



Columbia River, Prairie
make Clark County
football history

SPORTS, B9



Camas artist Jilleen
Shahidi plants a
garden of creativity

LIFE, B1

The Columbian

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Fuel prices at record Labor Day high

Iran
war and
refinery
issues
blamed
for high
prices

By JEFFREY COLLINS
Associated Press

It's never been more expensive in the United States to fill up the tank and take one last summer trip over the Labor Day weekend.

The average price of regular gas was \$4.14 a gallon heading into the holiday, nearly a dollar higher than last year and well

above the Labor Day weekend record of \$3.82 from 2012, according to AAA motor club.

Nicole Collins planned to head from Philadelphia to South Carolina to visit friends, but she said her family has spent most of the summer close to home and not taking their typical weekend trips because driving has gotten so expensive.

"Gas is pretty high right now. It doesn't help that we also have a baby, so we also have to pay for that," Collins said outside a gas station in Claymont, Del., where regular gas was \$4.199 a gallon.

Prices shot up after the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran in February and have not settled down since. Crude oil traffic through the key Strait of Hormuz has

plunged, and Iran has refused to reopen the waterway.

"Everything points to the Iran War and the Strait of Hormuz," said Tom Seng, a professor of energy finance at Texas Christian University.

Energy Secretary Chris Wright offered few specifics on when the nation's drivers might see relief at the gas pump, acknowledging that prices are

higher now than Labor Day 2025.

"Yes, they're higher today, but we're doing everything we can to push them down," Wright said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

The national average for regular gas prices is still well below the record of \$5.02 a gal-

GAS PRICES, Page A2

Initiatives 001 and 638

Groups oppose school initiatives



Queer Community Network Secretary Bren Baker speaks during the Aug. 14 No Hate in WA State rally at Fourth Plain Community Commons in Vancouver. The group opposes two state ballot initiatives — I-001 and I-638 — that address parental rights and student protections and require girls that want to play school sports have a healthcare provider verify their sex, respectively. At top, balloons festoon a wall Aug. 14 during the rally.

Photos by TAYLOR BALKOM/The Columbian

Measures addressing parental rights, girls sports to be on November ballot

By KELLY MOYER
The Columbian

More than two dozen South-west Washington organizations have joined statewide efforts to defeat Initiatives 001 and 638, measures they say would dismantle safeguards for K-12 students.

Backed by conservative multi-millionaire financier Brian Heywood's Let's Go Washington group, the initiatives have been billed by their supporters as a way to bolster parental rights and protect female student-athletes. But opponents argue the measures are poorly written, lack enforcement provisions and would endanger the state's most vulnerable youth.

"These initiatives were

designed to divide our community and distract us from the challenges folks are facing," said Terah Ebie, president of the Vancouver-based nonprofit Queer Community Network. "But Washingtonians are smarter than that, and we care too deeply about our kids to be manipulated into voting to remove protections that are already in place to keep them safe."

Initiative 001 would restore the original text of Initiative 2081, the so-called "parental bill of rights" passed by the state Legislature in 2024 and nullify student protections included in House Bill 1296 sponsored by Rep. Monica Stonier, D-

INITIATIVES, Page A2



Queer Community Network founder Terah Ebie speaks Aug. 14 during a No Hate in WA State rally at Fourth Plain Community Commons. "These initiatives were designed to divide our community and distract us from the challenges folks are facing," Ebie said.

Housing out of reach for very poor

Nearly 16% of U.S. low-income housing remains unoccupied

By CLAIRE RUSH
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Mathew Davis, who lives in a homeless shelter in Austin, Texas, would love an apartment of his own. But with the little money he makes donating blood plasma, even a \$450-a-month tiny home with no running water and a communal bathroom would be a stretch.

Meanwhile, over 4,500 units the city classifies as affordable — nearly 16 percent — sit empty.

"I don't make enough money really to afford anything," Davis, 49, said of the few hundred dollars he earns a month. "I just keep trying to swim uphill."

The poorest people in the U.S. face the most acute shortages of affordable homes. But the majority of low-income housing financed in recent years is for those earning 50 percent of an area's median income or above, according to a survey of state housing agencies.

Some cities are now seeing an uptick in vacancies as rents for these units approach market rates. The result: Apartments designated as affordable sit empty because the poorest of the poor cannot afford them.

Meanwhile, some people are forced into homelessness and others into desperate circumstances to pay for housing they can't afford.

THE POOREST HAVE FEW HOUSING OPTIONS: There are only about 4 million affordable rental units available for the country's 11 million extremely low-income renter households, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition's most recent annual report.

These are people with annual incomes either below the federal poverty guidelines — just under \$16,000 for a single-person house-

HOUSING, Page A7



Orchards Elementary
School celebrates new
soccer mini-pitch

CLARK COUNTY, A3



Truth about 9/11
toxins still unclear
25 years later

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Robin
Abcarian:
Gloria Steinem
deserves credit

OPINION, A4



80°/53°

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