

STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS



ARTIST RENDERING COURTESY OF ISLAND COUNTY

An artist rendering of what the new Island County Administrative Building on Camano Island will look like in this side view.

Construction starts soon on Camano's county offices

Bids now open for project to replace admin building

By PEGGY WENDEL
Staff Reporter

Construction of Camano Island's new administrative building starts in spring.

And by 2020, all the county offices — sheriff's precinct, customer service counters and public meeting room — will be under one roof.

Bidding on the project is open from March 13 to 3 p.m. April 9. Island County Facilities Management Department officials will review all bid packages and determine which company has submitted the lowest qualified bid, said Larry Van Horn, Island County facilities management director.

They will make sure the apparent low bidder has met all the minimum requirements. Next, the contracting phase takes about a month, as they work through legal and risk reviews then negotiate the contract, he said.

It's Horn's responsibility to keep everyone current, including commissioners, design team and county project team. At Wednesday's work session, Horn reported the final projected cost is \$5.6 million, based on construction documents and project specs. The initial concept cost assumption was \$5 million, set in 2017 before plans were complete.

The estimated cost of the fully designed project was determined through a combined effort of SHKS Architects, Haley Cost Consulting Group and the county's Facilities Management. Cost projection anticipates local construction market conditions and soft costs including furnishings, equipment and taxes. Construction costs are estimated at \$4.1 million to \$4.3 million.

■ SEE BUILDING, A10

CIFR picks new chief

Camano Fire hires former firefighter to lead department



Levon Yengoyan

By EVAN CALDWELL
Staff Reporter

Camano Fire found its new chief.

The Board of Fire Commissioners on March 11 unanimously approved hiring Burlington Fire Chief Levon

Yengoyan to take the helm at Camano Island Fire & Rescue after chief Michael Schick resigned in January. Yengoyan starts May 1.

"We're pretty excited about it," Commission chairman Paul Williams said. "We think he has the right passion for the job and

for the island."

Yengoyan, a Camano Island resident, spent nearly two decades with CIFR, including as an assistant chief, until being hired as the Burlington chief in July 2016.

■ SEE CHIEF, A11

FAMILY FOOTSTEPS

Liam Shelley & Ava Schweiger follow fathers into firefighting



PHOTOS BY EVAN CALDWELL | STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

Firefighters Liam Shelley, left, and Robert Shelley participate in training last month in Stanwood.

"It's not a career, it's a lifestyle. The time I see my dad put into his job, outside his job, to better the community amazes me."

— Liam Shelley



Erich Schweiger, left, and Ava Schweiger look over gear at Camano Fire's Station 3.

"I took the (fire cadet class in high school) to find out if it was going to be something that I really did like — and I did. There wasn't a Plan B."

— Ava Schweiger

By Evan Caldwell | Staff Reporter

Robert Shelley smiles proudly. "I love looking at that photo," he said of the three-year-old picture capturing a moment he and his son, both clad in firefighting gear emblazoned with SHELLEY on the back, stand shoulder-to-shoulder at a live-fire training.

Both are now firefighters with Camano Island Fire & Rescue — Robert Shelley, a full-time career firefighter, and his son, Liam Shelley, a part-time firefighter.

Liam, 20, is the first child of a career CIFR firefighter to join the department, having been hired in November. But not the first family connection: Mike Waite, volunteer chief at the Mabana Fire Station, retired in January after 36 years of service, and his son, Matt, is a firefighter with CIFR.

A child following their parent's career choices is something of a rarity these days — across most professions, according to data from the long-running General Social Survey at the University of Chicago.

■ SEE FAMILY, A11

Stanwood hires community paramedic

North County Fire partners with agencies to bring job to community

By KATHY BOYD
Editor

North County Regional Fire Authority now has a community paramedic.

The Stanwood-based fire department hired Darin Reid, a former deputy chief with Stanwood-Camano

Medic One, to help launch the Community Resource Paramedic Program — a partnership with the city of Arlington and North Sound Accountable Community of Health.

Community resource paramedic is an increasingly common job title. Typically, these paramedics work to identify people who have "fallen through the cracks" and connect them with health and safety resources to reduce emergency calls. The proactive outreach saves time, money and lives.

They can respond quickly to 911



Darin Reid

calls for non-life-threatening concerns and often can eliminate the need for a trip to an emergency room with the patient, Fire Chief John Cermak said.

"(The program) is an effort to prevent emergencies before they happen," Cermak said in February. "There will be a focus on providing solutions for people living with chronic illness, fall prevention and will also include mental health and substance abuse medical issues."

■ SEE PARAMEDIC, A6

Family

■ FROM A1

A man is only 2.7 times as likely as the rest of the population to have the same job as his father and 2 times as likely to have the same job as his mother; and a woman is 1.7 times as likely as to have the same job as her father and 1.8 times as likely to have the same job as her mother, according to the study.

Social scientists say a parent's career choices might influence their children in various ways, including the "breakfast-table effect," where children are exposed to the ins and outs of a particular career and inspire their own interests.

"We always stopped by the stations growing up," CIFR's Liam Shelley said. "I'd get to play around and hang out. It's definitely like a second family."

But it wasn't always that way. Before moving to Camano Island in 2000, Robert Shelley worked in sales for Home Depot's corporate offices.

"We moved into a house near Station 2 and there was a sign outside that said they were seeking volunteers," he said. "One day I stopped in and never looked back."

He started as a volunteer but took "training after training after training" until deciding to take the leap into full-time firefighting in 2005. Now, Robert is an acting lieutenant, traveling the state teaching auto extrication and marine rescue classes.

"I've always been someone who wants to help people," he said.

"It's not a career, it's a lifestyle," Liam said of firefighting. "The time I see my dad put into his job, outside his job, to better the community amazes me."

Now, Liam boasts the same attitude, but he admits his conviction wavered at times.

"Testing was hard, the EMT certification had me down," Liam said.

After three failed tries, he took a break and tried a few other jobs



EVAN CALDWELL | STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

Liam Shelley was hired as a part-time firefighter with Camano Fire in November. 'I can see myself doing this for a long time,' he said.

around town before being drawn back.

"Being away made me realize that being a firefighter was what I was supposed to do," he said.

And the Shelleys aren't alone.

Ava Schweiger also is attempting to follow her father's footsteps. CIFR firefighter Erich Schweiger has been with the department since 1997 when he started as a 33-year-old volunteer at the Mabana station.

Erich was a violinmaker by trade, having moved to south Camano from the Seattle area to build a log home with a workshop. But he, too, decided to test out the new profession after seeing a sign

seeking firefighter volunteers. By about 2001, CIFR transitioned from mostly volunteers to career firefighters with shift work.

"I applied, got the job and put violin-making on hold until 2015," he said.

Meanwhile, Ava came along and grew up in firehouses.

"It seemed like we were always at the fire station," she said. "I knew from an early age, I wanted to be either a firefighter or police officer. I would always be asking him questions about the job."

Now the 18-year-old, who graduated from Stanwood last year, is studying fire sciences at Everett Community College

and recently landed a part-time job with Snohomish County Fire District's Tulalip Bay station. She also volunteers with CIFR.

"I like how every day is different," said Ava, who is leaning toward paramedicine.

Both Liam and Ava participated in the fire cadet class at Stanwood High, which offers students a taste of what it's like working at a fire department.

"I took the class to find out if it was going to be something that I really did like — and I did," she said. "There wasn't a Plan B."

Ava, Liam and any other prospective firefighters start by completing a long list of accreditations, certifications, classes and trainings required for the job.

"The goal is to get a full-time job, but I know it takes steps to get there," she said.

She'll join an industry where women make up about 4 percent of the workforce nationally, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. To compare, women make up about 14 percent of police officers and military members.

"The Seattle Fire chief said recently that girls just don't know it's an option and I kind of think he's right," dad Erich said. "We need to change that."

New safety initiatives and plenty of expected job openings due to retiring Baby Boomers make it a good time to become a firefighter, Erich said.

"I think it's exciting she's getting into the job now," he said.

Robert Shelley echoed the sentiment about his son.

"I'm ecstatic that Liam is choosing this path," he said.

Regulations prohibit parents and children working together on the same shift. And both fathers admit to being simultaneously proud and nervous.

"Ultimately, he's got a good head on his shoulders and lots of training," Robert said of Liam. "I tell him every day to keep his head on a swivel."

Nevertheless, in separate interviews with the Stanwood Camano News, Ava and Liam offered the same declaration:

"I can see myself doing this for a long time."

Firefighter marks 20th year at CIFR

Camano Island Fire & Rescue will honor Lt. Darryl Tedrow for his 20th career year anniversary with CIFR during the public Board of Fire Commissioners meeting at 4:30 p.m. Monday, March 25, in the CIFR Administration office at 811 N. Sunrise Blvd., Camano Island. Light refreshments will be served.

Chief

■ FROM A1

"My biggest goal is to sit down and hear from the stakeholders, the community, the firefighters to help set up the department for long-term vision," Yengoyan said of his 100-day plan. "Nothing's broken. Camano Fire is not in distress, it's about continuing to improve."

When Schick resigned Jan. 14 after more than four years on the job, CIFR officials said they expected to use a hiring firm for a three-to-six month process of finding a new chief. But Williams said when Yengoyan expressed interest, the board knew they had their man.

The two fire departments serve a similarly sized region — Camano Island Fire and Rescue serves 45 square miles of the island, and the Burlington Fire Department serves 32 square miles.

"Everything seemed to click," Williams said. "His forte is working with people, and we were impressed with his ability and his planning."

Yengoyan moved to Camano Island in 1998 and started with CIFR as a volunteer.

"One of the things I missed was serving in the community in which I lived," he said. "This department is so closely tied with the community. ... It's going to be an interesting, exciting job."

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