

## City aims to stop graffiti

By Gordon Weeks

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Taggers have vandalized Shelton Mayor Eric Onisko's Texaco station with paint three times in the past month.

"The graffiti's gotten pretty crazy lately, all over town," Onisko said during the Shelton City Council's work session March 8.

Other council members agreed.

"I've definitely seen an uptick of this in the community, not just downtown," said Joe Schmit.

"You drive by an alley and 'boom,' and it wasn't there yesterday," said Kathy McDowell. "When did they do it?"

City Manager Jeff Niten told the council the city has no ordinances regarding graffiti. The word "graffiti" appears only once in the city code, and it is the section regarding signs, Niten said.

The draft of a proposed ordinance defines graffiti as "any unauthorized inscription, letter, words, numbers, figures, pictures, designs, regardless of content, which is drawn or painted on any surface on public or property that is visible from any public right of way."

Under the draft ordinance, violators could be charged with malicious mischief.

The owner of the vandalized property would be responsible for the cleanup. But the council can consider a proposed plan by former Shelton Police Chief Darrin Moody that calls for the city to offer to either pay for the materials for the vandalism cleanup or provide the labor, perhaps by people performing community service, Niten said.

"It's in the city's interest to see that cleaned up as soon as possible," Niten said.

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**Tim Sheldon, D-Potlatch, is retiring after more than three decades representing the 35th Legislative District in the Washington Senate. Sheldon is the longest-serving current member of the Legislature. Photo courtesy of Washington State Senate**

## Sheldon retiring from Legislature

By Matt Baide

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Tim Sheldon joined the state Legislature during the year Bryan Adams' "I Do It for You" was the No. 1 song, the New York Giants defeated the Buffalo Bills in Super Bowl XXV and "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" was the top grossing movie.

That year was 1991, and now 31 years later, Sheldon has decided it's time to retire.

"It came along during this term. It's been 32 years in Olympia and before that I had six years as a port commissioner, so it overlapped two years so 32 and four, that's 36 years and I want to do some other things," Sheldon said.

Sheldon was in the House of

Representatives from 1991 to 1997 before being elected to the Senate in 1998, representing the 35th Legislative District in that role for 25 years.

He said he first became interested in politics in middle school. He grew up in Shelton before his family moved to Everett. He attended South Junior High School and ran for class president, losing to Dennis Erickson, a future NFL coach who was the head coach of the Seattle Seahawks for a period.

"That turned out to be the last election I lost," Sheldon recalled with a laugh.

His family moved to Philadelphia while Sheldon was in high school. Sheldon's brother came home in 1964 when Tim was 17 with tickets as alternate delegates to the Democratic

National Convention in Atlantic City. It was the year after John F. Kennedy was assassinated, a president Sheldon admired and a big event in his life. He recalled the battle to seat Fannie Lou Hamer as a delegate, an African-American woman and civil rights leader who helped co-found the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.

He decided to attend college at the University of Pennsylvania and was a classmate of former president Donald Trump.

"Nobody cared for Donald too much, everybody knew the rich kids at school," Sheldon said.

Sheldon returned to Washington after finishing school. He began his elected office career in 1988

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## Most masks come off in schools

By Gordon Weeks

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Erika Edgin, Tryssa Robertson and Hailey Lohman were Mary M. Knight ninth-graders when they donned face masks to ward off the COVID-19 virus.

On Monday, as high school juniors, they took off their masks.

"It feels like we're supposed to go back to normal, but it's not our normal," Edgin said as the trio stood together outside during a class project Tuesday. She added, "I go to pull up my mask, and it's not there."

Monday was the first day students, teachers and other school staff were allowed by Gov. Jay Inslee's

decree the option to not wear masks in schools. The seven school districts in Mason County reported a range of student mask use on Monday and Tuesday, from 5% to 10% in the Grapeview School District to 50% in the Hood Canal School District.

None of the districts report a noticeable initial divide between the masked and unmasked.

"It hasn't been an issue, making fun of people for wearing masks ... Everyone is pretty chill," Robertson said.

Mary M. Knight senior Aden Ziegler agreed.

"I feel like (the masked) are being a little overcautious, but I respect their decision not to want to get sick," he said.

Ziegler said he won't miss the zits the masks produced. "It's like we can breathe a lot better," he said.

Mary M. Knight Superintendent Matt Mallery estimated 10% to 12% of students are wearing masks, and about 40% of the staff.

"We communicate to kids, 'It's OK to make a choice, we support you either way,'" he said.

The mask transition is going well in the North Mason School District, Superintendent Dana Rosenbach wrote to the *Journal*.

"We have not had any clashes reported between groups of students," she wrote. "Though the

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# Shelton Music takes its sound up the hill

**By Gordon Weeks**  
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Shelton Music has moved to Olympic Highway North in the Mountain View district after conducting business for seven years in downtown Shelton.

The business's lease expired at 415 West Railroad Ave., said store manager Jimmy Garrod. The new site at 2337 Olympic Highway North, Suite 100, is immediately south of McDonald's.

The windows were broken three times at the downtown location, and no suspects were ever found, Garrod said.

The business purchases instruments from five or six companies, Garrod said. Instrument owners can sell their instruments on consignment, and the business is also open to trades, he said. The business also repairs instruments.

Garrod started playing guitar at age 13. He writes and performs Christian songs at local churches. He said he enjoys jamming with customers, including former Shelton Mayor Gary Cronce.

The store is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays, and is closed on Sundays.



**Jimmy Garrod is the manager of Shelton Music, which recently moved from downtown Shelton to Olympic Highway North in the Mountain View district.**

*Journal photo by Gordon Weeks*

## Graffiti: Council also talks about updating sign ordinance

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At the work session, the council also talked about tweaking the city's sign ordinances. The current ordinances were created in 1995, with some updates in 2002, Niten said.

The current ordinance is more than 9,000 words and is "lengthy and complicated," Niten said. The proposed new code is about half the size "and makes it more clear, easier to understand for everybody, and much simpler to implement," he said.

Niten said he's received

several calls asking about "offensive" signs or flags on display and at demonstrations.

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that signs can be removed only if they are "obscene" or are "an incitement to violence," Niten said.

"As the government, we have to respect the First Amendment and allow people to express themselves, in a way that they choose," Niten said. "It's a reasonableness test: what a contemporary person in a reasonable society would see. If you think that's pretty vague, you're right, it is."



**The City of Shelton has no separate ordinances involving graffiti, such as is shown here in downtown Shelton recently, and is working on creating one. Shelton City Council members say they see increasing vandalism throughout the town. Journal photo by Gordon Weeks**

## Masks: Superintendents report smooth mask transition

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percentage wearing masks is different in each building, the majority are choosing not to wear them."

Hood Canal Superintendent Nikki Grubbs estimates about half the staff and students are wearing masks.

"(They) continue to wear masks because they have compromised immune systems, while others wear their masks to protect family members," she wrote. "However, some kids have become accustomed to wearing masks and feel more comfortable keeping them on."

Grubbs added, "We have taught our students to respect one another's choice to wear a mask. We have not had bullying issues around mask wearing. Students tend to adapt to change more readily than adults."

Southside School District Administrator Robie Spaulding wrote the change has been "an incredibly smooth transition."

"Prior to Monday, we sent information to our families and held a staff meeting to share new guidelines and answer questions in an effort to control the transition," he wrote. "We are continuing cohorting, social distancing when possible and temperature



**Mary M. Knight High School juniors, from left, Tryssa Robertson, Erika Edgin and Hailey Lohman hang out together maskless Tuesday at the school. They were ninth-graders when the mask mandate began. Journal photo by Gordon Weeks**

checks at this time."

About one-third of the students and staff members continue to wear masks, without any reported discord, Spaulding wrote.

On Monday morning, about 10% of the Pioneer students and staff walked

into the schools wearing masks, wrote Superintendent Doris Bolender.

"Our past two days have gone very well," she wrote. "We met with the students the Friday before and set the tone of options and acceptance. Our students and staff handled

everything in superb fashion."

The youngest elementary school students were seeing each other's faces in school for the first time, Bolender pointed out.

In the Shelton School District, "students and staff have responded well to having the option to wear or not wear a mask," wrote Superintendent Wyeth Jessee. "Staff members have commented on how wonderful it is to see student faces and students have been intrigued by what staff members really look like without a mask on."

A majority of the staff and students at Shelton High School are unmasked, while Bordeaux Elementary School reports about 10% of students and staff are wearing masks, Jessee wrote.

"So far, students and staff members have been respectful of each other's choices to wear a mask or not ... Schools across the district have been talking with students about the importance of being respectful of other's choices," he wrote.

Grapeview Superintendent Kurt Hilyard said about 5% to 10% of the students wore masks on Tuesday. As for conflicts, "No, our students have been great!" he wrote.