

# THE SKANNER

CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE NOW



For The Skanner news alerts Text "NEWS" to 503-715-0890 or scan this QR code



## SKATING FOR BOOKS



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Luna Negra a jammer for the Throttle Rockets tries to break through Grave Danger's blockers during a bout between the 2 teams Saturday at Key Arena. During halftime of the event celebrity librarian Nancy Pearl read "Where the Wild Things Are," a book selected by the audience as part of a fundraiser for First Book Seattle.

## Students Without a Home

### Federal law prompts better reporting but numbers still shock

By Sheridan Smalley  
Special To *The Skanner News*

The roster of homeless students in Washington State's K-12 schools reached a whopping 27,390 during the 2011-12 school year, according to the state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

That's up almost 5 percent from the year before and more than 46 percent from 2007-08, when the recession first slammed area families.

"It's heartbreaking," said Nathan Olson, state schools communications manager. "One student homeless is heartbreaking, 27,000 is heartbreaking times 27,000."

The latest number is based on reports of school-district representatives, who submit the number of students who are homeless in their districts to the superintendent's office.

The higher figure stems partly from better reporting, Olson said, because the superintendent's office is working to increase awareness of issue and connect families to available services.

In recent years, the economic downturn has continued to take its toll.

According to the federal Stewart B. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, students are considered homeless if they "lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence." This includes a broad array of living arrangements: motels, hotels, shelters, cars, public spaces, abandoned buildings, trailer parks, bus or train stations, substandard housing or any other "public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings."

"It's really a poverty issue more than anything," said Dinah Ladd, who works on the issue for Seattle Public Schools.

She says the ways poverty impacts kids' lives are as varied as the number of students—the housing market, lost jobs, sudden illness, greater severity of needs and

## Madigan PTSD Center Probed

### Army doctor suspended, claims retaliation for whistleblowing

SEATTLE (AP) — A 15-year veteran Army doctor has been suspended for alleged problems with patient care, but Dr. Russel Hicks said the suspension is retaliation for providing information on Madigan Army Medical Center's troubled PTSD diagnosis program to investigators.

The psychiatrist was suspended in January from his hospital duties because he allegedly practiced outside the scope of his clinical privileges and did

not properly document patient records. During an initial investigation that could last a month or more, he must refrain from any diagnosis, prescriptions, charting or treatment, The Seattle Times (<http://is.gd/bOMX-AX>) reported Saturday.

Hicks, in a letter to Madigan's credential's committee, said he believes the actions were in retaliation for information he offered Army investigators who last year examined diagnoses of post-traumatic stress disorder at

the hospital.

Hicks shared the documents detailing his suspension with U.S. Sen. Patty Murray.

"We are absolutely looking into this and will be making an inquiry with the Army," said Matt McAlvanah, a spokesman for the democrat.

The Jan. 17 memorandum sent to Hicks does not detail any specifics about the allegations against the doctor or how his conduct posed a risk to patients.

Hicks, in his response to the

memorandum, said the suspension was the first time he was informed of any problems with his care, and that he was concerned his removal from practice could disrupt the care of some of his patients addicted to painkillers.

Madigan officials, citing federal privacy laws that protect employees, said they could not comment on the decision to temporarily remove Hicks from practice. They said such actions

See PTSD on page 3

See STUDENTS on page 3

### INDEX

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

## Pro-Gun Rally Draws Hundreds to Capitol

### Olympia one of the few statehouses that does not restrict firearms

By Andrew Garber  
*The Seattle Times*

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — For Rep. David Taylor, a gun is like an article of clothing. He wears it everywhere — even on the floor of the state House of Representatives.

"I've carried for so long that it's second nature to me. It's almost like, if for some

reason I don't have it with me, I feel like I'm missing my wallet," said Taylor, a two-term Republican from Moxee, Yakima County.

What Taylor does is legal, and he's not alone. Other state lawmakers say they, too, have carried concealed weapons on the Capitol campus and on the floor. In fact, Washington's Capitol is one of the few in the country with no restrictions on firearms.

It's part of the culture in Olympia, something that's seldom discussed, rarely criticized and speaks volumes about the split between those who oppose most curbs on gun ownership and those pressing for gun-control legislation this session.

Over the years, the state Legislature has proved a friendly place for gun rights. A

See RALLY on page 3