

# The Northern Light

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Community Newspaper of Blaine and Birch Bay

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## The C Shop reopens for in-person sales

BY IAN HAUPT

The C Shop reopened May 7 after closing its doors in March 2020 due to the pandemic.

Many familiar, masked faces visited the nearly 50-year-old shop at 4825 Alderson Road throughout the afternoon, all of whom were excited to see their local chocolate factory let in more than five randomly selected kids.

"Glad to see you back open," a man said, pushing a stroller carrying his son out the front door, each with an ice cream cone in hand.

Since closing last year, the Birch Bay staple had been taking online orders that customers could pick up outside the shop or have mailed. But now, with changes that include the shop rearranged to have separate entrance and exit doors, The C Shop is ready to reopen.

The shop is open weekends, Friday through Sunday from 1 to 8 p.m., but hasn't finalized summer hours.

The C Shop will celebrate 50 years of selling sweets to the community of Birch Bay this June. Patrick and Patricia Alesse originally opened the shop on June 26, 1971 where the Jacobs Landing condominiums are now on Birch Bay Drive. After eight years, they moved to their current location on Alderson Road.

Since then, the Alesse's eldest son Keith and his partner Saara Kuure have taken over the family business. But Patricia can still be seen either working at the shop, and Patrick dropping by, especially on the shop's first day open in over a year.

Keith said they were still getting things back together during their first weekend.

The C Shop makes special holiday chocolates, like chocolate-covered wine jell and chocolate heart boxes for Valentine's Day, and of course, chocolate bunnies for Easter.

Some of the C Shop original specials include peanut butter yumms, which are white chocolate-covered peanut butter bars, and C-foam, a chocolate-covered

(See *The C Shop*, page 16)

## Lummi carvers bring totem pole to Birch Bay



▲ From l.; Douglas James, Siam'el wit, Heather Misanes and Jewell James are members of the Lummi Nation who helped carve and paint a totem pole to be presented to President Joe Biden later this summer. The group arrived in Birch Bay on May 8, one of many stops they will make while taking the totem pole on their Red Road to D.C. journey.

Photo by Chuck Kinzer/CKimageart.com

## Totem pole en route to Biden stops in Birch Bay

BY GRACE MCCARTHY

Dozens of people gathered at the future site of the Birch Bay Vogt Community Library May 8 to learn about a 24-foot totem pole Lummi Nation members will travel with across the U.S. to raise awareness to land and water protection.

The Lummi Nation House of Tears Carvers is made up of carvers and painters who will take the totem pole on a journey called "the Red Road to D.C.," which will culminate with the totem pole being pre-

sented to President Joe Biden.

"The pole is not what is sacred," Douglas Jewell said during the event. "It's you and you and you. When you come together you create the sacred moment."

During the event, the carvers spoke about their upcoming cross-country tour and explained the art on the totem pole.

The cedar totem pole depicts images such as the moon, a divine eagle to represent leadership, a Chinook salmon to bring urgency to disappearing salmon in the Pacific Northwest and red hands to

represent murdered and missing Indigenous women.

In part, according to their website, the group is doing the journey now because of the new federal administration, which includes Deb Haaland, the first Native American to serve as U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

"Now is the time to implement policies to protect, restore, and renew sacred places, lands and waterways; and redefine the

(See *Totem pole*, page 10)

## Council approves next steps for H Street annexation

BY GRACE MCCARTHY

After strong pushback during a May 10 public hearing, Blaine City Council voted 6-0 to move forward with the process of annexing two adjoining H Street properties. Councilmember Richard May abstained from voting.

Council's approval does not fully green light the annexation of the properties at 4455 H Street and 2221 Cedarwood Lane, which together make up just under 5 acres.

For the annexation to be approved, the

city of Blaine's community development services director Stacie Pratschner said a draft ordinance will be presented at the next city council meeting. The ordinance will then go to the Whatcom County boundary review board, which acts as the appeal body for boundary decisions and will verify the annexation is consistent with Blaine's urban growth area, Pratschner said. The county will ultimately approve or deny the annexation.

"What is before us tonight is whether the application was done in a proper and

legal fashion and whether it merits going forward as an annexation," councilmember Mary Lou Steward said during the meeting. "Once the property is annexed into the city of Blaine, what happens to it after that is not for our discussion this evening because there are way too many factors."

The property was first brought before council during a January work-study session in which the community devel-

(See *Annex*, page 3)

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