

Camas parents rail against 'woke agendas'

Local pediatric physician assistant claims to have cure for COVID-19, says school board either 'negligent' or 'pure evil' for requiring safety measures

By **KELLY MOYER**
Post-Record editor

More than 20 Camas-area residents — including the owner of a Washougal pediatric health clinic and several parents who have pulled their students out of public Camas schools — wrote letters and spoke at an in-person Camas School Board meeting on Monday, May 10, lambasting mask

mandates and other COVID-19 safety measures; remote learning; racial justice and equity programs; and “woke agendas.”
 “I no longer believe our children’s futures and educations are at the core and heart of the school board and district,” Kenric Thompson, who identified himself as a father of two children in the Camas School District, told Camas school board members



SCREENSHOT BY KELLY MOYER/POST-RECORD
Scott Miller, a certified physician assistant who runs Miller Family Pediatrics in Washougal, speaks at a Camas School Board meeting on Monday, May 10, 2021.

Monday. “This is one of the reasons why I am pulling my daughter out of the school district.” Thompson accused the school board and district leaders of “perpetuating woke agendas” including

“critical race theory, pronouns, sexual education, politics and lobbying by the teachers unions, perpetual fear inside classrooms and ultimately enabling illiberal teachers to divide classrooms and target those children who do not agree with their viewpoints.”

Thompson focused on the district’s racial equity program, which he called “disgusting and shameful” and claimed is teaching Camas children “to be racist and judge each other based on the color of one’s skin.”

The school district ramped up its focus on equity issues in 2016, after

hearing from several parents who were concerned about racist incidents happening inside the Camas School District. The district hosted a series of equity forums with students, parents, teachers and district administrators throughout 2018, and the school board adopted its new equity policy in October 2018.

The district’s equity policy examines how race, as well as gender, sexual identity, special education status and socioeconomic factors play into student equity and success. Dis-

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Washougal honors Hometown Heroes

Four residents honored for service, leadership in 2020

By **DOUG FLANAGAN**
Post-Record staff writer

During a year of unprecedented challenges, several Washougal residents maintained — and in some cases increased — their efforts to make their community a better place.

Their deeds have not gone unnoticed. On April 23, Washougal Mayor Molly Coston presented Tom Pastore, Cindy Reidel, Pam Clark and Rochelle Ramos with “Hometown Heroes” awards in recognition of their volunteer services and community leadership actions in 2020.

Reidel and Pastore received the Rose M. Jewel Volunteer of the Year Award, which honors “individuals who give above and beyond to the entire community,” according to the city.

Reidel and Pastore collect items for the Hathway Clothing Closet, the Gateway Church, the Salvation Army and Refuel Washougal; receive and distribute pet food and supplies for the West Columbia Gorge Humane Society; and coordinate information and items for local foster care programs, among other activities.

“You’re a wonderful part of our community,” Coston told them after presenting them with a plaque.

Pastore and Reidel told Coston they were especially honored to receive an award named for Jewel, the city’s assistant to the city manager.

“The reason we volunteer here is because of Rose,” Reidel said. “When we moved from Vancouver to Washougal, we kept driving to Vancouver to volunteer at Share Vancouver. Then one day I said to Tom, ‘There’s got to be something here in Washougal,’ so I called city hall and Rose answered. She said, ‘I can get you plugged in.’ And plug us in she did.”

Clark received the Community Leadership Award, which honors those who “engage like-minded individuals to build relation-

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SPRING SHOPPING

The popular Camas Plant and Garden Fair canceled for a second year due to COVID-19, downtown merchants get creative with pop-up shops over Mother’s Day weekend



KELLY MOYER/POST-RECORD
Downtown Camas visitors, most masked to prevent the spread of COVID-19, browse a pop-up plant and garden shop outside Camas Antiques on Saturday, May 8, 2021. The Downtown Camas Association was forced to cancel its annual Camas Plant and Garden Fair in 2020 and 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The popular event, traditionally held throughout downtown Camas the day before Mother’s Day, typically draws hundreds of visitors to Camas’ historic downtown shopping area. This year, several downtown Camas merchants held plant- and garden-themed pop-up shops and sidewalk sales to help make up for the missing fair.

Engage Camas asks residents to share thoughts, concerns

Online tool billed as city’s ‘alternative to traditional public engagement’

By **KELLY MOYER**
Post-Record editor

One and a half years after the contentious “pool bond” election of November 2019, in which more than 90 percent of Camas voters shut down the city’s bid to build a \$78 million public community-aquatics center and hundreds of Camas residents

loudly complained in online forums of a perceived communications breakdown between city officials and the community, the city has launched Engage Camas, an online platform designed to be “an alternative to traditional public engagement.”

“As many people know, traditional public engagement or community involvement usually involves attending a public meeting or providing a

written submission to the city council,” the Engage Camas site informs Camas residents. “This can be time consuming and inconvenient; it can also be a little intimidating. Engage Camas gives you the opportunity to have your say on issues that are important to you, at a time and place of your choosing.”

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Camas mayor resigns; hands reins to Burton

Barry McDonnell, who won write-in campaign in November 2019, cites need for more time with children

By **KELLY MOYER**
Post-Record editor

A little more than one year after winning a last-minute, write-in campaign to lead the city of Camas, Mayor Barry McDonnell is stepping down and handing the reins to Mayor Pro Tem Ellen Burton.

“Over the last few months, it has become clear to me that the needs of this Council, City and community are such that balancing a full-time job and family, while running the day-to-day operations as Mayor in our form of government is not sustainable for me,” McDonnell wrote in a letter sent to Camas city staff and media late Tuesday afternoon, May 11.

The mayor said his role leading the city “has taken up so much of his physical and emotional presence” with his “rapidly growing children” and that he feels uncomfortable missing out on their lives.

McDonnell and his wife, Anastasia McDonnell, who moved to Camas from Florida in 2016, have four children under the age of 15.

McDonnell entered the 2019 mayoral race as a write-in candidate just five weeks before the general election in November 2019, telling the Post-Record in 2019: “there seemed to be a conflict of interest in how we approached things (in city



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF CAMAS

Camas Mayor Barry McDonnell, elected in November 2019, resigned on Tuesday, May 11, 2021.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF CAMAS

Camas Mayor Pro Tem Ellen Burton took over for outgoing Mayor Barry McDonnell on Wednesday, May 12, 2021.

leadership) ... when I look at how we operate as a city, it feels like there is a disconnect between the mayor and citizens.”

The newcomer to politics, like many Camas voters, opposed the city’s ballot question in 2019, which asked voters to decide if they wanted to build a \$78 million com-

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‘WINTER’ SPORTS BEGIN

Basketball, wrestling teams ready for weeks-long season **Sports, Page A6**



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Camas:

From page A1

istrict leaders said then they will know they've achieved their equity goal "when the factors that predict any student's success or opportunity are no longer correlated with any group identity."

Several of the parents who spoke at the Monday night school board meeting and submitted written comments said they are concerned about "critical race theory," an academic movement that originated with civil rights scholars in the 1970s that seeks to critically examine how social, cultural and legal issues relate to race and racism in American society.

Thompson said he believed critical race theory "is actually teaching children to be racist," and accused the school board of "trying to introduce a woke, illiberal agenda."

"We are not a racist country," Thompson said, "and your liberal and divisive agendas are being pushed on our children and brainwashing them into thinking we should judge others based on a characteristic they cannot change."

Thompson said everyone on the board who voted for the equity policy should "immediately resign."

"The community is coming for you," Thompson said. "You thought by hopping on the 'woke train' it would save all of you, but you had no idea about the sleeping giants that have been (awoken) by your illiberal push. We're tired of these woke agendas ruining our schools and our children's futures. And I can't wait to see the board this next year, as it's going to look very different if you keep this up."

Dacey Thompson, a Camas mother of two, also spoke Monday night and said her children's education "has been a joke over the last 14 months" due to COVID-19 restrictions that implemented remote, then hybrid and now four-days-a-week of in-person learning at Camas schools. "Children are not affected by this virus," she said. "My child's right to fresh air does not stop at someone else's fear ... it is time to remove the mask to allow oxygen to get to their brains."

According to a mid-April 2021 report by the American Academy of Pediatrics, at least 297 children in the United States have died of COVID-19 and nearly 15,000 children have been hospitalized due to complications from the coronavirus.

Dacey Thompson accused the school board of "government overreach" that used "masks to keep people silent" and said she would not be allowing her children to continue attending Camas schools.

Like most of the speakers Monday night, neither of the Thompsons wore masks, despite a district policy requiring guests at in-person school board meetings to wear face coverings over their noses and mouths.

Camas School District Superintendent Jeff Snell later told the Post-Record

"several people cited a medical note for not wearing their masks during the meeting" and said the district would review the state's directive regarding masks at indoor meetings "and communicate that in our board meeting attendance requirements for future meetings."

Snell added that some of the concerns shared Monday were frustrations with COVID-19 protocols that are established by state and county public health departments.

"This has been a challenging year with a lot of polarized views about how to navigate the pandemic and best serve our students," Snell said. "Throughout the year, we've seen the protocols (for COVID-19 prevention) evolve based on the current situation with the pandemic. We expect that to continue and will stay up to date with them."

Another parent, Kelsey Hartley, who said she had lived in Camas for about 10 years, said she also did not agree with the district's equity policy.

"I do not agree with the new equity agenda," Hartley said Monday. "As we all know, regardless of how much money you have or what your experience is, life will never be fair. It doesn't matter what race you are, it will never be fair."

Hartley said her chief concern was that she saw "buzzwords in the equity (policy) that sound like communism."

"Social justice and Black Lives Matter as an organization we want to follow?" Hartley said. "Black Lives Matter is a misnomer. If they really cared about Black lives, there would be major unrest in the ghettos. This is like Chicago, L.A."

"I know there have been horrible, abysmal things and behaviors of racism in our schools," Hartley added. "However, I also feel that it is not going to work to try to make life fair for everybody. It's impossible."

Local health practioner claims he knows COVID cure, accuses board of 'pure, unadulterated evil'

Scott Miller, a certified physician assistant who runs Miller Family Pediatrics in Washougal, was one of those who spoke out against masks and other COVID-19 safety protocols at the Monday evening school board meeting.

"I don't know anybody that's died (from COVID-19)," Miller said. "I've treated 350 COVID patients. Do you know there's treatment? ... I treat people every day. I had 90 COVID patients come into my clinic last month."

Miller then falsely claimed ivermectin, a drug used to treat parasites in animals, as well as vitamin D and vitamin C were cures for the novel coronavirus that has killed nearly 600,000 Americans since March 2020. The European Medicines Agency and the United States Food and Drug Administration have both said the available data "does not support the drug's use for COVID-19 outside of well-designed

clinical trials." Likewise, the World Health Organization has warned against using ivermectin for COVID-19. In February, the drug's manufacturer, Merck & Co., Inc., stated it has found ivermectin has "no scientific basis for a potential therapeutic effect against COVID-19" as well as "a concerning lack of safety data in the majority of studies."

In his comments to the school board on Monday, Miller said he has felt anger "every day" because of the Camas School District's leaders and railed against the district's requirement for students to wear masks during their in-person learning days.

"Do you not know what you're teaching these kids or what you're doing to them?" Miller asked. "Or do you know and you don't care, which is nefarious and evil? It's either gross negligence or pure, unadulterated evil."

Miller also brought up an off-campus COVID-19 outbreak that impacted more than two dozen Camas High students and their close contacts and was linked to a student party where teens were socializing with their peers without masks.

Miller said he would talk to students in his pediatric practice about the outbreak and when they would tell him it was bad that their peers had broken COVID-19 safety protocols and gathered unmasked, he would pull out his phone and bring up photos of himself "hanging out with a bunch of buddies in Montana, skiing, in a bar with live music," and say, "No, they're doing exactly what kids should be doing: (being) engaged in life."

Miller drew applause from the audience at the board meeting, and went on, saying he did not allow his own children to wear masks during the pandemic.

"I do not allow them to wear a mask," Miller said. "I did not allow them to wear a mask when we went to the airport and got on a plane."

The pediatric care provider added that he has been "begging and begging" parents to unenroll their students from Camas schools, reject COVID-19 safety protocols such as wearing face coverings in public and to "start acting normally, letting go of the fear-mongering."

Other parents also spoke against the mask requirements for Camas students attending in-person classes. The district does offer fully remote learning options for all of its students.

Gerri Rubano, of Camas, said she was speaking for her son, a Camas student.

"Mask wearing presents severe risk of harm and should not be required for children," Rubano told the school board on Monday.

Rubano compared the district's mask-wearing policy to "forced medical experiments performed on human subjects without express permission," and said she did not consent to her son "or any child in this district" being masked.

"Shame on you," Rubano, who slid her mask down around her chin while speaking, told the board before walking away to applause and cheers from the crowd gathered inside the district's board room on Monday.

Camas School Board President Tracey Malone said the school board will not change its policy regarding its requirement to wear masks at the in-person board meetings.

"If community members are unable to wear a mask, even for medical reasons, we will ask that they view a live feed of our meeting outside of the board room and submit public comment in writing," Malone told the Post-Record on Tuesday.

Malone added that the school district does not implement critical race theory into its curriculum.

"Our focus on equity is the mission of the district to see and serve each student," she explained. "Talking about student experiences and owning our responsibility as a district to better serve students

can be uncomfortable but we want to be clear that conversations in the classroom around historical racism or systemic racism doesn't correlate to a curriculum."

"We understand that critical race theory is an academic movement focusing on systemic racism and we do not have curriculum based on this movement," Malone added. "Our equity policy, approved in 2016, is about eliminating the predictors and barriers to student achievement. We hold several equity forums throughout the year."

The district will host its next equity forum in the fall of 2021, Malone said.

COVID-19 rates continue to climb

After the 55-minute public comment period on Monday, Snell gave his superintendents report.

"Unfortunately, (COVID-19 transmission) rates are going up," Snell said.

On Tuesday, Clark County Public Health reported a rate of new COVID cases of 276.6 per 100,000 residents, up from 110 cases per 100,000 residents in early April.

Snell said though the state has given clear guidance on how school districts could reopen classrooms as COVID-19 transmission rates fell, the guidance for what to do when students are already in the classrooms but community COVID rates are climbing is less clear.

"At this point, there are not a lot of recommendations for transitioning out (of a low or moderate COVID activity rate)," Snell said Monday.

He said district staff are not recommending making another transition, possibly going back to a more restrictive hybrid learning model, "at this point."

"We would love to have the rates go down," Snell said. "We continue to remind our community to wear masks, distance and do the things that help our students remain in class."

Snell added that "another wild card" was the FDA's announcement this week that it has approved the Pfizer-BioNtech COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 12 to 15 in addition to all people age 16 and older.

With that announcement, several people in the audience cried out "no" and "not approved" and "experimental" in regard to the COVID-19 vaccines.

Snell said district leaders continue to "recognize the importance of minimizing transmission for students and staff," and urged the school board to think about what in-person learning will look like when students return in the fall for the start of the 2021-22 school year.

Board member Connie Hennessey said she would like district staff to look into possibilities surrounding the district's requirement that masks be worn during recess and while children are outdoors.

Malone said the board "continues to strongly encourage and enforce masks inside schools," and said, if COVID-19 rates continue to climb in Clark County, "it could be necessary to return back to our hybrid model and/or cohorting of students."

To view the May 10 school board meeting, visit bit.ly/33xSd3R.

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Washougal pediatric care provider investigated

Medical commission eyes 13 complaints against Scott Miller; GoFundMe raises \$29K for his defense

By **KELLY MOYER**
Post-Record editor

A state medical commission charged with ensuring physicians and physician assistants provide quality

health care to Washingtonians has received more than a dozen complaints involving a Washougal pediatric health care provider who has railed against distance-learning and students wearing masks inside schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stephanie Mason, the public information officer for the Washington Medical Commission (WMC), told the Post-Record the WMC has received a total of 13 complaints against

Scott Miller, a physician assistant who runs Miller Family Pediatrics in Washougal.

Of those 13 complaints, seven are “currently under investigation,” one is undergoing a legal review and two are still in the “complaint intake” stage, Mason said.

Although Mason was unable to provide details of the individual complaints, she said the WMC “is aware, interested and listening to the community

concerns expressed in the complaints.”

Miller, who moved to the Camas-Washougal area in 2014 and established a popular pediatric practice in Washougal in 2017, has become a vocal critic of several public health measures meant to curb the spread of COVID-19, an illness that has led to the deaths of more than four million people — including over 620,000 Americans and 300 Clark County residents — over the past 17

months.

The complaints lodged with the WMC are not the first to target Miller’s controversial stance on internationally accepted COVID-19 precautions.

On Nov. 23, 2020, an anonymous complaint came into the state’s COVID-19 violations center, reporting Miller for promoting anti-mask rhetoric on social media sites.

Miller was “gloating about how Miller Family Pediatrics ... doesn’t use

masks” and said he “has to ‘teach’ clients about how worthless masks are,” the complainant stated. “He talked about the stupidity of people taking the pandemic seriously” ... “then shared a barrage of antiquated or false information regarding COVID.”

“I’m mortified that a health care ‘expert’ is endangering the lives of hundreds or thousands of people in my community,”

See Complaints, page A8

COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations increasing again

Local public health officials urge masks indoors, vaccinations

By **KELLY MOYER**
Post-Record editor

With the COVID-19 activity rate now four times higher than it was just three weeks ago, Clark County Public Health officials are urging everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated against the coronavirus and wear face coverings in public indoor spaces to help slow the spread of the virus.

“The data continues to show that the vaccines provide the best protection against COVID-19, particularly against hospitalization and death,” Dr. Alan Melnick, Clark County health officer and Public Health director said this week. “With virus activity rising and hospitals getting busier, it’s more important than ever to get vaccinated.”

The county was averaging about 21 COVID-19 cases per day in mid-July. This week, that number increased to nearly 140 cases per day, causing the county’s COVID-19 activity rate to jump from 50 cases per 100,000 residents on July 22 to 191 cases per 100,000 residents on Aug. 12.

During the 2020-21 school year, the Washington Department of Health split COVID-19 activity levels into three groups: high, moderate and low, with “moderate” being 50 to 350 cases per 100,000 residents. Clark County dipped into the “high” activity range in December 2020 and January 2021, when local COVID-19 activity rates ranged from 386 to 473 cases per 100,000 residents.

In a Facebook post published on Friday, Aug. 13, Clark County Public Health officials said COVID-19 case rates are rising in all age groups, “with the highest rates among young adults 20 to 39 years old” and case rates for children and young adults age 10 to 19 “increasing over the last month” with numbers for that age group now approaching those seen during the height of the pandemic in the winter of 2021. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults ages 18 to 49 accounted for the largest increase in COVID-19-related hospitalizations in the week ending July 24.

At least 300 people in Clark County have died from COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic in March 2020.

Public health officials blame low vaccination rates, more contagious COVID-19 variants and more people gathering in groups for the rapid increase in local COVID-19 cases.

“Hospitalization rates are also increasing and are now nearing the highs reached in December and January,” the county reported in a news release about increasing COVID-19 rates. “Statewide data shows that most people being hospitalized with COVID-19 are not fully vaccinated. A recent report from the state Department of Health shows that 95 percent of people hospitalized with COVID-19 through July 24 were not fully vaccinated.

People ages 12 and older are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. In Clark County, about 57 percent of the eligible population are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and 63 percent

See COVID-19, page A6

A RETURN TO NORMAL?



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS COURTESY OF KRIS CAVIN
Camas volleyball player Emmy Hansen wears a mask as a COVID precaution during a February 2021 match.



Washougal High School football player Gavin Multer runs the ball during a March 2021 game.



Camas basketball player Sammi Guffey dribbles during a game in May 2021, and wears a mask as a precaution during the COVID-19 pandemic.

State loosens guidelines around prep sports in time for school year

By **DOUG FLANAGAN**
Post-Record staff writer

With the return of full regular-season schedules, state tournaments and mask-free competition, many prep sports in Camas and Washougal will look and feel more familiar this year.

“It looks like we’re getting a little bit back to normalcy as far as what athletics should look like. It’s exciting,” Washougal High School football coach Dave Hajek said two days before his team’s first practice of the 2021 season on Aug. 18. “As a society, we’ve learned more about (COVID-19), and that’s why we have some of the guidelines that we have.”

Hajek said masking was “necessary, but kind of a nuisance.” “We’re all excited to be back with sports and back at school and have the chance to start to get back to what we love,” Hajek said.

Camas High School’s football teams also began practicing on Aug. 18. The rest of the Papermakers’ and Panthers’ falls sports squads will hold their first workout sessions next week.

“We’re looking at a ‘regular’ season of athletics, so I’m super excited about that,” Camas High athletic director Rory Oster said. “We’ve created great schedules for our teams, who are going to travel and play some awesome competition. I’m excited that we get a real season with full schedules and playoffs at the end. It’s great. It’s where the kids need to be right now.”

All of the local squads played condensed, postseason-free schedules during the 2020-21 school year, with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) requiring student-athletes in the vast majority of sports to wear masks during competition.

According to updated health guidelines released Aug. 11 by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), masks will not be required to compete in outdoor sports but are recommended in settings where unvaccinated athletes, coaches, athletic trainers and/or support personnel are in close proximity during the 2021-22 school year.

“You have to know where and when to wear a mask. You have

to know what to do in certain situations,” said Hajek, also the Panthers’ track and field coach. “It makes our jobs a little harder, but I will say the kids so far have done a great job of adapting to what we’ve asked them to do without much problem. They’re like us — they don’t want to wear masks. But most people realize we have to do what’s best for our society, so if that means wearing masks, we’ll wear masks. If that means we don’t have to, we won’t.”

The DOH guidelines state masks are not required for athletes while competing in low-contact or moderate-contact indoor sports regardless of vaccination status, but are required for unvaccinated athletes in high-contact indoor sports such as basketball and wrestling, and encouraged for all athletes while practicing indoors.

“Everything we’ve learned the last year-and-a-half (revolves around) the constant moving goalposts,” Oster said. “While they say ‘This is what needs to happen for wrestling and basketball,’ that’s so far off that I’m not

See Preps, page A9

Washougal School Board resumes in-person meetings

Community members return to speak out against masks, new equity policy

By **DOUG FLANAGAN**
Post-Record staff writer

The Washougal School Board resumed in-person meetings this month for the first time since a May 25 school board meeting ended in disruption and police citations against three community members.

The board members opted for virtual meetings in June and took their normal summer hi-

atus in July, but decided to meet in-person again on Aug. 10.

Also returning were some of the same community members who had prompted the school board to call the Washougal police in May and a group of Washougal residents upset by the district’s new equity and inclusion policy, as well as a statewide mandate that will require students and staff in Washington’s K-12 schools to

wear masks at the start of the 2021-22 school year as COVID-19 case and hospitalization rates continue to increase.

Patricia Bellamy, one of three local women issued citations for disorderly conduct after trying to re-enter the May 25 school board meeting — which had been recessed after one of the women refused to put on a face covering — spoke during the Aug. 10 meeting and criticized the district’s newly approved equity, inclusion and di-

See Meeting, page A5



Washougal gets \$1M loan for water treatment plant

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Washougal man dies in motorcycle crash

John Hess, 64, remembered as ‘selfless, respected’

By **DOUG FLANAGAN**
Post-Record staff writer

A 64-year-old Washougal man died in a motorcycle crash in eastern Washington on Aug. 10.

John Hess was riding a motorcycle on Highway 12 near Pomeroy, Washington, when he left the roadway and crashed into a ditch, according to the Washington State Patrol. He was taken to Garfield

County Memorial Hospital, where he died.

“If anyone knows and/or is close to him, you know exactly what kind of man he was and always will be,” Kayte Hess, John’s daughter, wrote in an Aug. 12 Facebook post. “All I can say at this very moment is hold your loved ones close to you and realize that life is too short to choose not to live it to the fullest. My father was always so great about knowing what that meant, and it’s time that people really try to understand what it means to do this.”

See Crash, page A9

Complaints:

From page A1

stated the complainant. Around the same time, Miller was promoting unproven COVID-19 remedies, including hydroxychloroquine and ivermectin — neither of which are approved by the Federal Drug Administration as treatment for SARS-CoV-2, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. In October 2020, Miller was featured in an article and video posted on Clark County Today, a media site owned by former Clark County Councilor David Madore, touting the drugs' purported benefits. A few months later, on May 10, Miller attended an in-person Camas School Board meeting, where he refused to follow the board's policy regarding face coverings — "I will not allow my children to wear masks ... I didn't allow (masks) when we went to the airport and got on

a plane," Miller told the school board members — and again promoted ivermectin and vitamin therapy to treat COVID-19, calling the unproven remedies "a cure" for the deadly coronavirus and accusing the school board of "gross negligence" and "pure, unadulterated evil" for requiring masks inside schools and implementing distance-learning policies during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. "It actually cures," Miller insisted about ivermectin — an antiparasitic medicine shown in a recent large-scale clinical trial known as the Together Trial to have very little benefit for COVID-19 patients — during the May 10 meeting. "So the question is, 'Where are you getting your information?' Some of us know the science. Do you not know? Or do you know and don't care?"

GoFundMe raises \$29K to help pay Miller's legal fees

Miller has hundreds of



SCREENSHOTS BY KELLY MOYER/POST-RECORD

Scott Miller, a Washougal pediatric health care provider, states his opposition to various COVID-19 precautions, including masks, during a May 10, 2021, Camas School Board meeting.

loyal patients in the Camas-Washougal area who have been speaking out — and opening their wallets — in support of the Washougal physician assistant.

A Camas resident named Joshua Brock recently started an online crowd-sourcing GoFundMe campaign to raise money for Miller's legal fund in the face of the Washington Medical Commission complaints.

"Our community's beloved family health prac-

itioner, Scott Miller, P.A., is the subject of multiple unfounded complaints to the (Washington Medical Commission)," Brock wrote on the GoFundMe page. "The expenses to defend his license to practice medicine and managing those who are denied access to care are mounting. He needs our help if he is to continue serving our community."

On the GoFundMe page, Brock describes Miller as a health care practitioner many parents turn to after striking out with other providers.

"He is known to readily find answers to difficult childhood health issues that other pediatricians are either stumped by or brush off as something that will pass," Brock wrote about Miller. "Scott is sought out by parents who have tried multiple physicians, therapists and practitioners without success. In so many cases, Scott is able to find solutions for these children and their distraught parents."

Many of Miller's patients agree. As of Aug. 16, the GoFundMe page for Miller's legal defense bills had been shared more than 1,400 times and 164 people had donated \$29,825, with many people donating \$200 or more.

"We stand behind you and support you," wrote a person identified as Jenna Kauzlaric on the GoFundMe site who donated \$200 to Miller's legal defense this week. "Praying for wisdom and strength as



Help Save Scott Miller's Medical License

\$29,475 raised of \$50,000 goal

A GoFundMe campaign to raise money for Washougal physician assistant Scott Miller has raised nearly \$30,000. Miller, the founder of Miller Family Pediatrics in Washougal and an outspoken critic of mask mandates, is the subject of 13 complaints filed with the Washington Medical Commission.

you climb out of this valley and onto the mountain top. You have a community of people that support you and your mission of speaking truth. It is the weak and naive that are trying to tear you down."

"We stand with you 100%!" wrote another donor, identified as Sandy McCausland, who gave \$100 to Miller's GoFundMe two weeks ago. "Your willingness to search beyond 'standard, cookie-cutter' options to find remedies uniquely tailored to our individual problems has had an invaluable effect on our health and wellbeing! We need you, so please keep up the fight!!!"

One donor, identified as RaeShel Peck, donated \$300 and said Miller was "the most amazing doctor" their children had ever had and was needed by his patients.

On his clinic's Facebook site and on his clinic's main website, Miller addressed the GoFundMe established to pay for his legal defense and said the "attacks" against him "have been brought on by a small handful of people that have no ties to our medical practice, and by pharmacies and hospitals

that have a zero tolerance policy on family members asking that I help them advocate for loved ones that have been admitted and written off in our current system of dismissiveness and neglect."

"I don't know that I have the words to adequately describe the deep sense of love and connection I have received from you, the families I serve, and those that have reached out to me in this deeply challenging time," Miller wrote. "I have read your words. I have seen your generosity. Many of you have actually prayed over me and for my amazing staff to be able to continue to provide the type of care that everyone as human beings deserves to receive, regardless of affiliations or ideologies."

Miller said his decision to become a health care provider was not his choice, but one that was "offered to (him) by the highest authority," and asked his supporters to "continue to pray for us and our mission to serve those who have been willfully and tragically ignored."

Miller was not able to answer the Post-Record's requests for comment before the paper's print deadline.

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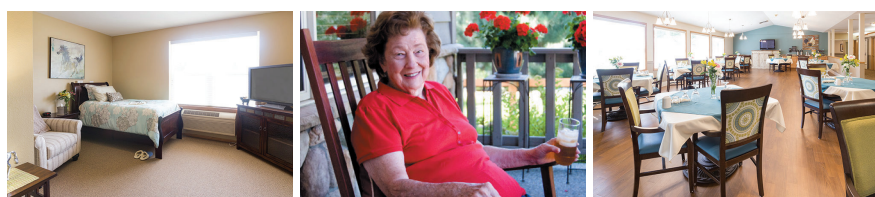


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CAMAS-WASHOUGAL POST-RECORD

Volume 113 No. 42

Camas-Washougal, Washington, Thursday, October 21, 2021

2 Sections, 14 Pages • \$1.00

State suspends Washougal PA's license

Scott Miller, of Miller Family Pediatrics, accused of prescribing unfounded COVID-19 'cures' in wake of patient deaths

By **KELLY MOYER**
Post-Record staff writer

The Washington Medical Commission (WMC) has suspended the license of a Washougal physician assistant accused of promoting unfounded COVID-19 "cures" and interfering with hospitalized COVID-19 patients.

The WMC said today it has suspended the license

of Scott C. Miller, head of the Miller Family Pediatrics clinic in Washougal "pending further administrative proceedings."

Miller is accused of promoting the ivermectin as a cure for COVID-19 and has prescribed the drug, typically used a dewormer, "without adequate examination to at least one person, with no reliable clinical studies that establish its efficacy in preventing

or treating COVID-19," according to the WMC.

The Commission also alleges that Miller, who has been a vocal opponent of COVID-19 mandates, and often appears in-person at Camas School Board meetings to rail against mask requirements and remote education, interfered with the care of hospitalized COVID-19 patients, "engaging in a hostile and threatening public cam-

paign against both hospitals and individual physicians regarding COVID-19 treatment."

Complaint: At least two people being treated by Miller have died of COVID-19

The WMC has accused Miller of treating at least four COVID-19 patients

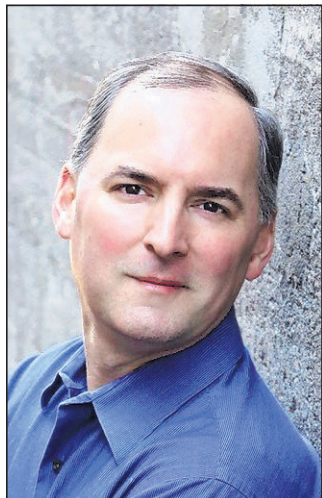
with medication not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Those patients included a 39-year-old man who spoke to Miller over the phone for about 20 minutes in May 2021, and told Miller he was experiencing congestion, cough, headache and fatigue and had tested positive for COVID-19. Miller

See Miller, page A2

VOTE 2021

4 vie for Camas School Board



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS (LEFT TO RIGHT) COURTESY OF COREY McENRY, ERNIE GEIGENMILLER, ERIKA COX AND JEREMIAH STEPHEN
Four people are competing for election to the Camas School Board in the Nov. 2 General and Special Election. From left to right are: Incumbent Corey McEnry (Position 1) and his challenger, Ernie Geigenmiller, and incumbent Erika Cox (Position 2) and her challenger, Jeremiah Stephen.

Candidates discuss the Camas School District's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing superintendent search, funding challenges and recent outcry over 'critical race theory'

By **KELLY MOYER**
Post-Record staff writer

There are four people vying for two seats on the Camas School Board in the Nov. 2 General and Special Election.

Incumbents Erika Cox and Corey McEnry each face one challenger: Jeremiah Chevrolet Stephen, a Vancouver insurance agent, is competing for Cox's District 2 seat, while Ernie Geigenmiller, the owner of Lacamas Magazine, is competing against McEnry for the board's District 1 seat.

The Post-Record reached out to all four candidates to learn more about why they want to be a part of the school board and heard back from both incumbents and Geigenmiller in time for this newspaper's print deadlines. Stephen's responses will be included in an online version of this article at camaspostrecord.com on Thursday, Oct. 21.

Position No. 1: Corey McEnry

Like Cox, incumbent Camas School Board member Corey McEnry said he is devoted to improving and strengthening the public education system.

"I believe in public education," McEnry, Camas native who has been a music teacher in the Hockinson School District since 2008, and served on the Camas School Board since 2018, told

The Post-Record this week. "I have devoted my life and career to public education. Public education is the great equalizer in our society, and I volunteer as a member of the Camas School Board to make sure that each student has the resources, tools and experiences they need to be successful throughout their time in our schools so that they may grow up to be thoughtful, creative, and contributing members of our community."

McEnry said he also believes experience matters.

"As a National Board-certified high school teacher of over 13 years here in Clark County, I have used my experiences in the classroom to guide my decisions as a board member," McEnry said. "These experiences give me a unique perspective on the board. I understand how the decisions made by a board can have a profound impact, directly and indirectly, on the students and teachers in our classrooms because I have experienced the intended and unintended consequences of those decisions myself. Every decision I have made as a board member has been weighed and examined through the eyes of a teacher wanting what is best for kids."

The school board director also sees public education in Camas through the eyes of a parent these days. McEnry and his wife, Kristin — also a teacher — have one daughter, Molly, a fourth-grader at Helen Baller Elementary School. In 2030,

Molly will be the fourth generation in McEnry's family to graduate from Camas schools.

"I'm proud to have grown up and lived in Camas, and I'm optimistic about raising my daughter in the same hometown that allowed my grandparents, parents and myself to become who we are today," McEnry said. "I realize how fortunate I was to receive the education I received in Camas, and (voters) can count on me to unite traditional Camas values and experiences with innovative, 21st-century skills and knowledge to position each Camas student for success in their chosen pathway after graduation."

Asked to name what he believes to be the school board's top-three responsibilities, McEnry said "leading by example; responsibly managing taxpayer funds and resources and engaging with stakeholders."

"The primary responsibility of a school board member is to collaborate with their board colleagues, superintendent and district staff on articulating a mission and vision for the district and overseeing its execution," McEnry explained, adding that the current Camas School Board members all bring "unique experiences and backgrounds to the position" while still striving "to make informed decisions based on reviewing all the facts and data presented to us while leading in a respectful and civil manner that Camas deserves."

Being fiscally responsible

with taxpayer dollars also plays a huge role in McEnry's work on the school board, he said.

"One of the biggest reasons for our district's success has been the consistent support from our taxpayers. A majority of our voters throughout our recent history have consistently supported bonds and levies in order to maintain the Camas School District's tradition of caring, quality and growth," he said. "As a steward of taxpayer funds, I take the responsibility of efficiently and carefully allocating those precious resources very seriously. Through my efforts and those of my board colleagues, we have sought not only to invest in new and updated facilities in Camas, but also to maintain our existing facilities to prolong their usefulness. We have adapted to new funding models forced on us by the state legislature and sought to balance tax burdens on our patrons with the quality of programs we deliver and that our community has come to expect."

McEnry said the board has pursued "both conventional and creative opportunities to invest in projects for our district's future that will yield a high rate of return for our community, such as modernizing our bus fleet, partnering with Sharp to develop our project-based learning campus, and the acquisition of the Leadbetter Campus (formerly Underwriters Laboratories)."

See Camas, page A8

Washougal mayoral candidate Ford dies

Derik Ford suspended campaign in September after being arrested for domestic violence

By **DOUG FLANAGAN**
Post-Record staff writer

Former Washougal mayoral candidate Derik Ford, 45, has died.

The Washougal Police Department received word of Ford's death from the Fairview, Ohio, police department on Friday, Oct. 15, according to Washougal sergeant Kyle Kinnan.

Kinnan said the Fairview Police Department did not divulge additional details about Ford's death, but added that the Ohio police department was at the "very beginning" of its investigation and would likely send a copy of their report to Washougal police once it was complete.

The Washougal Police Department is "scrambling to get more info" about Ford's death and hoping to release additional details as soon as Monday, Oct. 19, Kinnan told The Post-Record. As of this newspaper's print deadline, police had no updates on the circumstances surrounding Ford's death.

Ford, who owned 2 Rivers Bar and Grill in Washougal and several massage parlors in Oregon, finished in second place in the August primary election, beating Washougal City Councilman Paul Greenlee for a chance to compete against the top vote-getter, Rochelle Ramos, as Washougal's next mayor in the Nov. 2 general election.

Ford suspended his campaign after being arrested on a domestic violence charge on Sept. 15. He was scheduled to appear in court on Nov. 2, and had already pleaded not guilty to a fourth-degree assault charge as well as to additional allegations that he had repeatedly violated a no-contact order.

Ford's name appears on the Nov. 2 General and Special Election ballots sent to Washougal voters.



Derik Ford

Washougal eyes more parks improvements

With Hamllik Park upgrades nearly complete, city leaders hope to replace aging playground at Lower Hathaway Park

By **DOUG FLANAGAN**
Post-Record staff writer

Washougal residents may soon notice a few park

upgrades around their city.

The city is finishing up a series of upgrades at Hamllik Park and is now setting its sights on upgrading the more than 20-year-old

playground equipment at Lower Hathaway Park.

Work at Hamllik Park shifted into high gear this month, with the removal of two unused, deteriorat-

ing sheds; the installation of new benches and tables; and repainted restrooms. Now, the city is working to repair a bicycle track at Hamllik Park and replace leaky roofs on the dugouts at the baseball field.

The city also has ordered a new playground

for Hamllik, which should arrive by mid-November, according to Michelle Wright, the city's public works business administrator.

"I think the playground was 23 years old, so it was definitely time for some upgrades there," Wright

said of the Hamllik Park improvements. "This is a really special park. It's got amazing parking and allows neighbors to play and recreate and have barbecues."

The city used \$100,000

See Parks, page A7



VOLLEYBALL HERO
Senior player a rock for team in turmoil:
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KELLY MOYER/POST-RECORD FILES

Washougal Physician Assistant Scott Miller (left), the founder of Miller Family Pediatrics, pulls his mask down to speak against COVID-19 mask mandates during a Camas School Board meeting on Aug. 23, 2021.

Miller:

From page A1

placed the patient on a regimen of vitamins as well as ivermectin, dexamethasone and azithromycin without conducting a physical examination, according to the WMC complaint, and “failed to counsel (the patient) on the possible interaction between ivermectin and dexamethasone and did not order follow-up testing to monitor and address possible impact on (the patient’s liver) function.”

Miller also is accused of prescribing ivermectin to an unvaccinated patient who had been admitted to the hospital after becoming “unresponsive with unreadable stats” and respiratory failure due to COVID-19. After refusing intubation and leaving the hospital against medical advice on Sept. 3, 2021, the patient received a prescription from Miller for ivermectin “to treat head lice,” according to the WMC complaint. The patient’s wife called 911 that same day because her husband “had acute hypoxic respiratory failure and needed to be sedated and intubated.” That man died eight days later.

The WMC also alleges that, in July 2021, Miller treated another unvaccinated COVID-19 patient with ivermectin and sent her an oxygen tank to use at home. The patient came into the hospital one week later, on July 19, and died on July 27.

The WMC states in its complaint against Miller: “Ivermectin is not part of the hospital protocol in treating COVID-19 patients. Ivermectin is not part of the NIH protocol for treating COVID-19 patients. These protocols are not considered standard of care treatment for COVID-19.”

Miller also is accused of threatening hospital staff and physicians and of convincing family members of ill COVID-19 patients to push for their loved ones to receive unproven treatments.

One patient sought care from a local hospital emergency room

on July 17, 2021, according to the WMC complaint. He was unvaccinated and suffering from symptoms of COVID-19. The patient’s family sought an emergency injunction to have the man treated with ivermectin — something the patient’s wife told hospital staff that her children had pushed her to go after the injunction on Miller’s advice, despite the fact that Miller had never treated or examined her husband. The man died from COVID-19 complications less than three weeks later.

The WMC complaint states that Miller has violated state code related to unprofessional conduct for a medical provider, including “incompetence, negligence or malpractice, which results in injury to a patient or which creates an unreasonable risk that a patient may be harmed,” as well as “an act involving moral turpitude, dishonesty or corruption ... whether that act constitutes a crime or not,” and “promotion for personal gain of any unnecessary or inefficient drug, device, treatment, procedure or service.”

Miller cited by California Physician Assistant board in 2014

Miller also is accused of lying on his initial Washington medical licensing application by denying another investigation by the California Physician Assistant Board.

Public records show that, in March 2014, the California Physician Assistant Board cited Miller for providing medical care to patients “without supervising physician authorization to do so,” writing prescriptions “without conducting physical examinations,” writing drug orders for controlled substances “without the approval of a supervising physician,” and for failing to document and maintain medical records for patients.

“The case was initiated based on a complaint submitted to the Medical Board of California alleging that while employed at Cal Family Health you wrote drug or-

ders for controlled substances for family and friends who were not patients of Cal Family Health,” wrote the executive director of the Physician Assistant Board in the citation order. “You were not authorized (by) your supervising physician to provide medical treatment or write drug orders for persons who were not patients of your supervising physician or Cal Family Health. You did not receive the approval from your supervising physician to write drug orders for controlled substances.”

The board ordered Miller to “immediately cease treating persons and issuing drug orders for persons that are not patients of your supervising physician or the practice where you are employed,” pay a \$2,500 fine and enroll in an ethics course.

According to California records, Miller, who graduated from San Joaquin Valley College in 2006, relinquished his California physician assistant license before it came up for renewal in 2015. Miller and his wife, Shelly, moved to the Camas-Washougal area in 2014, according to the Miller Family Pediatrics’ website.

The WMC said Miller applied to the Washington Medical Commission for a physician assistant credential in October 2013. Though the California investigation had started in August 2012, with investigators interviewing Miller in February 2013, the WMC said Miller marked “no” on his application when asked if he was the subject of an investigation by any licensing board.

During its investigation into Miller in October 2020, the WMC asked the Washougal physician assistant about any past investigations by other licensing boards. The WMC said Miller falsely claimed he had already disclosed the California investigation in his initial application.

GoFundMe raises \$47K to help fund Miller’s legal defense

Miller has hundreds of supporters in the Camas-Washougal area

who have spoken in defense of the Washougal pediatric care provider since the WMC investigation began.

In July, a Camas man named Joshua Brock started a GoFundMe to raise money for Miller’s legal fund in the face of the Washington Medical Commission complaints.

“Our community’s beloved family health practitioner, Scott Miller, P.A., is the subject of multiple unfounded complaints to the (Washington Medical Commission),” Brock wrote on the GoFundMe page. “The expenses to defend his license to practice medicine and managing those who are denied access to care are mounting. He needs our help if he is to continue serving our community.”

On the GoFundMe page, Brock describes Miller as a health care practitioner many parents turn to after striking out with other providers.

“He is known to readily find answers to difficult childhood health issues that other pediatricians are either stumped by or brush off as something that will pass,” Brock wrote about Miller. “Scott is sought out by parents who have tried multiple physicians, therapists and practitioners without success. In so many cases, Scott is able to find solutions for these children and their distraught parents.”

As of Oct. 15, the GoFundMe had been shared more than 2,000 times, and nearly 300 people had donated a total of \$46,947 to help Miller fund his legal defense.

Miller has 20 days to respond to the WMC’s suspension notice.

Stephanie Mason, the WMC’s public information officer, told The Post-Record in late September the Commission was investigating 17 cases and had three new allegations against Miller and had also authorized an investigation into Miller’s supervising physician, Dr. Rick L. Jackson, with the Vancouver-based Ashbrook Medical clinic.

Neither Miller nor Jackson responded to The Post-Record’s request for comment in time for this newspaper’s print deadline.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Washougal City Council: The Council will hold a remote workshop at 5 p.m. and remote regular meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 25. For more information about the agenda or about how to watch or listen to the meetings, visit cityofwashougal.us/129/Agenda-Minutes.

Camas School District: The Camas School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 25, in the Dennison board room at the Zellerbach Administration Center, 841 N.E. 22nd Ave., Camas. Masks are required for in-person meeting attendees. To watch a livestream of the board meeting, visit the Camas School Board’s YouTube channel at bit.ly/camassb. Citizen comments will be accepted in written form and in-person. To send a written comment, email gail.gast@camas.wednet.edu by 3 p.m. Oct. 25.

Washougal School District: The Washougal School Board will meet at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 26, on Zoom and in-person at Canyon Creek Middle School, 9731 Washougal River Road, Washougal. Masks are required for in-person attendees. To submit a written comment, email kori.kelly@washougalisd.org by 3 p.m. Oct. 26.

DEATH NOTICES

Dawson, George Frederick, Jr., 91, Vancouver, died Oct. 10, 2021. Brown’s Funeral Home, 360-834-3692.

Hood, David Adam, 71, Camas, died Oct. 15, 2021. Brown’s Funeral Home, 360-834-3692.

Kitchen, Mac, 90, Washougal, died Oct. 17, 2021. Straub’s Funeral Home & Columbia River Cremation, 360-834-4563.

Knapp, John A., 90, Washougal, died Oct. 10, 2021. Straub’s Funeral Home & Columbia River Cremation, 360-834-4563.

Kulani, Cheryl Joanne, 72, Brush Prairie, died Oct. 12, 2021. Brown’s Funeral Home, 360-834-3692.

Mounier, Ruth E., 94, Washougal, died Oct. 17, 2021. All County Cremation and Burial Services, 360-718-7948.

Walker, Mary E., 97, Camas, died Oct. 13, 2021. Straub’s Funeral Home & Columbia River Cremation, 360-834-4563.



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