



# FEDERAL WAY MIRROR

## South King County mayors meet to address crime, gun violence

By OLIVIA SULLIVAN  
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Mayors of South King County cities met privately on Dec. 3 as the first step in addressing the surge of violence affecting the south Puget Sound.

Federal Way Mayor Jim Ferrell said in a statement that the meeting was “a positive step and a work in progress.”

The meeting was attended by Ferrell and mayors Dana Ralph of Kent, Nancy Backus of Auburn and Armondo Pavone of Renton.

“We are speaking about important issues impacting our entire region,” Ferrell said. “While we continue to work toward a comprehensive and broad-based set of solutions, I can tell you what we will do locally.”

“This meeting was scheduled to strategize next steps on how we collaborate with police, legislators, prosecutors and judges,” said Kent Mayor Dana Ralph. “We all have a role in how to keep our community safe. In time, we look forward to sharing our

plan and accomplishments in conjunction with our partners.”

Ferrell said the coalition will ask their King County partners for a commitment to hold high-impact offenders accountable.

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## New city council and school board members sworn in

By OLIVIA SULLIVAN  
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Several new elected officials were sworn into their seats on the Federal Way City Council and the Federal Way Public Schools Board of Directors on Dec. 7.

Incumbent Trudy Davis was sworn into her role as director of District 4 for the school district. She was appointed to the position in Oct. 2018, and was elected to the seat in Nov. 2021. Her term expires in 2025. Davis has two boys who attend Federal Way High School. She has previously worked as a personnel management specialist for the United States Army, a pharmacy technician, an early childhood education teacher and a family support specialist, among other roles.

“I’m excited to still be continuing the work off the heels of Dr. [Tammy] Campbell with Superintendent Pfeiffer,” Davis said, adding that she welcomes the new leadership of Director Hiroshi Eto as the new school board president.

Newcomer Quentin Morris also took his oath for the school board at Tuesday night’s meeting. Morris, filling the District 1 director position, was elected in Nov. 2021 and his term expires in 2025. He graduated from the FWPS system before taking on a 41-year career with The Boeing Company. For the past 30 years, he and his wife have called Federal Way their home.

Morris said he is “extremely honored” to be seated on the Federal Way Public Schools Board of Directors.

“I come to this important post prepared to serve with humility and respect,” he said, adding that his guiding quote is that by Frederick Douglass: “It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

“I dedicate myself to working with the other directors, Superintendent [Dani] Pfeiffer and the FWPS staff toward ensuring our district policies facilitate the development of educated, responsible, collaborative, and empowered life-long learners,” he said.

On the Federal Way City Council, Erica Norton was sworn in at Position 2 by Mayor Jim Ferrell at the Tuesday night meeting. She has lived in Federal Way for 12 years and is a small business owner. She previously served on the Pierce County Corrections Committee, the Washington State Area 72 Corrections Committee, and a homeless coalition in Federal Way. Her council term expires in 2025.

Norton refused to speak to the Mirror about joining the Federal Way City Council.

New councilmember Jack Walsh, Position 5, took his oath of office on Dec. 7, sworn in by Judge Dave Larson. In 2020, Walsh



Trudy Davis pictured at the swearing-in ceremony on Dec. 7.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Quentin Morris pictured at the swearing-in ceremony on Dec. 7.

ran for state representative of the 30th Legislative District and lost to Jesse Johnson. Walsh is a small business owner in the Federal Way community and has lived in Federal Way for 36 years. In the past decade, he has been an active volunteer in the community.

Walsh said a lack of other candidates in the running for council with “common sensibility” was the turning point that made him

seek public office for the city. His term expires in 2025.

“I realized if it was going to be done, it had to be me,” Walsh told the Mirror at Tuesday night’s meeting.

“This is an office that I initially had no intention of going after, but I felt that the City of Federal Way needed my service and I felt it was the right thing to do to provide that service to the city,” Walsh

said. “I think that we will be able to make a real difference in the city. I’m excited to work with the new city council.”

He also thanked the voters of Federal Way for making “good choices with this election.”

Former mayor and incoming councilmember Jack Dovey, Position 6, will be sworn in for his seat at the Jan. 4, 2022, Federal Way City Council meeting.

## City to address ‘digital deserts’ for local internet connection

Pandemic reveals heightened broadband infrastructure demands for remote learning and remote work.

By OLIVIA SULLIVAN  
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Federal Way will soon undergo an internet broadband study to address the city’s digital deserts and develop a high-speed internet city fiber network.

On Dec. 7, the Federal Way City Council accepted a \$50,000 grant for the “Federal Way Broadband Planning Study,” provided by the Washington Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB). The board announced investments of \$3.3 million in four counties on Nov. 22.

The broadband project consists of a feasibility study to assess the potential for developing a high-speed city fiber network for Federal Way, according to the board. The CERB funds are matched by \$25,000 in federal ARPA funds from the city. The total study cost will be \$75,000.

At the city council’s February 2020 retreat, the council agreed upon the goal of becoming a “tech hub,” said Tim Johnson, economic development director.

In September, the City of Federal Way determined that improved broadband access is vital for economic development, improving diversity and inclusion, and enhancing education.

“Enhancing broadband was identified early on in the pandemic as essential due to remote learning, work and the demands it brought on the existing broadband infrastructure in the city,” stated a Sept. 7 city memorandum.

In early 2020, the city provided \$100,000 in CARES Act funding to the Federal Way Public Schools district to acquire internet hot spots located near areas where students experience inadequate internet connection.

The was a “Band-Aid” solution, the city said. The pandemic revealed heightened broadband infrastructure demands when it comes to remote learning and remote work.

An assessment is needed to determine what internet

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# FEMA to send mobile COVID-19 vaccination unit to Western Washington

By OLIVIA SULLIVAN  
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The federal government is stepping in to help Western Washington residents receive COVID-19 vaccines, starting first in Federal Way.

A Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mobile COVID-19 vaccination unit will soon be sent to several western Washington communities, Gov. Jay Inslee announced on Dec. 2.

The first mobile site location is planned to open Monday, Dec. 20, at the Federal Way Performing Arts and Event Center, 31510 Pete von Reichbauer Way S. Additional locations are to be determined.

The Federal Way site is expected to operate for about 30 days. Mobile vaccination sites administer about 250 vaccinations per day, according to FEMA.

“This is great news in the ongoing fight against COVID. I am grateful for our strong partnership with the federal government, and these FEMA Family Mobilization Clinics coming to King County is a great result of that partnership,” said Inslee. “This is an innovative model that will help increase equitable access to vaccination for all Washingtonians.”

The mobile vaccination unit is offered in partnership with the Washington State Department of Health, the King County Executive’s Office, Public Health – Seattle & King County, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Washington State Emergency Management Division, and King County Emergency Management.

“We’re grateful for President Biden’s leadership, and for the partnership of the White House in keeping

everyone in King County safe this winter, including one of the first Family Vaccination Units in the nation operating right here in south King County,” said King County Executive Dow Constantine.

“The free home tests and other new tools in President Biden’s plan, paired with our vaccine verification program here in King County, will help keep families healthy during the holidays, schools open for our students, and ensure small businesses and restaurants can recover,” Constantine said.

Booster demand is strong in King County because people know vaccines are safe, effective and provide an added layer of protection in the community, said Dennis Worsham, interim director for Public Health – Seattle & King County.

The mobile vaccination unit from the federal



OLIVIA SULLIVAN/THE MIRROR

The Federal Way Performing Arts and Event Center is located at 31510 Pete von Reichbauer Way S.

government helps expand vaccination capacity as some are waiting for appointments and allows for the flexibility

to station vaccination resources where the need is the greatest, he added. “It’s this kind of strong

partnership among local, state, and federal partners that is key to our recovery,” Worsham said.



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# Kent man charged with murder after man fatally shot at FW gas station

By OLIVIA SULLIVAN  
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A Kent man is accused of shooting a man at a Federal Way gas station and leaving his body face-down in a ditch a few miles away, according to the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Robert Nelson III, 24, of Kent, was charged with first-degree murder on Dec. 1. He is being held in lieu of \$2 million bail and his arraignment is set for 9 a.m. Dec. 15 at the Maleng Regional Justice Center.

Nelson is accused of fatally shooting Uso Hale, 39, and leaving his body face-down in a watery ditch in unincorporated King County. Hale's body was discovered near the 4600 block of S. 352nd Street on Nov. 12 after neighbors called to report an object in the ditch.

An autopsy by the King County Medical Examiner's Office reported Hale

had been shot at least seven times and ruled his death a homicide. He had bullet wounds to his left cheek, chin, neck, right thigh and left arm and two wounds on his left torso. Five .45-caliber bullets were removed from Hale's body, according to charging documents. Hale's last known address was at a Federal Way apartment complex.

Prosecutors say Nelson allegedly shot Hale in the front seat of his car at a Mobil gas station (32002 Military Road South) when people were present at the gas pumps and inside the store. Later, investigators found a bullet struck and was lodged in one of the gas station windows.

Nelson allegedly fled the parking lot and left Hale's body in a ditch minutes later, documents state, and took steps to get rid of his car. The .45-caliber gun registered to Nelson has not yet been located.

Nelson's "willingness to commit such a violent crime in a public place, risking the lives of others present, make clear that he poses a substantial danger to the community," Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Jennifer Petersen wrote in the charging documents.

According to the charging documents, a close friend of Hale's said the day before his death, a man Hale had robbed of \$1,500 came looking for him in a dark, four-door vehicle believed to be a black Cadillac. The man came into the residence and "made things right," documents state. The close friend later identified the man as Nelson, according to investigators.

Interviews with people close to Hale revealed that Hale was allegedly meeting up with that same man to sell him blue pills, about \$2,000 worth, on Nov. 11. When Hale got out of a

family member's car at the gas station and into the nearby two-door Audi, the family member reported hearing shots fired. The family member attempted to follow the Audi after it fled, but lost sight of the vehicle as it sped up the hill from Peasley Canyon Road.

Video surveillance footage shows a vehicle stopping near the ditch in unincorporated King County around 4:08 p.m. Nov. 11. The vehicle, believed to be the Audi, seemed to park for about a minute, then drove away, documents state.

A plastic baggy filled with small blue pills and another baggy filled with "blue mush" — presumed to be fentanyl or Oxycodone pills — were found in Hale's pockets, along with a black cell phone. Detectives also found two copper .45-caliber bullets near Hale's body in the ditch.

Police used photos of Nelson to link him to the person in the surveillance footage near where the body was dumped. Phone records also show Nelson received a call from Hale around 3:53 p.m. Nov. 11 and about 20 minutes later, his phone records show that his device was in the area where Hale's body was dumped, documents state.

Nelson was arrested on Nov. 24 while driving a black Cadillac, registered to his grandfather. Both the car and his apartment were searched. Police recovered a 9mm handgun, gun ammunition and a baggie of blue pills from the car.

A magazine full of .45-caliber ammunition, a gun box to a .45-caliber pistol, and boxes of copper .45-caliber ammunition were recovered from Nelson's apartment in Kent.

Charging documents state that as detectives

were searching the Cadillac, "Nelson was upset and asked multiple times why detectives were searching the vehicle." After informing Nelson that police had a warrant, Nelson allegedly said: "It's not that vehicle."

He was taken to the Burien police station for questioning when he requested to speak with his attorney.

Through the King County Sheriff's Office investigation of the homicide, sheriffs determined that the actual shooting most likely occurred in the parking lot of the gas station or close by, according to Cmdr. Tracy Grossnickle of Federal Way Police.

"Since KCSO has jurisdiction over the entire area, they kept the case and filed charges," Grossnickle said. "Due to them keeping the investigation and filing charges, it is not going to [be] considered a Federal Way homicide by our Department."

## 1 man fatally shot near Federal Way Crossings

By OLIVIA SULLIVAN  
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One man was fatally shot in a parking lot of the Federal Way Crossings on Wednesday night.

At about 9:47 p.m. Dec. 8, officers responded to the 1400 block of S. 348th Street for a report that someone had been shot, said Cmdr. Cary Murphy of FWPD.

Upon arrival, officers found a man in the parking lot suffering from gunshot wounds. Officers and medics attempted life-saving efforts, but the man died at the scene, Murphy said. The man's

age and identity has not yet been released.

Police say the man appeared to have been targeted and the shooting does not seem to be random.

Further information regarding the possible suspects will be given as it is determined by the investigation, Murphy added.

Anyone with information about the shooting should contact the Federal Way Police Department at 253-835-2121.

This is the 11th homicide in Federal Way this year.

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## Message to Sound Transit: Not in my backyard

It is easy to oppose something you don't like – particularly if it is expensive – but also hard to think objectively if a project will be an inconvenience to you.

Where is the best location for the Sound Transit maintenance facility? This decision will have an impact on any area it is placed in. Because it will serve locations in South King County, it seems obvious that the facility should be in South King County before light rail heads on to Tacoma and eventually Olympia. But other maintenance facilities will be needed in north Seattle and Bellevue as the connections come on line from Snohomish County.

Up until now, it has seemed like the decision was months or even years away. But the Sound Transit board is likely to select a preferred alternative by its Dec. 16 meeting and finalize that selection in late 2022 after further in-depth study. We could get an early clue to their thinking as soon as the Dec. 9 at the meeting of the expansion committee. King County Councilmember



**BOB ROEGNER**  
INSIDE POLITICS

Claudia Balducci, from Bellevue, chairs the expansion committee and says she will come to the Dec. 9 meeting with a recommendation.

One location site is at the Midway Landfill in Kent. The other two sites are in south Federal Way at South 336th Street, which is a 59-acre site between I-5 and Pacific Highway 99. If selected, two churches and two businesses with about 94 employees would need to be relocated along with 73 residential evictions. Also, the area has a minority population of 7,973 people. The 344th Street alternative site is 62 acres and is between I-5 and 18th Place South. Both Federal Way options are projected to cost between \$1.2 billion and \$1.4 billion and could be completed

in about three years. If the 344th Street site is selected, it would require Ellenos Yogurt manufacturing and Garagetown private storage to move, including 217 employees along with 60 unit owners and three churches.

The Midway site is the most expensive and would take the longest to build, which troubles the chair of the 18-member Sound Transit board, Kent Keel, who is a University Place City Councilmember and also a member of the system expansion committee. He makes the point that adding more years and billions of dollars doesn't seem to make sense. However, the board is made up of mostly elected officials who want to be reelected. And most of the public participation has favored the Midway site because no one is inconvenienced, either through their business or home being in the way at that location.

However, that just makes the Midway location the path of least resistance because it is a Superfund waste location fill site. The site is located between S.

240th Street and between Pacific Highway South and I-5. This site is projected to cost \$1.8 billion to \$2.4 billion and take six to eight years depending on which design is selected. This issue seems like it has been around for many years of controversial debate, but the list was only cut to three sites a few months ago.

The public participation has been mostly those who have a business or home in the two Federal Way locations, and it is easy to understand why they oppose the two Federal Way locations, which is part of the reason that the elected officials in Federal Way oppose the two Federal Way sites. They want to be reelected. Businesses and residences affected have formed a political action committee of 60-70 residents and have tried to learn where Sound Transit is leaning. The Group is called "Protect Federal Way." Given the changes in the city council with the recent elections, don't expect the council to change positions. And it will look like "not in my backyard" will win again.

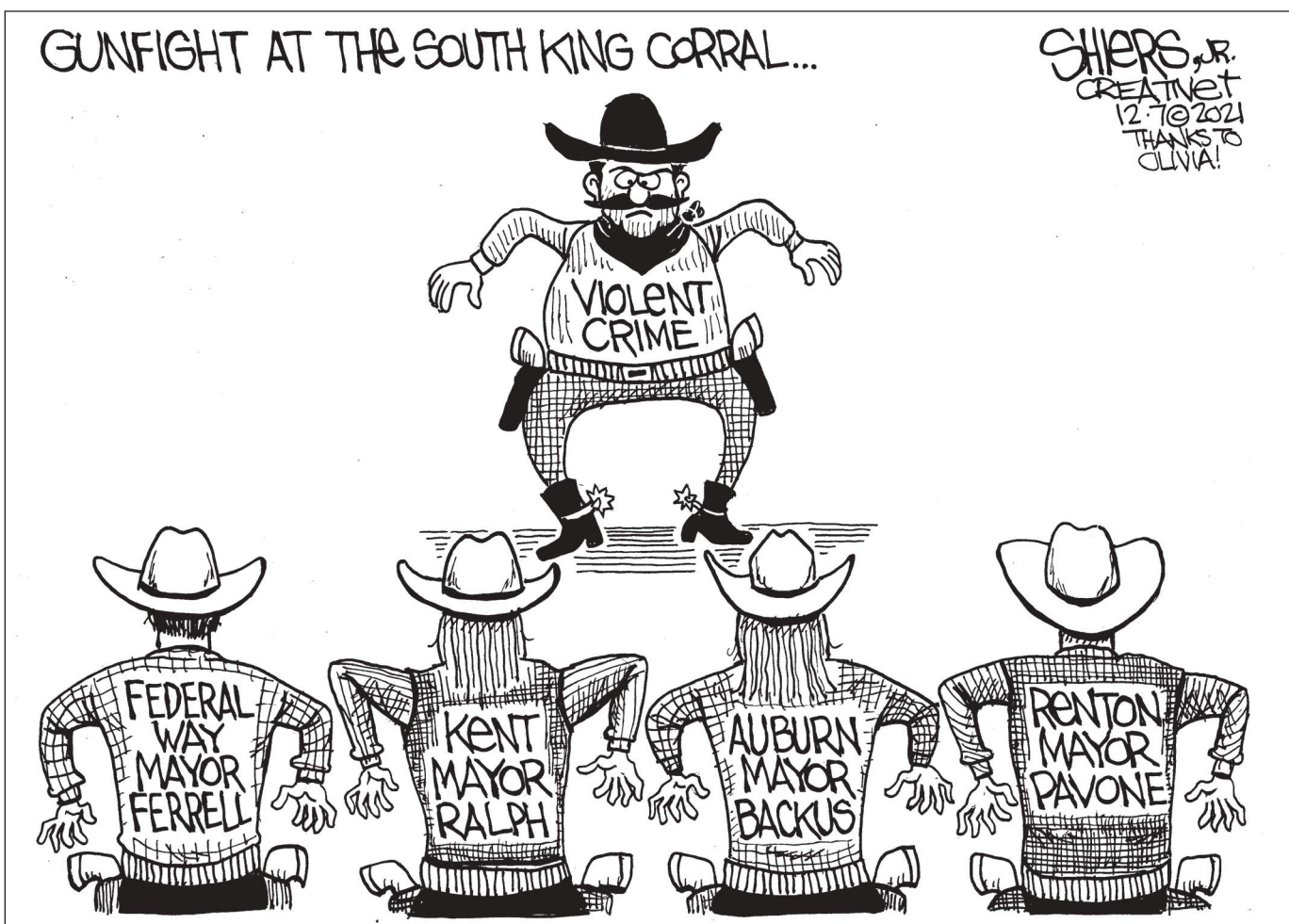
The Sound Transit Board is governed by 18 elected officials proportional to the population in the Sound Transit district. Ten members are from King County, four are from Pierce County and three are from Snohomish County. The Secretary of Transportation also sits on the board. I'm a little surprised that the Midway site is still in contention given the potential dangers to the future of the Sound Transit staff who will work there, but it is the most politically expedient because no one is inconvenienced by its selection. However, the Sound Transit board is not done with this topic and there are some advantages. The 400 employees who work at the facility will earn about \$80,000 per year. The professionals who will build the facility can't give an iron-clad agreement that nothing will ever happen over to the 30 years or more that Sound Transit employees will work there.

But would you want a relative of yours working at a Superfund site? Even the salaries of the employees didn't influence

the Federal Way council to drop its opposition and they say economic development is important to them. The city of Kent has said it will not oppose the Midway site, and the Puyallup Tribe prefers the Midway site due to the potential impacts to ecosystems such as fish habitats and water resources. And to add to the intrigue, rumors continue to circulate one of the church owners in Federal Way could be a willing seller.

Watch the political messaging after the final vote on which site is selected. Some board members will argue that the Midway site is too expensive or unsafe, while others will message that they were listening to the public should the Midway site be chosen. If the site chosen is Midway, then taxpayer money doesn't mean much, nor does the safety of future Sound Transit employees. Reelection is what counts.

*Federal Way resident Bob Roegner is a former mayor of Auburn. Contact bjroegner@comcast.net.*



## Holiday ode to Federal Way as 2021 comes to a close

A node to Federal Way's holiday season begins with a roast before we toast.

Poor Federal Way is in a pickle since its economic development is nothing but a trickle. The mayor is searching far and wide for businesses to fill our empty office space but his policy partners don't

want to give him chance because his duress gives them an opportunity to verbally prance.

They want the executive post for themselves, especially the so-called deputy, but collectively they serve without a clue as to what to do to lead our city to a better world view. While the policy partners

complain about why they aren't in charge, there is talk from the regressive crew about attempting an election coup to bring back the city manager form of government anew.

That is the form of government the city had when we incorporated and then as now Federal Way's growth and vision remains as mediocre and misunderstood as our chosen name. However, back then our council had the city manager to fire or blame for supporting their ideas which were often lame.

Leadership taking its cue from the Growth Management Act proclaimed housing affordability must be our rule in order to take care of our increasing numbers of poor and homeless. But, sadly they fooled themselves and short-changed the rest of us by not focusing on the real prize of community success which requires a laser focus on building a higher-level city embracing middle-class diversity.

Council leadership and political powers beyond our town's control believe



**KEITH LIVINGSTON**  
MY PERSPECTIVE

that Federal Way should be all about affordability, so with multifamily expanding beyond 50-percent and a growing number of renters with a subsidy check our city blazes a trail toward poverty. While all on council championed this point of view, the progressive wing on council got blamed for a policy seen by the public as out-of-line with the community's minds and by voter's choice the progressive voice is gone.

Empathy for our economically challenged while admirable and necessary alters council's ability to see that the real investment must be in building a strategically-valued-community able to help people grow out

of poverty. Our council consistently fails to see that our focus must be on elevating our community's cultural health, the arts, education, aesthetics, diversity, jobs and middle class housing opportunities because that is where our city's future lies and without them being our front and center policy our city slowly dies.

Hands are getting wrong when talk begins about Federal Way's never-ending crime season that is here for no logical reason. Except for the fact that every year our city grows poorer and since stuff just costs too much, why not grab a little from the rich – it won't be missed – much.

Crime seems to be society's forever curse with drugs and guns making things worse. But when our police response – here or elsewhere – is over the top the public rightly gets pissed.

To right the wrongs, our former council member turned legislator convinced the state that with a few changes in the laws our police would instantly be nice. But

somewhere in the legislation our citizens' misbehavior was given not much of a glance and now we are looking everywhere for our local flatfoots to do an arresting dance.

He saw a national wrong that needed to be righted but our local criminals know the drill and will continue doing what they do for a thrill. The robbers may not understand that the only advantage they gained is that when they get arrested the cops have to be chill.

Economic development is critical and some council members believe they should hire the chamber of commerce to do what they have failed to do. Our chamber of commerce is a valued lunch club of no common sense seeking to lead the city forward at the citizens expense.

They want to become the voice of creating a better local economy and tell the city they know what to do. What gets lost in the discussion is that our chamber of commerce has no track record of building community

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# Ode

From Page 4

success which is a good reason they should not be paid by the city to tell the city the job it needs to do.

Communication is critical. The Federal Way Mirror nearly shutdown when the pandemic hit. It reduced its presence to online and slowly became a printed paper once more. The Mirror is needed to remind us that as a community we are better connected with ink in print, and the police blotter segment proves that criminals sometimes amuse.

Letters are written and shared. Complaints are expressed and the Mirror’s weekly opinionator gets mentioned by some as one of our city’s manipulators, but still, it is just freedom of the press.

The schools need our appreciation for their task is huge. They need all the help they can get but a free pass is not given because they are the engine for Federal Way’s future success. This means they have our empathy while we hold them to the highest of standards and challenge them with respect to become an “A” rated district out of necessity.

Some of our citizens have expressed

concern with the mayor’s leadership ability now that he is half the man he used to be. He is proudly losing weight in our community and his gravitas is always being challenged, but in every speech he expresses confidently that our city is being well-managed. Right or wrong he has no doubt that after being duly reelected many of his ideas will be rejected.

But this is the season where we look past our grievances and make amends. The spin may be thin but the sentiment is real because we care a great deal about what happens next. Federal Way’s challenge is to grow every day in its understanding of what it means to be a cutting-edge place full of energy, grace, commerce and pace.

Our politicians creak and moan about what they can and cannot do, but today we are all one enjoying the holidays with thoughts of kindness and care for one another in the spirit of the season. May your holiday season be joyous and great and let’s raise a glass wishing 2022 a peaceful new year.

*Keith Livingston is a retired municipal management professional, lifelong artist and Federal Way resident. He can be reached at keithlivingstondesign@gmail.com.-*

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# Federal Way residents celebrate holiday tree lighting

The holiday season has officially arrived in Federal Way. About 200 people attended the city's Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony on Saturday, Dec. 4. The event, hosted by the Federal Way Arts Commissioner, took place at Town Square Park. Community members Yamilet, 4, and her brother Yandel, 12, had the honor of lighting this year's tree with the pull of a decked out lever. Shawn Lewis and Natasha Neuschwander of Beat Frequency, a husband and wife musical duo, performed several holiday carol favorites. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived in style with South King Fire & Rescue to meet the crowd. Attendees also picked up Federal Way cookies and cocoa bomb gifts giveaways. The holiday tree at Town Square Park is located at 31600 Pete von Reichbauer Way S. in Federal Way.



Yandel, 12, and Yamilet, 4, lit this year's holiday tree in Federal Way. Town Square Park is located at 31600 Pete von Reichbauer Way S. in Federal Way.

PHOTOS BY OLIVIA SULLIVAN/THE MIRROR

federal way

## ...WINNER'S CIRCLE

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*Susan*

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BY VINCE BRADY

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## POLICE BLOTTER

### Dec. 1

**Purse, backpack stolen:** At about 10:39 a.m. near the 34500 block of 16th Ave. South, a woman left her purse and backpack in her vehicle while she went into a store. When she returned, she found her rear window had been broken out and both items were stolen. The total loss estimate is \$3,500. No suspect information.

**Armed robbery:** At about 7:25 p.m. near the 33501 block of Pacific Highway South, an armed man robbed the victims at gunpoint.

**Robbed at gunpoint:** At about 7:49 p.m. near the 160 block of SW Campus Drive, there was a robbery involving a firearm.

**Robbed after casino trip:** At about 11:33 p.m. near the 700 block of SW 357th Street, a couple had just come home from the casino when they were robbed at gunpoint by two men.

### Dec. 2

**Hotel parking lot theft:** At about 8:25 a.m. near the 31720 block of S. Gateway Center Boulevard, a woman was moving from Canada to Sacramento, California, when she stayed overnight at the Hampton Inn. Her vehicle was broken into and over \$100,000 worth of belongings were stolen. There was no damage to the vehicle and the woman said she may have accidentally left the window partially down. No suspect information.

**Son strangles mom:** At about 3:53 p.m. near the 1300 block of S. 328th Street, officers responded to a welfare check which turned into a physical domestic call. The woman said she was hit and strangled by her son until she gave him her car keys and money. The son was gone upon police arrival.

### Dec. 3

**Man shot in leg:** At about 10:10 a.m. near the 2200 block of S. 314th Street, a man was involved in a dispute in a vehicle when he was shot in the leg by one of the passengers. Both passengers fled on foot and the man drove off in his vehicle, and was later dropped at St. Francis Hospital. The man refused to talk with police or cooperate with the investigation.

### Dec. 4

**Bank robbed at gunpoint:** At about 11:25 a.m. near the 1400 block of S. 312th Street, there was a robbery at a bank involving a firearm.

**Subway employee pepper sprayed:** At about 5:30 p.m. near the 34815 block of Pacific Highway South, a male suspect pepper sprayed a Subway employee and stole a cash till.

### Dec. 5

**Woman shot in hand:** At about 3:03 a.m. near the 34500 block of 9th Avenue South, a woman was dropped off at the St. Francis Hospital with a gunshot wound to the hand. The man who dropped her off said he found the woman walking along "Central Ave" but did not specify a city. The man left the area and the woman was transported to Harborview Medical Center for treatment. She reportedly told an ER nurse that the shooting happened in a vehicle in Federal Way, but there were no additional details.

**Roommate stabbed:** At about 4:19 a.m. near the 300 block of S. 304th Place, a roommate returned home with several stab wounds. The victim was uncooperative with police and refused to provide a statement. Investigation found the assault happened in another jurisdiction.

**Attempted robbery:** At about 8:56 p.m. near the 27200 block of Pacific Highway South, a suspect pointed a gun at the reporting party and demanded

money. The reporting party ran away and the suspect fled immediately after without obtaining any money.

### Dec. 6

**Missing person found:** At about 2:39 p.m. near the 30000 block of 16th Ave. South, a security guard at Federal Way High School

reported a non-student on campus. The boy was discovered to be a "missing person" out of Kent and was transported back to his family's care.

**Shoplift at shoe store:** At about 1:26 p.m. near the 1824 block of S. 320th Street, two women went into a shoe

store and shoplifted. The third woman was waiting in a parked vehicle outside. The women were detained and the third woman had a stolen handgun in her purse.

**Possible shooting:** At about 6:50 p.m. near the 2100 block of SW 356th Street, a man was driving

from Northeast Tacoma into Federal Way on SW 356th Street. An unknown dark colored SUV drove around him, spun his tires while pulling a u-turn and fired shots at his vehicle. NO plate information found and no cartridges found near the scene.

federal way

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Internet

From Page 1

speeds are available in the city, the internet speed adequacy in the city, what infrastructure improvements are needed and

the digital deserts within Federal Way. Federal Way currently relies on Century Link for digital subscriber line (DSL) service, and Comcast “does not provide adequate speeds for many households,” the memorandum stated.

“There is a need for affordable broadband that can handle the internet demands of a modern household,” it stated. “High-speed internet access, or broadband, is critical to economic opportunity, job creation, education, and civic

engagement,” according to a 2020 report from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). But, there is a “digital divide” between people who have access to high speed internet/advanced telecommunications, and those who do not, the report states,

and most of the divide depends on fixed broadband networks. FCC data from 2017 estimates about 0.2% of Americans do not have access to high-speed mobile broadband service, which rises to about 0.9% in rural areas and approximately 3% on Tribal lands. The study’s work is set to begin in 2022. Work and examination will be performed through hiring a consultant.

Materials outlining the scope of work will be developed and provided to the Federal Way City Council in January for approval, Johnson added. Overall, CERB approved \$2,431,250 in grants and \$843,750 in low-interest loans for economic development, public infrastructure, and broadband development. The four additional recipients are in Cowlitz, Grays Harbor and Whatcom counties.

# KEEP THE HOLIDAYS BRIGHT!

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Wishing a safe and joyful holiday season for all.



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Daniel Allen, Medicare and Individual Medical

Crime

From Page 1

For the upcoming Legislative agenda, Ferrell is recommending the Federal Way City Council seek to re-criminalize controlled substances, and to “fix the pursuits section of HB 1054 to allow police officers to once again utilize ‘reasonable suspicion’ standard in investigative stops.” The Federal Way Police Department will share information with other agencies to document

drug referrals. This way, Ferrell said, police can move more quickly amid the current laws to get to the third interaction with those in possession of hard narcotics, to arrest and prosecute offenders. Ferrell also said Federal Way is planning to develop a South King County Top 10 list of high-impact offenders (for drugs and guns). The city will also aim to identify a main source of drug production and distribution. This information and Top 10 list will be shared with regional agencies, he added.

More local news online at [www.federalwaymirror.com](http://www.federalwaymirror.com)

# BEST OF 2022

FEDERAL WAY

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Voting ends January 31, 2022.

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# BEST OF FEDERAL WAY 2022



# Jingle Bell Brunch tradition returns in Federal Way

By MIRROR STAFF

The Jingle Bell Brunch returned to Federal Way last Saturday.

On Dec. 4, about 125 people gathered at the Federal Way Community Center for the holiday event since it was last held in 2019. The Jingle Bell Brunch has been a Federal Way tradition for 16 years.

The event included breakfast with Santa Claus, a hot cocoa station, crafts, games

and a dance party in the snow with several characters such as Rudolph, Olaf and Anna from Disney's "Frozen," Belle from "Beauty and the Beast," and Snow White.

"The Federal Way Parks department is so happy to be back and providing meaningful events for the community to get together with friends and family and create special memories such as these," said Cassie Swan, Federal Way's recreation coordinator of cultural

arts and community events.

Jingle Bell Brunch was supported by in-kind donations from local businesses Ellenos Yogurt and Smith Brothers Milk.

Volunteers Shelley Pauls and We Love Our City provided the cocoa/beverage station, and the Thomas Jefferson Key Club provided 15 outstanding volunteers to dress up in costume and to help with serving and clean up, Swan said.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHELLEY PAULS

Photos with Santa Claus at Jingle Bell Brunch.



A hot cocoa station provided by We Love Our City nonprofit.



A dance party in the snow at Federal Way Community Center on Dec. 4.

## BEST OF FEDERAL WAY 2022

## VOTE TODAY!

Voting ends January 31, 2022.

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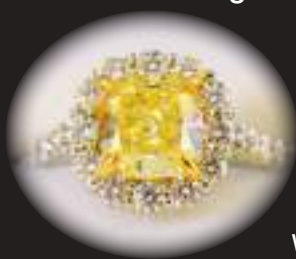
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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK FOR DECEMBER 10:

Ahjeawnna Sterling

By MIRROR STAFF

Todd Beamer High School senior Ahjeawnna Sterling, basketball, was selected as the Federal Way Mirror Female Athlete of the Week for Dec. 10.

Q: What is your favorite subject/class in school?

A: Math.

Q: What other activities/hobbies do you enjoy?

A: I'm a year-round athlete, and I also like watching Netflix.

Q: Person who has helped you succeed the most?

A: My Mother.

Q: The best advice I've ever been given by a coach is:

A: "You are the strongest in the league."

Q: Describe your pre-match ritual?

A: My ritual is to pray before the game and talk about things that I am going to do in the game.

Q: Song you currently can't stop listening to?

A: "Essence" by WizKid.

**From the sideline:** TBHS senior has been the backbone of Todd Beamer's success the last couple of years. The things she does may not always show



Ahjeawnna Sterling

up in the scoring section, but she is a key rebounder and major defender for the program. Ahjeawnna has clocked 64 minutes in two games.

Darius Israel

By MIRROR STAFF

Todd Beamer High School senior Darius Israel, basketball, was selected as the Federal Way Mirror Male Athlete of the Week for Dec. 10.

Q: What is your favorite subject/class in school?

A: Math with Ms. Young.

Q: What other activities/hobbies do you enjoy?

A: Shopping.

Q: Person who has helped you succeed the most?

A: My mom and Coach B.

Q: The best advice I've ever been given by a coach is:

A: "Be a student first," and to stay focused on my grades.

Q: Describe your pre-match ritual?

A: Pre-game: I lay down and relax. Post-game: Chick-fil-A.

Q: Song you currently can't stop listening to?

A: "Lick Back" by EST Gee.

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# King County woman among first in state to test positive for Omicron

BY HENRY  
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@soundpublishing.com

The Omicron COVID-19 variant has been discovered in King, Pierce and Thurston counties, according to the Washington state Department of Health.

The DOH in partnership with the University of Washington Medicine's Virology Lab discovered the three cases on Dec. 4. The patients range in age from 20 to 39, according to the DOH. The vaccination status of the three individuals is unknown at this point.

Washington is now the 13th state in the U.S. that has identified Omicron cases, said Dr. Umair Shah, Washington Secretary of Health.

A woman in her twenties in King County contracted the new variant, according to the DOH. Samples were taken between Nov. 29 and Dec. 1 and were confirmed at a lab in Washington. It is not likely the cases are related, according to the DOH.

"We knew that it was a matter of time before omicron was sequenced in our state and so we were anticipating this very news," Shah said. "We strongly urge people to get vaccinated and get their boosters as soon as possible to maximize their level of protection from any variant."

A lot is still unknown about the Omicron variant, such as how transmissible and severe it is, according to the DOH. However, preliminary data suggests the Omicron

variant spreads more readily than the Delta variant, Dr. Jeff Duchin, King County Health Officer said.

In addition to this, people who have had COVID-19 in the past are more likely to be re-infected with Omicron, according to preliminary data, Duchin said.

The good news is that the tools we've been using to fight COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic will still work for the Omicron variant, Duchin said.

"Omicron may pose new challenges that we will need to respond to, but compared to the early days of the pandemic, we know much more about COVID-19, and we're better prepared for it," Duchin said.

Wearing face masks indoors, getting vaccinated, and avoiding large crowds are the best ways to protect yourself and others from all strains of COVID-19, including the Omicron

variant, Duchin said.

Although there has only been one case of Omicron identified in King County, it is likely not the only one, and more cases are expected to be identified, according to King County Public Health.

The existence of the Omicron variant in Washington is not a reason to panic, but it is a reason to be concerned, Shah said.

"We may be tired of this virus but as Omicron and our current surge of Delta in our state show, this virus is certainly not tired of us," Shah said.

A rapid surge of cases in Washington in which most infections and serious infections are among the unvaccinated is a possibility, Duchin said.

It's not clear yet how effective the vaccines are at preventing Omicron but the high vaccination rate in Washington will likely help blunt the impact of a surge in cases, Duchin said.

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# As new COVID-19 variant looms, vaccination disparities linger in King County

County data shows gaps among age, geography and race.

By CAMERON SHEPPARD  
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@soundpublishing.com

On Nov. 26, the World Health Organization classified a new COVID-19 variant, called B.1.1.529 (or “Omicron”) as a “variant of concern.” There are currently no confirmed Omicron cases in the U.S. as of this writing. However, some leaders and public health experts are concerned about how infectious it could be and the impact it could have.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is recommending many of the same things for folks to protect themselves from the spread of this variant and any others including mask wearing, handwashing

and social distancing. They are also continuing to encourage people over age 5 to get vaccinated and for those who are already vaccinated to get the booster shot.

As one of the first places in the country to confirm COVID-19 cases in early 2020, King County is also one of the first high-population counties to reach its goal of full vaccination for over 70 percent of residents.

Since vaccinations have been rolled-out to the public, King County has reached 73 percent full vaccination, with 80.7 percent receiving at least one dose. But vaccination disparities still exist across different regions, ages and ethnicities in the county.

For example, the elderly in King County are far more likely to have been vaccinated with the population of individuals between ages 50 and 64 nearing 92% full-vaccination across

all races and ethnicities and those older than 65 recording more than 95% full-vaccination in the county.

Currently, only 46.8 percent of King County residents between ages 5 and 24 have been fully vaccinated. There are regional disparities that exist among that age group as well, with both South King County (Auburn, Kent, Federal Way) and Southeast King County being the only two subregions in the county with less than 40 percent full vaccination among the age 5 to 24 group.

Of the over 131,000 five-to-nine-year-olds in the county, none have been fully vaccinated, but about 30 percent have received their first dose. Residents ages 10 to 19 have recorded 57.7 percent full vaccination among their demographic, with 69 percent receiving at least one dose.

A United States Census

Bureau Household Pulse survey asked parents why they were hesitant to get their kids vaccinated. The parents all had children ages 12 to 17, but the results still give an idea of some of the sentiments shared among hesitant parents.

Of the parents surveyed in Washington state, 55 percent said they were concerned about the side effects of the vaccine, a lower percentage than most of the other states surveyed; 36 percent said they were not sure if their children needed it, a higher percentage than most states; 33 percent said they were waiting to see if the vaccine was safe; and 47 percent said they did not trust the government, a higher percentage than the broad majority of states.

When looking at vaccination rates among different racial and ethnic groups, the data seems to indicate that white, Black and Latinx residents are

relatively behind in full-vaccination rates when compared to the other groups.

In residents ages 5 and older, the Latinx population has recorded 64 percent full vaccination, the Black population has recorded 69 percent, and the white population has recorded 73 percent full vaccination. This may not seem that far behind, but Asian, Pacific-Islander and Indigenous populations average around 92 percent vaccination rates collectively.

Among the younger demographics between ages 5 and 24, roughly 38 percent of residents have to receive even a single dose of the vaccine. Among Black and Latinx residents in the 5 to 24 age group, both populations are 47 percent unvaccinated in any form. White residents in the same age group are a little over 42 percent unvaccinated.

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<b>City of Federal Way Request for Bids RFB 21-012</b> <b>Federal Way Community Center Slide Replacement RFB</b> City of Federal Way is seeking bids for the engineering, replacement and installation of a new water slide, tower, stairs, supports, and deck, as well as a play structure at the Federal Way Community Center. The new Water slide and Play structure shall be designed to fit the existing feed within the pool of the Federal Way Community Center. Notice is hereby given that the City of Federal Way will receive sealed bids through January 7, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. at the City Hall Finance Department at 33325 8th Avenue South, Federal Way, Washington 98003. Proposals received after said date and time will not be considered. All timely bids will be opened and read publicly aloud in the Hylebos Conference Room, City Hall 33325 8th Avenue South, Federal Way, Washington 98003 at 2:05 p.m. on January 7, 2022. The full bid may be accessed at the City's website at: <a href="https://www.cityoffederalway.com/bids">#944923</a> 12/10/21, 12/17/21	ceived after said date and time will not be considered. All timely bids will be opened and read publicly aloud in the Hylebos Conference Room, City Hall 33325 8th Avenue South, Federal Way, Washington 98003 at 2:05 p.m. on January 7, 2022. The full bid may be accessed at the City's website at: <a href="https://www.cityoffederalway.com/bids">#944923</a> 12/10/21, 12/17/21	<b>ORDINANCE NO. 21-923</b> AN ORDINANCE of the City of Federal Way, Washington, relating to pedestrian interference and obstructions within public rights-of-way; amending FWRC 6.35.030. (Amending Ordinance Nos. 20-887, 15-784, 11-697, 08-576, 05-509, 94-214, and 91-89) <b>ORDINANCE NO. 21-924</b> AN ORDINANCE of the City of Federal Way, Washington, relating to amending the 2021-2022 Biennial Budget. (Amending Ordinance No. 20-903 and 21-916) <b>ORDINANCE NO. 21-925</b> AN ORDINANCE of the City of Federal Way, Washington, relating to fixing the property tax	amount for the year of 2022. <b>ORDINANCE NO. 21-926</b> AN ORDINANCE of the City of Federal Way, Washington, amending T-Mobile West Corporation's nonexclusive franchise to occupy rights-of-way of the City of Federal Way, Washington, by adding a new site to the list of authorized sites. (Amending Ordinance No. 15-803) The full text of any ordinance is available by contacting the City Clerk's office at 253-835-2540. Copies will be mailed upon request in accordance with the City's fee schedule. D: December 8, 2021 Steatedphanie Courtney, CMC, City Clerk Published Federal Way Mirror: December 10, 2021 #944892	<b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b> Four Corners Northeast, P.O. Box 730, Black Diamond, Washington 98010, is seeking coverage under the Washington State Department of Ecology's Construction Stormwater NPDES and State Waste Discharge General Permit. The proposed project, The Learning Experience, is located at 26424 242nd Ave SE in Maple Valley, in King County. This project involves 5.27 acres of soil disturbance for commercial construction activities. The receiving water will discharge to ground with 100% infiltration. Any persons desiring to present their views to the Washington State Department of Ecology regarding this application, or interested in Ecology's action on this application, may notify	Ecology in writing no later than 30 days of the last date of publication of this notice. Ecology reviews public comments and considers whether discharges from this project would cause a measurable change in receiving water quality, and, if so, whether the project is necessary and in the overriding public interest according to Tier II antidegradation requirements under WAC 173-201A-320. Comments can be submitted to: Department of Ecology Attn: Water Quality Program, Construction Stormwater P.O. Box 47696, Olympia, WA 98504-7696 #944891 12/10/21, 12/17/21 <i>Find your perfect pet in the classifieds</i> <a href="http://www.SoundClassifieds.com">www.SoundClassifieds.com</a>

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# Black drivers disproportionately pulled over by WSP in King, Pierce counties

BY HENRY STEWART-WOOD  
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Despite finding no evidence of significant statewide bias, Washington State Patrol officers disproportionately pull over Black drivers in King and Pierce counties, according to a study by Washington State University researchers.

The study, which examined 3.4 million traffic stops between Jan. 1, 2015, to Dec. 31, 2019, found that no groups were “significantly” over-represented in officer contacts or calls for service, according to the study.

The study compared the officer contact data with census data. A demographic is over-represented if they are stopped at a rate higher than their proportion of the statewide population. The study defines “significant over-representation” as a difference of 5 percent or more.

However, there were still disparities in officer-initiated contacts, according to the study. Black drivers made up 5.7% of officer-initiated traffic stops during the four years examined despite only making up 4.3% of the total population in Washington, according to the Office of Financial Management.

In 2019, that disparity was even larger and Black drivers accounted for 6.2% of all stops initiated by state patrol officers, according to the study.

White people made up 74.4% of officer-initiated traffic stops despite making up 78.2% of the total state population, according to OFM.

The disparities between Black and white drivers was even higher in King and Pierce counties, according to the study. In King County, 11.5% of officer-initiated stops were of Black drivers, who make up 7% of the county’s population. White drivers made up 62.3% of stops, but 66.2% of the county’s population.

In Pierce County, Black drivers are significantly over-represented in officer-initiated stops as they made up 12.7% of stops, but 7.7% of the total county population. Conversely, white drivers are underrepresented, making up 68.8% of stops and 74.3% of the county’s population.

The researchers at WSU created a disparity index to determine if disproportionalities exist for ethnic or racial groups on a statewide level. The index shows that white people are stopped at a rate that would be expected considering their proportion of the population.

Black drivers are over-represented when compared to their proportion of the population and all other races are underrepresented, according to the study.

In addition to this, the study found that Black, Hispanic and Native American drivers were more likely to be searched by WSP officers than white drivers, according to the study.

Despite being less likely to be searched, white people were more likely to actually have contraband compared to Black and Hispanic people between 2015 and 2019, according to the study. Native American people were less likely to actually have contraband compared to white people in 2018 and 2019, despite being searched more often, according to the study.

The study concluded that this could indicate WSP officers have lower probable cause standards for Black, Hispanic and Native American drivers compared to their white counterparts, according to the study.

WSU researchers plan to continue working with the WSP to address the disparities for Black and Hispanic drivers, according to the study.

## pet of the week

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# Tacoma woman, 26, killed in four-vehicle crash on I-5

**By STEVE HUNTER**  
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A 26-year-old Tacoma woman was killed in a four-vehicle collision early Saturday morning, Dec. 4, along southbound Interstate 5 near Federal Way that allegedly involved a driver under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Samantha Mararac was a passenger in one of the vehicles and died at the scene, according to the Washington State Patrol. The crash occurred at about 1:44 a.m. on I-5, just south of State Route 516 near South 272nd Street. The State Patrol arrested a 43-year-old Kent man for investigation of vehicular homicide and DUI, according to a press memo. A vehicle was disabled and blocking lane one of five lanes, according to the State Patrol.

Two vehicles stopped in lane one to attempt to get around the vehicle. A fourth vehicle, driven by the Kent man, reportedly rear ended one of the vehicles pushing it into another vehicle, causing one of the vehicles to come to a stop facing the wrong way. The Kent driver then reportedly continued southbound and struck that vehicle before it came to a rest in lane two. The Kent driver, who was alone in his vehicle, was not injured. Two others in the vehicle with Mararac were injured. The driver, a 24-year-old Renton woman, and another passenger, a 34-year-old Renton man, were each transported to Valley Medical Center in Renton. The drivers of the other two vehicles were not injured and had no passengers. Three vehicles were totaled and one had damage.

# Self-proclaimed gang member sentenced for drug charges, violent carjackings

**By OLIVIA SULLIVAN**  
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A Federal Way man was sentenced on Dec. 3 for drug charges and two violent attempted carjackings in 2019. Ivan Lopez-Ramos, 26, was sentenced in King County Superior Court to 39.75 months for the attempted robbery and 12 months for the conspiracy to commit a violation of the Uniformed Controlled Substances Act, which is the maximum with his criminal history set by lawmakers. The sentences will be served concurrently, documents state. Police said Lopez-Ramos is a self-identified gang member dealing large quantities of heroin in Federal Way. On Jan. 2, 2019, Lopez-Ramos and a passenger were attempting to flee the area in a silver

Corvette near the 2600 block of 296th Place after seeing a Federal Way officer. The officer followed the Corvette onto Military Road South when the vehicle crossed into the opposite lane of traffic and crashed into a Honda CRV. Lopez-Ramos, who was driving the Corvette, and the passenger exited the vehicle and attempted to carjack a nearby Honda Odyssey van. When unsuccessful, Lopez-Ramos and the passenger ran to an occupied Dodge Grand Caravan and attempted to carjack the vehicle using force, fighting with the driver. The Federal Way officer was able to pull Lopez-Ramos from the vehicle. When Lopez-Ramos resisted arrest, the officer struck and kicked him, and attempted a Lateral Vascular Neck Restraint, before calling on nearby citizens

for help in restraining him. Two Seattle Police officers passing by also assisted with the arrest. Officers discovered the Corvette was stolen out of Lynnwood. Lopez-Ramos' criminal history includes a felony warrant for attempting to allude police and a felony conviction for assault. He was also considered armed and dangerous. Lopez-Ramos was taken to the hospital where he was found to have 3.5 grams of meth in his pocket and also removed 1.7 grams of heroin from his rectum. In an interview with police, Lopez-Ramos stated he was guilty of the day's events. Upon searching the Corvette, police recovered over 17 ounces of heroin and drug paraphernalia. The passenger's cell phone —used for drug transactions — was also found in the vehicle.

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