newleaf news

Summer 2026

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Employee Appreciation Picnic



New Leafers gathered at the admin building for our annual late summer celebration of employee togetherness

There's a reason we have our annual Employee Appreciation Picnic in mid-August: because coincides with National Bad Poetry Day! (Or maybe it's because the weather is virtually guaranteed to be beautiful.) Well in any case we got a great day and had a blast being together. In fact...

We gathered for corndogs and soda to sip

While tossing cornhole bags with excellent zip

Then we got shaved ice, all frosty and sweet

And together we called it a picnic complete

In the interests of general mental well-being, we'll let the pictures do the talking. Turn the page for more!

Employee Appreciation Picnic (continued)



















Employee Appreciation Picnic (continued)



















Bowling Battle of the Businesses

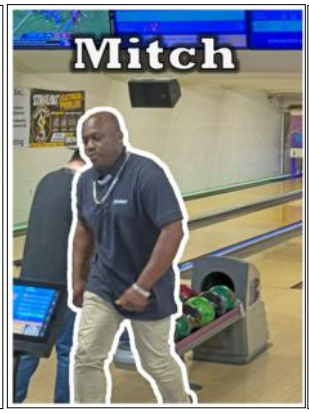
New Leaf heard about a local Bowling Battle of the Businesses and decided to jump into the fray. We recruited our best and most enthusiastic bowlers from among our illustrious employees and rolled into Oak Bowl & Mario's Pizza ready to rumble.

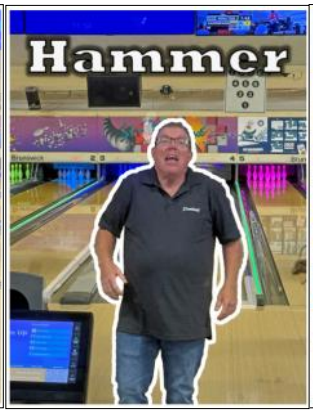
John Trindle and Keith Glass of the Commissary, Donald "Mitch" Mitchell of the Galley, and Keith Harrel and Mike "Hammer" Hamernik of Grounds did an outstanding job representing New Leaf and rolling their way to a highly respectable second-place finish. Way to go, team!

















USA 250

This summer America celebrated out semiquincentennial (AKA sestercentennial, AKA bisesquincentennial) anniversary, and some New Leaf crews got together to pose with our USA250 buttons gifted by SourceAmerica.We are proud to be one small part of what makes America work!







AMERICA 250

Soapbox Car Downhill Challenge

New Leaf had the privilege of gathering with community partners on Barrington Avenue for the 34th Annual Whidbey Island Challenge Series Downhill Challenge! Despite a close call with the Pacific Northwest weather, the skies held out for an unforgettable day of racing.









A massive shout-out goes to the Rotary Club of North Whidbey Island Sunrise for putting on another spectacular, high-energy event. For years, this fun local tradition has given children and youth with special needs the unique opportunity to experience the pure thrill of gravity-powered soapbox racing.

The racing setup pairs racers with trained youth volunteer drivers. Together, they climb into the soapbox derby cars and speed down the hill. New Leaf, including Steve Jacobs, Mo Morrison, John London, and Ben Vehorn lent a hand and a Gator to tow the cars back up to the starting line.

The event was a true community effort and included Oak Harbor High School cheerleading team and the NJROTC Color Guard.

Congrats to all the courageous racers. Looking forward to next year in ~~8710~~ 2027!

Message of Appreciation: Whidbey Community Foundation

Earlier this summer we had the pleasure of hosting the leadership of Whidbey Community Foundation to discuss our employee housing initiative and WCF's supporting role: they generously donated six thousand dollars to fund the purchase of new appliances for the apartments. We are so grateful to WCF for their support and for the excellent work they do, encapsulated in their mission: *Connecting people who care to causes that matter.*

Check them out at whidbeyfoundation.org



WCF Executive Director Jesse Gunn shared this thoughtful message about New Leaf and our work:

> *New Leaf's mission is to promote independence and quality of life through employment. Housing isn't its core work, but stable housing had become such a critical need for some employees that New Leaf decided to address it directly. In 2025, after years of planning, the organization purchased six apartment units in Oak Harbor to house employees in severe need of stable housing.*
>
> *New Leaf refurbished the apartments and addressed major issues before employees moved in. A $6,000 Whidbey Affordable Housing Fund grant helped with one of the final pieces: replacing missing or unusable appliances. The grant purchased five sets of washers and dryers, one dishwasher, one oven, and one refrigerator.*
>
> *During the site visit, we learned just how meaningful those basics can be. Several tenants shared that they had never had a washer and dryer before, and residents particularly appreciated being able to cook their own meals. New Leaf described the appliances as essential to allowing employees to live independently in their new homes.*
>
> *New Leaf's initiative is a powerful example of how Whidbey's housing challenges reach well beyond organizations focused specifically on housing. For New Leaf, providing stable housing became another way to support the independence and quality of life of its employees—and WCF's Affordable Housing Fund was able to help make those homes complete.*

Working Hard









Top left: Director of Operations Glenn Kincaid gives a supervisory thumbs up of approval on the window-washing efforts of CEO Steve Jacobs.

Top right: HR/VS Specialist Brent Bowden staffs the New Leaf booth at the Community Cares Wellness Festival led by Positively Linked (and assisted by New Leaf).

Middle left: Receptionist Nancy Lawson attends to the New Leaf admin plants.

Middle right: The hard-working New Leaf Safety Committee and supervisory team.

Bottom right: Steve Jacobs tests a new security system in the office.



Employee Awards

Congratulations to the follow New Leaf employees on winning employee awards for their hard work, attention to detail, and commitment to the job: Mmandu Usoro of Night Janitorial, Jon Stinnet and Matt Johnson of Day Floor Care.





Additionally, New Leaf would like to acknowledge Day Janitorial crew member Kimberly Trout on receiving special kudos for her outstanding work at the Aviation Survival Training Center at NAS Whidbey. The building manager noted her efficient work practices, attention to detail, and care in working around occupied spaces, and additionally stated:

> "Kim's attitude deserves high praise. Doing a job that is demanding and never ending, she always has a great attitude and smile on her face, with a very pleasant “Hello or Hi”, an inviting quality when working around our diverse staff and students. She is very courteous, respectful and cognizant when vacuuming in and around personal spaces."

New Leaf extends appreciation to Kimberly for her excellent work, going above and beyond, and earning praise in a challenging day-to-day job. We are always grateful to our employees and to base officials who recognize their work.

Around New Leaf







Top: Steve Jacobs, Glenn Kincaid, Mo Morrison, and Adam Troyer attended the NSBOSC conference at Tessera HQ in Bremerton.

Middle left: New Leaf's DHA office in Building R-80 on Ault Field. With that door label it's now official.

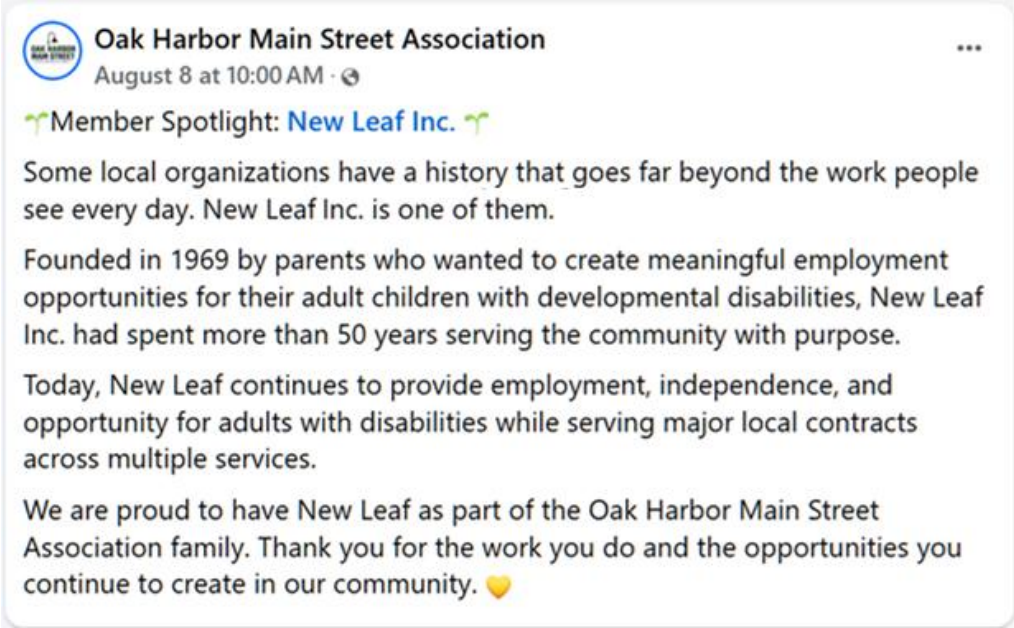
Middle right: You have to admit, that is a pretty good-looking garage.

Bottom: Check out this awesome new coffee machine and that awesome vintage New Leaf mug. This thing is GRRRRREAAT like Frosted Flakes but coffee instead.



Community Shout-Out:
Oak Harbor Main Street Association

Recently a friendly social media post came our way and we can't help but share the positive vibes. Oak Harbor Main Street Association, an organization that works tirelessly to beautify downtown Oak Harbor, promote local businesses, and organize community events, shared this post about New Leaf:



Oak Harbor Main Street Association
August 8 at 10:00 AM ·

🌱Member Spotlight: New Leaf Inc. 🌱

Some local organizations have a history that goes far beyond the work people see every day. New Leaf Inc. is one of them.

Founded in 1969 by parents who wanted to create meaningful employment opportunities for their adult children with developmental disabilities, New Leaf Inc. had spent more than 50 years serving the community with purpose.

Today, New Leaf continues to provide employment, independence, and opportunity for adults with disabilities while serving major local contracts across multiple services.

We are proud to have New Leaf as part of the Oak Harbor Main Street Association family. Thank you for the work you do and the opportunities you continue to create in our community. 💛

The mission of the Oak Harbor Main Street Association is to support and promote a vibrant historic downtown and waterfront community through local business support, community engagement, events, and revitalization efforts.

Check them out at oakharbormainstreet.org

OAK HARBOR MAIN STREET
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN OAK HARBOR

Mmmmmm… donut….

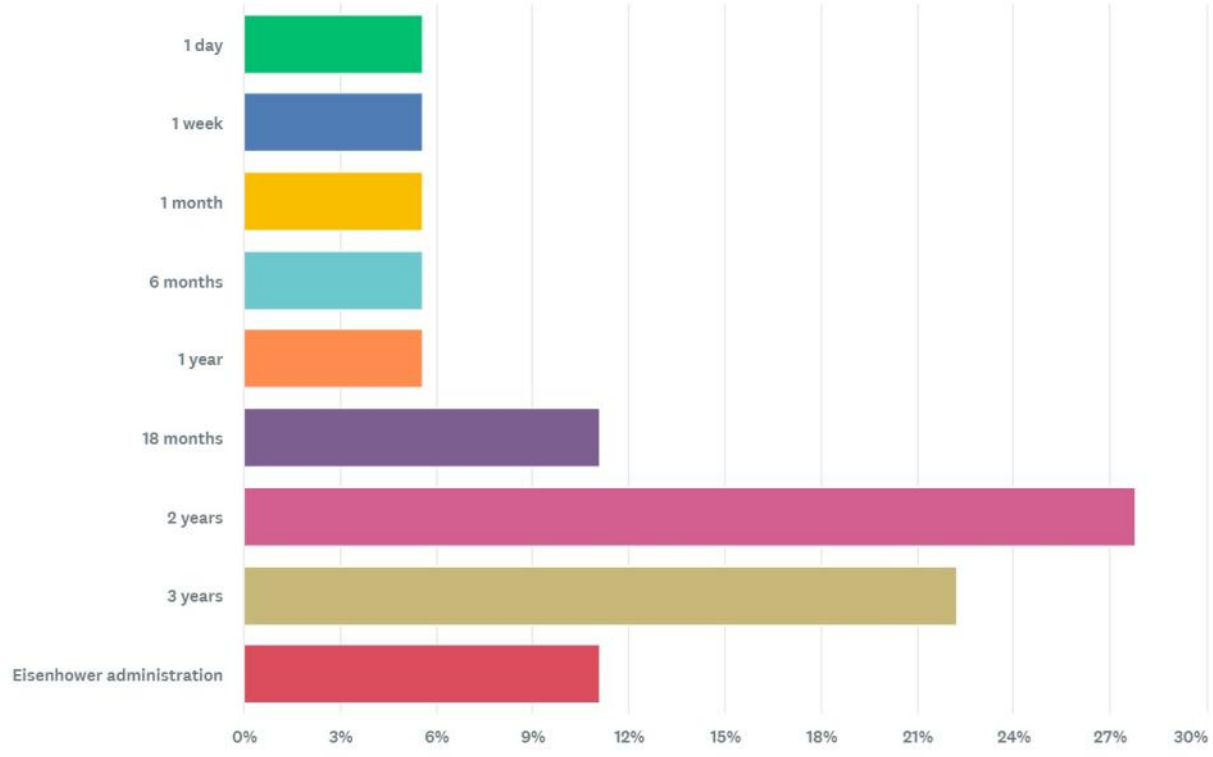
Science is a hard term to define. Some say it's a particular method of inquiry and falsification. Some say it's a worldview that renders meaningless or irrelevant statements that cannot be tested through quantitative empirical research. Some say it's about being curious, staying attuned to structured observations, and always being willing to change our minds in light of new evidence.

Some say mmmmmm… donut….

In the name of science, New Leaf has been observing a particular donut on the 2nd floor of the admin building for a while. How long has the donut been there? Well, we've got the curiosity part of science down, but the measurement part, not so much. We're not sure how long that donut has been there, so we took a survey:



Photographic evidence of the donut



Well it's probably has been around since sometime between 1953 and 2025. More research is needed.

Bite-Sized Books

The Scout Mindset

Julia Galef



In *The Scout Mindset* Julia Galef explores why people often resist information that challenges their beliefs. She contrasts two ways of thinking: the "soldier mindset," which looks for reasons to defend what we already believe, and the "scout mindset," which tries to understand what is actually true. The goal is not to become detached or indecisive, but to become better at recognizing when we may be wrong and adjusting our views accordingly.

Soldier or Scout?

- The soldier mindset treats ideas like positions to defend. We naturally look for evidence supporting our beliefs and find reasons to dismiss evidence against them. The scout mindset treats beliefs more like hypotheses that can be tested.
- Example: If you believe an employee is unreliable, you may notice every mistake while overlooking times they performed well. A scout asks, "What evidence would make me reconsider my assessment?"

Seek to See Clearly

- Scout thinking begins with a genuine desire to know what is true, not simply to be right. This requires recognizing that confidence is not proof. Being certain does not make a belief accurate, and being wrong does not make someone unintelligent.
- Don't treat changing your mind as admitting defeat. Instead, treat discovering that you were wrong as useful information.

Look for Disconfirming Evidence 9046

- We naturally seek information that confirms what we already think. Scouts deliberately look for evidence that could challenge their conclusions.
- Example: Before deciding that a new procedure or policy is bad or wrong, first ask what problems it is intended to solve and seek to understand how it is supposed to work, how it is being implemented, and what its actual consequences are—without evaluating the information as you gather it. Seek to understand, not to judge. Then ask, "What information would I expect to see if my conclusion were wrong?"

Separate Identity from Beliefs

- It becomes harder to change our minds when beliefs are tied to our identity, reputation, or relationships. If we think of ourselves as being correct or always having the right answer, then admitting uncertainty becomes threatening.
- Admitting that we were wrong or that we don't know can liberate us from the obligation of upholding an image. In fact, our credibility can actually increase when people see that we care more about accuracy than appearing to always be right.
- When a belief is closely tied to the people or group we identify with, changing our mind can feel like betraying them or distancing ourselves from our community. But loyalty to a group should not require us to deny what we see and believe to be true. We can remain connected to others while thinking for ourselves.

Think in Probabilities

- Most important questions do not have simple yes-or-no answers. Instead of asking whether something *will* happen, ask how likely it is and what evidence would change that estimate.
- Think of your judgment as a working estimate, not a final verdict. As new information becomes available, be willing to raise or lower your estimate rather than defending your original conclusion.

"If you find out you were wrong about something, great — You've improved your map, and that can only help you." - Julia Galef

Spot the differences

Check out this photo from the Rotary Downhill Challenge. The top photo is the original, and the bottom is the same photo with five differences. Can you find them?

Original photo



5 differences



Answers are on the last page.

Where's your SSN?

Four randomly selected New Leaf employee Social Security Number (SSN) final-four numbers have been placed somewhere in this newsletter. If you find yours and notify the office before the next edition of the newsletter comes out, you win $25!

For example, if your SSN is 123-456-7890, look for "7890" hidden somewhere in the this edition of New Leaf News.



Look for your final four SSN hidden somewhere in this issue of New Leaf News! If you find it, call the office and tell us, and win $25!

It's like looking for this guy, but easier. And you can win a gift!

Details:

- Every New Leaf employee's SSN, current as of this publication, is entered into the drawing.
- All numbers are entered into an AI tool which is instructed to select four of the entries at random.
- The four selected numbers are embedded in the newsletter in assorted ways. Look carefully!
- If you find your number, call the office and tell us you won. Your number will be verified, and once confirmed you'll be issued a $25 gift card.
- The *Where's your SSN?* feature will be repeated in the next issue of the newsletter, with all current employee SSNs entered in the random drawing, EXCEPT: the SSN's of the four winners from the current issue will be removed from the drawing for the next issue. Those SSNs will be re-entered into the drawing for the next issue after that.

Happy Anniversary!

Johnson, Matthew	22 years	Gillett, Charles	4 years
Olson, Tyler	20 years	Dymond, Nathan	4 years
Johnson, Rachel	19 years	DeWelles, Kenneth	2 years
Glovier, Zachary	11 years	Cole, DeWitt	2 years
Johnson, Carrie	11 years	Bernal, Alexander	2 years
Westman, Christine	11 years	Andrews, Shaun	2 years
Myers, Christopher	9 years	Purin, Dennis	1 year
Sodano, Nathan	9 years	Boyd, Tyler	1 year
Niles, Shea	9 years	Brady, Jonathan	1 year
Watts, Tylan	7 years	Graham, Dominique	1 year
Leach, Michelle	6 years	Mitchell, Dillon	1 year
Glass, Keith	4 years	Wines, Camren-Lee	1 year
Aston, Timoteo	4 years	Griffin, Christopher	1 year

Happy Birthday!

Niles, Shea	June 1	Shelly, Owen	July 6
Johnson, Michael	June 3	Dallas, Robert	July 7
Sodano, Jason	June 7	Stinnett, Jon	July 10
Sodano, Nathan	June 7	Westman, Lindsey	July 14
Watts, Tylan	June 8	Thomason, Matthew	July 16
Deaver, Jerry	June 9	Wines, Camren-Lee	July 18
Madeiros, Shane	June 11	Rider, Jeremy	July 20
Stark, Sherry	June 11	Graham, Dominique	July 21
Mitchell, Dillon	June 13	Stewart, Colin	July 23
Brewer Dershem, Dominique	June 13	Montes, Guadalupe	July 29
Purin, Dennis	June 15	Pulu, Gene	August 1
Leach, Michelle	June 18	Szypula, Jorden	August 10
Rollins, Kenneth	June 21	Estep, Travis	August 12
Preston, Jeremiah	June 24	Wilder, Nicholas	August 12
Aston, Timoteo	June 25	Wendling, Kai	August 15
Mitchell, Donald	June 26	Dettman, Hidemi	August 21
Myers, Christopher	June 27	Rousselle, Josefina	August 29
Bevill, Jacob	June 29	Anglum, Gary	August 31
Wendling, Caleb	July 1	Ferris, Cristina	August 31
Marshall, Alexus	July 3		

Welcome new employees!

Towne, Leonor	Trontel, Vanessa
Stinnett, Alexander	Walter, Michael
Ketcher, Aubree	Patterson, Madison
Chandler, Garry	McNichols, Leilah
Wendling, Caleb	Shelly, Courtney
Barbin, Victoria	

Spot the differences photo

1. Rider's helmet
2. Bird on wire
3. Extra traffic cone
4. Cart hood logo
5. Light on top of cart