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Pacific NW

The Skanner News presents
our new regional edition,
featuring more news and
local information.

Obama Views Mudslide

Snohomish victims still
being recovered
from disaster zone

Darlene Superville
Associated Press

OSO, Wash. (AP) — Swooping over a terrain of great sadness and death, President Barack Obama took an aerial tour Tuesday of the place where more than three dozen people perished in a mudslide last month, then mourned privately with those who lost loved ones in the destruction.

Evidence of the mudslide's power was everywhere: trees ripped from the ground, a highway paved with mud and debris, a river's course altered. And in the midst of the awful tableau, an American flag flying at half-staff.

Even as the president flew overhead, the search for bodies continued below. Two people are still listed as missing.

Back on the ground, the president gathered at a community chapel in the small town of Oso, about an hour northeast of Seattle, with families of the victims. The March 22 mudslide killed at least 41 people and buried dozens of homes.

Obama was meeting separately with emergency responders and planned a public appearance at the local firehouse to talk about what he had witnessed and experienced on a clear, sunny afternoon. On his drive to the firehouse, a sign outside one business read "Oso strong."

Brandee Taylor, whose boyfriend volunteered to work on the mudslide debris field, was appreciative that the president made the effort to visit this rural outpost.

"It is a small community. It's little. It's not huge on the map. But there's still people here who need help, that need the support," said Taylor, who stood near the firehouse. "And they need to know the president is here to support and to help them rebuild their lives."

Kellie Perkins, who lives in Oso, said Obama's visit would help families who have lost so much begin to heal.

"They don't now have houses any more,

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EGG HUNT



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Kids between the ages of 1 through 11 participated in the Annual Spring Egg Hunt, Saturday April 10 at Nathan Hale High School's stadium. The Seattle Parks and Recreation Department sponsored event was one of many similar events held at community centers across the city.

Oregon Sheriffs Turn Down ICE

Two court decisions have big impact on immigrant communities

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

The Oregon Sheriffs' political action committee has come out in opposition to Measure 301 which would permit undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers licenses.

In a release Sheriff Tom Bergin said 28 of Oregon's 36 Sheriffs voted to bar people without proof of legal residency from being allowed to apply for drivers privileges. The other eight sheriffs took no position.

"Offering the privilege to drive to people who are breaking the law makes no sense to those of us who enforce the law," said Clatsop County Sheriff Tom Bergin. "It just doesn't pass the 'common sense' test."

The sheriffs plan to campaign against Measure 301, which will be up for a vote in the November election.

Supporters of the measure say since people will drive anyway, it's safer to encourage them to pass a driving test.

At the same time, sheriffs in

Deschutes, Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman and Wasco counties have joined Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington sheriffs in suspending the practice of holding people in jail for Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

U.S. District Court Judge Janice M. Stewart ruled last week that detaining people who otherwise would be released, because of an ICE request, could violate the constitution. Stewart ruled in the case of Maria Miranda-Olivares, who sued Clackamas

County after she was detained for 19 hours after ICE decided to investigate her residence rights.

Stewart's ruling said that once inmates have completed requirements for release, continuing to hold them amounted to a second detention.

Multnomah County Sheriff Dan Staton agreed last year not to hold people who had been jailed for minor offenses for ICE. Now Staton will not hold

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Former PDX Finance Chief Files Claim

Jack Graham had been City's highest-ranking Black administrator

Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

Former City of Portland Chief Administrative Officer Jack Graham has filed a tort claim alleging that racial discrimination drove him out of his job at the Office of Management and Finance, where he was the top-ranked African American administrator in city government.

The notice of intent to sue the city also charges that officials denied him the right to due process in answering allegations against him; and that Commissioners Amanda Fritz, Steve Novick and Nick Fish publicly defamed his character when they spoke of his situation to a newspaper reporter.

According to the legal documents delivered to city officials yesterday by Graham's attorney, Dana L. Sullivan, Graham was

subject to a higher degree of scrutiny in his actions than others in his position have been.

"City employees and managers questioned his qualifications because of his race and repeatedly complained about Mr. Graham's decision to make diversity hiring a priority in OMF.

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