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## **Bigelow House gains support**

### **Thumbs up: Bigelow House**

The oldest original home in the City of Olympia — and one of the oldest in the state — is about to benefit from a new, three-way partnership for preservation. The state Parks and Recreation Commission has agreed to take over ownership and lend financial support to the Bigelow House, a move supported by \$100,000 included in the supplemental budget approved by the 2008 state Legislature. The Bigelow House Preservation Association, the nonprofit group that assumed responsibility for the home and museum after four generations of the Bigelow family gave up residency, will continue to offer tours and raise money for upkeep of the historic home. In addition, City of Olympia maintenance crews will care for the grounds. This is the type of local-state partnership required to restore the home to its potential historical splendor, ensuring that its place in South Sound and state history is preserved. The home was built by Olympia pioneer and Harvard-educated civic activist Daniel R. Bigelow, who was one of the authors of the Washington territorial constitution. The Bigelow family role in early Olympia and state history makes the home a natural for a local-state partnership.

### **Thumbs down: Sonics owners**

Was there ever really any doubt that the ownership group from Oklahoma City was dead set on moving the Seattle Sonics out of town? If so, those doubts were put to rest last week with the release of e-mail correspondence among the ownership group members as early as a year ago, speaking of their hopes and desire to break the KeyArena lease and move the NBA team to Oklahoma City in time for the 2007-08 season. Sonics chairman Clay Bennett describes himself as a man possessed, willing to do everything the group could to move the team to Oklahoma City this season. Four months later, Bennett had the audacity to e-mail NBA Commissioner David Stern, telling him he was passionately committed to trying to keep the team in Seattle. The City of Seattle and Bennett's group will square off in federal court June 16 as the city tries to force the Sonics to honor their KeyArena lease, which runs through September 2010. Here's hoping Seattle prevails, buying enough time for local owners to buy back the team or attract a new team to Seattle so the disingenuous Bennett gang can take their ball and go home.

### **Thumbs up: Winter snowpack**

Heavy snowfall in the Cascade mountains this past winter, coupled with a unseasonably cool March, should pay water supply dividends for people and fish in the warm, dry months ahead. The latest surveys by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the federal agency that measure snowpack in the mountains, show a record amount of snow in the mountains that drain into King and Snohomish counties. That's good news for Seattle, which relies on mountain runoff to replenish its water reservoirs in the Tolt and Cedar River watersheds. On the east side of the state, farmers in the Yakima Valley should be free of water rationing this growing season. An ample supply of water provides greater flexibility in the types of crops farmers can grow. In addition, the Bonneville Power Administration is looking at a promising year for hydropower production at the Columbia River dams. With all the dire predictions of long-term water shortages due to climate change, it's nice to see a little reprieve from Mother Nature.

### **Thumbs down: Racist graffiti**

The small Pierce County town of Roy was stained last week by a spate of anti-Semitic, anti-police messages spray-painted on several railroad cars and a building in the downtown area. The messages left behind go far beyond vandalism and graffiti pranks. Several railroad cars were painted with swastikas and contained references to white power, "dead cops" and "dead pigs." Similar messages, including an six-foot drawing of an upturned cross, defaced a storage building in town. There's just no tolerance or excuse for such cowardly, disgusting behavior. The culprits in these acts of defamation and racism must be held accountable. Coincidentally, the alarming graffiti in Roy was discovered as state Department of General Administration crews worked in Olympia to scrub off the "No War" graffiti sprayed on one of the columns of the state Legislative Building, yet another mindless act of vandalism.