



FROM THE YORK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION—BRINGING THE YORK COMMUNITY TOGETHER

York General Meeting

Wednesday, March 8th

6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

at Garden Street

United Methodist Church

1326 North Garden Street

6:30 pm Taco Supper

7:00 pm Meeting

YNA Board members will provide taco meats, corn tortillas, beans, and all the fixins. Please bring a plate of cookies to share and your own place setting and a beverage. Coffee provided.

If you need child care at the meeting, please let us know so we can plan ahead! Contact VicePresident@yorkneighborhood.org.

Guest speakers:



Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations and Community Development at Western Washington University.

photo courtesy of Western Today



Ben Larson, WWU student and York Neighborhood Association (YNA) Board member, to report on Bellingham's new tenants' union (see page 4).



Officer Eric Osterkamp, Bellingham Police Department, will provide information about the new **Bellingham Neighbors Together** program (see page 3).

photo courtesy of City of Bellingham, cob.org

Whatcom Transit Authority staff will attend 6:30 to 7 pm to answer questions about bus route changes in York neighborhood (see page 8).

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SPRING PARK WORK PARTY

Join us for the first-ever...

Harriet Spanel Park Work Party

Saturday, April 8th

10:00 am-12:00 pm

Let's kick off this new era for the former Franklin Park with a fabulous work party in partnership with **City of Bellingham Parks & Recreation Department** and the **Sehome Neighborhood volunteers**. We'll focus on weeding, mulching, and generally sprucing up the hillside and trail next to the basketball court/playground.

Meet at the picnic shelter at Whatcom Street and Franklin Street. Gloves, tools, coffee, and baked goods will be provided.

Questions? Contact **Mark Schofield** at FranklinParkSteward@yorkneighborhood.org.



Prefer to read *The Yorker* in digital format?

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YORK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

c/o 1444 Grant Street, Bellingham WA 98225

www.yorkneighborhood.org • President@yorkneighborhood.org • [#YorkNeighborhood](https://www.facebook.com/YorkNeighborhood)



President's Corner

Meet York's new President: Kim Bogren Owen

I would like to briefly introduce myself to you. I have served on the YNA board for the past two years, starting almost as soon as my family moved here from Colorado. At that time, I decided to join to get to know my neighbors and the city. After serving as the newsletter editor, I debated if I still had the time to stay on the board; however, the election in November convinced me to stay active in local politics.

Our family includes my husband Jim, our two children—Amber and Zac—plus three dogs and various reptiles. Oh, yes, and my daughter's horse, who doesn't actually reside in York. If it sounds like our house is a zoo, it also frequently feels that way, too.

Professionally, I am an early-childhood trainer who helps professionals and child-care centers throughout the state to prepare for rating evaluations and to complete quality improvement. I am also a self-published author of two children's picture books. In my free time I enjoy gardening, reading (which has led to a bad habit of collecting books), writing, and hiking.



I look forward to working with and getting to know my neighbors in my new capacity as your president and am excited for this opportunity to represent our neighborhood to the best of my ability. But, for that goal, I am going to need your help. **Please get involved in our neighborhood.** Follow our posts on **Nextdoor** and **Facebook**, attend **YNA general meetings**, help distribute these **newsletters**, and consider joining the **board**.

One of our major goals is to promote a more active, involved neighborhood. Toward that end, our **May 10 general meeting** will focus on advocacy and community action. We will use this meeting time to help identify issues that are important to you. I look forward to hearing your ideas. I can be contacted at President@yorkneighborhood.org.

The Owen Family: Lucy, Jim, Bilbo, Amber, Zac, Kim, Rory, and Zander



2017 YNA officers elected

At its first meeting of the new year, held February 1, the YNA Board elected its officers: President **Kim Bogren Owen**; Vice President **Tom Scott**; Treasurer **Cory Anderson**; and Secretary **Anne Mackie**. **Don Hilty-Jones** will continue as the representative for the Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission (MNAC), with **Anne Mackie** as MNAC Alternate.

Other volunteer assignments include fundraising coordinators **Edward Tabor** and **Ben Larson**; Harriet Spanel Park Steward (formerly Franklin Park) **Mark Schofield**; Rock Hill Park Stewards **Audrey Roberts** and **Edward Tabor**; newsletter editor **Anne Mackie**; and newsletter distribution coordinator **Kim Neiderhauser**.

Mission Statement of the York Neighborhood Association:

- *To reduce isolation among residents;*
- *To enhance the quality of life in a low- and moderate-income urban neighborhood;*
- *To create a sense of community;*
- *To reduce or prevent crime; and*
- *To preserve the historic character of the neighborhood.*

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Bellingham Police invite neighbors to partner on community safety

New program expands community relationships and allows citizens to impact safety and well-being of neighborhoods

Reprinted from the City's website; by Danette Beckley, Public Information Officer

In January the Bellingham Police Department (BPD) announced the 2017 expansion of their volunteer program **Bellingham Neighbors Together**. Bellingham Neighbors Together (BNT) is a new volunteer citizen organization committed to a visible public presence to reduce crime, educate residents, and promote safe neighborhoods.

Working with Bellingham's **Neighborhood Police Officer** program (NPO), established in 2015, BNT-qualified volunteers will complete a comprehensive training program. Trained and equipped for patrolling Bellingham's 25 neighborhoods, BNT volunteers will collaborate with the community and police.



“The implementation of Bellingham Neighbors Together is an important milestone for our department,” said Bellingham Police **Chief Cliff Cook**. “We have a long history of citizen volunteerism within our organization with the RSVP* team. Abandoned vehicles, vacation house check, and disabled parking patrol are some of the ways our RSVP serve the community. BNT will expand community relationships and allow citizens to have a direct impact on the safety and well-being of their neighborhoods.”

During his tenure as Chief of Vancouver, Washington, Police Department, Chief Cook created the **Neighbors on Watch (NOW)** program. The very successful NOW program boasts over 150 volunteers serving the Vancouver community.

The BPD is encouraging Bellingham residents to volunteer for the program. To learn more and fill out an application, please go to our website www.cob.org/gov/dept/police.

* RSVP = Retired Senior Volunteer Program

To learn more about the new BNT program, attend York's March 8 meeting for Officer Eric Osterkamp's presentation.

“Apple picking:” the new wave in residential burglaries

By Anne Mackie

Apple computer devices are especially prone to being stolen from area residences, according to **Officer Eric Osterkamp**, Bellingham Police Department. He reported to the York annual meeting held January 11 that home burglaries are on the increase in neighborhoods near the university.

“York is not unique with this problem,” Osterkamp said. “People need to be more vigilant about their home security. Unlocked windows make your valuables easy targets.”

Macs, iPhones, and iPads have become hot items for theft in recent years, even gaining the nickname “apple picking.” The industry has increased security technology so the devices may not so easily be wiped clean or your data stolen, but that doesn't take the pain out of being a victim of theft.

How safe is York?

Most residents in York believe it is a relatively safe neighborhood. An upcoming survey to be conducted by the YNA this spring will shed more light on that perspective. See the adjacent chart for a comparison of 2016 crime statistics for York, Sehome, and Happy Valley neighborhoods, which surround the university. Keep in mind that data is impacted by population differences in these three neighborhoods, and the crime-ridden motel strip along Samish Way impacts Sehome neighborhood's statistics.

2016 Neighborhood / City Crime Stats

Reported Incidents	York	Sehome	Happy Valley	Citywide
Alcohol offenses	9	18	3	344
Assault (felony)	5	5	3	95
Assault (misdemeanor)	21	25	22	453
Auto theft	15	20	20	277
Burglary (residential)	32	76	28	711
Crimes against person	6	10	19	181
Crimes against property	7	10	16	247
Domestic violence	19	49	49	856
Drug offenses	13	22	6	333
DUI	18	41	6	248
Malicious mischief	37	57	33	843
Public order maintenance	152	256	166	837
Robbery	1	5	0	46
Service calls	759	330	317	6,640
Sex crime reports	6	14	5	151
Theft	54	134	140	2,756
Vehicle prowls	61	87	64	1,317

Traffic accidents, traffic offenses/complaints, incidents categorized as “other,” and “nonreportable calls” have been omitted due to space limitations.

Data obtained from www.cob.org/gov/dept/police/news/pages/crime-stats.aspx.

New tenants' union being organized

By Ben Larson, YNA Board member

The **Bellingham Tenant's Union (BTU)** was started a few months ago by a group of young renters passionate about the issue of housing in Bellingham. We felt a group that could advocate specifically for the interests of tenants in our community was needed. Renters make up 54% of Bellingham's population, but not a single renter holds a seat on our city council, nor are we a group otherwise strongly represented in local politics. We the renters make up a vital part of this city, including the York neighborhood, and it is time to advocate for solutions at the local level that ensure safe, affordable, equitable, and sustainable housing options in our community.

Here are some of the goals we wish to accomplish in Bellingham and issues you can get involved with.

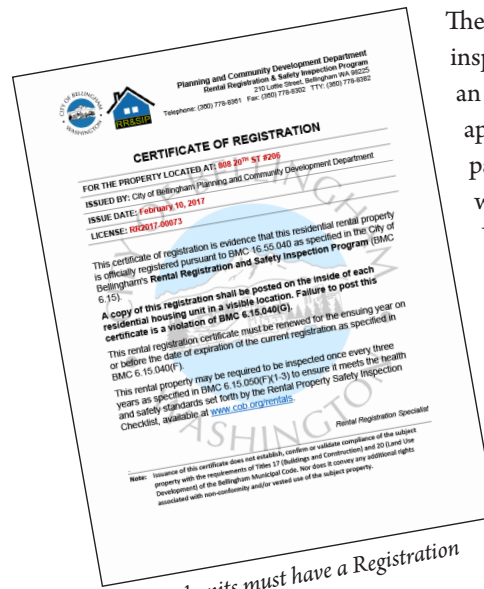
- ✦ View everyone in Bellingham as a neighbor.
- ✦ Bring tenants together to collaborate on issues that impact us.
- ✦ Educate tenants of their rights by requiring landlords to post basic tenant rights in every unit, just like they provide information on mold when tenants move in.
- ✦ Promote the safety of tenants and continue the rental inspection program recently instituted in Bellingham.
- ✦ Require landlords to give voter registration forms on move-in day so our voices will be heard by local officials and our ballots mailed to us correctly.

Want to get involved? If you're a renter, we'd like to hear your ideas for Bellingham and your experience as a renter here. Feel free to email us at bhamtenantsunion@gmail.com or send us a message on Facebook!

Nearly one-third of York rentals fail inspections

By Dick Conoboy

reprinted from *Northwest Citizen*, www.nwcitizen.com



All rental units must have a Registration Notice posted.

The Sehome and York neighborhoods have been inspected for basic health and safety standards, with an initial failure rate of about 50% in Sehome and approximately 31% in York. In Sehome, 748 units passed on either the first or subsequent inspections, while 132 units remain in non-compliance. In the York neighborhood, of 519 units to be inspected, 161 failed the first inspection.

[Note: York has 894 rental units; however, the remaining 375 units are either inspected by other government entities such as HUD or are inspected by private inspectors allowed under the law.]

No inspected units have yet to be declared unfit for human habitation, although the city is prepared to assist tenants who may lose their rental due to safety and health conditions.

There is some question regarding the initial failure rate of 50% in Sehome and 31% in York. Why the 20% difference? There are several possible explanations. First, are the York neighborhood rentals in better condition? Although possible, it is highly unlikely; only more data will reveal the cause. Second, has inspection criteria undergone refinement since the program first started in Sehome? Indeed some inspection issues, such as height of egress windows, have been modified to accept the heights required by code at the time of permitting.

Another possibility is that there are more units now passing “with conditions,” meaning the unit failed an inspection criterion but the fix is simple, does not require a second inspection, and is entrusted to the landlord to correct immediately. Unfortunately, this is now counted as a “pass;” however, there were fewer of the pass “with conditions” during the first round in Sehome. In order to determine the true nature and condition of rental units, those passing “with conditions” should be counted in the fail category. Eventually, the city’s database will be refined to demonstrate what *types of failures* are encountered and the *number by failure category*.

The City has been carrying out rental registration and inspections mandated by the City Council. All rentals were to have been registered by the beginning of 2016. Only a few holdouts remain from that initial registration round; the code-enforcement office of the Bellingham Police Department has these cases in hand, which number less than 75.

There are approximately 16,000 rental units in Bellingham subject to inspection that are contained in 5,700 properties. Each property must be reregistered at the beginning of each calendar year; however, the first renewal period ended in January with about 2,400 of 5,700 properties not reregistered, a phenomenal 42%. The reasons for the noncompliance are not readily clear, but the City is working diligently to re-contact property owners who have not yet reregistered. Nevertheless, inspections are moving forward, next in Happy Valley and then on to South Hill, Fairhaven, and Edgemoor.

Code enforcement protects character of city

By Kim Bogren Owen

In order to help promote health, safety, and order, the **City of Bellingham** has a variety of codes that are enforced by three code-enforcement officers.

Two code-compliance officers are in the Police Department. They enforce building municipal codes relating to buildings and construction, land use, environment, business license and registration, parks, streets and sidewalks, and public nuisances. The officers are: **David Herschlip**, 360-778-8634, dwherschlip@cob.org; and **Claudia Vizcarra**, 360-778-8756, cvizcarra@cob.org.

The third position is the Neighborhood Code Compliance Officer, which is a new position to be filled in April. This position will work to enforce codes related to litter, garbage, junk vehicles, recovering stolen bikes, as well as helping with homeless camp clean-ups. Complaints regarding these kinds of issues can be made to 360-778-8623.

Additionally, all City departments have staff who perform enforcement work. This work includes site inspections, or researching and making first contact with property owners, as many owners are unaware that they may be in violation of City codes. When voluntary compliance cannot be achieved through the City departments, the cases are forwarded to the Police and Legal Departments for final action.

How complaints are processed

Police Department Code Enforcement receives complaints from both citizens and City departments after city staff has attempted to gain compliance. Once a complaint has been received, the officer investigates to determine if there was actually a violation or reviews previous city staff investigation materials.

If there is a violation, Code Enforcement works first to notify the individual and educate them so they can correct it. If, however, the violation is not corrected, they will take formal action against the violator. You can find Bellingham municipal codes at www.codepublishing.com/WA/Bellingham.

Some common issues that are referred to Code Enforcement are noise and cars parked in the yard. As inspections of rental units moves forward, violations that are not corrected will be referred to Code Enforcement.

If you have questions about permits for building projects, call 360-778-8300.



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Vice President: **Tom Scott**
Treasurer: **Cory Anderson**
Secretary: **Anne Mackie**

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Ben Larson (WWU Student Rep)
Jean Layton • **Leigh McDiarmid**
Kim Niederhauser
Audrey Roberts (WWU Student Rep)
Mark Schofield • **Mark Sherman**
Edward Tabor (WWU Student Rep)

Newsletter layout: **Mark Ellis Walker**

CONTACT

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Bellingham WA 98225

President@YorkNeighborhood.org

website: www.YorkNeighborhood.org

For advertising / business
donations, contact:

YorkerEditor@YorkNeighborhood.org

Rock Hill Park report

By Audrey Roberts, Rock Hill Park Steward

Rain and cold couldn't keep volunteers away for the first work party of the new year at **Rock Hill Park**. On Saturday, February 4, approximately 20 volunteers gathered for a work party organized by **Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department**. During the work party, they laid down new mulch for the hillside, pulled up invasive Himalayan blackberries, and planted new native sword fern to repopulate the area where old invasives once grew.

We'd like to thank everyone who volunteered and braced the freezing temperatures to serve the community. More work parties are planned for the spring. Contact me if you wish to help out! RockHillParkSteward@YorkNeighborhood.org.

Campus Community Coalition seeking feedback on quality-of-life issues in Bellingham

The **Campus Community Coalition (CCC)**, in conjunction with the **City of Bellingham's Police and Community Planning Departments**, is collecting information about quality-of-life issues in the Bellingham community through a neighborhood-wide survey. The information collected through this survey, as well as feedback gathered at neighborhood association meetings, from police data, and through one-on-one interactions, will help guide future joint efforts.

Please pass this survey along to your friends and neighbors who live in the local community and encourage their participation in gathering this information. The survey can be accessed at baseline.campuslabs.com/www/neighborhood.

To keep up to date about the survey results and other CCC activities, please sign up for our newsletter via our website at www.campuscommunitycoalition.com.

Thank you to these neighbors and businesses for their donations since January:

Jim Kirkland and Suzi Hambelton, Shiloh and John Kovac,
Chris Robinson and Amy Carder, and Binyon Vision.

Donations to the York Neighborhood Association are appreciated!

YORK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION DONATION FORM

suggested donation levels

- Students—\$5 Household—\$20 Singles—\$10 Other Amount _____
 Business—\$100 *includes a business-card-size ad for four issues of The Yorker*

Make check payable to the **York Neighborhood Association**

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Email _____

Return form and check to: Cory Anderson, YNA Treasurer · 520 Edwards St.
Bellingham WA 98225

New name, same great park

By Mark Schofield, Harriet Spanel Park Steward

For decades, neighbors and visitors have enjoyed playing and relaxing in Franklin Park. That’s about to change. People will now enjoy playing and relaxing in Harriet Spanel Park.

Last November, Bellingham City Council approved changing the name from Franklin Park to Harriet Spanel Park to honor the memory of the longtime Bellingham resident, activist, and former Washington State legislator. [For more background, see “Honoring Former State Senator Harriet Spanel” in the November 2016 issue of *The Yorker*, available at yorkneighborhood.org.]

Both the York and Sehome neighborhood associations supported the name change, and we’re excited to embark on this new era for a much-loved park. The new park sign was installed at the corner of Whatcom and Grant before the end of February.

In more good news for Harriet Spanel Park, the Parks Department installed replacement playground equipment last month—including a basketball hoop and spinning Super Nova. This equipment replaces park features that were destroyed last June when a vehicle careened through the park.



photo by David Camp

Parks & Rec Dept staff installed new basketball hoop February 21.



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Calendar of York Events

March						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

April						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

YNA General Meeting
Wednesday, March 8
 6:30 pm *Taco Supper*
 7:00 pm *Speakers & Meeting*
 at Garden Street United Methodist Church
 1326 North Garden Street

WWU Spring Break
March 20 to 27

Spring Work Party
Saturday, April 8, 10:00 am–Noon
Harriet Spanel Park
(formerly Franklin Park)
 at Whatcom Street at Franklin Street

YNA Board Meeting
Wednesday, April 12, 7:00 pm
 at Garden Street United Methodist Church
 1326 North Garden Street

YNA General Meeting
Wednesday, May 10
 6:30 pm *Supper*
 7:00 pm *Speakers & Meeting*
 at Garden Street United Methodist Church
 1326 North Garden Street

Dumpster Day
In June—date to be announced
 8:30 am at Nelson’s Market parking lot
 514 Potter Street

York bus routes change March 19

by Anne Mackie



Heads up, bus riders! On March 19, **WTA 90-B** route will be eliminated. This is the bus that comes from Lincoln Creek Park & Ride, north to Lakeway Drive, west to Humboldt Street, north to Potter Street (stopping in front of Nelson’s Market and again at Franklin Street), west to Ellis Street, south to Billy Frank Jr. Street, and then up the hill to Western’s campus.

The 90-B is a heavily ridden route, with 40–50 people catching this bus at Nelson’s Market every school day morning, every 20 minutes, all morning long. This route frequently has two buses, back to back, to accommodate the large ridership. Why this route has been eliminated is unclear. To catch a bus to campus, York riders will now need to go to the bus stop at Magnolia Street (in front of the Magnolia Court Apartments) or to the bus stop at WECU on Billy Frank Jr. Street, to catch the 107 or 190.

A representative from the Whatcom Transit Authority (WTA) will attend York’s March 8 meeting from 6:30 to 7 pm to answer questions about the route changes.

A new route is being added that connects the 1400 and 1500 blocks on Ellis Street to the downtown terminal and to Samish Way. This bus will add a stop on the west side of the street at the new senior apartment complex.

Route **90B** York riders to WWU can catch the **Blue Line’s 107 or 190** near Magnolia and Ellis streets (Mon.–Sat.), returning on the **108 or 190**.

Routes **43 and 44** now become **Route 5 to Fairhaven** via the Lincoln Creek Park & Ride and 32nd Street. Service to Lake Padden is now via **Route 533**, which runs on Lakeway.

Routes **512, 525, 533, and 540** will now pass through York as the **Plum Line** on Lakeway, connecting Downtown with Sudden Valley, Sunset Drive, Squalicum High School, Lake Padden, and the Galbraith trail system.

