

'Hot all over the place'

Local COVID-19 cases more than doubled in a month

By Isabella Breda
isabella@masoncounty.com

In one month, reported cases of COVID-19 in Mason County have more than doubled.

"Any time we are expanding the level of social interaction we are going to be seeing more cases," Mason County Health Officer Dr. Daniel Stein said. "This is a simple virus, in that more



Stein

contact between people who are infected and people who are healthy makes it more likely that (a) healthy person will be infected."

Since Mason County moved into phase three of the governor's phased reopening plan on June 22, case numbers have risen from 42 to 92, as of Tuesday.

Stein said though the county is testing more individuals, the percentage of tests coming back positive also is rising.

"This virus is hot all over the place in our community," Stein said. "Originally more people were outside the county, coming back and spreading it in their family, now there's more transmission within Mason County."

Early in the pandemic, Mason County Public Health was able to identify the origins of positive cases based on exposure. Now the virus is spreading through community transmission — a form of spread when there is no clear source of origin of the infection in a new community.

"Case and contact tracing, (and) investing in increasing testing is our tool to put out those embers," Stein said.

Stein said he doesn't expect that a vaccine will be the end-all, be-all, and instead of waiting for mass production of a safe vaccine, efforts should be aimed at reducing the reproduction rate. The reproduction

see **CASES**, page A-25



TAKING AIM, MAKING CUTS

Crews respond to a reported fire Sunday at Elena's Tienda on Olympic Highway North in Shelton. *Journal photo by Shawna Whelan*

WIAA moves Friday night lights to March

By Justin Johnson
justin@masoncounty.com

The upcoming high school athletic year in Washington will look a lot different than usual.

The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association Executive Board in a Tuesday meeting in Renton modified the sports season calendar due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The changes will create four WIAA-sanctioned seasons, moving moderate- and high-risk sports such as football to the third season, which would begin in March.

In the WIAA's tentative calendar, which could still see additional changes, football, girls soccer and volleyball would be in season three and begin practice March 1, with the first competitions March 8.

"I'm not surprised our football season was moved to the spring given our

see **SPORTS**, page A-15



Shelton High School football players run onto the field prior to a game with Montesano last season at Highclimber Stadium. The WIAA announced Tuesday that football and most traditional fall sports are scheduled to begin around the first of March. *Journal file photo by Justin Johnson*

3 teens rescue deputy

Shelton residents 'quite possibly' saved cop who was being strangled

By Gordon Weeks
gordon@masoncounty.com

Three Shelton teens rescued a King County Sheriff's Office deputy who was being strangled by a drunken driver during a struggle early Saturday on an Auburn hillside.

The King County Sheriff's Office states Shelton residents Isaiha Sansaver, Tyran Powell and Darrell Swilley "quite possibly" saved the life of Deputy Jen Elliott during the confrontation about 1 a.m. Saturday near the East Valley Access Road in Auburn. Sgt. Ryan Abbott, who conducts media relations with the King County Sheriff's Office, told the *Shelton-Mason County Journal* that his department and the Auburn Police Department will recognize the trio for their actions.

Sansaver and Swilley are about to start their senior years at Shelton High School,

see **TEENS**, page A-16

INSIDE TODAY

Supporters of home rule charter seek signatures
Page A-2

Shelton schools making final plans for 2020-21
Page A-7

Teal glow back in Hood Canal
Page A-27



8 53263 00111 2



*Happy 93rd
Bill Barron
from your
Friends in
Shelton*



Shelton teens, from left, Tyran Powell, Isaiha Sansaver and Darrell Swilley, hug King County Sheriff's Deputy Jen Elliott early Saturday morning after saving her from being strangled by a drunken driver. Courtesy of King County Sheriff's Office



Area Agency on Aging

Help for Seniors

We are here to answer your questions about:

- Community Resources
- Transportation Options
- Medicare Savings Programs
- Medicaid Services

360-427-2226 LMTAAA.org

Funding provided by the Federal Older Americans Act and the State of Washington

Teens: Alleged drunk driver put deputy in chokehold

continued from page A-1

Powell his senior year at CHOICE High School.

That night, the three teens traveled to Auburn to pick up Sansaver's brother. On their way home, they came upon the scene of a multiple-vehicle accident in Auburn and pulled over.

The youths came upon a man whose Volkswagen Jetta was stopped in the middle of the road with the airbags deployed. "He seemed disoriented," Swilley said.

The teens helped remove the man from the vehicle.

"He was stumbling everywhere ... He said, 'I wasn't driving,'" Swilley said.

Sansaver's brother called the police. That's when Elliott, who was off duty but still in uniform, pulled over in her patrol car.

"She thought we were in a car accident," Swilley said. He added, "Then the dude started running down a hill."

The King County Sheriff's Office described the scene on its Facebook page:

"A woman whose car was hit told Deputy Elliott the man who had just caused the collision was drunk and trying to walk away from the scene. Deputy Elliott called out to the male to stop, but he kept trying to stumble away from her. Deputy Elliott had to jog up to the male and was able to grab on to him to advise him he was not free to leave and was being detained. The male immediately turned around in a fighting stance with his arms up in the air. A struggle began and at one point Deputy Elliott was able to get the suspect onto the ground and call for help on her radio. Suddenly, the suspect wrapped his arms around Deputy Elliott's neck, put her in a headlock and began squeezing. She struggled to get out of the hold but thankfully did not lose consciousness. About this time, Deputy Elliott heard several men's

voices yelling 'get off of her.'"

The Shelton teens were charging down the hill.

Swilley said Sansaver shouted several warnings to the man before punching him. Powell grabbed his legs, and Sansaver got him in a headlock. Swilley punched the man in the face.

"I squeezed him — I think he passed out for about two or three seconds — he snored," Sansaver said.

According to the teens and the sheriff's report, the youths held the man's shoulders and legs to the ground to allow Elliott to handcuff the man.

When a backup officer arrived, he ordered the teens to "get back up against the car!" Elliott said, "No, these citizens helped me," Powell said.

The man was arrested on charges of felony assault of an officer and DUI and booked into jail by the Auburn Police Department, which will be the primary agency on the case, the King County Sheriff's Office reported. The suspect

had several other warrants for his arrest, including for DUI, driving while his license was suspended and failure to have an ignition interlock.

"If he was drunk enough to fight her, he could have been drunk enough to grab her gun," Swilley said.

"At the end, we were kind of laughing," Sansaver said.

Elliott hugged the teens, and they posed for photos.

Smiley ended up with scrapes on his shoulder. Elliott suffered scrapes and bruises, but was not seriously injured, the King County Sheriff's Office reported.

"Moms and Dads, you should be proud of these kids!" the sheriff's office wrote on its Facebook page.

The teens talked about the incident on the drive back to Shelton.

"I fell asleep," Swilley said. "It was late."

Clean & Green!



Once it's printed, the Journal can be enjoyed without additional electricity. Add to that our commitment to recycling and we've got a pretty 'Green' product!

Research shows that on average, several people read each edition and lots of folks then use the paper for all kinds of purposes. That's great news for the planet and the future!

Call us today at 360-426-4412 or visit masoncounty.com

Shelton-Mason County Journal