

HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS

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STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

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A house with history

Century-old home offers a peek of Stanwood's past



PEGGY WENDEL | STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

Above: Neighbors Shirley Gilbertson and Mary Schultz chat on the curved porch of the historical Lien house that, over the decades, they've both owned. **Below:** Although the 1918 Otto Lien house has changed locations on the hill, it's looked over a century of changes in Stanwood.

By PEGGY WENDEL | Staff Reporter

Thirty years ago, when Shirley Gilbertson stepped into a 1918 house on the hill, it felt right.

"I knew in my heart, that this was for me," she said.

She's lived in this old-fashioned house with charm and style in east Stanwood ever since. Tucked out of the way on a quiet, dead-end road, this distinctive Craftsman-style house faces west on the hill overlooking Stanwood, Port Susan Bay and beyond to Camano and Whidbey islands, and on a clear day, the Olympic mountains.

Gilbertson grew up in Stanwood and cares about her connection to its history. James Lund, her maternal great-grandfather, homesteaded on Pioneer Highway.

"In those days, you knew most everybody in town. It's not that way anymore," she said. "Mom was related to Harry Lindbeck, a cousin. It's nice to have that history in the family. That's why it's felt like home here for me."

The fourth-generation Stanwood

resident bought it from Don and Mary Schultz, who like to tell the story of how Gilbertson came to buy the house.

In 1989, the Schultzes contemplated selling the home that they had lived in and loved for 17 years. A Sequoia tree — 3 feet tall when planted — visibly ticked off the years as it grew. They'd invested a lot of sweat equity in home projects and homeschooled their two children there.

■ SEE HOUSE, A6



City to unveil banners at park

Ovenell Park will be gateway from Camano

By PEGGY WENDEL
Staff Reporter

Stanwood's newest park takes another step forward on Monday.

Banners will be officially revealed at the site of Stanwood's future Ovenell Park during a 3 p.m. ceremony Oct. 21 at the north barn on SR 532.

Ovenell barn will be decorated with banners depicting historical photos to honor the past uses of the historical farm property.

The banner project will serve as an entryway to Stanwood on the mainland side of the Camano Gateway Bridge.

The display is a team effort several years in the planning involving the city's Parks and Trails Advisory Committee, Friends of Stanwood Parks and Trails members, the Ovenell family and Stillaguamish Tribe.

Recently Public Works staff cleaned the exterior barn facade, mowed the area, constructed frames and installed banners on the barn.

City officials don't have an opening date for Ovenell Park or the planned Hamilton Park. Instead, they will be developed in stages as money allows.

Crematory hearing set

An appeal hearing is set for 10 a.m., Friday, Oct. 25, regarding the city of Stanwood's decision to allow a crematory downtown in the Mainstreet Business I zone.

Hearing Examiner John Galt will soon determine details of how the hearing will be conducted.

■ SEE CITY, A2

*** ELECTION 2019

School board shake-up possible

4 of 5 positions on November ballot

By MARY JENNINGS
For SC News

The Stanwood Camano School Board will see change this fall — potentially dramatic change.

Four of the five seats are on November's ballot, two of which are contested — the first contested races since 2005. All races are non-partisan.

Two are vying for the District 4 director position, which represents the area north of Stanwood.

Incumbent Ken Christofersen, a local business owner, previously served on the board from 1995-1999. He was re-elected in 2003 and has served continuously since.

Supporting Career and Technical Education is a priority for Christofersen.

"In light of the increase in the number of credits needed to graduate, it is critical that the board continues to support all areas of study — especially Career and Technical Education," he said of the skills-based curriculum route to a career. "We need to make sure that these students don't get left behind."

District 4 challenger Brett Kinney is a manager in the manufacturing industry. He has served on various boards, including on a county parks board and a legislative district political board.

Kinney views the proper use of financial resources as critical.

"My top priority is to ensure that our students, staff and operations are resourced appropriately by working with the superintendent and fellow board directors to manage the district's overall budget, considering both funded and unfunded mandates in a way that meets our current resources and needs," he said.

■ SEE SCHOOL, A6

Election 2019 coverage

This week, the Stanwood Camano News continues a five-part series previewing the November election.

- Oct. 1 Superior Court
- Oct. 8 Stanwood City Council
- Oct. 15 Stanwood Camano School Board
- Oct. 22 North County Fire
- Oct. 29 County-level races

Local election forum

The American Association of University Women and the Stanwood Camano News are hosting a free public candidate forum 6:30 p.m. Oct. 16 at Stanwood Middle School. Candidates will make a short presentation followed by questions from members of the audience.

- Register to vote at votewa.gov
- More coverage at SCnews.com

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House

■ FROM A1

"I thought this house would be good to grow old in," Mary Schultz said.

But their children got into horses, so the Schultzes considered buying property and moving.

It was a hard decision, Mary Schultz said, dreading all the work of putting the house up for sale and showing it to strangers. One day, she was praying on the matter and said, "Lord, if you want us to move, would you please bring a buyer to us?"

That afternoon, Shirley Gilbertson knocked on the door and said she loved the house and asked if they were interested in selling.

Mary Schultz invited Gilbertson back for a tour.

"When I came back the second day, I knew in my heart, that this was for me," Gilbertson said.

Gilbertson traded her Camano

Island property to the Schultzes, which brought the price down to what she could afford on her wages as a waitress at Helen's Kitchen, where Ixtapa is now.

The Schultzes moved to Camano Island, but they later moved back to a nearby vintage house on the hill. They've been Gilbertson's neighbors ever since.

A house with history

Don Schultz said that as he delved into the house's history, he found that Otto Lien originally built the house on the hill, just south of where St. Cecilia's Catholic church is now.

Otto and Martha Lien took a wedding trip to San Francisco in 1913 and moved in when they returned. Don Schultz got information from the previous owners at Assembly of God Church. The county assessor documents the house as being built in 1918. Lien and his brothers owned

Lien Brothers Packing Co., which later became Twin City Foods.

The Liens had big Fourth of July parties at the house. Otto Lien played trombone with his band, which set up in the curved section of the porch to entertain a crowd in the yard.

Around 1964, long after Otto and Martha Lien died, the house was earmarked for destruction to make way for Highway 532, which would cut through the hill where the house stood.

Someone wanted to salvage fixtures, but saved the whole house instead, moving it west across a field to its present location, which was called Carnation Heights back in the days of Carnation Creamery.

When the Schultzes bought the Lien house in 1972, it was a parsonage for the Assembly of God Church.

"They were building a new church downtown. We laugh and say we built the church," Mary Schultz said.

Her husband added: "Because

when we bought the house, they had the money to build the church."

Home improvements

Through the years, Don and Mary Schultz made plenty of home improvements.

When insulating above the dining room, Don Schultz found a box with postcards from the Liens' San Francisco honeymoon, a 1913 Redbook magazine, a celluloid collar, plus an instruction manual for the built-in vacuum system. The manual showed a huge machine, taller than the woman pictured next to it.

The machine was gone, but they found metal plates covering vacuum pipes in the walls. They also found gas lines by the fireplace when they installed electric light sconces.

They built the garage to match the house and even matched the siding and hand dug the foundation.

They spent six months stripping and refinishing woodwork in the

living and dining rooms, parlor and stairway. Wood is everywhere. There are thick moldings around doors and windows, panels frame the fireplace, heavy beams line the ceilings and wood partitions separate parlor from living room.

Don Schultz said, "We were almost to the top of the stairs when Mary started crying, 'I'm so sick of woodwork!'"

Gilbertson appreciates their effort, though.

"I was really glad Don and Mary refinished the woodwork because it makes it really authentic," she said.

An oak-paneled den offers an eagle's view of town and beyond. The living room and dining room have original hardwood white oak floors. Ceiling beams and wood around the fireplace are the original cross grain fir.

"It's neat to live in an old house. There's something about the past that grounds us," Gilbertson said.

School

■ FROM A1

Two are also running for the District 5 seat, which is a director-at-large position.

Incumbent Natalie Hagglund, is a local preschool teacher and is also employed by an area foundation. She was elected to the board in 2015.

Hagglund puts financial stability as a high priority.

"If re-elected, I will remain committed to students, staff and our community to continue to be financially stable while responding to funded and unfunded mandates, law changes and other needs of the district," Hagglund said.

District 5 challenger George Zeigen is a retired local school counselor and is involved in many community organizations.

Zeigen said that connecting students to appropriate resources is a top priority.

"Strengthening student connections to their schools and our community will be a priority if I'm elected," he said. "I want to examine student services, such as those provided by counselors and nurses, to make sure we are supporting the social and emotional well-being of students in the classroom and the community."

Only one candidate is running in District 2, which represents the east and south sides of Camano Island, and District 3, representing the north and west sides of Camano.

However, each of these districts will see new representation because incumbents Chad Lewis and Julie Dean did not seek to retain their seats.

Charlotte Murry is seeking the District 2 seat, and Miranda Evans is unopposed for the District 3 position.

The Stanwood Camano News sent each candidate a questionnaire with the same questions. Their responses follows.

District 2

Charlotte Murry

Murry did not respond to the SC News' questionnaire.

District 3

Miranda Evans

Why are you running: I decided to run for this position as a way to get more involved with our great community and the school district my children attend.

What experience do you have and how will that help in this position: I currently work for a large corporation where I audit files, manage large outside accounts, and am in charge of rolling out and supplying the necessary training for substantial process changes. This means that I am a detail-oriented person that is good at taking in information and breaking it down for others to understand in clear, concise ways.

What do you want to accomplish or change: My goal is to ensure that our school district is doing everything they can to set up, not only my children, but all of the children in the Stanwood-Camano School District for future success.

District 4

Ken Christoferson

Why are you running: I am running to continue the work underway. I want to contribute to the education of the children in our community and make sure that each of them has the opportunities for the best possible future. This community has been the home of my family for many generations, and I think that we should do what we can to provide for the future members of our community.

What experience do you have and how will that help in this position: I have served as a Stanwood Camano School Board Director for several terms, District 19 Fire Commissioner for 12 years, and served on several school district planning committees including facilities, curriculum, athletics and program review. I have served on the Washington State School Directors Association resolution committee for 10 years. I am a member of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church and serve as congregation president. I'm a member of Fritjov Sons of Norway and serve as counselor. I serve on the executive board advisory committee for

the Stanwood Area Historical Society. I own and manage a business in Stanwood. I have served on the board and as president of Washington Concrete and Aggregates Association.

What do you want to accomplish or change: I want to support the work of our educators. We all are proud of our students and expect to provide for the best possible opportunities for their future. I pledge to work hard to make that happen. I am anxious to watch the construction of new school buildings and look forward to their completion, but the most important work is the continued efforts that take place in the classrooms and that is a cause for celebration each spring at graduation time.

Brett Kinney

Why are you running: I strongly believe that every student should have the opportunity for a quality education, because as we invest in our public education, we are ultimately investing into our community's future. The district has made good strides in providing a quality education to our students, but I believe with the right leadership we can do more.

What experience do you have and how will it help you in this position: For over 18 years I have been a professional manager in manufacturing. I am also a product of the public education system graduating from public high school and a public university, so I am familiar with how they function. My management experience has prepared me for the management or governance of the school district in all administrative functions such as strategic planning, budgeting, capital projects, personnel management, finance, operation management and administrative oversight. Additionally, I serve on a county parks advisory board, a legislative district political board, and a church board. The various boards that I have served on all had bylaws that board members needed to abide by and most cases guided by state laws.

What do hope to accomplish or change: Improve the quality of education our students receive and having measurable results that show successful outcomes — we do this by improving curriculum, resourcing our teachers with quality materials and recruiting and retaining great teachers and staff. I also want to make sure that we are fiscally accountable to the voters — we do this by having a responsible budget. I also want to improve the communication between board and staff by being transparent with our planning and communication.

District 5

Natalie Hagglund

Why are you running: I have enjoyed my term on the school board and believe that I continue to have a valuable perspective. I am experienced, do my job with integrity, and have relevance for what is happening in our district now. We have four positions on the ballot this year — two of them do not have incumbents running. It's important that the other two races keep experienced people on our board. In the time that I have been on the board, eight schools have received awards of recognition, graduation rates and test scores have risen, we have remained financially stable, and are accomplishing wonderful capital projects. I am proud of the work that our district is doing and would like to continue to be part of it. I am intentional about my work as a board member — I listen and respond to inquiries, am supportive of staff, and participate in our schools. I am the only member with children attending school full-time in our district.

What experience do you have and how will that help in this position: I am completing my first four-year term on the board and have received extensive training through the Washington State School Board Association. I also grew up in this community. My first job was at Twin City Foods, and I began to volunteer in our schools before we even had children. I went on to coordinate MOPS groups, was the PTA president at Twin City Elementary, and am active in the PTO at Port Susan Middle School. Before joining the board, I was a classified substitute employee for the district. I teach preschool at Our Saviour's Lutheran, and am the scholarship coordinator/executive assistant for the Stanwood-Camano Area Foundation.



Charlotte Murry



Miranda Evans



Ken Christoferson



Brett Kinney



Natalie Hagglund



George Zeigen

schools and community.

What experience do you have and how will that help in this position: I started as a school counselor in Stanwood-Camano School District in 1987 and retired in 2018. During those years I worked with thousands of students and hundreds of families, dozens of teachers, numerous administrators, and two superintendents. My position as counselor at Stanwood Middle School put me in the unique position to directly help students work through challenges, mediate for teachers, and represent the district when tragedies struck families from our community and the neighboring communities of Marysville and Oso. These experiences equip me to face challenges and look for unique solutions that provide positive outcomes. I have raised children and have eight grandchildren. I care about their future and the future of all our students. My dedication to our students motivates me to hear their voices and to be their voice on the school board.

What do you want to accomplish or change: I want to see the school board make more connections with students and staff in our district. I'd like to see more face-to-face meetings with groups of students (and parents) to hear their concerns and needs. I'd like to see more time given to teacher collaboration. I want to improve Stanwood High's graduation rate along with the college and career readiness of students. I want to ensure we are doing all we can to close achievement gaps and provide the best possible practices in serving all our students, including special populations. I want to approach contract negotiations with good will and integrity. I want to address our population growth in a manner that respects families, school capacities, and the community.

I am also a piano accompanist, often playing for our school choirs, and have the privilege of accompanying the Stanwood High Spring musical. I am the registrar for Stanwood Lacrosse, a Boy Scout merit badge counselor, and volunteer at my church.

I am connected to many people in our community and understand our students, parents, staff and neighbors.

What do you want to accomplish or change: The school board is a cooperation. Directors do not act alone; our interaction models the culture and expectations for our district, and we can only take official action when together. Quite frankly, our district is always changing. We are constantly having to respond to changes in the law, figure out how to pay for new requirements that we don't receive funding for, and adapt as the needs of our students change. I am glad that our district continues to focus on safety, and I would like to see us communicate our plans more clearly with families and our community. I am proud of how many students take advantage of our Career and Technology Education classes and want to continue to make sure we are helping kids find their specific way to succeed. Our staff continues to display their excellence with clean state financial audits, and I want to continue to make decisions that keep us fiscally sound. It is important to me that our employees keep their jobs and we maintain the ability to follow through on everything we have promised to our community.

George Zeigen

Why are you running: I am running for school board because I love our students. I've considered being on the school board for a number of years. Now that I'm retired, I am able to do so. Having worked in the school district for 30 years, I feel strongly that our students need a voice in their education and future. Being on the school board will allow me to ask tough questions and get answers. I want to ensure we are providing the strongest education along with college and career readiness upon graduation. I want to ensure all employees are valued and compensated fairly. I want to work with an independent board that is willing to make changes in our district, changes that will improve our

OBITUARIES



JUDITH MOWERY

Judith, 79, passed away, with her children by her side, on Thursday, September 26, 2019, after she had a massive stroke three days earlier. Her children found her the morning after her stroke, and she was able to communicate with them and with her friends who visited before she passed.

On October 19, 2019, you are invited to enjoy the local wildlife refuge in celebration of our mom's life. Rain or shine, 9 to 11 a.m. at the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, followed by a lunch hosted by her children, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Gallery room of the Seventeen 51 Restaurant at Panorama in Lacey. Come to one or both.

More information can be found here: <https://funeralalternatives.org/tribute/details/150547/Judith-Mowery/obituary.html#tribute-start>

In lieu of flowers, please support The Nature Conservancy, or just turn off your devices and go for a walk outside with your family.



SHANE CAMERON WHITENER
October 7, 1971 - October 4, 2019

Shane Cameron Whitener, born October 7, 1971 in Arlington, Wash., passed away in his home on October 4, 2019. He was a loving husband and an amazing father. He leaves behind his wife, Tracy Whitener, two beautiful daughters, Kylie Lowery married to Dylan Lowery, and Melyssa Whitener, and three stepchildren that he loved as his own, Joshua Sitler, Savannah Lopez, and Rudy Lopez.

Shane was an avid hunter, fisher, and outdoorsman. In his free time, you could find him spending time out on his boat in the Puget Sound or scouting out next year's deer season. He enjoyed doing these activities with both his kids and his friends. He loved teaching people about the outdoors and all it had to offer.

Since Shane was a teenager, he had a huge passion for the fire service. He volunteered with many Fire Departments and spent much of his time with his Fire family. He thought highly of those in the profession and felt lucky to stand beside them. Shane was a very smart man and was always willing to help teach those around him.

Shane was an extremely hard-working, generous, and gentle man who devoted his life to each and every one of his family members. He was highly respected and looked up to by his peers and made an excellent role model to anyone around him.

There are no words to express his positive influence in the lives of his family and friends.

"Your wings were ready, but our hearts were not"

Shane was and still is loved by so many and will forever be missed by all.

Shane's family invites all those who had the pleasure of knowing him to a Celebration of Life Sunday, October 13 at 1 pm. It will be located at The Tera Building at 10200 Marchs Point Rd.

Marathon's main entrance, up the hill, turn left at the electronic sign.

They ask for you to bring any picture of him that you have and your memories to reflect on Shane's life.

Please share your thoughts of Shane and sign the online guest register at hawthornefh.com.

Arrangements are under the care of Hawthorne Funeral Home, Mount Vernon.



RON RYSER
December 25, 1966 - October 2, 2019

Ron Ryser, loving husband and father passed away peacefully in his home on October 2, 2019. Born in Seattle on December 25th, 1966, Ron was a longtime resident of Camano Island and owner of R & S Construction and Remodel Inc.

He is survived by his wife Sandy, son Nate, and daughter Emily; along with his mother Donna, his brothers Jeff and Darien, and extended family.

A memorial is undecided at this time. He will be deeply missed. Remembrances may be made to Camano Island Fire and Rescue.