

Classic car enthusiasts pitch in for Marysville, Arlington community service groups

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EVERETT — Area auto enthusiasts continued a tradition of support for groups which work to benefit the Marysville and Arlington communities in turn.

The Port Gardner Vintage Auto Club serves as one of the co-hosts of the annual Arlington Drag Strip Reunion and Car Show, along with the Arlington Boys & Girls Club. Arlington Boys & Girls Club Director Bill Kinney started the Drag Strip Reunion in 2003 and invited the Port Gardner Vintage Auto Club to take part in the car show in 2008.

The proceeds from last September's car show yielded nearly \$12,000, of which about \$6,000 went to the Arlington Boys & Girls Club and the remaining \$6,000 was divided up among a number of local organizations dedicated to helping children, families or animals in need.

On Feb. 8, the Port Gardner Vintage Auto Club presented checks to representatives of the Arlington and North Everett Boys & Girls Clubs, Everett firefighters, the Burned Children Recovery Foundation, Cocoon House of Snohomish County, the Animal Rescue Foundation, the Arlington and Marysville food banks, and the Marysville-Pilchuck High School Automotive Career Program.

M-PHS auto tech instructor Chuck Nichols explained that the monies received by his program will go toward tool scholarships for a select number of graduating seniors who intend to make their careers in the automotive industry.

"The economy is so bad, but we've got such a good crop of students," Nichols said. "When you go to automotive school, you're expected to provide your own tools. These students can purchase those tools with this money. The first recipient of these scholarships is working at Roy Robinson Chevrolet. We've got three of our students working there now."

According to Nichols, the Marysville School District will continue to fund the automotive career program and retain it at M-PHS. He cited its value in maintaining the school's reputation within the community for producing graduates with solid skills that prospective employers can use.

"Even our students who choose to go into other career fields leave here with foundational skills in place," Nichols said.

Marysville Community Food Bank Director Dell Deierling pointed out that his client base of roughly 6,000 individuals served each year constitutes close to 11 percent of the city of Marysville's population.

"There's a significant need out there," Deierling said. "The average client visits our food bank five or six times a year, which means many of them simply need to visit us once or twice to get back on their feet, but 50 percent of our clients are seniors and children."

Deierling credited the entire Marysville community with providing support for its food bank, especially since a number of



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The recipients of the Arlington Drag Strip Reunion and Car Show's proceeds for 2010, presented by the Port Gardner Vintage Auto Club. Back row, from left, Karen Stalberger and Amy Ferguson with the Animal Rescue Foundation, Burned Children Recovery Foundation Director Michael Mathis, North Everett Boys & Girls Club Director Jeremy Oshie, Marysville-Pilchuck High School Automotive Career Program instructor Chuck Nichols, Dennis Somerville representing Everett firefighters and Arlington Boys & Girls Club Director Bill Kinney. Front row, from left, Greta Schreurs with Petco and the Animal Rescue Foundation, Marysville Community Food Bank Director Dell Deierling, Arlington Food Bank President Sharon Moon and Heidi Scott representing Cocoon House of Snohomish County.

the volunteers who work there are themselves clients of its services. At the same time, he acknowledged that the winter holidays tend to be the peak times for donations to the Marysville Community Food Bank, and he anticipates that its current inventory level will continue to slide until its letter-carrier collection drive in May.

"You can be confident that we'll use your funds as wisely as possible," said Deierling, who announced that the Marysville Community Food Bank had struck a deal with the recently opened Olive Garden in Tulalip to receive their excess frozen soup. "Unfortunately, we're a growing business."

Arlington Food Bank President Sharon Moon reported that her food bank is in the process of moving to a new building, since one of its many needs is a facility that isn't at risk of being flooded whenever the Stillaguamish River runs high.

"It'll be nice not to have to ask, 'How many inches away is it from flooding?'" Moon said of the new Arlington Food Bank facility, whose groundbreaking ceremony is currently scheduled for June. "The new building also has room for forklifts. The building we have now is so small that we have to move all our food around in it by hand."

The Arlington Food Bank's 35 volunteers distributed approximately 300 tons of food to an estimated 15,000 individuals last year. Although Moon sees far fewer seniors as clients at her food bank than Deierling, the Arlington Food Bank serves a far larger population of people for whom English is a second language. As such, she welcomed volunteers who can speak Spanish, Russian, Ukrainian and Armenian.

"We're losing our one Spanish-speaking volunteer," Moon said. "Russian-speaking clients make up 20 percent of our client base."

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