membership Co-Chair (Membership4GCA@gmail.com)

Bookmark the GCA Website and GCA Facebook!!

Keep up to date with the latest news and events from the GCA and the greater Grapeview Community by visiting and bookmarking the [GCA Website](#) and the [GCA Facebook](#) page. Both the website and Facebook page are updated throughout the month as news and information are made available regarding both the GCA and our community.

From Bob Doremus -- A look at Grapeview in the Early Years....

Mason County's First Winery: The St. Charles Story



The early 20th century was a golden age for Mason County's grape growers, with consistently high yields and prices that met a seemingly endless demand for their table grapes and juice. Then the bottom fell out. The stock market crash of October 1929 and the subsequent Depression that followed devastated the grape market, with the price of grapes declining by 75% by 1932. Much of the crop was simply left on the vines to rot. One of Mason county's major grape growers was Charles Somers, who had purchased his Stretch Island property from the widow of Lambert Evans in 1918. Somers was a good businessman and realized that there was more profit to be made if he could convert his grapes into wine. Unfortunately, the Prohibition Act of 1920 made that impossible. By 1930 Somers sensed a shift in the nation's attitude toward alcohol consumption. He applied to the Federal Prohibition Enforcement Bureau for a special permit which would allow

him to produce small quantities of wine which could only be sold to drug stores to be used "for medicinal purposes." Charles Somers' hunch proved to be correct, when on Dec 5, 1933, the states voted to ratify the 21st amendment repealing prohibition. Already having some experience navigating the red tape of Washington D.C., he was quick to apply to the newly organized Alcohol Tax Unit for a winery permit. His was the first license granted for the 15th District, which included not only Washington but also Oregon, Idaho and Montana. St. Charles was the name chosen for his new venture. Somers hired a French winemaker to supervise the first year's crush. The grape juice was fermented in used 50-gallon white oak whiskey barrels and the year's total production was 3,000 gallons, done in a building no bigger than a basketball court. In 1935 Somers hired a new winemaker, a German immigrant named Erich Steenborg. His family owned restaurants and hotels in Germany and he had been trained at Germany's premier winemaking school. Although he possessed the knowledge to produce truly fine wines, he was smart enough to realize that was not what the local population was use to or wanted. They preferred fruity, sweet wines with a high alcohol content. Charles Somers said that it was too hard to educate the consumers about wine, and it was more important to give the consumers what they wanted. Working with Dr. Benson of the University of Washington's chemistry department, Steenborg used a special strain of yeast to produce wines that had a 17% alcohol content without having to fortify them with brandy. Charles Somers' oldest son Bill, graduated from the University of Washington in 1933 and joined the family business. A new winery building was erected and within two years production jumped to 38,000 gallons. That year they also produced 8,000 gallons of loganberry wine. In 1941 younger son Howard graduated from UW as a chemical engineer. For the next 20 years Charles ran the business, Bill tended the vineyards and Howard made the wine. As many as twelve workers were employed full time and during harvest time many local workers, mainly housewives, were used to pick the grapes. Production continued to increase over the years, reaching 100,000 gallons in 1965. Unfortunately, this was also the company's last year of operation. The business was sold to the Alhambra Wine Co. of Selah in Yakima County. Though the St. Charles winery closed its doors in 1965, its legacy as a pioneer in the Washington wine industry and a key part of Mason County's history lives on.