

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 164

CITY NEWSLETTER

FEB. 2016

Tax benefit begins in annexation area

When residents in the Klahanie annexation area voted overwhelmingly last year to join Sammamish, it's probably safe to say that property tax rates were a major consideration.

The facts were clear: In 2015, the owner of a \$500,000 home in Klahanie paid between \$700 and \$800 more on their property tax bill than a Sammamish resident with a \$500,000 home.

Now, thanks to the annexation, Klahanie-area taxpayers will enjoy the same rates as their fellow Sammamish residents. And that means that in 2016, the owner of a \$500,000 home in the newly annexed area will pay less than they would have if they had remained in unincorporated King County.

"We were very happy that about 86 percent of the people casting ballots voted in favor of annexation to Sammamish," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "I think the benefits were pretty clear. They were going to get better services and a lower tax rate."

One word of caution to all annexation-area residents: It's possible,

See TAXES, pg. 3



Deputy Mayor Ramiro Valderrama (right) listens at the S.E. 4th Street Open House.

Residents weigh in on S.E. 4th St. \$4 MILLION GRANT WILL HELP PAY FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TOWN CENTER'S PRIMARY ARTERIAL

With several projects already under construction inside the city's Town Center planning area, improvements to Southeast Fourth Street are a top priority.

As the Town Center takes shape, the east-west corridor will serve as the primary connection through the city's much anticipated, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly urban core.

To share information and gather public input on the improvements, the city held an open house at Pine Lake Middle School on Jan. 28.

"The City Council will review all of the public input before we move toward a final design," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "If things go smoothly, we could see the start of construction late

See S.E. 4TH STREET, pg. 4

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Page 2

FINANCE AWARD

Story on page 3

HUMAN SERVICES

Story on page 4

Action Days in Olympia: A report from your Mayor

Last month, the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) held its "Action Days in Olympia." This annual trek to the state capital provides city representatives with the opportunity to meet state legislators, highlight their municipal priorities, and do their best to inform and persuade.

Deputy Mayor Ramiro Valderrama, Councilmember Bob Keller and I made the trip this year and were very pleased to meet with a long list of influential lawmakers: Representative Tana Senn and Senator Steve Litzow of the 41st District, Representative Roger Goodman and Senator Andy Hill of the 45th District, and Representative Jay Rodne and Senator Mark Mullet of the 5th District. All of these legislators represent a portion of Sammamish.

Among other things, we proposed a study of the State Route 202 corridor. This travel route, which is often congested, is badly in need of improvements so our residents can enter and leave Sammamish at the north end without long delays.

We also discussed the prospect of additional state funding for the much-needed improvements to Issaquah-Fall City Road, and a number of other issues.

Since we know that not much will transpire in Olympia during this short supplemental session of the state legislature, we obtained commitments from

all of the legislators to come up to Sammamish after the session so we could hold more extensive discussions.

In addition to our one-on-one meetings with specific legislators, we also attended panel discussions on education funding, infrastructure funding for cities, and liquor and marijuana revenue sharing.

We also heard from Governor Inlee, who touched on many topics of

At the AWC board meeting, our 41st District Representative Judy Clibborn was given particular recognition for her extraordinary efforts last year as Chair of the House Transportation Committee. She helped pass the multi-billion dollar "transportation package," a legislative success that is funding worthy projects throughout the state, including the provision of \$5 million for Issaquah-Fall City Road. Clibborn's leadership also set aside substantial funding for improvements to I-90 that will benefit Sammamish and Issaquah residents.

It's always important for Sammamish to watch, learn and listen at these "Action Days in Olympia." For example, David Schumacher, the director of the governor's office of financial management gave us a status report on projected revenues for 2016. And the news

is not good.

The projected budget appears to be out of balance by some \$500 million. That means the legislature will be looking for ways to close the gap. So, as a city, it's very important for us to always maintain our presence in Olympia.

As the old proverb says: "If you are not at the table, you may be on the menu!"



Councilmember Bob Keller (left), Sen. Steve Litzow, Mayor Don Gerend and Deputy Mayor Ramiro Valderrama met in Olympia to discuss city issues.

concern to cities throughout the state.

As past president of AWC, and a current board member, I went down to Olympia a day early to attend the association's board meeting and several AWC committee sessions. The AWC does a lot of good work. Among other things, it provides education and training, handles group medical, property and liability insurance for cities, and, of course, stays busy lobbying for all 281 cities and towns in the state of Washington.

Finance department earns “excellence” certificate

The city has once again been recognized for the quality of its financial reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA), this time for the city’s 2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

The GFOA is a non-profit professional association serving approximately 17,500 finance professionals in both countries.

“We are very pleased that Finance Director Joe Guinasso and his team have con-

tinued this tradition of high performance,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “Accounting Manager Jennifer Dilley and Finance Specialist II Jodee Bass

have done a great job of ensuring that the city’s strong financial practices are translated into information that is easy to understand when it appears in our annual report.”

Sammamish has been recognized repeatedly in this way since first receiving the award in 2009. The certificate is for “excellence in financial reporting,” according to the GFOA.

It focuses on the clarity and quality of a city’s “comprehensive annual financial report,” and gives special consideration to a constructive “spirit of full disclosure.”



Finance Director Joe Guinasso (left), Financial Specialist Jodee Bass, Accounting Manager Jennifer Dilley, and Deputy Finance Director Chris Gianini.

TAXES, cont. from pg. 1

despite the city’s lower tax rate, that other taxing authorities (school and library districts, for example) could increase their rates, potentially offsetting some of the savings from Sammamish.

The city is allowed by law to raise

its total property tax revenue by one percent per year. But the City Councils in Sammamish have declined to do that for seven straight years.

Final levy rates will be available from King County in mid-February and will be reflected in the 2016 tax bill received by residents.



A street scene in the Klahanie area.

New residents!

The annexation into Sammamish has **NOT** changed your zip code, so the post office will continue to deliver to your street address.

No change to your address is required.

As long as your zip code and street address are correct, the mail will arrive!

How do I help my aging parents?

Learn what your options are
from a panel of experts
on Sunday, February 21, 3-5 p.m.,
at the Sammamish Library, 825 228th Ave. S.E.

Panel participants will include representatives from:

Aegis at Marymoor
Family Resource Home Care
Careage Home Health
Mission Healthcare
Aging Wisdom

This event is free and open to the public
No registration required

City supports human services

The city wants its residents in need to receive human services at an affordable cost. To that end, the city gives financial support to organizations like these:

- **Eastside Baby Corner** - This non-profit collects and distributes diapers, clothing and food to 700 needy infants each week. (425-865-0234, ebc@babycorner.org).
- **Kindering** - This organization helps children with hearing, vision, cognition, motor skill, communication, and behavior challenges. They're at nfo@kindering.org.

For other human services, go to www.sammamish.us and click on the "Community Links" tab.

Keep in mind also that many non-profits serving Sammamish rely on volunteers. To explore those opportunities, go to www.sammamish.us, click on the "Volunteer" tab, and then select "Community Opportunities."

S.E. 4TH STREET, cont. from pg. 1
this fall or in the spring of 2017."

Currently a two-way road without sidewalks, Southeast Fourth Street will likely be expanded to include one travel lane in each direction, a center turn lane or median, bike lanes, planter strips and sidewalks. The city will also coordinate with the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District to install upgraded utilities as part of the improvement project.

The preliminary cost estimate for the 3,300-foot-long improvement project is just over \$12 million. That figure will cover right-of-way acquisition, design and construction. A \$4 million grant from the state's Transportation Improvement Board will be applied toward construction.

"As we consider public input and the various design options, the cost and scope of a project could change, of course," Yazici said. "That \$12 mil-

lion estimate could be a bit high or a bit low."

The Town Center plan provides a development framework for 240 acres in the geographical center of the city. The intersection of 228th Avenue Southeast and Southeast Fourth Street divides the planning area into four

public spaces, all bound together and fed by a network of pedestrian-friendly pathways.

"The community's vision called for a place where residents could shop, work, live and have fun," Yazici said. "The improvements we're making to Southeast Fourth Street will help facilitate all of that."

The three projects already under construction are:

- **The Village at Sammamish Town Center** - This 6-acre project will feature a Metropolitan Market, 159 apartments, plus retail and commercial space.

- **Southeast Village** - This 4.5-acre site will provide 75 townhomes (including 13 live-work units) and 6,500 square feet of commercial space.

- **Plateau 120** - Built on a 2.84-acre site, this apartment development will feature 92 units built by American Classic and 14,515 square feet of office space.



Councilmember Christie Malchow discusses improvements.

quadrants.

The plan's regulations are intended to produce a mixture of retail, residential, recreational, commercial and

City employees recognized for great work

Staffers associated with the Community & Aquatic Center earned most of the awards at last month's Employee Appreciation Lunch.

Project Manager Sevda Baran won the "Employee of the Year Award" and Project Manager Anjali Myer won the "City Manager's Award" for their work on the project.

Not surprisingly, the "Team of the Year Award" went to a large group of employees who made key contribu-

tions to the same enterprise under the leadership of Parks Director Jessi Bon.

Also recognized at the yearly lunch were Firefighter of the Year Jeff Werre and Police Officer of the Year Adam Scherck.

"We have great people working for the community," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "It's always a pleasure when we take the time to recognize their contributions."



Sevda Baran, holding her "Employee of the Year" award, is joined (from the left) by Councilmember Tom Odell, Councilmember Bob Keller, Mayor Don Gerend, Deputy Mayor Ramiro Valderrama and Councilmember Kathy Huckabay.



Anjali Myer, holding her City Manager's Award, is joined (from the left) by Mayor Don Gerend, Deputy Mayor Ramiro Valderrama, Councilmember Kathy Huckabay and Councilmember Christie Malchow.



Staffers contributing to the Sammamish Community & Aquatic Center project received the "Team of the Year" award: (From left) Jim Grueber, Lynne Handlos, Allison Gubata, Shelby Upton, Andrew Zagars, Missy Marshall May, Kellye Hilde, Cynthia Tiwana, Kyle Endelman, Marlene Dunham, Jodee Bass, Joanna Martin, Anjali Myer (holding plaque), Janie Jackson, Darci Donovan, Sevda Baran, Mike Keller, Dawn Flores, Steve Belzak, and Jessi Bon.

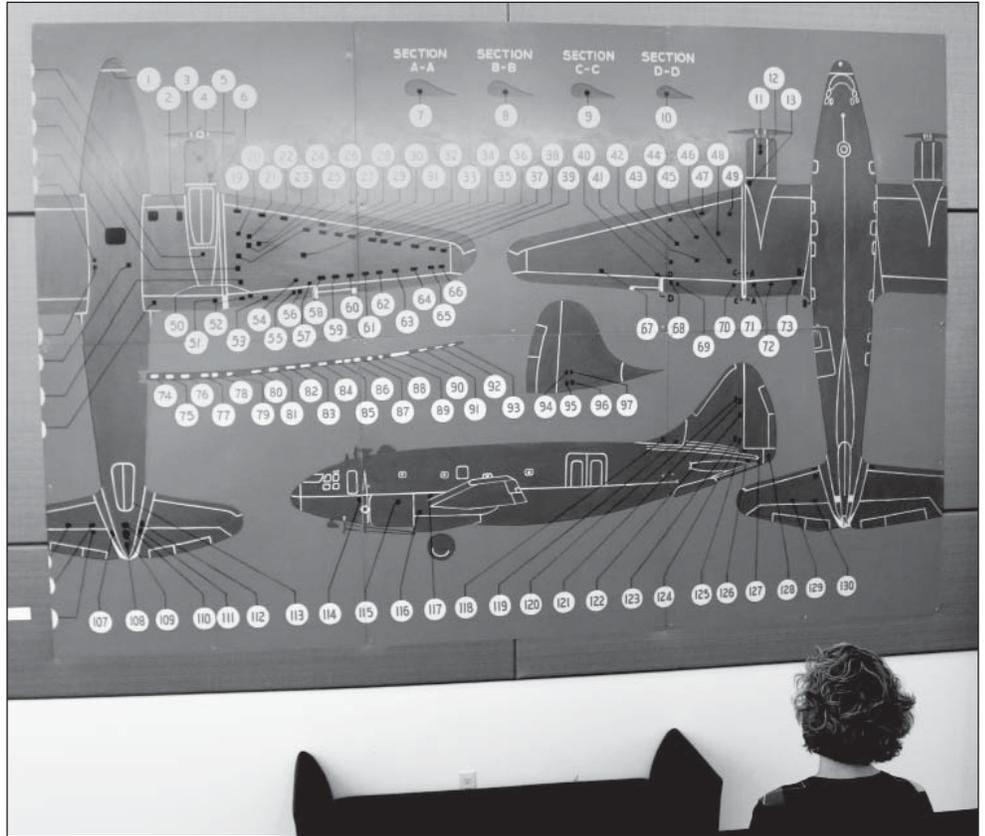
“Vanishing Points”

ART BY DON FELS ON DISPLAY
IN CITY HALL UNTIL APRIL 18

The striking work of internationally acclaimed visual artist Don Fels is currently on display inside City Hall.

Entitled “Vanishing Points,” the display draws on the artist’s connection to the China-Burma-India airlift during World War II. The artist’s father was one of the heroic pilots who flew cargo over “the hump,” a dangerous route over icy peaks that took many lives.

An artist reception for Mr. Fels and a discussion of the exhibit was held at City Hall on Thursday, Jan. 28. The exhibit, sponsored by the Sammamish Arts Commission, will run through April 14.



Now on display at City Hall: C46 Airplane, enamel on metal, 2008, by Don Fels.

What’s the matter with motor oil?

IT DOESN’T DISSOLVE IN WATER, AND THAT’S A PROBLEM

When motor oil runs into storm drains, it goes directly to our lakes, rivers and the ocean. That’s not good. And did you know that a one-pint can of oil can make a slick larger than a football field?

Used motor oil is the largest single source of oil pollution in lakes, streams and rivers. Americans spill 180 million gallons of used oil each year into our waters. And unfortunately, these petroleum products aren’t just unsightly, they’re also toxic to fish, wildlife and plants.

Here’s what you can do to help:

- Keep your car well maintained. Regularly check for leaks and make sure your car goes in for service on an appropriate schedule.
- If you find leaks or drips under your car, please have it repaired.
- Don’t change your oil in the driveway. Take your car to a service center.
- If you do change your own oil, do it in a garage, never in the street. Use a self-contained oil pan and discard the oil at a local service center.
- NEVER discard oil, gas, or antifreeze into a storm drain.
- If you spill hazardous fluids, contain it immediately with rags and cat litter. Clean up the spill and properly dispose of the waste.

Please do your part to keep our lakes, streams and oceans clean!

Volunteer this month!

Plant a tree in Lower Commons Park!
Saturday, Feb. 20, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Volunteers will also remove invasive
plants and enhance the wetland habitat.

Restore Ebright Creek!
Saturday, Feb. 27, 9 a.m. to noon.
Volunteers will join the Washington
Native Plant Society as they remove
weeds and plant native trees.

Sign up on the city’s volunteer page at
www.sammamish.us/volunteer.

CITY CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

Tuesday, Feb. 2

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

Wednesday, Feb. 3

-Parks and Rec Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 4

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

Saturday, Feb. 6

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

Tuesday, Feb. 9

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

Monday, Feb. 15

-Presidents Day,
City offices closed

Tuesday, Feb. 16

-City Council Mtg/Study Session 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 18

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

Saturday, Feb. 20

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

Monday, Feb. 22

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

Saturday, Feb. 27

-Volunteer at Ebright Creek, 9 a.m.- noon
-“Life Stories”

Cross-Generational Event
FREE, 1-4 p.m.
Bellewood Retirement Center

MARCH

Tuesday, March 1

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

Wednesday, March 2

-Short Course on Local Planning, Bellevue City Hall, 6-9 p.m.
-Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 8

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

Tuesday, March 15

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

Wednesday, March 16

-Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, March 17

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

Friday, March 18

-Blood Drive, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
City Hall

Saturday, March 19

-“Make It A Clay Day”
FREE Inclusive Event, 1-4 p.m.
Boys and Girls Club

Monday, March 28

-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.

Would sponsoring a city event make sense for you?

MORE THAN TWENTY SPECIAL EVENTS OFFER MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

Whether you're a small company, a well-established business, or a high-profile agency, there are a variety of sponsorship levels available for anyone interested in partnering with the city.

Musical performances, Shakespeare plays, holiday celebrations – they're all family-friendly marketing opportunities that might be perfect for you!

Here are the top five reasons to partner with the city:

- Unique opportunities for face-to-face interaction with potential customers.
- A chance to enhance your brand in ways that your storefront or website can't.
- Be a hospitality host, become part of the community fabric and experience these special events from the inside.
- Network with other local businesses.

- Identify your brand with images and emotions that are associated with fun, family-friendly events.

With an established, year-around schedule of special events, the city offers a variety of marketing options. Here are just a few:

- The Fourth on the Plateau
- Summer Concerts in the Park
- Sammamish Days
- Very Merry Sammamish
- KidsFirst!
- Rig-a-Palooza

To view the sponsorship packet, go to www.sammamish.us and click through *Events, Special Events and Sponsor*. You may also contact Lynne Handlos (425-295-0584, lhandlos@sammamish.us) to identify just the right opportunity for you.





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*Don Gerend
Mayor*



*Ramiro Valderrama
Deputy Mayor*



*Tom Hornish
Councilmember*



*Kathy Huckabay
Councilmember*



*Bob Keller
Councilmember*



*Christie Malchow
Councilmember*



*Tom Odell
Councilmember*

Oops!

Corrections:

In last month's city newsletter,
two incorrect phone numbers were listed.
Here are the correct numbers:

To report a sign down, call the Maintenance
and Operations Center at 425-952-2115

For non-emergency calls to the Sammamish
Police Department, dial 206-296-3311.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

801 228th Ave. SE, Sammamish, WA 98075
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Lyman Howard	Deputy City Manager
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
Greg Tryon	Fire Chief
Michael Kenyon	City Attorney

*Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
Contact Communications Mgr Tim Larson
425-295-0555, tlarsen@sammamish.us*