

WHAT'S happening

It's likely that to most of the world, **Calvin Johnson** will never become a household name. But for more than 20 years he's been helping "explode the teenage underground into passionate revolt against the corporate label he started in 1982." Besides running K Records, the independent record label he started in Olympia home to his Dub Narcotic Recording Studios, and helping to plan music festivals, Johnson's been in a few bands of his own, including Beat Happening and Dub Narcotic Sound System. He and Built to Spill singer/guitarist Doug Martsch also came together briefly as The Halo Benders, a Seattle supergroup of sorts that benefited from the strange, beguiling combination of Johnson's deep-voiced, talky delivery and Martsch's clear, plaintive tones. This last October, Johnson released his second solo album, *Before the Dream Faded*, which features a host of guest producers and musicians. Johnson plays The Blue Room this weekend. See Sunday Calendar.

There are about a gazillion places other than the dreaded, crowded mall to do your shopping this holiday season. There's the **Holiday Market**, for one, weekends at the Fairgrounds. This particular weekend you can pick up crafts by Eastside Elementary students who are hosting a sale to benefit local homeless families. If you're looking for art to give (or keep), try the **Artists in the Round Holiday Art Show and Sale**, or maybe the **2nd and Blair Artists' 8th Annual Holiday Studio Sale and Open House**, featuring work by Judith Sparks, Chris Paulson, Betsy Wolfson, Peter Chapman, Alison Shiboski, Roni Simone, Sandy Tilcock and Michael DiBetto. Six local artists are selling jewelry, sculpture, mosaics, herbal body products and more at a **Holiday Studio Sale** on Saturday; **Tim Boyden** and **Linda Lu** are just a few of the artists holding studio sales over the course of the month. Eccentricities Gallery is open for the weekend, and Clear Lake Elementary tries out their first annual **Craft Faire**. Out on Camp Creek Road, a **Holiday Gift Sale and Open House** features sandtrays, Zen gardens, holiday gifts and decorations. For a change of pace, try MECCA's **Less is Best Holiday Fair**, or pick up a wreath or tree and help FOOD for Lane County at the GrassRoots Garden. Last but not least, Temple Beth Israel's **Annual Chanukah Fair** is Sunday, with music, vendors, raffles and more. See Calendar.



It's hard not to think of **Nickel Creek** as "that really young band that plays bluegrass and folk." And it's somewhat understandable — though they're in their 20s now, when they formed in 1989 the oldest member of the trio, guitarist Sean Watkins, was all of 12. The band released two early albums (now out of print and not even mentioned on the official website), but their self-titled 2000 release, produced by Alison Krauss, was what started to get people's attention. This year, they followed up the Grammy-winning *This Side with Why Should the Fire Die?*, another well-received combination of bluegrass, rock and alt-country that features violinist Sara Watkins singing Bob Dylan's "Tomorrow Is a Long Time." The band's tour winds through the McDonald this weekend as they head home to Southern California. See Friday Calendar.