

In this issue:

Timmy Aston	1-3
RFSC-BOSC	4
Trade Scholarship	5
Military Appreciation Picnic	6
Aila Kinker	7
Open Enrollment	8
Chamber Member of the Year	9
Most Amazing Adventure	10
Around New Leaf	11-14
Giving Thanks	15
Bite-Sized Books	16-17
Employee Spotlight	18
Where's your SSN?	19
Word Scramble	20
Birthdays & Anniversaries	21

Timoteo Aston, Galley Employee



Galley employee Timmy Aston with WA state representative Clyde Shavers and a supportive team from New Leaf admin, NASWI

It takes a lot to make the Admiral Nimitz Galley run smoothly, including a dedicated staff of prep cooks, servers, dishwashers, and custodians. Every crew member is essential to making the operation come together 365 days per year for about 1,200 meals per day. We won't make you do the math, but suffice it to say that a lot goes in to working at the Galley.

One of the Galley crew members, Timoteo (Timmy) Aston, has worked with job coaches from Sherwood Community Services throughout his employment at New Leaf, but as his knowledge and skills have grown he has achieved nearly complete self-reliance. His story of independence is one worth sharing.

Timmy recently met with Washington State District 10 representative Clyde Shavers and a visiting contingent including NASWI commanding officer Captain Nathan Gammache, Mike Ezzell of Island County Human Services, Sherwood CEO Lance Morehouse, and Sherwood job coaches Kevin Wang and Megan Owens to provide a tour of the Galley and discuss his work experience as well as his motivations and ambitions.



Timoteo Aston (Continued)

Timmy has worked at the Galley for three and a half years. Initially, Timmy worked only part-time and mostly as an assistant to other coworkers. His tasks were mostly limited to cleaning tables and drying trays. He relied on his Sherwood job coaches, Megan and Kevin, for occasional redirection and focus.

Timmy gained confidence as he learned the job task procedures and knowledge of Galley operations, as well as the role of individuals in a team. With time and experience has come increased belief in his own competence and the kind of self-assurance that gives him a strong sense of commitment to his work.

Over the past few years he has become proficient in nearly all of the operations of the New Leaf galley crew. After thriving in vocational training, Timmy began running the scullery on his own and building his customer-service skills on the line.

He now excels at everything from the serving line, speed line, juice bar, salad bar, restocking, and especially custodial and the scullery. He has become a completely independent worker. He still checks in with job coaches Megan and Kevin from time to time, sometimes remotely, just to touch base.

Timmy says he enjoys his work and loves the camaraderie of being on a team, as well as the clean indoor environment of the Galley.



Timmy began his tour of the Galley in the lobby, and moved to the serving line and juice bar before moving to the kitchen and scullery. He explained his work tasks and pointed out what he and his coworkers do day in and day out to get the job done.

Timoteo Aston (Continued)

Galley Project Manager Lindsey Westman has been a source of support and direction for Timmy. She commends him not only for his tremendous growth in job skills, but also for always having a positive attitude.

“Timmy is very honest with himself,” she said. “He works hard and is very motivated. He always says that no matter what, you have to try. He’s a positive presence on the crew. He puts you in a good mood.”

Timmy’s motivation comes from a desire to do a good job, help his co-workers, and serve the Galley customers, and also to save money for his future plans. Timmy is intensely interested in Japanese culture, having once funded a trip there for himself and his family. He says he intends to move to Japan and pursue his dream of living there, immersing himself in Japanese culture and the animated programs and world of Nintendo that he loves.

Outside of work, Timmy enjoys playing games and watching Japanese animation. He is also an accomplished piano player, having performed several concerts with his brother and fellow pianist Jaime Aston (of the New Leaf Grounds crew). Timmy now works full-time, having come a long way from his part-time beginnings on the crew. Most days he works the morning shift beginning at 6 a.m., and he arrives at the Galley at 5 a.m. to study Japanese before starting work. His hard work, motivation, and ambition are truly admirable.



NW Alliance Contract Conference

New Leaf took a trip to Tessera headquarters in Bremerton to meet with our Northwest NPA Alliance partners for our Grounds and Janitorial contracts, which are grouped together under Northwest Alliance, including Northsound (of which New Leaf is a part) and Westsound: contract prime Tessera, NPA federal umbrella SourceAmerica, and partners Northwest Center and Peninsula Services. New Leaf was represented by CEO Steve Jacobs, Director of Operations Glenn Kincaid, Grounds Project Manager Jacob Bevill, QC and Safety Assistant Adam Troyer, and Documentation Specialist Ryan Brooke.

A lot has changed since the last time alliance partners all met together in person — 15 years ago! This was a great chance to catch up on team history, alliance partnerships, contract pricing, payment allocation, service levels, and NPA relations to the customer. Among the news from the conference is New Leaf will begin working directly with Tessera's NASWI department rather going through Tessera Bremerton HQ, which will increase efficiency.

Following the conference, the New Leaf team had a chance to see a bit of Port Townsend while waiting for the ferry back home.



Jo Balda Trade School Scholarship

In years past the New Leaf Jo Balda scholarship has gone to students enrolling in four-year universities who demonstrated a commitment to community service both in their past efforts and their future plans. Because New Leaf is a service-oriented organization with a strong commitment to helping others, this has always been the right focus for the scholarship.

However, one thing we've noticed over the years is that students enrolling in trade and vocational schools (typically two-years institutions) are overlooked when it comes to scholarships. Since New Leaf work crews do direct labor — working with their hands to provide essential services that people depend on in their daily lives — it makes sense for us to recognize graduating students who plan to learn practical, real-world skills through vocational training.

Hence, our new trade-school scholarship!

New Leaf Jo Balda Trade School Scholarship

The New Leaf Jo Balda Trade School Scholarship is awarded to deserving seniors enrolled in high school in Whidbey Island, Washington.

Most scholarships are directed at students going to four-year colleges and universities. The NLJB Scholarship is different. We at New Leaf recognize the essential work done by tradespeople — electricians, carpenters, plumbers and pipefitters, chefs, cosmetologists and estheticians, auto technicians, medical & dental assistants, and others. These jobs are always in high demand, and we want to help support the training of young adults seeking to learn skilled trades and enter the workforce.



The New Leaf Jo Balda Trade School Scholarship is named in honor of Jo Balda, a member of the New Leaf Board of Directors for 25 years. She was a blessing to friends and family and was known for her tireless community service in Oak Harbor and her dedication to helping others around her.

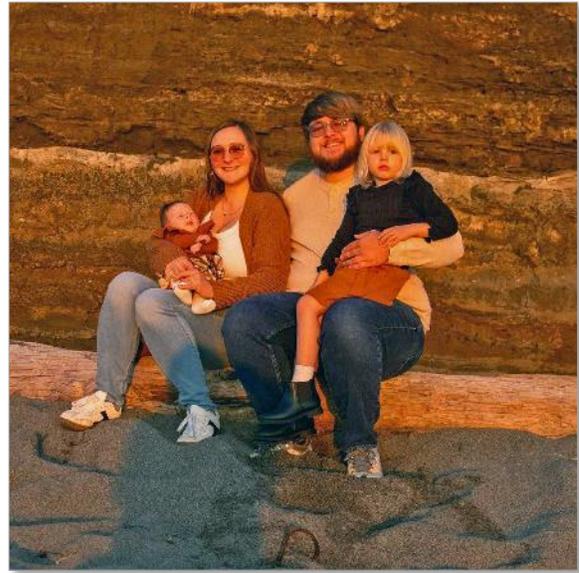
Military Appreciation Picnic

New Leaf had the privilege of joining the Military Appreciation Picnic again this year. The Oak Harbor Chamber and Oak Harbor Navy League partnered to put on the event. Along with live music and free BBQ, New Leaf was there with our always-popular football toss.



Employee departure: Aila Kinker

New Leaf Night Janitorial Supervisor Aila Kinker recently departed from New Leaf to care for her new baby and spend time with her family. Over the past few years Aila has been a valued part of the New Leaf family, and although we are sad to see her go, we're happy for the time she had here and the opportunities she has to be with her family. We're also grateful for this thoughtful departure letter she sent to New Leaf.



I want to thank everyone for this job opportunity and the growth and knowledge it was able to provide me with. I appreciate you all!!!

I am proud to have worked for New Leaf. And I am proud to have shared the same views of promoting independence and quality of life through employment. I am proud to say "I have worked for that company." and will continue to tell individuals about New Leaf and their mission, the importance of having a company like this, and even referring them to work here.

I want to thank you all for being supportive in this role and answering any questions and concerns I have had, no matter how small.

I really enjoyed my 2 years here and will be looking at returning in the future if there is a spot open.

Thank you New Leaf for the opportunity and the support you give individuals in this community. Thank you for being a great impact for differently abled bodies. I will be cheering this company on from the sidelines and I am looking forward to seeing the future good this company does and will continue to do!

- Aila Kinker

Open Enrollment

This year New Leaf was privileged to work with Shannon Darrow of Leavitt Insurance to identify optimal health plan choices and explain options to our employees. The process this year went smoothly and we're happy to say that all New Leaf employees have been successfully signed up for health insurance.



Chamber Member of the Year

Big congratulations to our CEO Steve Jacobs on winning the Oak Harbor Chamber Member of the Year -- for the second year in a row!! 2026 threepeat???



Most Amazing Adventure

For their September 19-25 2025 issue, the Whidbey Weekly newspaper asked the following “Upbeat Question of the Week” to few Oak Harbor luminaries: “What is the most amazing adventure you have ever experienced? Among those asked was New Leaf CEO Steve Jacobs. His answer says a lot about him and about New Leaf.



Steve Jacobs, Oak Harbor

When I think about the most amazing adventure I’ve ever been on, it’s not a trip around the world or a daring expedition—it’s my career at New Leaf.

Before New Leaf, I started working young. At 13, I picked berries. Later, I was a dishwasher, and soon after, promoted to line cook. I even had the chance to cook with a catering company when the movie Practical Magic was filmed in Coupeville. But that’s a story for another time.

In 1998, I began working at New Leaf as a janitor. My job was cleaning the meat room at the Commissary. It wasn’t glamorous, but it paid the bills. I had just graduated high school and was grateful to be employed. At first, it was just a job—but over time, I started to appreciate more than the paycheck. It was the people I worked with, the sense of teamwork, the camaraderie. That’s when I knew—I wanted to build a career at New Leaf.

Fast forward 26 years, and I now serve as the CEO and Executive Director of New Leaf.

Working here has given me the privilege to support individuals with exceptionalities— people often underestimated by society. I’ve watched employees receive their first paychecks and celebrate achievements many believed were out of reach. I’ve seen firsthand what it means for someone to proudly show off the car they bought or take their friends out to eat with their own money. These moments are powerful—especially for those who were once told they’d never have these opportunities.

This work has brought me so many life-changing experiences. I’ve seen people grow, take pride in their jobs, and find a sense of purpose and ownership. It’s been an honor to help make that happen.

This journey has even taken me to Washington, D.C., where I’ve had the opportunity to advocate for people with exceptionalities. Even more inspiring, some of our employees have joined me to share their stories directly with lawmakers. We’ve met with Representative Rick Larsen, Senator Patty Murray, and Senator Maria Cantwell at the Capitol. One year, an employee we brought along ran into someone they knew who worked in the Hart Senate Office Building—they had gone to school together. It was a full-circle moment.

What an adventure it has been.

I don’t take long vacations. I’ve never been on a safari. But this—this career, this mission— is my greatest adventure. And I can’t wait to see where it takes me next.

Around New Leaf



Top left: New Leaf was the happy winner of the Oak Harbor Chamber and Whidbey Coffee's weekly Mocha Monday.

Top right: HR/VS Specialist Brent Bowden and Documentation Specialist Ryan Brooke at the Oak Harbor High School resource fair.

Bottom left: Steve goes over best practices for keeping the Floor Care trailer neat and organized.

Bottom right: Galley Supervisor Donald Mitchell takes care of business.

Around New Leaf



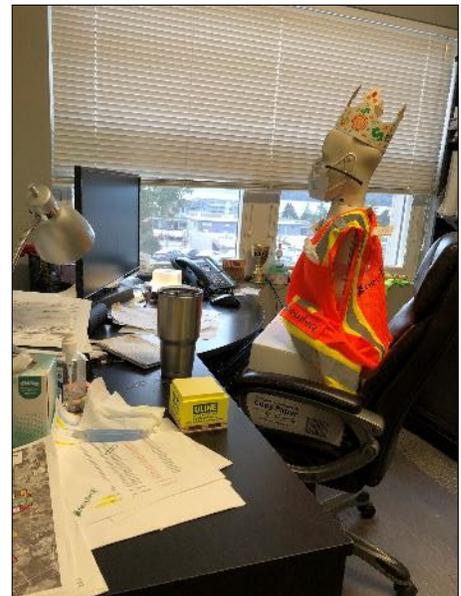
Top: Steve and Brent at the Coupeville High School Resource and Transition Fair. They ran into New Leaf veteran Mike Murcay, current New Leaf longevity record-holder.

Middle left Director of Operations Glenn Kincaid brushes up on his floor care skills.

Bottom left: Grounds held an end-of-season BBQ lunch and enjoyed a frightening Halloween movie.

Bottom right: One of the stars from the movie incarnated in the office and roamed the halls.

Around New Leaf



Top left: New Leaf's HR team during a Galley field trip

Top right: Steve works with the Atalanta Way apartment complex HOA to figure out financial requirements for New Leaf employee housing.

Bottom left: Brent at the NASWI Career Fair.

Bottom Right: Quality Control and Safety Manager Mo Morrison demonstrates proper PPE for office work.

Around New Leaf



Top left: New Leaf got a nice thank you from the Boys and Girls Club of Oak Harbor. We're proud to be a *Sapphire Sponsor*.

Top right: Congrats to Grounds Project Manager Jacob Bevill on winning a New Leaf Star Award! Jacob does an awesome job leading his crew and inspiring them to go above and beyond.

Bottom: The office held a celebratory boss's day lunch for Steve. He got some weird gifts.

Giving Thanks

Thanksgiving in the United States grew out of early harvest celebrations, moments when communities paused to express gratitude for the blessings in their lives. The tradition became more defined when President Abraham Lincoln, seeking unity during the Civil War, proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day in 1863. His call to give thanks each year helped shape the holiday's spirit of reflection and togetherness.

In 1941, Congress made Thanksgiving an official federal holiday, setting it on the fourth Thursday of November. Today, the day invites people to gather with loved ones, share a meal, and appreciate the goodness, big and small, that has carried us through the year.



Top: New Leaf joined in giving efforts sponsored by the Leavitt Insurance Group for the Oak Harbor and North Whidbey Help House food drive and the Toys for Tots toy drive.

Bottom: The New Leaf admin team got together for a thanksgiving meal. Shout out to the party planning committee for pulling this together and make it look great.

Bite-Sized Books

Conquer your Negative Thoughts

by Daniel Amen



Recognize ANTS: Automatic Negative Thoughts

ANTs are distorted, unhelpful thoughts that arise automatically and reflexively, without conscious effort, fueling anxiety, depression, and emotional pain.

Always/Never Thinking (Overgeneralizing)

- Overusing always, never, or every time.
- Example: "I always make a complete fool of myself when I meet a new person."

All-or-Nothing Thinking

- Believing something is all good or all bad, with no middle ground.
- Example: "If I don't get this promotion, I'm complete failure."

Fortune-Telling / Catastrophizing

- Predicting the worst-case scenario without evidence.
- Examples: "I just know the interview went badly and I'm not getting the job." "If the car makes that noise again, it's going to break down and cost thousands to fix."

Mind Reading

- Assuming you know what others are thinking, usually that it's negative.
- Example: "She hasn't responded to my message. She must be angry with me."

Blaming

- Blaming others for your problems and failing to take responsibility.
- Examples: "I'm behind on my work because everyone is taking up my time and hassling me." "I'm unhappy because my spouse/partner never supports me."

Focusing on the Negative

- Seeing only the negative aspects and ignoring positives.
- Example: "My meeting went well, but I can't stop thinking about that dumb thing I said."

Labeling

- Attaching a negative label to yourself or others.
- Example: "I'm such an idiot for forgetting that person's name."

Personalization

- Taking things too personally, assuming things are about you.
- Example: "My boss seemed irritated today—he must be unhappy with my work."

Guilt Beatings ("Should" Statements)

- Thinking in terms of "should," "must," or "ought" that leads to guilt and pressure.
- Example: "I should exercise every day. I'm so lazy and irresponsible."

If-Only and I'll-Be-Happy-When

- Believing happiness depends on something you don't have or can't change.
- Examples: "If only I made more money, then I'd finally be happy." "I'll be happy when I retire." "I'll be happy when I lose ten pounds." "If I just won the lottery then all my problems would be solved."

(Continued next page)

Bite-Sized Books - Continued

Conquer your Negative Thoughts

by Daniel Amen



How to conquer your negative thoughts

Notice the ANT

The first step is awareness. Pay close attention to your thoughts and recognize when an Automatic Negative Thought (ANT) enters your mind. Say to yourself, "This is just a thought, not a fact."

Name the ANT

Identify the specific type of negative thought (such as "mind reading" or "catastrophizing"). Naming the pattern helps you gain distance and see it more objectively.

Write It Down

Put the negative thought on paper or type it in your phone. This makes it easier to evaluate and track recurring patterns over time.

Question the Thought

Challenge the truth of the thought by asking: "Is it really true? Consider whether you have solid evidence for this belief."

Talk Back with Logic

Respond to the ANT as if you were refuting a bad argument: "What evidence contradicts this thought?" Offer a rational, more balanced alternative explanation.

Replace an ANT with a PAT (Positive Affirming Thought)

Deliberately flip the negative thought into something encouraging and constructive. For instance, "I always mess up at work" becomes "Sometimes I make mistakes, but I have also succeeded many times."

Prioritize Brain-Healthy Nutrition

Eat whole foods including leafy greens, nuts, seeds, berries, and lean proteins while limiting sugar and processed foods.

Stay Hydrated and get Exercise

Water and exercise boost blood flow to the brain and reduce stress hormones.

Get Quality Sleep

Sleep is vital for memory, emotional regulation, and clearing toxic by-products from your brain.

Practice Gratitude and Positive Thinking

Deliberately focusing on things you're grateful for can shift your brain's bias away from negativity and help build emotional resilience.

Limit Alcohol and Avoid Drugs

Alcohol and drugs harm brain health, worsen mood, and increase the risk of health problems.

Prioritize Mental Stimulation

Keep your mind active with reading, puzzles, engaging hobbies, and learning new skills.

Practice Relaxation and Mindfulness

Use deep breathing, meditation, or mindfulness techniques daily to reduce stress and calm your nervous system.

"You do not have to believe every stupid thought that enters your mind."

— Dr. Daniel Amen

Employee Spotlight

Timoteo (Timmy) Aston, Galley Food Service

Where are you from?

I'm from Oak Harbor. I've lived here all my life.

How long have you been at New Leaf?

Three and a half years. I've been working in the Galley for my entire time at New Leaf. Before working here I worked at Haggen grocery doing cleaning and custodial work.

How is your experience at New Leaf?

I like working at the Galley. I've met a lot of people here and have learned a lot about the work that is done here. I've worked nearly all parts of the Galley job. My favorite work tasks are cleaning the scullery, washing dishes, cleaning the pizza bar, and doing wipedowns. Also, I like to work inside. I'm an indoor person, so the Galley suits me.

How do you stay motivated on the job?

I like to stay positive. I like to be a sunny person. Sometimes I get help from my coworkers and assistants and I am happy about that. They have helped me stay focused so that I can get my work done.

What are some things you've learned while working at New Leaf?

I've learned lots of job skills as well as the importance of working on a team and accomplishing my work goals. Plenty of people have helped me and I am glad to help others also.



What are some things you like to do outside of work?

I like games and TV shows. My favorite game is Super Mario Galaxy, and my favorite shows are Teen Titans Go, Unikitty, and SpongeBob SquarePants. My favorite character is Rosalina from Super Mario Galaxy.

Beyond work, do you have any plans for the future?

I'm really interested in Japan and Japanese culture. I study Japanese through TV shows and Duolingo and I can speak a lot of Japanese. I plan to move to Japan someday. One place I really want to go is Akihabara Electric Town.

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 a \$25 gift card.

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 a \$25 gift card!

It's like looking for this guy. Less colorful, but you can win a gift card!

Details:

- ◆ Every single 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.

Word Scramble

Example: conea = ocean

1.dlrow _____

2.tnaicre _____

3.tnocuraligasotu _____

4.elptan _____

5.mntauu _____

6.raesume _____

7.cfnrtuarisetru _____

8.emso _____

9.maceral _____

10.tahw _____

11.reppa _____

12.refebo _____

13.phocrvensieme _____

14.khtin _____

15.grale _____

16.becu _____

17.sdnretnuad _____

18.dusayurat _____

8715

Answers p. 21

Happy Birthday

Robert Willis	September 2	Yolander Harris Johnson	October 7
Mo Morrison	September 10	Katherine Hancock	October 13
Nelanna Sadesky	September 13	Railand Bartlett	October 19
Wesley Worrel	September 16	Tyler Olson	October 20
Emmitt Hall	September 17	Mary (Robyn) O'Reilly	October 26
Emily Jones	September 18	Benjamin Vehorn	October 29
Rachel Johnson	September 22	Elijah Giugliano	November 2
Jonathan Brady	September 23	Ryan Brooke	November 3
Meghan Sowers	September 28	Jaime Aston	November 6
Keiran Kretchman	September 30	James Hollett	November 7
Adam Troyer	October 1	Alexander Bernal	November 13
Michael Harris	October 5	John Trindle	November 27

Happy Anniversary

Mona Laverdure	24 years	Hidemi Dettman	6 years
Michael Hamernik	18 years	Melissa Nuanez	6 years
Shane Madeiros	15 years	Scott Taylor	4 years
Gary Anglum	15 years	James Sane	3 years
Nicole Bustillo	11 years	Kassandra Kast	2 years
Railand Bartlett	9 years	Patrick Cascio Jr	2 years
Lindsey Westman	8 years	Yolander Harris Johnson	2 years
Cathy George	8 years	Robert Vance	2 years
Meghan Sowers	8 years	Jeremiah Preston	1 year
Adam Troyer	7 years		

Welcome New Employees

Mary (Robyn) O'Reilly	Night Janitorial
Francisco Boquiren	CDC
Dominique Brewer Dershem	Night Janitorial
Ralph Garcia	Night Janitorial
Benjamin Vehorn	Administration
Matthew Stayskal	Commissary Custodial
Guadalupe (LuLu) Montes	Day Janitorial
Natalia Alvarez	Galley
David Scott	Day Janitorial
Nathaniel Brown	Commissary Custodial

World scramble answer key

1.world	11.paper
2.certain	12.before
3.congratulations	13.comprehensive
4.planet	14.think
5.autumn	15.large
6.measure	16.cube
7.infrastructure	17.understand
8.some	18.saturday
9.caramel	19.importance

