



This Week from the Mayor



OCTOBER 11, 2018

VOL. III, NO. 32



Photo courtesy of Renton School District

Community pride shows at Sartori ceremony

If you want to develop a sense of community pride, take advantage of attending events at your local school. I had the opportunity to join Dr. Damien Pattenaude, superintendent of Renton School District, school board members and local families in cutting the ribbon of the new Sartori Elementary School this week.

It's a beautiful school that is a significant catalyst for the redevelopment and improvement efforts downtown and the north Renton community.

But it's more than just a large, modern, multi-story building. A walk through the hallways, where walls are lined with artwork produced by the kids and you hear the sound of young, happy voices, provides you with a sense that this is a warm and safe sanctuary where kids will learn, play and begin to develop life-long skills.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony drew hundreds of parents and students who are excited and proud of their new school. It was great to see former school superintendents Dolores Gibbons, Vera Risdon and Art Jarvis, as well as current and former school board members who were there to join in the celebration that included singing performances from a kindergarten music class. These school leaders have played a huge role in our school district becoming one of the best in the state.

One local parent, who was carrying his young son in his arms, told me how pleased he was that they found a home to purchase nearby. His son will attend Sartori next year and this parent was obviously proud to be a part of the Renton community.

With the headlines dominated by so much negativity these days, it was a nice break to attend such an inspiring event with a very diverse crowd of neighbors who came together to celebrate the opening of their new school.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Fire Prevention Week

The City Council adopted two proclamations I presented Monday night, one recognizing [Fire Prevention Week](#) and the other proclaiming October as [Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#).

Fire Prevention Week is a great time to remind families of the importance of making sure you have working smoke alarms throughout your home. It is proven smoke alarms have saved many lives over the years. Renton Regional Fire Authority is committed to assisting residents with obtaining alarms and providing assistance to seniors and others who need help in changing batteries and checking to make sure that the alarms are operating properly.

Domestic violence statistics continue to be alarming. Every nine seconds in this country a woman is beaten by her husband or boyfriend and in many cases the result is serious injuries or homicide. These calls are among the most dangerous ones our police officers handle and we have too many examples of women being killed in this community by husbands or boyfriends.

Domestic violence cases now fall under a more common term "intimate partner violence," referring to physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. For most of us, it's inconceivable that some men feel it's alright to strike or abuse a woman. Yet it happens every day throughout society in all demographic and racial backgrounds. Men can also be victims, but more than 85% of the victims are women.

Domestic violence also takes a huge toll on children and is playing a part in the growing homelessness crisis as some women try to escape from their abusers. We should all be aware of how to report these cases if you are either a victim or know someone who is a victim of domestic violence. Information on how to report domestic violence can be found on our [website](#).



The city hall lobby features silhouettes of Renton residents who were victims of domestic violence.

Renton pioneer Chuck Divelbiss passes

Renton has lost a number of prominent pioneers from this community over the past couple years, leaving legacies that have become an important part of Renton's history. This group of leaders played a significant role in the health and vitality of Renton over 70 years, from their successful professions to years of supporting many local organizations that improved the quality of this city.

Services were held this past Saturday for Dr. Charles (Chuck) Divelbiss, 87, a retired physician who was the family doctor and surgeon for Renton families for many years. Chuck was one of these pioneers.

He practiced medicine in Renton for many years and was the first chief of staff for Valley Hospital. He was also a major property owner in the downtown area and long-time business partner with his son in St. Charles Place Antiques on South Wells Street.

Chuck was part of a group of leaders who were devoted to this community. Several were graduates of Renton High School and most of them were members of Renton Rotary, devoting time and resources to programs and community projects for many years. They remained close friends and connected to Renton.

There was Gary Dime who died at age 82 in late 2015. Gary moved to Renton in 1939, graduated from Renton High and the UW, and spent a career as a stock broker. And Alex Cugini, 88, who passed away in 2016. Alex was best known as the owner and operator of the Barbee Mill on Lake Washington Boulevard. He was involved in many other business ventures with his wife, Norma Jean Cugini, who passed away in 2017. The Cuginis were well-known throughout this community and were major supporters of local schools, Renton Technical College as well as other organizations in this region.

In April last year, we lost Judge Jerry Shellan, 95, who served as the Renton City Attorney for 27 years and later became a King County Superior Court judge. Jerry was married to Barbara (Baxter) whose father was a former mayor of Renton. I had the opportunity to honor Jerry with a "Key to the City" in 2014 for his many years of service to this community. He, too, was a long-time member of Renton Rotary.

This past July, Tony Porcello, 95, passed away. Tony and his wife opened Porcello Jewelers in downtown Renton more than 60 years ago.

For years, these individuals, along with a couple of other life-long friends, met for lunch downtown at a popular Italian restaurant to hold court on local and national politics. I was invited to join them on occasion and admired their wit, knowledge and reflections on "the good-old days."

These gentlemen lived life to its fullest by working hard and always devoting time to enjoy the fruits of their labor with family and friends.

They represented a big part of Renton's history.



Dr. Charles (Chuck) Divelbiss

Feedback

Comments, questions or suggestions, or just want to share all the great things that are happening in the city, please [email](#) me. Thanks for reading. | [Newsletter archive](#)