

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 101

CITY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2010

City harnesses volunteer energy

RESIDENTS HELP CITY
IN BIG, SMALL WAYS

When the Sammamish plateau coalesced into a city back in 1999, it did so on the shoulders of energetic, well-educated, and community-spirited residents.

Not everyone agreed on policy – there was considerable rancor both before and after incorporation – but the urge to contribute, and build, and create was pervasive. And now, more than ten years after Sammamish became a city, that urge to give remains a signature trait in this forested, lakeside community of 40,000 plus.

“We see that trait among our volunteers on a daily basis,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “Since we hired a volunteer coordinator a few years ago, we’ve really been able to harness the generosity and skill of our residents.”

Although generosity pre-dates incorporation, and certainly doesn’t depend on City Hall for its continuing presence, the city is playing an important coordination role.

See *VOLUNTEERS*, pg. 4



The barricade at Southeast 28th Street and 257th Place Southeast.

All barricades are not the same

At incorporation in 1999, the new City Council faced a lot of obvious challenges – growth, traffic, and inadequate infrastructure. The to-do list was long.

But one of the knottiest problems in 2010, an issue that may provide challenges into the next decade, probably wasn’t on the first, second, or even

third page of that initial list.

Who would have thought that a few temporary road barricades, many installed at the end of unfinished stub streets back in the King County days, would turn into major neighborhood issues as the city grid began to more fully connect.

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MAYOR’S MESSAGE

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TOYS FOR TOTS

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HOLIDAY LIGHTING

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What a nightmare!

It was a dark and stormy night. Well...actually it was nearly a full moon and dead calm, but it certainly was scary as I crossed a field of thickening fog and approached the entrance to the dense forest.



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

It was Halloween season and I was a victim once again of that unique experience called Nightmare at Beaver Lake. I wandered alone through the dimly lit for-

est path and was periodically approached and threatened by various wicked characters. There were some strange creatures called Tweedle-Dee and Tweedle-Dum, and a giant rabbit, that tried to warn me of the dangers of traipsing through the evil forest, but I proceeded.

Deep into the forest I strode, hearing blood-curdling screams the whole way. Three dimensional tabloids with dreadful ancient mechanisms, frightening flying figures, and appalling apparitions negotiating for your life, or, at the very least, a limb – they all drew me into an interactive nightmare that left the nirvana of normal Sammamish life far behind.

This annual adaptive use of the deep forests and glades of Beaver Lake Park is the creative work of the Sammamish Rotary Club and their many helpers. The intent: to provide a fun and safe Halloween experience for young people, families, and a few senior citizens – like me – who were willing to test the health of their hearts.

The Rotary partners with the city of Sammamish and Scare Productions, a non-profit group of wonderful, talented, fun-loving folks who happily and masterfully enjoy scaring people. All of the people who plan and produce the event – as many as four hundred individuals during the year – are volunteers, and over a third of them are high school students!

In conversations with Curt Madden, President of Scare Productions (<http://scare.com>), I learned that this non-profit theatre group agreed to become the annual production partner of the Sammamish Rotary some four years ago, and that all of the workers and actors totally volunteer their time and talents, even the fire breather with the dramatic flame tower arching high above his head.

The Sammamish Youth Board is another source of volunteers, and our own Sammamish Councilmember Michele Petitti, horsewoman extraordinaire, is always deeply committed to this unique community event.

Jerry Vice, current President of the Sammamish Rotary, told me that the Rotary organized the first Nightmare in 2004, hoping to attract a few hundred people. Instead, a few thousand showed up! And now the annual attendance for this 11-day (or rather, scary night) event is around 10,000, depending on the vagaries of the October weather.

Lovely Beaver Lake Park is perfect, a venue that allows a first-class, indoor-outdoor, haunted house experience. The Sammamish Parks Commission and city staff work

closely with the Rotary to make the Nightmare a success while minimizing the footprint on the Beaver Lake Park environment.

Now, the really great part about the Nightmare is what this event has allowed the Sammamish Rotary to do for the community and the world. Locally, in the last two years, the Sammamish Rotary has awarded \$35,000 in college scholarships to high school seniors attending Eastlake, Skyline and Eastside Catholic!

That is truly awesome, and much appreciated by many families struggling with tight family budgets and the ever-increasing costs of college tuition.

The Nightmare is just one of many great community events that have sprung up in Sammamish and made our city a special place to live. Think about the concerts in the park, the Fourth on the Plateau, Shakespeare in the park, Teen Fest, the Beaver Lake Triathlon, Sammamish Days and Nights, the Farmers Market, the Sammi Awards, all the great school events, the Sammamish Symphony, and the Challenge race, a soap-box-derby-type event for physically and mentally challenged kids that is also a Rotary event.

Thanks to these and other events, Sammamish has indeed turned into the “family-friendly, kid-safe” community we all envisioned at incorporation some eleven years ago.

I hope you had a chance to experience the Nightmare this year. If not, put it on your calendar for next October. That’s assuming, of course, that you get the okay from your cardiologist!

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

BARRICADES, from pg. 1

In recent years, as the city began to consider which if any barricades should be removed, the response from those directly affected has been very vocal. Their objections to removal were clear:

- Traffic would increase on the street.
- The street would be less safe for children and other residents.
- The increased traffic would change the character of the neighborhood.

The city's interest in removal, as embodied in the comprehensive plan, was based on the value of "connectivity." That word simply means that the removal of obstacles makes for shorter trips, fewer car miles, easier access for emergency vehicles and a more cohesive bond between neighborhoods.

Given the level of upset in some neighborhoods, the city decided to develop a set of criteria to guide its decision-making process on barricades. Taking into account that the dozens of barriers in the city all present a different

set of circumstances, the city, through an extensive public process, produced a flexible set of criteria that it hopes will be useful in all cases.

Some of the considerations built into the decision criteria include:

- Driver sight distance.
- Roadway grade.
- Impact on neighborhood "feel."
- Cost of improvements needed to compensate for increased traffic.
- Impact on air pollution and water quality.
- Effect on vehicle miles traveled.
- Is the barrier near a pedestrian generator such as a school?

The barricade at Southeast 32nd Street was chosen as the first test for the criteria. At an open house on Sept. 23, residents were asked to weight the importance of the various criteria items when applied to that specific street.

The next open house on that barricade will be at Pine Lake Middle School on Tuesday, Nov. 30, from 6 to 8 p.m. The City Council will then look at all the public input, discuss the issue, and then move toward a possible decision in the first quarter

of 2011.

"This is going to be a challenge," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "The concerns of the neighbors are understandable. The rights of taxpayers to use the roads they paid for are understandable. And the difficulty of the City Council's choice is clear.

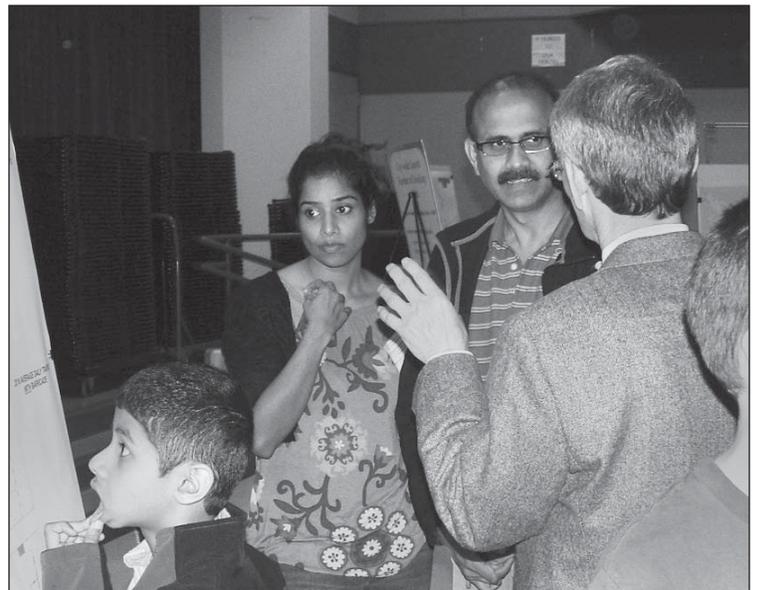
"Plus, each barrier is a little bit different. Settling the issue at Southeast 32nd won't necessarily settle the issue anywhere else. This is going to take some time."

There are also some cases in which barricades need to be dealt with in an interconnected way. In the Beaver Lake area, for example, one barricade's impact may affect analysis of a separate nearby barrier. In that circumstance, the city will consider the barricades as a group rather than individually.

For more information on barricades, go to the city website (www.ci.sammamish.wa.us), click on the "projects" tab on the left side of the home page and then select "connectivity." Residents can also contact City Engineer Laura Philpot at lphilpot@ci.sammamish.wa.us or 425-295-0570.



Residents and City Council members tour barricade locations.



A family at the Sept. 23 open house on the S.E. 32nd St. barricade.

VOLUNTEERS, from pg. 1

“I think we’ve done a good job of connecting people,” Dawn Sanders, the head of city volunteer efforts, said. “We put skills and needs together, not just on city projects, but throughout the community.”

Over the past three years, Sanders has recruited and coordinated the efforts of more than a thousand registered volunteers who’ve helped with city projects. But she’s also used the city’s website and other communication tools to connect outside organizations with the volunteer skills they need.

“For example, if there’s a non-profit organization in town that needs volunteers, we help by sharing information,” Sanders said. “It doesn’t really matter if the city is involved in something. The



Kelsey Saario fills copy machines.

important thing is to encourage this wonderful culture of giving throughout the community.”

Yazici was trained as a civil engineer, and he fully appreciates the im-

portance of roads and infrastructure, but he notes that the human bond is what really ties a city together.

“That’s not just sentimental stuff,” Yazici said. “It’s really true. Our annual Fourth of July celebration, for example, is probably more important than any road project we’ve done.”

Fueled by community-minded sponsors and a small army of volunteers, the “Fourth on the Plateau” is the biggest yearly event in the city.

But Sanders’ focus on coordinating all this community helpfulness results in quieter, smaller scale success stories, as well.

One example is Kelsey Saario, a 22-year-old with cerebral palsy who comes into City Hall once a week with her mother to stock shelves, put paper in the copying machines, and create a “win-win” proposition for all involved.

“She’s a very social person,” her mother, Barbara Saario said. “She likes to work around other people and is quite proud of her contribution.”

In addition to helping the city, Kelsey also volunteers twice a week at the Swedish Physicians Pine Lake Clinic.

Another quiet but inspiring story is being written by Craig Ross, a 56-year-old Sammamish resident who works at City Hall about 12 hours a week. Ross, who has never fully recovered from a boating accident in 1996, helps design layout diagrams for city events like the Fourth on the Plateau and the Farmers Market. His story is explored more full on the next page.

Whether it’s Kelsey and Craig working around City Hall, or the swarm of volunteers at the Fourth, or



Volunteers plant along 228th Avenue.

the many planting parties beautifying parks and trails, city-sponsored volunteerism is thriving.

“Mostly what we do is just provide a channel for people’s generosity,” Sanders said. “But it sure is fun to play a part in that, and to join other groups and individuals within the community who are also focused on making Sammamish a healthy, prosperous and supportive place.”

Volunteers by the numbers:

Registered volunteers: 1,064
2007 volunteer hours: 2,154
2008 volunteer hours: 3,476
2009 volunteer hours: 5,590
2010 hours year-to-date: 5,844

Contact information:

Volunteer Coordinator
Dawn Sanders
425-295-0556
dsanders@ci.sammamish.wa.us

Volunteer webpage:
[www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/
Volunteers.aspx](http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/Volunteers.aspx)

Volunteer email alerts:
www.ci.sammamish.wa.us
Click on “Email Alerts” icon

Creating designs; structuring a life

On the outside, Craig Ross doesn't look like someone who needs structure in his life. Everything about him looks professional and orderly as he works the city's computer-aided design and drafting program.

But that's not how it looks and feels from the inside, from the vantage point of a 56-year-old man who lost all order when a sail boat boom hit him in the head 14 years ago.

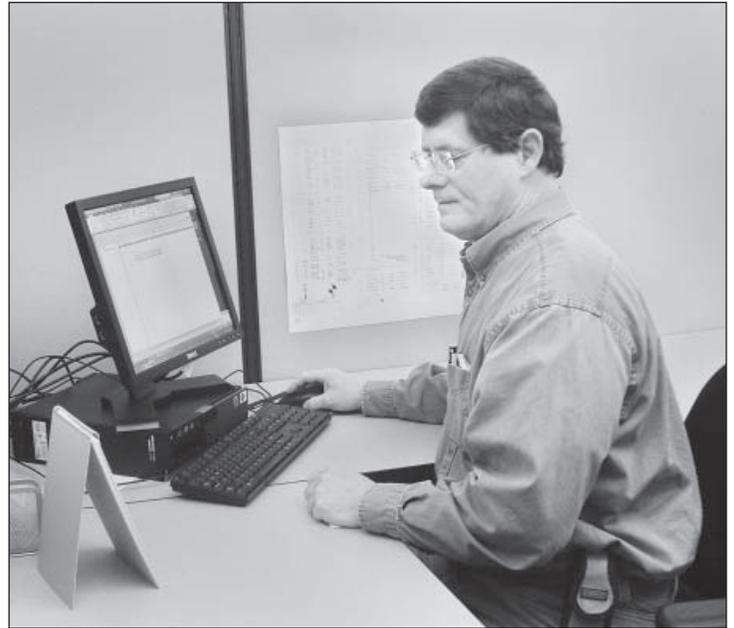
Since that 1996 accident off the coast of Texas, Ross has had to learn how to walk and talk all over again. And although he looks quietly competent during his 12 hours of weekly volunteer work at City Hall, Ross says he'll never be back to normal.

"The doctors said that after two years, that was about as good as I was going to get," Ross said, speaking in his chrysal-clear but measured way. "Working at City Hall is good for me, though. It keeps me interested and provides my life with some structure."

He needs the solitude of a cubicle and the deadline-free drafting jobs he gets at City Hall because his memories, talents and capacities have been permanently mangled by the accident. Although his intelligence shines through the fog, he has trouble remembering, and sometimes finds it exhausting to hold lengthy conversations.

That doesn't keep him from doing good work for the city, though. Drawing on his residual engineering skills – among other things, he designed and built pressure and temperature sensors before the accident – Ross creates the layouts for city events like the Farmers Market and the July 4th celebration.

"He uses the city's AutoCAD system to lay out where everything should go," Volunteer Coordinator Dawn Sanders said. "He also does some of our construction drawings for



Craig Ross works with the city's AutoCAD system.

road maintenance work.

"I think Craig is a shining light for our volunteer program. I think it's wonderful the way he's helping the community and helping himself, all at the same time."

Asked how long he's been volunteering with the city, Ross says he can't remember. But he's planning to continue.

"I realized I needed a quiet place to work, and this has turned out well," he said. "There are nice, professional people here, and it's a consistent environment."

"As long as I'm not detracting from anything, it's a good place for me. And it's also nice to contribute something to the city you live in."

Food drive engages whole city

Led by eastside mayors, including Sammamish Mayor Don Gerend, a "Month of Concern" food drive gathered a bountiful supply of canned goods, pasta and other nutritious contributions from a broad range of Sammamish groups and individuals.

Although the grand total was not available at press time, the donations from schools, churches, and individual contributors will go a long way toward stocking the shelves of local food banks. The effort was capped off when those attending the Skyline High School homecoming game versus Eastlake High School brought a final burst of donations to the game.



Eastside Catholic High School students delivered a busload of food.

Pajama Party Art Exhibit

The Sammamish Art Commission will present a new exhibit at City Hall later this month featuring the quilting of Port Ludlow resident Ellin Larimer.

The exhibit will kick off with an opening reception on Wednesday, Nov. 17, 6-8 p.m., and run through Jan. 28. The exhibit is open to the public and may be viewed during normal business hours at City hall.

Larimer's work, which pays tribute to color, line and vibrancy, can be previewed by going to her website at <http://ellinlarimer.com/>.

Toys for Tots record?

Ever since she started collecting toys for needy children back in 2005, Det. Amy Jarboe says the number of donations has steadily gone up. As she prepares once again to gather donations for the U. S. Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" program, Jarboe is confident the 2010 number will be the best yet.

"With the economy still down, we think Sam-



Chief Nate Elledge and Det. Amy Jarboe last year.

mamish residents are really going to be thinking about all those needy kids out there, and respond from the heart."

Beginning Nov. 1, those wishing to donate should bring new, unwrapped items to City Hall and place them in a bin just outside the police offices. More information on the effort is available by going to www.toys4tots.org or by calling Det. Jarboe at 425-295-0786.

City awaits state feedback on shoreline regulations

At press time, the state's Department of Ecology (DOE) had not yet identified any additional steps the city might have to take before implementing the new Shoreline Master Program Update (SMP).

The DOE held a public hearing on the city's SMP at City Hall on Oct. 7. Approximately 50 property owners and other stakeholders testified at the hearing.

The SMP, a set of regulations covering docks, bulkheads, setbacks and a variety of water quality and habitat issues, was adopted by the City Council in October 2009.

"We're proud of the work our residents put into the SMP," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "We think it really reflects the values and interests of our community. If the DOE asks for more work, I hope it doesn't go beyond clarifications and minor issues."

Any necessary amendments will go before the Planning Commission and City Council, probably in the first quarter of 2011.

Will a flood contaminate your home or business?

Flood waters do more than get you wet. They can also spread your unsecured toxic and hazardous materials throughout your home or business. That's why you should learn how to protect yourself before the creeks rise and make your life miserable.

Here are some educational resources:

- Business Waste Line - 206-263-8899, or www.govlink.org/hazwaste/business.
- Household Hazard Line - 1-888-869-4233, or www.govlink.org/hazwaste/house.

Everyone should avoid stockpiling hazardous materials. The best way to stay safe is to dispose of these dangerous materials by using the "Wastemobile" or another appropriate disposal option.

Remember – your home or business doesn't have to be located in a floodplain to be flooded by natural or manmade events. Contaminated flood water is dangerous to all living things, and the cleanup is very expensive for both home and business owners.

CITY CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

Tuesday, Nov. 2

City Council Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 3

Parks and Rec Comm. Meeting
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 4

Planning Commission Meeting
6 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 9

City Council Special Meeting
5:30 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 11

Veterans Day
City offices closed

Monday, Nov. 15

Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 16

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 17

Art Exhibit Reception - Pajama Party
6-8 p.m., City Hall
Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 18

Planning Commission Meeting
6 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 20

Parks and Rec Volunteer Opportunity
Lower Commons, 9 a.m. - noon,

Saturday, Nov. 20 - Tuesday, Nov. 23

Volunteer at Lower Commons North-
west Garden,
9 a.m. - noon each day

Thursday, Nov. 25

Thanksgiving Day
City offices closed

Friday, Nov. 26

Thanksgiving Holiday
City offices closed

DECEMBER

Wednesday, Dec. 1

Holiday Lighting Event
5:30-6:30 p.m., City Hall

Thursday, Dec. 2

Planning Commission Meeting, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 7

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 8

Parks and Rec Comm. Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 14

City Council/Planning Commission
Joint Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 15

Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 16

Planning Commission Meeting, 6 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 24

Christmas Holiday
City offices closed

Friday, Dec. 31

New Year's Holiday
City offices closed

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.

Help your fellow drivers; be a traffic reporter

If you encounter a traffic problem affecting Sammamish drivers, you can spread the word by calling City Hall. Thanks to the city's email and text alert system, your report can be passed on to those who've signed up for the alerts. Just call City Hall at 425-295-0500 and report the problem.



If you would like to receive the traffic alerts, go to the city website at www.ci.sammamish.wa.us, and click on the email alert icon in the upper right-hand corner of the home page. As you follow the prompts, make sure you select the text alert option so the update will go straight to your cell phone.



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*Don Gerend
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*Nancy Whitten
Deputy Mayor*



*Mark Cross
Councilmember*



*John Curley
Councilmember*



*John James
Councilmember*



*Tom Odell
Councilmember*



*Michele Petitti
Councilmember*

Holiday lighting set for Dec. 1



*The Holiday Lighting Ceremony will be held at City Hall on Dec. 1 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Elementary school students will sing, sugar cookies will be decorated and Eastside
Fire and Rescue will bring the ever popular Reindeer truck. See you there!*

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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- Pete Butkus Deputy City Manager
- Kamuron Gurol 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
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