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Real News ⚡
Real Impact

Meadowdale High School's Beth Marriott inducted into 2022 WACA Hall of Fame



Meadowdale High School Beth Marriott at her induction ceremony on February 24, 2022. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

STORY ON PAGE 5

Judge overturns Washington state's new capital gains tax

By MARIO LOTMORE

DOUGLAS COUNTY, Wash. – On Tuesday, Douglas County Superior Court Judge Brian Huber overturned a new capital gains tax that was signed into law last year by Governor Jay Inslee. Huber ruled that it is an unconstitutional tax on income.

“The State characterizes the new tax statute as a “tax that applies on the sale or transfer of property” and argues that such taxes are excise taxes” he wrote. “But as noted above, the new tax is not levied upon ‘the sale or transfer’ of capital assets. Instead, the new tax statute levies a tax on receipt, and thus ownership, of capital gains.”

Attorney General Bob Ferguson released the following statement after a Douglas County Superior Court judge ruled against the state in a challenge to a tax on capital gains passed by the Legislature in 2021:

“There’s a great deal at stake in this case, including funding for early learning, child care programs, and school construction. Consequently, we will continue defending this law enacted by the peoples’ representatives in the Legislature. All the parties recognize this case will ultimately be decided by the State Supreme Court.

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County Council passes resolution in support of Ukrainian neighbors

By MARIO LOTMORE

SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash.– During its Administrative Session on Monday, the Snohomish County Council unanimously passed Resolution 22-009 to show support for the Ukrainian community in the county.

The resolution, introduced by Councilman Nate Nehring (District 1) and seconded by Councilman Jared Mead (District 4) reads:

WHEREAS, late on Wednesday, February 23rd, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced a military invasion of the sovereign nation of Ukraine; and

WHEREAS, in the first days of the invasion, the

Russian military has conducted multiple bombings and attacks across Ukraine, killing and injuring soldiers and civilians; and

WHEREAS, the attacks have been strongly condemned by President Biden and other global leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Russian invasion of Ukraine is unprovoked and unprecedented in a time of relative peace across Europe; and

WHEREAS, many members of the Ukrainian community call Snohomish County home; and

WHEREAS, our Ukrainian neighbors are undergoing a period of significant hardship and grief during this time;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

THAT, the Snohomish County Council stands in solidarity with our Ukrainian neighbors; and

THAT, the Snohomish County Council sends thoughts and prayers for peace in Ukraine; and

THAT, the Snohomish County Council stands ready to welcome and support any refugees which may arrive in our county and state as a result of the invasion.

“Today I introduced a resolution of solidarity with our [Ukraine] neighbors,” tweeted Nehring. “I can’t imagine how difficult this is for those in Sno Co with ties to Ukraine. Our hearts are with them and all Ukrainians, who are a collective profile in courage and have inspired the world. Pray for Ukraine!”

Continued **PAGE 2 >>**

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Public Works Board says hands off PWAA funds after House Democrats axe proposed 6-cent export fuel tax



Kathryn Gardow, Chair of the Public Works Board.

By MARIO LOTMORE

OLYMPIA, Wash. – Last weekend House Democrats announced plans to jettison an unpopular export fuel tax proposed to support the \$16.8 billion Move Ahead Washington transportation revenue package in favor of tapping the Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA). The PWAA makes low-interest loans to local governments in support of local drinking water, sewer, solid waste, and stormwater projects.

“This is a short-sighted proposal that will have negative consequences for our communities,” said Public Works Board Chair Kathryn Gardow, P.E.

“Whenever the Legislature finds itself needing quick, easy cash, it turns to the Public Works Assistance Account. This time they need to keep their promise to return funding next year and find another source for the transportation package.”

Legislators have been diverting more than \$150 million a year to cover some of the costs associated with the McCleary fix to fund basic education. In 2017, legislators promised the diversion was a temporary six-year grab, and current law will end the diversions June 30, 2023.

An amendment proposed by House Transportation Chair Jake Fey, D-Tacoma, would stop that reversion, and continue to take another \$100 million each year for 15 years.

“Last year we received \$255 million in requests with only \$129 million available,” said Gardow.

“At least 31 qualified, essential infrastructure construction projects – worth \$125.7 million in requested funds – were not funded because we didn’t have the money. And we have a \$1 billion pipeline of projects ready to go in the next two to four years when our revenues are returned to the account,” Gardow continued.

Washington residents should care, said Gardow, because when they turn on their faucets, they expect clean water.

“When they flush their toilets, they expect the waste to go away. They expect their garbage to be picked up, their rivers and waters to be protected from harmful waste and chemicals due to stormwater runoff, and their roads and bridges to be safe and structurally sound.

“This is not the only solution to replace that revenue shortfall.

“The Public Works Board asks the 2022 legislature to pause long enough to find other revenues or options to leave the state’s nationally recognized local infrastructure tool alone,” said Gardow.

OREGON, ALASKA AND IDAHO DISAPPROVE OF FUEL EXPORT TAX

Two weeks ago, Idaho Governor Brad Little (R) and Attorney General Lawrence Wasden sent a letter to Washington Governor Jay Inslee calling on him to step in and stop Washington’s fuel export tax proposal which would increase the cost of fuel for Idahoans.

The Idaho state House then passed a resolution asking the Washington Legislature not to go through with this. The Idaho House resolution states, “a recent proposal in the Washington Legislature to impose a six-cent-per-gallon tax on gasoline and diesel fuel exported to Idaho, for the purpose of funding transportation and other projects in Washington, would create additional and unnecessary costs to Idahoans.”

Oregon Governor Kate Brown (D) posted on Facebook her displeasure with the fuel tax proposal.

Continued **PAGE 09 >>**

from page 1 **UKRAINE**

Both Council President Megan Dunn and Councilman Sam Low thanked Nehring for drafting the resolution.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MILITARY ACTION AGAINST UKRAINE

The civilian death toll from the conflict varies. Aljazeera reports that Ukraine’s health ministry said that at least 352 civilians have been killed; whereas, the United Nations confirmed 500 people.

On Monday, Russian President Vladimir Putin held an emergency economic meeting at the Kremlin as the Russian Ruble plunged almost 30 percent after the European Union, United States, United Kingdom, and Canada announced it was imposing a ban on major Russian banks from SWIFT to paralyze assets of the Russian Central Bank.

The Russian Central Bank increased the country’s borrowing rate from 9.5% to 20%. Although major Russian banks are banned from the SWIFT banking messaging system, this has no impact on Russian energy and grain revenues

– 40 percent of the E.U. energy comes from Russia.

Black Sea port closures disrupt global market for grains threatening global food supplies as Russia is the world’s largest wheat exporter – 50 percent more than the U.S. or E.U.

Food prices in U.S. are expected to rise due to the demand from countries dependent on Russian grains. The largest importers of Russian grains are Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kazakhstan, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sudan, United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan, and Morocco.

The U.S. has sent B-52s directly to NATO’s eastern front to conduct operations over the Arctic and Baltic Sea, as well as over Poland. F-35 Lightning II aircraft assigned to the 388th Fighter Squadron have arrived at the 86th Air Base, Romania; and U.S. Army soldiers assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade traveled from Aviano Air Base in Italy to Latvia in order to support NATO allies.

On Sunday, Belarus held a national referendum of its constitution and voted 65 percent to repeal its non-nuclear status allowing for Russian nuclear weapons to be deployed on Belarusian soil.

This came just hours after Putin ordered Russian nuclear deterrent forces put on high alert. Russia has a 10-to-1 advantage over the U.S. in nonstrategic (i.e., low-yield) nuclear weapons—aka tactical or battlefield nukes.

Concerns of a SWIFT alternative – Russia, China and India – are growing within the banking industry, threatening the dollar-dominated Euro-centric global financial system. China’s international payments system called CIPS – Cross-Border Interbank Payments System – is operational with at least 23 Russia banks using the system.

China is Russia’s biggest exporter and post-Cold War partner. First reported by the New York Times on Feb 25, China was passing along U.S. intel about the Ukraine military operation from the Biden Administration to Russia.

On Wednesday, Guo Shuqing, the head of China’s banking and insurance regulator shared that China will not participate in financial sanctions imposed by Western nations on Russia.

Latin American leaders of Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Uruguay, signed a joint letter rejecting the Russian invasion.

President Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela and President Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua have been vocal in their support of President Vladimir Putin. On Tuesday, communist-run Cuba criticized the U.S. for imposing sanction on Russia.

The United States European Command is reportedly now at DEFCON 2.

LYNNWOOD TIMES

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Naz Lashgari new Lynnwood Planning Commissioner



Photo of Naz Lashgari.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD, Wash. - At Lynnwood’s City Council meeting Monday, February 28, Naz Lashgari was named the city’s newest Planning Commissioner to work alongside Rebecca Samy, Chris Eck, Aaron Lum, Adam Segalla, Patrick Robinson, Layla Bush, Bob Larsen, and Council Liaison Patrick Decker, whom Lashgari ran against for Council Position 2 last year.

“I’m really looking forward to working with the commission,” Lashgari told the Lynnwood Times. “There are very capable people in the commission that are very committed to delivering excellence to the city of Lynnwood.”

The planning commission is an advisory body appointed by the City Council responsible for making decisions on issues relating to development and land use within the city.

Naz Lashgari approaches this new position with the love she has had for the city of Lynnwood since she purchased her home in the city in 2006.

Before then, she immigrated to Seattle from Iran during the Iranian Revolution to join her brother while he pursued higher education at the University of Washington, where Lashgari would later attend for her Bachelor of Science in Biology.

Lashgari relocated to Lynnwood from Seattle where she essentially grew up to escape the urban sprawl and settle in a city that was “beautiful” and more along the lines of where she wanted to spend the rest of her life.

As a woman, an immigrant, and a minority in many different aspects, she quickly became passionate about diversity, equity, and inclusion with the commitment to get involved in any way she could.

“Diversity, equity, and inclusion are important for everyone. We are a tapestry of a diverse community; we

all come from a different background, [and] we all bring something from where we are from, from where we grew up, [and] from what we’ve experienced,” Nashgari said.

To Lashgari, the development of the city is rooted, like most things, in economic inequity.

The housing crisis, for example – one of her major focuses when she ran for city council – could be tackled through the development of more affordable housing, according to Lashgari, who believes the planning commission is already making progress toward the developments surrounding Alderwood.

“Until we bring economic equity and get income to where it needs to be for people to afford housing, [the housing crisis] will continue to be an issue,” Lashgari told the Lynnwood Times.

Lashgari became involved in politics initially through volunteer work, eventually serving as chair and vice chair of former Mayor Nicola Smith’s rebooted Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission in 2017.

Although she cherished her time spent on the DEI Commission, Lashgari felt it was time to allow more and different people to join the conversation. In her new role as planning commissioner, she plans to continue this “lens of equity” as it pertains to the development of Lynnwood.

While she believes it was time to move on from her role in the DEI Commission, working alongside the Mayor and city council has been paramount to understanding her approach in her new role and how to work with local governments to get things implemented.

In 2020 she took her passion for making a difference to the city council race for position 2, believing it is important to have “different voices on the council and to offer different perspectives as the city moves forward,” particularly with marginalized communities whose voices, historically, have not been appropriately represented.

“Lynnwood is growing and I wanted to be a part of that growth,” Lashgari said.


In the next few months, Lashgari plans to familiarize herself with her new role and take strides toward the direction she wishes to take the city, like creating more green spaces so that children and family members can get clean air and get outside.

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CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Issue 71: The article titled “Janelle Cass announces run for Senate in the 21st LD” was a press release from the Janelle Cass campaign.

Issue 71: The picture caption for article titled “Love Your New Neighbor sculpture unveiled at Convention Center” contained the wording “JBK Choi’s mother,” the correction is BuWon Yoon of our Sister City Committee.






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Dr. Woodard: A “Beacon of Hope” for Snohomish County

By KIENAN BRISCOE

MOUNTLAKE TERRACE, Wash. – The only thing Dr. Steve Woodard’s biography on LinkedIn says is “service is my calling,” a mantra that resonates through both his personal and professional life through politics, volunteerism, and education.

Last month, Dr. Woodard was appointed as the new Vice President of Community Engagement for Volunteers of America Western Washington, a non-profit organization that offers hundreds of human service programs from housing and healthcare to rehabilitation and assisting the elderly, veterans, and people with disabilities.

If Dr. Woodard had to be put in a box, it would be, first and foremost, an “educator,” serving in the profession for over 30 years at the University of Washington as vice president within the Minority Affairs and Diversity Office and most recently as dean of Edmonds College.

While Dr. Woodard noted that education has been a “humbling experience,” his scope for how he wished to serve his community ultimately led him to volunteerism through Volunteers of America, where he believes the reach of services far exceeds the limitations of education.

“It was such an amazing experience at Edmonds; I can’t speak highly [enough] of the work they continue to do. . . . But at the end of it, we could only do so much,” Dr. Woodard said. “We were fulfilling the educational side, but there’s still the medical, there’s still the financial stability, there’s still a number of things that make you feel whole and successful.”

He met the Volunteers of America the way he hopes most people get to know



DR. WOODARD: A “BEACON OF HOPE” FOR SNOHOMISH COUNTY

them – through volunteering. Through his volunteer work, he was invited to join the board and was eventually appointed to his vice president position.

Volunteers of America Western Washington CEO Steve Corsi shared with the Lynnwood Times the value Dr. Woodard’s is bringing not only to VOA but to Lynnwood.

“We are excited to have Dr. Steve Woodard at VOA Western Washington as the new Vice President of Community Engagement! His history of service speaks for itself,” said Corsi.

“Before coming on staff, Dr. Woodard served as a volunteer for our programs numerous times and in numerous capacities. Additionally, Dr. Woodard served on our Board of Directors for over a year. His energy, enthusiasm, and passion for helping others is exactly what we need in the VOA Neighborhood Center we’re constructing in Lynnwood.”



What attracted Dr. Woodard most to Volunteers of America is their ability to assist in any component of life, and where they can’t assist, they find a partner who can.

In addition to his new role, Dr. Woodard also sits on the Mountlake Terrace

City Council, a position he has held for the last three years.

Dr. Woodard got involved with politics as a resident, father of Edmonds School District students, husband to a high school educator, and someone with social justice on the top of his

Continued **PAGE 09** >>

from page 1 **CAPITAL GAINS TAX**

We respectfully disagree with this ruling, and we will appeal.”

Senate Bill 5096, which Gov. Jay Inslee signed into law in May of last year, creates a 7 percent excise tax on capital gains above \$250,000 beginning this year. The first collections under the law would begin in 2023. Less than one in 1,000 Washingtonians are expected to owe the tax each year, and only the wealthiest few.

The law applies to the sale of assets like stocks and bonds where a person receives capital gains exceeding \$250,000 during the year. For example, if a person bought stock for \$100,000 and sold it 10 years later for \$400,000, they would have a capital gain of \$300,000. The first \$250,000 of that amount would be exempt from tax, so the person would owe the 7 percent tax rate only on the remaining \$50,000 in gains, for a total tax payment of \$3,500 on the \$400,000 sale. The tax does not apply to assets in retirement accounts, sales of real estate (including homes and farmland), livestock, timberlands, qualified small businesses and more.

Ten Washingtonians who claimed they would be subject to the tax filed a lawsuit challenging the new law. They are represented by, among others, former attorney general Rob McKenna and the Freedom Foundation. The plaintiffs argued that the tax is a tax on property, which makes it subject to restrictions in the Washington State Constitution, and that it also violated other constitutional provisions.

Washington Solicitor General Noah Purcell, as well as deputy solicitors general Jeffrey Even and Peter Gonick, and assistant attorneys general Cam Comfort and Charles Zalesky led the case for Washington.

Republican Response to Ruling Sen. Lynda Wilson, Senate Republican budget leader, offered the following statement after Douglas County Superior Court Judge Brian Huber found the state income tax on capital gains passed in 2021 violates two sections of Washington’s constitution.

“Judge Huber’s ruling is encouraging, but not surprising. When we were battling the majority Democrats on their income tax a year ago we predicted it would fail on constitutional grounds, and we saw through their claim that it’s an excise tax. The judge agreed on all counts.

“The Democrats who support the income tax probably expected this ruling too. Remember, their end game all along has been to get this tax in front of the state Supreme Court. They’re well aware five of the nine justices were appointed by either Governor Inslee or his predecessor, so they have to be hoping the court will lean their direction.

“The income tax is even less defensible today than it was last year, when the Democrats pushed it through. The majority would be smart to work with us to repeal the income tax before this legislative session is over next week. State government is sitting on a huge surplus, so it clearly has enough revenue already.”

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Beth Marriott inducted into 2022 WACA Hall of Fame

LYNNWOOD, Wash. – The intercom rang at Meadowdale High School a little after 2 p.m. on Thursday, February 24, asking Beth Marriott, ASB Advisor and Athletic Director, to report to the Great Hall where, little did she know, she would be attending her, surprise, induction into the Washington Activities Coordinators Association (WACA) Hall of Fame.

An eruption of applause immediately greeted Marriott when she walked through the doors, sporting her school spirit with a Meadowdale hockey jersey. Staff and students smiled behind their masks and met her with a standing ovation, including her daughter who flew in from West Virginia for the ceremony.

“I had no idea this was going to happen,” Marriott told the Lynnwood Times. “I thought, because I was meeting with some coaches to give them their evaluations, that the principal was waiting here [for that].”

One-by-one students and administration took to the podium to share their appreciations, some bringing gifts. Behind them, unicorns decorated the stage to represent the quote “life is rainbow and unicorns...even in the toughest times” – a quote that Principal David Shockley said aptly describes the approach that Marriott continues to bring to her position.

Beth Marriott is a woman whose reputation resonates through the Meadowdale High School grounds as someone

who takes her role in education, and her love for her students, to heart.

She has been the Activities Director since 2007 but stepped into the Athletics Department in 2013, a role she has always wanted since being a high school student herself, having an admiration for her own Athletic Director.

When she graduated high school she even told that same teacher “I’m coming for your job.” Years later, upon stepping into her role, she emailed him to say “I got the job! I just didn’t get it in the same building.”

To many of her colleagues, Beth Marriott “is Meadowdale High School.” “Everything to her is about making this school a better place. She’s so invested in the kids. She’s always here – she’s irreplaceable; when she leaves athletics, she’s going to be tough to replace,” Angie McGuire, District Director of Athletics said.

McGuire’s position was formerly held by Julie Stroncek before her retirement, who has worked closely with Marriott for about a dozen years, told the Lynnwood Times that Marriott is “one of the most selfless people [she] know[s].”

“She always wants what’s best for everyone in everything she does, whether that’s activities or athletics, she’s always there,” Stroncek said. “She is a constant professional who always has the student’s interests at heart.”



Meadowdale High School Principal, David Shockley, thanking Beth Marriott for her contributions to the Meadowdale Mavericks. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

Marriott is planning for her retirement this August and, although she loves her work she has done for the last 20-plus-years, she looks forward to having more time to spend with her family.

“I feel incredibly humbled. This is not anything that I ever thought that I would have the opportunity to be considered for,” Marriott said.

WACA HALL OF FAME AWARD

The Washington Activity Coordinators Association Hall of Fame was established in 2002 to honor individuals who have made significant, lasting impact on student activities in the state of Washington. Recipients of the award

demonstrated leadership and dedication to providing high quality programs at the school, district and state levels. WACA nominates only three people per year for the entire state.

The qualify for a Hall of Fame Award, nominees must have at least 20 years of service in any capacity related to student leadership/activities in the state of Washington, have served as an advisor, administrator, leadership teacher, secretary, facilitator, and be active in student leadership/activities beyond their school. To everyone who has ever known Beth and what she brings to her job, she is all of these and more.

Boeing suspends operations in Russia, titanium supplier in crosshairs

By LYNNWOOD TIMES STAFF

EVERETT, Wash. – Governor Jay Inslee announced on Monday, February 28, that state entities are to identify and sever ties with Russian institutions. Boeing is certainly not part of the state government — the company also relocated their headquarters to Chicago in 2001 — but the aerospace giant still remains a major employer here in Washington. For almost 25 years, Boeing has partnered with Russian titanium producer VSMPO-AVISMA and just renewed their agreement in November 2021. While there are currently few details, Boeing has taken steps to respond to Russian aggression.

Politico reporter Lee Hudson tweeted on Tuesday:

“JUST IN: From Boeing, ‘We have suspended major operations in Moscow and temporarily closed our office in Kyiv. We have also suspended parts, maintenance and technical support services for Russian airlines.’”

As Boeing’s largest titanium supplier, it does beg to question what sort of ramifications this move will have. President and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes Stan Deal called VSMPO-AVISMA “a reliable and valuable partner” in the November press release.

The Boeing 737, 767, 787, 777 and 777X airplanes all use VSMPO-AVISMA titanium, but the agreement with the Russian company goes beyond supplying titanium. The recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) had

three main objectives:

Increase utilization of their Russia-based Ural Boeing Manufacturing joint venture.

Increase R&D investment and continue to develop new titanium alloys and technologies.

Explore new opportunities to expand VSMPO-AVISMA’s role producing titanium parts and components beyond raw material or forging, for current and future Boeing commercial airplanes. But responding to Russia in spite of economic repercussions has national bipartisan support. The state legislature amended their budget proposals to include \$19 million for Ukrainian

refugees.

“If our state can put one brick in the wall around Putin, it will be a good thing, and we intend to do all that we can in this regard,” Inslee said.

In the private sector, a plethora of organizations have taken action against Russia. Apple also recently joined the growing list of private companies and international organizations — Visa, Mastercard, Adidas, BP and Ford to name a few — that have taken tangible steps.

There are some that argue that companies acting days into the conflict only do so because government sanctions are forcing their hand, but regardless,

pressure is mounting on Putin and the Russian government.

“I would say it’s going to be a lot worse for business if we end up in some type of armed conflict with Vladimir Putin,” Inslee said in his announcement on Monday. “Because he doesn’t get the message that we are not going to let him go into Poland and Bulgaria and Hungary and Latvia and Estonia. He needs to get that message.”

The Lynnwood Times is awaiting a statement from Boeing regarding its supply of VSMPO-AVISMA titanium and other impacts from the sanctions on Russia.

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Retired Seattle Police Chief Carmen Best shares the importance of wisdom, perseverance, and togetherness

By OLIVIA THEISSEN

Carmen Best shares what it is like to be “Black in Blue” in her 2021 bestselling book that is available on Amazon and at local booksellers. The retired Seattle Police Chief tells her story of navigating racism and discrimination early in her career and dealing with civil unrest as a police chief during BLM demonstrations in Seattle.

In 2018, Best became the first Black woman to lead the city’s police force until she stepped down in 2020 amidst budget cuts. Her book, “Black in Blue: Lessons on Leadership, Breaking Barriers, and Racial Reconciliation,” which details her rise to police chief, became an instant success, hitting the #1 Amazon bestseller list within 24 hours of its release.

In her book, Best recalls incidents of hardship, including parallel stories of young Carmen being passed up for student government and Deputy Chief Best being passed up for police chief. What’s more, she discusses the discrimination she faced both as a young girl and as an adult.

The book is both autobiographical and instructional with “tactical debriefs” peppered throughout to drive home the hard lessons Best learned and wants her readers to learn, too. Her account is a guide to young leaders, filled with advice from one who so transparently depicts her own shortcomings in ways that are often comical and relatable.

A theme that runs through her book is the reconciliation between two seemingly opposed worlds – at least on the surface – that Best found herself in. As the title implies, Best works to reconcile being Black and being a police officer amidst an age of “defund the police.” Her work ultimately reveals how she has used her position to advocate for the Black community.

Her stories provide the reader an inside look at a leader’s journey, the trials and hardships that sharpened her, and the mistakes she made along the way. From early childhood to military training to the day Best stepped down as police chief, Best seamlessly weaves together charming anecdotes with hard lessons and advice to her reader.

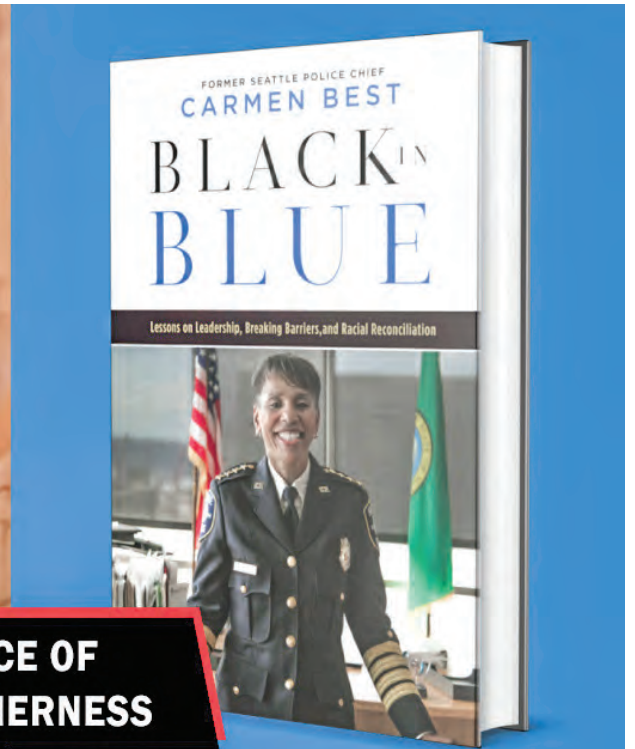
Carmen Best was willing to speak with the Lynnwood Times about her book, her life, and her career. Our correspondence is as follows.

Lynnwood Times: What motivated you to finally sit down and write your story, and why now?

Best: As they say – time provides clarity. In the middle of everything, and even in those couple of few months after retiring, I don’t think I had the perspective to really translate what I had taken in and produce something someone in policing – or even not in policing – could benefit from. Also, it was cathartic to write things down and to reflect. It helped me process and stitch together a really enjoyable but complex career, and it helped to know that even though, for now, I am not in policing, I could provide some insights for those who are. I mean, at this mo-



CARMEN BEST SHARES THE IMPORTANCE OF WISDOM, PERSEVERANCE, AND TOGETHERNESS



ment in history, I think we need more people to stand up and commit to honest service and leadership and not fall to the mangle of the day.

Lynnwood Times: You’ve done a lot of traveling to promote your book recently, meeting many new people from all walks of life who’ve come together to celebrate your book. What lessons or wisdom have you gained through this experience?

Best: Not to sound trite, but, we really are so much more alike than we are different. We should acknowledge a commonality can a human level. Since I retired, and even when I was attending local and national meetings as Chief, I have spoken to so many different types of groups and people. Really, what it comes down to is, people want to know their family is safe and provided for, that if they do hard work they can get ahead, and that our government and its systems will treat them and everyone else fairly.

I have met with people on flights, in seminars, and at book signings who I know have completely different political views from me and from each other, but that isn’t what gets brought up. They want to know how they can help their communities – how they can serve. I think those of us who get the honor to be leaders have to hear that and answer that call. We have to work together and allow this country to do what it does best – be one, indivisible, country. There is too much focus and stoking of our differences to get attention and to get votes.

Lynnwood Times: “Black in Blue” hit the #1 Amazon bestseller list within 24 hours of its release. Why do you believe this book resonates with so many people?

Best: I think people always like to get an insider’s view of how things really happened. We know that information on social media is often distorted or contrived. It’s hard to tell what is true and what isn’t. We can even curate our news to ensure we only hear what we want to hear. I think people are drawn to real stories about why people choose to serve. A lot of people work for local, state, and federal governments, but it’s really only 7% of the population. Less than 1% serve in the military today. I

think there are compelling stories of working with community, especially on difficult areas during difficult times.

Lynnwood Times: The book details the many life lessons and leadership principles you learned at home or as a child that contributed to your success. What is the most important lesson you learned that you want to share with young people today?

Best: I say it in my book. I say it at speeches. Relationships are everything. In the first chapter of the book, I wrote about my favorite childhood memory, seeing my younger brother smile when I gave him my gloves so he wasn’t freezing cold anymore. It was that sibling love. That knowledge that we had each others’ backs.

I think part of why we are so fractured right now when it comes to politics and sometimes even just basic issues, is we have lost a lot of relationships. Maybe it’s because of social media. The pandemic has not helped. But it started before then. We have had so many wonderful advances that have made life better and easier, but they also allow us to get along on our own more.

We need more opportunities to see what happens when we build real relationships. Nurturing those, seeing those thrive...that will truly bring happiness.

Lynnwood Times: How do you hope your book effects change in today’s

Continued PAGE 12 >>

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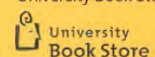
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Local Eats Spotlight: Zuri's Donutz of Lynnwood

By BO JOHN BRUSCO

LYNNWOOD, Wash. — Experience donuts anew at Zuri's Donutz located at 7600 196th St SW in Lynnwood, WA. Zuri's shop might be small, but it's explosively entertaining with an assortment of pop culture decor sprinkled throughout the interior. From Star Wars figurines to exotic house-plants, it's a perfect habitat for the creative mind of the shop's owner, Chef Davis.

"There's no chain on my creativity," says Chef Davis, who creates new donut flavors almost every weekend. This week it was "Mexican Chocolate."

Davis likes to think outside of the box when it comes to his confections. One of the craziest donuts he had when I visited was called the "Whaaaaat?" and it was a sort of cinnamon roll/egg sandwich hybrid with bacon bits on top.

Even the standard flavors like maple, for instance, are always reinvented at Zuri's. The maple bars Davis makes don't have the classic light tan frosting, and they're not called "Maple Bars." Instead, they're called "Sap of Sugar" bars, and the frosting is a dark, chocolatey-looking color that is naturally derived from the sap of maple trees.

"It's actually sap from a sugar maple tree," Davis explains.

On his expedition for new flavors, Davis is joined by his three-year-old daughter, Zuri (who the shop is named after). "That's the kind of collaboration we have together. She'll learn a new fruit and ask, 'daddy, is that at my donut shop?' And I'm like, 'I'll try it.'"

The most recent flavor Zuri suggested to her father was strawberry, which Davis baked the weekend I visited. But if you're looking for it, search for the donut labeled "Starrberry" because that's how Zuri says it.

THE FOOD

Sap of Sugar (Maple Bar)

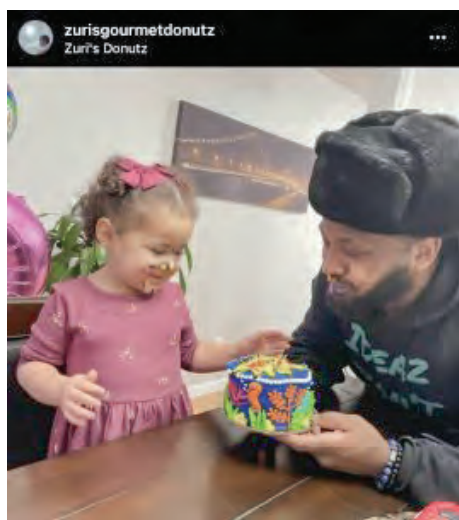
The Sap of Sugar bar was absolutely delightful. This was the lightest maple bar I've ever had. But even though it wasn't super dense, greasy, or "eggy," it wasn't lacking at all in flavor. And even though it didn't look like a traditional maple bar, it still had that maple taste.

The Burnt Buttercream Roll

This creation left me awestruck. I couldn't believe that I had never had something like this before in all my years of consuming donuts and pastries. The roll, again, was noticeably lighter and fluffier than your standard donut. The sweetness of the buttercream was complimented by the burnt topping, and since the top did have that little char it created the most delectable caramelized shell—which compli-



Zuri's Donutz Owner, Chef Davis. Image from Zuri's Donutz Instagram account.



Chef Davis with his daughter, Zuri (Image from Zuri's Donutz Instagram account)



Left: Burnt Buttercream. Right: Sap of Sugar. Lynnwood Times | Bo John Brusco.

mented the fluffiness.

The Wood Bourbon

The Wood Bourbon was a chocolate-covered apple fritter (Davis calls his fritters "clouds") with a shot of Maker's Mark bourbon jammed in at the top with a clever plastic tube. The fritter would be appropriately described as a cloud—I've never had a fritter melt in my mouth so rapidly. The chocolate and apple danced nicely together, but what blew my mind was when I drank some of the bourbon while eating the fritter; the flavor combination worked so well and was something I would have never thought to try.

RATING

I'm going to give Zuri's Donutz the "Donut Outliers" award because Davis's donuts are completely separate from the pack, and all of the more flashy looking donuts at Zuri's aren't just eye candy either—they're strategically designed to give you the best donut-consuming experience you've ever had.



The Wood Bourbon Fritter (or "cloud"). Lynnwood Times | Bo John Brusco.

Zuri's Donutz is only open from 6 AM – 2 PM, Friday through Sunday. Zuri's also sells vegan and gluten-free options, as well as coffee, hot breakfast sandwiches, and Italian sodas.

flavors at Zuri's, be sure to follow them on Instagram @zurisgourmetdonutz.

Check out Zuri's Donutz video review at <https://youtu.be/ksv6UiRkVlw>.

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Sheriff shares updates on County's LEAD The Way program

By BO JOHN BRUSCO

Last year, Snohomish County Sheriff Adam Fortney started his LEAD The Way program for youth between the ages of 13 and 17. The program's goal is to provide Leadership, Encouragement, and Direction (LEAD) for youth in the county who may be involved in the criminal justice system or at a crossroads in their life.

In an interview with the Lynnwood Times on Feb. 18, Sheriff Fortney shared updates on the program, including that the first session had a 100% graduation rate and that the class size doubled in its second session.

"In 2021, I really wanted to sit down and figure out something that I could give back to the to the community as the Sheriff of Snohomish County," Fortney says.

"I am personally passionate about the youth. I've raised a bunch of kids already. I'm still raising kids. The youth in Snohomish County are very important to me. They're near and dear to my heart, so I wanted to do something that I could give back."

Sheriff Fortney says that LEAD The Way isn't solely for youth who've been involved in the criminal justice system.

"You might be a youth that's just kind of going through some tough decisions and things like that as they're growing up. We want to be there to mentor them a little bit [and] help them with decision-making," he said, noting that it isn't uncommon for youth to lack the familial and societal support they need in today's world.



SHERIFF FORTNEY SHARES UPDATES ON SNOHOMISH COUNTY'S LEAD THE WAY PROGRAM

Photo of Sheriff Adam Fortney sharing the LEAD the Way program updates with the Lynnwood Times.

The program involves two-hour classes held once a week for eight weeks. The classes are co-taught by Sheriff Fortney and Tyler Ware, who has been through the criminal justice center, but now has a story of recovery and success to share. The classes are also frequently visited by guest speakers with relevant experience.

"And so they get to see me standing up there in uniform, they see Tyler, and we just talk real stuff with these kids," the Sheriff says. "Does it work with every one of them? Probably not, but we're just trying to plant seeds in them. As they grow up, they know they can reach out to us—and they do."

The program is currently in its second session, which began in January 2022

and will end next month, and the enrollment has already doubled since the first session. Last year, the program had nine youths enroll (all nine graduated), and the current session has 18 participants.

"It's a lot more work than I anticipated," Sheriff Fortney says, "but it's also work that I love."

One of the enduring benefits of the program is the relationships of trust and mentorship that continue beyond graduation.

"And that has proven successful because our first session ended in September 2021, and we're still contacting those families. I was with one of the families almost all of last weekend just

working through some stuff," the Sheriff explains.

After the current session ends, Sheriff Fortney anticipates having another summer session this year. "As long as we think the kids are getting something out of this thing [...] we're going to keep this going."

LEAD THE WAY PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

To enroll in the LEAD The Way program, visit: <https://snohomishcounty-wa.gov/5815/NEW-Lead-The-Way-Program>.

To view the video interview with Sheriff Adam Fortney, visit: <https://youtu.be/oQVqZMqeS4c>.

Canadian pastor Artur Pawlowski denied bail, in solitary confinement for trucker convoy protests

By OLIVIA THIESSEN

ALBERTA, Canada, February 23, 2022 – Calgary pastor, Artur Pawlowski, 48, is currently awaiting trial after being charged with mischief and interrupting the operation of essential infrastructure, both charges related to the trucker convoy protests. According to his lawyer, the pastor remains in solitary confinement for 23 hours a day, Fox News reported.

Last week, Alberta's Provincial Court Judge Erin Olsen denied the pastor bail, claiming he cannot be released in part because he "will not follow court orders," according to the CBC.

Pawlowski was arrested outside his home on February 7, just days after he spoke to the trucker convoy protestors at the U.S.-Canada border in Coutts, Alberta. In his speech, the pastor urged protestors to "hold the line," a phrase that became popular amongst truckers partaking in the blockades.

The pastor's speech came after the truckers had reportedly made a deal with RCMP to move the blockade from the border to Edmonton, Alberta. But Pawlowski's "impassioned" speech, according to prosecutor Steven Johnston, seemed to change their minds. The truckers remained at the Coutts border crossing until February 14, nearly two weeks after the on-and-off blockade began.



CANADIAN PASTOR DENIED BAIL, IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT FOR CONVOY PROTESTS

This is the pastor's fifth arrest over the last couple of years, all of which surround his protests against mandates in the country. Pawlowski's arrest is also historic—he is the first to be arrested under Alberta's Critical Infrastructure Defense Act, which allows law enforcement to arrest a perceived offender without a warrant.

"For him to be incarcerated, for him to be put in jail, because he has expressed

and acted contrary to the public health message that's out there is really concerning from the administration of justice perspective," Pawlowski's lawyer Sarah Miller said in an interview after his bail was denied.

"It's extremely frustrating because the charges all stem from public health measures that are all being incrementally withdrawn over the next few weeks," she added. According to Miller, Pawlowski will remain in custody

until at least March 11. In the meantime, Pawlowski remains in solitary confinement for 23 hours each day.

Even before the trucker convoy protest began, Pawlowski has been a figurehead of the anti-mandate movement in Canada, stemming back to his April 2021 viral video, in which the pastor stopped police from disrupting his church's Passion celebration.

Mukilteo fixes technical difficulties in posting online meetings

MUKILTEO, Wash. – After a month of the city of Mukilteo being unable to post video, audio, or agendas of city council online meetings to its website, due to “technical difficulties,” the problem has been resolved.

Beginning with the January 18, 2022, meeting, the city was unable to post its city council meetings yet other commission meetings were posted to its website. The agendas for past city council meetings were also missing from the city’s website for 31 days.

Under Washington State law, RCW 35A.12.110, city councils are required to keep a journal of “all proceedings... which shall be public record.”

To ensure transparency and provide a service to Mukilteans, the Lynnwood Times began broadcasting Mukilteo City Council Meetings on Facebook until the City was able to resume posting City Council meetings.

The Lynnwood Times contacted Mukilteo City Clerk, Kara Johnson,

who is responsible for posting of recorded minutes, online meetings and managing the record of public meetings, to discuss the issue.

“The City is currently having technical difficulties in regards to posting the live meetings to our website. At this time I do not have a time frame that it will be fixed. We are working on it and are aware of the problem. Thank you for your patience in this matter,” Johnson wrote in an email response.

The city recently allocated \$148,924 of American Rescue Plan Act funds in upgrades to audio/visual equipment in the council chambers.

The audio portion of these upgrades has been installed and is operational and the new video cameras have been installed and are operational, however, according to Steve Powers, Mukilteo City Administrator, there are still items not installed due to supply chain shortages such as replacement microphones, a screen replacement for the projector, and the lobby display.

The February 14 meeting was the first meeting where the City could use the audio equipment and there was a “dramatic improvement to the audio quality,” Powers said.

The Lynnwood Times reached out to Powers to understand what the “technical issues” the City Clerk described were and how the issue will be resolved in the future.

According to Powers, the encoder which plays the live feed on the City’s website is not compatible with the new installation. During the AV installation it was discovered that the vendor for the encoder does not support the analog input from the new AV system as the city had made accommodations for.

In the very near future, the city council will be asked to approve a contract amendment with the encoder vendor to replace the equipment so that it is compatible with the AV system. During this time the live feed will not be available, and the video recordings (which will occur via Zoom) will require manual

upload and made available later.

“The public is currently able to participate in each of the City Council meetings via phone or by Zoom; this will continue in the future,” Powers said.

Powers added that once the new encoding server is installed, recordings will be available live and shortly after the end of scheduled meetings. The city also plans to record the audio locally, separate from the encoding server, in case of any hardware failures.

“Until the new equipment needed to correct this problem can be installed, the city will continue to record meetings through Zoom and manually upload this video to the website,” Powers said.

As of February 23, all city council meetings have been uploaded to the city’s website and are operational for public viewing.

from page 3 **NAZ LASHGARI**

Areas that are more economically stable have more green spaces, according to Lashgari. She explains this principle is a perfect example of how even the environment is related to economic inequalities.

“We need to change the narrative so that not only rich people can have access to clean air. Everyone should be able to get out of their home and to go to a local park, to have the green space, to take their children, to walk for their mental health and be in nature and connect with nature,” Lashgari said.

Another one of Lashgari’s priorities as planning commissioner is to focus on the redevelopment of South Lynnwood, an area that is more than a quarter Hispanic and Latin, according to the city’s 2020 Existing Conditions Report and Gap Analysis.

When Lashgari is not involved in her fight for equality in the city, she enjoys going on walks and writing. She has written several screenplays she hopes will someday be made into films. Her favorite film, although a difficult choice, is *Don’t Look Up*.

from page 4 **DR. WOODARD**

mind. To him, it was a way of “getting involved in any way” he could.

Mountlake Terrace, being only four square miles, was very easy to get into volunteer work, said Dr. Woodard.

“I think it was the background that I was bringing to the council, what I was doing in the area, that ended up being a good match, and then when it came down to the election, the residents agreed,” Dr. Woodard said.

Some top priorities of Dr. Woodard at a council level is preparing Mountlake Terrace and the county for growth, and the new Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commission, which goes hand-in-hand with growth, according to Dr. Woodard.

“As you have this growth coming, it’s very easy to focus on those who know how to access the system and get their concerns heard . . . where there are a lot of voices out there that won’t have the same privilege and access, so we need to be looking out for those voices in particular,” Dr. Woodard said.

“When I think about population growth, it’s looking at how we welcome new people in without displacing and not minimizing those who have already been there.”

Dr. Woodard has sat on a number of boards including Equity of Opportunity at Edmonds College, Sno-Isle Library System, Commissioner at RPAC, Teachers of Color Foundation, LEVL, Washington State Family and Community Engagement Trust.

He has spread his skill sets through other countries, including Spain, working with students but mostly on the West Coast, where he has called home most of his life. Through his work in Snohomish County he has honed in to residents who have felt “disenfranchised.”

Dr. Woodard holds a doctorate in multicultural education and feminist theory. He has used his degrees to focus on “voices that had been erased or minimized” historically, which is the lens he looks through in his work, always looking for who is being served but also who is not being served and what the implications are.

“At the end of it all, what I want to be for someone, everyone quite frankly,

is a beacon of hope. I felt that’s what higher ed. is, but from that, and seeing the larger problems, I started to think in terms of how I don’t have to be a beacon of hope alone, so [VOA] asked me to take up that mantle with them too, not only to be a beacon of hope but to be a part of the solutions.”

Through his new position, he plans to expand VOA’s scope and reach. One of the latest partnerships will be with Blood Works NW, which coincides with the March Against Hunger next month, previously covered by Snohomish County and now operated through Volunteers of America.

“What I think formal education can structurally do is dream bigger. Education is important to get you out of your own story so you know why you’re sacrificing. It sets you up so that you can be a better person,” Dr. Woodard said.

“I’m in the job of finding people who have dreams and bringing more people who have dreams to show them their commonality, so we can operationalize those dreams to meet needs.”

from page 2 **PUBLIC WORKS**

“Right now, Washington State is moving a bill that will tax Oregonians to fund Washington’s transportation package,” wrote Gov. Brown. “Yes, you read that right: Washington wants to tax Oregonians at the pump for their transportation costs.”

And just last week, Brown sent a letter to Gov. Inslee threatening legal action against Washington state that would hold up a much needed federal grant for the replacement of the Interstate Bridge that extends over the Columbia River.

“If this export tax moves forward, not only will our states’ relations be strained, but we will both be caught up in lengthy and costly legal battles,” the letter from Gov. Brown to Gov. Inslee warns. “For you in Washington this means stalled progress on the exact projects being funded by this bill – including likely missing the huge

opportunity to apply for the Mega Projects grant in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) for the Interstate Bridge.”

Alaska state Rep. Kevin McCabe introduced retaliatory legislation last week, which would tax fish shipped to Washington and increase moorage costs for Washington boats in Alaska harbors.

In an interview with KTTH’s Jason Rantz, Alaskan Governor Mike Dunleavy (R) urged Gov. Inslee to “rethink” the fuel export tax.

Washington has five fuel refineries, but Oregon and Idaho do not, and Alaska has only one. Fuel products refined in Washington are shipped to these states by rail, truck or pipeline. The export tax would have applied a 6-cent fee on fuel exported from Washington refineries to other states. It was expected to generate \$2 billion in revenue over the package’s 16-year lifespan.

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Your March 2022 Horoscope by Startoonz

Although it's hard to believe that the world is going in a positive direction right now, astrology does have some optimistic things to say about it this March. The trickster energy, symbolized by the planet Uranus, may still have some surprises in store for us of course. However, with March kicking off with a New Moon in Pisces this month – and with this being conjunct with the jovial and ever giving Jupiter energy – we can only hope that fresh inspiration and a greater compassion will come to the fore when and as we need it. If this is not possible on a worldly scale, then it most certainly is possible in a personal sense – meaning we are all quite capable of taking responsibility for being much more positive in our lives and caring far more for our fellow human beings who are suffering.

In many ways, the world is but a reflection of our inner selves. So, if we can but learn to love, care, and reach out with a greater compassion to those in our reach, then who knows how powerful those collective ripples may affect the greater scheme of things in the fulness of time. Consequently, at this pivotal moment in our planet's history, let us consider what we can do in our own lives that may be new to us, but can be a small, yet invaluable, part of the greater healing that our world needs so desperately right now.

ARIES: The higher purpose of the Aries spirit is to **LEAD, PIONEER, CONQUER FEARS** and to **INITIATE NEW ACTIVITIES**. Therefore, at this critical time we look to you to show us how we can all be initiators of positive and powerful things that might change our lives, and the lives of others, for the better. It's a time to take up the sword of reason – which you are so equipped to do – inspiring us all to do similarly at the same time.

TAURUS: The higher purpose of the Taurus spirit is to be **RELIABLE, STEADFAST, LOYAL** and to **BUILD A MORE SECURE ENVIRONMENT** for themselves and their loved ones. Taurus can also be a “voice” for others too – especially in terms of **ORATORY** or maybe even **SINGING**. Therefore, at this critical time, do consider that in your calm and collected way, you can help everyone find their true voice too – so that all can work in a more practical and solid way towards making the changes that our lives and our world need right now.

GEMINI: The higher purpose of the Gemini spirit is to **STUDY, LEARN, REASON** and to **COMMUNICATE NEW IDEAS** with others. Therefore, at this critical time you need to be the communicators, the teachers and the speakers who can help us understand the needs of the world and the important lesson that only by sharing information and being honest with one another will a greater and more positive progress be made for us in our lives and on our planet. A trouble shared is a troubled halved when all is said and done.

CANCER: The higher purpose of the Cancerian spirit is to **FEED, NURTURE, PROTECT** and to **BE SENSITIVE TO THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS**. Therefore, at this critical time you need to show us how to nurture what we have and feed those who are lost and who hunger. We are after all one big earthly family and although conflict and strife can affect even the tightest of families, we need that influence of the caring adult in the room – to show us what we have and what we must preserve in the interests of family unity.

LEO: The higher purpose of the Leo spirit is to **INSPIRE, BRING WARMTH, DEMONSTRATE STRENGTH OF WILL** and to **SHOW PRIDE** in work and deed. Therefore, at this critical time where we need good leadership, good inspiration to take us that one more step, that one more yard forward, to a greater peace. You are built for that. So, show us how we can be that too, as self-confidence and wise governance not an easy thing for us to learn on our own.

VIRGO: The higher purpose of the Virgo spirit is to **ANALYZE, SHOW HUMILITY, DEAL WITH DETAILS** and to **SHOW EFFICIENCY IN THE HEALTH AND SERVICE OF OTHERS**. Therefore, at this critical time you are the ones to teach us the value of service to one another, to take care of all the details, and even be the power behind the throne if needs be. Your humility needs to be our humility. That way we can learn from one another and be there for each another, regardless of personal interest or ego.

LIBRA: The higher purpose of the Libran spirit is to **BRING JUSTICE, to HARMONIZE, APPLY BALANCE** and **SHOW BEAUTY AND DIPLOMACY** whenever it is needed. Therefore, at this critical time blessed be the peacemakers, such as yourself. Teach us to weigh up options and alternatives. Teach us that even in the most challenging moments of conflict and enmity, diplomacy is the only true process that will bring lasting peace and stability in our lives and in our world.

SCORPIO: The higher purpose of the Scorpio spirit is to **POSITIVELY DIRECT EMOTIONS, APPLY FOCUS, EXHIBIT TENACITY** and to **UNDERSTAND AND RESOLVE SUBCONCIOUS MOTIVES** in the self and in others. Therefore, at this critical time show us how we can draw on our deeper-most instincts for survival, despite any fears we may have. Show us the unbending courage we all need to initiate, in order that we face the powerful challenges of our lives inevitably throw up from time to time. And give us the tenacity to stick to our higher purpose, even when all seems to be lost and our world seems a terrible place to be in.

SAGITTARIUS: The higher purpose of the Sagittarius spirit is to **EXPLORE, SEEK TRUTH, BE ADVENTUROUS** and to **APPRECIATE ALL FORMS OF BELIEF OR THOUGHT**. Therefore, at this critical time teach us how to seek out the greater truths that we need to understand. Then, when they are understood, to bring a higher purpose and wise judgement to those truths. That way, no matter how challenging the path may be ahead us, we will always be guided by that light of reason and higher understanding that we can discover within us.

CAPRICORN: The higher purpose of the Capricorn spirit is to **RESPECT LAW AND ORDER, UPHOLD TRADITIONS, RESPECT LONGTERM OBJECTIVES** and to **WORK HARD FOR A BETTER SOCIETY**. Therefore, at this critical time help us understand the value of traditions and values that have been handed down to us. And although we may have different traditions and values to others, help us also appreciate the meaning they have for them – which are valid and therefore need to be respected – as we work together for a greater future and a united purpose in the future.

AQUARIUS: The higher purpose of the Aquarian spirit is to **BE IDEALISTIC, PROGRESSIVE, INDIVIDUALISTIC** and to **RESPECT THE INDIVIDUALITY IN EVERYONE ELSE** too. Therefore, at this critical time show us how to be open to new ideas and new inspirations that will benefit us all on this planet we share. Show us how to break out of prejudice and judgmental attitudes and see, then respect additionally that the difference in others is the strength we might apply to our own weaknesses. As one we are strong but as dividing individuals, we remain weak.

PISCES: The higher purpose of the Piscean spirit is to **TRANSCEND NORMS, DREAM, CREATE** and to **EXPLORE THE NON-MATERIAL WORLD**. Therefore, at this critical time show us how we too can have dreams and visions of a greater world and a greater life. Be the bridge builder that will take us from the dark place we are now to the inspirational place of light we may yet find. Help us rise above the mundane and see the greater purpose that might inspire us all to create a better Earth and a better life for each and every one of us.

- **MARCH 02 / NEW MOON IN PISCES:** The arrival of a New Moon is always suggestive of a fresh start in one way or another. Being in Pisces this month it perhaps opens us up to a new creative endeavor, a fresh spiritual insight or an opportunity of self-sacrifice based on a higher love. A good time to initiate compassion, gentleness, or imagination.
- **MARCH 06 / MARS ENTERS AQUARIUS:** Mars brings energy and passion into social, intellectual, and innovative issues. A great time for doing something entirely new and unconventional. This is not a long-haul thing however – more a sudden whim or an instant idea out of the blue that fires us up in some way. Mars will be in Aquarius for a while yet, so there's no need to hurry – although the outcome and nature of this configuration is often quite unexpected and sudden!
- **MARCH 06 / VENUS ENTERS AQUARIUS:** Could be that our love and affections take on a quite quirky or innovative turn during the immediate future. It can indicate a love for the absurd, the eccentric or even an attraction to transformative social issues. Creative types might expect much new inspiration at this time – a breaking of the artistic mold or the attempting of entirely new things.
- **MARCH 09 / MERCURY ENTERS PISCES:** Traditionally, when Mercury enters Pisces, it indicates a time when our mind frees up from serious thought for a while – where dreams, inspirations or creative thought can take a stronger hold. We may not feel quite so mentally focused as normal, but this can be a great time to do something more creative instead – like write a poem, a book, or song, if so-inclined. Kind words and thoughtful comments are to be encouraged during this time-period.
- **MARCH 18 / FULL MOON IN VIRGO:** Often indicative of a time where we need to address things that we have been putting off – or a time to wind down current passions for a short while to replenish our energies. A good time for getting our house in order – of crossing the “t's” and dotting the “i's”. The Virgo element here can be a good time to re-assess work, health, or service issues in our lives.
- **MARCH 20 / SUN ENTERS ARIES – SPRING EQUINOX:** The beginning of our astrological year, this is a time of fresh starts and new significant ventures for the year. Aries is all about pioneering, charging ahead without fear, fighting the good fight. Symbolically, the Spring Equinox is considered a tipping point in the year – where we can begin to look forward to brighter days and begin the preparations for making them so, with passion and energy.
- **MARCH 27 / MERCURY ENTERS ARIES:** Unlike the softness and fuzziness indicated when Mercury entered Pisces earlier this month, Mercury entering Aries here suggests a quite different frame of mind. This is a time when we're more likely to speak before thinking, for talking aggressively or expressing honest and unfiltered thoughts without caution. So, if you don't wish to offend the important people in your life, attempt to rain in your thoughts and words at this time – unless of course the cause is right, and a little honest expression will go a long way to improving a situation.

Fifth Circuit rules ‘ongoing coercion’ by United Airlines of its COVID-19 vaccine mandate

By OLIVIA THIESSEN

United Airlines employees who are suing the airline for its COVID-19 vaccine mandate just got a second chance to make their case. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered a district court judge on February 17 to reconsider after he initially denied the employees’ request to block the policy.

Back in September, eight Texas-based United Airlines employees sued the airline over its vaccine policy, which caused employees without the COVID-19 vaccination or a religious/medical exemption to be fired. But those with exemptions were also required to either get vaccinated or be placed on indefinite, unpaid leave and lose benefits.

Roughly 2,000 United Airlines employees have religious or medical exemptions, according to United Airlines. Those with exemptions come from various roles, including pilots, flight attendants, and customer service agents.

In their lawsuit, the plaintiffs alleged they were not provided “reasonable accommodation” for a religious or medical exemption.

They cited *Weber v. Roadway Express*, which states that “an employer has the statutory obligation to make reasonable accommodations for the religious observances of its employees, but is not required to incur undue hardship.”

The plaintiffs attested that indefinite unpaid leave is not a reasonable accommodation.

“United’s actions have left Plaintiffs with the impossible choice of either taking the COVID-19 vaccine, at the expense of their religious beliefs and their health, or losing their livelihoods,” the lawsuit said.

But United Airlines claims the opposite. “At present, none of our accommodated employees are required to remain on unpaid leave; they all have other alternatives,” United Media Relations told the Lynnwood Times.

United also outlined some of the additional measures it has taken:

Our “non-customer facing” employees . . . remain at work in their regular positions, subject to masking and testing requirements. Others, including customer service representatives, were transitioned to temporary assignments that do not require direct interaction with customers. Similar measures were not possible for flight crew—pilots and flight attendants—due to their unique working conditions as well as constraints imposed by union contracts and federal regulations. As a result, they were placed on temporary unpaid leave, but they all have preferential consideration to available non-customer facing jobs at United.

United Airlines did not discuss the employees who were fired outright. Furthermore, pilots, flight attendants, and customer service agents were not given the option for masking and testing as an alternative.



FIFTH CIRCUIT RULES ‘ONGOING COERCION’ BY UNITED AIRLINES OF ITS VACCINE MANDATE

Featured picture by @flyarizona on instagram.

Despite the airline’s claim that all employees have been given alternative accommodations, several plaintiffs – including customer-facing employees – assert that the only option they received was unpaid leave.

As a result, the employees requested that the court put United’s vaccination policy on hold throughout the case. U.S. Fifth Circuit Court Judge Mark Pittman denied their request, claiming the employees failed to demonstrate that “they would suffer imminent, irreparable harm” if the policy be upheld.

RULING FROM THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIFTH CIRCUIT

The three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit Court, which included Judge Jerry Smith, a President Ronald Reagan appointee, Jennifer Walker Elrod, a President George W. Bush appointee, and Andy Oldham, a President Donald Trump appointee, stated that the employees continue to face coercion and loss of livelihood, both of which are harmful, and ordered Judge Pittman to reconsider the request.

“Plaintiffs are being subjected to ongoing coercion based on their religious beliefs. That coercion is harmful in and of itself and cannot be remedied after the fact,” the court stated. “Because that harm is irreparable, we reverse the district court.”

The airline’s tactics of coercion, according to the judges, include the threat of suspension and loss of benefits such as medical coverage, which disproportionately affect those with medical exemptions due to pre-existing conditions.

The airline also questioned the sincerity of religious views, in some instances requesting a statement from a religious leader or third party attesting to the faith of the employees.

In some cases, employees were required to provide their vaccination records and were questioned why their previous vaccinations were not a violation of religious beliefs.

The judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit Court presiding over the case also detailed how the airline sent postcards – not letters – to unvaccinated employees reminding them to turn in evidence of their vaccination. The plaintiffs “credibly contend,” according to the judges, that these were coercion tactics in order to “broadcast employees’ unvaccinated status to family members and enlist those family members in coaxing employees to receive the vaccine.”

Some employees also explained that when they attempted to submit their exemption through the airline’s online accommodation request system – its only approved mechanism for request – the system prevented them from doing so.

IMPLICATIONS IF COURT’S DECISION IN UPHELD AGAINST UNITED AIRLINES

The federal court certainly sees these issues as a matter of coercion and religious discrimination, but whether Judge Pittman agrees is another matter. However, he will now be required to revisit his decision with these alleged “coercion tactics” in mind.

Furthermore, the judges’ description of coercion and religious discrimination could help the employees in their case against the airline. And if the employees can prove they were coerced or faced religious discrimination, the airline could see more lawsuits in the future – and other companies that employed similar tactics could, too.

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from page 8 **CANADIAN PASTOR**

“Get out of this property immediately!” the pastor shouted at RCMP officers. “I don’t want to hear a word . . . until you come back with a warrant!” The pastor can then be heard calling the intruding officers “Nazis” and “Gestapo.”

Pawloski, a Polish immigrant, has criticized the Canadian government’s handling of COVID measures as oppressive, comparing Trudeau’s Liberal party to communists and the freedom convoy to Poland’s 1980s solidarity movement.

“I really believe that we are living behind the Iron Curtain in Canada right now. It’s a repetition of history,” Pawlowski said.

He has been outspoken in his support of the convoy, as well as his beliefs in Canadian rights to mobility and free speech under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, both of which he has been denied in the past, even since gaining Canadian citizenship.

Last year, Pawlowski faced a civil contempt charge for continuing to hold church services in violation of a provincial court order that forbade “organizing an in-person gathering, including requesting, inciting or inviting others to attend an ‘Illegal Public Gathering.’” As a result, the pastor faced three days in prison, a fine of \$23,000 (CAD), 18 months probation, and was forbidden from traveling outside of Alberta.

The court order also required the pastor echo “qualified speech provisions,” when speaking out against the Alberta

health orders. The “provisions” read as follows:

I am also aware that the views I am expressing to you on this occasion may not be views held by the majority of medical experts in Alberta. While I may disagree with them, I am obliged to inform you that the majority of medical experts favour social distancing, mask wearing, and avoiding large crowds to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Most medical experts also support participation in a vaccination program unless for a valid religious or medical reason you cannot be vaccinated. Vaccinations have been shown statistically to save lives and to reduce the severity of COVID-19 symptoms.

Many have criticized this order as an attack on freedom of expression, which is protected under Canada’s Charter.

“This compelled speech—straight from Soviet Russia or North Korea—was un-Canadian, illegal and undemocratic,” said Pawlowski.

Pawlowski is not the first pastor in Canada to be arrested during the pandemic for protesting mandates. In fact, dozens of pastors have been arrested for continuing to hold church services, including outdoor services.

One such pastor, Tobias Tissen of Steinbach, Manitoba, was arrested and spent the night in jail after holding a church service that violated the province’s health order against outdoor gatherings of more than 5 people.

Pastor Tim Stevens, another Calgary-based preacher, was arrested on two occasions for holding church ser-

VICES above the province’s 15-person capacity limit after the Alberta Health Services surveilled the church for months.

Alberta Pastor James Coates was arrested on similar charges for exceeding capacity limits. Before his arrest, RCMP surrounded his church and used wire fencing to keep members from public worship.

Hundreds of Canadian churches have permanently shut their doors as a result of public health orders. And while many nations have begun to lax

COVID restrictions, Canadian provinces continue to prevent various forms of in-person worship. To this day, many churches meet in secret – congregating in the homes, garages, or barns of their members.

For people like Artur Pawlowski, neither the federal government nor the RCMP will deter them from expressing their right to worship and assembly.

“When you know history a little bit, when you’ve lived through history . . . you know this is a mistake,” Pawlowski’s wife, Marzena Pawlowski said.

from page 6 **CARMEN BEST**

America?

Best: That we focus on doing the work. We spend too much time and effort, I think, trying to be seen. Whether it’s wanting likes on social media or wanting votes, if we could all focus on doing things that help our communities right now, I know it would unite us. It would make us stronger. We could have some of the much-needed reconciliation I speak about in the book. But it is going to take a lot more of us committing to our core beliefs and values and just doing the work, and worrying a lot less about whether we are doing the work in the way that will get us “likes.”

Lynnwood Times: Having gone through disappointments in your life, feeling as though you’ve been overlooked, what led you to continue pursuing your goals, rather than giving in to disappointment?

Best: I never wanted to let disappointment win. If disappointment gets you to stop – it won. THEY won. Be it a man who didn’t think a woman could do a job, or someone who didn’t think a Black person could live in a certain neighborhood or be Chief of Police. If you give up, they win.

In this country, we always persevere because when we get knocked down, but we get back up, stronger, more united. We need to call this country together again around a common purpose. I know it’s out there. There are many needs, but we need to find the one that people can generally unite behind. I think a lot of people are disappointed right now, but we can’t give into that.

Best’s bestselling book “Black in Blue” is available on Amazon and local booksellers for those who want to read more about her journey and the lessons on leadership she has learned along the way.



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