

# HUSKIES HEAD TO SWEET 16

Plum sets another record in 108-82 win

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Seattle Jewish Film Festival to feature soul-reaching fare

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High electric bill? How to find out — and what to do

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# The Seattle Times

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## Comey confirms FBI probe of Trump aides' Russian ties

WAS CAMPAIGN LINKED TO ELECTION MEDDLING?

'No information' to support Trump wiretapping claim

By MATTHEW SCHOFIELD  
McClatchy Washington Bureau (TNS)

WASHINGTON — In an acknowledgment that is likely to hobble the fledgling Trump administration for months, if not years, FBI Director

James Comey on Monday confirmed for the first time that his agency is investigating possible collusion between advisers to President Donald Trump's election campaign and Russia.

At a rare public hearing of the House Intelligence Committee, Comey said it was unusual for his agency to confirm the existence of an ongoing investigation. But, he said, Justice Department guidelines allow such a revelation "where it is

in the public interest."

"This is one of those circumstances," he said.

Comey said there is no "usual" length of time for a counterintelligence investigation but that this one began in July and would be considered "quite young" — a timeline that suggested, at a minimum, that it would distract for months, if not years, from Trump's policy priorities.

Some see the investigation as a

no-win situation for Trump. If his supporters are indicted, he will face further questions about what he knew. If they aren't indicted, critics will accuse the Trump administration of letting the president's allies escape charges.

Republican Rep. Devin Nunes of California, the committee chairman and a Trump campaign adviser, urged Comey to complete his investigation as quickly as possible.

See > COMEY, A4

### JUDGE TO FACE TOUGH INQUIRY

Judge Neil Gorsuch introduced himself on Capitol Hill as a "faithful servant of the Constitution and laws of this great nation," but his road to the Supreme Court runs through states where Democratic senators face re-election.



Neil Gorsuch

Senate Republicans are in a race against the clock to put Gorsuch on the Supreme Court in time to participate in at least some of this term's cases.

Story, A5



Vancouver's tech payroll has grown 27 percent in the last decade, fueled partly by flexible Canadian immigration policies.

GABRIEL CAMPANARIO / THE SEATTLE TIMES

## Vancouver tech sector gets a bump from Trump policies

By MATT DAY  
Seattle Times technology reporter

VANCOUVER, B.C. — Comparisons between British Columbia's largest city and Seattle tend to start with similarities.

Proximity to picturesque mountains and bodies of water. The climate. A liberal-leaning electorate. But Vancouver's high-tech sector owes much of its recent growth spurt to the biggest difference: the side of the international border it sits on.

That gap grew even wider in the past 90 days with the inauguration of President Donald Trump, whose temporary travel ban and pledges to rewrite U.S. guest-worker programs

have rattled the U.S. high-tech industry and sparked speculation that Canada may figure more prominently in the plans of tech companies and workers alike.

British Columbia Premier Christy Clark at a tech conference last week called the nationalistic streak in the U.S. and elsewhere "a terrible, tragic trend." But, she continued, it's also "an opportunity."

### Flexible guest-worker policy

Employment of highly skilled technology workers in B.C. has grown 27 percent in the last decade, fueled in part by software-engineering offices seeded by U.S. companies frustrated with the U.S. govern-

ment's limit on the number of visas available for highly skilled guest workers.

Canada's guest-worker programs are more flexible. They lack a hard cap on new visas, and, for countries with visa-free travel arrangements with Canada, work permits can be obtained in less than an hour.

There's also a difference in costs. Applications for U.S. H-1B visas, the most common high-tech guest-worker permit, cost three times as much as their Canadian equivalent.

See > TECH, A7

**MOST ELECTRONICS to be banned on certain U.S.-bound flights > A2**

"Our short-term strategy is immigration." Longer term, the ambition is to create a big enough local talent pool that "you can go big, and stay home."

AMRIK VIRK  
B.C. tech minister

## Council creates new panel to advocate for Seattle renters

SOARING RENTS AND DISPLACEMENT

Volunteer commission to provide renters with direct line to City Hall; landlords object, say move is unfair

By MIKE ROSENBERG  
Seattle Times business reporter

The Seattle City Council on Monday voted unanimously to create what is believed to be the nation's first renters' commission, which will push laws to help a growing group that makes up 54 percent of all households yet has a weak voice in City Hall.

Rents have skyrocketed about 40 percent across Seattle in the past four years, and some longtime tenants have been priced out. But advocates for renters say they had nowhere near the organized clout of homeowners — who had long dominated city-sanctioned neighborhood groups to push politicians on their agendas — or landlords, who pool money for lobbyists and opposed the renters' commission.

The 15-member group of renters will meet regularly and pass ideas directly to City Council members who make laws, and to other officials who help shape and enforce them.

"To renters, your life and your voice matters and the City Council affirmed that today," said

See > RENTERS, A7

## Prescription-drug costs on the rise; so are the TV ads promoting them

By BRUCE HOROVITZ AND JULIE APPELBY  
Kaiser Health News (TNS)

Laura Ries was moved to action when she saw a TV commercial that portrayed a woman enjoying time with her grandchildren after taking Lyrica, a prescription medication for diabetic nerve pain. Ries' elderly mother suffered from just that problem.

"The ad showed someone who was enjoying life again," said Ries, president of a marketing strategy firm in Atlanta, who then researched the drug and spoke with her mother's doctor. "This ... was very relatable to what my mom was experiencing."

Her reaction was precisely the aim of direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising: getting patients or their family members to remember a drug's name and ask by name for a prescription.

Spending on such commercials has grown 62 percent since 2012, even as ad spending for most other product types has been flat.

"Pharmaceutical advertising has grown more

See > DRUGS, A12

**MEDICAID MONEY: GOP has win-or-lose proposition for states > A3**



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