

# The Northern Light

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## Golf carts approved for Birch Bay roads on a trial basis

By OLIVER LAZENBY

Birch Bay is a "golf cart zone," at least for now.

Whatcom County Council unanimously passed an ordinance allowing golf carts on some roads in Birch Bay on a trial basis at its May 22 meeting. The ordinance sunsets in 18 months, at which point the council will review and assess traffic and safety issues.

The zone includes Birch Bay Drive from Birch Point Loop to Point Whitehorn and roads immediately connected to the drive that have 25 mph speed limits.

The council's decision came after a public hearing in which eight speakers voted in favor of the ordinance, five were opposed, and one, Pat Alessor, who said he was neutral but in favor of giving it a try.

Speakers opposed to the ordinance cited safety and traffic concerns. Some speakers expressed discontent that the Birch Bay Chamber of Commerce had pushed for the ordinance, saying the chamber represents business interests, but tends to speak for the community as a whole.

Before voting on the ordinance, council member Tyler Byrd suggested an amendment to make the golf cart zone temporary.

"Before we go full bore I think we should test things out," he said.

State law has allowed cities and counties to create local golf cart zones since 2010.

According to the law, golf carts must be equipped with reflectors, seat belts and rearview mirrors, including center, passenger and driver's side mirrors. Drivers must be at least 16 and have completed a driver's education course or have experience as a licensed driver.

The council passed a related ordinance making speed limits on roads in certain Birch Bay neighborhoods 25 miles per hour. Those roads are commonly understood to have 25 mph speed limits, but their speed limits were never officially designated, county public works assistant director Joe Rutan told the council at a May 8 council meeting.

## National Kids to Parks Day draws a crowd to Bay Horizon Park



▲ Blaine-Birch Bay Park and Recreation District 2 celebrated national Kids to Parks Day on May 19 by hosting a picnic at Bay Horizon Park. Guests were served hot dogs and hamburgers and were encouraged to participate in a variety of games with a Star Wars theme.

Photo courtesy of Blaine-Birch Bay Park and Recreation District 2

## Got plans? A full lineup of events scheduled on June 2

By STEPHANIE DONAHUE

A jam-packed lineup of events will keep residents and visitors busy in early June.

Here's what's happening in Blaine:

Tall Ships, Lady Washington and Hawaiian Chieftain: Friday, June 1, 4-8 p.m.; Saturday, June 2, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sunday, June 3, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Tuesday, June 5, 4-8 p.m., Blaine Harbor. Members of the crew will be offering walk-on

vessel tours and evening sailing cruises. To learn more, call 703/517-6698 or visit [historicalseaport.org](http://historicalseaport.org).

Hawaiian Luau Dance Party: Saturday, June 2, 10 a.m.-noon, Blaine Harbor gate 3, 235 Marine Drive. To celebrate the arrival of tall ships Lady Washington and Hawaiian Chieftain, the public can participate in a Hawaiian Luau Dance Party. The event features a 90-minute dance party, kids' crafts, pizza, smoothies and ice cream, and last but not least - hula

hoops. The event is free to attend. To learn more, call 360/656-6416 or email [info@bbhdpd2.com](mailto:info@bbhdpd2.com).

Gardener's Market Opening: Saturday, June 2, 10 a.m. The opening of the market will take place in Pizza Factory parking lot, 738 Peace Portal Drive, and thereafter will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the H Street plaza through October. The market features a variety of handmade

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## Impressive turnout for state, county office positions

By STEPHANIE DONAHUE

Voters are sure to be on the edge of their seats this midterm election.

According to the Whatcom County Auditor's Office, 77 people threw in their hats for 17 positions serving the state and county during candidate filing week, May 14-18.

Races with more than two candidates will be winnowed down at the Tuesday, August 7 primary election. The top two candidates who receive the most votes, de-

spite party affiliation, will move onto the November 6 general election.

Several key offices are up for election this year, including U.S. Senator, which serves a six-year, partisan term. A total of 29 people, including incumbent senator Maria Cantwell (D), are running for the position.

Thirteen of the candidates identify as Republican and five identify as Democratic. The other remaining candidates identify as Independent or Libertarian or name other parties, such as "Freedom Socialist."

Five people, including incumbent repre-

sentative Suzan DellBene (D), are running for U.S. Representative in the first congressional district, which serves a two-year, partisan term. Jeffrey Beeler (R), Scott Stafne (R), Robert Mair (no party preference) and Adam Piskog (no party preference) are also running for the seat.

In District 42, incumbent Doug Erickson (R), Pinky Vargas (D) and Tim Ballew II (D), are running for state senator, which serves a four-year, partisan term. A res-

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## Beachside Beerfest and BBQ

Hosted by Semiahmoo Resort, Golf and Spa on May 19.

All proceeds were donated to Make.Shift, an all-ages nonprofit art and music space located in Bellingham.



Photos by Walter Selden