

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 91

CITY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2010

New library opens next to City Hall

With both residents and appropriate dignitaries in attendance, the city's new library celebrated its grand opening on Saturday morning, Jan. 9.

The King County Library System's newest facility is one mile south of the old library, and just a few steps south of Sammamish City Hall.

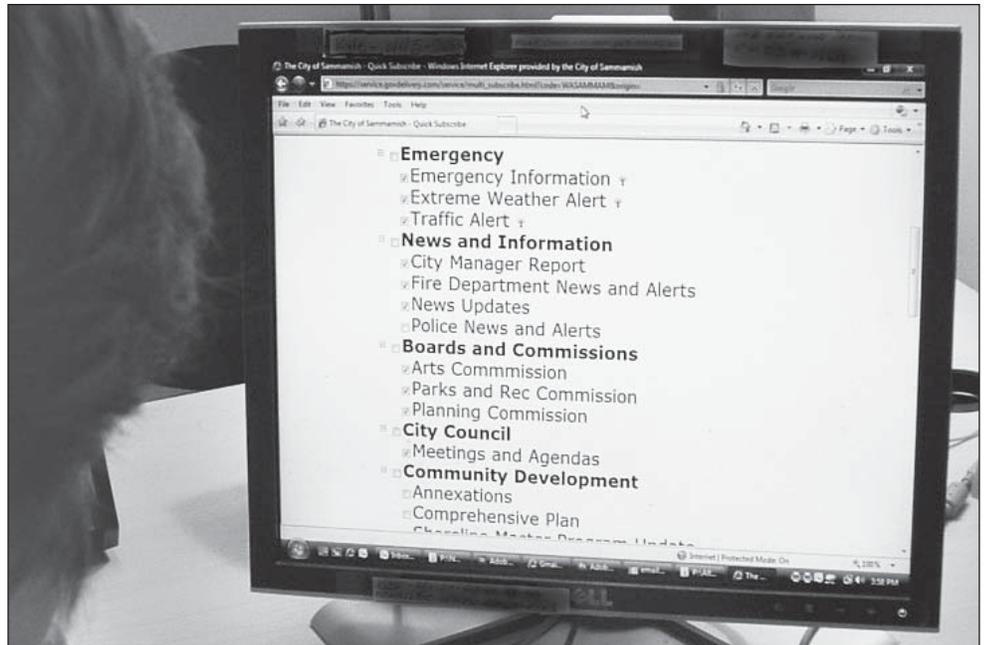
"This is a great milestone for the community," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "There were always concerns about the size and location of the old library, so this feels like a big step forward."

The new 19,500-square-foot library, roughly twice the size of the old facility, features an expanded community meeting room, two conference rooms and a Children's Area and Teen Zone.

A large reading room, complete with a gas fireplace, provides views to the west toward the Seattle skyline.

In addition to more computers

See LIBRARY, Page 5



By going to the city website, residents can now sign up for email alerts on a variety of topics. They can sign up for as many or as few topics as they wish.

Sign up for email alerts!

To further strengthen its communication with residents, the city has just launched an "email alert" system that allows people to sign up for messages on topics of particular interest to them.

If they want to hear the latest on a road project, a new parks program, or the Town Center planning process, the new system allows residents to sign up for those topics from a menu of more

than 40 selections.

"We use a lot of communication tools to connect with residents," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "But we're really excited about the new email alert system. It really empowers people to stay on top of the issues they care about."

Here's how it works. When a resi-

See EMAIL ALERT, pg. 3

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Page 2

SMP TO DOE

Story on page 4

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Story on page 7

The changing face of municipal communications

We are now in the second decade of the 21st century, and in the second decade of the history of the City of Sammamish. As we so often hear, the world has changed, and it changes faster all the time.

An example of this change is in the field of electronics. The transistor was invented in 1948 and its first



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

consumer use was in a transistor radio in 1954, six years later. Today the world has some 6.7 billion people and about 1 billion transistors per capita.

And technology is advancing at an even more frantic pace. In 2006 there was no Facebook or Twitter. Today in the United States alone there are some 60 million Facebook users. Clearly, we are in the middle of a communication revolution.

In the world of social media, the shift is from masses “accessing” content to masses “creating” content on line. This is transforming a user of the internet from a visitor to a member of a community.

Sammamish and other cities are being pulled along by this online revolution. The City has already set up a special email service to alert citizens of topics that interest them. Check this out by going to the city website at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us and clicking on the Email Alert icon in the upper right-hand corner of the homepage.

The City also has more permitting services available on line, is now web-casting council meetings, and has plans for more.

Interactive involvement of citizens online is not intended to replace other methods of communication, but rather to complement already existing channels. The local newspapers, the city newsletter, the cablecasting of City Council – those channels remain valuable.

So do citizen emails and phone calls, traditional letters, public notices and invitations, and the recently initiated Council Open Office Hours. And on special topics, such as major capital programs, the city will continue to hold open houses so citizens can interact with staff and consultants directly.

The city has also done random surveys and in the past has held roundtable meetings to better understand the desires of the community as a whole, and I hope that we do more of this.

One way to gather broad involvement in a town hall type of meeting is by use of individual keypad voting devices. With each participant holding a keypad, a question can be asked, everybody votes by keypad, and the results are then displayed so you can see how your position fits in with the rest of the participants. This type of participation can be also introduced at other events such as art exhibits and public celebrations.

The City will necessarily be somewhat behind the latest fad in interac-

tive communication because there are legal issues that dictate treading lightly. Terms of use and privacy issues have to be addressed when considering public use of such tools as Facebook, Twitter and blogs.

But I would encourage you to look at some examples. A blog that relates to organizations associating with the public can be found at <http://blog.bradrourke.com/>. A specific example of a city jumping into the blog arena is the City of Evanston, Illinois, <http://www.cityofevanston.org/blog/>. In Evanston, the City Manager himself has a blog.

In Palo Alto there is a privately run blog which deals with city issues and acts as a means for citizen interaction, not just with city officials (as you already do via the traditional phone, mail, email, etc.) but with each other. That website is <http://paloalto.open-cityhall.com/> and is worth checking out.

This next decade will see a continuing evolution in the way cities communicate with their constituents. And that's definitely a good thing.

During these tough economic times, it's especially important to have open dialogue – using all means possible – between the city's elected officials, its staff, and the public they are privileged to serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Gerend". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

EMAIL ALERT, *cont. from pg. 1*

dent goes to the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us), they'll see an "Email Alert" icon in the upper, right-hand corner of the screen. After clicking on the icon, they'll be asked to supply their email address, a password, and – strictly optional – the name of their neighborhood. That will lead them to a menu of topics.

If they want the latest information on the 244th Avenue road project, they'll click the box next to that item. For the latest on City Council meetings, special events, or volunteer opportunities, they'll click next to those items. They can sign up for as many or as few topics as they wish, and change – or cancel – their subscription list at any time.

Subscribers will receive two types of email alerts. One will simply contain a link back to the city website where new information has been posted on a topic they've selected. The other will be a complete email containing information on a topic they've subscribed to. If they like, alerts on three topics – emergency information, extreme weather, and traffic problems – can also be sent

via text to their mobile phones.

Before giving the system a big publicity push, Communications Manager Tim Larson initiated a "soft launch" on Dec. 1. After a five-week shakedown cruise, he says the system – supplied by GovDelivery of St. Paul, Minnesota – seems pretty simple.

"I'm sure we'll hit some bumps in the road when lots of people sign up,



but most of our city staffers seem to think it's a straightforward system to operate," Larson said. "Hopefully, we'll learn over the next few weeks and really be humming as we get further into 2010."

The new email alert system will be added to a long list of city communications tools:

- Monthly city newsletter
- City website
- City cable television channel (21 Comcast, 61 Broadstripe)

- City Council meetings streamed on city website
- Press releases
- City-wide mailings
- Targeted mailings
- Public meetings
- Open houses
- Dialogue tables
- City Council office hours so residents can speak directly with councilmembers
- Citizen action requests
- Community surveys

"This won't be the last communication tool we add," Yazici said. "We have a young, evolving city with a lot of very busy families. We're always looking for new ways to keep people involved and up to date on the many important issues that affect their lives."

Residents are invited to sign up at their earliest convenience. If they encounter problems, or have questions, suggestions or concerns, they're asked to contact Communications Manager Tim Larson (tlarson@ci.sammamish.wa.us, 425-295-0555) or Webmaster Kris Munroe (kmunroe@ci.sammamish.wa.us, 425-295-0594).



Recorded City Council meetings can now be viewed by residents on their home computers.

Council meetings online

Recordings of the City Council's regular meetings can now be viewed on the city's website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us.) The recordings can be found under the City Council tab on the left side of the homepage.

Currently, viewers can toggle forward and backward through the recording to find specific material. After a new feature is added later this year, however, they'll be able to click on a list of agenda items and be taken directly to the selected content.

New meetings can be viewed live on the city's cable television channel (21 on Comcast, 61 on Broadstripe). There are no immediate plans to stream the meetings live over the internet.

New, easy access to the Lower Commons

Thanks to a brand new parking lot, the curving pathways, play areas and grassy expanses that make the Lower Commons so attractive to Sammamish families are now easily accessible from the northwest.

The 39-space lot, bordered by attractive landscaping and detention ponds, is located at the opposite end of Sammamish Commons from City Hall. To access the new lot, drivers on 228th Avenue should turn west on Southeast Fourth Street and then take a left onto 222nd Avenue Southeast.

The project, which also added road improvements and six additional parking spots near the city-owned Sween House, began construction in July and wrapped up in December.

The Lower Commons property, approximately 20 acres just below and to the west of City Hall, was purchased by the city in 2001 for \$2 million.



The new parking lot will allow easy access to trails, open space, picnic facilities and play areas in the Lower Commons. From this vantage point in the northwest corner of the park, City Hall and the new library can be seen on the horizon.

Town Center regulations go to City Council

On Feb. 9, the Planning Commission will deliver an important batch of recommendations to the City Council regarding the new Town Center. The handoff will contain proposed development regulations and related infrastructure plans.

“This is a big milestone,” said City Manager Ben Yazici. “The Planning Commission has worked for more than a year on this, making sure that the recommendations meet the City Council’s policy goals.”

The regulation recommendations cover design standards, landscaping, parking, stormwater management and other important aspects of the new Town Center.

“Once the City Council reviews and adopts these regulations later this year, developers will have the information they need to submit permits applications,” Yazici said.

The Town Center planning area, covering about 240 acres in the center of the city, will accommodate a blend of residential, retail, commercial, public and open spaces.

SMP on the way to DOE

ECOLOGY WILL REVIEW CITY’S NEW SHORELINE REGULATIONS

The Shoreline Master Program Update, adopted by the City Council in October 2009, is being printed and will soon be on its way to the state Department of Ecology (DOE) for review. Under state law, the DOE has the authority to make sure the city’s updated shoreline regulations conform to state standards.

“The Planning Commission and City Council made sure we had a long and thorough conversation with the community about these regulations,” Director of Community Development Kamuron Gurol said. “The city really listened to the residents, so we hope DOE will give us a timely approval.”

The regulations, among other things, cover docks, bulkheads, setbacks and a variety of water quality and habitat issues. As part of their review, which could take several months, the DOE may hold a public hearing in Sammamish.

LIBRARY, cont. from pg. 1

and wireless access, there is a total collection of more than 106,000 library materials.

“Having the library just on the other side of the City Hall plaza is going to make Sammamish Commons a very lively place,” Yazici said. “Together with the skateboard park, the police station, and the Lower Commons park, it feels like we’re reaching a very positive, critical mass here.”

The \$16.3 million construction cost was paid for by funds from the \$172 million capital bond approved by King County voters for expansion and maintenance of the library system.

The library will be open seven days a week. Parking is underneath and on the south side of the building.



The new Sammamish Library, located at Sammamish Commons, just south of City Hall.

Weigh in on 244th sidewalk, bike lane

The city will hold a public Open House this month on proposed improvements to a segment of 244th Avenue between Northeast Eighth Street and Northeast 20th Street. The improvements, which include a sidewalk and bike lane on the west side of the road and a widened shoulder on the east side, are still in the planning stages.

The Open House will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 13, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Rachel Carson Elementary School, 1035 244th Ave. N.E.

Residents will have the opportunity to learn about the project goals, and share their thoughts and concerns at the Open House. Those who are unable to attend are invited to obtain information about the project by going to the city website at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/projects/244thAveNE.aspx.

Residents with questions or concerns may also contact the city’s project manager, Jim Grueber, at jgrueber@ci.sammamish.wa.us or 425-295-0566.

Winter preparedness

CITY WEBSITE OFFERS TIPS AND LINKS

Although at press time the city had not yet been buried by a winter snowstorm, it’s always a good idea to be properly prepared should the weather decide to turn nasty.

To help residents deal with snow, wind or other potential winter hardships, the city website now has a special page containing tips and online links to valuable resources.

To reach the page, go to www.ci.sammamish.wa.us, click on the Community Links tab, and then click on “Winter Preparedness.”

Among other things, the web page has information on proper preparation for floods, thunderstorms and snowstorms. It also has links to King County and federal emergency websites.



Sammamish in the wintertime.

Appreciation dinner honors volunteers serving on boards and commissions



Volunteers on city boards and commissions enjoy dinner at City Hall on Dec. 14.

Ordinances and resolutions are the usual fare in the Council chamber, but on Dec. 14, thanks to a special appreciation dinner, the menu changed to roasted salmon and grilled flank steak.

The dinner, honoring residents who make up the city's boards, commissions and other volunteer entities, also featured white table cloths, flowers, and an attentive wait staff partly comprised of city staffers and elected officials.

"Working on a board or commission requires a lot of time and work," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "I hope they know how much the community values their commitment."

Those honored included the Arts, Parks and Planning

Commissions, the Youth Board, police and fire volunteers, The Sammamish Citizen Corps and SARGE, the Beaver Lake Management District and the Technology Committee.

Sammamish Police collect Toys for Tots



Police Chief Nate Elledge and Det. Amy Jarboe with Toys for Tots donations.

It was another big haul for members of the Sammamish Police Department in 2009 as they continued their tradition of collecting "Toys for Tots" in association with the United States Marine Corps.

Led by Det. Amy Jarboe, the department took in an assortment of bikes, dolls and toys for deserving children in King County.

"We've been doing this since 2005 so it's turned into a very nice tradition," Jarboe said. "I think the community knows there are a lot of kids out there who could use a little boost, especially during these tough economic times. It's great to see the generosity and holiday spirit."

Since 2005, the police department has placed a "Toys for Tots" container just outside its office in City Hall and asked residents to drop off new, unwrapped gifts.

"As long as that container keeps filling up, we're planning to do this each and every year," Jarboe said.

City honors the 2009 Employee of the Year



Kyle Endelman (left) accepts the Employee of the Year Award from City Manager Ben Yazici. Endelman serves as the city's Infrastructure Maintenance Manager.

When you ask about Kyle Endelman, the city's Infrastructure Maintenance Manager and 2009 Employee of the Year, people tend to say the same things – conscientious, organized, hard working. And, oh yes – he provides great customer service.

“In his various roles with the city since he joined us in 2002, he’s had a lot of contact with the public,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “We hear great things about him from our residents.”

Among other things, Endelman is in charge of maintaining roads, parks, and other city infrastructure. Some of the biggest challenges come during winter snow storms.

“We haven’t had a big storm this winter,” Yazici said, “but we have complete confidence in Kyle. He’s seen and done it all.”

CITY CALENDAR

JANUARY

Friday, Jan. 1

New Year's Day

City offices closed

Tuesday, Jan. 5

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 12

City Council Special meeting and Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 13

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 18

Martin Luther King Day

City offices closed

Tuesday, Jan. 19

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

City of Sammamish Eagle Scout

Projects, 4-5 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 20

Sammamish Youth Board

Meeting, 7 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 25

Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY

Tuesday, Feb. 2

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 4

Planning Commission Meeting,

6-8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 9

Joint Meeting: City Council and Plan-

ning Commission, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 10

Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 15

Presidents Day, City offices closed

Tuesday, Feb. 16

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 17

Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 7 p.m.

Monday, Feb. 22

Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

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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Sammamish, WA 98075

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Councilmember*



*Mark Cross
Councilmember*



*John Curley
Councilmember*



*John James
Councilmember*



*Tom Odell
Councilmember*



*Michele Petitti
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*



**Day of Caring for
"seniors in need"**

January 18

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS
WHO WANT TO HELP SENIORS IN NEED**

The city is partnering with "Faith in Action," a local non-profit, to provide seniors in need with lawn care, housekeeping and other services on Jan. 18. If you would like to take part in this national "Day of Caring" event, contact Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Sanders at 425-295-0556 or dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us.

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- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Ben Yazici | City Manager |
| Pete Butkus | Deputy City Manager |
| Kamuron Gurof | ComDevDir/AsstCityMgr |
| Lyman Howard | FinanceDir/AsstCityMgr |
| John Cunningham | Public Works Director |
| Jessi Richardson | Parks & Rec Director |
| Mike Sauerwein | AdminServices Director |
| Melonie Anderson | City Clerk |
| Nathan Elledge | Police Chief |
| Lee Soptich | Fire Chief |
| Bruce Disend | City Attorney |
| Tim Larson | Communications Mgr |