Mountlake Terrace Looking Back 60 Years & Beyond

60th Birthday Celebrated at Tree Lighting & Council Meeting

This month we are celebrating 60 years since November 29, 1954 - the date of our city’s incorporation. What was Mountlake Terrace like back then? Fortunately, some of the citizens who pioneered Mountlake Terrace have shared some of their recollections that we have included in this issue along with some historical facts about how this area developed.

Pre-1939

Well before Mountlake Terrace was a city, the thickly forested land was acquired by the Puget Mill Company, as part of a 17,000-acre purchase in 1862. Puget Mill became one of the largest landowners in the Puget Sound Region and was a division of the Pope & Talbot Company of San Francisco.

Nearly all the land in south Snohomish County was logged by the early 1900’s and Pope & Talbot subdivided it into 10-acre chicken ranches. Farmers moved into the area to raise chickens, minks and chinchillas. Long-time residents still recall several mink farms in our city back in the 1950’s and 60’s. The interurban rail line (now Interurban Trail) that connected Tacoma, Seattle and Everett was completed in 1910 and invited settlers into this area. Many of them raised livestock and produce at home while working in Seattle or Everett.

The area featured beautiful Lake Ballinger that is bordered by Edmonds to the west and Mountlake Terrace to the east. The lake was originally called Lake McAleer after Hugh McAleer, a logger who owned much of the land around the lake. The island in the lake was said to have been discovered by Ira Bartholomew in 1890 who built a homestead on the island with his wife, Julia.

Judge Richard Achilles Ballinger (who was elected Seattle Mayor in 1904) was fishing on the lake and struck up a conversation with Ira Bartholomew. He purchased the property in 1901 and named the lake after his father (Richard Henry Ballinger) who was a Civil War Veteran. Richard A. Ballinger later became Secretary of the Interior in the William Taft administration.

The Nile Shrine purchased 135 acres of waterfront and adjacent land at Lake Ballinger and construction of their clubhouse began in 1927. Seattle-Tacoma service of the interurban rail line ended in 1928 after Highway 99 opened and car travel increased. The Seattle-Everett line ended in 1939 and the line was abandoned which temporarily halted further development.

The Nile deeded 35 acres of their property to the State of Washington in 1961 for construction of Interstate 5 for nearly $242,000. The city bought 1 ½ acres of the Nile’s lakefront property for the park for $45,000 and the Nile sold off additional acreage east of the freeway. The proceeds of these sales helped the Nile remodel their clubhouse and build a golf course that opened in 1968. (Continued on Page 4)
Renewable Pet Licenses

Mountlake Terrace is a city of over 20,000 people and it is estimated there may be as many as 13,000 pets. The city is selling renewable pet license tags. In an effort to streamline the licensing process and conserve resources, our tags are now assigned to your pet for their lifetime and are not transferrable. The licenses do expire and must be renewed each year to stay current with correct information, but you will no longer have to change tags.

Licenses can be purchased at the Police Department, M-F 7:30 a.m.

Be Safe This Winter

Are you prepared for upcoming winter weather? In our area, you can expect wind, flooding, and freezing weather as well as an occasional snowstorm during winter months.

The city prepares for winter weather by clearing streets and storm drains, prepositioning sand bags, de-icing roads, and prioritizing snowplow routes. We are proactive in posting emergency information on Facebook and Twitter (find links at www.cityofmlt.com).

Widespread power outages may occur during winter storms. Keep a battery powered or crank radio in your emergency kit along with spare batteries. Create an emergency preparedness kit with at least three-days of non-perishable food, water and prescription medication for your home and office. (Don’t forget your pets!)

Prevent frozen water pipes and faucets by disconnecting garden hoses and using molded foam covers. Drain outside lines and in-ground sprinkler systems according to the installer’s instructions. Insulate pipes in unheated areas like your crawl space, attic, garage or basement. Open cabinet doors below sinks to allow pipes more heat in freezing weather. Allow a trickle of water to flow at problem locations.

Please help the city by keeping the storm drains near your home clear of leaves, debris, snow and ice to prevent local flooding. It’s also a good idea to have heating systems checked by a professional and have your chimneys cleaned. Our electrical inspector reminds you to not overload your circuits beyond capacity. Please be aware of fire hazards such as baseboard heaters, frayed extension cords, breakers that blow frequently, and candles. Don’t forget to clean the lint trap of your dryer and do not leave clothes and papers laying around heat sources.

For more information, please go to www.cityofmlt.com and click on For Residents/Emergency Preparedness.

Recreation Pavilion Inclement Weather Policy

In the interest of our customers’ and employees’ safety, the Mountlake Terrace Recreation Department follows the Edmonds School District’s recommendations regarding closure of schools due to inclement weather.

If the Edmonds School District has cancelled school due to inclement weather, all swimming lessons with a start time prior to 3:00 p.m. will be cancelled. If school has been delayed, we will simply cancel the classes held during the delay. All classes held after the delay will begin at their regularly scheduled time. For information on swimming lessons and dance classes with a start time after 3:00 p.m. on days when the Edmonds School District cancels classes, please call the Recreation Pavilion at (425) 776-9173 after 2:30 p.m. to find out whether these classes will be held or not.
City Approves Contract with Waste Management

The City Council approved a new contract with Waste Management this fall that provides several benefits to the community. Among the highlights: 1) The new contract avoids a rate increase that would have gone into effect in October 2014 under the prior contract; 2) Residential customers receive a two percent (2%) reduction in rates that were effective in October of this year; and 3) Waste Management will increase funding to the city to aid in the repair of streets impacted by heavy garbage, recycling and yard waste collection vehicles. The new contract will run for eight years into 2022.

When Weather Interrupts Waste Pick Up

With fall almost at an end, winter storms and dangerous road conditions can impact us at any time. Waste Management has special collection information for those days when snow and icy conditions interrupt your regular weekly collection.

Garbage and Recycling
Next regularly scheduled collection day

Yard Debris
On Saturday following the interrupted collection

Multifamily/Commercial
As soon as conditions improve. In some commercial areas, Waste Management may collect after regular hours or on Saturdays in order to catch up.

If bad weather occurs two weeks in a row, an additional collection will be made on the next possible business day that same week. For more information, you can call Waste Management at (425) 481-1100 or visit www.wmnorthwest.com.

PAWS: Pet Licenses

To 5:00 p.m. For your convenience, PAWS will also have licenses available for purchase for a $3 fee. The cost for unaltered dogs and cats over three months of age is $31.00 per year per pet or $15.50 per year per pet for neutered male or spayed female dogs and cats. For seniors (65 and older), the cost is $8.50 per year per pet for neutered male and spayed female dogs and cats. Replacement tags are $6.00 each.

For more information, contact Animal Control Officer Elena McKee at (425)670-8260 or emckee@ci.mlt.wa.us.

Council Highlights

November
- Third Quarter Police Department Report
- Adopted Resolution Establishing Recreation and Park Fees for 2015-2019
- Public Hearing on the 2015-2016 Biennial Budget Ordinance
- Reviewed 2015 Property Tax Ordinance
- Reviewed General Operating Levy Property Tax Levy Resolution
- Reviewed Emergency Medical Services Levy Resolution
- Reviewed Public Defender Case Weighting Standards Resolution
- Reviewed Prosecuting Attorney Contract
- Public Hearing on Revenue Sources Including 2015 Property Tax
- Adopted General Operating Levy Property Tax Levy Resolution
- Adopted Emergency Medical Services Levy Resolution
- Adopted 2015 Property Tax Ordinance
- Adopted 2015-2016 Biennial Budget Ordinance
- Approved Public Defender Case Weighting Standards Resolution
- Approved Prosecuting Attorney Contract
- Approved Agreement with Verdant Health Commission for Third Grade Swim Lessons

October
- Reviewed Town Center Subarea Plan Map Amendment Ordinance
- Adopted Comprehensive Plan and Town Center Subarea Plan Building Prototypes Map
- Adopted an Ordinance to Amend the Downtown Community Business (BC/D) Building Districts Type Zoning Map
- City Manager Overview of Proposed 2015-2016 Biennial Budget and Schedule
- Reviewed Financial Policies
- 2015-2016 Department Budget Presentations
- Approved Public Records Policy
- Reviewed Recreation and Park Fees for 2015-2019 Resolution
- Presentation by Mountlake Terrace Senior Center Director
- Reviewed 2014 Revenue Bond Issuance Ordinance
- Briefed on Proposed 2015-2016 Biennial Budget

cityofmlt.com
**The Development of Mountlake Terrace**

Continued From Page 1

**Stan Krahn**

1939-1949

What happened to those chicken farms? According to city historian Stan Krahn, “After the Great Depression,” he quipped “they didn’t fly.” Stan Krahn, age 88 and a current resident, served for 31 years in the city’s Police Department, spanning five decades. Mr. Krahn recalled that he visited this area in 1950 and said to himself, “Who would live here? It was so remote.” Within the next few years, many World War II veterans and Boeing workers moved here including Mr. Krahn who became a resident in 1953.

A 1957 article in The Weekly Reporter noted that Mountlake Terrace was already Snohomish County’s second largest city and was a fast development from the start. Mr. Krahn said he heard but could not substantiate that Judge Ballinger owned the Lower Terrace property and wanted to build an airfield so he cleared the land. Eventually the land was sold to developers Al LaPierre and Jack Peterson (who have streets named after them). Hedlund Avenue was named after the mortgage company, Mr. Krahn added. They built 200 homes in the first unit on that proposed airfield that extended north from 244th Street SW (King-Snohomish County line).

Residential development started in June of 1949 and the first homes were sold in Mountlake Terrace for $4,999 with no down payment for veterans. Bill and JoAnne Gossett said they were living in a little apartment in Seattle when they saw an ad in the Seattle Times for homes in Mountlake Terrace. Their son Dave served on the City Council from 1989-2001 including terms as Mayor from 1997-2001 and as a Snohomish County Councilmember from 2002-2013. The model home had a lovely kitchen with nice cabinets and dining room furniture (that they later purchased and still own today) and JoAnne fell in love with it. The Gossetts bought the third home sold in Mountlake Terrace and moved in on Thanksgiving weekend in 1949. Mr. Gossett said some of these homes weren’t ready and didn’t have electricity yet, but people moved in any way and used Coleman stoves and lanterns.

The southwest part of Mountlake Terrace developed first and the original residents refer to this area from 244th to 238th as the “Lower Terrace.” Mr. Gossett said there was a tiny grocery store where they could buy a quart of milk and other incidentals at the corner of 56th Avenue W and 205th Street NE. He added that the Gateway Place area at 60th and 244th/Ballinger Way was a lumber yard.

The early homes were mass produced by LaPierre and Peterson and sold faster than they could build them during the robust post-war economy. These homes were simple, two-bedroom houses on 20x30 foot concrete slabs. The Gossetts said their original home was just 475 square feet on a third of an acre lot.

The city was named Mountlake Terrace, according to historian Edwin T. Hunt, by an old-time real estate man, H.A. Cross, who said you could see both Lake Washington and the mountains from the highest portion of the tract which three GIs were making into an airfield. It’s also been said that the airfield resembled a terrace. Mr. Gossett noted that this area of the city was logged back then and from his house he could see Lake Washington, Mount Rainier and a part of the 520 bridge. In fact, the view was one of the reasons the Gossetts were attracted to Mountlake Terrace.

(Continued on next page)
Pre-Incorporation

Five years later, in 1954, over 5,100 residents crowded this small area with no city services. There were no paved streets, no sewers, no street lights, and an inadequate water system. The nearest Police Department was in Everett. Mountlake Terrace was about one square mile from present day 216th-244th Streets SW and 48th-68th Avenues W. Records show the average age of adults was 26 years old and most of the families had preschool age children. It took over a year to wait for a telephone line to be installed and when the wait was up, the phones were on a party line shared with nine other families.

City historian and former City Councilmember, Patrick McMahan (1930-2013), said someone tried to break into his home while he was on duty as a Seattle Firefighter. His wife called the sheriff’s office and no one responded until 4:00 p.m. the next day. McMahan was frustrated with the lack of quality public safety service and infrastructure and so he organized a Mountlake Terrace Study Committee to look into the idea of incorporating into a city.

McMahan had appeared before the Edmonds City Council in June 1953 to inquire if they were interested in annexing the area. Only 23 years old at the time, McMahan stated that he was summarily dismissed by the Edmonds Mayor because Mountlake Terrace was “five miles out in the country”. McMahan was frustrated with the lack of quality public safety service and infrastructure and so he organized a Mountlake Terrace Study Committee to look into the idea of incorporating into a city.

Ham had appeared before the Edmonds City Council in June 1953 to inquire if they were interested in annexing the area. Only 23 years old at the time, McMahan stated that he was summarily dismissed by the Edmonds Mayor because Mountlake Terrace was “five miles out in the country”. McMahan was frustrated with the lack of quality public safety service and infrastructure and so he organized a Mountlake Terrace Study Committee to look into the idea of incorporating into a city.

McMahan described Bishop’s expertise as “instrumental” in focusing the incorporation group’s efforts to bring the vote before the citizens.

The issue was hotly contested as developers objected to the prospect of tougher building codes and some property owners, including Bill and JoAnne Gossett, were concerned that their taxes would go up. To place the incorporation vote before the citizens, signatures from at least 20% of the voters were required. McMahan credited the energetic work of Art Keller, who would later become a Police Officer for the city, for “gathering the greatest number of petition signatures and ensuring the vote would be put before the citizens.” If not for Keller’s efforts, as well as those of future civic leaders H. Scott Wilson (original Councilmember), William Hennessey and Levy Johnston (local attorneys who later served as city attorneys and prepared the incorporation petition), and Fred Smethurst (Co-Chair of the committee with McMahan), McMahan believed the November 23, 1954 incorporation vote could easily have produced a different result.

There were two polling sites that fateful November day and voters chose a five-person City Council on the same ballot. Since there were no absentee ballots back then, McMahan and his cohorts did not have to wait long to know the official election results. When the votes were tallied, exactly 1,000 people voted with 517 in favor of incorporation and 483 against. McMahan promptly posted a brand new “Welcome to Mountlake Terrace” sign (see photo above), prepared in anticipation of a successful election outcome at a prominent city site to officially publicize the new municipality. (Continued on Page 6)
Post-Incorporation

The City Council held its first meeting on November 24 and 35-year-old hardware store owner, Gilbert “Gil” Geiser, was selected as the Mayor by the Council under a Council-Manager form of government. Mayor Geiser loaned the brand new city $5.00 to file the incorporation papers and Mountlake Terrace officially became a third-class city on November 29, 1954. Other original Councilmembers included Harley McFarland, Lester Steele, H. Scott Wilson, and Patricia Neibel who said she was called a “female Councilman” back then. Even Peterson, former City Manager of Bellevue, was hired as the first City Manager shortly after incorporation. Lucille Foard was the first City Clerk and along with Evan Peterson played a major role in getting the city up and running in its early years.

Police and fire protection were high priorities for the new City Council and the first Police Chief started in March of 1955. By 1957, there were five full-time personnel and a reserve force of more than 20. The city contracted for fire service with Snohomish County Fire District No. 1 - the same entity we contract with today. The city established its own Fire Department with 19 volunteer firefighters in 1957 to serve over 6,000 residents. There were two elementary schools at the time, Mountlake Terrace and Forest Crest.

**Police Department, October 1959**

Current residents Jim and Karen Miller moved to Mountlake Terrace in fall of 1956. Jim was a volunteer Police Officer and served on the reserves for 22 years. He also served on the City Council in the 1980’s and his wife, Karen, was the city’s first female Planner Commissioner and served on the Snohomish County Council. The Millers said they chose Mountlake Terrace because it was a “great place to raise children”. Ms. Miller shared that they had six children and families got connected at the Forest Crest outdoor swimming pool. The Millers and McMahan’s and other young families took their kids to the Forest Crest Pool to learn how to swim before the Pavilion pool opened in 1968.

Inexpensive land attracted a few new companies including the John Fluke Corporation that moved its electronics firm from Seattle to its 220th Street site in 1959. John Fluke’s wife, Lyla (1910-2010), recalled how difficult and expensive it was to build on the steeply sloped site that is home today to Premera Blue Cross.

Dr. Frank Hammer (1918-2010), shared that he was convinced to run for the City Council during a three-hour chat in 1958 with Levy Johnston and Fred Smethurst. Hammer said his overriding reason to serve on the Council was for his children. “I wanted better parks, playgrounds, and streets for them.” Hammer devoted a decade of service on the Council including his four-year stint as Mayor. He fondly remembered the overwhelming bond approval to build a City Hall in 1961. “The voters passed the bond issue with an 80% approval,” Hammer proudly noted. “Senator Henry (Scoop) Jackson was there for the City Hall’s dedication in 1962. It was a big event and a proud moment for the community.”

1960-1991

The town center bustled in the 1960’s and Ms. Miller recalled some of the downtown businesses including Wilmer’s Department Store, the Spot Tavern, Sid’s Ice Cream Shop, Dan and Joe’s restaurant, Summers Plaza Drug Store, and of course, the iconic Double DD Meats that opened in 1955.

City historian and former Councilmember Doris Cannon explained how the northeast corner of 232nd and 56th was referred to as the “East Plaza” while the southwest corner of that intersection was the “West Plaza”. Doris and her husband Ed moved to Mountlake Terrace in 1961 just as the Civic Center opened. Ms. Cannon said the East Plaza included People’s Bank, Ben Franklin dime store, and Dom’s drugstore. She recalled that West Plaza had, next to the Post Office, a Sears Catalog Store, Capital Savings, hardware store, and a small grocery store where Yen Ching Restaurant stands today. Ms. Cannon added that People’s Bank later built and moved in to where U.S. Bank is now at the corner of 232nd and 57th.

The “Boeing Bust” of the 1970’s had a major impact on Mountlake Terrace as well as the rest of the region when three out of four Boeing workers lost their jobs. Alderwood Mall opened in nearby Lynnwood in 1979 and the 1980 census showed that the city’s population dropped 5% in 10 years. In 1981, the Fluke Corporation moved to Everett.

The once vibrant downtown shopping area died out following arson fires that damaged both the East and West Plaza shopping centers in 1990. A local resident later confessed to setting those fires and 11 others during an arson spree from mid 1990 to spring of 1991. Ms. Cannon shared, “It was a hot summer night and we had opened our bedroom window. I awoke to the loud sounds of “crackling”, and Ed and I went down to the City Center. Many people had gathered at Lucky’s (Roger’s Market today) and brought lawn chairs to sit and watch the East Plaza burn down. Neither our dedicated volunteer firemen nor firemen with their fire trucks from other cities could stop it! We slept through the West Plaza fire three weeks later. Both were arson fires. Our downtown shopping was totally wiped out, but we were thankful no lives were lost.”

We will pick up from here and bring this story up to date in our February issue. In the meantime, Happy 60th Birthday, Mountlake Terrace! Join us at the December 1 City Council meeting for a walk down memory lane or at the Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 5 at Evergreen Playfield as we enjoy a little birthday cake after we light the tree atop the water tower.
Over 70 property owners, residents and their guests filled the Ballinger Clubhouse at the Mountlake Terrace Evergreen Awards Ceremony held September 17. The program encourages beautification efforts in the city by recognizing residents and businesses who take pride in maintaining their properties. This program also helps promote conservation as part of the city’s sustainability strategy.

This year’s presentation featured 24 award winning properties, including 17 residences from six neighborhoods, and 3 multifamily properties. In addition, two Transformation Awards recognized owners who renovated their properties to become assets to the community. Two Sustainable Awards were given that recognized property owners who best utilized green features to help preserve the environment. Fourteen honorable mention awards were also awarded. Winners received a plaque to display on their property and a slide show of winning and honorable mention properties was presented.

The sharing of personal stories about moving to Mountlake Terrace and the joys and challenges of maintaining homes and businesses is one of the highlights of the awards reception. Here are some of the reasons this year’s winners were attracted to Mountlake Terrace: The close but not too close proximity to Seattle and local sports teams; family friendly neighborhoods and the Edmonds School District; centrally located city with easy access to downtown Seattle for commuting; great parks; close to everything; pleasant, quiet neighborhoods; a safe place where the kids could play outside until dark and when it snowed they could sled down the street; and easy to get to.

“After six years, we are seeing great results and more people are learning about the program. We had more nominations this year from the community than ever before and we hope that trend will continue next year,” stated Community Relations Director Virginia Olsen. You can contact us anytime with the address for a home or business you think is worthy of a nomination at cityhall@ci.mlt.wa.us or (425) 744-6206. We will update our nomination form and start the program again in April. Are YOU the next Evergreen Award Winner?

2014 Evergreen Award Winners

- 234th Street Townhomes
  - Chris & Laurel Connolly
  - James Coolbaugh
  - David & Margaret (Peggy) Dahl
  - Diamond Knot Brewpub@MLT

- Hall Lake Townhomes
  - Daniel & Jessica Ertel
  - Lois Harris

- Elise Hegrat

- Mick & Margaret Horton

- James Ito & Melanie Granfors

- Kelley Family Dentistry

- Lake Ballinger Village
  - Mark & Karen Blake

- Craig Matheson & Amy Jeffries

- Kurt & Margie Metzler

- Pat & Barb Otter

- Clifford & Janet Rice

- Blair & Kim Scarth

- Tim & Lynn Smith

- Brad Wauldron & Marianne Tynan

- David & Sharon Wheeler
Mountlake Terrace Tree Lighting Ceremony
City’s 60th Birthday Also Observed

The 32nd Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony is December 5, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Evergreen Playfield, 22205 56th Avenue W and features a concert by Mountlake Terrace and Terrace Park Elementary School students, a visit from Santa and the traditional tree lighting.

Serving as a beacon of light from I-5, the “tree” is a frame of 1,800 lights on top of the city's water tower. The LED lights use only 25% of the power as the old lights. Thank you to Red Onion Burgers for sponsoring this year’s event.

Tour de Terrace volunteers serve cookies, hot coffee and cocoa while Santa meets with the children. Santa will make his grand entrance on a fire truck and at the end of the program, cake will be served to celebrate the city’s 60th Birthday. For information, call (425) 744-6206.