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MAY DAY



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Over 2000 people marched peacefully from Judkins Park to the Federal Building to draw attention to the right of immigrants. Earlier May Day protests resulted in the breaking of windows and destruction of property. Among the marchers Tuesday were Eddie Rye, center, and Seattle City Commissioner Larry Gossett.

Whooping Cough Epidemic

Free clinics open for vaccinations -- babies at highest risk

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) -- Washington Gov. Chris Gregoire opened an emergency fund Thursday to help contain a spreading whooping cough epidemic, and officials urged residents to get vaccinated against an illness that particularly threatens infants.

Gregoire is making \$90,000 in crisis cash available to help strengthen a public awareness campaign about the need for the pertussis vaccination. The state Department of Health is already looking to spend about \$200,000 on the effort.

"Pertussis is very serious, especially for babies," Secretary of Health Mary Selecky said in a statement. "It's vital that teens and adults are current on their immunizations because they're often the ones who give whooping cough to babies."

Free whooping cough booster shots are available for adults without insurance.

Vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others—including babies—during the ongoing epidemic, so Public Health – Seattle & King County and Group Health Cooperative are partnering to provide free whooping cough booster shots for adults. Adults without health insurance and those who cannot afford to pay can get a free booster on Saturday, May 12 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Group Health Burien Medical Center.

The clinic is open from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. or until there is no more vaccine available.

Group Health Burien Medical Center is at 140 SW 146th St, in Burien.

Vaccines are also available at many local pharmacies and through health care providers.

Young infants are at highest risk for severe illness, hospitalization and death from whooping cough. In older children and adults, the severity of whooping cough can range from a serious illness to less severe cold-like symptoms.

However, the greater danger is that adults can spread the infection to infants, pregnant women and others who have no protection.

See SEX on page 3

Mayors Strike Against Child Sex

By Manuel Valdes
The Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) -- Mayors of nearly 50 cities across the country are urging Village Voice Media to require identification for people posting escort ads on Backpage.com - its online ad service that has come under scrutiny from authorities for allegations that it's used to promote child prostitution.

"There is an urgent need to act quickly, as cities continue to find advertisements on your site that reflect underage sex trafficking," the letter by the United States Conference of Mayors said

Monday. "We are making every effort to stop the ongoing trafficking of underage individuals, but these efforts are made more difficult by the inadequate safeguards of your website, Backpage.com, to prevent underage sex trafficking."

The leaders criticizing the ads include the mayors of New York, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Philadelphia, Austin, Texas, and Laredo, Texas.

Backpage.com critics say the site is used to advertise underage prostitutes who are often victims of sex trafficking. The mayors join state attorney generals, cler-

gy, anti-sex-trafficking groups and others that have put pressure on Village Voice Media, Backpage.com's parent company.

But in an op-ed published in The Seattle Times on Monday, Village Voice attorney Liz McDougall argued that sites like Backpage.com help law enforcement agencies by attracting traffickers who leave forensic footprints of their activities and can then be traced by law enforcement agencies.

"Backpage.com already employs a triple-tiered policing system that includes automated filtering and two levels of manu-

al review of the adult and personal categories," she wrote. "It also responds to law-enforcement subpoenas within 24 hours or less in almost all cases. It uses its own technological tools to voluntarily collect and submit additional evidence to law enforcement from across the Internet. And it is ready to do more."

A message left on McDougall's cellphone was not immediately returned.

The mayors argued that placing an ad on Backpage.com is too easy for those exploiting

Investors Lose in WaMu Bankruptcy

By Randall Chase
AP Business Writer

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) -- The judge in Washington Mutual's bankruptcy case ruled Monday that a group of investors who are plaintiffs in a federal mortgage-backed securities lawsuit against WaMu cannot file a claim in the company's bankruptcy case until distributions are made to a group of low-ranking creditors.

The plaintiffs, whose lawsuit is scheduled

for a September trial in Seattle, have asserted a claim of \$435 million in the bankruptcy case and argue that they should be treated as general unsecured creditors.

Washington Mutual maintains that the plaintiffs' claims must be subordinate to those of other creditor classes. WaMu also says the plaintiffs had agreed in a previous stipulation not to file a claim unless a group of low-ranking creditors with securities fraud claims had received recoveries.

Following a hearing Monday, Judge Mary

Walrath declined to rule on whether the plaintiffs should be treated as general unsecured creditors. She agreed with Washington Mutual, however, that the filing of their claim was premature because the required distributions to the low-ranking creditor group have not yet been made.

"The trigger has not occurred for purposes of the stipulation.... Therefore, the claim is premature," Walrath said.

See BANKS on page 2

INDEX

News	2,4
Calendar	2
Opinion	3
Bids/Classifieds.....	3