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local information.

Murray Supports Veteran

Seattle mayor calls off police in helping veteran stay in home

Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

Seattle Mayor Ed Murray set a historic precedent last week by instructing city law enforcement to “stand down” from evicting a stroke-ridden Vietnam veteran from his underwater home.

The Occupy-related group Standing Against Foreclosure and Eviction (SAFE) and the Washington Community Action Network had spent weeks of focused organizing in support of the elderly homeowners, Byron and Jean Barton.

Byron Barton, a Vietnam veteran, had suffered a stroke that left him unable to walk and with a severe speech disability; the couple’s property had fallen into the hands of a mortgage trustee corporation – one that has been repeatedly sued for wrongdoing — and went into foreclosure.

The deed for the Bartons’ West Seattle home had been snapped up at auction by mortgage trustees Quality Loan Service, who sold it to Triangle Property Development, who foreclosed on the couple and filed for the eviction.

The Bartons are currently suing Quality Loan Service as well as JPMorgan Chase, and had asked Triangle to suspend the foreclosure while the case remains in court.

The Bartons say Triangle Property Development responded to the lawsuit by fast-tracking the eviction rather than waiting to see the case’s outcome.

Chris Genese of Washington CAN says activists supporting the Bartons have won a battle against foreclosure but the war itself continues.

“Washington CAN has been working as part of a coalition in a campaign to get the county to address underwater mortgages,” he said Tuesday.

“Reports have been released, Council has gone into deliberation but we have been stalled out in getting anything meaningful on the table.”

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PEACE



PHOTO BY HELEN SILVIS

Artist Antwoine Thomas supervised volunteers of all ages who came together to paint the Big Bang of Peace street painting at the intersection of North Killingsworth Court and North Borthwick streets in Portland. The street painting is one of a series of projects from the STRYVE program which has trained and hired youth to support community efforts to reduce violence.

Kids Count Report Hits Oregon

Washington was ranked 18th and Oregon 30th in national study

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

A new report from the Annie E. Casey foundation ranked Washington state at 18th in the nation on measures of child well being, while Oregon lags at 30th.

Tonia Hunt, executive director of Children First for Oregon said the state’s low ranking doesn’t reflect the values of people who live here. “Particularly concerning are the family economic stability indicators in

the report, that show Oregon is now 40th among all the states for family economic stability,” she said. “That has a lot of long-term impacts for kids.”

Lori Pfingst, research and policy director at the Washington State Policy Center, said her main concern is that children of color have not seen the same improvements.

“The biggest lesson in this data is that declining economic security among children and families, and the opportunity gap for kids of color are really

holding back Washington state from making real progress from recovering from the downturn and setting ourselves up well for the future.”

Hunt also pointed to disparities that hurt children of color. High poverty rates in Oregon’s communities of color are linked to school dropout, she said. And because educational success is crucial to lifting families out of poverty, Oregon needs make sure more kids of color attend pre-school and get support to succeed all the way through col-

lege.

“We need to do more there,” she says. “There is no question we need to do more. I think it’s important that we look at high-quality education throughout the system from early childhood, early education, quality pre-school, quality daycare settings up through access to higher education for youth leaving high school.”

The Kids Count Data Book 2014 highlights national trends

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King County Compromises on Buses

Service reductions postponed a few months but still on the table

Of The Skanner News

The King County Council on Monday opted to defuse outrage over Metro bus cuts by postponing service reductions until September and vowing to “explore options before implementation of future service cuts.”

In a unanimous vote, Councilmembers moved to keep up to 349,000 service hours

on the chopping block, scheduled to be cut in September 2014 and February 2015.

More cuts in 2015 are to be worked out in biennial budget process – all with the goal of “keeping service in line with actual revenues.”

The transportation funding crisis was prompted by voters’ defeat of Proposition 1 in April, which would have created a county transportation district to fund Metro and

roads with a sales tax and a hike on vehicle registration costs.

Following the defeat of that measure, the County Executive asked the Council to approve legislation that would reduce Metro bus service by 550,000 hours between September 2014 and September 2015.

Council Chair Larry Phillips, Council

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