



LEO News

Car show king rallies for LEO

For Marv Nielsen, combining his passion for classic cars with his passion for Life Enrichment Options was an obvious connection. His wife, Susan, had been involved with the formation of LEO and served as a long-time board member, and his daughter, Crystal, became the first resident in a LEO adult family home. Add to this his long-time love of classic cars and membership in The Sunset Hiway Cruisers car club, and the combination resulted in the now famous car shows benefitting LEO held at Issaquah's Triple XXX Rootbeer Drive-in.

Classic car enthusiasts come from around the state, and even from surrounding states, to participate in the shows, or to admire the many meticulously kept vintage cars. With Marv's dedication and guidance, the shows featuring wide ranging specialty car clubs, grew from two shows in 1995 to the 33 shows held nearly every weekend from April through October in 2012.

"We knew we wanted to do something to support LEO, so I talked to Jose (Enciso) at Triple XXX and we started from there," said Marv.

Car club members are very altruistic, usually having a chosen charity that they contribute to. Because of Marv sharing his story of Crystal and of his connection to LEO at the many car shows held at the Triple XXX, several of the clubs choose to donate any proceeds from these shows to LEO,



Long-time LEO supporters Sue and Marv Nielsen with their 1937 Ford coupe.

which has resulted in donations of \$6,000 to \$7,000 per year from the clubs. At Marv's suggestion, the 2010 Washington State Hot Rod Hall of Fame banquet also benefitted LEO, raising nearly \$7,000 for the organization.

"Marv and Sue are priceless to the community," commented Jose Enciso, owner of Triple XXX. "A little concept to have some car shows and benefit LEO went way past our imaginations."



LEO's president Nancy Whitaker and Marv Nielsen.

Marv and his "crew," including Joe Forkner, Lee Woods, Bill Buxton, Steve Merryman and Richard Kreiger, coordinate and schedule all of the shows, including working with the city to arrange for traffic control needed due to the large crowds that the events attract. Triple XXX provides not only the venue, but door prizes and trophies as well, although Marv has been known to fabricate some unique trophies from car parts for some of the shows.

The shows even attracted the attention of the nationally televised show "The Vehicle Vintage Show" with car connoisseur Lance Lambert. Because of the increased publicity by this show and several local newspapers, as well as word of mouth, the number of entries and visitors keeps growing, as do the donations to LEO.

"I have a super nice little garage and a super tolerant wife," said Marv. "This just adds a little more flavor to my life and benefits a great organization."

LEO appreciates the generosity of the following car clubs:

NW Classic Chevy Club
Gig Harbor Cruisers
M.G. Car Club
Jeep Club
Rat Bastards Car Club
Britannia Club
Mopars & More
Porsche Club PNW
Mustangs Northwest
NW GTO Legends
(formerly NW Muscle Car)
BMW CCA Puget Sound Region
Boeing Stratocruisers
Mopars Unlimited
Cascade Cougar Club
Sunset Hi-Way Cruisers
Fiat Enthusiasts NW
Corvette Marque Club of Seattle
Pacific NW Camaro Club
BMW Car Club
Garage Town Federal Way, LLC
NW Muscle Car Show
Convertibles Only
Puget Sound Military Vehicles Club
Mini Cooper Club
Thundering Angels Motorcycle Club
(formerly Harley Club)



Crusing the "Fenders on Front Street" car show with his daughter Crystal.

Let's have a Heart to Heart

Please support our 2012 annual fundraiser

Many thanks to all who have supported us in our journey to continue to work towards our goals of supporting individuals with developmental disabilities achieve their life style goals. The community considers LEO a great resource with a wealth of information and experience. Please consider supporting our ongoing efforts by making a donation at www.lifeenrichmentoptions.org.

Our goal this year is to raise \$100,000 to purchase land for our fourth home; for continued maintenance costs of our current homes; and to continue to support our specialized recreational programs, educational forums, and employment opportunities.

Please help us help them. Dreams really can come true.



Issaquah's Triple XXX Rootbeer Drive-in.

Angela House caregiver follows her passion to LEO

The Angela House, LEO's third house for those with developmental disabilities, is fast becoming a home. Caregiver Evelyn Galasso has decorated the house for the holidays, giving it a warm and welcoming glow. But the warmth of the home's atmosphere is also a reflection of Evelyn's dedication to enhancing the lives of those with disabilities.

Evelyn had been a member of the LEO family long before accepting the caregiver position, first becoming involved with LEO when her sister-in-law, Laura Austin, was the caregiver at the Ann House. Spending time there with the residents became an important part of Evelyn's life. She enjoyed her developing relationships with the residents and, after becoming part of the family, eventually became their substitute caregiver. "To earn their love and respect feels so good," said Evelyn.

Evelyn has a long history of caring not only for those with developmental disabilities, but for those who struggle with health issues, poverty, homelessness, and more. She has served warm breakfasts at the Union Gospel Mission in Seattle, made care packages for women undergoing treatment for breast cancer, and has traveled to the Philippines, with her husband Paul and daughter Rachel, to provide school supplies to children in her hometown. But having her cousin's child born with cerebral palsy gave Evelyn a special insight and heart for people with disabilities and their families.

Along with Evelyn and Paul, the Angela House has welcomed its first two residents, Dylan and his canine companion, Mary. Dylan now has his



Dylan, Evelyn and Mary at home in the Angela House.

own place where he has the ability to live independent of his family, just like his older brother and sister.

"Dylan moved in and really never looked back, which is what ever parent would hope for," said Dylan's mom Liz. "Evelyn is magic," Liz continues. "She is getting Dylan to eat

many foods that he would never try at home. She is helping him to be independent while providing the same care that I would as his mother."

"I'm so appreciative to be able to live here and have this opportunity," Evelyn said. "This is not just a job. It's a sense of fulfillment."

Interested in Getting Involved with LEO?

New members are always welcome to join our Issaquah and Snoqualmie Valley Outreach Committees. The committees meet just four times each year, planning the spring and fall educational presentations, sharing information about LEO at the Issaquah ArtWalks, and participating in the Salmon Days and Festival at Mt Si parades. The committees are an important way for LEO to connect with the needs of the community. For more information, contact Chris Weber at chris.weber@lifeenrichmentoptions.org or visit our website at www.lifeenrichmentoptions.org.

And, we always have a need for volunteers of any interest or skill, for individuals as well as organizations. For more information, contact Becky Kitz at becky.kitz@lifeenrichmentoptions.org.

We apologize if we have inadvertently sent this newsletter to you. We are implementing a new database and have made all attempts to keep records in sync. If you would like to be removed from our distribution list please email us at info@lifeenrichmentoptions.org.


Life Enrichment Options is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization registered with the Washington State Secretary of State. For verification of this registration, call the Washington State Secretary of State's Charities Hotline at 1-800-332-GIVE.



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