

YOUR BEAT EYES ON THE STREET

Investigators Find More Benefits Fraud

Investigators identified nearly 7,000 people last year who lied, cheated, scammed and schemed in order to collect unemployment benefits.

This small minority of claimants collected more than \$14 million in unemployment benefits through fraud – about 56 percent more than in 2009.

Employment Security's investigative team has expanded and improved its efforts to cross-match records with other state agencies, a strategy that is paying dividends, Taylor said.

The cheaters will have to pay back the money and face additional penalties, ranging from fines to potential jail time. In 2010, Employment Security recovered nearly \$11 million in benefits acquired fraudulently.

In one of the odder cases, an individual was redeeming his unemployment checks twice. His bank allowed him to take a picture of his check and deposit it electronically. To double his money, he cashed his actual checks at a different establishment. If that weren't enough, he also used his infant child's name to file for additional unemployment benefits. A call to the department's fraud line led investigators to the suspect.

For context, Employment Security paid \$4.6 billion in benefits to more than a half-

million people in 2010. That means fraud accounted for about three-hundredths of a percent of the benefits paid.

Report fraud: Call 866-810-0210, or visit www.suspectfraud.com.

Earth Day River Restoration

Environmental forces will join together at the semi-annual Duwamish Alive! Earth Day river restoration event on Saturday, April 16. Starting at 10:00am volunteers will roll up their sleeves at multiple sites along Seattle's industrialized watershed to perform cleanup and restoration work in the ongoing effort to keep Seattle's only river alive.

Duwamish Alive! brings together over 30 conservation groups, businesses, and government entities, organizing hundreds of volunteers to work at 13 work sites in the river's lower watershed.

Work sites include a river cleanup by kayak and canoe, shoreline salmon restoration, and native forest revitalization. Families, company groups, clubs, individuals, schools, fraternities and sororities are encouraged to participate, and no experience is necessary.

These volunteer restoration projects complement government efforts to clean up the contaminated sediments at the bottom of the Duwamish River.

Improvements in the health of the river will benefit people, wildlife, and runs of threatened salmon

on the Green/Duwamish River.

At Duwamish Waterway Park, volunteers take to the river in kayaks to remove marine debris and plastics which are harmful to both water quality and marine life. Also at this site, volunteers will conduct park beautification and pick up trash in the surrounding neighborhood. Working at Duwamish Waterway Park are Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition/TAG, Environmental Coalition of South Seattle, Argosy Cruises, and Alki Kayak Tours.

2011 Seattle Reads Uchechi Kalu and E.C. Osondu

Nigerian-born authors Uchechi Kalu and E.C. Osondu will read from their debut works, "Flowers Blooming Against a Bruised Gray Sky" and "Voice of America," from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 20 at The Seattle Public Library, Central Library, 1000 Fourth Ave., Level 1, Microsoft Auditorium.

The program is free and open to the public. Tickets and reservations are not required. Parking is available in the Central Library garage for \$5 after 5 p.m. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

"Flowers Blooming Against a Bruised Gray Sky" is a collection of poems. "Voice of America" is a collection of stories set in Nigeria and America; it



SUSAN FRIED PHOTO

Nia Gosset, 11, celebrates after her teammate gets a hit in a game April 9 at Garfield Playfield. On one of the first non-rainy days of spring the Seattle Central Lassies played against the Rainier Rockers.

Softball Season

won the 2009 Caine Prize for African Writing.

Kalu is a poet, teacher and activist. Her work has appeared in several publications, including "Revolutionary Voices." She lives in San Francisco.

Osondu's short stories have appeared in The Atlantic, Fiction and The Kenyon Review. He is assistant professor of English at Providence College in Providence, R.I.

For more information, call the Library at 206-386-4636.

'The Big Shift' Author Speaks at Seattle Library

Marc Freedman will discuss his book, "The Big Shift: Navigating the New Stage Between Midlife and Old Age," from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 27 at The Seattle Public Library, Central Library, 1000 Fourth Ave., Level 1, Microsoft Auditorium.

The program is free and open to the public. Registration is not required.

Parking is available in the Central Library garage for \$5 after 5 p.m. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

"The Big Shift: Navigating the New Stage Between Midlife and Old Age" discusses ways to transform America's coming midlife crisis into positive opportunities for individuals and society.

The program is presented in partnership with The Elliott Bay Book Co. Books will be available for purchase and signing.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SEATTLE APRIL 2011

BULLETIN BOARD

THE SKANNER.COM

If you have an event you want to share with the community, email it two weeks in advance to *The Skanner* at info@theskanner.com

Thursday April 14

MEET AUTHOR E. LOCKHART AND ENJOY CUPCAKES! This is a teen event with E. Lockhart, raffles and cupcakes from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Participants should look for flyers with a treasure map on the back prior to the event day at any library location. Level 3, Teen Center, Central

Library, 1000 Fourth Ave. Seattle
Friday April 15

TAX DAY FUN DAY! You have been stressed and had to rush to get your taxes completed, now come relax with your favorite little people at Ravenna. \$1 per person: 6:30 – 8 p.m. Ravenna – Eckstein Community Center 6535 Ravenna Ave. NE.

Saturday April 16

YOUTH EGG HUNT! AGES 12 AND YOUNGER: Hippity, hoppity along Montlake's bunny trail and join the hunt for eggs. 10 a.m. – Noon Montlake Community Center, 1618 E. Calhoun St. Free for children 12 and younger.

Thursday April 21

THE SEATTLE MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS SENIOR COFFEE HOUR! This coffee hour will feature Diane Sugimura, Director of the Seattle

Department of Planning and Development. 10 a.m. Downtown Central Building 810 3rd Ave.

Saturday April 23

SPRING EGG HUNT! Rain or shine, kids scramble for goodies in age appropriate hunt areas. Please bring a basket for collecting. The hunt starts at 10 a.m. for kids 3 and younger. 4-6 year olds 10:30 a.m. 7-9 year olds and 10-12 year olds 11 a.m. Garfield Community Center 2323 E. Cherry St.

Saturday & Sunday April 16 & 17

BOOK ON OVER TO WARREN G. MAGNUSON PARK: Friends of the Seattle Public Library spring book sale: More than 250,000 books, CDs, DVDs and much more. Saturday hours 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sunday hours 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. 7400 Sand Point Way NE Building No. 30.