

The background of the entire page is a high-angle, aerial photograph of a city street during winter. The ground is covered in a layer of snow. Several modern, multi-story apartment buildings with large windows and balconies are visible. Some buildings have warm interior lights glowing through the windows. In the background, a dense forest of evergreen trees is visible, and further back, a city skyline with various skyscrapers can be seen under a grey, overcast sky. The overall atmosphere is cold and urban.

MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT

THE SPRING DISTRICT

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POINTS OF INTEREST

Ramadan & Spring Forward
Meet our Security Officer Kadija
Plan Ahead for the Spring Fling
Lebanese Rice Pudding Recipe

MARCH HOLIDAYS



MARDI GRAS MARCH 4, 2025

New Orleans has been celebrating Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) since March 3, 1699, when French explorers landed nearby. Celebrated the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, Mardi Gras is a pagan holdover from when Christianity was originally

introduced in Rome.

Today Catholics worldwide participate in Mardi Gras as a prelude to Lent, which is the 40 days of fasting and penance between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. People will indulge in fatty foods before they "give something up" for Lent. Often people give up sugar, chocolate, alcohol, or meat for the 40 days of Lent.

Learn more [here](#).



ST. PATRICK'S DAY MARCH 17, 2025

St. Patrick's Day honors a British captive, who followed a dream to preach the word of God to the people of Ireland. Honoring his death on March 17, St. Patrick's Day brings together millions of people celebrating Irish culture and the life of St. Patrick. Annually the New York

City Parade brings out 2 million people. The first parade in the United States of America was in Boston in 1737. The first parade in Ireland took place in 1903 in County Waterford. Learn more fun facts [here](#).

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME SUNDAY, MARCH 9, 2025

Daylight saving time occurs every second Sunday in March until the first Sunday in November, as passed in 1966 with the [Uniform Time Act](#). The practice of changing the time is thought to provide more daylight during the summer evenings; then in November when we change the clocks back, we have more daylight during winter mornings.

Daylight saving time is not mandated by federal law and is not observed by most of the state of Arizona (the Navajo Nation does observe the time change). The sudden time change can be immediately inconvenient, but overall the increase in daylight allows us to spend more time outside enjoying physical activity or time with friends and loved ones. Another upside is that there is a decrease in robberies in the spring. Learn more facts about daylight saving time [here](#).



MARCH HOLIDAYS, CONT'D

RAMADAN MARCH 1 - 30, 2025

Ramadan commemorates when the Quran was sent to Muhammad, the first revelation, in 610 CE. The complete work was revealed over the next 23 years. It is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. The Quran is believed to be God's own divine words providing a code of conduct for humanity to follow in every aspect of their lives.

The holy month of Ramadan lasts up to 30 days from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next occurring in the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. During this time Muslims worldwide practice fasting from dawn to sundown. The fast includes abstaining from food, drinks (including water), smoking, and marital relations. A typical day starts with a pre-dawn meal, called a Suhoor. The meal ends with the first prayer of the day, called the Fajr. At sunset, practicing Muslims say a prayer, Maghrib, and they then enjoy Iftar (the meal at sunset), starting with dried dates and water, followed by a full meal. Throughout the month of Ramadan, followers read the Quran, say special prayers, and give to charities. Muslims end the month of Ramadan with the celebration of [Eid al-Fitr](#).

Ramadan is observed by 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide. Visit the [Mashud Madeena](#) website to learn more about Ramadan and Islam.



HOLI (FESTIVAL OF COLORS) MARCH 13-14, 2025

[Holi](#), the Festival of Colors, is a two-day Hindu festival celebrating the arrival of spring. In addition, this festival celebrates the eternal love of the deities Radha and Krishna.

Day one of the festival is known as Holika Dahan. A bonfire is built representing the triumph of good over evil, rituals are performed as celebrants dance around the bonfire and make offerings of flowers and holy water. This day is believed to bring blessings, prosperity, and happiness to homes.

Day two of the festival is when people playfully toss colored powder at friends, family, and strangers alike. This ritual represents joy, unity, and love. This small, fun act encourages people to let go of grudges and celebrate life with a fresh start. Some groups have started using flower petals rather than colored powders.

This year you have three different opportunities to celebrate Holi Festival in Bellevue. Visit this [website](#) to learn dates and locations.



SARA DOUD, DOTE COFFEE BAR

In honor of International Women's Day on Saturday, March 8, 2025, we are highlighting woman-owned businesses in The Spring District. This month we are focusing on [Dote Coffee Bar](#). Sara Doud has been in the coffee business for decades and Dote Coffee Bar's first shop opened in 2017. The Spring District location opened in 2023. Stop by, enjoy a delicious coffee, and support a woman-owned business!

What inspired your business? Dote Coffee Bar was inspired by community. Having spent most of my life in Bellevue, I have watched its incredible transformation from a sleepy bedroom suburb into a bustling city. When Lincoln Square South was built, the opportunity arose for me to create something in the very heart of my hometown, purpose built to foster connection and gathering no matter how urban the surroundings. We called the business Dote - a non-judgmental expression of affection - to weave people, and how we serve them, into our DNA.

Given my long career in the coffee industry, I knew our coffee needed to be sourced and crafted for the most discerning customer. I also wanted to do something a bit more novel by mixing the coffee with chocolate, ice cream and booze in a way that wasn't being done at the larger chains. But beyond that, Dote was built for all comers. We always want to be accessible. We are in the people business, serving coffee and not the other way around.

How do you stay inspired? The incredible, hardworking team at Dote is what inspires me most. Initially when I set out to create a people forward business, my mind was on customers and the community of Bellevue. However, it quickly became clear to me that any community we were to create at Dote needed to start with the people behind the bar. I have had the pleasure of working alongside so many talented, creative young people. Learning from them and with them, navigating the pandemic together, and always striving to create a place where everyone grows, continues to inspire me. Whether they are in it for the long run, or just part time to help ends meet, the community of our team is extremely important to me.

DOTE
COFFEE BAR

What do you hope people know/feel/takeaway when they leave Dote? We really do care. We appreciate feedback and partnership in what we are trying to create at Dote. By definition, community changes and grows along with the people in it. So we will always try our best to get to know and understand why you are here.

What do you like best about being in The Spring District? The Spring District in so many ways represents the 'new Bellevue' and it is very exciting to be part of it. It is a special opportunity to be at the beginning of something and we have seen so much growth and change even in the past year.

Do you have a favorite quote or inspirational mantra? Stay curious. I am not sure that is exactly inspirational. (It might even feel a little preachy!) But it speaks to me right now in our incredibly changing world. There is just so much to be curious about. Pick something and jump in.

Would you recommend a book or podcast to help others realize their dreams? I love the podcast Hidden Brain. It is about the unconscious patterns that drive human behavior and the host is a great interviewer and storyteller. I also highly recommend Brene Brown's 'Dare to Lead'.

Would you change anything as you look back? The pandemic was an extremely difficult time so if I could change anything it would be to erase those years and their after effects. We did our best to navigate and there were some bright spots during that time. But there was a lot lost that we will never be able to rebuild.

Are you comfortable talking about what makes you nervous as a business owner in a general sense, or specifically? Having operated through the pandemic, we now know anything can happen. Even the most unexpected thing. So that uncertainty naturally brings nervousness. But in some ways, that discomfort keeps me rooted in where this whole thing started - community. We can get through anything if we stick together.

Is it what you thought it was going to be? It is more vulnerable than what I thought it might be. But that might be the lesson I need to learn.



THE SPRING DISTRICT TEAM

GETTING TO KNOW A SPRING DISTRICT TEAM MEMBER

Kadija is a security officer in The Spring District. She is from Conakry, Guinea.

What is your role within TSD? I am a Security Officer, ensuring the safety and security of the community.

How long have you worked in TSD? I started working in The Spring District in January 2024.

What is your favorite thing about TSD? I appreciate the open and welcoming property management team. The peaceful and safe atmosphere makes it a great place to work.

What is your favorite outdoor activity? I enjoy going to the gym and staying active.

Is your family nearby? Yes, my family lives in Kent.

How long have you lived in the Puget Sound region? Nine years.

Where is your favorite PNW destination? I love visiting the Seattle waterfront and taking the ferry.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work? Spending time with friends and family is something I truly enjoy.



Kadija is a big Seahawks fan, and she loves to play soccer and basketball. Her favorite meal is Yam Leaf Sauce--"it's my favorite dish!" Fogo de Chao is her go-to spot for a great meal.

What is your favorite movie? I'm more of a TV show person. My favorite show is Sistas. **Coffee or Tea? How do you like it?** Tea, with a bit of sugar. **What is your favorite dessert?** Strawberry cake, every time! **Do you have a favorite travel destination?** Paris, France, is my dream destination. **Do you have a hidden talent? If so, what is it?** Cooking—I enjoy experimenting with different dishes. **If you were a superhero, what would your superpower be?** The ability to read minds would be incredible! **What's something interesting about you that we haven't touched on yet?** I love meeting new people, so if you see me around The Spring District, don't hesitate to say hi!

Thank you, Kadija! We appreciate all you do to keep The Spring District safe for everyone.



NEIGHBORHOOD UPDATES

GIX IS HELPING FARMERS GROW HEALTHIER CROPS

Graduate students from the [Master of Science in Technology Innovation \(MSTI\)](#) program at [UW's Global Innovation Exchange \(GIX\)](#) are halfway through their industry-driven 6-month capstone project. By blending technical expertise, user research, and design thinking, this interdisciplinary team is giving farmers the data they need to grow healthy, sustainable crops.

Calling themselves Team Aigen, Tianyi Mu, Sebastian Qian, Yulin Li, and Haochen Zeng have a singular mission: enhance the capabilities of an agricultural robotics startup and empower farmers with actionable insights that save money, increase crop yields, and reduce pesticide usage.

The team of graduate students is working to utilize data collected in the field by robots that target and remove weeds. Data includes visual images, crop health, moisture readings, and weed distribution, among other information. The team is also working to make a dashboard that is easy to interact with and also presents the data in a meaningful way. Read the full article [here](#).



Join us on Thursday, April 17
for the annual Spring Fling in
The Spring District!

Petting Zoo, Face Painting & Easter Bunny
Photos – 3:30–5:30pm

Market Hall Vendor Fair 12:00 – 5:30pm

Electronics Recycling Available!

FEATURED ORGANIZATIONS

RENEWAL FOOD BANK

Working out of a church in Bellevue, Washington there is a modest food bank serving hundreds of families in east King County, including Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, and Renton. The Renewal Food Bank provides a shopping experience to its constituents as they browse for the food items they need for their family in the quantities that are appropriate.

The food bank strives to make culturally relevant food available allowing for individual dietary requirements and religious preferences. In addition to fresh food, they offer shelf-stable groceries, hygiene items, pet food, and baby supplies.

One of the unique aspects of the Renewal Food Bank is they operate entirely on a food rescue and donation basis. This model helps build community and reduce food waste.

Renewal Food Bank is always looking for volunteers for individuals and groups. Learn how you can help, by visiting their website: <https://renewalfoodbank.org/#volunteer>. If you are unable to volunteer, please consider making a financial contribution by following this [link](#) to their donation page.

Thank you for your interest in learning more about this incredible community asset.



YOUR DONATION COULD SAVE A LIFE

There's lifesaving power in all of us. By donating blood, you're helping patients needing blood transfusions for challenging procedures and treatments - chemotherapy, heart surgery, serious burns, organ transplant, critical injuries, sickle cell disease, and more. Blood transfusions are one of the most common procedures in hospitals and volunteer donors are the only source. To save lives and make sure blood is there when it's needed, taking an hour to give blood for the first time or as a regular habit is crucial. And your generous donation is even more important this time of year to protect our community from scary shortages. Will you help supercharge our blood supply? Find a donation opportunity near you and make an appointment today.

[When you donate in March, you can enter to win a sun-soaked trip for two to Kauai!](#)

[Learn more by clicking this link!](#)

#BloodworksNW #BloodSupply #BePrepared #DonateBlood

- Tuesday, March 4 - [Bellevue City Hall](#)
- Book your appointment anytime at the [Bellevue Donation Center](#)

Create Your Bloodworks Account at
www.bloodworksnw.org/giveblood

Use the new [Donor Scheduling Portal](#) to book your appointment to save lives. Get ready for a new donor scheduling experience that's mobile responsive and makes booking an appointment from your phone or desktop easy. [\[Watch Video\]](#)



BloodworksNW.org / 800-398-7888

Lebanese Rice Pudding - Riz Bi Haleeb

by [Cookin' with Mima](#)

This delicious Lebanese Rice Pudding (Riz Bi Haleeb) is super delicious and made with only 3 main ingredients, Rice, Milk and Sugar. It's served as dessert and even as breakfast and snack. It is also perfect for [Suhoor](#) during Ramadan.

Prep Time: 5minutes minutes

Cook Time: 35minutes minutes

Total Time: 40minutes minutes

Servings: 10 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup rice, I used jasmine
- 3 cups water
- 7 cups milk
- 1.5 cup sugar, or more, taste for preference
- Ground Pistachio, optional for garnishing
- Corn Starch Mix:
 - 1/4 cup corn starch
 - 3 tbsps. orange blossoms water
 - 3 tbsps. water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring the water to boil. Wash and drain the rice and then cook on low for 15-20 minutes or until the water is thick and almost gone. Do not dry completely. (See photo on website.) Cooking time will vary depending on the type of rice you use.
2. Add in the milk and sugar. Once the pudding starts to boil again, cook for another 10-15 minutes or until the liquid thickens up a bit more. Stir occasionally.
3. Add in the corn starch mixture and let the pudding cook for another 5 minutes more on low heat while stirring.
4. Once the pudding is thick enough, you can then transfer into small bowls. Do not wait too long to do that because the pudding will thicken up more after it gets cool. Cool at room temperature.
5. Once the pudding is cool, cover with plastic wrap and place in the fridge to store.





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