

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 156

CITY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2015

City's preferred annexation date is January 1

PROMISED TAX DROP IN ANNEXATION AREA WOULD BEGIN IN 2016

The county delivered some welcome news in recent days: If the annexation of the Klahanie area becomes official by January 1, the much-discussed, lower property tax rates for new residents will begin in 2016.

The only requirement: The City Council has to pass an ordinance by the end of July that identifies Jan. 1 as the official annexation date. The Council is working hard to make that happen.

"We have a few things to take care of," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "But I'm confident we'll pass the ordinance in time to meet the deadline."

Initially, the city was told that the annexation had to become official by Aug. 1 for the lower taxes to commence in 2016. In an effort to provide that benefit to its new residents, the

See ANNEXATION, pg. 3



Spread those blankets, look up into the sky, and enjoy the show at Sammamish Commons.

A slight change to your Fourth!

COMMUNITY CENTER CONSTRUCTION CLOSSES PATH BETWEEN CITY HALL PLAZA AND LOWER COMMONS

It's a heart-warming sight – hundreds of Sammamish families making their way from City Hall Plaza down to the Lower Commons, their blankets and picnic baskets in hand, their anticipation of fireworks putting a spring in their step as they follow the familiar,

serpentine pathway.

But this year, it's going to be different. The pathway is temporarily closed to accommodate the ongoing construction of the city's new Community and Aquatic Center.

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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FARMERS MARKET

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SAHALEE WAY PROJECT

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It's the best: Spring and Summer in Sammamish!

Last month, on May 16, I attended our Parks and Recreation Department's first, and apparently now annual, "Rig-A-Palooza!"

In addition to having perhaps the coolest name ever for a city event, Rig-A-Palooza offered lots of trucks, fire vehicles, tractors and other "giant work machines" for families and their young kids to explore.



*Tom Vance
Mayor*

As I wandered around City Hall Plaza, enjoying the scene, I was fortunate enough to meet an interesting young family that was really enthusiastic about living in Sammamish.

It was genuinely uplifting to see our community through their eyes.

They loved the parks and the schools, but they said they were also very impressed with the sense of community spirit they had found in our city, a spirit that was missing where they lived before.

When I asked them where they had moved from, they said, "Hawaii." Really! Imagine that – to them, Sammamish feels warmer than Hawaii! That's a pretty good metric of success.

This happy scene at City Hall Plaza made me think about how far we've come. Back in 1999, when our first comprehensive plan was written, one of the prime goals was to create, especially in the center of our city, a "sense of place."

Sixteen years later, we have been acknowledged as one of the best and safest cities in America, and based on

the activity at Rig-A-Palooza, it looks like we've also secured a very good "sense of place."

A few days after my "rigs and kids" experience, I was privileged to say a few words and ring the cow bell to mark the beginning of the new Farmer's Market season on the Plaza.

It was a gloriously sunny day, with the Creekside Marimba Club providing music, residents of all ages providing energy, and a terrific variety of vendors serving up fresh, local produce. It was a great start for the Farmers Market season, and I made off with some delectable, organic strawberries!

For me, the opening of the Farmer's Market is the beginning of our best time of the year: our warm-weather spring and summer season. Who would want to be anywhere else?

Soon, Concerts in the Park will begin, providing a mid-week opportunity for music, picnics and fun. I especially look forward to our own Sammamish Symphony concert in August. These concerts are a great place to meet your neighbors from all over the city, and strengthen the bonds of community our friends from Hawaii have embraced so enthusiastically.

And it goes on, reaching a crescendo with our 4th of July celebration. We'll have the usual menu of food, fun and fireworks – and plenty of live music to dance to. You didn't hear it here, but word is our fireworks this year are going to be even better than last year.

And that's as it should be. The Fourth on the Plateau is our biggest event every year. Here's hoping I see you there!

Later in July, this year's Shake-

spare in the Park will include two of my favorite Shakespeare characters: Rosalind in "As You Like It," and Sir John Falstaff in "Henry IV, Part One."

Other summer favorites include the KidsFirst! Programs, Sammamish Days and Sammamish Nights, and much more that I'm probably forgetting about.

Please take a look at the events calendar on our city website (www.sammamish.us). I don't think there's any doubt; this is going to be a great summer season!

Oh, and there's one other thing our friends from Hawaii were excited about. It's the rapidly rising Community and Aquatic Center we could all see from City Hall Plaza during Rig-A-Palooza.

It's not due to open until early next year, but it's yet another amenity our residents can look forward to, an amenity that will let us stay really active even after our bright summer gives way to gray.

Lest I come across as a mayor who's over-fulfilling his duties as a community booster, you should know that I realize we still have important work to do in Sammamish. We have our share of growing pains, thorny issues and difficult choices.

But there's no reason we can't multitask. Let's work on the tough issues, but never forget to celebrate what we have become – a great and still-new city with much more to come.

Here's to a great summer!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Vance".

ANNEXATION, cont. from pg. 1

city was contemplating a very rushed process.

“That was going to be tough,” Yazici said. “We need to hire additional police officers and other staff to provide services to an expanded area. Now that we know the annexation doesn’t have to be official until Jan. 1, we’ll have more time.

“As they say, you only have one chance to make a first impression, so we’re glad we’ll have a better opportunity to do everything right.”

Klahanie-area Transition Committee

To maintain good communication with annexation-area residents, the city is forming a temporary, informal committee made up of homeowner association representatives.

If your HOA would like to take part, please contact Tim Larson at tlarson@sammamish.us or 425-295-0555.

Council offers city manager position to Lyman Howard

After City Manager Ben Yazici announced earlier this year that he planned to end his employment with Sammamish, the City Council held an extended public discussion on April 21 regarding the merits of both an internal and external search for a replacement.

Opting for an internal search, the Council conducted extensive interviews with Deputy City Manager Lyman Howard and discussed his qualifications at length in executive session.

Then, during their regular meeting on May 19, the Council announced that Howard had been offered the position. They noted, however, that contract discussions would still need to be successfully concluded.

At press time, those discussions

were ongoing. Assuming an agreement is reached, the Council will have further public discussion before sealing the deal with a public vote.

Howard, who has been with the city since 2001, served as finance director until 2011. He was then promoted to Deputy City Manager.

“Lyman knows our community, our staff and our governance approach inside out,” Yazici said. “But beyond all that, he’s also a terrific, well-liked person. He’s going to do a great job.”

Before coming to Sammamish, Howard worked in finance with both Seattle and Kirkland. He will remain in his deputy city manager role until Yazici departs at the end of February.



Lyman Howard

If it's Wednesday, stop by the Farmers Market!

FRESH PRODUCE, MUSIC AND MUCH MORE — EVERY WEDNESDAY, 4-8 P.M., THROUGH SEPT. 30



Fresh strawberries on sale at City Hall Plaza.



A marimba club from Creekside Elementary entertains shoppers.

Purchase gives city a “running start” on exciting possibilities DEAL CLOSES AT \$6.1 MILLION; ORIGINAL ASKING PRICE WAS \$8.75 MILLION

The City Council’s desire to secure a location for higher education in Sammamish became a reality on May 4 when the city closed on the former Mars Hill Church property, at 120 228th Ave. N.E., for \$6.1 million. The original asking price was \$8.7 million.

The two-story building, just south of Eastlake High School, sits on a 22-acre parcel of land on the east side of 228th Avenue, the city’s main north-south arterial.

The building, which features 30,807 square feet of floor space, is surrounded by 330 parking stalls.

“I don’t remember a City Council having this much enthusiasm for a property purchase in the time that I’ve been here,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “The

prospect of creating an educational space for our residents, whatever their age, was genuinely meaningful to our Councilmembers.”

There are three high schools – Eastlake, Skyline and Eastside Catholic – a short distance from the property. The Council believes the popularity of “running start” college courses for high school students could produce strong demand at the location. Several have also voiced enthusiasm for “lifelong” learning opportunities at the site.

Although it’s not binding, the city already has a joint letter of interest from Cascadia College, Bellevue College and the Lake Washington School of Technology. The schools have until Sept. 15 to complete research on the viability of a potential lease.



The city’s new property at 120 228th Ave. N.E.

Sahalee Way Widening Project; Open House set for June 24 RESIDENTS INVITED TO SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON MAJOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

The first of two open houses on the Sahalee Way Widening Project will be held on Wednesday, June 24, 6-7:30 p.m., at the Boys & Girls Club Teen Center, 825 228th Ave. N.E.

The public is invited to meet the project team, look at aerial maps of the corridor, and provide suggestions. A second open house will be scheduled for this fall.

The plan is to widen Sahalee Way between

Northeast 25th Way and Northeast 37th Street. Potential features may

include median strips, turn lanes, bike lanes and sidewalks on one or both sides.

A preliminary design report being prepared by the city should provide some valuable perspective on what features would be most suitable.

Please contact Project Manager Jed Ireland if you have questions. He can be reached at 425-295-0563 or jireland@samamish.us.



Looking north along Sahalee Way Northeast.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH

FOURTH, cont. from pg. 1

So, welcome to the 4th of July shuttle! If your plan is to start your Independence Day celebrating at City Hall Plaza and then migrate to the Lower Commons, where the slope of the hillside produces perfect viewing angles for all the pyrotechnics, just hop on the shuttle. It will run between the two locations from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

Both locations have their attractions. City Hall Plaza will feature "America be Strong" and "Wings 'N Things," a pair of live bands. There will also be a broad menu of food choices on the Plaza.

The Lower Commons location, in addition to providing more food and an excellent vantage point for the fireworks show, will feature a "Kids Area" with an array of bouncy toys. Children will receive unlimited bouncing privileges for just \$5.

As always, parking for the event is scattered and in most cases distant enough to require good walking shoes. So be prepared!

For \$5, parking is available at Sammamish

Hills Lutheran Church, Mary Queen of Peace Church and Skyline High School. Free parking is a bit farther away. Have a great Fourth!



This path is temporarily closed.

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to our
Fourth on the Plateau
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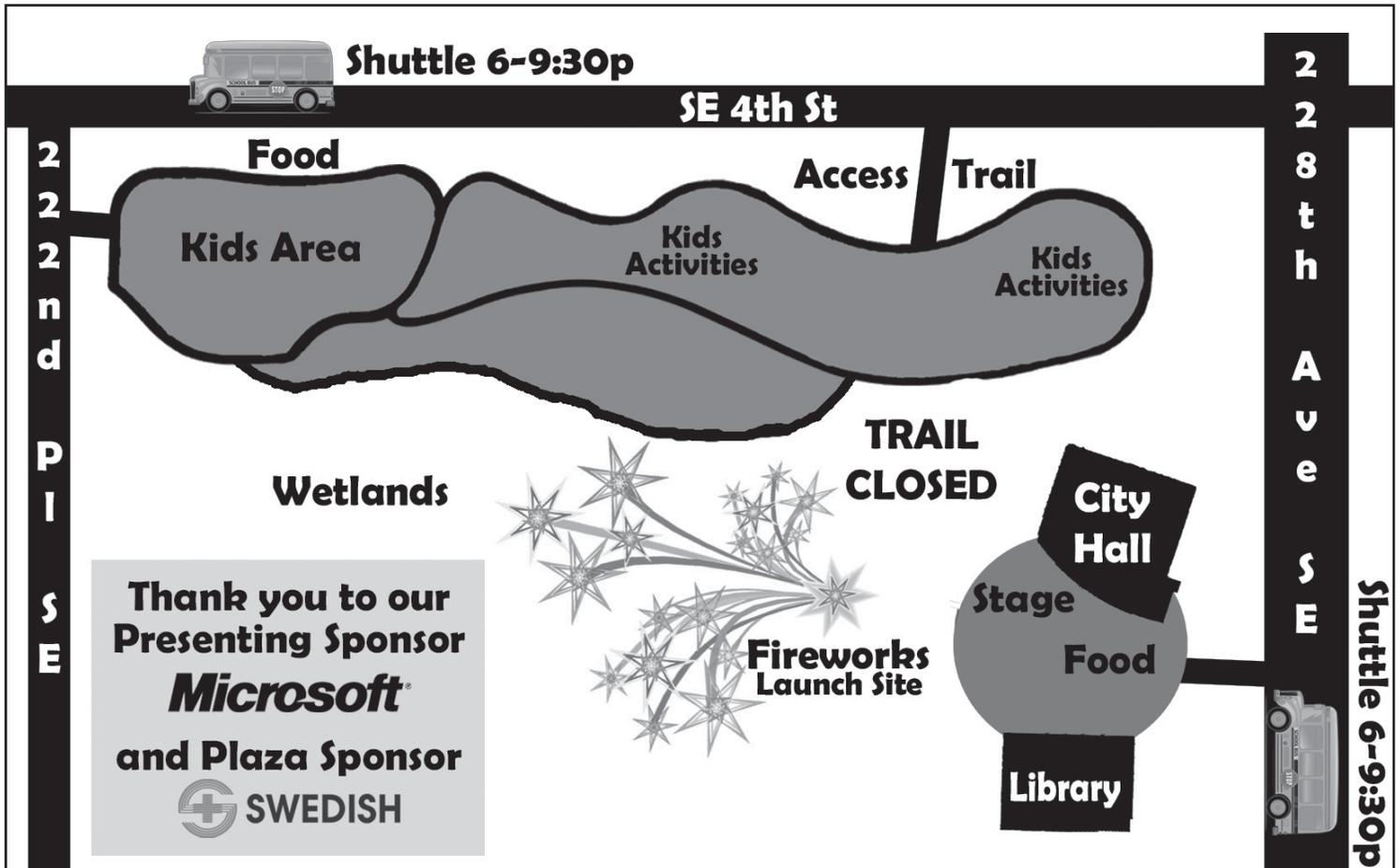
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SWEDISH

STEM students design and implement a community project at Big Rock Park

Big Rock Park will always be a peaceful expanse of donated open space, but it does need a little work.

So, a band of 10 students from the Lake Washington School District Tesla STEM High School are going to pitch in. And, as part of an 18-week internship with the city of Sammamish, the STEM students are going to:

- Develop and implement a plan to restore an existing stream corridor
- Create park signage with educational content
- Acquire an electric vehicle charging station and solar panels for the park
- Develop an online educational curriculum for elementary school students that focuses on the ecosystem

Kellye Hilde, a project manager for the parks department, says this student internship is

part of a broader effort to really involve the community in the enhancement of its park system.

“When I went to the STEM High School, they suggested an internship,” Hilde said. “We thought we’d go with about four students, but after 40 applications came in, we ended up with 10 great kids.”

This past school year, the empha-

sis has been on planning. The implementation portion of the internship will, for the most part, wait until the next school year. And throughout the process, including this summer, the students will be working with Sammamish Friends, an environmentally oriented non-profit, to raise funds for the project.

“This is a win-win,” Hilde said. “The community benefits from the hard work of these really bright students, and they get to put a very impressive item on their resume as they prepare for college.”

STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The Tesla STEM High School, located in Redmond, is highly selective, employs a lottery to select attendees, and has only 559 students.



Project Manager Kellye Hilde talks with STEM students.

Help stop the West Nile virus

The West Nile virus, which is spread by infected mosquitoes, was found in humans in Washington state in 2006.

To keep this threat under control, here’s what you can do: Get rid of standing water by tipping out barrels, buckets, wheelbarrows, children’s wading pools and the like.

Wherever you find it, get rid of standing water!

Please adjust your calendar!

The Sammamish Days and Sammamish Nights event comes around a bit later than usual this summer, so please save this date:

August 22

Have a safe summer at the beach

LIFEGUARDS ON DUTY FROM JUNE 20 TO LABOR DAY



Swimming season at Pine Lake Park begins June 20.

CITY CALENDAR

JUNE

Monday, June 1

-City Council Special Study Session, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, June 2

-City Council Office Hour, 5-6 p.m.
-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 3

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza
-Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, June 4

-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, June 5

-Teen Fest Skate Competition, 4-7 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Saturday, June 6

-Volunteer at Lower Commons Park, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, June 9

-City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 10

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Thursday, June 11

-Family Volunteering: Native Plant Garden, 10 a.m.-noon
Lower Commons Native Plant Garden

Saturday, June 13

-Volunteer at Ebright Creek Park, 9 a.m.-noon

Monday, June 15

-Committee of the Whole, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, June 16

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 17

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Thursday, June 18

-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 20

-Sammamish Walks - Hazel Wolf and Beaver Lake Preserves, 10 a.m.-noon

Monday, June 22

-Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 24

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Thursday, June 25

-Family Volunteering: Native Plant Gar-

JULY

Wednesday, July 1

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza
-Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, July 3

City offices closed for July 4th

Saturday, July 4

-Fourth on the Plateau, 6-10:30 p.m.
Sammamish Commons

Tuesday, July 7

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
City Hall Plaza
-City Council Office Hour, 5-6 p.m.
-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 8

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Thursday, July 9

-Family Volunteering: Native Plant Garden, Lower Commons, 10 a.m.-noon
-Finance Committee Meeting, 2 p.m.
-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.
-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Tuesday, July 14

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
Beaver Lake Park
-City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 15

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Thursday, July 16

-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Saturday, July 18

Sammamish Walks - East Lake Sammamish trail, 10 a.m.-noon
-Shakespeare in the Park, 7-8:45 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Monday, July 20

-Committee of the Whole, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 21

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
East Sammamish Park
-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 22

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Thursday, July 23

-Family Volunteering: Native Plant Garden, Lower Commons, 10 a.m.-noon
-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.
-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Saturday, July 25

-Shakespeare in the Park, 7-8:45 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

Monday, July 27

-Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, July 28

-KidsFirst!, 1-2 p.m.
City Hall

Wednesday, July 29

-Farmer's Market, 4-8 p.m.
City Hall Plaza

Thursday, July 30

-Concerts in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.
Pine Lake Park

PLEASE NOTE:

All meetings and events at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.



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Rig-A-Palooza!

Kids and Rigs on May 16!

Sponsored by:

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- Lyman Howard Deputy City Manager
- Laura Philpot Ass't City Mgr/Public Works Dir
- Jessi Bon Parks & Rec Director
- Beth Goldberg Admin Services Director
- Joe Guinasso Finance Director
- Jeff Thomas Community Dev Director
- Melonie Anderson City Clerk
- Nathan Elledge Police Chief
- Bud Backer Fire Chief
- Michael Kenyon City Attorney

Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
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