

Local Business

Diving for the American Dream ...DoubleJ Diving, that is

By Mike Davis

In the modern world of megabillion-dollar corporate mergers, and people blaming every domestic problem imaginable on immigration, it's easy to forget that this country was built by people, our ancestors, from all over the world who were, and are, willing to come here, work hard and achieve the much-talked-about American Dream.

The good news is that the dream lives on, and though we don't often hear about the people living that dream, thanks to the corporate-owned news media obsessed with telling us about Britney Spears' latest antics, people are still coming to the United States, working two or three jobs, and reaching for success that was unattainable in the country of their origin.

One such story is unfolding in Magnolia. You'll soon see the van with the "DoubleJ Diving — Underwater Yacht Service" logo on the side.

Jorge Saldana and his wife, Janel Bussing, have a new business servicing boats with hull cleaning, zinc inspection and replacement, prop maintenance/repair/removal, bottom inspection and recovery of lost items.

If you're a frequent diner at El Ranchon, chances are you've seen Jorge there — he's the big, athletic-looking guy with the leading-man good looks and a smile that lights up the room.

Born in Los Idolos (The Idols), Mexico, in the state of Veracruz not far from the Gulf of Mexico, Jorge came to the U.S. in 1996, living with family in Shelton, and working in a restaurant in Yelm, a 40-mile commute. He said that at one point he had three jobs: working full time in a cheese factory in Olympia, working in the restaurant, another job cleaning horse stalls at a friend's stable — all while going to school to study English. He laughed that he

was so tired he fell asleep driving between jobs a couple of times. That's the work ethic that many of our ancestors employed, but that most of us have lost in the modern world.

Jorge moved to Sitka, Alaska, in 1999, working in another restaurant there for a year, before returning to Seattle and working two jobs, one at Jalisco on lower Queen Avenue, and at his cousin's restaurant in Snohomish, another long commute.

Serendipity came into play when Jorge returned to Seattle, needing a place to stay. Abraham Garcia, one of El Ranchon's owners, found him an apartment rented out by a diving business owner.

Janel, who was working for the company, saw this strapping young Mexican on his way to and from the gym, and love, like fate, took over. Jorge took an interest in diving as well as Janel, signed up for diving school, and attained his certification.

Janel, originally from Vermont, had come to Seattle after college in 1991 when she and a friend took advantage of a deal offered by Greyhound Bus Lines. Deciding to stay on in Seattle when her friend returned to the East Coast, she worked several jobs before she hooked up with diving, beginning her diving career in 1993. Between the two of them, they have more than 15 years of experience.

It's a story that's been repeated millions of times in the U.S. — two people from different countries and cultures find each other in a faraway city. It's a story that is responsible for much of the greatness that is part of the history of the United States, and one that we can only hope is repeated many more times in the future.

If you have a boat needing servicing, you can contact Jorge and Janel at 282-7900, at their website, www.doublejdiving.com, or email them at info@doublejdiving.com.



**Janel Bussing and Jorge Saldana
gearing up for business in Magnolia.**

Photo by Bradley Enghaus