

Welcome to Bothell, for a Day or a Lifetime

...by Chris Serold

As I gradually approach my own retirement, I've been thinking about the importance of destinations. They come in all shapes and sizes, from the simple to the exotic. Your destination might be the corner bakery for your morning scone and coffee, or it could be the Great Wall of China. Somewhere in between lies the kind of destination that invites you to settle down and stay a while—the sort of place that makes you feel at home and empowers you to live an engaged, active lifestyle that is ideally suited for a rich and fulfilling retirement.

The retirees I've worked with for the past 25 years have helped me discover that the best retirement destinations have several things in common:

- Easy access to services, dining, arts, culture, shopping and entertainment
- A friendly neighborhood setting offering support and social interaction
- Close proximity to natural beauty, exercise and outdoor recreation
- A civic infrastructure that welcomes, accommodates and plans for retirees
- Diverse community opportunities for continued education, mental stimulation and personal growth.

Monday through Friday my destination is Bothell, Washington. At first, it was simply where I went to work. However, it wasn't long before I became aware that Bothell offers all of the qualities of a true retirement destination. In fact, I would go as far as to say that Bothell is unique in the Seattle metropolitan area in this distinction.

For those of you with raised eyebrows who think I'm taking money under the table from the Bothell Chamber of Commerce (I'm not, I promise), and for those of you who have yet to discover Bothell's many qualities as a retirement destination, permit me to give an introductory overview.

First let me confess that I live in Seattle's urban core. I enjoy the culture and diversity of big-city living. What I miss, however, is the friendly neighborhood atmosphere of a small town. Bothell is perhaps the only town left on the perimeter of Lake Washington where shop owners regularly greet each other and their patrons by name on Main Street. A realtor I know recently told me how when he runs along the Sammamish River Trail, the only time he hears a



Destination Bothell: bridge connecting the Sammamish River Trail to Bothell Landing

friendly "hello" is on the stretch that passes through downtown Bothell and Bothell Landing.

Bothell has many cosmopolitan characteristics of a larger metropolis, but with the comfort and accessibility of a small town or village. You aren't in this friendly village surrounded by woods and nature long before you stumble on a trail or a bridge, a boutique clothier or an art gallery, an inviting international restaurant or a family-owned bakery and café.

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Unlike many suburbs or even large cities, Bothell has the rare distinction of having a thoughtful, forward-thinking city government. With city planning programs like the Bothell Revitalization Project currently under review, the town

North Creek: from Parking Lot to Productive Wetlands

...by Diann MacRae

Flashes of yellow from a goldfinch, the warbling of a black-headed grosbeak from the tree tops, swooping swallows all around, and

the kersplash of a heron connecting with a fish—all are just a small part of the restored North Creek wetlands adjacent to the University of Washington Bothell campus and Cascadia College.

North Creek travels thirteen miles from under a south Everett parking lot to the Sammamish River in Bothell. The site was logged of its forests in 1895 and the logging camp that sprang up was called Stringtown, the location of what would be Bothell.



The boardwalk at North Creek wetlands in Bothell. Photo by Don Beyer

North Creek was straightened and made into a log flume to carry timber to the river and then on to Lake Washington where sawmills

were located. Migratory fish didn't have much chance. Subsequently, the area became a farm.

But in 1998, with the purchase of the property for the U.W.'s Bothell campus and the new Cascadia College, things changed. Fifty-eight acres were designated for wetland restoration. The stream was relocated to its original meandering pathway; over 1,000 logs stabilized the channels and serve as nurse logs for some of the 450,000 native

plants that were introduced.

The North Creek Restoration Project is one of the largest in the Pacific Northwest.

North Creek is now salmon-friendly with runs of sockeye, Kokanee, and Chinook salmon, plus cutthroat trout, steelhead, and carp. The site is one of the first urban sites in Washington state to receive the Salmon-Safe certification.

To add to its awards, the campus site was listed in *Forbes* magazine as one of the top ten greenest campuses in the U.S. and the National Wildlife Federation has given the restoration project its top honors.

Now, ten years later, the site is filled with native trees such as willows, hardhack, and alders, a small lake has been created, and North Creek wanders its original run through

Chris' Corner

Welcome to Chris' Corner! Chris Serold is delighted to once again contribute to Northwest Prime Time. Chris draws on a 25 year career in the senior housing industry to offer insight and perspective on topics of interest to today's retirees.

She looks forward to sharing her expertise with Northwest Prime Time readers, and welcomes suggestions, questions and feedback. Look for her column, Chris' Corner, to appear every other issue through Spring 2009.



Where the neighbors know your name: Bothell's Main Street

is preparing for its future without rejecting its history and cultural identity as a warm and welcoming place to live. An Eastside retiree made a poignant observation when she recently told me that Bothell still retains the best features of Kirkland as they existed twenty years ago.

I believe opportunities for life-long learning are a crucial component of any retirement destination. The University of Washington, Bothell Campus allows people over age 65 to audit all of their classes for free through their Access program. If you live in Bothell, you can sign up for that American literature class you always wanted to take. After class, invite your friends to join you in a discussion of Ernest Hemmingway or F. Scott Fitzgerald over a glass of wine and delicious food. After all, education doesn't only happen in the classroom, and with so many world-famous Washington wineries right in Bothell's backyard, you don't have to go far to educate yourself on some of life's more sublime pleasures.

And whether you're looking for other educational opportunities, art classes, exercise or just good old entertainment, Bothell boasts one of the nation's most respected senior centers, the Northshore Senior Center (NSSC). NSSC is situated five minutes' walk from downtown in the heart of what is affectionately referred to as Bothell's Retirement Village, a neighborhood of a half-dozen independently owned and operated retirement communities within walking distance of each other.

There is a wooden sign coming into Bothell that reads, "Welcome to Bothell, for a Day or a Lifetime." I'd invite you to put this to the test. Discover for yourself what makes Bothell such an ideal retirement destination. Come for the day; walk down Main Street; take a stroll on the Sammamish River Trail and stop by Bothell Landing; tour one of the many retirement communities; stay for lunch. Who knows, you may end up staying for a lifetime. ❖

Chris Serold is Community Relations Director at Chateau St. Laurent. Chris welcomes all inquiries, and would be happy to discuss both Chateau St. Laurent and the larger Bothell community. To learn more or schedule a tour, please call 800.960.1944 or visit www.chateau-st-laurent.com.