

# Hoquiam Happenings



Newsletter  
Date 1/2009

## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Editors: Alissa Thurman and Tracy Wood

The *Daily World* recently published its Top 10 list of events from 2008. Much of it seemed to be a "misery index" that included a listing of the usual local suspects -- murders, teacher misconduct, mill closures, and bad economic news. Indeed, there seems to be a wall of negative news all around us nationally and regionally, but in Hoquiam we have a lot of positive things that we can all be proud of that have been a part of 2008 and will be a part of 2009:

\*Due to tough staffing decisions made in years past as well as conservative budget management by staff, we are in excellent financial shape. We do not have to make layoffs and reduce services and our cash reserves exceed peer cities. Your City is prepared for any economic situations that may confront us. Our revenues are broadly generated and we do not suffer as much if retail sales are reduced.

\*In a wonderful partnership with the Port of Grays Harbor, the City of Hoquiam has been extremely active in our industrial development. The new Willis Enterprises development near Bowerman Field, the Westways Terminals bulk storage facility next to Imperium Renewables, the expansion of Paneltech, and other opportunities under discussion are bringing investment and jobs to our community. Many cities and counties have a bad reputation for lengthy permitting delays; in Hoquiam we pay attention to the needs of new businesses.

\*There is an old saying that applies to our community development efforts in Hoquiam: "constant dripping wears away the stone" - even an infinitesimal

force when applied persistently can accomplish a seemingly impossible feat. Our code compliance focus on property owners who have unsafe or dilapidated homes has seen significant results in improving our neighborhoods. Our continued partnership with the Hoquiam Business Association honors the hard work of the businesses who have been here for years during good and bad times and also helps to attract and sustain new businesses. This is important work and citizens can help too by shopping locally and helping to recruit businesses to our Hometown.

\*Our professional law enforcement and firefighting/life safety personnel are second to none. Our community policing goal is enhanced by a sharp group of senior volunteers in our Crime Watch program who not only help with administrative chores but also assist at community events and can watch our homes when we are on vacation. Both our police and fire departments have seen new, young professionals come on board as others retire. We have strong departments to serve in the future.

\*The unsung heroes in my mind are the guys (and now a

gal) in our street/sewer and water departments who do the unseen work that is crucial

to our existence. They don't get much public recognition but they are a wonderful team of professionals. When you see them hip deep in waste and water trying to repair a 60 year old line, you might want to stop by and thank them.

\*Finally, we have many citizens who volunteer their time on various boards and commissions. Call me if you have an interest in serving on the Community Services, Urban Forestry, Planning, Building Code Council, Civil Service, Library, or other board. They are described on our website at [www.cityofhoquiam.com](http://www.cityofhoquiam.com).

The City Council and I are elected to serve you. We welcome your thoughts and suggestions any time. Hoquiam is truly a unique place to live and we look forward to a very bright future.

Jack Durney - Mayor  
[mayor@cityofhoquiam.com](mailto:mayor@cityofhoquiam.com)  
360-580-9856



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Mayor's Message</i>	1
<i>Crime Watch Volunteers</i>	1
<i>Adoption of Tree Regs</i>	2
<i>HBA "Crossing Bridges"</i>	2
<i>Electric Vehicles</i>	2
<i>Meeting Announcement and City Information</i>	2
<i>Legal Dept. Achievements</i>	3
<i>Economic Development</i>	3
<i>Police Personnel Changes</i>	3
<i>Surplus Property</i>	4
<i>Fire Dept. Achievements</i>	4

**TIMBERLAND LIBRARY**  
Pre-school Story Time  
Ages 3-6 Fridays 10:30 a.m. thru  
April

## Seeking Volunteers for Crime Watch

By Police Chief Jeff Myers

The Hoquiam Police Department's volunteer CRIME WATCH currently has 12 active members. In 2008, CRIME WATCH members provided a total of 2,134 hours of volunteer time. This included conducting 96 residence and business vacation checks, 444 hours assisting with office tasks at the station, distributing sex offender bulletins, staffing the

Bicycle Rodeo, participating in National Night Out and providing security and traffic control at local events such as Logger's Playday, home football games and the Cancer Relay.

CRIME WATCH is looking for new members to join the ranks. Volunteers are required to be over age-50, have a clear criminal and driving record and

also be willing to commit to monthly volunteer hours. Training, uniforms and a patrol vehicle are provided by the Hoquiam Police Department.

Our program depends on great volunteers. If interested, contact Officer Aaron Hergert at 532-0892 x 280 or CRIME WATCH Coordinator Betsy Seidel at 533-5968.

## City adopts new tree regulations By Alissa Thurman, City Planner

Over the past year the City of Hoquiam and the Community Services Board have been working diligently to achieve Tree City USA status through the Arbor Day Foundation. As part of the effort, the City Council adopted a revised Street Tree ordinance which created an Urban Forestry Advisory Board. The Board's roles and responsibilities include promoting the responsible planting of trees on public and private property, public education about trees, promotion of proper maintenance of trees, advocating trees within the city, developing innovative and joint funding from a variety of sources, and hearing appeals.

The revised ordinance contains a new section that requires the City to post a tree with a public notice for 14 days prior to its removal. This will allow the public time to file an appeal to the Urban Forestry Advisory Board. Additionally, homeowners should be aware that they must obtain a permit from the City to remove, install or alter a tree in a planting strip. This ordinance **DOES NOT** require that homeowners obtain a permit to remove, alter or install trees on their private property.

If you have any questions about the new regulations, or are interested in serving on the Urban Forestry Advisory Board, please contact Alissa Thurman at (360) 532-5700 ext. 211 or [athurman@cityofhoquiam.com](mailto:athurman@cityofhoquiam.com). You do not

have to be a resident of the City of Hoquiam to serve on the Board.

### Tree planting to begin in spring.

In an effort to restore and expand our urban canopy, the City of Hoquiam will begin a massive tree planting campaign this spring. An average of 3 trees per block will be planted along both sides of Sumner Avenue starting in April. The goal is to enhance the City's urban canopy, while providing a scenic gateway for our residents and visitors.

In mid summer, residents will also see some green in downtown Hoquiam. When the sidewalk replacement project is complete, approximately 40 trees will be installed on 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> streets. This effort is part of a two year tree planting campaign that the City will extend to Emerson in 2010.

Residents made it clear throughout the Hometown Hoquiam process that the appearance and overall beauty of the city are important to our character and quality of life.

If you are a resident or business owner in any of these areas and have questions or concerns, please call (360) 532-5700 ext. 211.

### CITY HALL COUNCIL MEETINGS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Beginning in 2009, the City Council will begin their meetings at 7:00 p.m. Any interested public are encouraged to attend the meetings held the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month.

## WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PONTON CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

### Public Scoping Meeting and Open House

**Thursday, January 29th  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**  
**A short presentation will begin at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Hoquiam High School Cafeteria  
501 West Emerson Avenue  
Hoquiam, WA 98550**

## City of Hoquiam and HBA to host "Crossing Bridges" event

By Alissa Thurman, City Planner

The City of Hoquiam has been working diligently with the newly created Hoquiam Business Association (H.B.A.) to promote business development in Hoquiam. This year they are co-sponsoring "Crossing Bridges", an event to celebrate the economic development success of Hoquiam over the past year and to recognize the planned projects and promising future in Hoquiam during 2009 and beyond.

The event will be at the Hoquiam Elks on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The social hour will be at 5:30 p.m., dinner will be at 6:30 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m. Mayor Cary Bozeman of Bremerton will give a keynote address. There will also be awards presented to individuals, organizations and businesses who have made a difference in Hoquiam. Tickets are \$25 and will be available at Alexander's Grill and at the door. This event is open to the general public.

Hoquiam City Hall is open 8:00 to 5:00 daily, Monday -Friday  
drop boxes for payments are located at the front door of City Hall and also in the alley behind the building for customer convenience. Call us at 360-532-5700

## Electric Cars

By Brian Shay, City Administrator

The City of Hoquiam recently purchased two fully electric vehicles through funding provided by the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency. These vehicles have no air emissions and are another example of the City's commitment to sustainability and green/environmentally friendly technology. The truck will primarily be used by the Water Meter Reader. The car will primarily be used by code enforcement staff.



Photo by Alissa Thurman

## LEGAL DEPARTMENT ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2008

By Steve Johnson, City Attorney

During the year 2008, the Hoquiam Legal Department assisted the City in achieving several legislative goals. Among those goals were the amendment of our "street trees" ordinance, creating an "urban forestry advisory board," and adopting a new "critical areas" ordinance in advance of the December 1<sup>st</sup> statutory deadline set by the State.

With respect to community enhancement, the Legal Department assisted the State Depart-

ment of Natural Resources in removing three vessels which had been trespassing on State aquatics lands for years. These vessels were a serious hazard to navigation and to the environment, and were owned by a person who simply did not want to cooperate – forcing the City to take legal action in both the Hoquiam Municipal Court and the Grays Harbor Superior Court.

The Legal Department also participated in the abatement

of numerous dangerous buildings, accumulations of solid waste, and other public nuisances. As always, the Legal Department was kept very busy by the Police Department, prosecuting hundreds of misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor cases in the Hoquiam Municipal Court. Unfortunately, we continue to see a never ending variety of serious criminal offenses, including domestic assaults, DUI's, thefts and drug cases.

### FAMILY EVENTS HOQUIAM TIMBERLAND LIBRARY

**MOVIE AND POPCORN**  
3RD THURSDAY OF  
EACH MONTH Children  
and Family Event

**FAMILY GAME NIGHT**  
5:00 p.m. Last Friday of  
Each month

(all ages welcome)  
**JR PAGETURNERS  
BOOK GROUP**

Tuesday, 2/3/09 4:00  
Grades 1-3

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS

By Brian Shay, City Administrator

2008 was another successful economic development year for the City of Hoquiam. During the past twelve months, we welcomed the Department of Licensing to the Train Depot, saw construction of the new Rite Aid, and enjoyed the opening of Alexander's Restaurant, Foggy's Bar & Grill, and other new businesses.

2009 is already lining up to bring even more significant positive change. Westway Terminals is constructing a \$20,000,000 liquid bulk storage facility near Imperium Renewables which will open by next fall. Willis Enterprises is in the process of locating a new chip manufacturing and barge loading facility at Terminal 3 near the Airport.

LaVogue's Department Store has a new owner that plans to revitalize downtown with a multi million dollar restoration which will turn the historic building into a boutique hotel, restaurant and retail center. The American Veteran's Building (formerly Moe-B's) has new owners that plan to renovate and find quality retail tenants to downtown Hoquiam, while the Detour Restaurant Bar is nearing completion of their full remodel as well.

These renovations, coupled with the \$1,000,000 downtown sidewalk project scheduled for construction this spring and reopening of the Historic 7<sup>th</sup> Street Theatre, will put more feet on the street helping all Hoquiam businesses grow and succeed.

### MORE LIBRARY EVENTS YOUTH PAGETURNERS BOOK GROUP

Tuesday, 2/10/09 4:00 Grades 4-6

### ADULT PAGETURNERS BOOK GROUP

Tuesday, 2/3/09 7:00

### Adult Group HOQUIAM

### CONVERSATION CAFÉ

Monday, 2/16/09 6:00

Adult Program

Turn small talk into Big Talk by engaging in monthly small group conversations. A Conversation Cafe is a hosted discussion among diverse people. Anyone can come to one or more of the cafes. There is no reading, homework or other preparation beforehand. February's topic: What is humankind's most important discovery?

## POLICE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL CHANGES

By Police Chief Jeff Myers

The year 2008 was yet another period of significant change for the Hoquiam Police Department. With the retirement of several senior patrol sergeants, two new patrol sergeants (Jeff Salstrom and Joe Strong) were promoted. These were the first sergeant promotions in almost eleven years.

We were also able to fill all of the open police officer positions in 2008. This included the new police officer position originally funded by the City

Council back in 2007. In total, five new police officers were hired! With a sworn staff of 14 officers assigned to the Patrol Division, this aggressive hiring and training curve was our most significant accomplishment for 2008.

Given average training time of 9-10 months for each new officer, the City Council and Mayor have strongly invested in the future of the police department. Once all the new officers

are trained and on the street, we look forward to advancing our community policing objectives by continuing to tackle drug houses, enforce traffic safety laws and target chronic public nuisances such as abandoned vehicles.

With full manpower and ongoing community support, we will continue to help make Hoquiam strong and self-sufficient; because a strong community is a safe community.

## Surplus Property Downtown Parking Lot

By Brian Shay, City Administrator

The City has recently declared several pieces of property surplus which are now listed for sale through Premier Realty. The most significant parcel is the large vacant lot on Simpson Avenue next to Emerson Manor. The City recognizes that this parking lot is used by visitors to the Senior Center and customers of downtown businesses. Anyone interested in purchasing this property will be required to submit a detailed site plan of how the property would be developed to ensure that adequate parking remains and that the project is a good fit with the existing downtown

businesses.

The City was given this property in 2001 by Fred Root. At that time the property had no parking area as it was fully occupied by the vacant "Grayport" building. Since then, the City has spent \$141,500.00 to demolish the "Grayport" and another \$44,741.00 to pave the property for the beneficial use of a parking lot until such time as a higher and better use could be found.

Any proposal to purchase the property must be presented to the City Council for their review and approval.

## 2008 Hoquiam Fire Department

By Fire Chief Ray Pumphrey

The Hoquiam Fire Department responded to 2,942 calls in 2008. This is a record number of calls and reflects a 2% increase from the previous year. Included in these were 2,738 ambulance calls (up 4.5%), and 204 fire calls (down 24%).

In addition to responding to emergency calls our crews were busy with various other tasks. These included EMS and fire training, station and vehicle maintenance, business inspections, fire prevention and CPR classes in the

schools and testing of all of our pumps, ladders and fire hose.

In 2008 our department requested bids and received a new Braun ambulance. This was a re-chassis, using the box from an existing ambulance and mounting it on a new Ford E-450 chassis. By using the box, the department realized a cost savings.

We look forward to the future and strive to continue to provide the quality service that our citizens have come to expect.

**Our Newsletter is Printed on Grays Harbor Paper's Harbor 100  
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