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## NEW MAYOR



Newly elected Seattle Mayor Ed Murray is swarmed by the media before being sworn in on Jan. 6 in front of the largest crowd ever to attend a Seattle inauguration ceremony.

## Get Flu Shots Now

Officials say healthy, young people seem to be most at risk

By Helen Silvis and Lisa Loving Of The Skanner News

Some 16 people in Oregon and Washington are thought to have died from the H1N1 flu so far this season, and health officials say almost everyone should get a flu shot to avoid the worst effects.

While many people remember the vaccine shortage of 2009, which caused higher infection rates as states struggled to obtain the necessary number of doses, this season there is no shortage.

In fact, the number of young people who are being hospitalized and even dying – in Bothell, WA., the virus claimed the life of a healthy 30-year-old woman, and a young boy in Oregon who had already been vaccinated – has health officials urging younger people to get a flu shot.

Jennifer Vines MD, deputy health officer for Multnomah and Clackamas Counties and health officer for Washington County, says despite the widespread concern there is no evidence that this year's flu season is worse than any other.

"Flu seasons are notoriously unpredictable. How many people get sick and how many people get severely ill depends on how many people are vaccinated or have pre-existing immunity, the general health of the population (individuals with underlying health conditions are more likely to have flu complications), and how good of a match the vaccine is for circulating strains in a given year," she said this week.

"So I don't think we can say the flu is more virulent this year. Rather, this year is a reminder that flu can strike all ages and in some cases cause severe illness and complications even in otherwise healthy people. The flu vaccine is not perfect but is by far the most important thing people can do to protect themselves and their loved ones."

The number of people affected is hard to track for a variety of reasons, but all jurisdictions reported an escalating number of

See SOCIAL on page 3

See FLU on page 3

## Socialist Takes Office at Council

Kshama Sawant first of her party to win office in a major city in years

By Manuel Valdes Associated Press

Seattle City Council member Kshama Sawant was sworn-in to office Jan. 6.

A former community college professor who won a surprising citywide election was sworn in Monday as the first socialist City Council member in Seattle's modern history.

Kshama Sawant of the Socialist Alternative party took her oath and served in her first hearing, then gave a speech to

throng of supporters in a ceremonial swearing-in at a packed City Hall.

"I will do my utmost to represent the disenfranchised and the excluded, the poor and the oppressed, by fighting for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage, affordable housing, and taxing the super-rich for a massive expansion of public transit and education," said Sawant, 41.

Even in this liberal city, Sawant's win surprised many. The incumbent, Richard Conlin, was backed by the political

establishment. But bolstered by a grass-roots campaign that harped on economic inequality, Sawant toppled the 16-year incumbent.

"Here in Seattle, political pundits are asking about me: Will she compromise? Can she work with others? Of course, I will meet and discuss with representatives of the establishment. But when I do, I will bring the needs and aspirations of working-class people to every table I sit at, no matter who is seated across from me," she said.

But just days into the new year, Seattle's new mayor, Ed Murray, has already had a public spat with Sawant. Last week, Murray issued an executive order to raise the minimum wage for city workers to \$15 an hour, a move that would affect about 600 workers. Sawant was quoted in The Seattle Times as saying she that Murray's move "shows the mayor's office is feeling the pressure from below to act on the rhetoric from the campaign."

### INDEX

- News .....2,3,6,8
- Calendar .....2
- Opinion .....4
- A&E .....2
- Bids/Classifieds .....7

## Going to the Game? Look for Fakes

Great deal on Seahawks tickets may be too good to be true

Lisa Loving Of The Skanner News

Seahawks fans heading to the Super-bowl game in New Jersey on Feb. 2 might need to put a second mortgage on the house to afford prices already as high as \$12,000 a seat.

The cheapest tickets on the resale market for this weekend's playoff in Seattle are

hovering around \$200, considered the most expensive in the country.

But the Better Business Bureau says no matter how much you are willing to spend, you need to watch out for fakes and rip-offs.

Be especially careful of online deals, BBB spokesman David Quinlan says, and make absolute sure you can see and touch the tickets before forking over thousands of dollars for them.

He says that any deal that looks too good to be true probably is.

"That's why if you're going to make a deal with someone, obviously meet them in public, look at the tickets, inspect them; know what a real ticket feels like – it's kind of that hard cardboard," Quinlan says. "Make sure the ink doesn't smear."

See TICKETS on page 3