

WSCJTC Arlington Regional Academy holds its first graduation of 27 law enforcement officers

By KIENAN BRISCOE

ARLINGTON—Arlington’s Regional Basic Law Enforcement Academy graduated its first class of 27 new law enforcement officers on Tuesday, July 29, since opening its doors back in March.

The opening of the training facility is just part of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission’s (WSCJTC) regional academy model to expand training access and strengthen local law enforcement recruitment across Washington state, the Commission said.

“By the authority of the Washington Administrative Code, and the revised code of Washington, I hereby attest that the officers in Class 915 have met all of the requirements as peace officers for the State of Washington,” said Commander Paul Bakala. “Please join me in welcoming Washington’s newest Police Officers.”

The Arlington facility, which offers immersive virtual reality training, modular simulation houses, and vehicle scenario space, enables new recruits to complete their required 720-hour basic training closer to home. It was designed to remove barriers for those unable to relocate to WSCJTC’s main campus in Burien.

BLEA Class 915 includes recruits from agencies across the North Sound region, including Snohomish and Skagit counties. The class began training earlier this year and completed comprehensive coursework in patrol procedures, de-escalation, defensive tactics, criminal law, and community engagement.

There was a total of approximately 300 people in attendance at Tuesday’s ceremony as well as roughly 50 elected officials.

The graduation ceremony began with a few words by Executive Director Monica Alexander, before TAC Officer Andrew Schuck presented select members of class 915 awards.

“Our Northwest Regional Campus is a game-changer in the way we train peace officers in Washington,” said WSCJTC Executive Director Monica Alexander. “This graduation represents more than the end of an academy—it represents the start of stronger community-based policing rooted in local training, support, and service.”

TAC Officer Stephanie Ambrose then presented the graduating class of 915 their certificates of completion before Commander Bakala swore them in as official peace officers.



The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission’s graduation ceremony for Class 915 in Arlington on July 29, 2025. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

“At a time when we really need officers of moral fiber, this class seems pretty exceptional, so it’s a good seed planted,” Susan Hobbs, attendee at the ceremony and grandmother of Lynnwood Police Officer Graduate Alex Hankins, told the Lynnwood Times.

List of Graduates in Class 915

The complete graduating class 915 included the following new recruits:

- Officer Dacia Dufresne and Officer Daniel Stewart of the Bellingham Police Department.
- Officer Trevor Chau and Officer Andrew Richardson of the Blaine Police Department
- Officer Barret Brown and Officer Zachary Nolan of the Bothell Police Department
- Officer Russell Wittenberg of the Chewelah Police Department
- Officer Leah Catoe, Officer Kevin Lillis, Officer Justin Coker, and Officer Christian Miles of the Everett Police Department
- Deputy Samuel Okutsu of the Lewis County Sheriff’s Office
- Officer Alex Hankins and Officer John Merica of the Lynnwood Police Department
- Officer Travis Houde of the Marysville Police Department
- Officer Nolan Hollingsworth of the

Monroe Police Department

- Officer Noah Cook of the Sedro-Wooley Police Department
- Deputy Matthew Roberts of the Skagit County Sheriff’s Office
- Deputy Timothy Daniels, Deputy Bryan Ngo, Deputy Josue Garcia, Deputy Brendan Osburn, Deputy Sean Graver, and Deputy Joshua

Rzechula of the Snohomish County Sheriff’s Office

- And Deputy Kara Veldman of the Whatcom County Sheriff’s Office

“We are completely thrilled that John has completed the course and done so well,” said Jim Gonzalez, father of grad-

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LYNNWOOD TIMES

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LYNNWOOD TIMES

12918 Mukilteo Speedway C23, PMB-162 Lynnwood, WA 98087
P: 425-931-1374 | Website: Lynnwoodtimes.com | Subscription: \$72/Year
(Mail Checks Payable to Lynnwood Times at above address)

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Green Earth Cup Unites 11 Nations in Epic Soccer and Cultural Celebration

By **GEORGE FTIKAS**

The unifying power of soccer was on full display during the inaugural Green Earth Cup held on August 2 at Valley Ridge Park in SeaTac. With a motto of “Together as One,” the cup — hosted by the Greater Seattle Korean Association (GSKA) — saw over 1200 people in attendance and had 15 teams representing 11 countries and ethnicities. Some of the nationalities represented included Afghanistan, Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Laos, Mexico, Nepal, Senegal, Somalia, South Korea, the United States, and Vietnam.

The cup was initially planned as a celebration for Seattle hosting six FIFA World Cup matches next year, but quickly turned into a multicultural event as more groups got involved. Event organizers and local elected officials all mirrored the opinion that the event should continue annually, with hopes that it will grow in size.

One of the lead organizers of the Green Earth Cup was Sam Sim, Vice President of the GSKA. Sim reached out to Ali Abdulla, Director of the African Youth Sports Academy (AYSA), and Enrique Calderon, who organizes Olympic Soccer Liga, Seattle National Soccer League, and La Liga, to find they were of the same mind to organize a multicultural event like the Green Earth Cup.

“We had the same vision,” Sim said. “That’s validation that despite our backgrounds; or despite how we may look; or despite the color of our skin; whatever our religion may be; we beat with one big heart and the same red blood. We may not always agree with one another, but we can respect each other.”

Sim stated that they of course want to extend to more diverse corners of the soccer world, but they also want to expand that cultural festival aspect — particularly to highlight a wider variety of regional foods — of potential future Green Earth Cups.

The tournament was held in a round-robin type format, with each team being guaranteed at least two matches. It was split into two brackets, the open division and the over-50 division. Matches were held in two 25-minute halves and independently refereed by The Referee Group. Tournament organizer and President of the Washington Korean Soccer Association Hwan Choi tried to split up teams from similar regions to promote a



Green Earth Cup Open Division winner team Mexico (left) with Team Korea at the Green Earth Cup held on August 2 at Valley Ridge Park in SeaTac. Lynnwood Times | George Ftikas.

bigger multicultural soccer community and randomized the brackets afterward.

The winners of each of the brackets were:

Open Division Top 3:

- 1. Mexico
- 2. USA (JBLM FC)
- 3. Nepal

Over-50 Top 3:

- 1. Laos
- 2. Korea
- 3. Vietnam

While competition and nationalism drove many of the players, Choi was proud that no major drama, fights, or injuries occurred during the event. As event organizers wanted to prioritize goodwill between teams, the cup did implement a no-tackle rule. Choi did concede that this almost makes it a different sport, but found that most players enjoyed their time playing.

“It was more peaceful than I expected — which is a total success,” Choi said. “I almost didn’t care about anything else other than the safety of the community and each team respecting each other... So I think in terms of those two categories, we did it well.”

Snohomish County District 1 Councilmember Nate Nehring participated on one of the teams representing the

USA.

“Such a cool event to bring together people from different countries and nationalities to get to play together and get to know one another,” Nehring said during the halftime. “As we all know, soccer is a sport that unites the world, so it is really cool to see that happening here today in SeaTac.”

The halftime festivities of the cup were essentially a cultural celebration and was kicked off by several speakers, including GSKA President Won Jun Kim, Mayor of Tukwila Thomas McLeod, Mayor of Burien Kevin Schilling, Renton City Councilmember Kim-Khánh Vãn, and Nehring.

The first performance during the halftime was a modern Korean Nanta percussion group, drumming to songs like “Gangnam Style” by PSY and “APT.” by ROSÉ & Bruno Mars.

Next was a Somalian-styled dance performed by Abdulla and children from the AYSA youth soccer team. Afterward was, arguably, the crowd favorite: a Taekwondo demonstration by Taekwondo Way that featured choreographed high-flying kicks and board breaking by a wide age-range of martial artists.

The halftime’s finale was a performance by Victorious Dance Company, blend-

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Lynnwood teacher returns from the Galapagos Islands



Beverly Elementary School Emily Czerwonka (center bottom) and pictures from her Galapagos Islands adventure. (Top L-R) North Seymour Island; Bartolome Island, after a hike learning about volunteer plants, Emily Czerwonka snorkeled in both of the coves with penguins along with other sea life; and The Charter boat and Naturalist Guide on the 360 tour around San Cristobal Island. (Bottom L-R) Tortoise from San Cristobal Island preservation center and Kicker Rock, where Emily Czerwonka snorkeled with abundant sea life, including Hammerhead Sharks. Source: Emily Czerwonka.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD—Second graders at Beverly Elementary School are in for a treat this schoolyear as they’ll have the opportunity to learn, firsthand, about their teacher, Emily Czerwonka’s, summer research trip to Ecuador’s remote Galapagos Islands.

From June 24, through July 6, Czerwonka traveled to various islands, dove with hammerhead sharks, hiked the volcanic mountains, and saw an array of exotic wildlife – including giant tortoises, iguanas, and boobies (a type of bird). Most importantly, however, she learned about the island’s robust emphasis on conservation and environmental stewardship; lessons she plans to instill upon her classroom to educate the next generation of change-makers.

Czerwonka was one of 355 pre-K-12 teachers from across the country awarded a \$5,000 Fund For Teachers (FFT) grant, which allowed her to work alongside scientists and naturalists in the Galapagos Islands to demonstrate the interdependence of living organisms. Of those 355, however, she was just one of 40 who were science-based.

“I’m so thankful to be apart of a fellowship that values educators and change-makers,” said Czerwonka.

Czerwonka is no stranger to world travel, and she typically brings these experiences back to the classroom for educational purposes. Though Galapagos Island has always been at the top of her list, its remoteness can be expensive and difficult to access. If it weren’t for the Fund for Teachers grant, she most likely would never have had the opportunity,

she told the Lynnwood Times.

Czerwonka applied for the fellowship last November and was notified of her acceptance on April 3.

Czerwonka said the application process to be considered as a FFT fellow was easy enough to navigate but required quite a bit of hard work. She just completed a second master’s thesis last October, which was about 25,000 words, and said the process was similar. Questions involved detailed explanations of what she would do and what learning gaps she is trying to fill, for both herself and her classroom.

In summary her proposal was to enhance her instructional practices by connecting her knowledge of ecosystems, climate change, and conservation to inspire her students to become

change-makers within their community. She proposed studying alongside scientists and naturalists in the Galapagos Islands to expand her local knowledge to a global perspective.

“The Pacific Northwest is a very niche ecosystem, and I wanted to go look at different places and what they do with conservation,” said Czerwonka. “I wanted to make sure I visited a place that had a lot of endemic species and what they’re doing to protect those fragile environments.”

Just some examples of what she learned about the Galapagos’ conservation efforts is tourists are not allowed to drive there – they either need to walk or take taxis who are operated by naturalists, some islands are off-limits to human

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the years but also the gaps of service within their community. During those conversations, early learning frequently rose to the surface.

“This is an example of that promise fulfilled in our community,” said CEO Tune. “It is our most recent, it is our newest, and it is far from our last.”

Larry and Linda Jubie, who built the original foodbank, were instrumental private donors to the remodel effort in addition to the Tulalip Tribes.

The YMCA’s new Marysville Early Learning Center could also not have been made possible without the support of the Washington State Department of Commerce – particularly Senator Patty Murray’s advocacy and her commitment to early learning in Snohomish County.

It’s the Y’s goal to eventually open an Early Learning/Childcare Center in every community it serves in Snohomish County, CEO Peyton Tune told the Lynnwood Times, hopefully at the rate

of one a year. Though it’s too early to say for certain, Tune hopes the Y’s next Early Learning Center will be opening some time next year if everything goes according to plan. Though he didn’t mention a city, by name, examples given were Stanwood, Mukilteo, and Monroe.

Tune continued he hopes the Y’s commitment to early learning sparks the motivation of other community nonprofits to follow suit saying, “many hands make light work.”

Senator June Robinson, who represents the 38th district, where the new facility is located, shared a few words at Tuesday’s ribbon cutting stating:

“Childcare and a quality early learning experience is the best investment that we, as the public, can make,” said Sen. Robinson. “An investment in early learning pays enormous dividends throughout that person’s life, who is the recipient of quality early learning. They do better in school, they do better long term in their career, and they give back to the community they serve. There’s no better investment for the State of Wash-

ington.”

Other elected officials at Tuesday’s ribbon cutting include Snohomish County Councilmen Nate Nehring and Jared Mead, and Washington State Representative Carolyn Eslick.

“Early Learning and Childcare is a huge need in Snohomish County so as a Snohomish County Council member, and a YMCA Board of Trustees member, I’m just thrilled to have this new Early Learning facility here in Marysville. It’s such a valuable asset to the community and it will serve so many families for generations to come,” County Councilman Nate Nehring told the Lynnwood Times.

The Snohomish County Council, including Council members Nehring and Jared Mead, invested its American Rescue Plan Act dollars to the YMCA which supported its Behavioral Health and Mental Health services which will be provided at the new Marysville facility.

“Statistically speaking, Snohomish County is a childcare desert county

within a childcare desert state. I’m so grateful to be a part of this amazing project through the YMCA that aims to address this dire need of childcare accessibility,” County Councilman Jared Mead told the Lynnwood Times.

The YMCA is the largest, and oldest, social service nonprofit in Snohomish County celebrating 125 years of age next year.

The Y serves one in six families in Snohomish County and is also the county’s 20th largest employer, employing over 1,200 employees.

Snohomish County is one of the worst areas for childcare access in Washington State, comparative to the number of children who need them, according to Snohomish County Dave Somers. An estimated 80% of residents live in an extreme “child care desert,” said Somers.

According to Child Care Aware, there are 62 slots of childcare in the county for every 100 infants, toddlers, or preschoolers, which is far below the state average of 79 slots per 100 children.

Lynnwood dad’s unsecured gun leads to bombs and massive arsenal

By **MARIO LOTMORE**

LYNNWOOD—In an unexpected turn of events that began with a 4-year-old boy’s accidental shooting of his mother in their Wildwood Townhomes residence in unincorporated Lynnwood, 44-year-old David Neff, an employee of West Coast Armory North in unincorporated South Everett, now faces a slew of felony charges—two counts of unlawful possession of a firearm, two counts of reckless endangerment (domestic violence), eight counts of possessing explosive devices, and one count of unlicensed possession of explosives—in addition to the gross misdemeanor charge of unsafe storage of a firearm in the first degree. This latest development to the story was first reported by KOMO News.

What started as a probe into the unsafe gun storage quickly escalated into a three-day search involving The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (AFT), Washington State Patrol, bomb technicians with Everett Police, and Snohomish County Sheriff Deputies court documents obtained by the Lynnwood Times revealed. Discovered were 73 firearms—most unsecured and “extremely easy” to be accessed by the two children living in the unit—over 10 homemade bombs laced with shrapnel with the “intent of killing and injuring others” according to court records, vast quantities of gunpowder (roughly 21 pounds), and what appears to be a child’s drawing depicting a potential mass shooting.

Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney Kristina Beske-Keplinger is pursuing the case, with bail set at \$1,000,000, arguing that Neff’s actions not only endangered his own family but posed a grave threat to neighbors in the connected townhome complex and possibly the community at-large.

“The magnitude of the threat that Defendant poses to this community was not fully understood until the search concluded,” Beske-Keplinger wrote in her affidavit of probable cause adding, “An individual who works at an armory would be expected to appreciate

the need for firearm safety. Instead, he added bombs to unsafe situation. The Snohomish County community is now safer due to the extensive work of law enforcement.”

The situation unfolded shortly after 8 a.m., July 15, 2025, when Snohomish County Deputies responded to an assault with a deadly weapon at the townhome of Neff and Sandi Weaver, 41, a married couple in unincorporated Lynnwood. Deputies discovered Weaver bleeding from a gunshot wound to her left arm by a Glock 19X handgun, inflicted by her 4-year-old son as she showered—the boy’s father, Neff, was asleep.

The child suffered a minor injury under his right eye—likely from the gun’s recoil—and was treated on scene alongside his sibling, 9-year-old child.

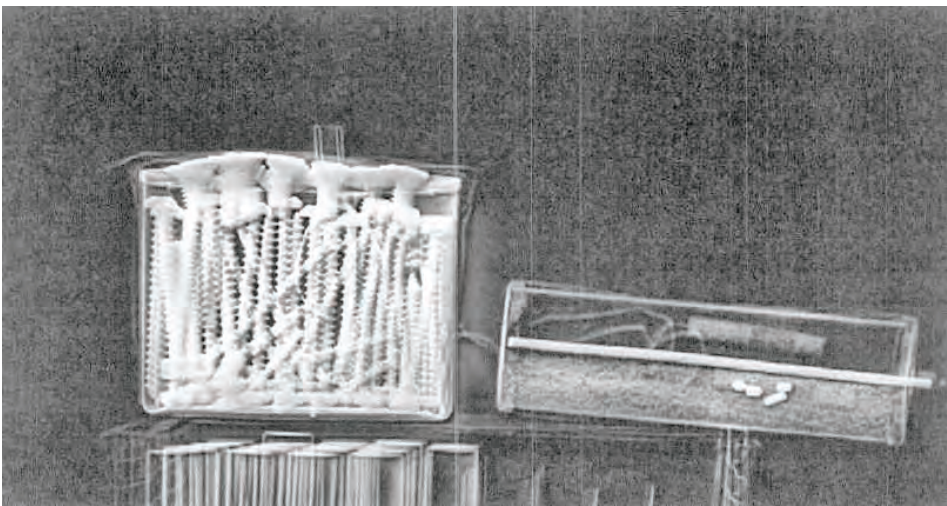
Weaver was rushed to Harborview Medical Center for treatment of serious but non-life-threatening injuries, while the children were placed with relatives for their safety.

Deputies described Neff as “pale, sweating, and eerily calm” during initial questioning, raising suspicions of narcotic influence—confirmed when a search yielded suspected narcotics and a possible meth pipe.

Neff admitted to carrying the loaded Glock daily with a round chambered and revealed he had 13 registered firearms locked in safes, but a safety sweep quickly contradicted his claims.

In one upstairs bathroom adjacent to the shooting site, officers found two unsecured AR-style rifles with loaded magazines and a suspected meth pipe nearby. Blood, flesh fragments, and a warm 9mm casing littered the scene, with a bullet lodged in the shower wall.

What followed was a tense three-day search warrant execution granted by Judge Karen Moore that uncovered a cache of weapons, explosive devices and munitions: 73 firearms scattered unsafely throughout the home, including five short-barreled rifles and a bump stock, 10 suspected explosive devices—tubular items filled with black powder, wires, and added metal fragments like nails and screws designed to act as shrapnel. Large containers of gunpowder, primers, and bullet-making components were stashed in the garage behind a curtain.



(Top) The image depicts an X-ray of one of the explosive devices from court records. (Bottom) The image depicts the drawing of a possible mass shooting according to court records.



The Washington State Patrol bomb squad was called multiple times to safely remove and assess the devices, evacuating neighbors for hours at a time, according to court documents.

On July 28, a joint team of technicians from various agencies deconstructed eight bombs, confirming explosive powder and deadly components; others were too volatile and had to be detonated after X-rays revealed their contents.

Investigators also discovered what appeared to be a child’s drawing bearing Neff’s name of a mass shooting.

The Washington Department of Labor and Industries later confirmed Neff held no license to possess, manufacture, or store explosives, leading to additional felony charges.

Neff has no prior juvenile nor adult misdemeanors nor felonies. As of August 5, 2025, he remains in custody at Snohomish County Jail, with a jury trial date set for September 26, 2025, with Judge Paul Thompson presiding.

However, the labor market remains resilient, with jobless claims falling for six consecutive weeks and consumer spending and industrial production exceeding expectations in June.

The Federal Reserve, meeting on Wednesday, July 30, maintained its key interest rate in the 4.25%-4.5% range, reflecting a cautious approach as inflation cools but tariff-related risks linger. However, for the first time in more than 30 years, the vote saw the first double dissent from Fed board officials with two of nine members voting to lower the interest rate.

Since taking office for his second term, President Donald J Trump has consistently pressured Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell to lower the federal funds rate by a full percentage cut arguing that it would act as “rocket fuel” for an already robust economy.

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or quarter, while core PCE, excluding volatile food and energy prices, rose by 2.5%, down from 3.5%. These figures indicate inflation is aligning closely with the Fed’s 2% target, easing concerns about persistent price pressures.

Additionally, real disposable income grew by a robust 3.0% in Q2, following a 2.5% increase in Q1, providing consumers with greater purchasing power.

Private-sector activity was a key driver of growth, contrasting with declining federal government spending, which fell for the second consecutive quarter. Real business fixed investment grew by 1.9% in Q2, following a strong Q1, compared to an average of 0.5% in the final two quarters of the Biden administration.

The auto industry saw a 35.5% annual-

ized increase in output, the largest since 2020, while manufacturing output rose by 1.8% in the first five months of 2025, reversing a 0.7% decline in the final five months of 2024.

In a statement on Wednesday’s U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis GDP announcement, Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt wrote, “Today, GDP growth came in above market expectations, and yesterday, consumer confidence rose. Americans trust in President Trump’s America First economic agenda that continues to prove the so-called ‘experts’ wrong. President Trump has reduced America’s reliance on foreign products, boosted investment in the US, and created thousands of jobs — delivering on his promise to Make America Wealthy Again. The data is clear, and there are no more excuses — now is the time for ‘too late’ Powell to cut the rates!”

These gains align with the Trump ad-

ministration’s “Made in America” agenda, which emphasizes reducing reliance on foreign products and boosting domestic production through trade policies and tariffs. Customs and tariff revenues exceeded \$150 billion in the first five months of President Trump’s second term, contributing to the first June budget surplus in nearly a decade.

Despite the strong performance, some analysts caution that trade policies, including significant tariff announcements, could introduce uncertainty.

The New York Times noted that President Trump’s trade strategy, marked by frequent policy shifts, may lead to higher prices and slower growth in the coming months, particularly if tariffs fully take effect after the August 1 deadline. The Conference Board projects real GDP growth to slow to 1.6% for 2025, with consumer spending expected to weaken in the second half due to tariff-induced price increases.

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of the worst calls imaginable – they would like to have covering their back.

“Class 915, I want you to know that the journey you’re embarking on is a noble, and honorable one. Law enforcement is an incredible profession that is filled with great people. The reality is that not everyone can do this work. And this is what makes you special,” said TAC Officer Andrew Shuck. “Your communities are lucky to have each and every one of you.”

What elected officials and Police Chiefs are saying about Class 915

The Lynnwood Times interviewed several elected officials and police chiefs in attendance at Tuesday’s ceremony. Here’s what they had to say about the graduating class, the Law Enforcement Academy in general, and how academies like these will serve the public safety of Washington as a whole.

“It’s exciting to have our first graduating class up here in North Puget Sound and I’m looking forward to seeing our Deputies and Officers start to rekindle some of the losses [in staffing] over the years,” said Washington State Representative and Snohomish County Councilman Sam Low.

“Graduation from Police Academy is extremely important for me, it’s wonderful because I get to connect a little bit with parents and let them know that we’re not just a Police Department but we’re a City. Every Officer that chooses to go down this path we are there for them,” said Lynnwood Mayor Christine Frizzell.

Mayor Frizzell informed the Lynnwood Times she typically attends four to five Police graduation ceremonies a year.

Sen. Lovick, who very much was the champion behind the law enforcement academy opening in Arlington, told the Lynnwood Times the graduation ceremony was “absolutely outstanding.”



Lynnwood Police Chief Cole Langdon with Officer John Merica (top) and with Alex Hankins (bottom) at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training graduating ceremony in Arlington on July 29, 2025. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.



“If you can’t feel good about today you can’t feel good about anything,” said Sen. Lovick.

Senator June Robinson was also pivotal in getting the law enforcement academy up in running, along with Sen. Lovick.

“We looked for a long time for a facility in Snohomish County, and tried a number of different avenues, and landed on

one that works well in Arlington. Today is proof that it’s important to have a local presence here,” said Sen. Robinson.

“To see this much support, that’s the kind of support that this academy is generating in public and it’s amazing because it’s about time right? Our law enforcement professionals have had a hard time and I think that’s turning around, and thing like this help,” said Sen. Keith Wagoner.

“I can tell you that we train [graduates] up to the highest level that we can, up-

holding a culture of people who have each other’s back. They will be supported, they will never be alone, I can tell you that,” said Lynnwood Police Chief Cole Langdon. “We hire or character and the two people coming out of here came in with great character, they’re people with integrity, and with this training the community is going to be well served.”

“Any time we see multiple officers graduating that’s a great thing for us. We’re constantly looking for great candidates, doing background processes, conducting interviews and this is really the end of a long journey of that,” said Everett Police Chief John DeRousse. “I’m really excited for them. It’s the beginning of their training. Now they’ll go out and get in cars and have an opportunity to take all the stuff they learned here, apply it on the streets, and learn the Everett way.”

“We’re so excited. This is a long time coming. Our thanks go out to the state for making this happen. To have our Deputies train in the communities where they’re going to serve – I’m very excited for what the future holds,” said Snohomish County Sheriff Susanna Johnson.

“It was special to join friends and family in celebrating these academy graduates. I wish each of them the best in their law enforcement careers,” said Snohomish County Councilman Nate Nehring.

“Today is such a great day, because what I see is that our law enforcement officers are expanding – we have many more than we did before – and that is so needed for Washington State and the quality of these officers is top notch,” said Washington State Representative Alicia Rule, Co-Chair of the Public Safety Caucus.

“At a time when law enforcement agencies are struggling to recruit and retain officers, it is inspiring to see such an incredible turnout of community support for this graduation ceremony. Congratulations to all the newly sworn in officers and a special welcome to the six new Snohomish County Sheriff’s Deputies who took their oaths today! We are lucky to have you,” said Snohomish County Councilman Jared Mead.



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visitors, and visitors must be scanned for foreign seeds and other non-native objects.

Only 3% of the Galapagos Islands are occupied by humans and of those 3%, the inhabitants adhere to strict requirements. For example, they must be Native Ecuadorians and are required to take a conservation class.

Though Czerwonka’s day-to-day varied, she spent a good amount of time on boats, sailing to various islands, learning about their history, catching rare wildlife, and hearing what the Ecuadorian government is doing to protect these islands.

A couple memorable events she shared was mustering the courage to free dive with a shiver of Hammerheads sharks and having one of her researchers be bitten by a sealion while they freed it from the clutches of a fishing net.

“I happened to bring my antibiotics that

day so I gave him my antibiotics. Luckily, he was wearing really thick pants so the sea lion’s teeth just grazed him,” said Czerwonka.

As for the sharks, Czerwonka said that was the biggest “boundary pusher” for her, growing up feeling uneasy around sharks thanks to movies like Jaws. However, she said as soon as she entered the water with the hammerheads it was unexpectedly “beautiful, peaceful, and calm.”

“It was just laden with beautiful sea creatures. The hammerheads were there, and we had the opportunity to swim with them for maybe a minutes before they disappeared into the depths of the ocean. It was a very surreal experience,” said Czerwonka.

Not everything Czerwonka learned about during her trip was uplifting, unfortunately. There was a darker history to the Galapagos she learned about while visiting the Charles Darwin Exhibition Hall, involving pirates who forced a species of tortoises into extinc-

tion from poaching.

“Most of the trip I had a sense of childhood wonder, but then there was that part that really sit with me – the thought in the back of my mind of some of that harder stuff,” said Czerwonka. “Like a lot of the plant species that are there are there because they came from garbage.”

Though grim to think about, these misfortunate realities just indicate how important environmental conservation efforts are for the world, according to Czerwonka. In modern times, for example, that very same Exhibition Hall now has a Galapagos Tortoise breeding ground on site and lead efforts to eradicating invasive plant species that jeopardize the ecosystem.

In Czerwonka’s classroom, even prior to her trip to the Galapagos Islands, she makes it a point to teach her children about conservation and habitat loss. Students, regardless of what age she’s teaching, pick a native bird to Washington, for example, and spend the year learning about that animal. Now she

plans to implement a compare/contrast segment comparing Washington birds to Galapagos birds.

She also wants to design more hands-on projects for her kids, to help them get in the minds of a professional conservationist and how they can “solve real world problems, and understand their own power to protect the planet,” she said.

“Those really meaningful and personal learning units where kids have choice and they’re learning something about, but then become really excited about, and it becomes deeply personal to them, I think that’s the type of learning that they carry with them as they grow,” said Czerwonka. “My goal is to plant that seed, that little seed where kids can realize their own power and how their choices can help make them change-makers in our world.”

FFT’s 2026 grant cycle begins on October 1. Teachers can apply by visiting: fundforteachers.org.

from page 4 **GREEN EARTH CUP**

ing modern K-Pop with traditional Korean attire.

Sim stated that unfortunately, the mariachi band was unable to make it.

The event also featured a youth soccer camp, with the official charitable arm of the Sounders FC and Reign FC, the RAVE Foundation, giving out free soccer balls.

“Part of what we do is we provide free equipment, often time soccer balls, to organizations that may need it,” RAVE Foundation Associate Executive Director Midori Hobbs said. “Supporting soccer tournaments like this is exactly what we do. Locally organized with a lot of different communities and cultures coming together, it just made perfect sense to support and layer in.”

A wide variety of local dignitaries attended the event. There are of course the aforementioned speakers during the halftime ceremonies. The Consul-General of the Republic of Korea in Seattle, Eun-ji Seo, spoke during the opening ceremony of the event. Seo, along with GSKA President Kim, stated that while “diverse in origin, we are united under one passion.”

Other elected officials in attendance included City of SeaTac Mayor Mohamed Egal, SeaTac City Councilmember Peter Kwon, Mukilteo City Councilmember Jason Moon, and Snoqualmie City Councilmember Rob Wotton.

In theme with unity despite differences, a diverse range of candidates also attended the event. These included King County Council candidate Steffanie Fain, King County Executive candidates Amiya Ingram and Derek Chartrand, Kent City Council candidate Andy Song, Bellevue City Council candidate Nicholas Ton, Tahoma School District candidate Elizabeth Karkoski-Gardner, Renton City Council candidate Raman Mann, Tukwila City Council candidate Ziggy Samra, and Washington House of Representatives candidate Ranga Bondada.

After speaking to many of these candidates, regardless of political stances, they all pressed on the importance of being active within their communities and experiencing other aspects of it.



(Top) Korean Nanta percussion group at the Green Earth Cup held on August 2 at Valley Ridge Park in SeaTac. Taekwondo demonstration by Taekwondo Way at the Green Earth Cup held on August 2 at Valley Ridge Park in SeaTac. Lynnwood Times | Goerge Ftikas.



City of Lynnwood now facing \$10.7 million budget shortfall, mayor proposing layoffs

By **MARIO LOTMORE**

LYNNWOOD—At its Business Meeting on Monday, July 28, the Council adopted revisions to its Council Rules of Procedure, approved an \$800,000 settlement with Marshbank Construction, and further discussed the City’s, now \$11 million, budget crisis.

Revisions to Resolution 2024-08 Council Rules

Below is a summary of proposed changes to the Council Rules of Procedure that Council President Nick Coelho motioned to approve with support of Council Vice President Joshua Binda at Monday’s meeting:

- Elected officials “must” be visible on the video of remote meetings.
- Council members will be allowed to attend up to 10 remote meetings per year, up from a maximum of three. Also removed is the three virtual meeting restriction to count as an unexcused absence. This rule change, financially benefits council members – see Lynnwood Times explanation below.
- A lost connection in virtual attendance by a council member will no longer be counted towards the virtual attendance threshold of 10 remote meetings per year.
- Council members are no longer required to be visible on the video of remote meetings for Executive Session.
- Established a cadence deadline for upcoming meeting materials.
- Public comments during Public Hearings & Quasi-Judicial Proceedings will be limited to five minutes.
- General housekeeping and grammatical corrections.

Council members Goerge Hurst, Patrick Decker, and Derica Escamilla proposed the following series of amendments to the original motion that were approved changing the final proposed Council Rules of Procedure changes to the following:

- Elected officials “must” be visible on the video “throughout” remote meetings.
- Council members will be allowed to attend up to 10 remote meetings per year, up from a maximum of three. Also removed is the three virtual meeting restriction to count as an unexcused absence. This rule change, financially benefits council members – see Lynnwood Times explanation below.
- A lost connection in virtual attendance by a council member will no longer be counted towards the virtual attendance threshold of 10 remote meetings per year.
- Council members are no longer required to be visible on the video of remote meetings for Executive Session.
- Established a cadence deadline for upcoming meeting materials.
- Public comments from individuals during Public Hearings & Quasi-Judicial Proceedings will be limited to “ten” minutes.
- General housekeeping and grammatical corrections.

The main motion passed unanimously 7 to 0.

Increasing the number of meetings a council member may attend from three per year to 10, comes with a financial benefit to a council member, at

a time the City is facing an \$11 million budget challenge.

According to Lynnwood Municipal Code 2.04.072, Compensation of councilmembers, council members are to receive a base compensation per month in the amount of \$900 plus a “per meeting” payment of \$150 up to a maximum accumulated bank of \$750. However, the LMC reads that “for councilmembers attending less than the five regular scheduled council meetings per month, a \$150.00 deduction for the ‘per meeting’ payment bank shall occur for each meeting missed” except “if fewer than five regular council meetings are scheduled in a month” or if a council member is using one of four “excused absences, at their [councilmember] discretion, during any calendar year.”

In other words, council members will not receive full compensation of the \$750 monthly portion of the meeting compensation for meetings missed in excess of four meetings. According to the currently approved Lynnwood Council Rules of Procedure, “After three virtual meetings, more [virtual meetings] shall be counted as an unexcused absence.”

By the council moving forward with the proposed rule change striking the verbiage that removes the three virtual meeting restriction to count as an unexcused absence, then a council member would receive a financial benefit to the rule change by receiving full pay in accordance with the Lynnwood Municipal Code. As written, the proposed rule change relaxes the financial incentive for council members to attend meetings in person.

“We have the most stringent remote attendance rules in our area, no other city has any issues with this at all, and I think we all understand why these rules were created, it was a chaotic time and they were trying to figure out what works best and I think these rules reflect our council a little bit better,” Council President Coelho said.

\$11 Million 2025-26 Biennium Lynnwood Budget Shortfall

Mayor Christine Frizzell, in her opening statement to the Lynnwood City Council on the City’s current budget crisis, shared with the council that her administration is considering a reduction in force (RIF)

“As our city grows, so does the number of employees as we respond to the needs we hear from our community. Now that we are looking at scaling back some levels of service, unfortunately we will need to reduce the numbers of associated personnel. Decisions for a reduction in force have been difficult and at times emotional,” said Mayor Frizzell.

The mayor, refuting claims by Finance Committee Chair and Councilman George Hurst in a Sunday commentary of an “inaccurate” 2025-26 budget presented to the council that was adopted with a 4-3 vote last year which included a property tax levy of \$7.2 million (equivalent to a 52% out-of-pocket property tax increase), said that the budget was created with a “purposeful and thoughtful mindset.”

In sharing that the economic forecasts in the biennium Lynnwood budget had a “growth mindset,” Financial Director Michelle Meyer then revealed that

in running the final numbers, the General fund is now projected end 2026 with a \$10.76 million deficit, up from the reported \$3 million discussed last week.

The revised General Fund ending fund balance for 2026 is now expected to be at least \$20.7 million less than the council adopted November 25, 2024, with a now revised amount of negative \$10.7 million.

“We put forward a 2025-26 budget really with a growth mindset that was discussed a lot in the budget process; we expected some continued growth, and we are not seeing that just like most other jurisdictions in the nation right now,” Director Meyer shared.

The lower-than-expected revenue forecasts Meyer said were due to impacts from tariffs and high interest rates resulting in stalled construction tax revenue.

The revised revenue forecasts now show a \$21.2 million reduction in three main areas:

- Sales Taxes, revised downward by \$7.8 million
- Development Services, revised downward by \$5.2 million due to revised DBS forecasts
- Photo Enforcement Fines, revised downward by \$8.2 million due to incorrect redlight camera predictive analysis

The Frizzell administration is working on a plan to reduce expenditures by \$12.3 million which would shrink the shortfall to roughly \$8.9 million (\$21.2 million in revenue reductions – \$12.3 million in proposed expenditure reductions).

Council President Coelho confirmed with Meyer that levying the remaining 33.5 percent in councilmatic bank capacity onto residents would reduce the budget shortfall by \$3.6 million.

In Washington state, there is a 1% limit on annual increases to property tax levies, but local governments can use “banked capacity,” in layman’s terms, unused property tax levies that is “banked” over the years to exceed the 1% annual threshold against residents without a public vote by residents. If enacted by the council, this would equate to an additional \$211 per household Meyer shared.

Councilman Hurst pressed Meyer for the details on the administration’s proposed \$12.3 million in expenditure reductions but to no avail.

“It depends on the department, it is anywhere from a three to 20 percent operating reduction,” said Meyer. “It is still a work in progress. There are positions that are included in these estimates ad that all haven’t been finalized yet. So aren’t at a point right now where we can say firmly what those cuts will be.”

“So, we are face with not a lot of specifics which is real concerning,” said Hurst.

Hurst, referring to Mayor Frizell’s eight bullet points to reduce expenditures in her July 21st memo again asked for expected cost avoidance numbers for each item in order for the council to make informed decisions to address the budget shortfall.

“I would suggest the city council not take a summer break, and that we have meetings all through August, and I would suggest we have a Finance Committee meeting as a whole; we did this during COVID,” said Hurst. “The Council needs to have some sort of figures to deal with to be able to come up with what we think are adequate solutions.”

To address the City not being compliant with its 2.5-month fund balance reserve requirement for 2025, approximately \$13 million, the council could relax the requirement to a 2-month requirement temporarily but would need to be at the 2.5-month requirement by the end of 2026. Doing so, Meyer said would reduce the \$ 4 million reserve gap to \$1 million for end of 2025 but it comes with consequences.

According to the new Government Finance Officers Association policies, Meyer shared, entities would need to disclose this as “financial stressors” which risk a credit downgrade from the City’s current AA+ bond rating impacting the City’s ability to issue debt.

Director Michelle Meyer and Finance Committee Chair Hurst reviewed the City’s 2nd Quarter 2025 Financial and Sales Tax reports on Wednesday, July 23. Which at the time showed a the City projecting a \$5.1 million shortfall in the General Fund through second quarter in addition to an already projected \$4.2 million deficit.

In a July 21st memo, Mayor Frizzell chalked the shortfall up to Lynnwood’s rapidly expanding growth (and by extension an increased demand for city services), inflation, unexpected operating costs of the new Community Justice Center (CJC), increased costs for prosecutorial and indigent defense services, lower than projected sales tax collection (which makes up about 44% of the city’s general fund revenue), and a far less-than-anticipated revenue stream generated by the new photo enforcement program.

Mayor Frizzell updated her Budget Management Plan calling on City Departments to reduce their General Fund operating costs by a target of 10%, while requesting Finance Director Meyers to re-forecast Lynnwood’s 2025-2026 to reflect zero percent growth in the city’s State Sales Tax, Development Service Charges, and Photo Enforcement revenues, which the council discuss on July 28.

The council will further discuss options to address the City’s budget challenges in upcoming weeks as the council seemed to agree not to forgo its summer recess.

Marshbank \$800,000 Settlement

The council coming out of Executive Session agreed to pay an \$800,000 settlement agreement with Marshbank Construction, a general contractor in Lake Stevens, related to the 196th Street Southwest project.

The details of the settlement were not shared with the public by the council and it is unknown of the impact the \$800,000 settlement will have to the City’s current financial crisis and/or its Liability & Property insurance. Also, there are no details of any claims listed with Marshbank Construction in the state’s Labor & Industries database.

Monumental Talks Foundation holds essay contest for high schoolers with generous cash rewards

By **MARIO LOTMORE**

SNOHOMISH COUNTY—The Monumental Talks Foundation is holding an essay contest for all Snohomish County high school students with the theme ‘Reflections on 9/11’. Submissions will be open from July 4 through September 5 with generous cash rewards for first, second, and third place winners.

The competition is open to grades 9 through 12, and open to public, private, or home-schooled students. Submissions can be an original, creative, poem, music, or artistic creation on the theme, so long as their submission is original, a personal composition, created without assistance, instruction, or collaboration of A.I. or other external means. This will be enforced through the honor system, the Monumental Talks Foundation said.

Essays must be type-written (Microsoft Word preferred) in Times New Roman font, sized 14, with 1.5 line spacing. Essays are limited to 500 words or less.

First place winner will receive a \$1,500 prize, second place will receive a \$1,000 prize, and the third place winner will receive a \$500 prize. Winners will be announced at the organization’s 9/11 Remembrance Event on September 11, at the Everett Civic Auditorium. Contest participants will

receive complimentary tickets to this event.

Judging and sponsorship will be supported by the Monumental Talks Foundation, donations, and the support of various businesses, media, service organizations, and individuals.

For more information on the contest and submission guidelines visit: <https://hartleymansion.com>. For questions contact the event coordinator, Dan Matthews, at 425-422-3105.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED: All submissions accepted will be considered a donation to and become the exclusive property of The Monumental Talks Foundation, which may retain, publish, print, distribute, display, and disseminate any entry at its sole discretion.

Upcoming 9/11 Remembrance Event Monumental Talks Foundation is hosting at the Everett Civic Auditorium on Thursday, September 11, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. a panel discussion titled, What is the cost of Freedom, hosted by Sanford Wright, MD.

Monumental Talks are dialogues the values of the American Dream, American Freedom, and how much people are willing to pay for the “Cost of Freedom.”

Speakers this year include Everett Mayor Cassie Franklin, John Car-

swell, Steve McLaughlin, Antonio Williams, Jeff Swan, Ray Lockman, Ricardo Velasco, Marcie Velasco, Lia Tetreault, and Karina Choe.

Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased here. Everett Civic Auditorium is located at 2415 Colby Avenue, Everett, WA. 98201.

About Monumental Talks

“Monumental Talks: What is the Cost of Freedom” is a powerful initiative rooted in the core American value of defending freedom, inspired by the historic legacy of Everett’s Hartley Mansion and the events of September 11, 2001. While the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, granted Americans freedom, the 9/11 attacks threatened it, prompting the creation of the Christmas Spectacular in December 2001 by Everett’s Volunteers of America. This annual show, running for 19 years, emphasized the importance of “Freedom” during the Christmas season, reminding Americans that without it, such celebrations might not exist.

In 2006, during the Iraq War, Dehner Franks’ song “What is the Cost of Freedom” was performed at the Christmas Spectacular, delivering a stirring message about the sacrifices required to preserve liberty. In 2024, this song forged a profound connection with the legacy of Roland Hartley, a Canadian immigrant who became a U.S. citi-

zen in 1878 and, at age 53, joined the Washington National Guard in 1917 to fight in World War I. Artifacts in the Historic Hartley Mansion—Hartley’s citizenship application, a 1917 family photo with sons ready for war, and a banner noting his service—reflect this commitment to freedom.

This connection birthed “Monumental Talks,” a platform celebrating the core value: The Cost of Freedom. This value, shared across generations, faiths, ethnicities, and political divides, unites Americans in their resolve to protect freedom against any threat to the “Monument” of the American Dream. Monumental Talks are essential dialogues that reaffirm the priceless worth of the American Dream and American Freedom, for which Americans are willing to pay the ultimate cost.

Every Monumental Talk incorporates three key elements:

- The American Dream
- American Freedom
- The Willingness to Pay the Cost of Freedom

These talks are vital for fostering remembrance of events like 9/11 and ensuring that the sacrifices for freedom are never forgotten. Through Monumental Talks, Americans are called to engage in meaningful conversations to uphold and defend the values that define the nation.

Seattle Tattoo Expo returns to Seattle Center in August

By **MARIO LOTMORE**

SEATTLE—The Seattle Tattoo Expo, a beloved annual celebration of ink, art, and culture, is back for its 2025 edition, taking over the Seattle Center Exhibition Hall from August 15-17. Hosted by Seattle’s iconic Hidden Hand Tattoo and Supergenius Tattoo, this one-weekend-only event brings together over 250 of the world’s most talented tattoo artists, alongside a dynamic lineup of contests, DJs, karaoke, burlesque, and more. Tickets are now on sale at SeattleTattooExpo.com.

For three days, tattoo enthusiasts and curious newcomers alike can immerse themselves in the rich history and artistry of tattooing. The 2025 Expo showcases legendary artists like VyVyn Lazonga of Madame Lazonga’s Tattoo (Seattle), Tony Hundahl of Rock of Ages Tattooing (Austin), and Big Gus of Tattoo Nightmares and Collective Ink Gallery fame.

Attendees can book tattoo appointments in advance or on-site, depending on each artist’s preference. A full list of participating artists is available at SeattleTattooExpo.com/artists.

Since its inception, the Seattle Tattoo Expo has been a platform for discovering new talent, celebrating fan-favorite artists, and uniting a community passionate about this timeless art form. Over the decades, the event has drawn thousands of attendees and introduced Seattleites to hundreds of in-

ternational artists, cementing its status as a cornerstone of the city’s cultural scene.

“We’re thrilled to bring the Seattle

Tattoo Expo back to Seattle Center, where creativity and community collide,” said organizers from Hidden Hand Tattoo and Supergenius Tattoo. “This year’s lineup of artists and en-

tertainment promises an unforgettable weekend for everyone, from seasoned collectors to first-time visitors.”

Event Details:

- When: August 15-17, 2025
 - Friday: 2:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
 - Saturday: 12:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
 - Sunday: 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
- Where: Seattle Center Exhibition Hall, 301 Mercer Street, Seattle, WA 98109
- Tickets:
 - Day Pass: \$30
 - Full Weekend Pass: \$70
 - Available now at SeattleTattooExpo.com

Whether you’re looking to get inked by a world-renowned artist, explore tattoo culture, or enjoy the lively entertainment, the Seattle Tattoo Expo is the place to be this August. Don’t miss your chance to be part of this vibrant celebration of art and expression.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit SeattleTattooExpo.com.



OP-ED: Washington State Legislature adds to list of government transparency assaults

By **COLETTE WEEKS, DIRECTOR OF COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT**

Our state Legislature’s march toward secrecy is speeding up, despite lawsuits, massive public outcry and even a ruling that was largely against them from the state Supreme Court.

In the latest move against government transparency, the public records officer of the Washington House of Representatives sent an internal email in July to House members outlining a restart of a 30-day email auto-deletion system and a guide on how to get rid of other emails even faster.

This action will destroy records on a regular basis and encourage lawmakers to delete certain emails they deem “transitory” even sooner.

Pushing boundaries for flexibility is one thing. The latest move by the Washington House of Representatives is much more than that. It’s a power grab straight out of the hands of the people they’re supposed to serve.

A Washington Supreme Court ruling in 2019 found individual lawmakers are subject to the Public Records Act but left a question mark about how the chambers themselves must behave. The House, led by House Speaker Laurie Jenkins, D-Tacoma, has been poking at that weak spot ever since.

Those wanting answers won’t get much from this House of Representa-

tives. With more power to delete records, lawmakers can hide what they want in providing documents to the pesky public.

What does “transitory” mean? It covers a wide scope and has zero oversight, so it can apply to pretty much anything. If lawmakers want to hide something, it’s now OK to toss it in the “transitory” delete pile. No one would ever know.

Left sitting in the dark, we have nothing but unanswered questions. How will we know how a lawmaker arrived at a decision to vote on a bill or whether they are working in our interest? We won’t.

This isn’t about partisanship. This is equal-opportunity anger at repeated attempts to steal and nullify the people’s power. Silence is acceptance.

“It’s hard to believe that after the Washington Supreme Court and the people of Washington clearly told the Legislature to obey the Public Records Act, House leadership continues to think up ways to withhold government-produced documents requested by citizens,” said George Erb, board member and secretary of the Washington Coalition for Open Government.

The public outcry Washington residents made in 2018 after lawmakers tried to exempt themselves from the Public Records Act convinced then-Gov. Jay Inslee to veto the bill. The next year, the state Supreme Court ruled that lawmakers are subject to the

PRA, but with some limits. Pushing to define those limits in the broadest way has become a House mission. As secrecy reigns, WashCOG would like to point out that the new policy has at least two major flaws:

1. It sanctions deleting an email by defining it as “transitory.” That will solidify the direction we are heading, where lawmakers remove many pieces of written information from public view. That will leave us with only formal, finished laws and policies. That flies in the face of what voters wanted when they pushed in 1972 for what became the Public Records Act. And frankly, it flies in the face of transparency and the concept of our democratic republic.
2. It says the prime sponsor of a bill is the only one who must retain emails related to that bill. What about what all the others voting on legislation had to say? Their words and interactions are not transitory, in our opinion. Their conversations, suggestions, promises and ideas matter.

This is proof that the slide away from transparency continues. WashCOG studied the state of the Public Records Act and issued a report in 2024 that concluded the people’s right to know was eroding, and the Legislature was the leading cause.

We are fighting for transparency, but it seems lawmakers are doubling down. It appears the bad actors won’t back off until the voters and courts demand openness.

That’s where you come in. We hope the people will join us in letting their legislators know that this must not stand. We reject the concept that all they owe us is the finished product when they make laws or do the people’s work. As teachers often require in school, you must show your work to prove you did it the right way. Don’t forget, they’re supposed to work for us.

The Washington Coalition for Open Government is a nonpartisan, non-profit organization founded in 2002. We are an independent, broad-based advocate for public records, open meetings and informed citizens.

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from page 1 **JANTZ**

Opening on a note of scripture from Acts 11:24, read by friend Pastor Peter Van Breda, “For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord,” captured the essence of Jantz’s influence—a man whose career bridged clinical expertise with compassionate outreach, transforming mental health treatment by focusing on root causes rather than symptoms alone.

His eulogy, read by Dr. Arden Snyder’s traced Jantz’s path from his 1959 birth in Boise, Idaho, to his Seattle years where he earned degrees in counseling and psychology, to then marrying LaFon (Ferguson) in 1983, where they built The Center into a global beacon of hope and healing.

Jantz loved family adventures—hiking, biking, skiing—who was anchored by the scripture of Jeremiah 29:11, a verse with God’s promise to provide a hope-filled future.

Eldest son Greg Jantz, Jr. shared a touching letter his father wrote him at age 13, pledging support as he stepped into manhood, “I commit to you as your father to stand with you, support you, pray for you... I believe in you and God’s plan for you.”

Recalling annual family goal-setting sessions and their mission statement—“Live to provide the hope of Christ to the culture and to future generations”—Greg shared principles from a note on his father’s desk reading, “Give without keeping score. Add value to people’s lives. Lead with love, not an agenda. Find ways to serve. Show you care. Encourage others. Focus on building relationships.”

Greg drew from the “Lion Chasers Manifesto” in the book Chase the Lion by Mark Patterson his father gifted him, that urged a bold living:

“Quit living as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death. Run to the roar. Set God-sized goals. Pursue God-given passions. Go after a dream that is destined to fail without divine intervention. Stop pointing out problems. Become part of the solution. Stop repeating the past. Start creating the future. Face your fears. Fight for your dreams. Grab opportunity by the mane and don’t let go. Live like today is the first and last day of your life. Burn simple bridges. Blaze new trails. Live for the applause of nail-scarred hands. Don’t let what’s wrong



(Top) Immediate family of Dr. Gregory Jantz—wife LaFon and sons (L-R) Benjamin and Greg Jr. on Saturday, August 2, 2025. Source: Westgate Chapel livestream of the Memorial Service. (Bottom) Dr. Gregory Jantz. Source: Support 7.



with you keep you from worshipping what’s right with God. Dare to fail. Dare to be different. Quit holding out. Quit holding back. Quit running away. Chase the lion.”

Younger son Benjamin’s thanked everyone for their support during their family’s period of mourning.

“Thank you all for being here,” said Benjamin. “I know my dad loved probably each and every one of you guys. Thank you for being his friend. He’s a really good dad. Probably the best.”

LaFon described her husband of over 42 years as kind, compassionate, and protective—a “watchtower” who treasured family and friends alike.

She recalled his “effervescent” presence, from in a recent Focus on the Family interview, and how Jantz believed in people’s worth, opening doors at The Center and greeting patrons at Red Twig Café each morning.

“He as an incredible listener with discernment and wisdom from years of

lived experience, choosing carefully to speak only words of encouragement, hope, and helpfulness to his hearers,” said LaFon. “Words that help and words that heal were always his aim. Words of encouragement and words of hope. He was a brilliant teacher, mentor, father, and extraordinary counselor to many. He always treated everyone he met with a smile and youthful enthusiasm. Kids and teens loved being with him and just really flocked to him.”

LaFon shared that Jantz had no plans to retire, insisting that he had “more to do” and reassured everyone that Greg’s final day was “the best day ever” and that “he did not suffer.”

Sister Lynne Wells evoked childhood memories, recalling how she was known as “Greg’s little sister.”

“I imagine the day that Greg was born in July of 1959, God was thrilled,” she said. “He was head over heels in love with this creation and God was excited for the moment for Greg to take his first breath and I could just hear him saying, ‘I’ve got great plans for this one.’”

Passing, symbolically, the baton to his sons, she encouraged them to “run the race” that God “has set out for you.”

Pursuit Church Northwest Lead Pastor Russell Johnson shared his account of the life-altering friendship he had with Jantz that began unexpectedly in mid-2022 when Jantz mailed him a box of his books. By late 2023, amid Johnson’s own mental health struggles, Jantz became his mentor and counselor.

“I’m not sure I’d still be pastoring today without him,” Johnson admitted, his voice carrying the weight of gratitude.

Just recently in May, Pastor Johnson shared, he and Jantz collaborated where he opened up about his mental health journey and Jantz spoke on God’s role in holistic healing—mind, body, soul.

Traveling nationwide, Johnson discovered Jantz’s quiet impact on other pastors and volunteers.

“There have been so many times over the last three weeks, I’ve picked up my phone to call Dr. Jantz just to remember he’s no longer here. I miss my friend,” said Johnson in raw vulnerability. “But today I’m confident that Dr. Jantz has now joined the great cloud of witnesses, leans over the banister of Heaven, looking at that which he left behind and encouraging us to keep walking in the direction that we should go, that we would never depart from him.”

Senior Pastor Alec Rowlands of Westgate Chapel delivered the benediction to the memorial of Dr. Gregory Jantz.

“Father, thank you for a life well lived. We may never understand why Greg’s life was taken so suddenly with so much living left to do, but we are confident, Lord, that you’ve not written the finish of the story yet. You’re still writing your story in our hearts. And so we turn to you for comfort, for encouragement, for strength, for hope. And Lord, if there are any here this afternoon who have yet to enter into that faith that sustained Greg Jantz all of his life into eternity, I pray that before very long they will discover you as Lord and Savior of their lives. And we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Dr. Gregory Jantz is survived by his parents Larry and Judy, wife LaFon, sons Greg Jr. (with wife Madison) and Benjamin, sister Lynne Wells, and extended family.

from page 1 **BOEING**

The segment booked 455 net orders, highlighted by deals like 120 787s and 30 777-9s for Qatar Airways, plus 32 787-10s for British Airways. Despite these gains, operating margins remained negative at 5.1%, though better than the 11.9% loss margin last year, as Boeing invests heavily in quality controls and integrates its recent acquisition of Spirit AeroSystems.

In Defense, Space & Security, revenue grew 10% to \$6.6 billion, with operat-

ing margins turning positive at 1.7% from a steep 15.2% loss previously. Milestones included securing a U.S. Air Force contract for four T-7A Red Hawk aircraft and starting ground tests on the MQ-25 Stingray unmanned tanker for the Navy.

Deliveries here totaled 36 units, ranging from Apache helicopters to KC-46 tankers and commercial satellites. The backlog expanded to \$74 billion, with about a fifth from international customers, offering a buffer against domestic budget uncertainties.

Global Services, often a steady performer, saw revenue rise 8% to \$5.3 billion, with margins expanding to 19.9%. Key moves included divesting its Gatwick Airport maintenance facility and landing a contract for P-8A Poseidon training systems for South Korea’s navy, emphasizing Boeing’s pivot toward high-margin aftermarket support.

From a fiscal standpoint, Boeing’s year-over-year revenue growth outpaced its 26% first-half increase, driven largely by commercial deliveries that nearly doubled in the quarter.

Margins across the board showed progress: company-wide GAAP operating margins improved to negative 0.8% from 6.5%, while core margins rose to negative 1.9% from 8.3%. Cash reserves held firm at \$23 billion, bolstered by \$10 billion in undrawn credit, even as debt dipped slightly by \$300 million to \$53.3 billion.

While losses persist—net loss halved to \$612 million—the narrowing gaps suggest cost-slashing measures, including workforce reductions and supplier negotiations, are taking hold.



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