Ecotones: The Heartbeat of Huxley, 2001, November 05

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Don't just sit there... Vote already!

The September 11th attacks on New York and Washington DC have redefined what it means to be American. As flags fly proudly from our flagpoles, workers continue to pull bodies from the rubble of the World Trade Center. We talk in coffee shops of peace or revenge as bombers target Taliban strongholds in Afghanistan.

As Americans, we have a responsibility to vote in the upcoming elections. Although this is an off year, races are still exceptionally important in this county. The choices we make this year, however small they may seem in the aftermath of this national tragedy, can have a profound effect on our quality of life in Bellingham. The quality of our air, water and life are at stake.

We've put together this guide for voters, outlining all the races and the key issues. All Whatcom county voters are allowed to vote for all districts and wards in the county and city council races. Ecotones encourages all registered voters to do their "civic duty" as Americans and go to the polls this November 6. The one thing we can control in this time of chaos is who we choose to lead us through.

The City Council Races

Incumbent Bjornson v. Newby Hile

Voters will choose between a seven-term incumbent and a relative new-comer to politics in the at-large city council race.

Louise Bjornson, incumbent, is facing Joel Hile, a self-employed consultant.

Bjornson said her years on the council, work for the Mayor's Advisory Commission and involvement with neighborhood groups gave her a broad understanding of the city, and where it needs improvement.

"I can drive through a part of the city and say that is better because of something I did," she said.

On the other hand, "My opponent has only been here a few years," she said.

Hile said he is committed to listening to the citizens and bringing their issues forward. The current city council is not listening to the people, he said.

"Citizens feel their issues aren't being heard... I would listen to what citizens say," he said.

Concerns over the decision to sue Georgia Pacific and the council’s handling of storm-water fees partially prompted Hile to run.

"Running for city council -- and if I get elected to city council -- will be a new challenge for me," he said.

Hile said the council needs to get their spending back on track.

"(The council) spent money like there was no bottom to the pot. We need to live within our budget," he said.

Bjornson said her long-standing involvement with the community demonstrates her commitment to the community. She would like to see the downtown area flourish.

"Downtown is a like a person," she said. "We need to have a healthy heart." Bjornson also emphasized the need for a healthy environment.

"Lake Whatcom is a fragile resource," she said. "The water tests good now, but we need to be careful."

The city is also working on a shoreline master program.

"We are doing our part to help salmon return to the community," Bjornson said.

In other environmental work, in 1984 Bjornson started a recycling program in her neighborhood. Within two years the program had grown to five neighborhoods and the city took it over.

Bjornson said many of the issues she cares about require long term plans. She would like to see the city grow responsibly.

"Growth management requires planning," she said. "How we grow greatly influences our quality of life," she said.

Bjornson pointed out the Greenways trail levy as one plan that "really makes Bellingham special."

"I came to Bellingham because it is a beautiful place to live," Hile said. "I didn't come here to take that away."

Hile said he thinks that the area could use development, but that's something that most citizens don't want.

"I want to reassure them we can have development and keep environmental quality," he said. "Although I believe in growth I don't believe in sprawl."

"I think that the area could use development, but that's something that most citizens don't want."

In the City Council At-large race, voters will choose between the candidates business and environmental views during Tuesday’s election.
Knutson, Trinkaus compete for Ward 2

In the Ward 2 city council race, both candidates hope to improve conditions for businesses in the downtown area. But, they have different views on manufacturing, specifically power plants, in the area.

Incumbent Gene Knutson is facing Stephen Trinkaus, owner of Terra Organica, a local organic market.

Bringing manufacturing jobs to Bellingham is an important goal for Knutson. "I want to get the anti-business cloud off of city hall," he said. The downtown area needs revitalization, Knutson said. He points to the Flame Tavern and Mason Tavern sites as an example of improvements being made. The council condemned both of the buildings, then bought the land and sold it to private businesses. The sites will become a combination of retail, professional and housing space.

Public and private partnerships could also help downtown, Knutson said. The city has about $4 million that it can use to help attract downtown businesses, but Knutson said it hasn’t been used since the early 1990s.

Knutson was the only city council member to vote against the Georgia Pacific suit. He said the lawsuit against G-P damaged the city’s ability to attract investors. "It will take a while to get them back to the city," he said.

Trinkaus said he opposed G-P’s diesel power plant. He hopes it won’t become an issue, but said he would fight plans for additional power plants in the city. "We don’t need to become a prostitute to the California power industry," he said. "We don’t need to live with pollution to generate power for other areas."

Trinkaus points toward the waterfront when talking about revitalizing downtown.

"We should reconnect downtown with a working waterfront. It is underdeveloped and the public doesn’t have access," he said. Reconnecting downtown and the waterfront would provide a place for jobs and prevent urban sprawl, Trinkaus said.

He sites minimal impact fees for developers as one reason for sprawl.

"We subsidize development," he said. "We should put the impact on those who profit."

Trinkaus said he will take an active leadership role in the issues that are important to him.

One such issue is protecting Lake Whatcom. Trinkaus points toward a development moratorium and banning 2-cycle engines from the lake as possible solutions.

"I will be taking leadership on environmental issues -- water quality, air quality and land use," he said.

"I believe that we elect leaders not only to represent us but to take issues that are important and build consensus around them," he said.

As a small business owner, Trinkaus said he found the council unresponsive and lacking in leadership.
Deger, Johnson vie for Ward 4 position

In the Ward 4 race for city council, the candidates agree on areas where Bellingham needs to improve. But they come at the solutions from different angles.

Rebecca Johnson, a civic activist, and Grant Deger, a semi-retired physician, are vying for the seat being vacated by Leslie Langdon.

Deger and Johnson both describe the same issues as their biggest concerns for the city. Working to improve Bellingham's economy, revitalizing downtown, and protecting our drinking water and Lake Whatcom's watershed draw the candidates' attention.

Downtown revitalization is one of Johnson's interests. She served on the Capital Improvements Advisory Committee for two years. The committee prioritized projects that need funding in Bellingham.

Johnson said her interest in seeing these projects through prompted her to run for city council.

"We've done a lot of planning, now we need to move forward," she said. "I want to provide leadership to move the projects forward."

Deger also emphasized his desire to improve downtown and get projects moving.

Permitting the development of high rises could help, he said. The housing could create a walking community and personality in Bellingham. And, shops and services could grow without adding congestion, he said.

"I'm not necessarily pro-growth, but I do accept that we are growing," Deger said.

If elected, Deger hopes to work with the Economic Development Council and Chamber of Commerce to find ways to attract employers to Bellingham. He said this is especially important due to the departure of Georgia Pacific. G-P's decision to leave prompted Deger to run.

"The G-P closure was a sad chapter in city government," Deger said. "When they sued G-P they really shot themselves in the foot."

Deger said that Bellingham is growing most in older generations. The children are leaving the community for better jobs, he said. To help keep a vibrant city, he said, we need to protect our economy.

"If we want our children to stay here, we're going to have to have some reasonable jobs," Deger said.

Johnson also expressed concern for the children of the area, and issues of quality of life in general.

"We need to encourage family wage jobs and economic development that doesn't pollute, that doesn't harm the environment," she said.

Johnson puts a lot of emphasis on quality of life on the quality of neighborhoods. Neighborhoods in Bellingham have strong neighborhood plans, and the city should respect that, she said.

As the city grows, the burden should be put on developers, not on neighborhoods, she said. Strong zoning laws should also be enforced, she said.

The environment also becomes a concern as a city grows.

"We should be filling in neighborhoods rather than having urban sprawl," she said. "No one wants Whatcom County to look like another Lynnwood."

Johnson said that protecting the environment and Lake Whatcom become other quality of life issues.

"If we don't have drinking water it doesn't matter what we invest in the downtown," Johnson said. "It doesn't matter that we have parks and trails. We can't attract families and family wage jobs without clean drinking water."

Deger also said that protecting Lake Whatcom is one of his main goals. But, he added that in all issues, the environment must be balanced with economics.

"We've done a good job of emphasizing the environment. Now we need to look at the economy so we can keep it up," Deger said. "We're a complex place. We can support the environment and the economy."

In order to protect the environment and do the necessary studies, he said we need to provide a tax base.\*

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District 1
- **Scott Walker** (incumbent)
  - Master's degree in environmental science from the University of Cincinnati.
  - 10 years as a Bellingham Port Commissioner.
  - Has worked for ARCO and now works with BP.

- **Dan Warner**
  - Magna cum laude graduate of the University of Washington.
  - Currently, Professor of Business legal studies at WWU.

District 2
- **Doug Smith** (incumbent)
  - UW graduate
  - 8 years as Port of Bellingham Commissioner.
  - 12 years project engineer, Mobil Oil Corporation.

- **Fenton Wilkinson**
  - Masters in tax law from New York University.
  - Has started and run non-profit organizations
  - Received international recognition for sustainable community research and planning.

*Information on these candidates came from the voters guide on the Whatcom County Auditor Website.*
Ryan v. Weston for open Ward 6 seat

In the race for the Ward 6 city council position, the candidates have focused on their own, distinct issues.

Barbara Ryan, incumbent, is focusing on many aspects of protecting the environment. Her opponent, Russel Weston, is targeting the city council's manner of operation.

Ryan makes public transportation one of her major efforts. She has worked from the big picture, interconnecting the transportation systems of North Sound communities, to the more local concerns of bike lanes on Bellingham streets.

"I'm effective at working with various groups," she said.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee recently gave her an award for her efforts in Bellingham.

"I want to make it easier to go without a car," Ryan said.

She said the city needs more places to lock bikes and store things that bikers don't want to carry at all times.

Another way Ryan works for bikers and pedestrians is thorough her involvement on the Whatcom Transportation Authority board. She said that, as a result of I-695, WTA will have its budget cut in half in 2003 unless another solution is found. Plans are in the works to ask voters to approve a sales tax to help transportation, she said. I-695 did not pass in Bellingham or Whatcom County.

"I think that means the people here a committed to public transportation," Ryan said.

"Cars are a major contributor to pollution in our water," she said.

Ryan also hopes to work to improve water quality and fish habitat.

Another issue that concerns her is the need to revitalize downtown, but not at the expense of the environment.

"I want to attract those who will provide good jobs without as much environmental impact," she said.

Weston said that, no matter what issue the council is dealing with, be in downtown renovation or the environment, better communication is critical.

"The council does not communicate well with constituents," Weston said.

The need for communication dominates Weston's discussion of all of the issues in the council race.

"We can talk about many issues, but if the council is not listening then the discussions are one-sided without the community," he said. "The community has so many wonderful, wonderful issues. ... But when the council puts a paper bag over their head and says, 'next order of business,' then what's their incentive to come back?"

Weston also extends his desire for communication to relations with the county. He said that we need to protect our drinking water, but much of the watershed is in the county, not the city.

"We need to have communication between the city and county," he said.

Voters will choose between Ryan's and Weston's different approaches during Tuesday's elections.

All stories in the "City Council Races" section were written by Jessi Loerch.

All pictures were provided by candidates and the Whatcom County Auditor's voter's guide Web page.

Property rights v. managing growth in at-large race

Marlene Dawson and Seth Fleetwood, contenders for the At-Large position, have completely different approaches to the issues facing Whatcom County.

Fleetwood is 38 and a lawyer. Dawson is 55 and the incumbent. Their knowledge of what needs to be done and how it should be done clashes, particularly regarding sprawl and growth.

The three issues that Fleetwood is focused on are clean water, farmland protection, and responsible economic development.

For Lake Whatcom, Fleetwood wants to reduce density around the lake and use protective measures on new developments.

"We need a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to the lake," he said.

Fleetwood would like to use the county's transfer development rights (TDRs). TDRs help to protect valuable land from development.

Fleetwood says the county needs a farmland protection program. His plan is to seek farmland protection through TDRs, a review of ordinances, incentives for farmers to stay and communication between farmers and environmentalists. Fleetwood said that now is a crucial time to preserve the county's farmland.

"It's crunch time for farming," he said.

Fleetwood explains that if the county loses any more farmland, the farming support industries will leave.

Dawson is also concerned about farmland preservation, though her approach is very different.

"I want to create a delineation between urban and rural areas to prevent sprawl," she said.

Dawson sees difficulty putting growth in the cities.

"The city has refused to increase its density," she said.

Dawson mentioned that zoning is how the county man-

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Dawson, Fleetwood

(Continued from page 5)
ages its land, and she feels that it is not an effective approach in keeping rural and urban separate.

Dawson's other concerns are fiscal responsibility and renewed economic development. Clean water is not on her agenda. She said, "Because we've already got it; 96% of the water quality is excellent in that lake."

Dawson said that mercury occurs naturally and believes that one of the bigger problems in the lake is the lack of oxygen due to rotting logs.

Dawson and Fleetwood may share the passion and effort to run for Whatcom County, but they very different individuals. Dawson is interested in protecting property rights.

"I have an expertise and understanding of tribal issues," Dawson said. "and I have a respect for property values and would acknowledge those values."

Fleetwood is focused on managing growth.

"I have a deep love for Whatcom County," Fleetwood said. "I am aware of the pressures of growth and what that growth can do."

The different interests of Dawson and Fleetwood give voters two options for who will be in charge, At-Large in Whatcom County. ☼

Two-term incumbent and local activist face-off

Ward Nelson is a pharmacist who has a military background and has served two terms in this position. Sherry Jubilo is a human-rights activist who decided to run at the last minute. These contenders for the District 1 position are distinct individuals with different solutions for Whatcom County.

Nelson's concerns include administrative areas, improving the criminal justice system, and water resource management.

The administrative areas Nelson wants to improve are the county's budgeting system, communication with the public, and performance from tax money.

He is also interested in water resource management for salmon, agriculture, and Lake Whatcom. He wants to identify non-point source pollution, such as runoff from roads, yards and driveways. Nelson said that gathering precise information is a must.

"You can't solve a problem until you focus it down as much as possible," he said. "We are going to monitor the lake. We want accurate information."

Nelson wants to determine the sources of these pollutants and make regulations based on how they impact the water for recreation, drinking water and fish.

Nelson's opponent, Jubilo, is running because she has a different perspective on what needs to be done.

When Jubilo signed up to run for council in July, she was at the courthouse protesting the shooting of a man in Birch Bay. "There was 15 minutes left to decide," she said. "No one had signed up to run against Nelson, and someone said, 'somebody has to run against him!'"

Jubilo works at a women's care shelter, and for 8 years she had a flower cart downtown.

"I'm a community activist," she said.

The issues of concern to Jubilo are cooperation with Lummi Nation, fighting the Boy Scouts right to discriminate, and enhancing the police system.

Jubilo wants to fight the Boy Scouts right to discriminate against gay people, because she said that the county council had voted to accept that right.

Jubilo wants to make a Civilian Review Board for law enforcement, give police training in how to use non-lethal weapons, and give cultural sensitivity and anti-racism training.

Also of concern to Jubilo is the county's recent decision to hire a labor lawyer for $46,000 a year. "They already have a human resources department," she said.

She believes a labor lawyer is unnecessary and suggested that a "cooperative effort" is what they needed.

Jubilo would like to see more restrictions on Lake Whatcom to help keep the water clean, including a temporary moratorium on development in the watershed.

"I would support a ban on development in the watershed until all studies are done," she said.

She would also favor a ban on clear-cutting in the watershed and on two-stroke engines in the lake.

"I've spent a lot of time dealing with local issues," Jubilo said. "I believe in community grassroots response to problems rather than government decisions with little community influence."

Nelson's experience is also local as the 2-term incumbent.

"I have a great deal of strength," Nelson said. "I have two terms of background and I was born and raised here."

Their backgrounds influence their perspectives and one of them might make a difference in Whatcom County. ☼
In-laws battle for District 2 position

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber is running against her brother-in-law, Albert Schreiber, for District 2 of the Whatcom County Council. Caskey-Schreiber is an administrative services manager for Western Washington University’s sociology department, and Schreiber is a US Customs Service special agent. Considering what each candidate wants for Whatcom County, a name may be all they have in common.

Al Schreiber’s concerns are the economy, protecting the natural environment, and monitoring tax spending.

Economically, he hopes to retain the existing job base, find energy for water problems and allow infrastructure for new businesses.

He wants to monitor tax spending and prioritize the budget.

Caskey-Schreiber, has an entirely different approach to development and what should be done in the county. Her main objectives are protection of open space and agriculture land, clean water, and good planning for a sustainable community.

“We have to follow our comprehensive management plan,” she said. “Bellingham might get more density, but it’s easier to service that density.”

She explained that it costs less to provide additional services in a city than to create new sewers, medic units, police, and schools needed by urban sprawl. Caskey-Schreiber suggested that growth go in communities such as Everson, Lynden, Ferndale, Blaine and Deming.

Caskey-Schreiber stresses the future of the county.

““What are we going to leave future citizens of this county 100 years from now? We have to keep them in mind,” she said.

Schreiber is running with different interest.

“I want to put my leadership and experience skills to work for Whatcom County to face the challenges that we have today,” he said.

Schreiber said that he is retiring from his job next year and will have the time to spend on county council.

Despite a common name, these candidates are clearly different individuals.

Roy, Wiesen for third County Council Position

Sharon Roy, 59, is a retired school administrator. Bob Wiesen, 62, is the manager and owner of Ferndale Truck Rentals. These contenders for Whatcom County Council District 3 are concerned citizens with different ideas.

Roy is interested in retaining the character of Whatcom County, clean water, and law and justice issues.

She wants to see Whatcom County protected from sprawl.

“The development is moving right up I-5,” she said. “But I believe it is not too late to save the character of this county.”

Roy suggested that good planning is the only way it can work.

“Good planning,” she said, “is trying to make decisions now when you think about that impact 20 years from now.”

Roy stressed that sprawl is expensive because development requires infrastructure and services. She said, too that it harms the quality of life.

“It is terrible for the quality of life for everybody,” she said. “The whole sense of community gets really destroyed.”

For Lake Whatcom, Roy would consider a moratorium on development around the lake until the studies are done.

“The evidence is convincing that the lake is being degraded. We need a council that will look seriously at that,” she said.

Roy believes a solution may be cooperation between the city and the county governments.

She is also concerned about the justice system.

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Roy, Wiesen
(Continued from page 7)

Wiesen believes the county cannot reduce sprawl without cooperation with cities. He commented that Bellingham lacks a way to accept the transfer of development rights. His solution is better cooperation between the city and county—similar to Roy’s suggestion.

Wiesen’s goals appear to be different, however. While Roy is concerned with non-development in the rural areas, Wiesen is focused on growth inside the Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).

“Inside the UGAs, where growth and density are supposed to occur, we need cooperation from the cities to rebuild an economy we’ve allowed to disintegrate,” he wrote.

Wiesen mentioned that infrastructure for development cannot be built outside the UGAs. He wants to develop more inside those boundaries.

Wiesen and Roy have different approaches to issues facing the county, development in particular.

“There is a distinct choice between Bob Wiesen’s attitude and mine,” Roy said. “Voters have a distinct choice.”

All stories in the “County Council Races” section were written by Carla Mingione.

All pictures are courtesy of the Whatcom County Auditor’s voter’s guide Web page.

What’s Up?

November 6, 2001
Election Day
Don’t forget to vote!

Bike clinic
Students, staff, and alumni - $15; Non-students - $25. Come learn about the inner workings of your bike with the Outdoor Center’s experienced bike mechanics. They’ll help you with the skills you need to effectively maintain and repair your bike with your own two hands. Call 650-3112 for more information.

November 8, 2001
Gear Grab
Viking Union, 7-9pm.
This is a perfect opportunity to invest new (to you) gear and sell your old gear, all at bargain prices. If you have gear to sell, the drop-off will be on the 7th at the Outdoor Center from 10am-4:30pm. The Outdoor Center takes 15% of the sale cost. Call 650-3112 for information.

Sunset kayaking
Students, staff, and alumni - $20; Non-students - $27. Learn basic kayaking skills, while witnessing spectacular sunsets, wildlife, and other beautiful scenery while exploring the shores of Larrabee State Park. Call 650-3112 for more information.

Ski/snowboard film: “Mind the Addiction”
Armstrong 100, 9pm.
$3 at the door or in advance. Enjoy this piece of eye candy: a 16mm film presented by the Outdoor Center of great skiing and snowboarding footage. It will follow the Gear Grab. Call 650-3112 for more information.

November 10, 2001
Indoor Rock Climbing
Cascade Crags in Everett. $8 for all.
The rain and cold doesn’t have to keep you from climbing. Join the Outdoor Center for a climb to maintain your strength while staying warm and dry. Transportation and gear (if you don’t already have your own) will be provided. Call 650-3112 for more information.

Whatcom Creek Stream Restoration
City Hall, 8am-noon.
Join Greenways and NSEA to restore the section of stream behind City Hall (210 Lottie St), located downtown between Grand and Commercial Streets. Take Garden from campus, go left on Holly, then right on Commercial, and left on Lottie – City Hall will be on your left.

Digging up trees at Greenways Nursery
Greenways Nursery, 10am-1pm.
If you have experience in digging up trees, you can join the LEAD seminar class to help at the Greenways Nursery. This is only for those with experience, so if you’re interested, call 650-4776.

November 11, 2001
Scudder Pond Planting with Audubon
Meet at trailhead at Alabama and Electric Ave., 1-3pm.
Join Greenways in planting native plants and removing invasive species at Scudder Pond. Parking is available at Bloedel-Donovan across the street. Take Lakeway east, then follow Electric Ave., which branches off to the left shortly after the Whatcom Falls Park entrance.

Want to see your event in “What’s up?” Send an email explaining the details of the event to ecotones@cc.wwu.edu

Our Mission.
Ecotones is a student publication devoted to providing a voice for the Huxley community and reporting on current events and issues affecting everyone.

We appreciate comments and criticisms about any aspect of Ecotones.

If you would like to contact us for any reason, you can write us at:
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Or you can email us at contact_ecotones@hotmail.com