

Neighborhood News

A NEWSLETTER FOR BELLINGHAM NEIGHBORHOODS

Winter's a Great Time to Get Movin'

Neighborhoods are invited to join this year's Get Movin' Winter Resolution program by encouraging kids and families in their neighborhood to register for the Get Movin' Program. Get Movin' challenges participants to be physically active five days a week, 30 minutes a day, throughout January 2009. Register at www.cob.org/ezreg or pick up registration forms at Bellingham Parks and Recreation by January 1, 2009.

Neighborhoods are also encouraged to plan a Get Movin' event. Why not organize a run or walk at a park or trail, plan a dog walkers' get together at an off-leash park, or schedule a play event for kids at a nearby park? To advertise your event on the Get Movin' calendar, contact Cori Kauk, Recreation Coordinator at Bellingham Parks and Recreation, (360) 778-7000 or ckauk@cob.org by December 18.

Kick-off a healthy 2009 by attending the Winter Get Movin' Resolution Kick-Off, **WEDNESDAY, DEC. 31, 2008 FROM 6 - 9 PM AT THE BELLINGHAM SPORTSPLEX** where all kinds of activities will be offered free!

Start the new year off right with a brisk jog or walk around beautiful Lake Padden! This event is free and it starts at 11 am sharp, January 1, 2009, at the bath house on the west end of Lake Padden Park.

Program organizers include the Whatcom County Health Department, Bellingham Parks and Recreation, Whatcom Physical Activity Coalition, Whatcom Coalition for Healthy Communities and dozens of organizations and businesses planning free events for participants to attend throughout the month of January.

Information on Whatcom County's Get Movin' program and how to participate is available at www.GetMovinWhatcom.org



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A letter from Mayor Dan Pike

I look forward to the holidays and celebration of the New Year as a time to reflect on the accomplishments of the past 12 months and set goals for the coming year. This reflection comes at a time when I also am completing my first year as the Mayor of Bellingham. And what a rich, rewarding, fast-paced year it has been!

I've been delighted to work with so many thoughtful, engaged citizens, especially neighborhood leaders and volunteers who give so generously of their time and expertise to promote strong, robust neighborhoods. Healthy neighborhoods are key to a healthy,

successful city. We've worked hard this year to continue building our partnerships with neighborhoods, such as by directing resources toward neighborhood nuisances, partnering with other agencies to provide neighborhood training and other services, and identifying ways to promote infill while protecting neighborhood character.

We've also made progress on key community priorities, such as promoting a "green," sustainable Bellingham, protecting Lake Whatcom - our

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Dan Pike
Mayor of Bellingham

Mayor's Letter

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precious source of drinking water - and redeveloping the city's waterfront into a vibrant, successful new part of our downtown.

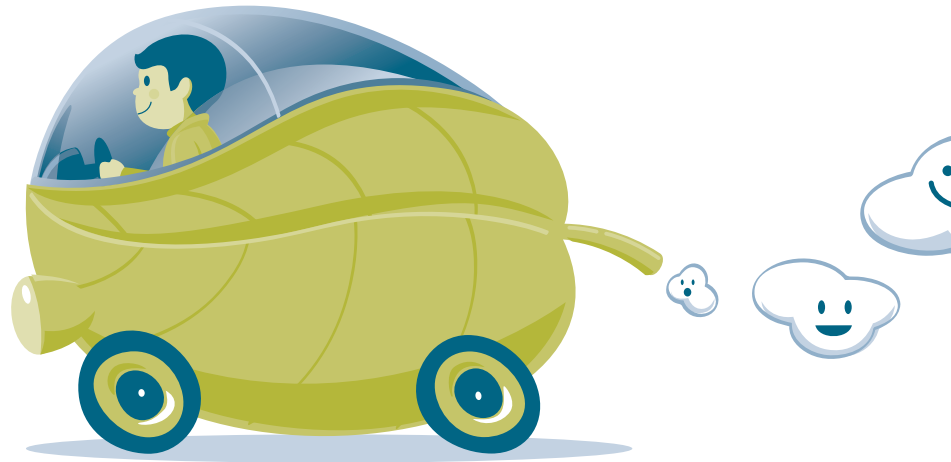
Last month I wrote about the financial challenges we face. Our fiscal realities today remain uncertain, but we are confident that we'll continue to serve the citizens of Bellingham with wise, informed financial decisions. I look forward to working closely with the community as we make decisions that strengthen the city's long-term financial outlook.

When I took office one year ago, I particularly focused on bringing the broadest possible spectrum of our community to the table to address critical needs and decisions. From our diverse backgrounds and common values we will find our way in a future that is filled with opportunities and challenges. I offer my heartfelt thanks to all who have been involved in the many important issues facing city government. I have learned from you and grown from your wise counsel. Together, we have tackled key issues and positioned city government to address even more.

Special thanks as well to the many highly competent, enthusiastic city staff who I've come to know as key partners in serving the citizens of Bellingham.

May the winter holidays bring joy and special times to you, your friends and your families.

Mayor Dan Pike



Save Money and Breathe Easy

There is an effortless act we all can do to help lower our gasoline bill, extend the life of our cars, and improve the quality of the air we breathe. The answer is to turn off our engines whenever idling, out of traffic, for over 10 seconds. You may think: 'Doesn't it take more gas to restart the engine than it is to idle? Won't turning the engine off and on cause damage?' The answer for both questions is no. There are many myths associated with idling, but the facts will save you money and the environment.

A common misconception is that restarting your car burns more gas and causes engine damage. In fact, the opposite is true; idling an engine forces it to operate in a very inefficient and gasoline-rich mode that, over time, can degrade the engine's performance and reduce mileage. Experts say there is a maximum 10 second break-even rule. If you are idling longer than 10 seconds, both you and the engine are better off if the engine is turned off and restarted.

It is not necessary to warm up your engine on a cold winter day.

Modern engines need no more than a few seconds of idling time before they can be driven safely. Moreover, the best way to warm up a car is to drive it. Driving your vehicle warms up the catalytic converter and other mechanical parts of the car, in addition to the engine.

By cutting just 5 minutes of idle time a day, you may save up to \$241 annually and keep 440 pounds of carbon dioxide out of the air. Turn the key on this issue and save money and the world you drive in.

The City of Bellingham is reducing its gasoline bill and reducing air pollution by implementing a new anti-idling policy for the vehicle fleet. City employees have committed to changing their driving habits and reducing their idling time by over 70%.

For more information contact: Kym Fedale, Environmental Educator, Bellingham Public Works Department(360) 778-7900 or kfedale@cob.org.



Urban Transportation CHALLENGE



The purpose of the Urban Transportation challenge is to harness the creative potential of local community members to generate innovative programs for reducing single occupant vehicle (SOV) trips and/or vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Winning Challenge entries will be programs local agencies can actually put into practice to help achieve the SOV trip reduction goal in the City of Bellingham's Comprehensive Plan, and/or the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal in Washington State's Western Climate Initiative.

The challenge is both a contest and a pair of community events. The contest will offer prizes as incentives for college students, neighborhood advocates, and community members to develop their

ideas. The events are opportunities for citizens to learn about the winning entries, explore alternative vehicle technologies (an Alternative Vehicle Expo will accompany the second event) and discuss the transportation challenges facing our community.

All Whatcom County residents are eligible. Projects must be implementable, economically feasible, measurable and transferable. Challenge events will include a Kick-Off on 1/8/09 and a Main Event and Alternative Vehicle Expo on 3/7/09.

For more information contact Whatcom Transportation Authority at (360) 527-4725.

Public Works in Our Neighborhoods

PROJECT UPDATES

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Bay & Holly Streetscape Improvements – Project on schedule. **BUSINESSES ARE OPEN DURING CONSTRUCTION!**

Mount Baker Theatre Lighting and Electrical Improvements – Restoration work complete.



Flora and Grand – Excavation for streetscape commenced.

MOUNT BAKER

Sunset Drive Reconstruction Phase II: – Storm drain installation complete.

Information about these and other Public Works projects can be found in the "road closures and restrictions" notice posted each week in the "news" section of the City's web site at www.cob.org.

For more information contact: Ravyn S. Whitewolf, P.E., Engineering Manager, City of Bellingham Public Works Engineering Division, (360) 778-7900

A Preparedness Message from the Office of Emergency Management

As the weather turns colder, consider how you might protect and store your important documents so you have quick, easy access to them during or after a disaster.

Why is this important? When disaster strikes, you may need financial assistance afterward and will want to document property loss for insurance and income tax purposes. **Having ready access to documents and important papers will help you complete applications for assistance,** as well as assist in substantiating claims.

To learn more about this and other important emergency preparedness topics, check out the Washington State Emergency Management Division website at: http://emd.wa.gov/preparedness/prep_infocus.shtml or contact City of Bellingham Office of Emergency Management, (360) 778-8440



Have You Mapped Your Neighborhood?

Map Your Neighborhood (MYN) is a simple plan for you and your neighbors to help each other in the event of a disaster until fire, ambulance, police and utilities can get to you. Depending on the emergency situation, this could be hours or days.

To learn about MYN, contact Don Davis, City of Bellingham Office of Emergency Management, (360) 778-8443, or ddavis@cob.org.