

# LYNNWOOD

# TIMES



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*Real News* ⚡  
*Real Impact*

## Mexican folk dance performance a win for Sister City program



Dance Troupes around Puget Sound perform traditional Mexican folk dances at Cedar Valley Gym on Sunday, August 15, 2021. Source: Lynnwood Times/Kienan Briscoe.

By **KIENAN BRISCOE**

LYNNWOOD, Wash., August 17, 2021 - Following a week of hard work and rehearsal, dance troupes Bailadores de Bronce and Herencias Mexicanas stunned audience members at Cedar Valley Gym Sunday with traditional folk dances from Guerrero and one from Oaxaca, Mexico.

Mexican dance legend Concepción Bello Nava (Conchita), the artistic director for the renowned Chilpancingo dance troupe Campañiade Danza Folklórica Xochicalli, arrived in Lynnwood a week ago to teach the groups three dances that represent the folklore and vibrant culture of these Mexican states. Since then, the groups have been meeting at Silver Creek Family Church for rehearsals where they practiced four hours every day before performing for the public on Sunday.

“It has been hard work, everything from wearing face masks to the hot weather, all the preparation...but I saw all the desire in the young people and how many traveled from so far to practice to dance and to share the passion

and love for our culture,” Conchita told the Lynnwood Times. “I feel very happy and satisfied to bring my culture and tradition here with all these people around.”

Guerrero has seven regions in total. However, each of the three dances performed represented just three of those regions: Central, Costa Chica, and Tierra Caliente. All of the clothing worn by the dancers were woven to represent each respective region meticulously, including such details as the flowers that grow in each region.

Although the performance mostly featured dances that exhibit the culture of Guerrero, Conchita decided to close the show with a dance from Oaxaca to pay homage to the large community of Oaxacans living in Washington State.

The dance included pineapples as props, which, according to Conchita, represent friendship and offering. Pineapples are a local crop of the Oaxaca region. The gift-giving element was realized at the end of the performance when the pineapples were offered out to audience members, one to council-

woman Julieta Altamarino-Crosby, who helped organize the event.

“I’m very thankful to see all of the families that came to enjoy [the performance], and I’m thankful for everyone that helped put it together and to the city of Lynnwood to let us use the gym,” councilwoman Altamarino-Crosby told the Lynnwood Times. “Sometimes we forget our roots and this brings the connection [to] where we come from through the culture and how we can share that with others.”

Crosby, who was born in Guerrero, stated that she was so moved by the dances on the first day of rehearsal that she teared up in her car.

“My heart is just filled with joy,” Altamarino-Crosby said.

Councilman Jim Smith, like many of the 100-plus spectators, was blown away by the skill and execution of the dance troupes’ hard work and diligence.

*Continued* **PAGE 08** >>

## Compass Health and Lynnwood PD partner to address mental health

By **KIENAN BRISCOE**

LYNNWOOD, Wash. – Compass Health and the Lynnwood Police Department announced a partnership, August 5, to embed a mental health professional with the Lynnwood Police Department Community Health and Safety Section to better manage the health and safety needs of individuals and the community.

“This is a great opportunity to engage in folks better than we otherwise may have engaged with them...we’re hoping this helps reduce the amount of law enforcement contact that folks have and get them the right resources at the right time,” Charissa Westergard, Director of Healthcare Integration at Compass Health told the Lynnwood Times.

Compass Health is a community-based healthcare agency which integrates behavioral health and medical care services to form a key section of the community safety net and serve clients and others in need of care and support. The non-profit organization serves people of all ages throughout Snohomish, Skagit, Island, San Juan, and Whatcom counties.

The organization first implemented the Community Transitions model in partnership with South County Fire in Snohomish County in 2016, providing a range of community response services, which includes crisis outreach through Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOT), the new Integrated Model of Police and Crisis Teams (IMPACT) program, and ongoing care coordination and non-emergency services such as the Community Outreach and Recovery Support teams.

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# 5th wave hits Snohomish County... Delta Delta Delta!

By MARIO LOTMORE

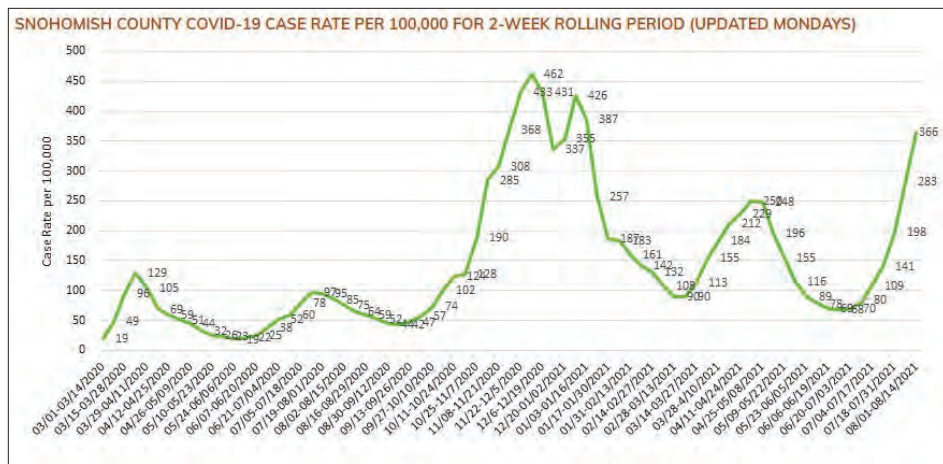
**SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash.** — An increase of 1,168 new COVID cases since August 9th for a cumulative total of 42,580 since January 2020. A total of 642 people have died, an increase of 3 deaths within the same period. ICU capacity is at 90% with 75 people currently in county hospitals with COVID.

“We still have over 250,000 unvaccinated people in the county unvaccinated who are eligible for vaccination,” Dr. Chris Spitters, Health Officer for the Snohomish Health District, told reporters in today’s COVID-19 briefing.

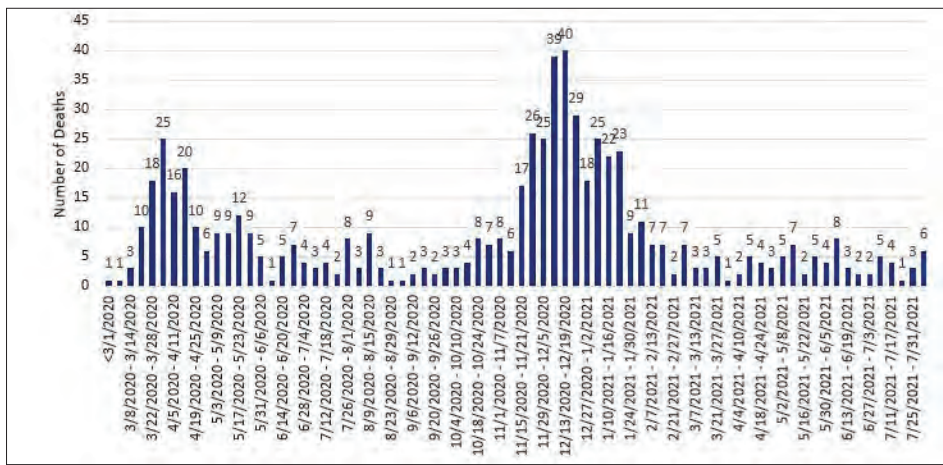
He also attributes the surge to “reduced implementation and prevention measures over the past couple of months including masking, social distancing, and gatherings.”

The Delta stain is a “game changer” said Dr. Spitters. According to Spitters, a single delta case on average will spread to 5-8 other people, compared to 2-3 people for previous strains, and comprises 20% of new cases.

On August 10, Dr. Spitters, issued a new mask directive effective August



Source: Snohomish Health District.



Source: Snohomish Health District.

12, that stated everyone 5 years of age and up in Snohomish County must wear a face covering within indoor public spaces.

The CDC has stated that people in high transmission areas should continue to wear a mask indoors to maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others. According to the Snohomish Health District, COVID-19 vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing serious illness and death, but it is still possible to become infected, but at a much lower rate than vaccinated persons—about 80-90% lower. If you become infected, you can spread it to others.

“Masks are primarily about preventing transmission from infected people by covering up the virus at its source,” said Dr. Spitters. “Masks also protect those who cannot get vaccinated like the 125,000 children under age 12 who are getting ready to go back to school and not yet eligible for any vaccine.”

County Executive Dave Somers shared during the briefing that restrictions on businesses are still on the table, but the priority right now is getting people vaccinated and wearing masks.

“I am comfortable with the current directive [mask] right now,” Executive Somers said.

## Frequently Asked Questions on the Masking Directive

By SNOHOMISH HEALTH DISTRICT

**SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash.** — On Tuesday, Dr. Chris Spitters, Health Officer for the Snohomish Health District, issued a new mask directive effective August 12, that stated everyone 5 years of age and up in Snohomish County must wear a face covering within indoor public spaces.

The mask directive led to a lot more questions than answers with other news agencies misreporting the mask directive as a county-wide mandate. The Lynnwood Times reached out to the Snohomish Health District for answers to your questions and concerns. Special thanks to Heather Thomas of the Snohomish Health District for putting together this quick Q&A for residents.

**Is this a directive or a mandate?**

This is a statement from the Health Officer directing people to wear masks when in public spaces indoors. While it is not a mandate carrying legal penalties, it implies a duty to comply. Also remember that there are still three oth-

er state and federal orders in place as well. Each document below outlines a particular area of responsibility and enforcement.

- Updated state workplace health and safety guidance for workers on masks from the Washington Department of Labor & Industries.
- DOH Secretary’s order (PDF) that explains general masking requirements for unvaccinated and fully vaccinated individuals, and exceptions to the requirements.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention order: This order from the CDC requires the wearing of masks by travelers to prevent spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. This order must be followed by passengers on all public transportation including but not limited to airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis, and ride-shares.

What is the penalty for a business or individual not following the directive? Enforcement for the three state and federal orders are explained in the links above. It is expected that individuals, businesses and organizations will

comply with the masking directive for Snohomish County effective August 12, 2021, but there is not an enforcement process or penalty attached at this time. If you have concerns about organizations not complying with the mask directive, you can send information to [complaints@snohd.org](mailto:complaints@snohd.org).

**Does this directive apply to people with disabilities or medical exemptions?**

No, individuals with disabilities or other medical situations that are unable to wear masks are not required to do so. Where possible, consider other face covering options or limit situations that require going into crowded indoor settings without a mask.

**DOH guidelines for schools states that teachers & staff do not need to**

**wear masks when not around students. Does the mask directive override that?**

In general, yes. Teachers and staff working indoors should wear masks, regardless of the presence of students and regardless of the staff members’ vaccination status.

**Does this apply to churches and other faith-based organizations?**

The directive is for places where members of the public can enter freely, which would include faith-based organizations and services. All singers and speakers should also be masked indoors.

**What about restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments?**

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# LYNNWOOD TIMES

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# Council passes spending requests for American Rescue Plan Act funds

By **GEORGE FTIKAS**

**LYNNWOOD, Wash.** – The Lynnwood City Council largely passed immediate spending requests for American Rescue Plan Act funds put forth by Lynnwood city staff during their meeting on August 9. Director of Finance Michelle Meyers first presented the immediate requests during the city council meeting on August 2, which was a continued discussion from July 19.

The plan for the funds is divided into short-term and long-term needs. The intent for the short-term implementations is to “stabilize and recover,” while long-term goals are to “strategize and enhance.”

“We’ve chosen to take a strategy somewhat like Snohomish County and some of the other cities in the area are doing,” Meyers said during the August 2 meeting. “We’re really looking at breaking up these funding requests and not trying to decide what to do with all the funding right away, because there are so many pieces of other funding coming down and so many jurisdictions determining how to really make sure to use this funding in a way that meets the broadest need.”

The total for the immediate funding request is \$1,438,000 and is broken into three categories: “respond to COVID-19 public health emergency,” “restore public sector capacity to pre-pandemic levels,” and “provide expanded services up to amount of revenue loss.”

This final category is a request of \$480,000 to “purchase and implement an officer body camera program.” The request allocates roughly \$350,000 for the hardware and was passed unanimously by the council. The camera systems being considered all utilize off-site data storage, so there would be no need to purchase additional IT infrastructure. According to Meyers, this usage of funds is very recent and is in response to an unfunded mandate from Washington State in May that includes “enacting the uniform electronic recording of custodial interrogations act,” or simply put: police body cameras.

Also included in the \$480,000 is a full-time clerk position to manage public records and requests. This was voted on separately from the body camera program and passed 6-1 with Councilmember Ruth Ross voting no.

“The American Rescue Plan is not for the city to spend on the city. The American Rescue Plan is for the city to spend on the community,” Ross said during the August 9 meeting. “None of this is what that money is for. This isn’t revenue. This is emergency funds to help the community.”

This sentiment prompted Ross to vote no on the bulk of the immediate funding request: \$858,000 for 8.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions with the city. The positions were voted on individually and passed 6-1 with Ross being the no vote on each.

There is a detailed breakdown in the

presentation, but 5.2 of these positions are for several part-time jobs that equal 5.2 full-time hours with the Recreation portion of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts department. According to Meyers, many city employees were able to transition to work-from-home during the pandemic, but recreation largely shut down operations. The other three positions that passed are for a police evidence officer, a court legal specialist and a custodian respectively.

The first category—respond to COVID-19 public health emergency—is the smallest of the three requests at \$100,000 and was unanimously voted to be postponed to a future meeting. This request would cover operational and capital needs for the council chambers, but multiple council members cited concerns and wanted additional information from the contractor and the city’s IT department.

Meyers stated this funding would be used to improve audio and visual capabilities to better facilitate hybrid in-person/remote meetings for the council. It would purchase new equipment such as monitors for each council workstations as well as replacing older wiring, screens and other equipment. As was mentioned in the previous Lynnwood ARPA report, the council meeting did have technical issues.

With these motions passed, there is still roughly \$9.5 million in ARPA funds that hasn’t been allocated that the city council and staff still needs to discuss.

## Douglas Raiford hired as Lynnwood RSJ Coordinator

By **CITY OF LYNNWOOD**

**LYNNWOOD, Wash.** – Mayor Nicola Smith hired Douglas Raiford to serve as the City’s first Race and Social Justice Coordinator. According to the press release, Mayor Smith advocated the need for a dedicated staff member to further Lynnwood’s commitment to being a safe, welcoming, and equitable community for all.

“For many years we’ve made great strides at advancing equity in our city,” stated Mayor Nicola Smith. “Now is the time to move forward with a dedicated staff member to pull together what’s been accomplished already, and move us forward with intentionality so that we can truly become a City that provides equitable services and programs, a city where all community members are welcome, and all belong.”

“Raiford is a member of the Mayor’s Executive Staff and he will work collaboratively with all City Departments, the City’s internal equity team, the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Commission, as well as our partners and community members.

“As a long-time resident, raising my two young boys in Lynnwood, it is an absolute honor to join Lynnwood city government,” said Raiford. “I am looking forward to working with partners both inside and beyond city government to break down barriers and increase equity for all. My goal is to




Douglas Raiford, Lynnwood Race and Social Justice Coordinator. Source: City of Lynnwood.

open the door and create opportunities for everyone to participate and access services, especially those in underrep-


resented communities.”

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# Whispering Pines down to 8 families as deadline approaches

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**LYNNWOOD, Wash.** – Since the Housing Authority of Snohomish County (HASCO) announced the demolition of Lynnwood apartment complex Whispering Pines, residents have scrambled to find new homes to avoid falling victim to homelessness. As the August 31 deadline approaches, Representative Lauren Davis (D) informed the Lynnwood Times that they are down to their last eight families.

Due to health and safety issues, HASCO is demolishing the 240-unit low-income apartment complex in Lynnwood. HASCO notified residents in 2018 that they needed to find a new place to live by August 31, 2021. In its stead, the housing authority plans to build another apartment complex, roughly the same size.

Within the last four to six weeks, 50 units were still occupied at Whispering Pines, which sent Davis scurrying to find housing for the last families. She partnered with the Snohomish County Council, who, thanks to the efforts of councilman Jared Mead, agreed to give \$100,000 toward relocation for the remaining families in Whispering Pines.

“It’s certainly easier to prevent a family falling into homelessness than it is to have someone experience the trauma that is homelessness,” Laura Davis told the Lynnwood Times.

In a more recent conversation Davis had with HASCO on Friday, August 13, she was informed that the apartment complex is now down to just eight families, which she stated is much more manageable than 50, in terms of

relocation expenses such as security deposits and first and last month’s rent, particularly within the funds granted by Snohomish County.

HASCO has directed its staff to ensure those remaining families have a safe place to land, according to Davis.

“I feel heartened after this conversation that none of the residents will be displaced into homelessness,” Davis added.

As of Friday, 80% of residents at Whispering Pines have now relocated elsewhere and are not at risk of homelessness. Although the move-out deadline is August 31, Davis does not believe that anyone will go “knocking on the door” at the end of the month to force them out. Since there are now flexible dollars, she is optimistic it would not come to that.

She also believes that a smaller number of remaining families presents a greater opportunity to identify their unique needs with tailored case management, whether or not they have veteran status and need to be connected with veteran’s housing or a psychiatric disorder and need to be connected with another specific voucher. Worst-case scenario, Davis believes the relocation funds could go toward long-term hotel/motel costs for families in housing transition, but she does not believe that will be the case with any of the remaining families.

“The tailored case management, coupled with the flexible funding that Snohomish County has generously given, I think it’s very achievable to help these folks find a new place to live in the next few weeks or so,” Davis said.



Source: Lynnwood Times/Mario Lotmore.

Lynnwood City Council President George Hurst has been working closely with his wife Pam Hurst, who is on the Human Services Commission, to help tenants find housing, which can take months when they have a Section 8 voucher. He contacted the nonprofit Isaiah58House to set up an online fundraiser and continues to help these remaining families move out.

On Wednesday, August 17, Hurst sent the names of the remaining families to HASCO requesting the need of assistance. Many of the remaining occupants are senior citizens who do not have the money nor physical ability to move.

“It all comes down to the failure of HASCO. They just didn’t take care of these people,” Hurst told the Lynnwood Times. “It’s time for them to take responsibility and pay for the

remaining families to get out of there.”

Two years ago the city of Everett experienced a similar situation with the demolishing of Baker Heights but the Everett Housing Authority helped the residents find housing for every resident. Hurst believes HASCO should have performed in the same way.

“Lauren Davis and Jared Mead did all the work,” Hurst said.

Hurst and his wife Pam, who he said spearheaded the effort of making sure residents were on track, hired local moving company Gus and Jack Moving to help residents move out who were in need.

“It’s been a teamwork, but as far as the heavy lifting my wife has been the one doing all the advising,” Hurst added.



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## Multiple gunshots fired in James Village Shopping Center

**LYNNWOOD, Wash.** – At 5:27 p.m. August 14, Lynnwood Police responded to multiple reports of gun shots fired near the Safeway located in the James Village shopping center located at 19500 Hwy 99. Police arrived to find multiple spent bullet casings in the alleyway between Hopscotch Kids and Sally Beauty just north of the Safeway store.

Also located nearby, in the 6200 block of 194th ST SW, police found a vehicle that had just been involved in a collision. The vehicle was still running, had significant damage including airbag deployment, but no occupants were immediately located.

The vehicle was a 2009 Mercedes C300 sedan. As police continued investigating, witnesses indicated someone with a firearm may have entered the Safeway store. Safeway was evacuated as a safety precaution, several surrounding stores went into lock-down while officers cleared the Safeway store.



Source: Lynnwood Police Department.

Police made contact with a 23 year-old male, who identified himself as a security guard for the James Village proper-

ty. The security guard indicated he was involved in some sort of a disturbance with a group of individuals that had fled the scene.

An individual associated with the crashed car, a 20 year-old male, who had initially been hiding nearby upon police arrival, also came forward and contacted the police.

At this time, no arrests have been made. Detectives are currently interviewing the security guard and the man associated with the crashed car to try and piece together what happened, who was involved, and who fired the shots.

Detectives will be impounding the Mercedes for further investigation. A review of potential surveillance footage from surrounding stores is also being conducted.

Initial indication is the security guard and the group associated with the Mercedes may have been involved in a confrontation earlier in the day and when the group returned, that is when shots were fired. Fortunately, there have been no reported injuries as a result of the gunfire.

# Victories and stories from the 2020 Tokyo Olympics

By **BO JOHN BRUSCO**

*America performed phenomenally at this year's Olympics in Tokyo, but some of the stories that will go down in history have little to do with athletic abilities.*

As the 2020 Olympic Games have concluded, there is a clear winner, and it's Team USA. Some athletes even broke records this year. From an entertaining warm-up routine during the Olympic Trials to anti-sex beds at the Athletes Village in Tokyo, many athletes brought home unforgettable memories along with their medals.

## The USA Wins Gold at the Tokyo Olympics

The results of the 2020 Olympic Games held in Tokyo are officially in, and it was a good year for America. American athletes brought home more medals in total and by category than any other country.

With 39 gold medals, team USA inched above the People's Republic of China's 38 gold medals. But in the collective amount of medals — gold, bronze, and silver — America roped in 113. The People's Republic of China came in second again, with a collective amount



Tamyra Mensah-Stock, U.S. Olympic wrestler, during her post-victory interview with NBC Sports. Image from NBC Sports's YouTube channel, 08/03/21.

that he had to fly separately to Tokyo and has also been prohibited from residing in the Olympic Village, forcing him to stay in a remote hotel. As the US Fencing Team told the Times, "This precaution was taken for the safety and well-being of other Amer-

represent her country.

With an American flag wrapped around her shoulders and tears running down her face, she said, "I'm crying from joy!" When asked how it felt to represent her country, she simply said, "it

After Disgraceful Olympic Decision" to his YouTube channel. The video starts with Kirk openly admitting that he "doesn't know what she's been through" and then proceeded to call Biles a "selfish sociopath."

## Garden Senior Village

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of 88 medals.

The comprehensive list of the 2020 Olympic Results is available at olympics.com.

Additionally, this year's athletes broke several Olympic records, and the New York Times gives a full report of the feats in their recently published article, "A look at all of the world records that were broken at the Tokyo Olympics."

As for some of the non-athletic stories that unfolded during this year's Olympic competitions, there was everything from teammates protesting against one another to outrage over anti-sex beds for the athletes.

## USA Fencing Team Protests Against Teammate Accused of Sexual Misconduct

US Olympic Fencing team alternate, Alen Hadzic, has been accused by multiple women of sexual misconduct. The incidents of sexual impropriety date back between 2013 and 2015 and involve three female-fencers — two of them likely attended university with Hadzic.

At this year's Olympic Games in Tokyo, Hadzic's teammates entered the arena wearing pink masks to show their support for his accusers and protest his past behavior as well as his eligibility to compete.

While Hadzic has denied the allegations, The New York Times reported

ican fencers who expressed concerns about Hadzic's presence and a desire to minimize distractions."

## An Unorthodox Warm-Up Dance

Sierra Schmidt has gotten a lot of attention for her lively warm-up dance before competing in the Olympic Trials for the US national swim team. In a now-viral tweet from user @lainehighgins17, Schmidt can be seen grooving to the max.

Twitter users in the comments section recognized her moves from a music video for "CHEER UP" by girl group TWICE.

Schmidt's dancing even caught the attention of Stephen Colbert, the host of The Late Show, who featured a clip of her routine during a segment of the show called "Meanwhile."

But this wasn't a stunt explicitly reserved for the Olympic Trials; instead, it truly is the way she warms up before a race. A YouTube channel called Swimming World published a small documentary about her routine back in January of 2015.

## Proud American Wrestler

After securing the USA's second-ever gold medal for women's freestyle wrestling, Tamyra Mensah-Stock went viral, but not for her dance moves. In her post-victory interview, Mensah-Stock could not contain how proud she was to be a part of Team USA and

feels amazing. I love representing the US. I freaking love living there. I love it. And I am so happy I get to represent USA!"

The full interview can be viewed on NBC Sport's YouTube Channel.

## Simone Biles Bows Out

Simone Biles is easily one of the most impressive athletes on Team USA. She showed her incredible athleticism at the 2016 Olympic Games, winning four gold medals and a bronze during the gymnastic competitions. Though the nation was excited to see her dominate again this year, Simone Biles formally withdrew from the competition.

After winning a silver and bronze, Biles pulled out from the Olympics for personal reasons. The USA gymnastics made the following statement on the matter: "Simone has withdrawn from the team final competition because of a medical issue. She will be assessed daily to determine medical clearance for future competitions."

Biles has spoken about her decision in multiple interviews, citing mental health concerns as the primary reason for withdrawing. Across the internet, Biles was both ridiculed and praised. One of her biggest critics was radio show host Charlie Kirk.

Kirk, the founder of Turning Point USA, a conservative media organization, posted a video titled "Charlie Kirk Takes Down Selfish Simone Biles

Not all of the responses have been criticizing in nature, though. For others, Biles has become a sort of icon for raising mental health awareness. A USA Today article titled, "Simone Biles is a role model for prioritizing her own mental health over an Olympic medal," praises her for her decision. One passage reads, "She's helping young people realize that it's OK to take care of themselves. She's teaching them to prioritize their bodies because mental health and physical health are inextricably linked."

While America's reaction to one of its star athletes has been divided, Biles has since revealed more about what was going through her mind at the time. As CBS News reported at the beginning of the month, "Simone Biles reveals her aunt died unexpectedly during Tokyo Olympics."

## Cardboard "Anti-Sex" Beds at the Tokyo Olympics

Olympic runner, Paul Chelimo, tweeted on July 16 about cardboard beds that competitors would be sleeping on during the Tokyo Olympics this year. Including photos of the beds, Chelimo wrote, "Beds to be installed in Tokyo Olympic Village will be made of cardboard, this is aimed at avoiding intimacy among athletes / Beds will be able to withstand the weight of a single person to avoid situations beyond sports." And thus, the rumors began.

In an interview with the Associated

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# Afrolatino heritage proudly celebrated in Lynnwood

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**LYNNWOOD, Wash.** – The Afrolatino Festival returned for its tenth year in Lynnwood, after a year off, at Silver Creek Family Church to celebrate Afrolatino culture in Washington State.

Vendors offering Latin imports and food met free of cost at the festival after event organizer Karina Gasperin acknowledged that local businesses had suffered enough during last year’s shutdown.

From clothing and jewelry to freshly-pressed agua de coco and hand-pressed crepes, vendors could sell their goods without having to pay a fee. This was made possible thanks to Silver Creek Family Church offering their grounds free of charge and the \$1,500 in grants offered by both the city of Lynnwood and Community Transit.

In a proclamation signed this month by the Snohomish County Executive, Dave Somers, August 7 was recognized as Afrolatino Festival Day in Snohomish County whereas:

- “For eleven years, the Afrolatino festival has been a showcase of the cultural richness of the ancestral fusion of Latinos and Africans...”
- “The Afrolatino festival provides people who live, work, and play in Snohomish County with a forum to celebrate the African and Latin experience through the sharing of culture and education...”
- “Our community is enriched by the opportunities for learning and cultural exchange shared during the Afrolatino Festival...”
- “Snohomish County strives to be a welcoming and inclusive community and we achieve this by being curious, interacting with people from cultures other than our own, and learning from one another...”
- “Snohomish County joins the Afrolatino Festival organizers and participants in celebrating our diversity and common humanity...”
- “Snohomish County appreciates the organizers and participants of the Afrolatino Festival who share their time, talent, and experiences to ensure we never forget the sacrifices of so many and celebrate the beauty of African and Latin cultures...”

Most of the vendors appearing at the



Afrolatino Festival in Lynnwood on August 7, 2021. Source: Lynnwood Times/Kienan Briscoe.

festival found their space through Gasperin’s vast contribution in the Latin communities of Snohomish County, including her own television show, Actitud Latino, which premiered in 2008. Hers was the first television show aimed at the Latino community in Washington State, according to Gasperin.

After Elizabeth Volz, Executive Director for Silver Creek Family Church since 2008, attended the Afro Latino Festival in Auburn in 2019, she was impressed with the outreach the Latino community and the connections they are making.

“I’m hoping as we get further in our partnership we’ll find more and more place[s] to be able to support [the festival],” Volz told the Lynnwood Times. “So far it has been an amazing partnership.”

Lynnwood councilman and mayoral candidate Jim Smith, who was in attendance Saturday, stated he would love to see the festival grow to a larger venue in the future, particularly Wilcox Park, where he believes more venues and attendees would have the space necessary to celebrate their rich heritage.

“I’d love to have this at one of our city parks, particularly Wilcox Park,” councilman Jim Smith told the Lynnwood Times. “The stage is already there, it’s perfect for families, it’s perfect for the community coming together, and this would be great for all people of Lynnwood and outside of Lynnwood to come together and enjoy this Afrolatino festival.”

Gasperin, a Lynnwood resident of over 21 years originally from Veracruz, Mexico, told the Lynnwood Times that Wilcox Park would be the best place to make the festival happen, but due to restrictions on staging and music, she was denied.

She has hosted the festival in several locations over the years but has chosen Lynnwood as its primary site for its past five runs, hosting two festivals per year, one always in Lynnwood and the other alternating between Burien and Seattle.

“I really believe that our community in Lynnwood is growing really fast and we don’t have enough representation of what we are in the community,” Gasperin told the Lynnwood Times. “For me, the festival is a way to show our kids that they belong to the city –

that this is part of who they are, our music, our culture, our food, and they need to embrace that part.”

Gasperin’s husband had the idea for the festival, which is organized by the family’s team of Karina, her husband, and their two daughters. Their background in production, owning their own company Oye Producciones, helped organize the festival.

Aside from the vendors and food stands, rock band Eclipse played an assortment of live Latin music from bachata, meringue, to salsa, urging attendees to get up and dance to which many obliged in another successful celebration of Lynnwood’s rich Afrolatino population.

from page 1 **COMPASS HEALTH**

This new partnership, funded by a grant from the Verdant Health Commission, aims to reduce high-frequency use of emergency services by responding to community members at risk in Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace. With thanks to this grant, many people in need will have access to mental health, substance use treatments, shelter assistance, food vouchers, hygiene sites and more.

“I think the real benefit of embedding with law enforcement is, they have the initial contact often, but what the individual needs is often what law enforcement is not able to provide,” Westergard told the Lynnwood Times. “We really want to foster a continuity of care.”

The Verdant Health Commission funds a wide range of programs that empower people in South Snohomish County to make healthy decisions and get the care they need to stay well. Their current focus is investing in innovative programs that will make a lasting impact on the health and well-being of South Snohomish County residents, having issued \$8.2 million in grants last year. In addition to their fiscal support, they offer free or low-cost education and prevention classes both virtually and in-person at the Verdant Community Wellness Center in Lynnwood.

Continued **PAGE 07** >>

Happy Hour

1/2 Price Appetizers

3pm-6pm










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# Taste Twenty-one Edmonds event August 20-22

**EDMONDS, Wash.** – The Taste Edmonds event contract for 2021 was unanimously approved by the Edmonds City Council during their meeting on August 3.

The fundraising event supports free community events such as the Fourth of July Parade & Fireworks Show, Tree Lighting Ceremony, Halloween Trick-or-Treat Night and the Edmonds Classic: Car & Motorcycle Show. This year's event will be held August 20-22 at Frances Anderson Center Field on 700 Main St.

The 2020 Taste Edmonds was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will see several changes from the 2019 event. A significant change made by the Chamber of Commerce is making the event 21 and up. Typically, Taste Edmonds is an all-ages family event with a beer garden available.

The other major change is location. As mentioned, this year's Taste will occur at Frances Anderson Center Field rather than the usual location of Civic Park. This is due to construction at Civic Park.

Taste Edmonds is calling this year's event "Taste Twenty-One" and will feature 13 different musical performances throughout the event. There aren't any mask or vaccination requirements for the event as it is outdoors, as the event capacity was set with safety in mind. That being said, the rules and

regulations can be changed if federal, state or county outdoor guidelines are updated.

"The [guidelines] are changing in the last couple weeks, but primarily to indoor activities and behaviors," Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director Angie Feser said. "So currently, the outdoor activities... there aren't a lot of guidelines right now in place as far as mask wearing and [requiring] vaccinations or anything of that sort."

Taste Edmonds is limiting ticket sales to 5,000 per day, which includes both pre-purchased and day-of tickets. The website for Taste Edmonds mentions that all sales are final, so no refunds on tickets: "not even for a Sharknado."

For event tickets go to <https://edmonds-wa.chambermaster.com/eventregistration/register/9949>.

Ticket prices have increased as the venue is smaller and costs have increased. When pre-purchasing, a one-day pass costs \$20 and a weekend pass is \$50. Tickets can be picked up at no cost or be mailed for an additional \$2.50. Tickets purchased during the Taste will cost \$30.

There is a raffle being held for those who pre-purchase on or before August 16 to win two unrestricted Alaska Airlines round-trip tickets with no blackout dates—a \$2,500 value.

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**TWENTY-ONE**  
**August 20-22**

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*more details at TasteEdmonds.com*

**700 Main St Edmonds, WA** | **Friday 2 to 10pm** | **Saturday 12 to 10pm** | **Sunday 12 to 8pm** | **21+ only** | **\$20.00 pre-purchase** | **\$30.00 day-of**

**[www.TasteEdmonds.com](http://www.TasteEdmonds.com)**

*A 21+ fundraiser supporting local non-profits, service clubs & free community events.*

# India's Independence Celebrated in Snohomish County



By **BO JOHN BRUSCO**

Last Sunday marked the 75th anniversary of India's Independence from British rule. Celebrations took place all around the world, and President Biden made an official celebratory statement about the holiday.

This year's celebration was held virtu-

from page 6 **COMPASS HEALTH**

Heather Turner, embedded Compass Health mental health professional, will begin riding along with LPD's community health and safety officers to meet with individuals throughout Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace. According to Turner, many people call 911 because they have needs that are not being met but they don't know where else to turn. This new program would allow them to get the appropriate resources at the appropriate time.

"I'm excited to be a part of this collaborative effort to look at this challenge holistically and provide care to indi-

ally, a decision made in response to the spread of the delta variant. However, the spirit of culture and celebration was palpable for all those who got to see performers laud India's independence.

Here in Snohomish County, community members gather every year to celebrate India's Independence. The festival usually involves food, musical

performances, and more.

Westergard's goal is to meet people in need of medical care, mental health care, substance use treatment, transportation, housing, or food assistance and connect them with the appropriate resources needed for help.

"This partnership is really beneficial to the individuals and the community," Westergard told the Lynnwood Times.

For more information about the Community Transitions program please visit: <https://www.compasshealth.org/services/community-transitions/>.

performances, and more. With the decision to make this year's festival a virtual experience, production workers and volunteers quickly adapted to the new format. As the audience would experience the celebration and expressions of culture through video, an added emphasis was put on the performers.

The dancers and musicians were of varying ages, creating a beautiful display of how tradition and culture are passed from one generation to the next. Everything from the music to the colorful outfits paid homage to India's history and its people.

After expressing how emotive the movements of a group of performers were, one of the event's emcees said, "this is the culture we need to pass on to our kids."

The 75th Anniversary of India's Independence celebration that took place in Snohomish County was presented by the Indo-American Cultural & Trade Association. And according to the festival's event page on Facebook, it was produced by Utsav USA, a non-profit organization. Many public servants and leaders, like Senator Derek Stanford from the first district of WA, made an appearance at the event on Sunday as well to show their support and celebrate with the community.

Mukilteo resident Ashvin Sanghvi explained to the Lynnwood Times how India's independence is traditionally celebrated across the world.

"In India and in the Indian diaspora

abroad every institution and organization celebrate by hoisting the Indian tricolor flag," he says. "It is unfurled with flowers dropping from it symbolizing being unbound from the colonial rule. This is followed by the singing of the national anthem and patriotic songs. A leader — or honored veteran or freedom fighter — would give a speech." This year, in India, Prime Minister Modi unfurled the flag and gave a speech at the country's historic Red Fort in the city of Delhi. Videos of the event can be viewed on Rajya Sabha TV's YouTube channel. The ceremony also includes an air force salute and a parade. Sanghvi explains how, after the Prime Minister's speech, "the national monuments are lit and fireworks color the sky."

Speaking more to the significance of these celebrations, Sanghvi says, "it usually is a balance of celebrating the progress the nation has made while upholding the messages of peace towards the world and unity amongst the diverse nation of hundreds of dialects and every religion known to mankind bound by a single thread of being a proud Indian. Displayed most vigorously rooting for the Indian cricket team."

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from page 2 **MASK DIRECTIVE**

Masks should be worn when entering the establishment, when speaking to others, and when not eating or drinking. This directive does not impose any capacity or distancing requirements.

**Do gyms, fitness studios and other recreational or entertainment facilities need to follow the directive?**

Yes, all indoor spaces that are open to the public, customers or clients should have all individuals wearing face coverings. People do not need a mask when in an indoor pool or hot tub, but should wear them when out of the water, in locker rooms, etc. This directive does not impose any capacity or distancing requirements.

**Can people wear something other than a mask, like a face shield?**

Some masks work better than others to help slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. Note: N95 respirators approved by CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) should be prioritized for healthcare personnel.

The CDC does not recommend using face shields as a substitute for masks, as they have large gaps below and alongside the face. Respiratory droplets may escape and reach others around you, potentially exposing others, and will not protect you from respiratory droplets from other people.

If you must wear a face shield instead of a mask, like for interacting with those who are deaf or hearing impaired:

- Choose a face shield that wraps

around the sides of your face and extends below your chin or a hooded face shield. This is based on the limited available data that suggest these types of face shields are better at preventing spray of respiratory droplets.

- Wash your hands after removing the face shield. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing it.
- Clean and disinfect reusable face shields according to the manufacturer's instructions or by following CDC face shield cleaning instructions. If you use a disposable face shield, wear it once and throw it away according to the manufacturer's instructions.

**Why do I need a mask if I am fully vaccinated?**

The CDC has stated that people in high transmission areas (including Snohomish County) should continue to wear a mask indoors to maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing serious illness and death, but it is still possible to become infected, but at a much lower rate than vaccinated persons—about 80-90% lower. If you become infected, you can spread it to others.

Masks also help protect the unvaccinated – which includes kids under age 12 who are not yet eligible for vaccines. Unvaccinated people are at a much higher risk of getting sick with and spreading the disease, as well as developing complications from COVID-19.

**Won't this directive hurt our local**

identity, as well as share our culture," Altamirano-Crosby told the Lynnwood Times.

The event was organized the Guerrero Association which is a connection between Guerrero and Washington State founded as part of the friendship between Guerrero and the city of Lynnwood.

"It's really amazing that we can have this exchange with two different cities," Karina Gasperin, member of the Guerrero Association, told the Lynnwood Times. "I think it's really important for us as parents to teach our children that you are American but you are also Mexican so you have to learn to love your two cultures because you live here but you cannot forget where you come from."

Bailadores de Bronce was founded in 1972 at the University of Washington (UW) by a group of students, led by Josefina Jaramillo Alvarez, who began to question the lack of a Mexican dance group at the UW as a product of the Civil Rights and Chicano movements. They aim to promote the beauty and richness of Mexican traditions through music and dance in the Pacific Northwest.

"We're really thankful that the city of Lynnwood could makes this happen," Olivas told the Lynnwood Times, "This is purely cultural. It has nothing to do with politics or money or anything, it's just pure knowledge that's being handed down to another generation."

Herencia Mexicanas is a newer group, founded in 2009 in Lake Stevens before moving to Everett, where they

**businesses?**

The directive does not impose any capacity or operational restrictions. Instead, it provides clear guidance that everyone should wear a mask when in public spaces indoors. This is our best public health advice to protect you, your family, and our communities. This will help reduce the risk of COVID-19 to the public, including customers and workers. It will also help stem the increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations and decrease the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant happening in our state.

**How long will this directive be in place?**

This directive will remain in effect until the Snohomish Health District confirms that COVID-19 disease rates decline to low levels of transmission as defined by the CDC or until this directive is otherwise rescinded.

Other factors to be considered may also include testing positivity rates, healthcare system capacity, and hospitalization and death rates.

from page 3 **RSJ COORDINATOR**

Raiford, who is originally from Miami, Florida, has a Bachelor's Degree from Barry University in International Advertising and Communications. He has past experience working for the Department of State in Washington, D.C.

Douglas Raiford comes to the City of Lynnwood from Cascadia College where he worked with international students and in the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

from page 6 **OLYMPICS**

Press, Takashi Kitajima, the general manager of the Athletes Village where the beds were being installed, explained how the beds could hold up to 200 kilograms (440 lbs). He even added that they are "stronger than wood."

The beds clearly were not designed to deter any athlete's sexual activity, as a TikTok now posted to YouTube shows one of these beds withstanding the weight of eight Israeli athletes, but why cardboard? According to Kitajima, "The organizing committee was thinking about recyclable items, and the bed was one of the ideas" (Video of athletes jumping on a bed on City Sports Network's YouTube channel).

**Next Year's Olympics**

The next Olympic Games will be held in Beijing, the People's Republic of China, in 2022. The last time the games were held there was in 2008, which was also the first time. China set a high bar for the Opening Ceremonies that year. The production value cost tens of millions of dollars, had more than 15,000 performers, and the New York Times published a piece on it titled, "China's Leaders Try to Impress and Reassure the World."

from page 1 **MEXICAN DANCE**

"I was very impressed with all the dancers and was pleasantly surprised to learn they have only been working on this for six days," Councilman Jim Smith told the Lynnwood Times. "It just goes to show the talent of all of the dancers and the teaching of the instructor. This whole thing was incredible."

On September 14, 2020, Mayor Nicola Smith and Hector Astudillo Flores, Governor of Guerrero, appointed the city of Chilpancingo in Guerrero, Mexico, Lynnwood's sister city. This relationship allowed the cities to cultivate international relationships, educational opportunities, trade, tourism, and art. The relationship also fosters cultural awareness between the people of both cities through international visits, exchange programs, humanitarian acts, and community events.

Less than a year later, as part of the Sister City program, Cecilia Garcia, Executive Director for Herencias Mexicanas, approached Adrian Olivas, Executive Director for Bailadores de Bronce, about bringing in a dance instructor from Guerrero. They reached out to councilwoman Julieta Altamirano-Crosby, who serves as liaison for the Sister City committee. Altamirano-Crosby worked with community members who brought Conchita to teach the two Washington-based dance groups some new techniques and refine their repertoire.

"I think that this is amazing because when we live here, as Mexicans, or immigrants, [sometimes] we forget our roots. So this is an opportunity to learn and connect [with] our roots, our



Concepción Bello Nava (Conchita), the artistic director for the renowned Chilpancingo dance troupe Campañiade Danza Folklórica Xochicalli, teaching local dance groups Bailadores de Bronce and Herencias Mexicanas traditional Mexican folk dances. Source: Lynnwood Times/Mario Lotmore.

practice every Thursday and Saturday.

Attending the rehearsal held Tuesday was Mayor Nicola Smith who stated this event does nothing but contribute to the richness of culture, not only in Mexico but also in Lynnwood. As Mayor, this is one of the ways she has attempted to engage local community members.

City executives of Lynnwood first appointed Damyang, South Korea as a sister city in 2019 as Koreans make up the largest demographic in Lynnwood, second to Whites. The third largest demographic is Latinx, mostly Mexican, which led to the relationship established with Chilpancingo. The next largest demographic is Ethiopian leading to the extension of the sister city program forming a relationship be-

tween Lynnwood and Bole Kefle Kertema Wereda, which was established January of this year.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Whites make up 59.2% of the almost 40,000 residents living in Lynnwood. Second to this is Asians at 18% and thirdly Hispanic or Latino at 13.7%. Black or Africans, mostly Ethiopian, make up 8%.

"I think [this is] wonderful," Mayor Smith told the Lynnwood Times. "It helps people not only of Mexican heritage but also the rest of us to open our awareness and knowledge of the richness of their culture which only contributes to ours as well."