

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE TO CONSIDER FUTURE OF LIBRARY BUILDING

The San Juan Island Library will hold a series of public open houses to present the findings of a recent architectural review of the state of its facilities, and possible future options for the Library building. Staff from SHKS Architects conducted the review, and will be in attendance to present their findings, in addition to members of the Library's board of trustees and staff. Each open house will feature a short presentation on the current status of the building, and the challenges and opportunities that the structure will encounter in the face of a growing island community and a world of rapidly changing library services. After the presentation, the public will be able to visit information stations around the room where more detailed information will be available, including urgent problems that will most likely need to be addressed in the near term, and some of the services that could be provided if space were available. The public is invited to attend, and, especially, to give input on future directions.

There will be three open houses, all at the **San Juan Island Grange Hall**:

Sunday, May 20th from 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Sunday, May 20th from 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Monday, May 21st from 1:00 – 3:00 PM

The Library moved into its current location – a former restaurant - in 1983. Over the years, there have been several renovations and expansions undertaken to meet the community's needs at the time they were completed. The most recent was 14 years ago. Since then, the island population has grown and so has Library usage, including the number of visitors, checkouts of materials, community classes and programs, and public attendance at events and meetings, pushing the limits of services and an aging structure.

There are a number of current problems with the building and the property. These include: a parking lot inadequate to serve all visitors, so small that it has been the site of numerous small vehicle accidents; a shortage of quiet spaces for reading, and of out-of-the-way spaces for groups to work together without disturbing others; a severely cramped staff work space, filled with distractions; very limited program and meeting space, often requiring attendees to stand throughout events; space too small to accommodate the expansion of any of the current collections, despite the community's growing demands.

These are only a few of the issues the Library is experiencing that impinge on delivery of the services the community needs and expects with no improvement in sight. These issues also restrict the Library from being able to offer newer services that are now the norm in many libraries across the country.

At the open houses, the Library board and staff is requesting that members of the San Juan Island community consider, and comment on, the possible future direction for the Library's facilities and services, which could include expansion of the current building, moving to a new facility, or staying within the present building. All of these possibilities come with a cost.

Please join us and help us guide the future of your Library.

Laurie Orton
Director
San Juan Island Library