

An American success story

Owner of Nisa's Thai Kitchen becomes a U.S. citizen in ceremonies last month

By CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

Do you know how many amendments the U.S. Constitution has? Nisa Blackler does.

Blackler, 49, has learned all kinds of things many natural-born U.S. citizens should know but don't.

The owner of Nisa's Thai Kitchen became a U.S. citizen July 10 during ceremonies at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services field office in Portland.

"Because I'm living here, I have to follow the rules," Blackler said. "I know I'll be more comfortable to stay here. If I stay as an alien, I don't know what will happen one day in the future."

Blackler grew up in Samutprakarn, Thailand, the oldest of six children. She met her husband, Bill Blackler of Warrenton, during

one of his travels there selling food processing equipment.

He'd spotted her on a dating website and she was looking for someone with whom she could practice English.

After she'd made several trips to the United States, the couple decided to marry in 2013 and Nisa moved here to be with her new husband.

She'd been working as an accountant and supervisor, but could find local work only as a housekeeper.

"I knew she was capable of more," Bill said.

Several things started working in her favor.

During her visits to America, Nisa had eaten at Kim's Kitchen and gotten to know owner Kim Fuhrmann, who died in 2017.

Nisa began volunteering at the former Blue Ocean Thai Restaurant in downtown Astoria and became close with Chanaphon Lindquist, a cook and consultant who specialized in starting new restau-

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Arrests made in vandalism case

The Columbia Press

A 40-year-old man and two teenage girls have been arrested in connection with thousands of dollars in recent vandalism to city property.

Three more juveniles were being interviewed Wednesday and police still are tracking leads.

"The recent vandalism is more than just offensive to the taxpayer; it's a crime against the community," Mayor Henry Balensifer said. "In Warrenton, parents, kids and community members donate and volunteer countless hours and funds to ensure facilities like the soccer fields and our baseball facilities are a welcoming and positive place for our kids to recreate. These acts are a slap in the face to all those volunteers and donors."

Last week, Warrenton city commissioners put up a reward of \$500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the culprits who plastered the Second Street kayak docks and Robinson Community Park with graffiti, obscenities and even a bit of poetry.

"We've gotten bits and pieces of information from multiple people," Police Chief Matt Workman said

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Cindy Yingst/The Columbia Press

Nisa Blackler, with her husband, Bill.

Air National Guard pilots get swift-water lessons

Knowing how to survive in icy cold water is essential for fighter pilots who could, someday, crash or be shot down over the ocean.

Last week, the Columbia River served as training grounds for Oregon Air National Guard members.

Those serving in the 142nd Fighter Wing were dragged by personal watercraft to simulate the impact of being pulled around

in the water while attached to an open parachute. They also learned how to escape from beneath their parachutes while in open water.

Swimming lessons concluded when pilots jumped from a training boat on the river and swam nearly 100 feet to shore.

The training is supposed to simulate an authentic environmental possibility for flight crew members, said Lt. Col. Nicholas

Rutgers, 123rd Fighter Squadron Commander.

"We try to make it as realistic as possible, so being out on the Columbia is about as close as we can get to executing off the coast of Oregon," he said. "It's a lot smoother than we could expect in the Pacific, but we are getting a great training opportunity today."

The 125th Special Tactics Squad-
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Courtesy Air National Guard

A fighter pilot gets tossed into the Columbia River during survival training July 26.