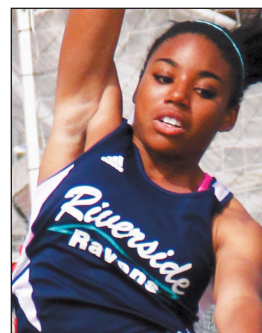


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MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND



HAVEN to HEAL

Sarah Blum tends
to others torn
by wounds of war

Sarah Blum saw her share of pain and suffering as an Army nurse in the operating room of an evac hospital during the Vietnam War. Today, she works to bind up the psychological wounds of veterans and others. MARK KLAAS, *Auburn Reporter*

BY MARK KLAAS
mklaas@auburn-reporter.com

War seared Sarah Blum.
As a 26-year-old Army nurse in an operating room within earshot of Vietnam's battlefields, Blum saw what modern warfare could do to the human body – and soul.
Soldiers and civilians, bodies torn asunder by enemy and friendly fire,

rivers of human blood, suffering on a lunatic scale.

For a young woman determined to do her duty, the war cut cruelly, horribly, lastingly deep.

"It was the hardest thing I ever had to do. It was crazy," Blum said of treating the wounded in an evacuation hospital in a battle zone by the Iron Triangle. In that thickly forested, 120-square-mile area, most of the heavy fighting of 1967 was done.

[more BLUM page 4]

City plans to lower speeds to ease strain on arterials

BY ROBERT WHALE
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Auburn officials plan to lower the speed limits on several key arterials starting this summer to keep drivers safe, they say, from the fallout of aging, deteriorating street surfaces.

Traffic safety engineer Pablo Para brought members of the City's Public Works Committee up to speed Monday on the proposed changes, as follows:

- West Main Street between West Valley Highway and the Interurban Trail – from 45 to 35 mph;
- West Valley Highway between 15th Street Northwest and West Main Street – from

- 40 to 35 mph;
 - 37th Northeast and Northwest, between Auburn Way North and West Valley Highway – from 40 to 30 mph.
- "This is for safety reasons," said City Engineer Dennis Selle. "We've gone out and studied some of our streets, and because of the condition of the pavement, to make it safe for the traveling public, we are proposing to reduce the speed limit ... on some corridors, and that's the reason we are doing it."
- "Speed is not going to change the deterioration of the pavement," Selle added. "The amount of the trucks and the

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Two private liquor stores to open

BY SHAWN SKAGER
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Two state liquor stores in Auburn will close their doors this month – only to throw them open soon afterward under private ownership.

The south liquor store at 3930 A St. SE rings up its final sale Saturday, with plans to reopen as the privately-run

Auburn Liquor and Wine in the same spot on next Friday, June 1.

As for the state run North Auburn store in the Fred Meyer plaza at 801 Auburn Way N., it ends its state-owned status Wednesday.

The new owner, Kulwant S. Khaira – who won the rights

[more STORES page 4]

REUNION AT LONG LAST

Kent worker reunites
with long-lost sisters

BY SARAH KEHOE
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Auburn resident Jerry Wooliver no longer feels alone.

Wooliver, 67, recently met three half-sisters he never knew he had for the first time at the South King County offices of Total Living Concept (TLC), a Kent social service organization where he works.

Wooliver thought he was the

only survivor of a family that had been estranged for many years.

"I was shocked and happy to see them," Wooliver said of the April 28 reunion. "They are all such beautiful people with loving hearts."

Wooliver was born with cerebral palsy, a group of disorders that affect the brain's motor control centers and often impair

[more REUNITE page 5]



Jerry Wooliver meets sisters Julie Martin, left, Karen Newman and Janis MacPherson for the first time. COURTESY PHOTO

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[BLUM from page 1]

"Can you imagine seeing people with their bodies partially mutilated, mangled, blown apart?" Blum said. "I've never seen so much blood in my life. Where I worked, the operating room, I was covered with blood. ... I literally was standing in blood. It was horrible."

Because battle lines were not sharply drawn in the confused jungles and thickets of Southeast Asia, Blum's hospital also served as a M.A.S.H. unit.

The airlifted wounded came quickly and frequently to doctors and nurses at the 12th Evacuation Hospital in Cu Chi, making it the largest user of fresh blood in all of Vietnam, Blum said.

Despite the challenges, Blum said, the hospital staff saved more wounded than it lost.

"I saw the worst because of where we were," she said. "We were right beside the Ho Bo Woods, where all the fighting was going on. I saw it. I heard it. I smelled it."

Sights, smells, and sounds that shaped what Blum would become.

Drawing on her wartime experiences as a decorated Vietnam War nurse and her later training stateside, Blum works today to heal others psychologically torn by war and other traumatic events – even as she was torn.

Her long, and at times difficult, journey ultimately led to a fulfilling career as a practicing nurse psychotherapist, energy healer and author.



U.S. Army nurse Sarah Blum worked with doctors in treating the wounded at the 12th Evacuation Hospital in Vietnam near a fiercely contested battle zone in 1967. "It was the hardest thing I ever had to do," Blum said of her duty. COURTESY PHOTO

Blum, the first psychotherapist to open an office in Federal Way back in 1977, has been in Auburn since 1985. She counsels clients from all walks – men, women and children, active and reserved military – veterans living in Auburn, Kent, throughout King County and beyond. She offers individual, couples and group therapy.

She specializes in helping people with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Blum's personal experiences taught her a great deal about trauma and how to heal it. War, she said, has proven to be the best preparation for being an effective psychotherapist and coach. What she didn't know then, as an Army captain nurse, was that psychological symptoms associated with PTSD would fol-

low her home.

Blum got through those terrible days in the operating room by "building up a brick wall around my heart."

She only succeeded in suppressing her feelings.

"(In Vietnam) I couldn't let the emotions get the best of me," she said. "I had to learn really fast to turn it all off, so that it didn't show. ... I did a lot of stuff internally to be able to survive."

She deals with the same issues today.

"Being a client, I was doing my own healing work. I spent years in my own therapy and dealt with issues from Vietnam and uncovered the early childhood issues and healed those," she said.

Blum vows to heal, not assuage,

patients.

"I tell people when they come to see me, 'If you just want to cope, see somebody else. If you want to get better, if you want your life to be better, then let's roll up our sleeves and get to work,' " she said.

A gifted surgical nurse, Blum decided to get out of the operating room and treat others in a different way. As her military stint ended, Blum went to college, earning her bachelor's degree in nursing at Seattle University. Later, she earned her master's in psychosocial nursing at the University of Washington.

She has been married. She raised a family in Auburn. Her daughter, Lorna, is a social worker. Her son, Sean-David, a professional musician, served in the U.S. Army Band.

Blum has made an impact with her practice and in her efforts elsewhere. She was among the first women to be elected to the Vietnam Veterans of American National Board of Directors. She has worked with others on legislation to help victims of Agent Orange. She was a member of the first international volunteer group, PeaceTrees Vietnam, which returned to the country in 1996 to plant trees on land once ravaged by war.

She went to heal herself – and the land.

"A veteran had given me a letter and asked me to read it when I got to Vietnam and to plant it under a tree," Blum said of her personal

pilgrimage. "It was emotional."

Blum has set her experiences down on paper. Her first, soon-to-be-published book, "Women Under Fire: Abuse in the Military," relates real stories of women who were raped or otherwise sexually assaulted in the military. She is working on a second book, "Women Under Fire: PTSD and Healing," that chronicles her own experiences and those of others.

Blum says there are more options today for those struggling with PTSD and other anxiety disorders. Attitudes towards afflicted war veterans and soldiers have changed since the Vietnam era, she said.

"It's much more accepted today. There's a lot more education about it," Blum said of PTSD. "I think that's what Vietnam vets have done for our country, in that they educated people about the trauma of war, about PTSD and what it is," Blum added. "(The past) has helped modern-day veterans become more accepted and respected because of what we went through from the public."

Blum recognizes there is more work to be done. She is doing her part.

It is her calling in life.

"I'm interested in the truth," she said of helping to treat the emotional wounds of others. "I'm a clear thinker, a problem solver. I'm a very strong person. I am someone who heals."

To learn more about Sarah Blum, ARNP, MN, please call 253-939-8796 or visit www.sarahshealinghaven.com.

[STORES from page 1]

to operate the liquor store with a \$251,200 bid in the state's online liquor auction last month – plans to reopen the store in a new location in early June.

Khaira, a businessman who operates a 7-Eleven and liquor store in San Francisco, said Fred Meyer declined to renew his lease

at the current location, forcing him to find a new spot within a mile of the old state-run store.

"I will not be at the Fred Meyer spot, but I will be open at 790 Auburn Way N.," Khaira said. "The good thing is that Fred Meyer has agreed to help us remove our equipment, and I want to thank him for that."

After May 30, Khaira

said, he will move the shelving and other fixtures from the current location to the new place, a 4,853-square-foot space across the street that he'll call Auburn Wine and Liquor.

"I just want to keep it local," he said. "I want to give the same service the people of Auburn were getting. I don't want to disrupt that."

Although the store

should be physically ready to open, with all the fixtures in place by June 1, Khaira said he's still waiting for the final OK on his liquor license from the state.

"I'm trying very hard to get it all done," he said. "They (the Washington State Liquor Control Board) said they are working on it, and I've given them all the things that I'm supposed to."

Once open, Khaira said he plans to add a few convenience items to the store's inventory but keep the focus on liquor and wine.

As for the former state employees at the old store, Khaira said he hopes to hire as many of them as possible.

"We have to look at how the business is going to do with the new location, but I'd like to hire some, if not all, the current employees," he said. "I'm interested in bringing in those who have the customer service experience."

Khaira, who has been in the retail business for eight years, said that he also

hopes to retain as much of the store's previous clientele as possible.

Khaira welcomes any input from residents of Auburn regarding his store. He can be reached at 415-533-6086 or by e-mail at kulwantsingh68@yahoo.com.

In addition to liquor sales at the two privately owned stores, several other retailers in Auburn will begin selling spirits on June 1, including Safeway, Fred Meyer, Walgreens and Top Food.

Officially, the state is out of the retail liquor business on June 1.

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