

## **The Draw of Edmonds**

*by Dave Earling*

We all rave about the quality of life in Edmonds. We all have our own view of what makes the quality. My guess is we all have some similar and some dis-similar views of what constitutes quality, and yet, we all know we live in a special place.

It could be the waterfront; our many parks; the hustle and bustle of downtown; the expanding Swedish Edmonds Hospital; the quality School District and Community College; the fabulous mix of multi-generational citizens; the flourishing arts community; the many community events; the thriving International District; the Center for the Arts; or the high level of volunteerism... the list goes on and on.

Truth is all of the above and more make Edmonds a very attractive place to live, work and visit. We all know these qualities have helped tourism become a vital part of our community, culture and economy. As more people discover Edmonds, it will evolve and change, for there is always change in a community as it strives to meet the needs of the community itself.

In my office I have a photo of downtown Edmonds taken in 1948. It's great fun to see smoke pouring out of one of the last shingle mills, how the waterfront has changed and developed and how many of the downtown buildings there then, are still here today. One of the most striking changes is how few cars are on the streets – a different time and a different feel.

To be sure, the community evolved from its beginnings in 1890 to 1948; changed again from 1948 to today; and yes, it will evolve again in another 50 years. I'm sure some of the people here in 1948 are uncomfortable with the change they see today. Today's younger generation will be uncomfortable with the changes they see by 2064.

All of this leads me to think about some of the physical evolution we have seen just this year, or will be seeing.

The largest physical change we will see in the near future is the expansion of Swedish Edmonds Hospital. They have completed a parking garage and have broken ground on a 72,000 square foot medical facility which will include Emergency and Urgent Care facilities as well as community gathering places. The hospital is planning for the community's long term needs.

Other important large projects we've seen completed or under way include: the new Community Health Center on Highway 99; a new memory care facility on 76th Ave. W.; a veterinary hospital on 5th Ave. S.; the new, about-to-open, Jacobsen Marine at the Port; a major multi-housing building on 2nd Ave. N. behind the Post Office; and the major renovation under way at the former Antique Mall, now Salish Crossing. All are important additions to the community.

With interest rates low and the improved economy, the building season is fully ramped up and single family housing construction is by far the busiest we have seen in years. We have issued 40 single family home permits this year and another 9 are in application. In addition, we have issued 2 duplex permits and have another 5 in application. The new home construction is taking place from Ballinger to Meadowdale to South Edmonds to the Edmonds Bowl.

All of the projects mentioned are part of the natural evolution of a community with a high regard and reputation for quality of life, a place to live and a place to work. Edmonds is indeed a special community and we need to continue to carefully maintain that quality.