

WHY THE STATE OF THE CITY?

By Mayor Dave Earling

For most cities, counties, states, or even countries, the 'State of' speech has become a tradition. Many Edmonds Mayors, as far back as I can recall, have given a State of the City presentation. And while the venue is often different, varying from a city council meeting to a local Rotary club meeting or perhaps even a Chamber of Commerce meeting, and sometimes the speech is presented in writing rather than orally, or in a few cases no speech is made at all, in the end, the purpose is the same – to outline the City's direction for the upcoming year and beyond. Last year I presented my address at the Wade James Theater. It was covered by the local press as well as videotaped for airing on the City's website and government channel.

While some may feel the State of the City is just an un-necessary exercise, I feel it is important to give a current assessment of how far the city has come this past year, take a little time to celebrate our successes, address our challenges and most of all, take a look toward the future... a future consisting not only of the current year, but beyond 2014. After all, we do have generations just behind us to think about and, as Mark Twain said, "if you keep doing the same thing all the time, your brain gets all caked-up".

Last year's address was great fun. Writing the speech provided me with an opportunity to talk to citizens, staff, councilmembers, other elected officials, the Port and people from all around the region about their view of important issues. In other words, it enabled me to find out what's important for the city, the county and the region to focus on. Of course I solicit feedback all throughout the year, but leading up to the 'state of the city address' I make it a point to ask many their opinions.

This year's speech is scheduled for the morning of Thursday, February 20th at 8:30 am in The Edmonds Theater located at 415 Main Street. The presentation is free to attend with refreshments provided by Waterfront Coffee Company. Once again the event will be videotaped for viewing on the City's website and on the government channel.

Dr. Jean Hernandez, President of Edmonds Community College and David Jaffe, Chief Executive of Swedish/Edmonds, were part of last year's program. This year Carolyn Douglas, former KING-5 News Anchor and currently with Carolyn Douglas Communications, and Carl Zapora, Superintendent of Verdant Health Commission and former CEO of Snohomish County United Way, have agreed to participate. I hope many of you will plan to attend and, as we did last year, that we pack the house. Consider this your invitation to join us as we celebrate Edmonds!