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Real Impact

Dr. Steve Woodard, Lynnwood Times' 2023 Person of the Year



One year in, Snohomish County's newly formed Health Dept has big plans for 2024

By KIENAN BRISCOE

EVERETT—On May 2022, after years of financial hardship, the Snohomish County Health District announced that its local public health services would be integrating to the county government structure as the newly formed Snohomish County Health Department.

Despite financial constraints, the District had an eventful final year before the integration commenced on January 1, 2023: responding to the COVID outbreak, monkeypox, RSV, and sexually transmitted disease outbreaks, carrying out over 4,000 safe food inspections, over 1,100 pool inspections, holding approximately 260 pollution prevention visits, responding to about 190 septic complaints and over 400 solid waste complaints, issuing nearly 16,000 birth and nearly 30,000 death certificates.

Although the Health Department recently celebrated one year of operation

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Don Benton leads Trump to another expected Washington state victory

By MARIO LOTMORE

BELLEVUE—As numbers continue to come in from Republican caucuses held on January 13, the 45th President of the United States, Donald J Trump, maintains his 2-to-1 lead over fellow contenders in Washington state.

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Edmonds Mayor Mike Rosen, 'Make Edmonds politics boring again!'

By KIENAN BRISCOE

EDMONDS—Running for mayor, or any elected official position, was far from Edmonds newest Mayor Mike Rosen's radar when he happily retired from making nature and wildlife documentary films in 2022. But when he started to notice the increasing divisiveness in politics that was happening national-

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Inslee visits Port of Everett, discusses electrifying WA's maritime industry

By MARIO LOTMORE

EVERETT—Washington State Governor Jay Inslee visited the Port of Everett's Pier 3, Wednesday, January 17, where officials are electrifying key infrastructure to reduce carbon pollution and improve overall air quality at the working waterfront.

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Lynnwood Times Person of the Year: Steve Woodard, Councilman, volunteer, devoted community servant

By KIENAN BRISCOE

MOUNTLAKE TERRACE—It is with absolute pleasure that we at the Lynnwood Times present our 2023 Person of the Year Award to Dr. Steve Woodard, Mountlake Terrace City Councilman and Vice President of Community Engagement at Volunteers of America.

After careful consideration the Times has selected Woodard for this recognition based on his work in local politics, his work at VOA—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—as well as his tireless pursuit of volunteerism and community service.

“Steve Woodard is extraordinarily deserving of this award,” Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers told the Lynnwood Times. “His decades of service to the public and volunteer work for many causes have made Snohomish County a better place to live. At a time of polarization and anger, Steve remains upbeat and positive, making a real difference in people’s lives. He is the essence of a good man, and I couldn’t be more proud to call him a friend.”

With a lot on his plate, balancing his family life, city council, and both professional and independent volunteerism, Dr. Woodard can best describe the work that he does as being divided into “lanes,” although he joked it’s more like being a “helicopter” because he seldom stays in a single lane.

In his professional lane, since joining Volunteers of America two years ago one of Dr. Woodard’s main focuses has been making progress towards opening VOA’s upcoming Lynnwood Neighborhood Center—a 40,000 square-foot Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified facility where multiple nonprofits can work together to engage the community and support low-income families through the complex struggles they may experience.

Second to that Dr. Woodard has been busy stewarding the humbling legacy of the South Snohomish County Emergency Cold Weather Shelter operating out of Maple Park Church in Lynnwood.



Dr. Steve Woodard, Mountlake Terrace City Councilman and President of Community Engagement at Volunteers of America, was awarded the Stems Award at the Red and White Banquet on April 29, 2023. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

“There is no one more qualified to receive this honor. Dr. Woodard is a natural leader with a heart for service. We are blessed to have him here at Volunteers of America Western Washington and I am proud to call him my friend,” Volunteers of America CEO Brian Smith told the Lynnwood Times.

In his personal lane, Dr. Woodard helped establish the Association for Collective Community Engagement on Safety and Security (ACCESS) this year along with some colleagues of his.

The ACCESS Project focus is to prevent and interdict the most significant root causes, and break the cycle of, gun violence, felony crimes, and hate crimes committed by teens, youths, and young adults. The project’s primary function is a “Referral hub” of mental health professional providers and community service organizations for youths and/or parents and guardians to access community resources with spe-

cific areas of expertise to treat the acute and chronic underlying mental health conditions youths are experiencing in real time.

Award by the Snohomish County Black Heritage Committee at its Red and White Banquet on April 29, 2023, for his dedication to community.

Dr. Woodard was awarded the Stems

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LYNNWOOD TIMES

CONTACT INFORMATION

<p>PUBLISHER Mario Lotmore publisher@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>MARKETING SPECIALIST Michele Mitsuchi-Stork sales@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>SENIOR STAFF REPORTER Kienan Briscoe kienan.briscoe@lynnwoodtimes.com</p>	<p>REPORTERS Doug Buell doug.buell@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>George Ftikas Jr. george.ftikasjr@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>Olivia Thiessen olivia.thiessen@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>Emily Chu and Jonah Rand</p>
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12918 Mukilteo Speedway C23, PMB-162 Lynnwood, WA 98087
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From poverty to promise, Governor Inslee visits Rise Up Academy in South Everett

By MARIO LOTMORE

EVERETT—Kicking off its 25th year of educational excellence, Governor Jay Inslee toured Rise Up Academy on Wednesday, January 17, seeing firsthand an education curriculum that refuses to let any child “fall through the cracks.”

“Trudi and I have been trying to help for the last four years on this by creating resources for early childhood education,” Governor Inslee said.

“Yes, I can!” The kids replied when asked if they can read, spell, and do math. “I can learn anything,” they told Governor Inslee.

Rise Up Academy, a nonprofit founded by Dr. Paul A Stoot, Sr., in 1999, is an early learning center in South Everett for Preschool to Kindergarten students that also offers after school programs. With 65 enrolled students and a student-teacher ratio of 5-to-1, the school prides itself on its pupils exceeding standardized tests by its accelerated learning methods.

“If they can pick up a phone and figure it out before I can, then there is a lot they can do,” Seattle-born professional football player, Dr. Terry Metcalf, now Curriculum Specialist at Rise Up Academy and Lead Kindergarten Teacher told Governor Inslee.

Dr. Metcalf and teaching assistant Ms. Mareddy demonstrated their methods to the governor with two exercises—one in phonics and the other in musical theory. The instructors teach by skill-set, not age.

“We take young children who are under-age, based on public school criteria, and teach them first and second grade information and they exceed, they excel,” Dr. Metcalf said.

Holding back tears, Joan Litzkow, Chief Operating Officer of Rise Up Academy and the 2011 Everett School District Teacher of the Year, shared with Inslee that one hundred percent of kindergarten students completed first-grade curriculum of phonics and math and were ready to start second grade.

“You don’t see that in general education...you don’t see that kinda start for these kids, so for me it is magical,” Litzkow said.

Rise Up Academy new Early Learning Center

Dr. Paul A Stoot, Sr., founder of Rise Up Academy, formerly known as Greater Trinity Academy, sat with the governor with hopes the state can help bridge the gap in the school’s ambitious plan of expanding to a 6,800-square foot Early Learning Facility that will double the number of students it serves from 65 to 130.

“We are taking these children from poverty to promise, problems to promise, perceptions to promise,” Dr. Stoot, Sr., told the Lynnwood Times. “We are taking these children from a trajectory from which society already gave up [on them] because of the homes they



Governor Jay Inslee (second from right) with Dr. Terry Metcalf (right) speaking with kindergarten students at Rise Up Academy on January 17, 2024. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

were born into. I am gonna save them. I am not Superman, but I will be ‘thee’ man for them.”

In July of 2023, Rise Up Academy received \$2 million of \$7.6 million of the county’s American Rescue Plan Act dollars (ARPA) that year to fund nearly 360 new child care slots fulfilling one of the key priorities community members identified in the countywide Pandemic Recovery Roadshow hosted by the Office of Recovery and Resilience. These dollars were allocated to fund access for high-quality childcare benefiting families over the next 20 years.

With a total project cost of the expansion at \$12.5 million and including a \$1 million grant provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce in 2022 and some additional donations, the Board of Directors for Rise Up Academy is about to launch an aggressive capital funding campaign this quarter to raise the \$9 million still needed. The goal is to break ground when the project is 50-75% funded.

“First we are turning to county, state, and federal sources with the help of Representative Rick Larsen,” Robert Bayersdorfer, with Optimus Fundraising told the Lynnwood Times. “Secondly we will seek help this quarter from philanthropist, foundations, businesses, and charitable donations.”

The proposed new Early Learning Facility will be built on the grounds of the existing South Everett campus and include six classrooms from three, a multi-purpose performing arts space to accommodate STEAM learning, an expanded library and technology space, and a new cafeteria.

Currently, 15% of its students are in foster care and 20% have an incarcerated family member. At a cost per pupil of \$1050 per month, approximately 94% of students receive some form of financial assistance.

Dr. Stoot, Sr., is committed to ending not only the cycle of generational poverty for these families but also the cycle of institutional confinement.

“Invest in the future of children, so they can be the leaders of our country,” Stoot said. “You are investing in what you want society to look like five, ten years down the road... invest in something I know will be worthwhile someday.”

Carmen Best, Director of Security Risk Operations, Microsoft Global Security, NBC/MSNBC analyst, former Chief of

Police for Seattle, and the author of the book Black in Blue: Lessons on Leadership, Breaking Barriers, and Racial Reconciliation, who is engaged to Rise Up Academy’s founder Dr. Stoot, Sr., shared her commitment to supporting the program’s success.

“There seems to be some political will

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VEG Lynnwood opens to provide 24/7 emergency care for your pet

BY MARIO LOTMORE

LYNNWOOD—Veterinary Emergency Group (VEG), a 24/7 veterinary emergency center opened its latest hospital in Lynnwood on Friday, January 12, at 4725 196th Street SW in the Fred Meyer Shopping Center. VEG also allows “pet parents” to stay with their pet through all stages of treatment, including surgery and overnight hospitalization.

“If it can fit through the door, we can make it happen,” said Nina Griffin, Medical Director for the Lynnwood location.

VEG Lynnwood provides services for chickens, cats, dogs, rabbits, small animals, and exotic pets. The facility isn’t equipped to handle large animals such as horses but up to three veterinarians are on staff to handle any situation, big or small.

Currently, VEG Lynnwood has a staff, or as they call it a doctor team, of 35 that operates in three shifts of up to three doctors and nine support staff. The doctor team will provide families in the Lynnwood area and neighboring cities with 24/7, including holidays, emergency care in veterinary medicine, including surgeries, ultrasounds, x-rays and more.

“No other ERs operate like this in vet-



The doctor team at VEG Lynnwood ready to care for your pet. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

erinary medicine,” Griffin told the Lynnwood Times. “It all started with our CEO who had this vision of an open concept and keeping people with their pet together the whole time. This was based on his experience watching the treatment of a human doctor with a parent and infant.”

The hospital has an open floor plan that provides transparency for pet parents to see the effort and care of doctor teams for pet patients. When a pet’s parent

calls VEG Lynnwood, they speak immediately with a licensed veterinarian. After being greeted at the door, a triage begins as soon as they walk in, even before filling out paperwork. Digital check-ins are available, so all services are ready to go upon arrival.

The receptionist will call “new triage” upon entry, and within 60 seconds (VEG’s goal) the pet patient is weighed and seated at one of their many benches lining the perimeter of the open space.

For more stimulated sensitive pets, one of five private exam rooms are available.

After the doctor performs a full exam and recommendation, the pet parent can then agree to diagnostics. Blood work, surgeries, and x-rays can be performed onsite. A doctor reviews every course of treatment with the pet parent.

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Lynnwood-based PAWS opening state's largest wildlife center in Snohomish

By KIENAN BRISCOE

SNOHOMISH—Since 1981 PAWS Wildlife Center has rehabilitated over 140,000 different injured animals and reintroduced them back into the wild. But for the last 25 years rapid urbanization, an increase in nearby forest fires, and the center's limited size has left the Lynnwood-based facility grossly unequipped to serve the region's increasing need for wildlife care.

In response, this upcoming March, PAWS will be opening Washington State's largest wildlife rehabilitation center in Snohomish, right off State Route 2—totaling a whopping 21,512 square footage of space across 25-acres. The current Lynnwood facility is approximately 3 acres making this quite the upgrade.

“PAWS has needed a facility away from urban development for years, which would be best for wild animals to rehabilitate, away from urban sounds, and urban smells, so that animals can peacefully rehabilitate, get well, after they've been injured, to live successful lives away from humans and independently,” Heidi Willis, PAWS CEO, told the Lynnwood Times.

Willis started serving as CEO right before the pandemic in 2020. Before that she ran another nonprofit that focused on youth development, and before that she worked as a legislative assistant in the city of Seattle. Willis also worked with former King County Executive Ron Sims managing several salmon restoration efforts in King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties.

“I just feel a duty to use my skillsets to give back,” said Willis.

Willis shared that seeing an injured animal, often on the brink of death, enter PAWS' facilities and receiving life-saving rehabilitative care, leading to their reintroduction back into the wilderness, is an “incredibly rewarding” thing to bear witness to (no pun intended). One of her favorite moments, working for PAWS, was seeing a black bear reintroduced into the wild have cubs just about a year later.

“To feel that the team of people, including finders - average citizens who bring these animals to PAWS knowing they're in distress and need special care - to the experts on our medical team to rehabilitate these animals who otherwise would perish, to go back into the wild and have rich, full, lives, have babies of their own and perpetuate that cycle is extremely rewarding,” said Willis.

The upcoming Wildlife Center includes recovery habitats for corvids and songbirds, small mammals, small and medium raptors, raccoons, large carnivores, small and medium carnivores, large raptors, and even seals and aquatic birds. The Center will be the only facility in Washington permitted to rehabilitate both black bears and marine mammals such as seals and one of very few facilities in the state permitted to heal wild birds harmed by oil spills.



Heidi Willis, PAWS CEO, at the construction site of its upcoming wildlife center in Snohomish. SOURCE: Lynnwood Times | Kienan Briscoe.

This new Wildlife Center will vastly increase PAWS' ability to care for more wild animals having the capacity to hold up to 30 bears (6 at the current Lynnwood site), 20 bobcats (10 currently), and 200 seabirds (100 currently), just to name a few. Each of these habitats are custom built for wild animals and designed to evolve with an animals' needs as they change during rehabilitation.

Just a few examples of these custom-tailored habitats include a large silo where large raptors (such as eagles and hawks) can conduct continual, 360-degree, flight for exercise, cylindrical raccoon enclosures (preventing raccoons from cornering each other mitigating aggressive tendencies), and large indoor and outdoor habitats separated by electronically locked doors. The doors also help to reduce human/animal interaction by allowing volunteers and staff to feed the animals in the inside section, while the animal is outside, so the animals do not begin to associate humans with food.

These larger, and more flexible, enclosures greatly reduce visual and auditory stress on animals, PAWS says, allowing for more enrichment.

The site will also have a state-of-the-art Wildlife Hospital, featuring a surgical facility, spacious examination room, radiology room, treatment rooms, and a laboratory to run in-house diagnostics, a Wildlife Care Unit where animals an receive quality care, offices, and a lobby.

Separate to the increase in space, by relocating the Wildlife Center to its new location in Snohomish, atop a tree encompassed hill, these recovering wild animals are tucked away from the urban sights, smells, and sounds they're



The construction site of its upcoming wildlife center in Snohomish. SOURCE: Lynnwood Times | Kienan Briscoe.



Bears being reintroduced in the wild by PAWS. SOURCE: PAWS

currently subjected to in Lynnwood.

this location was chosen,” said Willis.

“PAWS chose Snohomish because it's close enough that if people found an animal injured or orphaned, they're willing to drive to PAWS for care and medical attention, but it's still far enough from the urban center that it feels like a remote location... It was really an ideal set of circumstances that

PAWS' Wildlife Center provides expert care to 5,000 wild animals, and over 250 different species, every year, giving them the second chance they deserve. However, in just the last five years the number of calls from the

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from page 6 **PAWS**

community to PAWS for wildlife assistance, education, and advice has increased by 75%.

The organization has stretched to meet the needs of the animals but are now at a critical point of capacity. In addition to the lack of space, aging wildlife facilities are at the end of their lifespan and in dire need of replacement. What's more, PAWS has been consistently turning away participating in critical conservation research and training that could help save more animals around the globe, simply because their highly regarded wildlife veterinarian training program has increasingly outpaced its ability to respond to requests from students. The new facility in Snohomish aims to change all of that.

The nearly \$46 million project received 10% of its funding from government sources, and over \$12 million in contributions by individuals and foundations. The remaining balance comes from PAWS' reserve funds with the rest being financed.

PAWS' new Wildlife Center will have about 280 volunteers, who will prepare food and clean the habitats among other responsibilities, and about 22 full-time staff members. PAWS is always in need of more volunteers. To apply visit: www.paws.org/volunteer/

A ribbon cutting is planned to commemorate the opening of the new fa-



Heidi Willis, PAWS CEO, at the construction site of its upcoming wildlife center in Snohomish. SOURCE: Lynnwood Times | Kienan Briscoe.

ility some time in March.

PAWS is people helping cats, dogs and wild animals go home and thrive – whether home is the family room or the forest. They do this by rehabilitating orphaned and injured wildlife, sheltering and adopting homeless cats and dogs, and educating the community to inspire compassionate action for animals.

PAWS envisions a world where all people recognize the intrinsic value of animals and consistently make choices that demonstrate compassion and respect.



Rehabilitating a bear. SOURCE: PAWS

from page 1 **ROSEN**

ly, he felt calling to do something to set things right, at least in his home city of Edmonds.

“It seemed to be more about left and right than doing what’s right,” Mike Rosen told the Lynnwood Times. “And that troubled me. I thought not here, not in the Northwest — we’re better than that. But we weren’t better than that. It came to the Northwest, and it came to Edmonds.”

He continued to say if he lined up everyone in the city and asked them to “raise [their] hand if [they] think government is doing things right,” he believes no one would raise their hand. He further has always believed people should have critical involvement in the decision-making process that impacts them.

Local politics, to Rosen, are held up by the four pillars of council, the public, the Mayor, and city staff. In Edmonds, he said, that system got “pretty dysfunctional” and he felt like he could

make a positive impact on restoring it. He joked that if he had to have a campaign catchphrase it would have been “Make Edmonds politics boring again”— meaning less scandals, less drama and getting back to a position where the public can trust their elected officials to make decisions for their best interest.

Before Rosen retired, he was part-owner and Managing Principle for an integrated communication firm, PRR, where about 50% of the work was for local governments.

“We were the people they called when they couldn’t do it, or they needed help doing it, or needed help figuring it out,” said Rosen. “So, I knew I could solve government problems.”

The firm also held public engagement and market research whenever a government was slated to make a big decision, for the public to make informed decisions. This community engagement, Rosen added, granted a unique perspective and skillsets of understanding the needs of a community.

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Rosen officially assumed office on January 1 and now 10-days into his tenure, his first week was primarily spent meeting people over coffee, listening to the situations at hand, and assessing where the “burning fires” exist.

“It’s a big city with several hundred employees, 14 boards and commissions, and a lot going on,” said Rosen. “When someone elects you, you’re into it for 1,461 days so I now only have 1,451 days to get moving, so I also feel the pressure of time in terms of moving forward as far as the kinds of issues we have to face.”

Rosen’s priorities are returning, and maintaining, city staffing levels and balancing the city’s budget. Rosen stated that many of the issues Edmonds faces are not unique to Edmonds such as inflation and adhering to paying staff members a competitive wage as the price of everything else skyrockets.

“We only have so many revenue streams. I think there’s some confusion with the public like when they get their property tax bill and say, ‘what’s up with the city?’ But the reality is only 14% of that is actually going to the city because, rightfully, people said they want better schools, or they want better transportation,” said Rosen. “So, we have this reality of revenues are not keeping up with costs and you can save only so much. But the reality is also you want the police to show up if there’s a problem, you want the medics to show up if there’s a health issue, you want the fire guys to show up if something burning, and you want the roads to work, and water to show up and go away when you’re done with it. That’s a long way of saying to fund

that you need multiple sources, and we are going to have to save what we can, get back to basics, and budget by priorities.”

Rosen noted he wants to encourage the public to engage in decisions that will have a long-term effect on the future of Edmonds.

“Vision unites us. We all choose to live in this place for most of the same reasons, let’s not screw that up,” said Rosen. “Now what else can we improve and help create a future, or lay the foundation for a future, that’s yours and making sure that those people are involved. I’m not in this because I want a bridge named after me, it is can we put trust back in government. Can we make the four pillars work tightly together, can we have a good decision-making process, and can we have some core values, understanding there were people before us and there will be people after us.”

Prior to becoming Mayor Rosen has been imbedded in Edmonds affairs for years, volunteering as Secretary of the Board of Directors for Edmonds Center for the Arts, the city’s Planning Board, the Edmonds Chamber of Commerce, and the Waterfront Center.

“There are amazing people walking around this town. I believe that volunteerism is the secret sauce to this country and the people walking around this city – the experiences they’ve had and the sandboxes they’ve played in – if we put a group of people together to help solve a problem I think their first question will be ‘what do you want us to do

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Lynnwood opens city's first ever disc golf course at Gold Park, a new "Gold Standard" for parks and rec

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD—The City of Lynnwood held a ribbon cutting ceremony at Gold Park, Tuesday, January 16, commemorating the opening of the city's first ever public disc golf course.

Disc golf, formerly known as frisbee golf, is a flying disc sport where players take turns tossing specialized discs (putters, mids, drivers, etc.) down a course with the ultimate goal of landing it in a designated (often chain-linked) basket. The sport uses similar rules to golf in that each course has a par and the number of attempts it takes to reach the basket determine your overall scoring.

There are currently 10,051 disc golf courses across the country with quite a few falling in Washington State. A mobile phone app, called Udisc, can be used to locate disc golf courses nearby, as well as offering useful tools including point tallying.

The Gold Park Disc Golf project was funded with \$56,000 from the City's funds, a \$5,000 donation from the Eagle Scout projects, and a \$5,500 in-kind donation.

During this commemorative event speakers included (listed in the order in which they spoke): Sarah Olsen, PRCA Deputy Director, the Honorable Mike Evans, President of the Snohomish tribe of Indians, Lynn Sordel, PRCA Director, Lynnwood Mayor Christine Frizzell, Lynnwood City Council President George Hurst, Chair of the Park Board Tom Krause, Parks Superintendent Eric Peterson, and Lynnwood Police Chief Cole Langdon.

"When Lynn Sordel approached me, what feels like many months ago, I thought: really? People really want to do that there - throw frisbees at trees?," Mayor Frizzell jokingly stated during the ceremony. "I'm not minimizing the sport, now I realize there's talent there. But to come here from where we were a year ago to this beautiful area that's been provided has been amazing."

Frizzell noted although she grew up in Lynnwood, she seldom paid Gold Park a visit because it "always seemed dark and dreary" but thanks to the City's tireless restoration efforts it now feels like an "open and welcoming space."

"That's what makes a community... strong collaboration and partnerships are imperative for any successful project, and this was no exception," said Frizzell.

Frizzell shared she didn't know very much about disc golf when the idea was brought to her desk so when she stumbled upon a couple disc golf players at Gold Park, who were visiting from Canada, she asked if she could tag along and learn more. Now, she continued, she has come to learn how impressive the sport can be and is excited for the city's first ever course. She emphasized the usage of the word "first" in "first ever disc golf course", hinting that another one may be in the works.

Also in attendance was Lynnwood City Council members Julieta Altamira-



Braedan Swan (center) with his family (left), Parks Superintendent Eric Peterson, Lynn Sordel, PRCA Director, and Lynnwood Mayor Christine Frizzell at Gold Park on January 16, 2024. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore

no-Crosby, Shirley Sutton, David Parshall, and Councilman Nick Coelho, as well as a list of Lynnwood City staff members including the Police Department and Parks and Recreation. Council President George Hurst joked that the disc golf course is the new "gold standard" for park activities across the city of Lynnwood's 17 parks, spanning over 350 acres.

"Really this is going to be a park that people are going to want to come to," said President Hurst.

In late 2022 local Boy Scout Andrew Young earned his Eagle Scout ranking by improving the Steljixwali Ethnobotanical garden pathway and installing a new trail map at Gold Park. A certificate was awarded to Young's parents at the ribbon cutting ceremony, in honor of Young's work who was unable to attend the event.

By the beginning of 2023 the park began to see a rise in unhouse individuals resulting in environmental damage, vandalism, hazardous waste and open air drug use. By Spring of 2023 911 calls requesting response to the park by the Lynnwood PD Community Health and Safety unit skyrocketed. A cleanup effort was conducted for Earth Day, in April 2023, to restore the Ethnobotanical Gardens.

Additionally, beginning that Spring through Summer, the city led an outreach initiative to individuals' day camping in Gold Park to offer services and enforce city laws while increasing park operations, clean-up activities, and daily operations. In 2023 a whopping 5-yards of garbage was removed, 20 yards of landscape overgrowth was removed, 30 yards of arbor chips was lain, and 15 yards of gravel was placed, all in Gold Park as part of these efforts. Since then, word has gotten around and daily visitors have been increasing.

The cleanup effort was part of the recently-approved ParksLove Project which considers how to maintain existing parks to be high-quality and safe while looking to responsibly expand



Lynn Sordel, Director of Parks and Recreation, speaking at the ribbon cutting ceremony at Gold Park on January 16, 2024. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.



Honorable Mike Evans, President of the Snohomish tribe of Indians blessing the land and giving tribute to his ancestors. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

parks and trails to meet the demand of Lynnwood's growing community.

Last August local Boy Scout Braedan Swan and volunteer Jeff "Getty" Freeman began working with City of Lynnwood staff to bring the 9-hole disc golf course to the city's Gold Park. Braedan earned an Eagle Scout ranking for these efforts.

"This whole community adventure has been a huge undertaking and I only played a small part," said Swan. "

In September 2023, the City of Lynnwood hosted a National Public Lands Day event at Gold Park where community members and local fitness center, Experience Momentum, employees be-

from page 4 **RISE UP**

and support for these young kids who are from oppressed families, under privileged in many ways,” Best told the Lynnwood Times. “What the school is doing here is amazing. I hope they get all the support from the governor and everyone else that can help.”

Brian Sullivan, Snohomish County Treasurer who attended the tour, also shared his commitment in advocating for Rise Up Academy.

“I have always been a big supporter of Rise Up Academy,” Sullivan said. “It is really important, especially for the Governor and other public officials, to see the work they do. Snohomish County provided \$300,000 in Early Learning funding money years ago for this school and I am promoting that we continue that kind of funding for the



(L-R) Dr. Terry Metcalf, Governor Jay Inslee, First Lady Trudi Inslee, Carmen Best, and Dr. Paul Stoot, Sr. at Rise Up Academy on January 17, 2024. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

future, and help with their capital campaign.”

Rise Up Academy is located in what the county calls extreme “child care deserts” which is a census term to in-

dicating an area has at least 50 children under the age of five that contains either no child care providers, or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots. Additionally, these areas largely serve families that are at, or below, 65% of the area median income.

Stoot hopes that Governor Inslee, after seeing firsthand the unique curriculum at Rise Up Academy and how the facility aligns with his vision of eliminating the shortage of childcare in Washington state, that he and others will advocate for its growth and expansion effort.

“It is a dream that has come true,” said Stoot. “I have been trying to get a governor to set foot on these grounds for the past 20 years...He [Inslee] came and satisfied my dream. My bucket list was satisfied by him showing up.”

from page 1 **PORT OF EVERETT**

The port recently received a \$5 million investment from the Climate Commitment Act funds to electrify its Pier 3 to serve all-electric tugs and barges. According to Port of Everett CEO, Lisa Lefeber, these upgrades should lead to carbon reductions of at least 640 tons per year by eliminating the use of diesel generators while also making infrastructure improvements which would enhance the resiliency of the Port.

“We’re building a clean energy economy one connection at a time, and this is a big deal,” said Gov. Inslee Wednesday. “To electrify the motors that run these dry docks will remove 640 tons of carbon dioxide, that carbon dioxide pollution is hurting our families and hurting our state. It’s associated with climate change and causes fires, when we burn diesel, it pollutes our kids’ lungs and causes asthma, but the Port of Everett is doing something about it by electrifying these systems and getting ready for the future when we have electric ships as well.”

Inslee’s office says port decarbonization is critical to competitiveness and manufacturers are insisting on cleaner supply chains and that lends an advantage to cleaner ports. Officials are also currently researching decarbonizing the maritime industry to use hydrogen and fuel cell technology, which Inslee said would also help generate jobs.

“When we do this [decarbonization] technology we lead the world and it’s happening right here in Washington State,” said Inslee. “I am thrilled to see this investment. The Climate Commitment Act is pivotal at simultaneously reducing pollution and growing jobs.”

The Secretary of State’s Office delivered official notification to the Washington State Legislature on January 16 that signature verification was completed and certified for Initiative 2117 (I-2117)—an initiative that if enacted into law this session or passed by voters in November would prohibit carbon tax credit trading, also known as “cap-and-invest,” which would gut

Washington’s Climate Commitment Act, funds that are paying for projects like those at the Port of Everett.

Inslee told the Lynnwood Times that Washington is a state that moves forward, not backwards, and he is confident that the legislature will not pass I-2117.

“Who wants to go backwards in the state of Washington,” Inslee said. “We should be going forward to give our kids cleaner air not backwards; and this initiative would totally eliminate our protection to limit that amount of pollution. Secondly, it would also totally eliminate over a billion dollars that is helping Washingtonians grow our economy making electric buses, making air filtration systems so our kids can have cleaner air in their schools, giving people more access to public buses...over 8 million kids had free rides on buses; now their families don’t have to pay for transportation, that’s a pretty sweet deal.”

Inslee added that repealing “cap and invest” would result in a \$5 billion reduction in the state’s transportation budget.

“So here we know we need to have more bridges, we need we need more sidewalks, we can’t go backwards... people are choking in traffic already,” Inslee said.

Dock electrification is just one of many recent efforts the Port of Everett Seaport is undergoing to support a greener supply chain for a more sustainable future, says Lefeber. For example, adding the capabilities to support electric tugs which are currently in development in California, all-electric harbor crafts, barges and more that could dock at Pier 3 in the near future.

Once electric tugs reach completion it could still be some time before Everett sees them though, most likely beginning their operation in San Diego, Los Angeles, then Seattle-Tacoma before reaching Snohomish County.

Within the last decade, the Port has

invested more than \$150 million in Seaport Modernization which includes stormwater treatment improvements, dock upgrades for larger ships transitioning to shore power, improvements that would account for future sea-level rise, cleaning up legacy contamination from former mill sites, and facility upgrades, to name a few.

The cleanup of former mill sites alone costs approximately \$200 million. The Port worked with the Department of Ecology and the Legislature to create a first-ever extended grant agreement to secure the funds to execute the project.

Pier 3, which was constructed in 1973 and remains one of the Port’s oldest piers, has undergone continual upgrades for the last 15 years but is still in need of some dire fortification, Lefeber told the Lynnwood Times. The 50-year-old pier is now deteriorating at the mud line and requires strengthening before it prepares for electrification.

“It doesn’t make any sense to put in electrical infrastructure to an aging facility, so we have to do a modernization project in sync with the electrification,” Lisa Lefeber told the Lynnwood Times. “Electrifying a seaport is not cheap.”

Pier 3 is one of two finger piers at the Port of Everett Seaport, offering ship berths of 650-feet on each side, with a total usable berth length of 1,300 feet. The pier accommodates general, breakbulk and project cargoes, forest products and bulk cement handling.

The facility is extremely busy with recent Naval capabilities and running maintenance for practically all the Washington State ferries yet a recent assessment, led by a Jacobs Engineering dive team, found that 100 out of 170 pilings need to be replaced on the north side alone. The Port plans to do a similar assessment on the south side in the near future and will be seeking Federal funding in the amount of anywhere between \$10 to \$15 million.

When the pier goes fully electric, the power source would come from a pow-

er grid with backup generators if needed. The Port acquired power from the Snohomish PUD for its south terminal which essentially reserved the capacity to begin “greening” its facilities.

The Port also stated that investing in port infrastructure has a direct impact on economic vitality and job growth in the region, by investing in facilities that are attractive to maritime users looking to both find efficient and greener cargo facilities, and by serving industry and manufacturers throughout the region.

As it stands, the Port’s operations support over 40,000 jobs and contributes \$433 million to state and local taxes.

“While the Port’s mission is to grow the economy and create family-wage jobs, we always incorporate sustainable practices and environmental stewardship into all our operations, plans, initiatives and projects,” Port Commission President Glen Bachman said. “By design, the Port of Everett is an economic driver, but we also work hard and take pride in being an environmental leader for our region.”

Last month, in a historic action, the Port of Everett Commission unanimously passed Resolution No. 1220, directing Port staff to submit a proposition to expand the existing boundary of the Port District to the Snohomish County Council for voter consideration. This is the first resolution of its kind in 105 years since the citizens voted to create the Port in 1918.

The measure, slated for the August 2024 primary ballot, will consider enlarging the Port District to all of Snohomish County, excluding City of Edmonds, Port of Edmonds, and Town of Woodway limits, respectively. To be enacted, the proposed boundary expansion for the Port of Everett District must be a contiguous area, passed by commission, approved by the Snohomish County Council, passed by a simple majority of voters, a redistricting of the Port’s governance structure.

from page 1 **TRUMP**

“It appears that Donald J Trump has swept the caucuses in Washington state with 65-70% of the delegates supporting him,” former Senator Don Benton, and Washington State Director for Trump for President 2024, told the Lynnwood Times. “This is not a fluke. Anyone who has been paying attention will tell you the cost of everything has gone up and they’re worried about their kids being sent off to fight in two or maybe three foreign wars. The election of Donald J Trump as President will make all of these things better for all Americans—Democrat, Independent, and Republican.”

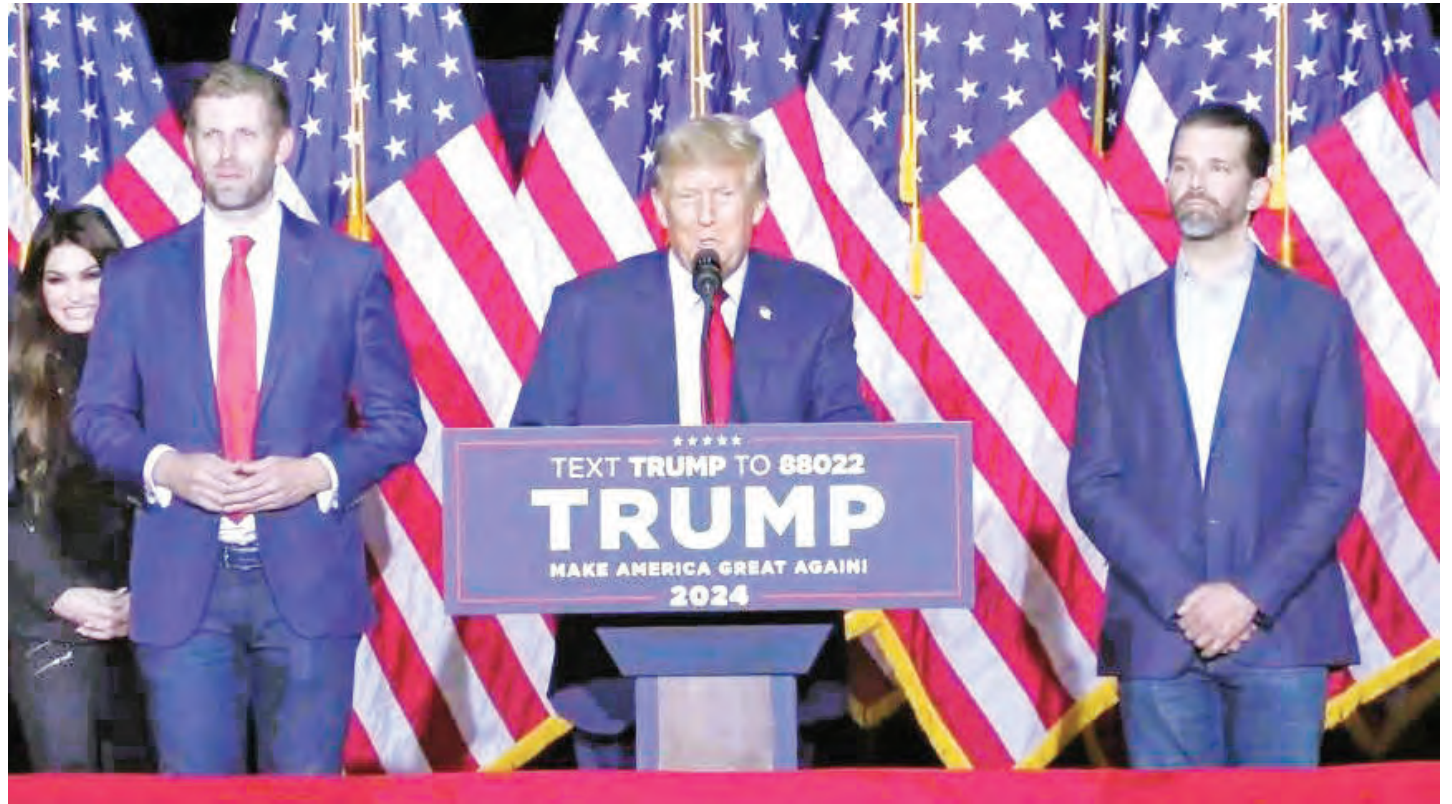
Benton, chaired Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign in Washington state and was appointed to the Trump Administration in 2017 as the 13th Director of the U.S. Selective Service System (USSS) on April 11, 2017, and served his full term. It is one of the few appointments where a director reports personally to the President of the United States.

Between 2017 and 2020, the overall engagement score for the USSS increased 84%, from a score of 44.3 to 81.3 out of 100 under Benton’s tenure resulting in the agency receiving national recognition for various workforce improvements.

Because the Iowa Caucus, with its 40 delegates, that were on January 15, must be the first in the country to report their results, the Washington State Republican Party is not releasing official tallies of its presidential and gubernatorial votes from its January 13 precinct caucuses for another two weeks. However, multiple sources in the largest counties—King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Skagit—have informed the Lynnwood Times that supporters of the 45th President of the United States, Donald J Trump, overwhelmingly attended the caucuses on Saturday and that he is expected to win, with a split between Ron DeSantis and Nikki Haley, in that order.

According to Bill Cooper, Chair of the Snohomish County Republican Party, Trump won his county’s caucus with 71.1% of the vote (257 votes), Florida Governor Ron DeSantis was second with 13.85% (50 votes), former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley with 11.63% (42 votes) and all other candidates with only 12 votes.

Pierce County, which had a turnout of approximately 1,000, is reporting at least 60% (650 votes) for Trump and sources have told the Lynnwood Times



The 45th President Donald J Trump speaking at his campaign’s post-caucus election party in Des Moines, Iowa, on January 15, 2024. SOURCE: Snapshot from Right Side Broadcasting Network live feed.

that approximately 65% of Republican caucus attendees in King County, the most populous county in Washington state, voted for the former President. Virtually all of caucus attendees in Skagit voted for Trump.

Island County is officially reporting 65.7% of caucus goers voted for Trump with Haley and DeSantis receiving 9.3% and 3.6% respectively. Approximately 21% of the vote was undecided.

Spokane County reported on January 20, that of over 700 participants at its caucuses, former President Trump received approximately 80% of the vote with gubernatorial candidate Semi Bird receiving a 2-to-1 victory.

Early voting seemed to have favored Republican gubernatorial candidate Dave Reichert but as more caucuses tally their votes, the race is now neck-to-neck with Semi Bird and is now a tossup on who will win.

Snohomish County reported on January 19 that Bird was its winner with 50.3% (169 votes) edging out Reichert at 49.7% (167 votes). Benton County voted 78% (131 votes) for Bird to Reichert’s 22% (37 votes).

Sources tell the Lynnwood Times that Bird is in a dead heat with Reichert in King County. But again, this is unofficial as the tallies are not yet complete. The official results will be released within the next two weeks.

Due to inclement weather, the following precinct caucuses have been re-

scheduled:

- Cowlitz: January 27, 2024
- Skamania: January 27, 2024
- Thurston: February 2, 2024
- Klickitat: February 3, 2024
- Clark: February 3, 2024
- Wahkiakum: TBA

With 99% of the precincts counted, the 45th President of the United States, Donald J Trump, won the Iowa Caucus on January 15 with 51%, 29.8 points from the nearest contender. The margin of victory is the largest Republican Iowa Caucus win in its state history. In an election night surprise, Vivek Ramaswamy dropped out of the race and endorsed Donald J Trump.

Trump thanked a room filled of supporters, his wife Melania, and his mother-in-law, Amalija Knavs who passed away last week. He also thanked Ramaswamy for an impressive election night performance.

“This is the time now for everyone in our country to come together,” said Trump to supporters.

He shared his plans to make the United States energy independent, improving election integrity by eliminating mail-in voting, rebuilding infrastructure, getting “tough on crime,” and securing the boarder.

“We are going to drill baby drill. We are going to seal the border... He [Biden] is the worse president we had ever had; he is destroying this country.”

On January 10, Chris Christie official-

ly suspended his race for the White House. In a hot-mic moment, Associated Press reports that Christie criticized fellow presidential contender Haley saying, “She’s going to get smoked... And you and I both know it. She’s not up to this.”

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis announced the suspension of his presidential bid on January 21, and endorsed Republican frontrunner, the 45th President of the United States, Donald J Trump.

With a record-setting turnout for New Hampshire’s GOP Primary, Trump won with 54.4% to Haley’s second place finish of 43.3%.

Haley, refused to drop out of race after losing two GOP primary presidential elections. Experts don’t see a path to victory for Haley. Hanover, a democratic area, is reporting double the Republican vote in a Primary Election than were in its 2020 General Election leading speculation that Democratic voters, particularly Democratic leaning college students, are voting for Haley in the open NH Primary.


“Wow! We are doing really well despite all of the Biden Votes going for Haley,” Trump posted to his Truth Social platform regarding the New Hampshire Primary results.

Haley is not on the Nevada Primary and Trump is expected to win the state.

Continued **PAGE 12 >>**

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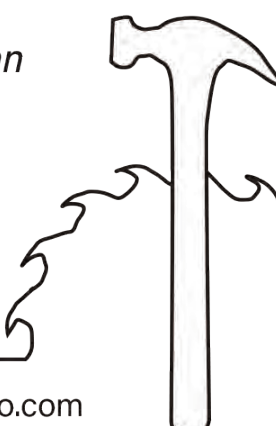
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from page 1 **HEALTH DEPT**

on January 1, 2024, the dissolution of the former Health District only fully concluded that same month with much of the Department's first year focused on handling budget transfers, handing over the building title to the county, and even a long, bureaucratic, process of working with the Federal Government to change the recipient information of awarded funding.

The Snohomish County Health Department's first year was primarily focused on handling these processes of finalizing the District's dissolution, working to integrate into a county government structure, all while juggling its core responsibilities.

Stepping into the role of Department Health Director, Dennis Worshman, a former employee of the recently dissolved Health District, who returns to Snohomish County after nearly 30 years working for the Washington Department of Health and various public health roles for the City of Seattle and King County - including Interim Director.

Worshman's love for the mission of public health blossomed while working for the Snohomish County Health District in the 90's and early 2000's. When he joined the team in 1993 his focus centered on AIDS and HIV prevention.

"I came in with the intent of just doing HIV work and step away but I totally fell in love with the mission of what public health was trying to do; work with community, and really try and change the overall health outcome," said Worshman.

Worshman followed former Health Officer Dr. Chris Spitters down to King County to manage its tuberculosis program. He worked his way through various leadership roles until climbing

his way to Interim Director during the peak of the coronavirus pandemic.

"It burnt me out, quite honestly, and I was in a reflective mode of what I want to do next, after a year and a half in that role," Worshman shared. "The position opened up here [in Snohomish County] with the announcement that they were moving from a District to a Department, and I was familiar with the model, I think it's a good model that really supports and sustains a public health presence in the community. [Snohomish County] being my first love I was really excited to throw my name in the hat."

When Worshman initially left Snohomish County in 2005 to pursue a position in King County, the Snohomish County Health District had over 300 employees but just prior to the pandemic that number fell to 106—one-third of its workforce!

Snohomish County is one of the largest counties in Washington State with nearly 900,000 residents, according to Census data, but ranked last in the Washington State Department of Health's Budgeting, Accounting, and Reporting System (BARS) for investments made in public health per capita.

Perhaps the biggest benefit of integrating the Health District to a government system is the added financial support that comes with it. Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers, who served on the Board of Health for several years prior to becoming County Executive, has monitored this erosion of health care service in the county for a number of years and has pledged to bring the care levels back to numbers which better serve the community.

Just recently, the Department received a portion of the state's opioid settlement dollars, the county's chemical dependency mental health funds (paid

for by a 1/10 sales tax in the county), one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, as well as a series of grants. These funds will go toward strengthening the Department's level of care by adding services and staff to fill in some of the gaps and deficiencies found through running assessments while bolstering its focus on substance abuse in particular.

Some of these projects include funding the County's Savvy Septic Program, a one-stop-shop for financing options, incentives, and education to help maintain a healthy septic system, and purchasing a mobile care unit, a van which can remove barriers in access to care by meeting the community where they are for immunizations and other needs.

The Department also plans to work closely with the Community Health Center to expand services for behavioral and mental health access for youths in the county, especially with the increasing need coming out of the pandemic.

Funding will also go towards remodeling its current Everett building, which withstood detrimental flooding damage eight years ago but due to a lack of funding could never be repaired. That flooding damage completely wiped out the existing STI and immunization clinic, both of which were never reopened.

There are differences when integrating from an independent district to a government department, however. For example, prior to integrating into a government system the Health District had a Board of Health which encompassed every member of the County Council in addition to City Council liaisons adding their individual jurisdictional lenses to the decision-making process. Furthermore, the district had its own Human Resources team, its own administrators, as far as operations go is

was fully internalized before seeking Board approval on certain decisions.

What comes with integrating into a county department comes aligning with county policies, reporting to a county executive, and being more cognizant of taxpayer spending, to name a few.

"It's moving from being nimble and small, through a Board of Health, to now going to the county process where you go through an executive branch, then the county council, then getting an approval over those processes all while integrating to their system," said Worshman. "It's a different mechanism but the payoff is we have more staff working and more financing to really wrap around and help us where we might get stuck."

In its first year of operation, the Health Department added new services including the opening of a brand new Sexually Transmitted Infections Clinic at 3020 Rucker Avenue in Everett, offering testing, treatment, and other supports to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections in the county. The county's STI/STD rate has quadrupled since its last STI clinic closed in 2009 making this a welcome, and needed, service for residents.

Now, going into 2024, the Department's priorities will be cracking down on the opioid epidemic, and assessments of where it is as well as assessing its new identity as a new department. It plans to do this by gaining input from the community, looking at public health accreditation standards, and meeting with key stakeholders including government and community partners. Through this work, the Health Department plans to develop a Strategic Plan which will then be implemented in 2025.

from page 8 **GOLD PARK**

gan the necessary preparations.

Just last month, December, 2023, the City of Lynnwood completed several park improvements to Gold Bar park including installing new park fencing, a kiosk, and a portable restroom.

Located at 6421 200th Street, in south Lynnwood, Gold Park is preserved as forested open space with trails, grassy clearings, a seasonal stream, and a variety of Northwest plants. Some of the trees in Gold Park span over 100 years in age.

In 2010, students in the Learn-n-serve Environmental Anthropology Field

(LEAF) at Edmonds College adopted Gold Park. With Snohomish Tribe of Indians, the school improved the trail system, and developed the "Stolja Ali" Place of Medicine Ethnobotanical Garden. The Garden showcases native plants of the Coast Salish Tribe and their modern uses and roles in restoration and ecology.

"This is Snohomish territory and I want to make sure that you are all welcome to Snohomish territory," said Honorable Mike Evans, President of the Snohomish tribe of Indians who shared his tribe has been visiting Gold Park for years and has a vested interest in.

from page 5 **VEG LYNNWOOD**

VEG also has "sleeper couches" for pet owners, equipped with bed sheets and pillows, to stay with their pets for overnight hospitalization.

"When a pet parent walks into VEG, they will immediately feel they have finally found a place that will provide their family and pet the best emergency veterinary experience that exists," said Dr. David Bessler, VEG founder and CEO. "Upon entering VEG, pet parents will feel a sigh of relief and comfort, as they are greeted with a friendly smile, empathetic attitude, and luxury comforts for them, and their pet."

Continued **PAGE 12 >>**





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from page 7 **ROSEN**

after lunch?,” said Edmonds Mayor Rosen. “I love this place.”

Rosen got his first job working in television when he was a junior in high school. Originally from Wisconsin, Rosen first moved to the Northwest after landing a job at Kiro7 — first in

news but later a producer for their documentary film unit. He also managed their public affairs. He and his wife, Sharon, have made several nature and wildlife documentary films of which they have won several hundred national and international awards including a Peabody.

Through his film career he was almost

killed by Mount Saint Helens and came face-to-face with several dangerous animals such as a silverback gorilla, lions, tigers, and Hippos.

When asked what his favorite thing about Edmonds, Rosen’s face lit up as he mentioned its robust community and community-driven events like Halloween, the Fourth of July, and the

annual Tree Lighting Ceremony.

When Rosen is not working in the Mayoral Office, he enjoys pursuing his photography hobby and travel. Whenever Rosen and his wife Sharon travel, he noted they typically choose locations that have large and exotic animals for an adventure.

from page 10 **TRUMP**

The performance of Trump, adds momentum for his campaign heading into the Nevada and the Virgin Islands caucuses are on February 8 and the much-anticipated South Carolina primary is on February 24.

An Emerson College poll released Jan 5, shows Trump 29-points ahead of Haley in her own state.

Thurston County Superior Court judge Mary Sue Wilson ruled on January 18, that the 45th President of the United States, Donald J Trump, is to remain on the Washington state’s Presidential Primary Ballot after a challenge by eight Kitsap residents that was originally filed in Kitsap County on January 10, contested the eligibility of Donald J Trump for the office of President under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, citing his involvement in the insurrection on January 6, 2021, according to court documents.

“No matter what your party is... this is a win for democracy,” Jim Walsh, Chair of the Washington State Republican Party said on Thursday in video posting on X regarding the Thurston

County judge’s ruling.

Kitsap County Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Bassett declined to hear the case on January 16 to consider removing Trump from Washington’s presidential primary ballot this upcoming March, stating Kitsap County was simply the “wrong venue.”

“Our government, at every level, is out of control and needs to be reigned-in significantly,” Benton told the Lynnwood Times. “There is only one person that can and will do that, his name is Donald J Trump. The establishment elites on both sides of the political aisle that profit from government will stop at nothing to stop Donald Trump. They know he is beyond reproach, and he will not stop until America is cleaned up and is back on track constitutionally.

“If people really want to save their country and be sure we return to the rule of law for everybody, you must vote for Trump even if you don’t like his personality. Trump keeps his word and does what he says. That is what we desperately need in America at every level of politics instead of the long list of promises delivered by typical politi-

cians that never materialize.”

WASHINGTON STATE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

The Washington State Republican Party (WSRP) has confirmed with the Lynnwood Times that the five candidate names for its 2024 Presidential Primary ballot are: The 45th President of the United States President Donald J Trump, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, Businessman Vivek Ramaswamy, and former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie.

If elected as a delegate at the Washington state Republican Precinct Caucus, a similar process is employed at the County Convention to be elected as a state delegate to the State Convention. The convention rules allow for roughly 2,500 state delegates to be elected from the county conventions. If elected as a state delegate, a similar process is followed at the State Convention, however, only 43 delegates are elected by fellow state delegates to represent Washington at the Republican National Convention from July 15 to 18 in Milwaukee.

The winner of the 2024 Presidential Primary on March 12, who is expected to be Donald J Trump, is the preferred nominee, and the delegates are bound to cast their votes for this candidate. However, if no Republican Presidential candidate at the Republican National Convention receives a least 1,235 of 2,469 delegates in the first round of voting, then delegates are no longer required to vote for the winner of the Washington State 2024 Presidential Primary.

Below are key dates for Republicans leading to the 2024 General Election:

- Republican County Conventions – January 20 – March 16, 2024
- 2024 Presidential Primary Election – March 12, 2024 (U.S. President only)
- 2024 Republican State Convention – April 18-20, 2024
- Republican National Convention – July 15-18, 2024
- WA State Primary Election – August 6, 2024 (Local, state, and federal races other than U.S. President)
- WA State General Election – November 5, 2024 (Presidential, Local, state, and federal races)

from page 2 **DR. WOODARD**

And finally, in Dr. Woodard’s political lane, while there were a number of achievements, he believed the City of Mountlake Terrace succeeded in last year, he is most proud of residents voting in favor of annexing into a South County Fire district, which Woodard believes will be paramount to providing top notch first response services to residents in the coming years for an overall “healthier community.”

“It’s very humbling [to be named Lynnwood Times Person of the Year] especially if it’s surrounding the concept of civic engagement and volunteerism, so that I could have the opportunity to represent that” Dr. Steve Woodard told the Lynnwood Times. “I do it because I love it and I look for connections wherever I go. I’m very honored to be recognized for something that I would just be doing naturally, and that I hope that I’m doing effectively.”

Separate to all these lanes, Dr. Woodard also serves as Trustee at the Foundation for Edmonds School District where he is proud to have played a role in placing two propositions on an upcoming special election, February 13, to consider replacing and/or enhancing aging and out-of-date facilities in several Edmonds School District schools.

Proposition one will be a School Construction Bond and includes completing Oak Heights Elementary, replacing the 2021 Capital Levy, replace College Place Middle and College Place Elementary, construct a fifth middle school at the Former Alderwood Middle location, and replacing Westgate Elementary, as well as several other upgrade projects. The estimated total cost for

these bond projects is \$594 million.

Proposition two would be a Capital Levy focused on enhancing student technology, investments in professional learning, and improvements in infrastructure. The estimated total cost for these projects is \$120 million stretching over four years.

As a father and husband, Dr. Woodard attempts to balance all these responsibilities while trying to engage his family as much as possible, he shared, so it’s not just a “this is what dad does,” or “this is what hubby does,” but “this is what the family does.”

Dr. Woodard gave a recent example of when his youngest son flew home for the holidays from Japan, he took him to volunteer at the VOA Toy & Joy Drive the day after landing. Dr. Woodard continued that events like these are so ingrained in his family that his son didn’t even question it—he just showed up, despite the jet lag.

Dr. Woodard shared with the Lynnwood Times that he lives by two things above all else: Ensuring whatever he does is meaningful and ensuring he’s being a decent human being. He recommends everyone get involved in their community, which he admits is probably the hardest thing to do but has the biggest pay off. The second thing he recommends is to challenge yourself and step outside of your comfort zone.

“I’m not just looking for another byline on my LinkedIn profile, whatever I do I want to be engaged,” said Dr. Woodard. “I encourage people to get involved in ways that are meaningful, but also meaningful in the long run. Your time is very precious as both a gift and a re-

source. Use it effectively, try to find a rhythm, and go from there.”

Speaking of LinkedIn, the only thing Dr. Steve Woodard’s biography on LinkedIn says is “service is my calling,” a mantra that resonates through every facet of his life.

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.

He met the Volunteers of America the way he hopes most people get to know them – through volunteering. Through his volunteer work, he was invited to join the board and was eventually appointed to his vice president position.

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.

As far as his role serving on the Mountlake Terrace City Council, 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 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, Dr. Woodard told the Lynnwood Times.

Dr. Woodard has sat on several 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.

from page 11 **VEG LYNNWOOD**

There are three VEG hospitals in Washington state—Seattle, Redmond, and now Lynnwood. To speak with a doctor or to find out more information about VEG Lynnwood call 425-329-7170 or visit <https://veterinaryemergencygroup.com/locations/lynnwood-wa/>.