



Girl charged with second-degree murder in jogger’s death

**By STEVE HUNTER**  
*shunter@soundpublishing.com*

A 15-year-old SeaTac girl allegedly tried to bump a jogger with her vehicle to “scare him” on an early Sunday morning in July in Maple Valley when she reportedly struck the man and killed him.

King County prosecutors filed charges of second-degree murder and hit-and-run on Sept. 14 against Kasama Z. Smith, who reportedly was driving a 2004 Toyota Camry that hit and killed

Gregory Moore, 53, of Maple Valley just after 6 a.m. on July 18 in the 23800 block of Southeast 216th Street.

“I’m going to scare him, I’m going to bump him,” Smith reportedly told a friend riding with her in the car as they approached a man running on the side of the road, according to charging papers and an interview of the friend by a King County Sheriff’s Office detective.

Smith then reportedly hit Moore and left the scene, along

with another vehicle traveling with her and behind her.

The friend in the other vehicle told detectives that Smith had taken the Camry from her godmother and that she took her mom’s car and was driving it alone behind Smith. She said she heard a loud bang and saw something fly into the air. She estimated they were going about 50 mph (in a 35 mph zone).

She said the Camry swerved and straightened out and that they continued driving. They

eventually made a right turn and stopped to look at the car.

“They were freaking out,” the friend said.

After Smith returned home, she reportedly told her godmother that she lives with in SeaTac that somebody had hit the Toyota Camry with a bat and that’s why it had damage. Smith did not have permission to use the car, but denied to her godmother that she drove it.

A relative of Smith told the godmother just over a week

ago that Smith had reportedly hit somebody with the car. The godmother later watched a news video that showed the Toyota Camry detectives were looking for. The godmother contacted Smith’s father.

Smith reportedly admitted to her father that she hit the man with the car, according to charging documents.

Detectives used headlight fragments found near the scene of the

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Kent’s West Hill water tower keeps on rising

**By STEVE HUNTER**  
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An eventual 16-story water tower continues to grow taller on Kent’s West Hill.

Crews are busy building the \$8.4 million reservoir at a former small city park at 24731 38th Ave. S., near Military Road South.

The project is scheduled to be completed by fall 2022, said city of Kent Public Works Director Chad Bieren in a Sept. 13 email.

“The steel will be erected throughout the fall/winter of 2021/2022 and will be topped off in the spring of 2022,” Bieren said. “The reservoir will be cleaned, coated, filled and tested before putting into service.”

Construction began in March on the project by Anacortes-based T Bailey Inc. The project will be paid for from the city’s water utility fund, covered by ratepayer fees.

The Kent City Council unanimously approved in November 2019 the transfer of a 0.65 acre-city park to the Public Works Department from the Parks Department to build the water storage tank near South 248th Street and Military Road South. Public Works paid the Parks Department \$520,000 (set by an appraiser) for the land, with those funds to be used for park expansions, improvements or acquisitions on the West Hill.

The council in September 2019 delayed a vote on the removal of the undeveloped



Crews work on a 16-story water reservoir on the West Hill in Kent near Military Road South and South 248th Street.

COURTESY PHOTO, CITY OF KENT

Kronisch Park after several people testified they wanted city officials to find a different spot for the 165-foot tower in order to preserve the park and keep such a tall tower away from their

business or home.

City staff said the 5-million gallon drinking water reservoir is needed to address a water storage and fire flow deficiency in the West Hill water

service area. The reservoir will ensure that residents and businesses have adequate water supply during peak demand and provide necessary fire flow storage for fighting fires.

“Completion of the tank will provide necessary storage for meeting demands of fire protection, along with the daily needs of customers for the next 50 years,” Bieren said.

Kent City Council grants rent relief to Half Lion Public House

**By STEVE HUNTER**  
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Half Lion Public House at the Riverbend Golf Complex will get a 17-month rent waiver from the city of Kent to help keep the restaurant open amid the financial impact of COVID-19 on the business.

The Kent City Council approved the rent break of \$3,000 per month (a total of \$51,000) from March 2020 through August 2021 at its Sept. 7 meeting. Owners of the restaurant/bar must start paying rent again this month.

“I think COVID impacted a lot of us,” Councilmember Bill Boyce said. “We’ve been through several restaurants there. Many walked away still owing the city. I don’t want to go there again. Half Lion was doing well prior to COVID.”

“If we get them through COVID and get them sustained, it’ll be good in the long run for the city and for Half Lion, so I strongly support this.”

Sumner-based Half Lion opened in June 2019 at the city-owned Riverbend Golf Complex, 2019 W. Meeker St. The company agreed to



COURTESY PHOTO, HALF LION

The Half Lion Public House at the city-owned Riverbend Golf Complex in Kent reached an agreement with city officials on a lease break due to the impact of COVID-19 on business.

a 10-year lease. But less than a year after opening, the pandemic struck.

City parks director Julie Parascondola told the council that state restrictions meant Half Lion for six months could have no customers inside, seven months at just 25% capacity and three months at 50%.

“It was not just about the capacity. They also had limited hours,” she said.

City leaders also approved no monthly lease increases for Half Lion until 2023, so the monthly rate will remain at \$3,000 until going to \$3,090 in year five of the lease.

Half Lion also received a delay in paying utilities, although it will have to pay back the utilities owed over a five-year period with 8% interest.

“Half Lion is a new restaurant and still building their brand,” Parascondola said. “They were there 10 months (before restrictions) and just rebuilt the whole interior and used their reserves for that.”

Parascondola said without the financial breaks Half Lion would close and the city would be left looking for a new tenant to run a restaurant.

“There is no market for

restaurants, especially during COVID,” she said.

It also helps the city-owned golf course attract business if golfers have a restaurant/bar to go to after playing, Parascondola said. She added the city staff waited to make recommendations about the lease agreement due to the uncertainty of how long the pandemic would last.

“We made a false assumption that it would not last too long,” said Parascondola who added staff didn’t want to keep coming back to the council with adjustments to the contract.

Councilmember Marli Larimer said it makes sense for the city to help out a tenant because city leaders have been asking other landlords to help out tenants during the pandemic.

“For many years we did not have a restaurant there, so it’s vital for the community to do this,” Larimer said.

City staff changed up the initial lease agreement with Half Lion two years ago to paying a straight monthly rate after more

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# Metro offers new on-demand access to transit service in Kent

By STEVE HUNTER  
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An on-demand access to transit hubs and work locations in the Kent Valley and parts of Kent’s East Hill arrived Sept. 14 with the launch of Ride Pingo to Transit.

People who live, work, or go to school within the specified service area can download the Ride Pingo app or call 855-233-6043 to request an on-demand shared ride, according to a Sept. 13 King County Metro news release announcing the new service.

Trips must start or end at Kent Station or the Kent Valley Hub (South 212th Street and 64th Avenue South) and be within the designated service area. Riders can connect to Metro buses at both hubs, or to Sound Transit buses and the Sounder Train at

Kent Station.

“As Kent grows - and grows quickly - its transportation options must grow with it,” said King County Executive Dow Constantine. “The valley is becoming a major transit center, with both Sounder commuter rail and major bus routes, and with the Rapid Ride I line now under development. Ride Pingo to Transit will serve as an important link to the growth and development of Kent and all its dynamic, diverse communities.”

Service is available from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday to Friday and from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Ride Pingo to Transit is a pilot service that provides easier access to jobs, shopping, Kent community center, services and more.

The Ride Pingo to Transit app’s smart technology

will also allow riders to select the bus or train they want to connect to and then match them with a vehicle to get them to their connection in time.

Ride Pingo to Transit will operate 14-passenger vehicles with side-deployed ramps. The cost for Ride Pingo to Transit is the same as riding the bus: \$2.75 adult, \$1.50 ORCA LIFT and youth, \$1 Reduced Regional Fare Permit and free for children 5 and under.

You can pay using your ORCA card, a Transit GO Ticket, cash, transfer, or paper ticket. Using an ORCA card lets you transfer fares between all buses and trains and Ride Pingo to Transit; other fare payment options allow fare transfers between Metro buses and Ride Pingo to Transit.

“Connecting our community with a diverse

set of transit options continues to be a priority of ours at the City of Kent,” Kent Mayor Dana Ralph said. “Ride Pingo to Transit will provide much needed access to public transit for Kent residents that is affordable and flexible. This service will empower our residents to better access our transit hubs and work in the Kent Valley and beyond. I’m very excited about the launch of this new service and am looking forward to trying it out myself!”

This service was developed through community input, which began in 2018, as part of Metro’s Renton Kent Auburn Area Mobility Project, designed to provide greater mobility options to Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and underserved communities in south King County.

Metro reached out to residents, employers, and community-based organizations to understand their needs. The outreach indicated that access to swing and nightshift work at distribution centers in the Kent Valley was a primary entry point into the workforce for immigrant and refugee populations in the Kent East Hill neighborhoods.

Ride Pingo to Transit will serve communities where 57% of residents are Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, 34% were born abroad, and 43% speak a language other than English at home. The Ride Pingo app is available in Arabic, Chinese, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

Metro’s Mobility Framework— which helps the agency adapt to the

changing transportation landscape in an equitable and sustainable way— identified these core neighborhoods as areas of opportunity due to their difficulty to be served with “fixed-route” bus and rail services, and the high unmet need for affordable access to public transit.

The \$1.5 million Ride Pingo to Transit is made possible by the U.S. Department of Energy (\$350,000 grant in partnership with The Routing Company), Amazon (\$500,000 in Amazon ORCA business credit) and King County Metro (\$650,000 in local funds), according to Metro. The pilot is funded through December 2022.

For more information, visit [kingcounty.gov/metro/RidePingo](http://kingcounty.gov/metro/RidePingo) or download the Ride Pingo app for Android or iPhone.



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# Kent City Council to repeal drug paraphernalia possession law

BY STEVE HUNTER  
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The Kent City Council agreed to repeal the city's code for possession of drug paraphernalia because it conflicts with the new state law that decriminalizes the possession of drugs and paraphernalia for personal use.

City Attorney Pat Fitzpatrick explained the reasons for dropping the ordinance at the council's Sept. 7 Operations and Public Safety Committee meeting. The council, which will officially approve to repeal the law on Sept. 21, has returned to committee meetings for specific topics rather than one large Committee of the Whole meeting that covered all topics.

A state Supreme Court

ruling in February (on State vs. Blake) found the state statute unconstitutional that a person can be found guilty of possession without proof that the defendant knew they possessed the substance. There was no requirement to prove criminal intent, which the court ruled is a violation of due process.

The Legislature then passed ESB 5476 earlier this year that included an element of knowing they possessed the drugs, which made a stricter city of Kent code invalid because city laws cannot be stricter than state laws.

The new state law, which the city now follows, makes possession of drug paraphernalia a misdemeanor only when a person possesses it with the intent

to produce and distribute controlled substances.

"Before the new bill, it was illegal to possess a syringe," Fitzpatrick said to the council. "Now it's not illegal to do that or to have a crack pipe. It's now legal to possess. It's illegal to sell, but not to have in possession."

Fitzpatrick said city prosecutors had charged for decades under the city's code for possession of drug paraphernalia.

Other changes under the new state law requires police officers to offer drug referral program options to people they find in possession of small amounts of controlled substances, including heroin, methamphetamine and cocaine. If the person refuses a deferral, the officer can arrest

them.

Otherwise, a person gets at least two deferrals in the city before an arrest can be made.

"If they want to defer, we fill out a form and give them a list of places to go for treatment," Fitzpatrick said. "And we take a copy for police records."

Fitzpatrick said the city hasn't had any deferral cases since the new law went on the books in late July.

"But if you get two deferrals under the statute, the third offense an officer can call records, if there are two prior deferrals, it's up to an officer's discretion about whether to arrest," he said. "(If they arrest) We review the case and decide whether to file charges."

The Legislature approved

the changes in an effort to get people using drugs into treatment rather than tossing them in jail.

### Man with pipe walks away

Police Chief Rafael Padilla told the council it's illegal to consume drugs in public but the deferral rule can be a challenge.

He shared a recent personal experience while he was in uniform and saw a man near Willis Street and Central Avenue South who appeared to be smoking a meth pipe. Padilla said he attempted to contact the man, but the man stuck the pipe in his pocket and walked away.

"I cannot book him in jail due to the law for deferral," Padilla said. "So I have

to make a choice if I should use force to contain the person, but with the (state Legislature's police reform) system saying don't take physical actions in those situations, I let him walk away and not use force."

Padilla said hopefully officers will get people to cooperate and do referrals, but he said so far they didn't have any such cases since the new law started on July 25.

Councilmember Bill Boyce asked Padilla if he would have tried to stop the man if he got into a car, possibly under the influence of drugs, and might have caused a major crash.

"At that point it's more justifiable to use force," Padilla said. "But this person was on foot and didn't want to talk to me."

## Westfield Southcenter to hold job fair Sept. 25 in Tukwila



COURTESY PHOTO  
Westfield Southcenter.

Westfield Southcenter and its retailers will offer a free job fair from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 25 at Macy's Court at the mall in Tukwila.

The fair will feature more than 20 shops and restaurants with a variety of positions available across all levels. The businesses are looking for more employees with a busy holiday season ahead.

Applicants will be able to meet and greet with the hiring managers with positions available from sales associates to team leads, line cooks to servers and merchandisers to shop managers. Participating retailers and restaurants, include:

Abercrombie & Fitch, Aeropostale, Amazon, Banter by Piercing Pagoda, Ben Bridge, Box Lunch, Braganza Tea, Buckle, Build-A-Bear, Charley's Philly Steaks, Charlotte Russe, Chipotle, Container Store, Din Tai Fung, FORME, H&M, Hollister, Johnny Rockets, Lolli & Pops, Lush, Kay Jewelers, Macy's and others.

To attend, please RSVP at eventbrite.com/e/westfield-southcenter-job-fair-tickets-168781390683.

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## Firefighters vs. the governor's vaccine mandate

We all thought we were in this fight with the coronavirus together, based on what the experts have been telling us are the rewards of vaccination for the greater good.

Apparently that was our misunderstanding. Over the last few weeks, we have learned that some teachers groups and state employees along with several firefighter unions have come out in opposition to Gov. Jay Inslee's mandate that we get vaccinated by Oct. 18 or risk losing your job.

State employees recently settled their disagreement without a change in Inslee's mandate. But it is teachers and firefighters that we look to as heroes in these troubled times. Firefighters hold a special responsibility. They are the first on the scene when we need help. Because they are emergency medical technicians and receive paramedic training, they qualify as health workers and fall under the governor's criteria. Many of them don't like the governor's mandate and our disappointment with their opposition is justified because their



**BOB ROEGNER**

attitude is troubling when their first concern should be the community. But it isn't complicated.

With public interest in the stories about the issue, one firefighter commented: "We're going to be forced to decide whether to take the vaccine or seek alternatives." Some firefighters are considering looking for other jobs, moving out of state or retiring rather than complying with the mandate. They also point out that with wildfires and increased calls, it has been a difficult 18 months and the work force has been stretched. Several fire departments in Pierce County worry how they will meet staffing requirements.

Aaron James, who represents 430 firefighters in Graham, Central Pierce, South Pierce and Orting, estimates that only 30% of his membership has not been vaccinated. Allyson Hinzman, president of the Tacoma firefighters with 412 members, says the mandate took away the rights of firefighters to choose the best option — and wants to see alternatives like frequent testing or masks.

The governor's office has said several times that they listened to stakeholders, engaged local leaders, and concluded vaccines are the most effective tool for workers and community members to fight the virus. Some of the smaller departments may have some difficulty with staffing, but larger ones should be prepared. East Pierce Fire and Rescue Chief Jon Parkinson said the department will comply with the requirement: "We have a dynamic staffing plan, which is designed to accommodate issues such as weather, injuries, illness and disasters."

Others say the biggest problem for the firefighters is their perception of lack of

respect. Going from being heroes to being required to get a vaccine to go to work may have been hard on their egos.

In Auburn, the union representing the Valley Regional Fire Authority, which represents employees in Auburn, Pacific and Algonia, did not specifically oppose the governor's mandate, but did oppose the governor's deadline of Oct. 18. VRFA is in the process of checking vaccination records. Recently, South King Fire and Rescue's board of commissioners, which serves Federal Way and Des Moines, passed a new policy that would prohibit unvaccinated firefighters from working with patients despite opposition from many fire department employees who are against the governor's mandate. Commissioner Mark Thompson said: "If you don't get the vaccine, you're not going to deliver patient care. You're not going to expose citizens that we're supposed to be protecting to the virus." SKFR Chief Vic Pennington will write a letter to the governor expressing the department's

and employees' concerns. It is estimated that 74% of the uniformed SKFR staff is vaccinated. The union joined with 10 other unions to send a letter to the governor stating their reasoning — "to defend our members' freedom of medical choice" — and said they felt like the SKFR Board was being disrespectful. Union president Ryan Herrera said the union is not against the vaccines, but is against the loss of personal freedom to make medical decisions as well as the deadline of Oct. 18.

This comes down to following orders. We all have bosses and the fire service is one where employees are trained to follow orders whether fighting a fire or following medical direction. Because to do otherwise could put someone's life in jeopardy, which is exactly what is happening here.

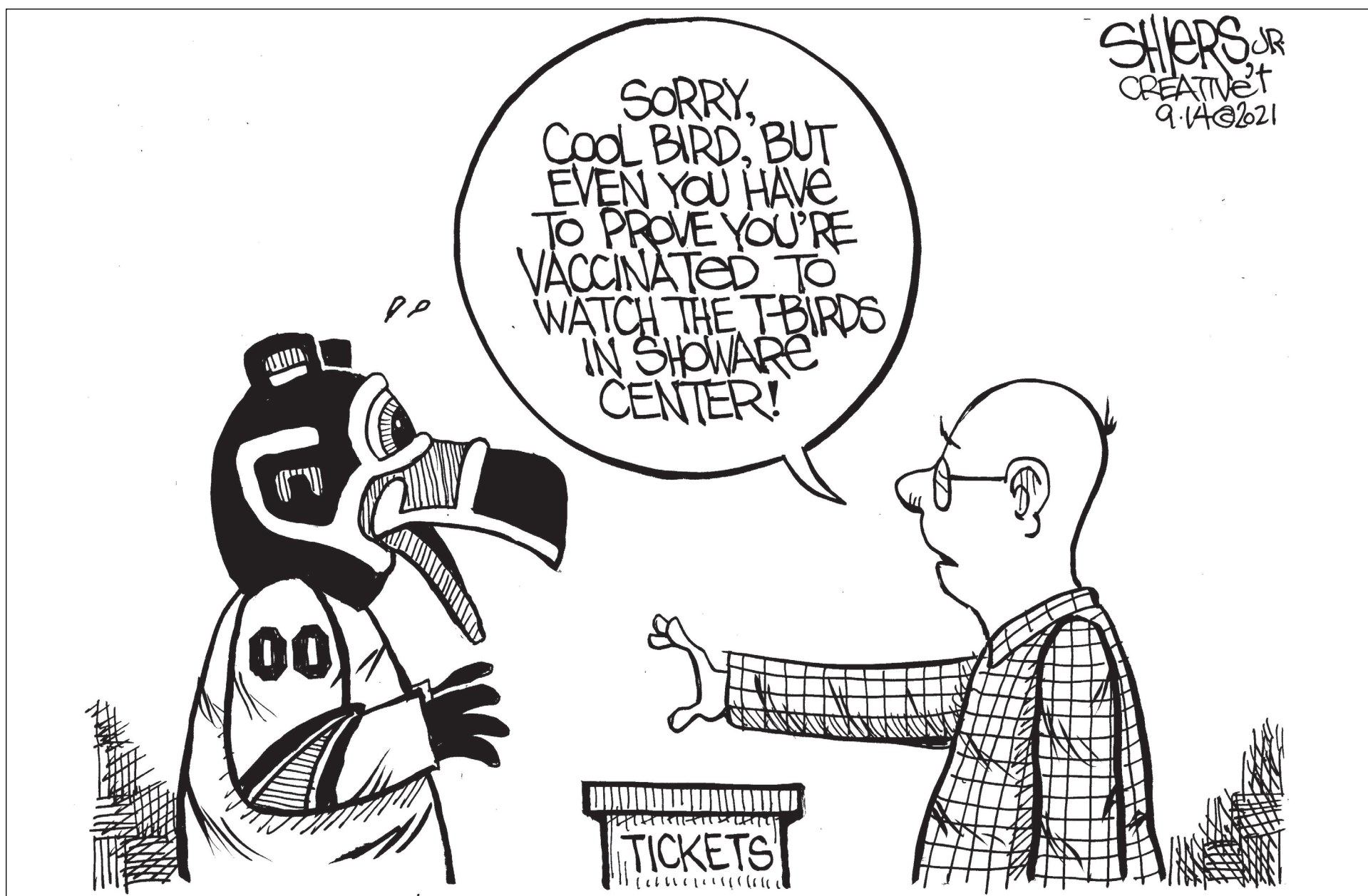
Fire chiefs are supposed to be leaders and more is expected of them. However, Vashon Fire Chief Charles Krimmert has said he does not intend to get vaccinated and is placing his board of commissioners in a very difficult position regarding

his continued employment — although the commissioners did say they expect to be in compliance in October. Much of the firefighting is done by volunteers in this small community with only two employees. The other one, a firefighter with an EMT license, is unvaccinated.

Patients and the public at large have a right to expect medical providers to be vaccinated.

The governor's order is clear, as is the reasoning behind it, and if firefighters continue to undermine their own position by choosing their ego over the communities they serve, it may not be as difficult to replace them as they seem to think. If we truly are all in this together, the firefighters need to show the leadership we expect from them and get vaccinated, rather than try to put political pressure on their commissioners and the governor to change his mandate.

*Federal Way resident Bob Roegner is a former mayor of Auburn. Contact [bjroegner@comcast.net](mailto:bjroegner@comcast.net).*



## Vaccinations improve our health and employment numbers

It is not surprising that COVID-19, which ravaged the world, was disastrous for our country's economy. Millions died from COVID complications. Offices, stores and factories closed. And people were forced to quarantine at home.

The good news this past Labor Day is vaccines are



**DON C. BRUNELL**

working and readily available. As a result, our job market has dramatically improved. People are eating out, shopping and traveling. Our economy is healing.

Vaccines were developed and deployed at "warp speed" under President Donald Trump. Having Americans inoculated as quickly as possible is one of the few things in which presidents Trump and Joe Biden jointly deserve credit. It is not a political football to be tossed back and forth. Proven vaccines are in everyone's best interest.

Shots in arms started en masse as Biden took office. His administration rightly accelerated the pace. As a result, our unemployment rate dropped from almost 15 percent during the pandemic peak in April 2020 to 5.4 percent in mid-August 2021.

The progress continues. Wallethub.com reported much better job growth in July, exceeding researchers' expectations: "The overall drop (in unemployment) can be attributed to a combination of vaccinations and states loosening restrictions."

Wallethub.com credits vaccinations for the resurgence in people working. Now, just over half of all Americans are fully vaccinated and just over 6 in 10 have received one shot. However, the vaccination rate needs to accelerate. The overwhelming number of patients with COVID in our overcrowded hospitals are unvaccinated.

The good news is nearly 60 percent of all Washingtonians are completely immunized and two-thirds received one injection. Lack of vaccines is not an issue. Our state's population is 7.8 million, and 10.5 million shots have been delivered and 9.4 million shots have been administered.

Vaccinations are reflected in jobs numbers. Wallethub.com data shows three Washington cities rank among the cities "bouncing back most." Spokane is rated 16th best followed by Vancouver (27th) and Tacoma (32nd). To keep the economy moving, job vacancies need to be filled.

The number of unfilled jobs soared to nearly 15 million by mid-March. April

data from online job site ZipRecruiter found that discouraged, hesitant and fearful job seekers translates into many positions remaining vacant. Vaccinations go a long way to alleviating fear.

With millions of employers looking for workers, the emphasis is shifting to encourage people to seek work. Employers nationwide say the enhanced federal unemployment benefits will only add to workers' reticence to fill the millions of open positions.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce believes paying people not to work is dampening what should be a stronger jobs market. As a remedy, some states, such as Montana, are rejecting the added \$300 payment to unemployment checks. Gov. Greg Gianforte told the Associated Press extra federal unemployment benefits are doing more harm than good — "extra payments have served as an incentive for people to stay home, collect the money and not seek work."

Instead, Montana instituted an incentive program

where workers currently receiving unemployment payments can qualify for a one-time \$1,200 bonus after they have completed four weeks in their new jobs. Montana also is among several states reinstating the work-search requirement.

Finally, lawmakers must find ways to generate revenue without further damaging our economy. In 2020, the federal government took in \$3.42 trillion, but spent \$6.5 trillion. Our national debt has soared by \$28.5 trillion, according to the Peter G. Peterson Foundation.

Vaccinations are key to putting people safely back to work. Working people sustain our economy and those workers and businesses pay the taxes needed to fund our government.

*Don C. Brunell is a business analyst, writer and columnist. He is a former president of the Association of Washington Business, the state's oldest and largest business organization, and now lives in Vancouver. Contact [thebrunells@msn.com](mailto:thebrunells@msn.com).*

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# COVID-19 closure strikes Kent classroom at Daniel Elementary

By STEVE HUNTER  
shunter@soundpublishing.com

The Kent School District closed a classroom at Daniel Elementary School due to COVID-19, the first and only closure through Sept. 14 among its 43 schools since in-person learning began Aug. 26.

The district reported the closure at Daniel Elementary, 11310 SE 248th St., on Sept. 8 on its COVID-10 dashboard on the district website.

“As of Sept. 8, one (1) classroom is closed and offering remote synchronous instruction,” according to the dashboard summary. “Otherwise, the building is open and offering in-person instruction to students in the remaining classrooms. The school

is contacting all impacted families of the closed classroom on Sept. 8. Close contacts have already been contacted by the school.”

District officials declined to disclose how many cases were in the classroom or the grade level of the class.

“Daniel is the first KSD school to have a classroom closure due to COVID-19,” said Melissa Laramie, district executive director of communications and public affairs, in a Sept. 10 email. “At this time, individual case counts for students and staff by school are not being posted, only classroom and school level closures. However, families will be contacted in case of potential exposure.”

Laramie said classroom closures are typically 14 days.

“In Daniel Elementary’s case, the earliest the classroom would reopen is Sept. 20,” Laramie said. “If a classroom or school is closed due to COVID-19, students will shift to the 100% remote model used during the 2020-2021 school year for the duration of the quarantine. Schedules will mirror current 2021-2022 in-person schedules. KSD teachers will have two days to transition to synchronous remote learning. Remote teach learning, with live instruction, will begin online fully by the third day for impacted classrooms.”

Laramie said the district is following state and federal health guidelines to reduce the number of cases, including face masks and social distancing.

“We have implemented layered prevention and mitigation strategies aligned to Washington State Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control guidelines district-wide to help keep everyone healthy, especially those not yet able to receive a COVID-19 vaccine,” Laramie said.

The district’s guidelines for closure of a classroom after consultation with Public Health — Seattle & King County will be considered when:

- Two or more students or staff in the same room/area test positive for COVID-19
- The cases have symptoms that start within 14 days of each other
- A student or staff member has been in close

contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more) with a person who has confirmed a positive test result

- The cases are not associated with one another in another setting (household, club, etc.)

If a full class needs to quarantine or a school is directed to temporarily close in response to COVID-19 transmission, then:

- Staff and families will be notified by phone, letter, and/or email of the classroom closure
- Students will shift to the 100% remote model used during the 2020-2021 school year
- Schedules will mirror current 2021-2022 in-person schedules
- Teachers will have two days to transition

to synchronous remote learning, and learning will begin online fully by the third day for impacted classrooms

As far as returning to school after a positive COVID-19 test, if a person tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 by a molecular or antigen test, they can return to school when the following criteria are met:

- 10 days since symptom onset, or since positive test specimen collection date if no symptoms are present (up to 20 days for those who are severely ill or severely immunocompromised) and
- 24 hours after fever resolves without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Symptoms have improved.



# SPOTLIGHT



## School Board extends Vela’s interim superintendent contract

By STEVE HUNTER  
shunter@soundpublishing.com

The Kent School Board extended the interim superintendent contract for Israel Vela until it can find a new interim superintendent.

The board voted unanimously Sept. 9 to extend Vela’s interim contract after giving him a 30-day deal in August to fill in after Calvin Watts resigned as Kent School District superintendent to become superintendent of the Gwinnett County Public Schools in Georgia.

The district has advertised for an interim superintendent and will review applications and select one of the candidates, according to the district website. No timeline has been announced for filling the position. The interim superintendent will finish out the 2021-2022 school year prior to a new superintendent starting next summer.

“The board will focus on the permanent superintendent search involving the public later this school year,” according to a district statement. “Information will be shared on (the district’s website) and in open public meetings about the search process as the board moves forward.”

Vela is the Kent School District’s chief school operations and academic support officer. He was one of four lead administrators under Watts. Vela’s interim role started Aug. 2. The board voted unanimously to appoint Vela at a July 28 special meeting, but only to



Israel Vela

a 30-day contract.

A search by the board for a new superintendent is expected to start in January after voters select two new members to the five-member board on the Nov. 2 general election ballot.


The board races are between Tim Clark and Sara Franklin for District No. 5 director and Awale Farah and Bradley Kenning for District No. 4 director.

The terms of Denise Daniels and Maya Vengadasalam expire this year and neither ran for reelection. Board members Leslie Hamada and Michele Bettinger have two years remaining on their terms. Joe Bento is running unopposed in November for the seat the board appointed him to in February.

Prior to hiring Watts to replace Edward Vargas, the board appointed Tony Apostle, a retired Puyallup School District superintendent, to serve as interim superintendent during the 2014-2015 school year. Vargas left in October 2014 and the board picked Apostle for the interim role the next month before hiring Watts in May 2015.


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## Kentridge High cancels Sept. 9 football game due to COVID-19

By STEVE HUNTER  
shunter@soundpublishing.com

The Kentridge High School football team canceled a game Sept. 9 against Liberty (of Renton) at French Field in Kent due to COVID-19.

“The Kentridge football team had a positive COVID case reported this week,” said Kent School District spokesperson Melissa Laramie in a Sept. 10 email. “After reviewing the close contacts with this individual, we have decided that the team did not have the

numbers to field a team to play safely.”

Laramie said the district continues to work with the state Department of Health and follow the directives in response to any positive cases.

Laramie said she did not know of any other Kent sports teams that have had to cancel games.

Kentridge opened the season Sept. 3 with a 46-14 loss to Auburn Mountainview. The Chargers are scheduled to play Sept. 17 at Eastlake High in Sammamish.



COURTESY PHOTO, KENTRIDGE HIGH

Kentridge High football last spring.



# School Board approves return of deputy to Kentlake High

By STEVE HUNTER  
shunter@soundpublishing.com

The Kent School Board voted 3-2 to approve a contract for the return of a King County Sheriff's Office deputy to serve as a school resource officer at Kentlake High and two elementary schools as well as adding two middle schools to his or her duties.

The Sheriff's Office covers the Kent School District schools in unincorporated King County. The board in August voted 3-2 to return Kent Police officers to Kent-Meridian and Kentridge high schools as well as Mill Creek and Meridian middle schools, which are in the city of Kent.

Board directors Michele Bettinger and Joe Bento opposed the contract with the Sheriff's Office at the Sept. 8 meeting for the same reason they were against the contract with Kent Police.

"We haven't had public meetings for community or student involvement and we said we would," Bento said prior to his no vote.

Bettinger voiced the same opinion.

"We promised meetings before any vote," Bettinger said. "We didn't have those meetings. We need to keep our promises to the community."

Board President Denise Daniels and directors Maya Vengadasalam and Leslie Hamada voted to approve the contract with the Sheriff's Office, just as they did with Kent Police. Hamada said she

supported the contract but agreed the board should have heard from residents. The district is trying to organize community meetings about the school resource officers to be held sometime in October.

"It'd be much better for the public if we had the educational piece before (the vote)," Hamada said. "I appreciate we are looking at October but I think the public would've been more happy if we did it before."

The district will pay \$62,509 in 2021 and \$88,528 in 2022 to the Sheriff's Office to provide one deputy to patrol the five schools. The contract runs from August 2021 through July 31, 2022.

The officer will split time among Kentlake, Grass Lake and Sawyer Woods elementary schools and Meeker and Northwood middle schools. The two middle schools were added this year to have a deputy spend time at the campuses.

The specific services to be provided include an officer presence on campus; staff training on topics such as gangs and violence intervention; classroom instruction about substance abuse prevention and criminal law; parent education on topics such as youth issues related to violence and the criminal justice system; building rapport with students to help students to see officers as a youth advocate whose primary concern is their safety and security.

Hamada said the district needs to get the message out about why police are in schools and changes to their role after police reform laws approved this year by the Legislature.

"Police in schools and their role includes major changes," Hamada said. "Something the community doesn't have is the image is more of a community policing and kids benefit from that. Society and policing are changing and school officers are taking on a different role."

Bento said it's confusing to the community because the district has school security officers as well as school resource officers. School security is part of the district's Safety Services Team that has 26 members spread across the district.

"The education piece would be really important to talk about the differences between the two positions," Bento said.

Bento also emphasized the importance to hear from youth about the program and in a community meeting where they can meet with other youth to speak freely about the topic without adults involved.

"If an adult is in their space, youth will not speak or be their authentic selves," he said.

District staff has yet to present a contract to the board for a school resource officer at Kentwood High, which is in the city of Covington. Covington contracts with the Sheriff's Office for police services.



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# Puget Sound Energy rolls out public electric vehicle charging station in Kent

By STEVE HUNTER  
shunter@soundpublishing.com

Electric vehicle drivers will have a new charging station in Kent near the Best Western Plus Plaza by the Green, 24437 Russell Road.

Puget Sound Energy is continuing its commitment to create a better energy future by launching another fast, convenient and green way for drivers to charge an electric vehicle, according to a Sept. 14 PSE statement.

PSE’s electric vehicle program Up & Go Electric installed a public charging station that is scheduled to open on Sept. 17.

The first PSE Up & Go Electric public charging station opened in September 2020 at the Hub at Lacey and has been providing fast, reliable charging to all EV drivers while offsetting over 20,800 tons of CO2.

“We are excited to be adding a public charging station to the Kent area as

we continue to expand our inventory of charging stations in our service area,” said Will Einstein, director of Product Development and Growth at PSE. “Our Up & Go Electric public charging stations are designed to offer our customers and all drivers a faster and greener way to charge their EV when on the go.”

The Up & Go Electric program plans to open more public charging stations in Kitsap, Whatcom and other counties where infrastructure is needed to help meet customer demand for more charging options. In addition, PSE is currently installing charging stations at workplaces, multifamily residences, and community-based service providers through other Up & Go Electric pilot programs.

“I’m very excited about PSE’s decision to open a public charging station here in Kent,” Kent Mayor Dana Ralph said. “As we continue to see more electric vehicles on the road, it’s important that we meet the

growing demand for public charging facilities.”

### Fast and convenient

The station is located near State Route 516 near downtown Kent. Boasting multiple Level 2 and DC fast charging ports, the station can charge up to four EVs simultaneously. The DC fast chargers in particular can fully charge an EV in less than an hour.

Electricity purchased at the station is matched with 100% renewable energy through PSE’s Green Power program, setting apart the Up & Go Electric public charging station from other charging stations as a greener way to charge.

All drivers – not just PSE customers – can use the new Up & Go Electric app to take advantage of simple mobile payment options, monitor their charging session remotely, and more.

To learn more about electric vehicles and Up & Go Electric, visit [pse.com/electricvehicles](https://pse.com/electricvehicles).






COURTESY PHOTO, PSE  
PSE installed new charging stations for electric vehicles near the Plaza by the Green hotel along Russell Road.

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# State employees including first responders sue state over vaccine mandate

BY CAMERON SHEPPARD  
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soundpublishing.com

Over 90 people including state troopers, state Department of Corrections workers, firefighters and health care workers are suing the state over Gov. Jay Inslee's mandate that state employees must be vaccinated before Oct. 18 or else they could lose their jobs.

The lawsuit, filed on Sept. 10 in Walla Walla County Superior Court, alleges that Inslee's vaccination mandate overreaches his authority and violates the rights afforded to workers by the state's constitution.

The complaint argues that Inslee's order singles out employees of protected "political" and "religious" classes of employees that would be "purged" by the mandate, violating their right to free speech and expression.

The document cites WA Const. Art. I, Sec. 11, which guarantees: "Absolute freedom of conscience in all matters of religious sentiment, belief and worship, shall be guaranteed to every individual, and no one shall be molested or disturbed in person or property on account of religion.... No religious qualification shall be required for any public office or

employment."

It also finds issue with the "religious exemption" process and the "religious questionnaire," which the complaint claims "improperly inquired into protected private affairs regarding health care decisions and religious sentiment, belief, and worship."

Additionally it argues that the governor can "prohibit" certain behaviors, but cannot compel citizens to commit certain actions like getting vaccinated.

The document also states intent to amend the complaint to "add thirty to fifty-thousand additional similarly situated Plaintiffs."

# COVID-19 walk-up testing site open in Kent/Des Moines area

BY STEVE HUNTER  
shunter@soundpublishing.com

Public Health — Seattle & King County has opened a new free COVID-19 walk-up testing site at 23221 Pacific Highway S., in Kent in partnership with UW Medicine.

Free COVID-19 testing is available throughout King County regardless of immigration or insurance status. They are open for drive-thru or walk-ups/wheel-ups to anyone who cannot access a COVID-19 test through

their regular health-care provider. Advanced appointments strongly recommended to avoid long wait times.

If you have symptoms, reservations can be made online at [solvhalth.com/book-online/A2788p](https://solvhalth.com/book-online/A2788p).

If no symptoms, for reservations go to [solvhalth.com/book-online/A91860](https://solvhalth.com/book-online/A91860).

The testing site is open 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

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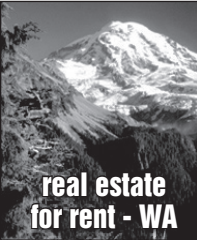
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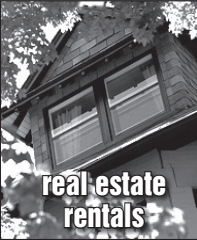


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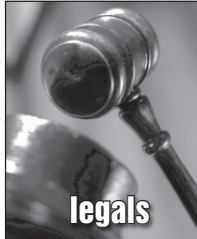
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[ecy.wa.gov](http://ecy.wa.gov), or ATTN: Water Quality Program, Construction Stormwater Washington State Department of Ecology P.O. Box 47696 Olympia, WA 98504-7696 #937334 9/10/21, 9/17/21

## Legal Notices

A public hearing will be held to consider the applicant's request to rezone a 4.48-acre property from CC - Community Commercial to GC - General Commercial. The applicant proposes to construct a 4 story / 100-unit hotel, fast food restaurant, and gas station with a convenience store and car wash. The site is addressed as 23703 Military Road South identified by King County Parcel Number, 1522049010. The project site is zoned CC-Community Commercial. Hearing Date:

## Legal Notices

Hearing Location: Hearing will be held virtually via Zoom Conference Call. Please use conference call instructions below. Dial by your location +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma) 888 475 4499 US Toll-free Meeting ID: 814 7129 3694 Passcode: 586868 Join Zoom Meeting <https://cityofkent.zoom.us/j/81471293694?pwd=dE8wNkFpZkVhY1NleVhQYm9YTjY2Xz09> Meeting ID: 814 7129 3694 Passcode: 586868 Permit Number: RPP4-2203648, RZ-2020-1 All interested parties may participate and provide testimony. The application is available for review upon request. For more information, please contact Sam Alcorn Planner, at [salcorn@kentwa.gov](mailto:salcorn@kentwa.gov), 253-856-6449. #937930 9/17/21

A public hearing will be

## Legal Notices

held to consider the applicant's request to change the amount of lots for the approved preliminary plat from 21 to 23 lots. The project is located at King County Parcel Numbers 1822059170, 1822059329 and 1822059062 Hearing Date:

## Legal Notices

Hearing Location: Hearing will be held virtually via Zoom Conference Call. Please use conference call instructions below. Dial by your location +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma) 877 853 5257 US Toll-free Meeting ID: 812 9325 5207 Passcode: 080018 Join Zoom Meeting <https://cityofkent.zoom.us/j/81293255207?pwd=OXhDaVh0aUk5ODd1FCY3J5aTNjOT09> Meeting ID: 812 9325 5207 Passcode: 080018 Permit Number: RPP3-2211477, PTA-2021-2 All interested parties may participate and provide testimony. The application is available for review upon request. For more information, please contact Andy Johnson, Planner, at [ajohnson@kentwa.gov](mailto:ajohnson@kentwa.gov), 253-856-5448. #937935 9/17/21

Kim Greer, is seeking coverage under the Washington State Department of Ecology's Construction Stormwater NPDES and State Waste Discharge General Permit. The proposed project, Sumpter Short Plat, is located at 14204 156th Avenue S.E., in Renton in King County. This project involves 2.7 acres of soil disturbance for residential, road and utility construction activities. The stormwater infiltrates into the ground, with a potential of the emergency overflow discharging into the Lower Cedar River.

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 anti-degradation 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 #937668 9/10/21, 9/17/21

To: BARBORA MARO-SOYA I have started a court case by filing a Petition. The name of the Petition is: Petition for Divorce (Dissolution). You must respond in writing if you want the court to consider your side. Deadline! Your Response must be filed and served within 60 days of the date this Summons is published: 9/10/21. If you do not file and serve your Response or a Notice of Appearance by the deadline: No one has to notify you about other hearings in this case, and the court may approve the requests in the Petition without hearing your side (called a default judgment).

To: BARBORA MARO-SOYA I have started a court case by filing a Petition. The name of the Petition is: Petition for Divorce (Dissolution). You must respond in writing if you want the court to consider your side. Deadline! Your Response must be filed and served within 60 days of the date this Summons is published: 9/10/21. If you do not file and serve your Response or a Notice of Appearance by the deadline: No one has to notify you about other hearings in this case, and the court may approve the requests in the Petition without hearing your side (called a default judgment).

To: BARBORA MARO-SOYA I have started a court case by filing a Petition. The name of the Petition is: Petition for Divorce (Dissolution). You must respond in writing if you want the court to consider your side. Deadline! Your Response must be filed and served within 60 days of the date this Summons is published: 9/10/21. If you do not file and serve your Response or a Notice of Appearance by the deadline: No one has to notify you about other hearings in this case, and the court may approve the requests in the Petition without hearing your side (called a default judgment).

## Legal Notices

Follow these steps:  
1. Read the Petition and any other documents that were filed at court with this Summons. Those documents explain what the other party is asking for.  
2. Fill out a Response on this form (check the Response that matches the Petition): FL Divorce 211, Response to Petition about a Marriage You can get the Response form and other forms you may need at: The Washington State Courts' website: Washington LawHelp; or the Superior Court Clerk's office or county law library (for a fee).  
3. Serve (give) a copy of your Response to the person who filed this Summons at the address below, and to any other parties. You may use certified mail with return receipt requested. For more information on how to serve, read Superior Court Civil Rule 5.  
4. File your original Response with the court clerk at this address: Superior Court Clerk, King County 401 4th Ave. N., Room 2C Kent, WA, 98032.  
5. A lawyer is not required however it is a good idea to talk to a lawyer, but you may file and serve your Response without one. /s/ James C. McGuire WSBA 28454 I agree to accept legal papers for this case at: 1906 East Aloha Street Seattle, WA 98112 This Summons is issued according to Rule 4.1 of the Superior Court Civil Rules of the state of Washington. Published in the Kent Reporter on 9/10/21, 9/17/21, 9/24/21, 10/1/21, 10/8/21, 10/15/21 #937371

The Personal Representative named below has been appointed as Personal Representative of this Estate. Any person having a claim against the decedent must, before the time the claim would be barred by any otherwise applicable statute of limitations, present the claim in the manner as provided in RCW 11.40.070 by serving on or mailing to the Personal Representative or the Personal Representative's attorneys at the address stated below a copy of the claim and filing the original of the claim with the Court in which the probate proceedings were commenced. The claim must be presented within the later of: (1) Thirty days after the Personal Representative served or mailed the Notice to the creditor as provided under RCW 11.40.020(1)(c); or (2) four months after the date of first publication of the Notice. If the claim is not presented within this time frame, the claim is forever barred, except as otherwise provided in RCW 11.40.051 and 11.40.060. This bar is effective as to claims against both the decedent's probate assets and nonprobate assets. DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION: September 17, 2021. PR: /s/ DURON L. JONES /s/ Peter W. Mogren Peter W. Mogren WSBA #11515 Of MOGREN, GLESSNER & AHRENS, P.S. Attorneys for Personal Representative 100 Evergreen Bldg.; P.O. Box 90 Renton, WA 98057-0090 (425) 255-4542 #938060 9/17/21, 9/24/21, 10/1/21

Tri Pointe Homes, John Fernstrom, 15900 SE Eastgate Way Ste 300 Bellevue, WA 98008-5012, is seeking coverage under the Washington State Department of Ecology's Construction Stormwater NPDES and State Waste Discharge General Permit. The proposed project, Pine Meadows at Soos Creek, is located at 11043 and 11061 SE 192 St in Kent in King county. This project involves 7.29 acres of soil disturbance for Residential construction activities. The receiving waterbody is Panther Creek. 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 anti-degradation requirements under WAC 173-201A-320. Comments can be submitted to: [ecyrewqlanoi@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:ecyrewqlanoi@ecy.wa.gov), or ATTN: Water Quality Program, Construction Stormwater Washington State Department of Ecology P.O. Box 47696 Olympia, WA 98504-7696 #938237 9/17/21, 9/24/21

## Legal Notices

To: Moustapha Fall I have started a court case by filing a petition. The name of the Petition is:

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Your must be within of the date this is published August 13, 2021. If you do not file and serve your or a by

the deadline: No one has to notify you about other hearings in this case, and The court may approve the requests in the Petition without hearing your side (

Follow these steps: the Petition and any other documents that were filed at court with this Summons. Those documents explain what the other party is asking for. a on this form: FL Divorce 211,

You can get the Response form and other forms you may need at:

- The Washington State Courts' website: [www.courts.wa.gov/forms](http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms)
- Washington LawHelp: [www.washingtonlawhelp.org](http://www.washingtonlawhelp.org), or
- The Superior Court Clerk's office or county law library (for a fee).

copy of your to the person who filed this at the address below, and to any other parties. You may use certified mail with return receipt requested. For more information on how to serve, read Superior Court Civil Rule 5. your original with the court clerk at this address: Superior Court Clerk, King County 401 4th Ave N Kent, WA 98032

It is a good idea to talk to a lawyer, but you may file and serve your without one. /s/ Diyenaba Traore Date: August 5, 2021 I agree to accept legal papers for this case at the following address: PO Box 65 Renton, WA 98057 #934885 8/13/21, 8/20/21, 8/27/21, 9/3/21, 9/10/21, 9/17/21

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The Personal Representative named below has been appointed as Personal Representative of this Estate. Any person having a claim against the decedent must, before the time the claim would be barred by any otherwise applicable statute of limitations, present the claim in the manner as provided in RCW 11.40.070 by serving on or mailing to the Personal Representative or the Personal Representative's attorneys at the address stated below a copy of the claim and filing the original of the claim with the Court in which the probate proceedings were commenced. The claim must be presented within the later of: (1) Thirty days after the Personal Representative served or mailed the Notice to the creditor as provided under RCW 11.40.020(1)(c); or (2) four months after the date of first publication of the Notice. If the claim is not presented within this time frame, the claim is forever barred, except as otherwise provided in RCW 11.40.051 and

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11.40.060. This bar is effective as to claims against both the decedent's probate assets and nonprobate assets. DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION: September 10, 2021. PR: /s/ JON (JOHN) JOSEPH KIRCH /s/ Peter W. Mogren Peter W. Mogren WSBA #11515 Of MOGREN, GLESSNER & AHRENS, P.S. Attorneys for Personal Representative 100 Evergreen Bldg.; P.O. Box 90 Renton, WA 98057-0090 (425) 255-4542 #937735 9/10/21, 9/17/21, 9/24/21

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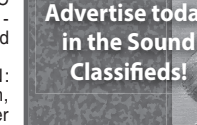
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Disney on Ice coming to Kent Oct. 27-Nov. 1 at ShoWare Center

By STEVE HUNTER  
shunter@soundpublishing.com

Disney on Ice will present Dream Big during a nine-show run Oct. 27 to Nov. 1 at the accesso ShoWare Center in Kent. The story features Miguel as he aspires to be a musician and journeys through the Land of the Dead to unlock his family's history. Moana and Maui bravely restore the stolen heart of Te Fiti; Anna and Elsa save their kingdom; and the Disney princesses inspire with stories of strength, determination and kindness. The moments are filled with breathtaking ice skating and beloved Disney songs and stories that give everyone a reason to believe.

See Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Goofy and stars from "Frozen," "Moana," "Coco," "Aladdin," "Beauty and the Beast," "The Little Mermaid," "Tangled," "The Princess and the Frog," "Cinderella" and "Sleeping Beauty." All guests ages 2 and older are required to have a ticket. No costumes are allowed for guests 14 and older. Monitor the ShoWare Center website for health and safety policies, including face covering and entry requirements, which are subject to change. Tickets go on sale to the general public at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 21 at accessoshowarecenter.com. A presale that requires a password code started Sept. 14.

Prices for non-weekend shows are \$80 for floor and \$50, \$40 and \$38 for arena seats. Prices for the weekend shows are \$110 for floor and \$70, \$50, \$45 and \$38 for arena seats.

**Showtimes**

- Wednesday, Oct. 27, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m.
- Friday, Oct. 29, 7 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 30, 11 a.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 30, 3 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 30, 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, Oct. 31, 11 a.m.
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- Monday, Nov. 1, 6:30 p.m.

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