

Community support makes more local news possible

The growing problem

The finance model that sustained local journalism for a long time is broken. Newspapers once relied on advertising and subscriptions to cover the costs of conveying important local information to the public. Over the past decades, however, big tech has monopolized advertising and unfairly reused local news' content and data, sapping newspapers of the revenue that once paid to put reporters on the street.

Newspapers continue to provide the vast majority of civic news coverage for their communities and they are the most trusted and valued source for local information, but they are failing at a rate of two per week. Data from the Pew Research Center shows that between 2008 and 2020, more than 2,100 newspapers across the country – or about one quarter – shuttered their doors, newspaper

revenue dropped more than 70% and surviving newsrooms lost 26% or more of their workforce.

Studies show a loss in local news not only leads to declines in civic engagement, voting rates and contested elected races, it also increases government costs as a result of lack of scrutiny. In addition, drastic reductions in the journalism workforce have taken a heavy toll, making it challenging to cover all the news that a community needs to know.

“We need to support access to local journalism to receive local information. Thank you to The Everett Herald, which fills this niche.”

- Sarah N.

Public support can help

To stop the news industry from collapsing, many advocate for state and national support. In addition, newspapers across the country are turning to philanthropy. The Seattle Times was one of the first to lead the way in asking their community to support local reporting. Now newspapers across the country are doing the same, including The Daily Herald in Everett.

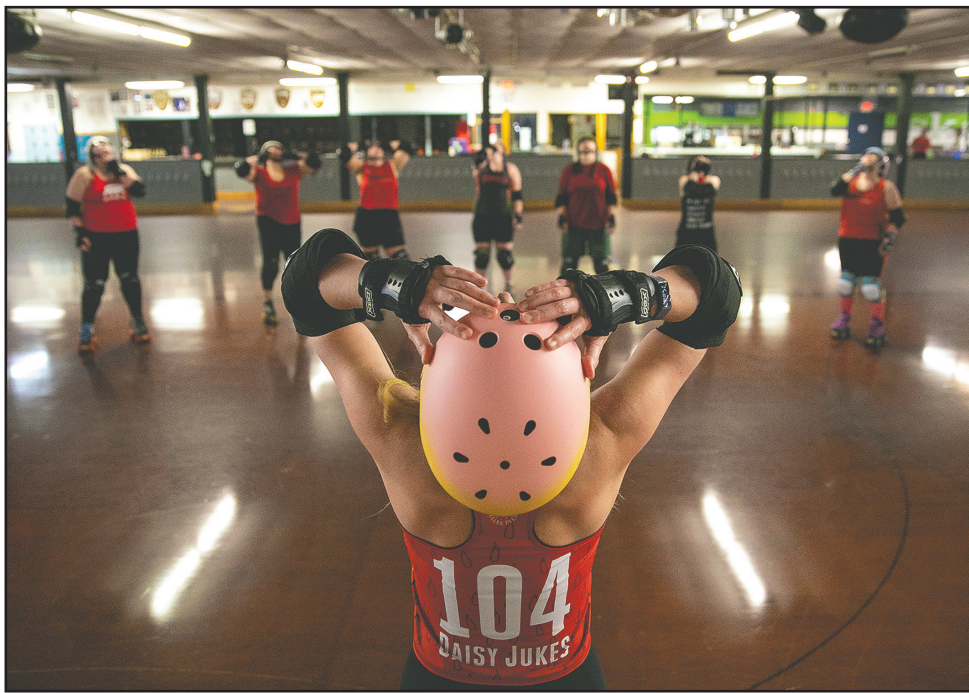
The fact that local newspapers can no longer cover all the news a community values and needs is a big change. According to John Palfrey, MacArthur Foundation president, “Part of it is actually shifting the mindset ... this is a public good, we need to put more public money into it, we need to put more foundation money into it, we need to put more personal money into it — otherwise we’re not going to have a democracy.”

Each dollar spent on local news brings hundreds in public benefits to communities, according to Democracy’s Detectives: The Economics of Investigative Journalism, a book by economist James T. Hamilton. Steven Waldman, president of Rebuild Local News and a co-founder of Report for America, agrees. He wrote in The Atlantic, “If more public or philanthropic money were directed toward sustaining local news, it would most likely produce financial benefits many times greater than the cost.”



Olivia Vanni / The Herald

A lone person treks across a snowy field in Forest Park.



Ryan Berry / The Herald

The Strawberry City Roller Derby team momentarily pauses while working their way back into tournament form.

You can make a difference

Thanks to individuals, organizations, businesses and public funders who understand that local newspapers serve a public good, the Herald has been able to add newsroom positions we would not otherwise have.

In the spring of 2020, the Herald launched an Investigative Journalism Fund. Advocates for local journalism in Snohomish County responded quickly and enthusiastically, enabling the Herald to hire a full-time investigative reporter and cover the costs for investigative editing.

Since then, we've added more community-supported journalism funds to increase our reporting on health and wellness and the local impacts of climate change. We also established an Education Project fund with the goal to support a full-time education reporter.

Each journalism fund is established in partnership with a fiscal sponsor – a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that ensures the Herald uses fund dollars as intended. That also means your donations to a Herald journalism fund are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The majority of our four journalism funds are supported by crowdsourcing. We have donors who give monthly recurring donations ranging from \$5 to \$250. Some donors give annually from \$100 to \$5,000. And we have large funders who have donated more than \$75,000.

On average, about 90% of every dollar donated to a journalism fund supports reporting we would not otherwise be able to do. Donations for our journalism initiatives are never used for general operating expenses. And The Daily Herald maintains editorial control over content produced with fund resources.

Now is a good time to give

The need for local journalism is ongoing, so now is a good time to make a financial gift that will benefit our community. Learn about your options and donate today at heraldnet.com/local-news-impact.



The Herald's community-supported journalism funds

You can support the local reporting you value most with a donation to one of the Herald's four journalism funds – or you can designate your donation to support multiple funds. Your contributions to our journalism funds help pay for the news resources needed to cover these important topics.

Investigative Journalism:

Exposes injustices, seeks to right wrongs and holds power to account

Fiscal Sponsor: Journalism Funding Partners, tax ID #84-2968843

Environmental and Climate Change Reporting:

Spotlights the impact of climate change on Snohomish County's environment, economy, and health and what our community is doing about it

Fiscal Sponsor: Journalism Funding Partners, tax ID #84-2968843

Health Reporting Initiative:

Addresses our most pressing health and wellness challenges and the solutions at work.

Fiscal Sponsor: Local Media Foundation, tax ID #36-4427750

This initiative is also made possible by a sponsorship from Premera Blue Cross.

Education Project:

Covers the challenges and successes of education in Snohomish County and digs deep into the issues that are important for you to know

Fiscal Sponsor: Local Media Foundation, tax ID #36-4427750