



THE SKANNER

CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE NOW



Inside: Black History Edition



Surprising Prison Report

AP finds Washington prison population is Whiter, more violent

By Nicholas K. Geranios
The Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — Washington state's prison population has become whiter and older in the past decade, and more of them are violent offenders, an Associated Press review of Department of Corrections records has found.

And while running the prison system eats up 5 percent of the state budget, there appear to be few places that funding can be cut without resorting to releasing inmates early, as some states have done.

"The main way to save money is to close a facility and lay off staff," said Tom McBride, a spokesman for the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, whose members are concerned the state is running out of prison beds. "When you look at our prison population, it's hard to find anybody who doesn't deserve to be there."

Indeed, reforms started in the 1980s have dramatically changed the prison system's population. While Washington has a relatively small prison population — about 17,000 for a state of 6.6 million people — the percentage of inmates serving time for violent crimes is greater than the national average.

The idea of releasing some inmates early to help reduce the projected \$4.6 billion deficit in the next two year state budget is being discussed in Olympia, officials say, although no bill has been introduced.

"We have taken no position on that," said John Lane, of Gov. Chris Gregoire's policy office.

At a legislative hearing on Wednesday, Steve Aos of the Washington State Institute for Public Policy estimated that cutting 60 days off the sentence of low and moderate risk offenders could save the state \$4.6 million a year, with just a 15 percent probability that crime would rise as a result.

The Corrections Department cannot release inmates early without authorization

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WIRED SUCCESS



President Obama visited Portland's Intel plant earlier this week to emphasize the importance of education and high technology innovation in the United States.

Broadband's Future as a Public Service

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

Part two of a two-part series.

Electricity, gas, water...and high-speed Internet in your home: each of these services meets a basic need. And if you feel that going online is not as important as the other three, you might want to reconsider.

"Frankly access to the Internet is not a luxury any more," says state Rep. Lew Frederick. "It's a necessity — maybe not quite as much as water or power, but it's a utility."

Frederick once decided to count the number of advertised jobs that ask for resumes to be sent by email. "Between 80 and 90 percent required an emailed resume — and that was six or seven years ago," he says. "In today's world, if you want to apply for a job you will have to go online. It's not about heading out and knocking on doors — that's not the way it works any more. And this isn't just about getting jobs — you have to go online for just about everything now."

Anyone who has high speed Internet access at home will recognize this truth. Yes, we go online for entertainment.

But we also use it to pay bills, make appointments, take classes, reserve library books, find information and talk to people near and far. More importantly, because we use it to buy, sell, market and recruit all kinds of goods and services, the Internet drives our economy — locally and nationally.

Compare Internet, Cell phone and Cable Prices in your area.

Since 1999, city officials and advocates, such as the founders of the Portland Telco project, have been looking for a way to provide fast, reliable, affordable Internet service to

everyone in the city. Significant progress was made, only to be derailed by funding problems and disagreement over government's role.

In the meantime, decisions made in Washington DC by the Federal Communication Commission — have changed the playing field.

Mary Beth Henry, deputy director of Portland's office of Cable Communications and Franchise Management, said the latest Broadband planning effort will bring industry, government and citizens together

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Evelyn Crews, Community Activist, 63

PSU grad helped Black marching band crash Rose Festival Parade

Evelyn Marie Crews, born in Multnomah County on June 14, 1947, died of cancer of unknown origin on Jan. 27, 2011.

Evelyn was the youngest child of the late Sadie Belle and Hosea Crews who came to Oregon from Alabama. Her older sister Ursula and brother Charles preceded her in death.

Evelyn graduated from Jefferson High

School and earned a B.S. Degree from Portland State University. Over four decades, Evelyn was an active participant in various volunteer community organizations including the Black United Front. She was a member of the Shining Star of Unity #1379 and the Mahogany Red Hatters.

Evelyn could be found at marches, rallies and other cultural events that focused on Black people and what was right, just, and

fair. She was a long-time community activist.

Evelyn worked a variety of jobs. Notably, she directed two YMCA afterschool programs; counseled victims of domestic violence and youth; originated the Rider Advocate Program coordinating a team that delivered customer services on Tri-Met

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