County's Project Homeless Connect serves 1,100 in need

Earlier this week, about 1,100 individuals and families needing human services attended Snohomish County’s third annual Project Homeless Connect at Cascade High School.

I had the privilege of addressing the county staff, nonprofits and numerous volunteers who made this event possible.

This year’s numbers were a small increase over the 900 who attended last year, but many who attended did so because they are still suffering the effects of a national economic downturn.

We are seeing signs of economic recovery, but it will take time for families and individuals hurt during such a severe economic recession to recover. County events such as Project Homeless Connect help those with critical needs find necessary resources.

Because needs are great, we’re already planning next year’s event. If you’d like more information on how you can help, please contact Jackie Anderson at jackiem.andeson@snoco.org.

I also want to briefly bring your attention to a federal program that can help some homeowners in mortgage default because of a change in their employment status or a serious, costly medical condition.

For many at-risk homeowners, the Emergency Homeowner Loan Program’s “bridge loan” could be a means of help, but the deadline to apply is July 22. Eligible homeowners can qualify for up to $50,000 in bridge loans to eliminate mortgage issues.

If you find yourself in such a situation, then click here for more information.

Sincerely,
**Reardon, Allied Waste launch 2nd "Living Evergreen" essay contest**

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon invites junior high and high school students to enter the second annual “Living Evergreen” essay contest as part of the Evergreen State Fair’s opening ceremonies on Aug. 25 in Monroe.

“Last year’s essay contest was a success in that it brought forth very strong submissions with exciting possibilities for tomorrow’s leaders,” Reardon said. “I expect we’ll again receive thoughtful ideas and solutions to today’s problems.”

Co-sponsored by the Snohomish County Executive Office and partner Allied Waste Services, students are asked to answer questions regarding today’s efforts to remain environmentally sound and produce an essay by Aug. 15 expounding on their personal thoughts and solutions. New to the contest this year, students will have the option of submitting either a written essay or a one to two minute video answering the questions.

A panel of judges will select first-, second- and third-place essays from students entering grades seven through nine and 10 through 12 and one overall video winner. Winners will be recognized and awarded along with their families as guests of the Executive at the Aug. 25 opening ceremony at the Evergreen State Fair.

Allied Waste Services has provided up to $900 in U.S. Treasury bonds as prizes, with each first-place winner receiving a $200 U.S. Treasury bond.

Students are challenged to answer one of the following questions related to renewable energies:

- What is Washington’s current situation regarding renewable energies and how can it be improved?
- What steps can you take in your community and everyday life to support renewable energies and improve the environment?
- What future technical advancements can you imagine for creating more renewable energies in Washington and improving overall sustainability?

During last year’s opening ceremony, leaders from Allied Waste Services discussed their renewable energy project in Klickitat County, which is fueled by waste from Snohomish County. Together, the two entities have found a way to reduce the impacts of the county’s waste stream on the environment.
environment.

“Allied Waste is proud to sponsor this 2nd annual Living Evergreen contest with Executive Aaron Reardon,” said Allied Waste's Joe Casalini. “Together, we’re trying to foster a community of young people who are creative when it comes to thinking about and managing our resources.”

“There is still so much more we can do to promote greener living while creating new jobs in new industries,” Reardon said. “Ideas such as these can lead to new technologies that one day will make our lives healthier and more enjoyable.”

Entries must be received before Aug. 15. For a complete list of contest and submission rules, click here.

County Campus sculpture exhibit features NW artists

Artworks representing a variety of styles from seven Puget Sound artists are being installed now as part of a temporary sculpture exhibition at the Snohomish County Plaza, 3000 Rockefeller, Everett.

“Increasing access to public art is a way of enhancing quality of life,” County Executive Aaron Reardon said. “Utilizing space on the County Campus is a great way to show our support for the arts and to better promote our campus as a community gathering place.”

The sculpture exhibition will include “The Dancing Bears” by James Madison, Jim Shields’ “The Ant,” Lance Carleton’s “Seeds of Change,” “3,600 Flags” by Aaron Haba, “Elwha Tears” by Al Adams, “George and his Curious Courthouse Adventure” by Debbi Rhodes and James Lapp’s “Adam and Eve.”

“The Snohomish County Arts Commission works to connect citizens with opportunities to explore and celebrate the diverse arts of Snohomish County,” said Rebecca Chawgo, chair of the Snohomish County Arts Commission. “This new exhibition brings such opportunities directly to our community.”

This exhibit is part of the county’s approved art plan for 2011, which includes the arts commission’s recommendations on how to use arts and culture to enrich the local environment, encourage regeneration and enhance public spaces.

The free exhibit is open to the public and will be on display through 2011.
Music on the Plaza schedule

The free, Wednesday lunchtime concerts are open to the general public and are held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the County Campus amphitheater, located at Rockefeller Avenue and Wall Street.

In addition to great music, fresh flowers from local Hmong growers as well as kettle corn, burgers and brats from the Comcast Arena Grill will be for sale.

Below is a list of remaining performances:

* July 20 Camille Bloom Feisty, soulful rock;
* July 27 Massy Ferguson, Americana roots;
* Aug. 3 Magazine, classic rock;
* Aug. 10 Wild Snohomians, rock and roll;
* Aug. 17 Nathan Arneson, county;
* Aug. 24 Sepals Gritty, indie rock.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read my electronic newsletter.

If you would like to send me your comments and feedback, or if you would like to unsubscribe, simply reply to this message.

You may also contact me directly by phone at 425.388.3460.