



Kate Westfall of Camas is All-Region girls cross country runner of the year

SPORTS, B11



Check out these stores on Small Business Saturday

LIFE, B1

The Columbian

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Comp plan update braces for clashes

City neighborhood pushes back on high-density housing

By KELLY MOYER
The Columbian

On its face, the zoning change request that came before the Vancouver Planning Commission was about

one piece of property in the city's Walnut Grove neighborhood.

As those who attended the Nov. 18 public hearing would soon discover, the request went far deeper, pitting residents fighting to preserve their quiet neighborhood against a developer who sought to build the sort of large apartment complex city leaders have deemed

critical to solving Vancouver's housing crisis.

As the developer's representative, Jayson Taylor of PLS Engineering, pointed out, the public hearing demonstrated the type of land-use clashes that could become more common as city leaders update Vancouver's comprehensive plan in a bid to accommodate a projected 81,000 new residents

by 2045.

"If everyone in the city knew what was happening with the comprehensive plan, I think you could fill a stadium with people that would have concerns about what's happening in their neighborhood or what's going to happen in their backyard," Taylor told planning commissioners.

Taylor represented Sun-

light Rentals at the hearing.

The housing development company had already been denied approval of an R-50 zone that would have enabled a 77-unit apartment complex. Sunlight Rentals returned with a revamped request.

This time, the developer asked to upzone the parcel from R-22 to R-35 and construct a 54-unit housing

complex.

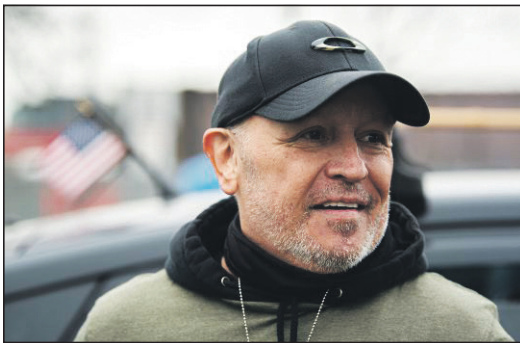
Despite having previously agreed with neighbors who argued that the proposed complex would overwhelm the area's roads, the commissioners voted 5-2 in favor of the R-35 zone change.

Taylor said that, if the commission denied the new request, the develop-

PLANNING, Page A2

'Everyone needs some good stuff'

Veteran organizes outreach event at Share House Men's Shelter in downtown Vancouver



Veteran Frankie Rodela organizes homeless outreach events that he pays for out of his own pocket.



Photos by AMANDA COWAN/The Columbian

Water and shampoo go flying as Brooke Blair of Ruff Roads Mobile Grooming bathes dog Emma, who lives near the Share House Men's Shelter, while joined by fellow dog Cain, right, on Tuesday.

Dog-grooming business donates its services to take care of encampment denizens' pets

By MIA RYDER-MARKS
The Columbian

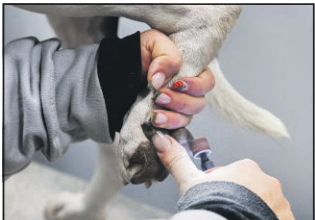
Buddy, a husky mix, sailed out of a mobile pet groomer's van to circulate through a group of people so they could pet his freshly washed fur.

The moment made U.S. Air Force veteran Frankie Rodela smile.

"This makes me happy," said Rodela, who organized Tuesday's outreach event at Vancouver's largest homeless encampment.

In the early 2000s, Rodela started hosting Thanksgiving meals for homeless veterans. That effort then blossomed into year-round outreach to people living outside near the Share House Men's Shelter in downtown Vancouver. On Tuesday, he partnered with Ruff Roads Mobile Grooming to bathe and tend to dogs living in the encampment. Rodela then finished off the week with a Thanksgiving feast.

Traci Freeman, who lives in the Share encampment,



Canine companion Cain gets a nail trimming from Ruff Roads Mobile Grooming in downtown Vancouver on Tuesday afternoon.

said she's known Rodela for about six months. Tuesday's event was extra special for Freeman and others living in the encampment because it helped their beloved pets.

"We can get showers sometimes. But it's harder to get your dogs to clean up. This is huge to be able to get them clean and taken care of," Freeman said. "He's a good man."

'Good day'

Rodela arrived at the Share camp at 9 a.m. Tuesday to sweep the entire street and check in with campers.

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Jessie Pitchforth, left, who lives in the encampment near the Share House Men's Shelter in downtown Vancouver, drops off her dog, Emma, for a bath while assisted by Shelby Halverson, co-owner of Ruff Roads Mobile Grooming, on Tuesday.

Rodela said he's troubled to see so many of his fellow veterans go homeless.

Last year, 266 veterans experienced homelessness in Clark County, according to Council for the Homeless data.

Research shows veterans face an increased risk of homelessness after leaving the service due to financial instability, difficulty finding employment and challenges with physical or mental

health.

"Our country is in a tail-spin right now. We're in disarray," Rodela said. "There's a lot of bad stuff in the world. But everyone needs some good stuff."

Greg Gilbertson, commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7824, worked with Rodela on Tuesday's event.

"It's important that we

OUTREACH, Page A2

Democrats expect to tweak new sales tax law

By DENISA R. SUPERVILLE
The Seattle Times

SEATTLE — Amid questions from school districts about the budget impacts of Washington's new retail sales tax, Democratic lawmakers say they expect to make changes to the law in next year's legislative session.

The expanded retail sales tax, which went into effect Oct. 1, is expected to raise about \$1.1 billion through 2027 via new levies on services such as digital advertising, information technology, security, temporary staffing and live presentations.

The late-session law pushed by state Democrats was billed as an effort to modernize the state's tax code.

School districts, which heavily use temporary staff for hard-to-fill positions and special education services, initially believed they'd be exempt, like hospitals. The law also took effect after districts approved their budgets, which left little time for thoughtful adjustments, district leaders said.

The state Department of Revenue has been rolling out interim guidance on how businesses and taxpayers will be affected, but final guidance won't come until next year, which will give lawmakers the chance to make adjustments, the department said.

The guidance has left unanswered questions, and some districts are worried they will have to sink any extra funds the state allocated to them last year to pay the new taxes.

Last week, a coalition of more than 40 districts and K-12-connected organizations wrote to Gov. Bob Ferguson and the Legislature requesting a fix to "correct the unintended consequences" of the bill.

The coalition said that applying an av-

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For the birds: Vancouver Audubon marks 50 years

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Froma Harrop: Do Trump, Mamdani need each other?

OPINION, A4

National Guard shooting suspect lived in Bellingham

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