

THE YORKER

MAY 2022



FROM THE YORK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION—BRINGING THE YORK COMMUNITY TOGETHER

YORK NEIGHBORHOOD GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, May 25, 2022

Social Time 6:00; Meeting 6:30pm

To be held in person (with online access via Zoom) at our new meeting location:

Norway Hall

now owned by Christ the King Church

1419 North Forest Street

Meeting Presentation: “Are You Ready for the ‘Big One’? How to Prepare for Emergencies”

Speaker: **Greg Hope**, Bellingham Fire Department, will share readiness tips and tools we all need to keep families and neighbors safe in a local emergency.

Doors open at 6:00 for light refreshments.

Zoom access codes will be posted on www.yorkneighborhood.org beforehand.



Seen our Little Libraries?

Did you know there are five Little Libraries around the York neighborhood? Three general libraries, a children’s library and ... wait for it ... a puzzle library! Most are along the sidewalks, but there’s one inside Nelson’s Market too.

The **Puzzle Library**, on Grant Street near Edwards Street, was added by **Chris** and **Amy** in 2020. Amy is a puzzler, and her habit continued while isolated during the pandemic. They had so many puzzles, they decided to share with York neighbors. Chris used recycled materials for the library building, and Amy painted the lovely design on the front. And **Franky**, their cat, supervised! Be sure to walk over and check it out soon.

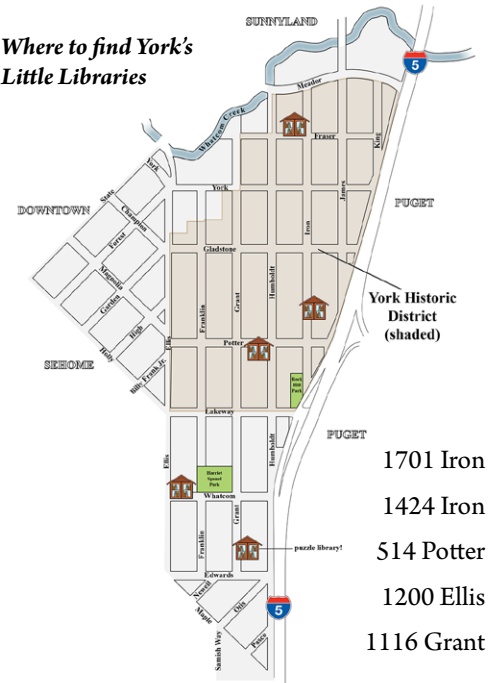
The **Little Children’s Library** was established about five years ago. **Abby Franklin**, the librarian and founder of the **Loving Space Preschool**, found that the parents were interested in swapping books, and ever since it was built it has been a success! Of course, the books are for any child in the neighborhood, so if you want one, take one, and if you have one to spare, consider leaving one (or two!). As of the last visit they were down to only one book, so let’s pull together and help restock it!

We’ll also be working to combine our Little Library Map with our York Historic Trees Map, along with other sites and historic features around the neighborhood, to create an interactive walking map. Stay tuned!

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Where to find York’s Little Libraries



Prefer to read *The Yorker* in digital format? Get it here:

yorkneighborhood.org/newsletters



YORK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

PO Box 1585, Bellingham WA 98227-4185

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



President's Corner

By Colin Beazley, YNA President

Greetings, York neighbors! I am honored to serve as your new York Neighborhood Association (YNA) President, a role with a history of illustrious York community members. I have big shoes to fill!

I am a director for **Smartsheet**, a Washington-based technology company, and have spent over 10 years in board leadership positions for the YMCA and as a Social Venture Partner. My partner Kristin and I have two young boys, ages 1 and 3, whom you will see running around Rock Hill Park and eating ice cream at Nelson's Market. We recently moved into a historic York neighborhood Victorian home on Humboldt Street, the same house my wife lived in during her years at Western Washington University.

After a challenging two years, this spring is starting to feel different... and you can expect the YNA to reengage the community and refresh the traditions that make this neighborhood special.

We are organizing our Board into committees to solicit and take action on community input:

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: We want to grow our Board, so please consider attending our next General Meeting on May 25 to learn more about these committees and consider joining an organization with opportunities for immediate impact.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY: In our last General Meeting, we heard from Lt. **Claudia Murphy** of **Bellingham Police Department (BPD)**, who discussed rising crime statistics and how the BPD and community can help. She suggested that turning on porch and garage lights, actively using our parks, and engaging with neighbors can be effective in deterring crime; I hope that, with this nicer weather, everyone can do so. More information to come on our **Light Up the Neighborhood** campaign.



PARKS & INFRASTRUCTURE: There has been tremendous participation and activity in both Rock Hill and Harriet Spanel parks. We have upcoming work parties on May 14 for Rock Hill and June 11 for Harriet Spanel. We are talking with the City on improvements to our parks, and the Board will dedicate time and resources so they remain vibrant assets of the neighborhood.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION: There is deep history in our neighborhood, and the Board plans to organize efforts to draw from historical City records and promote community-wide education across the York neighborhood. See page 7 for more on this! I am excited about this opportunity, and the entire Board looks forward to serving you across the committees. You can reach me at President@YorkNeighborhood.org.



in the historic York neighborhood at
514 Potter Street

call in to take out: **360-734-2448**

A portion of our May proceeds go to the Opportunity Council's fundraising for the **Maple Valley Inn**, a program providing meals to our community in need.

**Happy Hour
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Spring Rock Hunt

by Kim Owen

This April, York Neighborhood Association sponsored a Spring Rock Hunt for the kids in the neighborhood. Several



neighbors painted rocks with spring themes and hid them around the neighborhood. The rocks, painted with bright colors, sprung up in the morning for the kids to find hidden along the edge of the sidewalk in the grass, on rocks, or even in trees (there might still be an owl in a tree out there). There were mushrooms, chicks, eggs, flowers, and heart rocks all around the neighborhood, including in our two parks. Some lived for a bit in a fairy house children made at Rock Hill Park.

Events like this help to foster a sense of community and playfulness in the neighborhood. Our hope is that this will become an annual event with some rocks being hidden year after year to create legacy rocks. As children age out of finding, they can rehide the ones they no longer want, as well as join in painting and hiding others. Young children can always join in the fun too.



Be sure to be on the lookout for next year's rock hunt and rock-painting events. You can even start painting now! If you have kids who found some, please share pictures with us.



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Focus on York business

By R. Rebecca Hobbs

There's a new bakery in the neighborhood, and it's sinfully delicious!



Marci Abshire and her brother **Colby** recently held the grand opening of their new bakery and café, **Slice of Heaven**. Perhaps you've already tried a tasty dessert or saw the crane in their parking lot lifting the bright, sky-blue, red, and white sign into place at the former Diego's on Samish Way?

After 20 years in the pawn-shop industry, Marci and Colby wanted a change. In the year before the pandemic, Marci used her spare time to create wedding cakes and various other desserts out of her home, thus building a reputation for delicious, eye-catching dessert creations. During the pandemic, thanks to money raised by a GoFundMe campaign, Marci and Colby began cooking and delivering free meals to others. In just a three-month period, they crafted over 5,000 meals and donated the remaining \$1,500 to a local food bank. The whole experience inspired them to open the brick-and-mortar bakery and café, which kept the name of Marci's home-based business.

Marci's mission is simple: provide great-tasting food and an atmosphere where people can feel happy and enjoy themselves. What sets their bakery apart from others? Interactive food options, such as build-your-own ice-cream sandwiches, cooking your own s'mores, and an ice-cream bar for DIY sundaes. And let's not forget all of the delightful cakes, cookies, and bars. They offer several gluten-free options and have vegan and diabetic-friendly recipes in the works. The café now serves such classics as Marci's well-known baked macaroni & cheese and lasagna.

And what about the contrast between the angel and devil cupcakes on their sign? "That was Colby's idea," says Marci, "a play on 'Team Angel' and 'Team Devil.'" Colby contributes cookies and bars for Team Devil. Marci leads Team Angel, baking cakes for retail sale and weddings, along with the fancier desserts. Whose team will you be on?

Slice of Heaven, located at 300 North Samish Way, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 to 7, Sundays from 11 to 7, and closed on Mondays. Orders can be made online at www.slice-of-heaven.net.

Updates on Samish Commons Urban Village

By R. Rebecca Hobbs

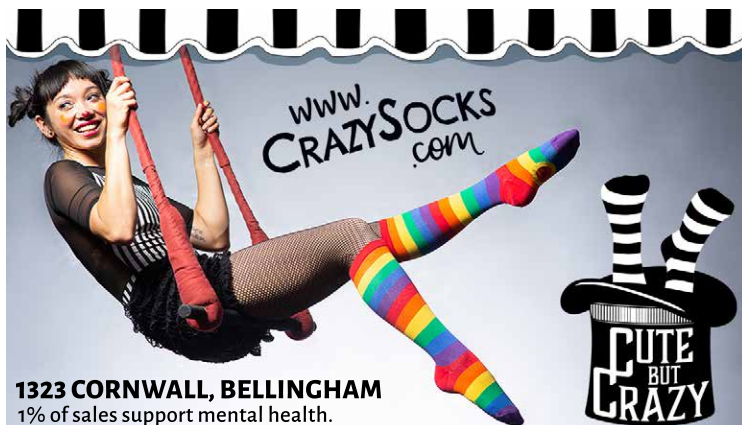
Since we last reported on the Samish Way project in February 2019, considerable progress was made to update the corridor.

The site comprises one and a half acres, and, once completed will have an infrastructure of 171 units, a small outdoor plaza with raised beds for resident gardening, an early-learning facility, and the housing authority offices. The **Samish Commons** residences serve a broad range of income levels, mixing low-income residents with apartments for senior citizens, thus contributing to a multigenerational experience.

Planners initially designed the project to be rolled out in three phases. Phase 1, at 1000 Otis Street, was completed mid-2021, and a total of 69 new affordable housing units have been filled. Community response has been positive, thanks to both the York and Sehome Neighborhood Associations (NA) being involved in the discussion early in the process. The NAs contributed a plan for the urban village, which ultimately inspired the **Bellingham Housing Authority's** (BHA) approach. At the groundbreaking for Phase 1, the NAs hung a "Welcome to the Neighborhood" banner on the construction fence to show their support.

Phase 2, which will front on Samish Way, is finally under way after overcoming some challenges, the biggest being not having Phase 3 funding in place and the supply-chain issues caused by the pandemic which drove up the price of materials. Funding and federal low-income tax credits came together easily and quickly to give rise to Phase 1 in 2020. A year later, the BHA secured federal tax credits for development of Phase 2 but were unable to obtain state funding for Phase 3. Consequently, it was not practical to begin constructing the second phase until the funding for the third phase was in place, since both buildings will sit on top of a two-story parking garage.

Fortunately, both the city and county came through with the needed support and necessary funding to complete Phase 3 so that Phase 2 could finally begin. Both phases are scheduled for completion around June 2023, with pre-leasing opening for the remaining 102 units in late January. One-, two-, and three-bedroom homes will be available,



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172 units affordable housing
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150 parking spaces



with 49 units dedicated to senior citizens. Be sure to watch the Samish Commons website for pre-leasing announcements: www.samishcommons.com.

The Housing Authority will establish offices at the corner of Otis and Samish. "We hope to stimulate more investment and redevelopment in the corridor. It will be good to bring our administrative and program staff, roughly three dozen professionals, into the neighborhood to work and shop, said **Brien Thane**, the BHA's Executive Director and CEO.

The city completed bicycle and pedestrian improvements along the corridor when they scaled down the number of lanes along Samish Way. Flashing crosswalks were also added across Samish, and bike lanes were widened.



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Rock Hill Park pollinator garden thank-yous

By Anne Mackie

A special thank-you to the **City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation Department** arborists who recently spent several days high in the maple trees removing dead limbs in the park, creating more sunlight and eliminating potential safety problems in high winds.

And, on behalf of the new mason-bee residents in the park, a thank you to **Micah Bobbink** for the chalet bee houses, **John Halladay** for installation, and **Nancy Mullane** for the bee larvae that emerged just in time to move into their deluxe accommodations. There was a lot of wiggling and wing flapping that day as the bees emerged from their winter hibernation cocoons. And, no, these bees do not sting.



One of the new mason-bee houses.



Andrew Fletcher-Love.

And, of course, a special thank-you to **Mayor Seth Fleetwood** for continuing to support funding for neighborhood projects!

New Bloomers

Added to the pollinator garden this spring are these fun-to-say bloomers that will be food for bees, birds, and butterflies: ceanothus, syringa, sambucus, viburnum, echinacea, penstemon, coreopsis, rudbeckia, agastache, lavandula, rosemary, oregano, asclepia, yarrow, milkweed, larkspur, lupine, flax, and kinnickanick.

Yes. That last one's a kick! Wikipedia explains the origins of this name from the Algonquin language of the indigenous peoples of the Americas—a language that is still spoken in parts of Canada. “Traditionally, the Algonquins were practitioners of Midewiwin, the Path of the Heart. They believed they were surrounded by many manitòk or spirits in the natural world.” A visit to York’s special garden at Rock Hill Park will connect you to nature and a world to enjoy, right in our own backyard.

Thanks to **Dustin Lippert** at **NW Custom Signs & Graphics** for the colorful graphics on the informational sign, **Carlson Steelworks** for the sign framing, and yours truly for the sign content and applying for the City “Small and Simple” Grant last year. Added to the chain-link fence at the basketball court are three butterfly iron sculptures purchased from **Kent’s Garden & Nursery** and then secured by neighbor **Andrew Fletcher-Love**.

John DeOrio has taken the lead as the Park Steward and gets a big “thank-you” for the successful March 20 work party with 35 people and one on May Day; kids worked hard, too, and enjoyed food, fun, and party-favor bags to take home.



March 20 volunteers.

Harriet Spanel Park work party—June 11th

9:00am-noon

Saturday, June 11th, is **National Get Outdoors Day**. Here’s one way to do just that: join York neighbors in removing weeds, mulching, and picking up litter to care for this lovely gem of a park!

All ages and abilities welcome. Participants under age 14 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian. Tools, gloves, and instructions are provided. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes and your mask.

This event, organized by the **Parks Department**, will follow current health department guidelines and COVID-19 safety protocols. Additional information and reminders will be emailed to registered participants. If you sign up, please show up! The park is at Grant Street and Whatcom Street, and we’ll meet near the picnic shelter.

Register early. Space is limited! To sign up, go to cob.org/gov/public/volunteer/parks-volunteer/volunteer-work-parties. Or for more information, contact Harriet Spanel Park steward **Mark Schofield** at harrietspanelparksteward@yorkneighborhood.org.

York Neighborhood Association Board

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President: **Colin Beazley**
 Vice President: **Chris Donaldson**
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 Jeremy Ferrera • Opie Knechtel •
 Jason Finkbonner • Élan Engel
 Todd Kleinbrook**

Newsletter Editor: **R. Rebecca Hobbs**
 Newsletter Layout: **Mark Ellis Walker**

Garden Club gathering—May 19th

Who knew we had a Himalayan Strawberry Tree growing in the neighborhood? Also known as an Evergreen Dogwood, this *Cornus capitata* beauty will be blooming in the garden where we'll meet **Thursday, May 19**, from 5pm to 7pm. We'll talk about our recent **Wine and Roses Garden Club** activities like the Painted Rock Hunt, our annual plant exchange, and upcoming garden tours in the hood. Bring a chair, beverage, munchies to share, and your great ideas! Newcomers are encouraged to join in. Please email to receive the address of this event: wineandroses@yorkneighborhood.org.



Birds love Himalayan Strawberry Tree fruits in the fall, as shown here in one of York's gardens. In springtime, it flowers as a Dogwood. Photo: Anne Mackie.



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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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Moving out the right way

By Nyla Metzke, WWU Student

As summer approaches, many of us students are beginning to prepare to move out of our beloved college town for the summer. In order to ensure that our esteemed city, and more specifically the lovely York neighborhood, remains taken care of, it is important to be aware of how to properly dispose of your reusable household items as well as other miscellaneous items and garbage when you move out.

Properly disposing of items that are no longer wanted is so important. Don't want something anymore, but it's still a usable item? Sell it! Sites such as **Craigslist**, **eBay**, or even **Facebook Marketplace** are all great options. Yard or garage sales are also a great way to earn some cash and get rid of things you no longer need or want.

If you don't want to deal with the hassle of selling your usable item, you can donate it to someplace like **Goodwill**, **Habitat for Humanity**, **Value Village**, etc. Make sure you plan some extra time to make these donations when you are moving out, especially if you

have heavy or excessive items. You can donate food to shelters, too, instead of throwing it out.

If you need to get rid of bulky unwanted items that are no longer usable (things like furniture and appliances) you can schedule a pickup with **Sanitary Service Company (SSC)**. Depending on the item, fees may be applicable for this service. It is important to remember that large items that do not fit in the garbage bin will not be picked up unless you specifically order a large-item pickup from SSC. The penalty for leaving waste or free piles curbside or in the alley can be a hefty ticket of around \$1,025, so just don't do it!

If you have questions or concerns about your rental situation, moving out, or getting your damage deposit back, the **Office of Off-Campus Living** at Western is here to help! Check out offcampusliving.wvu.edu, or email us at offcampusliving@wvu.edu.

Thanks for helping keep Bellingham beautiful!



York "Buy Nothing" group

The York neighborhood has a **Buy Nothing** group on Facebook. The name of the group is "**Buy Nothing Downtown/York/Sehome, Bellingham, WA**" and there are currently 582 members. As the group rules state, "Give, receive, lend, share, and show gratitude in hyper-local gift economies, where the true wealth is the connections between real neighbors."

You must be a resident at a qualifying address. Join today and ask for what you need, or post what you'd like to offer others!

The "Pack it In, Pack it Out" yard signs, provided by WWU and the City, will be available again this year for neighbors who want to discourage "free piles."

The signs will be available for pickup at the City of Bellingham Public Works Department building at 2221 Pacific Street after May 18th.

DUMPSTER DAY!

Get your junk ready to dump and help clean up York!

Saturday, June 18—8:30am
(not a minute earlier)

At **Nelson's Market** parking lot
514 Potter Street

The dumpster usually fills up
by 10am, so don't be late!

*This is York's 44th year hosting Dumpster Day. Special thanks to **Sanitary Service Company (SSC)** for the free dumpster, to **Republic Services** for the free dumpage, and to **Nelson's Market** for the location.*

Items you **CAN** dump:
household items that do not fit into a normal pickup.

Items you **CANNOT** dump:
yard waste; chemical waste such as paint, fluorescent light tubes, hazardous materials; large appliances; computers or TVs; tires; large construction debris.
Business-generated waste is not accepted.

Join the History and Preservation Committee

By Chris Donaldson, YNA Vice President

The York Neighborhood is one of the most historically relevant communities in all of Bellingham, with some of the earliest houses built in 1889 and most of the homes built between 1890 and 1910, including the luminary **Nelson's Market**, which was built in 1895. Many of the houses are great examples of historical Victorian architecture, and the neighborhood's proximity to downtown and Western Washington University has made it a destination living spot for people of all ages.



Building on previous work done by community members, our goal this year is to reinvigorate the **York Neighborhood History and Preservation Committee**.

This committee will review York historic records and archives, city and zoning regulations and associated impact, the implementation of historic designations and will provide neighborhood news and education to the public. If you are interested in participating in this committee, or just have any great York neighborhood stories to share, please reach out to **Chris Donaldson** at 360-383-6376 or email VP@yorkneighborhood.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Looking northwest at 1335 and 1339 Franklin Street, with Magnolia Street leading off into the distance towards the former City Hall, circa 1900.

Calendar of York Events

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				

June						
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		

July						
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						

Mother's Day
Sunday, May 8

Work Party at Harriet Spanel Park
Saturday, June 11, 9am to Noon

Work Party at Rock Hill Park
Saturday, May 14, 9am to Noon

MNAC Meeting
Wednesday, June 15, 6:30pm
via Zoom—see www.cob.org for access info

Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission (MNAC) Meeting
Wednesday, May 18, 6:30pm
via Zoom—see www.cob.org for access info

44th Annual Dumpster Day
June 18, starting at 8:30am
parking lot at Nelson's Market; see page 7

Garden Club Gathering
Thursday, May 19—see page 6

York Board Meeting
Wednesday, June 22, 7pm
Norway Hall — 1419 North Forest Street

York General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, May 25, 6–8pm
Norway Hall—1419 North Forest Street
also via Zoom

Independence Day
Monday, July 4

Memorial Day
Monday, May 30
no school

MNAC Meeting
Wednesday, July 20, 6:30pm
via Zoom—see www.cob.org for access info

York Board Meeting
Wednesday, July 27, 7pm
Norway Hall — 1419 North Forest Street

DUMPSTER DAY! JUNE 18



Details: page 7!



Treasures are always rescued from the dumpster.

CONTACT

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President@YorkNeighborhood.org

website: www.YorkNeighborhood.org

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