



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Mothers for Police Accountability

Harriett Walden celebrates her birthday and the relaunch of Mothers for Police Accountability, an organization she helped start over 25 years ago, on Jan. 23 at the Collaboratory on Rainier Avenue in Seattle. Friends, family and fellow activists showed up to honor the long-time fighter for justice and to help support an organization that has been at the fore front of seeking police accountability.

Seattle News Briefs

Washington Healthplanfinder Reminds King County Residents of Jan. 31 Deadline for Coverage

The Washington Health Benefit Exchange is reminding King County residents that only a few days remain to sign up for a Qualified Health Plan through wahealthplanfinder.org. Residents have until midnight on Sunday, Jan. 31 to select a 2016 health plan that meets their needs and budgets.

Individuals and families should be aware that tax penalties for not having health insurance have increased in 2016. Adults who remain without health coverage now face individual penalties of at least \$695, and families could be asked to pay upwards of \$2,000.

Public Health—Seattle & King County will be hosting free enrollment events to assist individuals and families who have not yet signed up for health insurance. Navigators and brokers can help residents review their health plan options and determine their eligibility for financial help that may reduce the cost of coverage. Find an event near you at the Public Health website.

Other ways to get help with enrollment include:

- King County's telephone hotline: 1-800-756-5437 (weekdays from 8am-1pm and 2pm-5pm)
- Healthplanfinder's Customer Support link on wahealthplanfinder.org.
- Healthplanfinder's toll-free Customer Support Center: 1-855-923-4633 (weekdays from 7:30 am to 8 pm, and with extended weekend hours from 10 am to 3 pm on Saturday, Jan. 30 and 10 am to midnight this Sunday, Jan. 31).

Note: Special weekend hours for in-person assistance at the Metro Seattle Office, on Jan. 30 and 31, from 10am-5pm, at 201 S. Jackson.

All residents needing to sign up for a 2016 Qualified Health Plan may do so by visiting wahealthplanfinder.org.

Refund Distribution to Washington Borrowers Begins

The Consumer Services Division of the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) announced that more than 3,000 refund checks stemming from predatory, high interest loans are going out to Washington borrowers today.

In October 2015, the DFI, Western Sky Financial, CashCall, Inc. and their owners and affiliates entered into a settlement involving two cases that had been on-going for more than four years. Under the terms of the settlement, the companies agreed to provide refunds of excessive interest payments to thousands of

Washington borrowers and eliminate the principal balances for additional Washington borrowers. The settlement also provides additional consumer relief by requiring the companies to contact the credit bureaus to remove any adverse credit reporting relating to these loans.

The Statements of Charges issued against CashCall and Western Sky alleged that the companies engaged in unfair and deceptive acts and violated usury laws and other consumer protection laws. According to the Statements of Charges, interest rates on these loans ranged from 89 percent to 169 percent. Many of the borrowers reported that they did not understand the loans terms or how much the loan would really cost.

Letters were mailed to refund eligible borrowers in December 2015 notifying them they would be receiving a refund and the refund would be sent from the fund administrator, A.B. Data, Ltd. Credit history repair and principal balance write offs were done automatically, requiring no action from the affected Washington borrowers.

In addition to making refunds and charging off principal balances, the companies also agreed to cease and desist from lending in Washington. CashCall's Washington State consumer loan license was revoked. Western Sky has never had a license to provide consumer loans in Washington.

To verify whether a company offering consumer or residential loans is licensed by DFI, go to www.dfi.wa.gov and click on the "Verify License" link.

Sponsors Needed for Summer Food Service Program

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is seeking sponsors for the 2016 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

The SFSP, a federally funded child nutrition program, was established to ensure that children in lower-income areas would continue to receive nutritious meals during long school vacations, when they do not have access to school meals.

Sponsorship is open to public and private nonprofit schools, residential and non-residential summer camps, private nonprofit organizations, tribal organizations, and units of local, county, municipal, and state government.

Colleges and universities that participate in the Upward Bound Program may also sponsor meal sites.

Eligible sponsors are those who operate a nonprofit meal program during the summer for children age 18 and younger. Meal sites must be located in areas where at least 50 percent of the children are qualified for free or reduced-price school meals or where at least 50 percent of the children enrolled in a specific program are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. All children — regardless of family income level — can receive a free meal at a site once the site has been approved.

Community Calendar 2016

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

JOIN THE DOG SQUAD: Authors Laura T. Coffey, Waverly Curtis, David R. Gross and Tracy Weber for an afternoon of Fido fun. All four authors will read from their books, answer questions, and accepting kisses. Come prepared to share your dog's special talents. 2 p.m., Phinney Books, 7405 Greenwood Ave.

ROBINSWOOD HOUSE/SEATTLE BRIDE - ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE AND TASTING: Planning a wedding or special event? Please join us for our annual open house and tasting, featuring all of our Exclusive Caterers. 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Robinswood House (in Robinswood Park) 2430 148th Ave. SE, Bellevue.

2ND ANNUAL FAMILY FUNFEST: Come check out this family fun event! Festivities to include The Harmonica Pocket, face painting, Caring Clown International, play fun carnival games and so much more. Admission is \$5. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Kingston High School, 26201 Sisaya Ave. NE, Kingston.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5

MINI GOLF: Bring your family down and get your min golf on! See how many hole-in-ones you can get in our 9-hole course. We'll provide the clubs, the balls and the snacks. It is all free for the whole family. 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., Ravenna - Eckstein Community Center, 6535 Ravenna Ave. NE.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7

BECOME A GARBOLGIST: Have you ever wondered what happens to our garbage once it leaves our homes? Does it really ever go anywhere? Bring the whole family for a fun, interactive, hands-on workshop to learn more about the R's how our landfill in King County works. 2 p.m. - 3 p.m., Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center, 1625 118th Ave. SE.

Meals must meet the USDA meal pattern requirements.

Sponsors may prepare their own meals or purchase them from a school district or food service management company. Sponsors are reimbursed for eligible meals served.

Up to two meal types per day per child may be served at each site. This may be a breakfast, breakfast and snack, breakfast and lunch, breakfast and supper, lunch, lunch and snack, snack, AM and PM snacks, supper, or supper and snack. Sites serving primarily migrant children and residential camp sites may serve as many as three meal types per day per child.

Interested organizations are encouraged to register for training at the SFSP website, which will take place in April and May and is a requirement for participation. Applications will be available online mid-spring.

Contact OSPI at (360) 725-6202 for more information.

McDermott, Dembowski and Dunn to Lead County Council in 2016

Metropolitan King County Councilmember Joe McDermott will Chair the County Council in 2016. McDermott was unanimously selected as Council Chair today by the full Council, and will be joined by Rod Dembowski and Reagan Dunn, as the Council's two Vice Chairs.

The appointments of McDermott, Dembowski and Dunn are part of the reorganization of the County Council for 2016. Councilmember Dembowski will serve as Vice Chair of Policy Development and Review with Dunn serving as Vice Chair of Regional Coordination.

"I'm honored that my colleagues unanimously elected me to lead the King County Council as Chair this year. We have much to be proud of, and many challenges to overcome," said McDermott. "I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues, with the Executive, and with the residents of King County to address issues of growing income inequality, housing affordability, homelessness, continued transit and transportation improvements, and environmental stewardship."

As the Council's Management Team, the Chair and Vice-Chairs work together to set the agendas for meetings of the Council and Committee of the Whole and coordinate the referral and scheduling of legislation.