



SOMERSET SUN

Neighborhood news from the Somerset Community Association

Winter 2019

**SNOW ON SOMERSET?
SCA ANNUAL MEETING
COUNCIL CORNER
SCHOOL BOARD UPDATE
CENSE NEWS**

SOMERSET COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS - RESPONSIBILITIES

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Maggie Yeh	yehmargaret@gmail.com	Secretary

The Somerset Community Association bylaws provide for a Board consisting of 12 to 15 Directors who are elected at our annual meetings and each serve a 3-year term. Our officers of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are chosen following election to the Board. If you are interested in possibly filing the vacancies we have on the Board or the Covenant Review Committee, or aren't sure who to contact with a question, please see our website or send an email to somerset98006@gmail.com.

SOMERSET SUN ADVERTISING DEADLINES:

February 7, 2020 – Spring issue

May 8, 2020 – Summer issue

August 7, 2020 – Fall issue

November 6, 2020 - Winter Issue

Sizes and Rates (same for color or black & white):

Business Card (3"w x 2"h)	\$25
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Full Page (8"w x 10½" h)	\$550

There is a 10% discount for Somerset residents, OR for committing to the next three issues.

Thank you for your interest in advertising in the Somerset Sun.

Together, we are neighbors helping neighbors.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR WELCOMED

Do you have a question or comment about the Sun newsletter or about what's going on in the Somerset community? Ideas for a topic you'd like us to cover? Submit your thoughts today! The SCA welcomes Letters to the Editor. Share your ideas, questions, and concerns with those around you. Send your email to us at somerset98006@gmail.com.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

*to all from the
Somerset Community
Association*



SOMERSET98006.ORG



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Hi, Neighbors!



I hope that as this newsletter arrives, you are prepared for the holidays and bundled up for the winter. The Somerset Community Association board has been meeting monthly through the year, and I want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Board members for their hard work and dedication to the Somerset community. We all have jobs, families, health challenges and other day-to-day life “issues” that compete for our time, and Somerset is grateful that you are willing to save some of that time for the SCA!

In this issue of the Sun, we have tried to provide you with information that you will find interesting and/or helpful. We have updates from our various committee chairs, news about upcoming holiday events, emergency preparedness and safety topics as winter approaches. We’ve also included some resources for snow removal should the days turn snowy. If you have ideas for future articles for the newsletter, or issues you’d like us to research or address, please let us know. We want this newsletter to be a useful resource for our community members.

SCA PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

As usual, I am hoping to encourage more of you to become involved in the Somerset community. Our main goal is to keep Somerset a desirable and sought after neighborhood, and we need YOUR involvement to be successful. Even if you can’t commit to joining our Board, please support the neighborhood by paying your annual membership dues, which go toward seasonal plantings, year-round maintenance of landscaping for entrances and community areas, and maintenance of the fountain, signage, lighting and sprinkler systems. Your dues invoice for 2020 should be in your mailbox shortly.

Lastly, please come hear all the details of our plans for next year at the SCA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on Thursday, January 23, at Forest Ridge School, in the Ackerly Room. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Your participation is welcome and encouraged. Hope to see you there!

All my best to you and your families for a happy and healthy 2020!

Diane Fern
SCA President

ANNUAL SCA GENERAL MEETING

Please join your neighbors on **Thursday, January 23, 2020** for our annual general membership meeting!

Come meet your SCA Board members and neighbors in Forest Ridge School’s Ackerly Board Room (south side of campus). Light refreshments and social mingling at 6:30 pm, business meeting begins at 7:00 pm. We will ask members to approve our annual budget and elect new board members. The agenda includes community speakers, a CENSE update on the status of the Eastside Energy project, and answers to your community questions. If you haven't already mailed in your proxy statement and annual dues for 2020, please bring your check with you.

Hope to see you there!

SCA BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

Your Somerset Community Association is seeking Somerset neighbors to serve on the Board of Directors as volunteers beginning in January 2020 for a three-year term. We need a diverse group of perspectives to accurately represent our wonderful neighborhood. If you are interested in giving back to your community and helping Somerset, please contact us at somerset98006@gmail.org.



By Councilmember Jennifer Robertson

The election is now over and we have three returning Councilmembers and one new Councilmember. Councilmembers Janice Zahn and John Stokes were re-elected to serve second and third terms respectively. Jeremy Barksdale was elected

year. With a combined budget of over \$1.5 billion for the two-year period, doing the budget is a large part of next year's work plan. One thing that will guide the budget development is the City Council Priorities. You can find these, along with the Council Vision, at bellevuewa.gov/city-government/city-council/council-vision.

COUNCIL CORNER

to his first term. He will replace retiring Councilmember John Chelminiak who served 16 years on the Council. I was also re-elected and will be serving a fourth term on the City Council.

I want to take a moment to thank everyone who voted or participated in this year's elections. I am very honored and humbled by the support from so many people who live and work in Bellevue, including many of my Somerset neighbors. I remain passionate about Bellevue providing excellent service to you and look forward to continuing to be your voice on the Bellevue City Council!

Swearing in for all elected or re-elected Councilmembers will be held in Council Chambers on Monday, December 9th. The public is invited to attend. The new mayor and deputy mayor will be selected by the Council as the first order of business at the first meeting in January.

In addition to seating a new Council, next year is also a budget year. Bellevue budgets biennially and sets a two-year operating budget and seven-year capital budget in every even-numbered

In the first quarter of each year, the Council goes on a two-day retreat to work on priorities and big picture issues for the City. During the retreat is when we often discuss updates to the Council Vision and modifying or adopting new Priorities. The actual adoption of the Vision and Priorities happens at a regular council meeting at some point following the retreat. Following the adoption of Priorities, the Council will hold budget workshops and study sessions. We typically hold three budget hearings throughout the year. The City Manager then takes this information and releases a proposed budget in the fall. The Council continues to discuss and adjust the budget until it is adopted in December. The budget is the City Council's largest policy document as it determines how we spend taxpayer resources for the benefit of our residents. If you want to learn more about the City's budget, please visit bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/finance/budget-and-performance/budgets.

As the year winds down to a close, I want to send best wishes from my family to yours for a restful and happy holiday season and a bright new year in 2020.

Jennifer is a municipal attorney and a member of the Bellevue City Council. She lives with her husband and three daughters in Somerset. You can reach her at j.robertson@bellevuewa.gov.

ADOPT A STORM DRAIN

Don't let fall rainstorms flood your street. "Adopt" a storm drain near you, raking it clear of leaves and other debris when you have the chance. Every autumn/winter Bellevue Utilities faces a big job keeping storm drains clear. There are over 20,000 of them around the city! Storm drains flow directly to local lakes, rivers and wetlands, acting as a conduit for trash and organic pollutants. After snowfall, melting snow and rain can also block storm drain inlets and cause localized flooding. You can prevent flooding or ponding in your neighborhood by safely removing snow and ice from your local storm drain.

If you can keep a drain in your neighborhood clear of leaves, trash, and other debris, it will:

- Prevent flooding in your neighborhood by keeping drains free of debris.
- Prevent pollutants from entering streams, creeks and Puget Sound, which protects fish and other wildlife.
- Help the city maintain our infrastructure, especially during fall months when rain increases and falling leaves block drains.



Remember to clear the drain only if it is safe to do so. Stay out of the street and work from a sidewalk if possible. Put all leaves and compostable debris in your yard waste. Don't put grass clippings, leaves or other debris into drains, ditches, creeks, culverts, gutters or ravines.

If a storm drain appears blocked below the street surface, call (425) 452-7840.

WHOSE LIFE WILL YOUR HOME SALE CHANGE?



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Ever wonder how you could help a person in need? When you work with me to buy or sell a home, I give 10% of every fee back to causes that are having a positive impact in our communities. This helps support organizations like Windermere Foundation, Bellevue Schools Foundation, Jubilee Reach, Youth Eastside Services and other worthy causes.

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Please check out my website for more information on the non-profits we are supporting and how together are helping to make a difference.

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LANDSCAPING UPDATE

The rainy and cold season is rapidly approaching with less sunshine and shorter days. Throughout the year, the SCA has continued to work with Dawn 'til Dusk (for common area maintenance) and Aquasense (for upkeep of the irrigation system). Dawn 'til Dusk has replanted the entrance island area with winter annuals, has been trimming the plants/trees, picking up leaves, and winterizing these areas to protect all of the vegetation from the cold winter temperatures. Aquasense recently upgraded our irrigation system by adding a new rain sensor and consolidating controls, which will improve the systems coverage in the Somerset Boulevard entrance area. Gary Albert has again helped to resolve issues and maintain the system. We greatly appreciate his continued support and dedication to our community - Thank you Gary!

The Holiday Season is rapidly approaching, and our holiday lights will be turned on at the main entrance from around Thanksgiving through Lunar New Year at the end of January. Please feel free to join us in celebrating this special time of year by decorating your homes with festive decorations and colorful lights too.

We would also like to encourage you to trim your trees and plants, winterize your lawn with winter fertilizer, and rake up

the leaves in your yard. It is good time to winterize your planters too, with winter-hardy plants such as grasses, euphorbias, heucheras, small shrubs (nandina, conifers), or flowering perennials (cyclamen, winter pansies). If the temperature drops into the 20s, cover the pots or place them in your garage to protect them from freezing.

Please remember to maintain the areas next to the streets between the curb and sidewalks (the "sidewalk strips"), and the islands in your cul-de-sac. These areas are the responsibility of the residents in that area to maintain. Also, the medians on Highland and Forest Drive are maintained by the City of Bellevue's Parks Department and we are continuing to coordinate with them to request that they enhance and improve those areas for our community in 2020.

Thank you all for your continued support for are community, maintaining your yards, and making your street look great! If you have any questions regarding any landscape or maintenance issues, please contact our Covenant Review Committee or email me at suesander1@gmail.com. Take care, Happy Holidays to you all, and remember to always **BE GREEN!**

Sue Sander
Landscape Chair



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Tanya Franzen-Garrett

SOMERSET RESOURCE

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TANYA@SOUND-PROPERTIES.COM

TANYA FRANZEN-GARRETT

SOMERSET RESOURCE
WITH GLOBAL CONNECTIONS



By School Board Member Dr. Francine Wiest

Great Schools Inside and Out Need Your Vote

Somerset Elementary School was rebuilt in 2003-2004 as the second school in a building-by-building

renovation effort across Bellevue School District to ensure that all students have access to safe, inclusive, and equitable learning facilities. An assessment of some existing buildings at the time found that the cost to maintain and make repairs to keep students and staff safe, warm, and dry, was nearly the cost to rebuild. In this area, Newport High School was partially rebuilt in 2007; portions of the existing building, such as the auditorium and gym, were kept to minimize costs and relocation of students, and more space is now needed. Tyee Middle School students had their new school in 2012.

Schools with complete rebuilds had students attending "swing" school sites. For middle schoolers, this meant two years at Ringdall in Newport Hills, while elementary students were relocated to Bellewood in central Bellevue for a year. This coming year, Bellewood is empty and is slated to be completely rebuilt and become the new Puesta del Sol Elementary, the Spanish immersion choice school currently located by Tyee in the Monthaven neighborhood. Opening up its current site will provide flexibility to meet demand as Bellevue continues to grow. Additionally, the new school buildings are larger to accommodate growth.

As each school has been rebuilt, increased energy efficiencies in the designs mean that the new Puesta del Sol building is projected to be net neutral to net negative (returning power to the grid), using solar panels, geothermal heating, battery storage, and more. Not only do these "green" buildings benefit our community and provide a living laboratory for students such as a real-time energy use panel and placards around the school highlighting efficiencies, but also they save the district on utilities, which means more money available to benefit student learning. As an example, one elementary school was rebuilt to twice its former size, and the savings on utility bills each year are almost enough to fund another teacher.

In order to finish the rebuild of the remaining schools, and to provide much needed expansion of overcrowded schools such as Newport and Interlake High Schools, as well as building upgrades to enhance security, the school board is asking voters to approve a \$675 million bond in a special election on

BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT UPDATE

Tuesday, February 11, 2020. Because bonds are only sold when needed at the time of construction, and then are nested into existing repayments, taxpayers will see, at most, a three-cent increase per \$1000 of assessed valuation (e.g., \$30/year on \$1 million home) when voting yes to approve this new bond.

This bond will positively affect residents of Somerset – either your children or those of your neighbors. While Somerset benefitted from being among the first to get a new school, it is now time for security upgrades, and Newport High School will have 148,000 square feet added for classrooms, common areas, athletic and music facilities, and more. Currently there is not enough space for all Newport High School students to be seated at lunch in the commons area (no dedicated cafeteria), there are multiple portables, and in order to create space for much needed counselors, part of the library had to be walled off.

Bellevue is known for a world-class education. This bond will ensure students, teachers, and staff have the facilities to continue providing that level of excellence to secure our community's future. Please vote in February 2020 on this important issue.

Francine lives in Somerset with her husband and three children. She was elected in November to retain her position as Bellevue School Board Director and appreciates the opportunity to serve our community.

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SNOW? ON SOMERSET? REALLY?

Really! If you were here last year, you remember this too well. Some love it: Isn't it beautiful? Let's make a snowman. No school! Some feel otherwise: What a mess. I can't drive in this. No school!?

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Either way, a winter storm will impact our lives for a few days, a week or more. Therefore, we should prepare for it BEFORE snow is forecast and we find store shelves empty of food and snow shovels.

Listen carefully to weather reports for the predicted rain/snow transition level. When it drops below 1000 feet to 500 feet or lower you should pay close attention. Due to our elevation (Somerset Elementary School is at 780 feet), we can receive snow when surrounding communities receive rain. So be aware that even though snow is not in the regional forecast, it may hit at home. Preparation for winter weather requires planning for dressing properly, winterizing your home and vehicle, preparing for power outages and little access to stores, planning what to do if weather prevents travel home from work or school, and having the right equipment to deal with snowstorms and ice storms. (Ice storms are less common than snow but can be more damaging and challenging.)

Dress for the Weather

- Dress in layers. You don't need a fancy snow parka. Layers of clothing topped with a water-resistant outer layer will keep you warm and dry.
- Wear boots with traction soles and purchase a pair of inexpensive slip-on traction devices for icy conditions or walking on slopes (search under "ice traction slip-ons" and read the reviews).
- Warm socks, a hat and good pair of gloves or mittens will also keep you comfortable. Where should you keep this? Maybe in your vehicle? You want it available wherever you are.

Prepare Your Home

- Get the furnace inspected now. The last thing you want during a winter storm is a problem with your heating system when an emergency visit from the furnace repairman may not be possible. So have your system inspected to help ensure it does not fail at the worst possible time.

- Secure and clean gutters. Make sure your gutters and roof are in good condition. Clogged gutters can cause water to back up and freeze resulting in excessive loads on your eaves, ice overhangs, and sudden ice falls. The weight of ice and snow on tree limbs can cause them to bend or break which may pose a risk to your home if they are overhanging.
- Protect water pipes. Water pipes that are either not insulated directly or protected behind home insulation will freeze. When water freezes it expands with tremendous force and will break pipes. Remove hoses from outdoor faucets and drain them. Place a cover over outside faucets to help protect them from freezing (local hardware stores have these).
- Have snow shovel and deicer ready. The right equipment for clearing snow and melting ice will increase driving and walking safety around your home. Don't wait until the last minute or you might not find any.

Prepare for Power Outages

The power may be interrupted for several hours or days by snow and ice laden branches falling across power lines leading into our neighborhood. Be prepared to dress warmly in the home. Shopping during and immediately after the storm will likely be impossible, so plan to shelter at home for several days with a supply of non-perishable food, first-aid materials and medicines, battery operated radio, flashlights with extra batteries, and a manual can opener. Find complete emergency preparation lists by following the links at the end of this article.

Winterize your Vehicle

- **Install traction tires.** Make sure your vehicle tires are up to the challenge of winter driving. Traction tires or tires with studs may be advisable. If you absolutely need to drive when conditions are bad, then chains may help prevent a long night in the cold. Be sure to practice putting chains on before they're needed (this is no fun to learn when you're stuck in the snow).
- **Keep essentials in your vehicle.** Throwing a sturdy shovel in the back is a good idea. Some snack bars and a few bottles of water, along with your snow gear and a flashlight, will help you through a long delay or stranding. The entries to Somerset at the base of hills often turn into parking lots for a few days after a big storm. Walking home will be much safer if you are prepared and have your gear in the car with you.
- **Keep your gas tank above half full.** Make sure you always have plenty of gas just in case you do get stuck and must use the car heat to keep warm.



- **Top off your washer fluid** reservoir and check your wipers.
- See WSDOT.com/winter/ for more information on preparing for winter driving in our state.

Beware of Black Ice

Roads can be icy even without a storm. Black ice is a particularly nasty condition when a cold night causes frost to form on roadway surfaces. This thin, transparent layer of ice is invisible to the eye. Always be on guard for black ice if you leave your home in the morning and temperatures are low. Keep in mind the air temperature does not need to be below freezing for black ice to form if the roadway surface has been exposed to a clear night sky. If you have noticed stripes on Somerset Blvd some mornings, that's from the city spraying a deicer solution on the road when conditions pose a risk for black ice. But they only hit our major streets so be especially careful on side streets.

Create and Communicate a Family Plan

Think through the different winter storm scenarios and how they will impact you and your family. If a storm arrives during the day when we're away at work or school, how do family members communicate with each other? It's important for each family to establish a plan that addresses (1) how to retrieve children from school. Consider that it may be safer (maybe even faster) to walk rather than drive if you are dressed for the weather, (2) how to get home or shelter in place if you are stuck at work or in your car, and (3) how to communicate status among family members.

Additional Winter Preparedness Information

- US Dept of Homeland Security: Ready.gov/winter-weather
- King County and Seattle: TakeWinterByStorm.org
- City of Bellevue: BellevueWA.gov/prepar

Pete Mansfield
Emergency Preparedness Chair

NOT SO FUN FACT: THERE IS ONE EMERGENCY RESPONDER FOR EVERY 2000 PEOPLE IN KING COUNTY.

It has been well understood for some time that if our region is hit with a widespread emergency or disaster, Somerset residents may not receive emergency services for days or weeks. About 15 years ago residents of Somerset addressed this concern by beginning to organize into "blocks" of 20-40 homes to promote community safety and emergency preparedness. Blocks were organized around Block Watch and Strengthening Preparedness Among Neighbors (SPAN) programs. At its peak, we had 22 active blocks encompassing approximately 800 homes. A recent survey finds that there are less than a handful of active blocks left. Many of the leaders who volunteered to help organize and maintain their blocks have either moved away or after many years are ready to pass the baton to someone else. Also, programs have been updated over this time and we need to update ourselves too.

As a result, we are seeking individuals who are interested in getting involved and who we can help to revive or form a neighborhood block. We're also looking to identify people who are ham radio operators or who maintain satellite phone call or text services that are willing to help with communication in a widespread emergency or disaster situation.

Please contact me at petermansfield@comcast.net for more information and to see how you can get involved!

Safe Holidays to Everyone!

Pete Mansfield
Emergency Preparedness Chair

SCHOOL CLOSURE INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency (including bad weather), the district may declare a one hour late start, two hour late start, an early dismissal or complete closure. To determine if school is cancelled, releasing early or starting late, your school website will provide information and local radio and TV stations should have up-to-date school closure information. Keep in mind that Somerset often receives snow when lower elevations do not. Also, for Newport High School students who use Metro -- during periods of poor weather, Metro will attempt to maintain service **according to their regular schedule**, even if school is to start late. Please listen to messages and have alternative means arranged to get to and from school if poor weather is present or predicted.

BSD405.org/help/closure
BSD News Line (425) 456-4111.

Facebook.com/bsd405
Twitter.com/thebsd405

Flashalert.net/id/BellevueSD
Local TV and radio stations

While the BSD does its best to make decisions to keep all students safe, conditions may vary through the district. Please take into consideration your personal situation and make the appropriate decision to keep you and your student safe.



SRC EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION:

2020 Summer Family Membership Pre-Sale!

Purchase your 2020 Summer Family Membership for \$645 (current or new members) **NOW** through December 31, 2019 and save \$50 at www.somersetrec.org.

After careful consideration the SRC board is removing the \$130 maintenance fee deposit from all SRC membership pricing. Benefits of the change/information:

- Even with no maintenance fee, we are hopeful that our members will still volunteer on one of our Community Service Days during the pre-season to get SRC ready for the summer. Pressure washing, weeding, landscaping, cleaning and painting will still be needed.
- By eliminating the maintenance fee, SRC can receive corporate matching donations for volunteer hours at the club. If you work for a company that will match your donation of time to

non-profits, please sign up for a pre-season spring cleanup party. Please watch our Facebook page throughout the year for additional volunteer opportunities as they arise.

- Students can receive volunteer hours towards graduation or club volunteer requirements.
- Simplified pricing allows SRC to remain competitively priced with neighboring pools.
- Payment plans (3 installments) are also available this year.
- Junior Memberships and other membership types will be for sale in early 2020.

Questions, please email somersetrecclub@gmail.com and make sure to like us on FB to keep updated on SRC news!

Important 2020 Summer Dates

Dec. 31, 2019 – 2020 Early Bird Pricing Ends

May 2020 – Pool Opens

May 2020 – Swim Team Practice Begins

June 16, 2020 – Swim Team Meets Begin

July 18, 2020 – Division Champs

July 20-22, 2020 - Prelims

July 26, 2020 - A Champs @KCAC

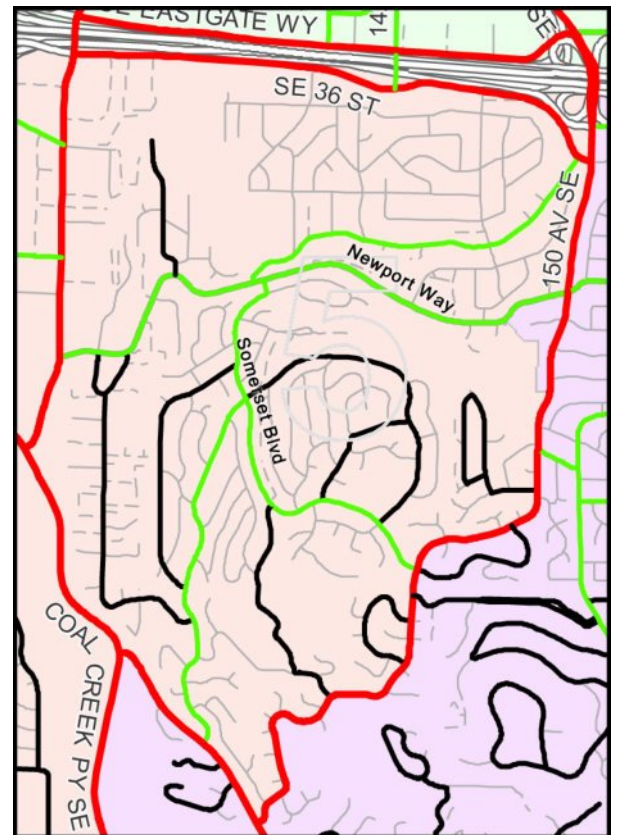
BE PREPARED FOR SNOW!

Various weather services are reporting that the Pacific Northwest will either have a very wet or a very cold winter (or both)! Since Somerset hill is at a higher elevation than much of Bellevue, we often have more snow or colder temperatures than other neighborhoods. Our steep hills increase the danger to our local drivers. The City of Bellevue has a “priority response system” to clear snow from major arterials and primary neighborhood routes, with secondary arterials and other streets being cleared only after the priority routes. A map is included which shows their priorities.

To report hazardous road conditions, call the Operations and Maintenance 24-hour Emergency Response line at (425) 452-7840. You may also make reports on the “MyBellevue” mobile app or on the city website at the customer assistance portal.

In the event that you desire to hire private snow removal services, we have collected the following names of local providers. Some are landscaping companies and others are high school students. We provide this list only as a service to our community members but do not have personal experience with their services. All have confirmed that they will be doing business this winter, so give them a call to check on their availability and rates.

Eli Cohen	(206) 359-2739
Silas Harrison	(425) 503-2097
Hoeper Enterprises	(206) 595-0480
Jack Ketchum	(425) 306-5252
Masteryards by Mike	(206) 858-3649
Adam Rashwan	(206) 696-9209
Steve & Ray's Snow Removal	(206) 230-9011



Snow Response Priorities

- Primary Arterial
- Primary Neighborhood
- Secondary Arterial



Rhona Lord
John L Scott Bellevue/Issaquah

425.241.0660

1700 NW Gillman Blve #300, Issaquah, Washington 98027
rhonal@johnlscott.com



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SEVEN REASONS FOR HOPE

On November 14, the Bellevue City Council unanimously rejected five appeals related to PSE's "Energize Eastside" project, the big transmission line upgrade that PSE announced in late 2013.

Given six years of hard work by citizen volunteers, industry

CENSE UPDATE

experts, and the CENSE attorney, this is a disappointing outcome, to be sure. At press time, CENSE is contemplating a challenge in Superior Court.

Besides court action, there are many reasons why residents should remain hopeful that the expensive and harmful project will not be built. Here are seven reasons to hope:

1. Declining demand

Peak demand for electricity in the winter has fallen approximately 10% during the past decade, according to PSE's federal reporting. PSE's main reason for building the project has evaporated. PSE's forecasts were simply wrong.

2. Batteries

Battery technology has advanced faster than anyone expected, partly due to the growing popularity of electric vehicles. Grid-sized batteries have now become a feasible solution for the Eastside's needs, providing better year-round reliability for less cost and less harm than PSE's transmission line. It is becoming increasingly awkward for PSE to deny these facts as more utilities turn to batteries for enhanced reliability and storage of renewable energy.

3. BPA cancels transmission line

Two years ago, the Bonneville Power Administration canceled a controversial transmission line across the Washington-Oregon border. The agency found that batteries and smart technology could meet the need and save customers hundreds of millions of dollars. CENSE will show how similar solutions would work for the Eastside.

4. Clean Energy Transformation Act

Earlier this year, the state legislature approved a landmark bill that mandates a transition from fossil fuels to renewables and advanced conservation technologies. This bill is having a decisive impact on PSE, because almost 60% of PSE's electricity is generated by burning coal or fracked natural gas. Necessary changes to PSE's long-range plans could significantly postpone or cancel Energize Eastside.

5. Newcastle hearing

Newcastle is skeptical of the need and benefits of Energize Eastside for their city because the project is targeted to serve growth in downtown Bellevue and the Spring District. The city of Newcastle hired an independent consulting firm to analyze the need for the project. PSE has not yet released all the data requested by the consultant, delaying the final report by many months.


6. Renton hearing

The current transmission lines are more than adequate to meet Renton's present and future peak demand. Lacking a demonstrated benefit for its citizens, is Renton willing to accept tall poles and disruptive construction to serve as an extension cord for Bellevue? PSE must answer this and other hard questions when Renton holds its public hearing next year.

7. Referendum in 2020

PSE is an opaque corporation, unaccountable to its customers, and controlled by foreign investors. Many citizens and environmental organizations are ready to "Take Our Power Back." The shortest path to clean, reliable, affordable electricity would be a public utility. Read more about this effort in the sidebar. If successful, the new utility would halt Energize Eastside before construction ever begins.

It is likely that 2020 will be a decisive year, no matter which fate awaits Energize Eastside. As always, CENSE is very grateful for the financial and moral support of Somerset homeowners. Over 90% of each donation pays for legal counsel and expert witnesses at land use hearings. As we enter this final stretch, please help by including a donation with your SCA dues, or donate directly at cense.org/donate.



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PSE OR PUD?

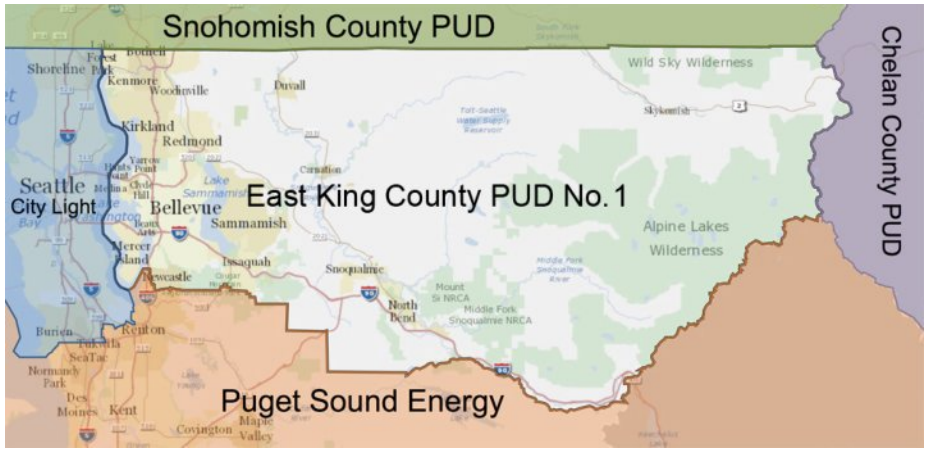
What is a PUD?

A PUD is a "Public Utility District." It's a voting district served by a publicly owned energy utility, like those that serve Seattle, Tacoma, and Snohomish. That's different from Puget Sound Energy, a profit-driven private corporation owned by Canadian and Dutch investors.

Why would a PUD be better than PSE?

First, a PUD would be more transparent and accountable to voters. Voters would directly elect three commissioners to run the PUD. The commissioners would serve the public's interest, rather than trying to maximize revenues for PSE's foreign owners. PSE is regulated by three state-level commissioners appointed by the governor with little power to review or halt a bad project before it is built.

Second, a PUD is the fastest way to reduce consumption of fossil fuels on the Eastside. Almost 60% of PSE's electricity is generated by burning coal or natural gas, producing harmful greenhouse gases. PSE is heavily invested in natural gas, and the company's owners have little financial incentive to reduce that investment. A PUD would qualify for a higher percentage



of hydro power, and would be more inclined to invest in wind, solar, and smart energy technologies.

Third, a PUD would not pursue questionable projects like Energize Eastside. PSE might voluntarily withdraw the project if PUD efforts appear to threaten the company.

How do we get a PUD?

A coalition of neighborhood and environmental organizations will collect 35,000 signatures to put an initiative on the 2020 ballot creating "East King County Public Utility District No. 1." A map of the district is shown at ekc-pud.org. You can help kickstart these efforts by downloading a petition form from the website.

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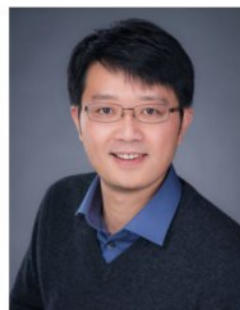
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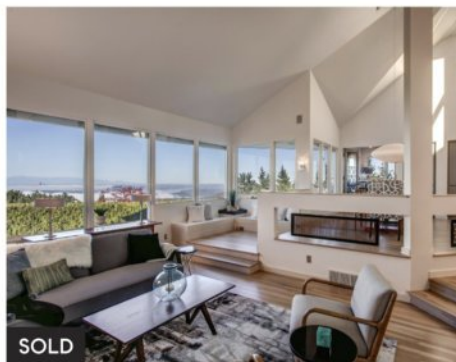
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By Jeff Skierka

In many homes, the fireplace is the centerpiece for relaxation and where home activities take place. Too often, this centerpiece is dated in another era and does not fit in with the appearance of the rest of the home. During the 80's and 90's, it seems that every new house was built with a standard used-brick fireplace facade. The majority of these home fireplaces were wood burning and let in cold air, offsetting the heat the fire produced.

In upgrading your old fireplace functionally and aesthetically, the first step to consider is bringing gas service into the fireplace. This involves a tap at the gas meter and running a line to the fireplace. Then, decide if you want a gas insert that will help heat the home or just add new doors that reduce heat loss.

With these key questions decided, it is time for the fun part, deciding what the fireplace could look like. As a designer, when helping my clients to make the correct decision, I consider the following:

- What is the style of the home and the elements surrounding the fire-place? While the fireplace is the centerpiece, it must connect to all the surrounding elements.
- Are there plans to change any of the existing elements, such as remodeling the kitchen or other areas surrounding the fireplace? Do you want a television above the fireplace?
- I ask the clients to give me words to describe the way they want the home to feel. Descriptive words often range from 'Nantucket and Cape Cod' to 'Salish Lodge' and 'log cabin'.
- When applying a new 'facing' to the fireplace, there are a wide variety of options. For example, if a thin stone is chosen for the new exterior, it may not be necessary to remove the existing brick. Dimensional tile works well for this type of application. Another relatively new stone option is thin set stone strips that are glued together. They give the fireplace a beautiful color scheme that will compliment the other design elements of the home.
- The brick that is on many of existing fireplaces is only for looks and not a part of the chimney construction. Therefore, changing the layout of the new fireplace does not have to be based on the shape of the existing layout.
- Hearth and mantel options present another design opportunity. The options range from no mantel, to stone slabs, concrete, and traditional wood mantels. For a client who wanted a lodge-like feel to her home, large pieces from a tree were cut to create the desired effect.
- Regardless of which design features you select, a modern appearing fireplace should be a visual anchor to your home. And with a simple addition of gas service, it can also be a heat source on those dark and stormy nights.

Before



After



Before



After





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Favorite Holiday Fun!

If you will be in town this holiday season, here are the details on some local favorite holiday events:

Snowflake Lane – The Bellevue Collection puts on this free parade which includes 300 performers, falling snow, dazzling lights, festive music and 16 lighted floats. Held nightly from November 29th to December 24th at 7 pm on the street between Bellevue Square and Lincoln Square. Details and exact parade route on their website. www.snowflakelane.com

Garden d'Lights - The Bellevue Botanical Garden puts on this annual event with over half a million sparkling lights formed into the whimsical shapes of plants, flowers, birds, animals and cascading waterfalls. Open nightly from 4:30 to 9:00 pm through December 31st. Admission is \$5 per person, ages 10 and under free. Tickets can be purchased online or at the door. www.gardendlights.org.

Enchant Mischievous – In its second year in Seattle, this event is held in T-Mobile Park and is marketed as the world's largest Christmas light maze, with an ice-skating trail, Santa, food, drink and nightly live music and shows. This year, guests will hunt for the 8 gifts that Eddie the Elf has hidden in the maze. Running 4 to 11 pm daily (timed entry) from November 22nd to December 29th. Tickets start at \$20/person but check the website for family packs and discount nights. www.enchantchristmas.com

Bellevue Ice Skating Arena- This all-ages winter tradition will again be held in Bellevue Downtown Park from November 29th through January 20th. The 9,000 square foot covered rink is open rain, shine or snow. Your admission (adults \$12-\$15, children \$10-\$13) includes skate rental. www.bellevueicerink.com

Christmas Ship Festival – This holiday celebration has been a Northwest tradition since 1949. The Argosy "Spirit of Seattle" is decorated with twinkling lights and onboard choirs perform while traveling to various communities gathered on shore. You can purchase tickets for the cruise (adults \$50) or listen from shore. Check their website for specific dates and locations. www.argosycruises.com/argosy-cruises/christmas-ship-festival

For more information on Bellevue holiday events, please visit the Bellevue Downtown Association website at www.bellevuedowntown.com/events/magic-season. All year long you can find local Bellevue events at www.visitbellevuewashington.com/events.

