



# STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

## A mammoth find

Camano family finds woolly mammoth tooth during beach walk



PHOTOS BY EVAN CALDWELL / STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

Marc and Brittany Root, with son Knox, show the woolly mammoth tooth they found in January on Camano Island.

By EVAN CALDWELL  
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The sun was finally out after a series of storms lashed Camano Island in mid-January, and the Root family decided to walk the beach.

"We like to beachcomb and look for agates," said Marc Root, 30.

And at the base of a bluff, something caught Marc's eye.

Brittany, 29, and Marc, carrying their 2-year-old son Knox in a backpack, went to investigate and started to dig. He found what he thought was part of a large striped rock with agates embedded in it.

It wasn't a rock.

Marc was holding a woolly mammoth tooth, though he didn't realize it at the time.



Columbian mammoth roamed the Pacific Northwest 12,000-30,000 years ago during the ice age, using massive ridged teeth to grind grass and seeds.

"It sat outside a few days and in my wife's car for a few days," he said.

On Friday, about two weeks

after the discovery, he decided to take a closer look.

"There was something different about it," Marc said.

"We even thought it could be one big agate," Brittany said.

Marc cleaned it up, took better pictures and asked a Camano Island Facebook Group if anyone knew what it was.

The replies were quick: "It looks like a mammoth tooth," "I believe that's a mammoth tooth," and "You found a mammoth tooth."

By Friday afternoon, officials with the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture in Seattle confirmed it was a mammoth's molar, Root said.

A mammoth tooth discovery is not uncommon in the area.

Most recently, a tooth was found on Whidbey Island in 2018, two years after another was found on a different part of Whidbey Island.

■ SEE MAMMOTH, A8

## Vaccine still in short supply

New mass vaccination site in Arlington to serve Stanwood

By EVAN CALDWELL  
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A drive-thru mass vaccination site opened Friday at the Arlington Municipal Airport, likely the closest a large clinic will get to Stanwood.

The site is on an unused runway at Arlington Municipal Airport and is serving eligible people in Phases 1A and 1B1.

People can sign up and check eligibility through the Snohomish Health District vaccine appointment site. Those with limited or no internet access, or who need language support, can call the local COVID-19 call center at 425-339-5278.

The Arlington site is expected to continue operating as long as doses are available, health officials said.

"While exact capacity at the site will vary, hundreds of vaccines can be administered there per day," according to a news release from the Health District. "Appointments at all of the sites have been booking rapidly. There is still much higher demand for COVID vaccine than doses available."

Like the three other Snohomish County Vaccine Taskforce sites, the Arlington location is by appointment for those who live and work in Snohomish County, and is for those who are eligible in the current phase.

■ SEE VACCINE, A6

### INSIDE

Stanwood moves to Phase 2 in state's reopening plan, A6

COVID-19 cases here trending down, A6



CITY OF STANWOOD

An artist rendering of a possible new Stanwood City Hall and police station near Church Creek Park.

## Council rethinking City Hall plan

By PEGGY WENDEL  
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Stanwood officials are looking at whether to build a \$13.4 million civic center or revamp the existing City Hall.

Discussions to replace the old City Hall — a 1932 landmark in the floodplain of west Stanwood — and

the police station on Main Street's historic block in east Stanwood have been ongoing for several years.

About a year ago, Stanwood City Council members discussed a plan to combine City Hall and the police station on 1.25 acres on 72nd Avenue NW, across from the new Stanwood High School. But the project was put on pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Thursday, the council rebooted the project by approving \$97,300 to extend a contract with designing firm Mackenzie. When the project was put on hold, money was still left in the original \$271,000 contract. With the extension to rescope the project, the total contract will be \$294,767.

■ SEE CITY HALL, A8

# More students come back in classrooms

By EVAN CALDWELL  
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Fourth- and fifth-graders returned to classrooms Monday for the first time this school year.

"You can feel their excitement to be back," Stanwood Elementary principal Staci Lauinger said.

They join K-3 students in a hybrid learning model in which half a class attends on Mondays and Tuesdays and the other half attends on Thursdays and Fridays. When not at school, the students do classwork online.

"It really feels like the first day of school in a way," said Maureen Stanton, the Stanwood-Camano School District executive director of human resources.

The Snohomish Health District has recommended schools bring high-needs children and K-5 students into buildings under a hybrid model, citing schools that follow safety protocols for younger

children have not been a source of major outbreaks.

According to the most recent state health metrics for schools, middle school students can return in a hybrid schedule when COVID-19 case rates are less than 350 infections per 100,000 residents and trending downward for two weeks, in addition to meeting other health metrics such as case positivity and hospitalization rates. High school students could start returning in a hybrid setting three weeks after middle schoolers return and when case rates drop below 200 infections per 100,000 people.

Currently, the COVID-19 case rate in Snohomish County is 184 and has been trending downward for three weeks.

Stanton said the district is working with secondary teachers to hone a reopening plan.

"It's more complicated than elementary," Stanton said. "For example, there are six periods a

day. We have to figure out what passing times are going to look like, where are they going to eat, how are they going to walk in the hallways."

The district plans to survey parents of secondary students to better help them plan for transportation and staffing needs.

"We need to know things like how much staff we need to safely and efficiently screen kids as they enter buildings," Stanton said.

She said the district is confident their safety procedures will continue to be effective. There have been no known cases of COVID-19 transmitted at a local school, she said.

In an email to families last week, district officials said they hope to announce Friday the plans for middle school students returning. The earliest middle schoolers could return according to current state and local health guidelines is Monday, Feb. 22.

# Wesco gives tentative OK to start games

By EVAN CALDWELL  
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Wesco Conference athletic directors gave a preliminary thumbs up to start high school sports seasons Feb. 22.

Though the conference meets its requirements that Snohomish County be in Phase 2 and that they received approval from each school district superintendent, the athletic directors decided in a meeting Monday to delay the final vote until Wednesday, Feb. 3.

"This allows (athletic directors) to have one more conversation with local school district superintendents to make sure all of the relative information is available and has been provided," according to a statement from Wesco Conference officials Monday evening.

If the plan is again approved Wednesday, Wesco will begin its

plan to play three seasons, starting with traditional fall sports on Feb. 22 for a six-week season.

Spring sports will start March 29, and winter sports will begin May 31.

Wesco schools will not be participating in any culminating events.

"What we have heard from our student-athletes is they just want a chance to play," officials said in the statement. "The schedules will be built to provide competitions for all schools without putting the focus on postseason."

In addition, the league will attempt to limit travel, trying to keep the schedules geographically focused as possible.

Stanwood High athletes started official practices last week in small groups, wearing masks and following other safety procedures.

Check SCnews.com later this week for updates.

## City Hall

► FROM A1

The council will take a deeper look at options both uptown and downtown, starting with a workshop on Thursday, Feb. 11.

"The takeaway is to get this rebooted, so (Mackenzie) can help with technical issues and have them there to answer technical and design questions. In order to do that we have to update their contract," Community Development Director Patricia Love said.

The council will consider four options:

Option A: Build the civic center on 72nd Avenue, and buy another acre to provide park access.

Option B: Build a police station on 72nd Avenue and extend Church Creek Park.



At left, an aerial photo from 2020 showing the potential site of a new Stanwood City Hall and police station located in the field at the center-left of the image, next to Church Creek Park. At right, the current Stanwood City Hall building, which the city council could choose to renovate.



PHOTOS BY EVAN CALDWELL / STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

The building would include a room for a community and emergency operations center that could temporarily be used as a council chamber.

Option C: Renovate the existing City Hall with bathroom and kitchen upgrades and possible floor

plan revisions. If renovations are kept below 50% valuation, the city can avoid flood-proofing the building. This option could be paired with options B or D.

Option D: Build a council chambers building on city-owned land west of City Hall. It could also be used

as a community building. The new building would need to meet floodplain regulations, but the existing City Hall could continue without major renovations.

Love said these options came from discussions between Stanwood City Administrator Jennifer Ferguson, Stanwood Mayor Elizabeth Callaghan and Love.

Callaghan said that besides her desire to keep City Hall downtown, the whole council wasn't behind moving it.

Councilman Robert Johnson said the city could save millions by building both the City Hall and police station at the same time, but the council would need more information first.

Councilman Timothy Pearce said he thought that there could be more savings

by relocating just the police station and remodeling the City Hall.

"We need a lot of information and need to get Mackenzie onboard sooner rather than later," Councilman Darren Robb said.

"I'm all in favor of talking and making sure we're doing the right thing," Councilman Sid Roberts said.

Ferguson said that before the pandemic, the council was at a stage in the project where they were identifying possible themes of the building and materials and whether to purchase an additional acre on the hill.

In this 2021 reboot, the council will first consider the four overall options. Once a choice is made, a package will be created to detail what the desired project would look like, including

financing, Ferguson said.

### In other business:

• The council approved a \$219,517 change order for Viking Way due to underground surprises with the location of utilities and the decision to use different ballast that caused SRV Construction delays and increased material costs. Viking Way is substantially complete with a few minor items left.

"As I recall ... it could have been a lot worse," said Pearce. "We have old roads and old things underneath them. We're working to have things located and mapped out for the future."

• International building and fire codes were adopted.

• Council approved the first reading of zoning changes that are on the Feb. 11 agenda for adoption. The changes would allow a mixed-use overlay on commercial property similar to properties nearby in the Uptown Center. The city would create a parks and open space designation for five city park properties to help satisfy conservation measures. The zoning changes would expand a business corridor by changing the light industrial zoning along the north side of 271st Street NW between 90th and 92nd avenues to Mainstreet Business II.

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Marc and Brittany Root don't know yet what they will do with the mammoth tooth. For now, it'll sit on the mantle at home.

## Mammoth

► FROM A1

A 2012 landslide exposed part of a mammoth tusk and a molar near Cama Beach State Park. And years ago, a mammoth tooth was found near Barnum Point.

The Columbian mammoth roamed the Pacific Northwest 12,000-30,000 years ago. The mammoths, relatives of today's el-

ephants, went extinct about 11,000 years ago during the Ice Age.

Mammoths were herbivores and grazed on grasses. They had only four big molars with two additional sets of each molar ready to come in as they lost their teeth over their lifetime, according to the Burke Museum.

Mammoths also had tusks, which were actually teeth — huge incisors — that kept growing through-

out their lives.

The Root family, which declined to disclose the location of the find, doesn't yet know if they will donate it, keep it or sell it.

"It might be kind of nice to just hold onto it and look at it for a while," Marc said.

"It feels like it has a gravity to it," Brittany said. "We're still in a bit of disbelief something that old is in our house. We just want to enjoy the treasure for a while."