

Kingston Open House a place to rub elbows

By Rebecca Pirtle

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Pencil in the date now to attend the North End's most valuable informational resource where in two hours or less, residents can get up to speed on developments and activities underway or planned for the near future in the greater Kingston area and have direct access to the movers and shakers making things happen. The Kingston Open House, organized by the Kingston Citizens' Advisory Council, will be held from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, March 20 at Kingston Middle School off West Kingston Road.

The public is encouraged to attend and actively participate with feedback – questions, opinions, concerns and ideas are welcome.

In past years, the open house took place in February, but was moved back a month to accommodate scheduling conflicts.

The annual event, one of the best attended in Kingston, features dozens of information tables and representatives from local non-profit organizations and county agencies, as well as developers, who will provide information and answer questions. Maps, handouts, brochures and business cards are plentiful.

Kitsap County Commissioner Steve Bauer will speak briefly, but the rest of the evening is focused on giving the public an opportunity to learn more about community groups, activities and programs in an informal and interactive setting.

"It'll be the same format as past years," said KCAC co-chair Greg Platz. "Our focus is bringing together the community. We'll provide a host of regular presenters from local organizations to county groups – the tried and true. The other part of it is trying to find out other hot topics and projects that are happening right now."

Some of those "hot topics" in the North End include the "String of Pearls" trail network, a kayak facility at Kingston marina, fund-raising efforts for lights on the Kingston High School playing field, passenger-ferry service and plans to revitalize the downtown Kingston area.

This year, the Kitsap County Clerk's office will again be on hand to accept passport applications and passport photos will be available as well, Platz said. The service was introduced last year and extremely successful.

Groups participating for the first time this year that have confirmed attendance are the Kingston High School Athletic Boosters and the Kingston Running Club, Platz said. Other

regular participants include the Port of Kingston, the tribes, school district, Kiwanis and Rotary clubs, North Kitsap Fire & Rescue, Kingston Friends of the Library, Stillwaters Environmental Education Center, Friends of Point No Point Lighthouse and many others.

To participate and for more information, contact KCAC co-chair Greg Platz at (360) 509-3181.

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