

EHAT Quarterly Review

'LITTER AND IT WILL HURT' CAMPAIGN COMES TO OAK HARBOR... AND SOON, TO THE WHOLE COUNTY!

The forums on illegal dumping and littering spawned the 3 E's: Education, Enforcement, and Economics. Since the forums, we have seen the 3 E's in action. In terms of Education, the City of Oak Harbor installed eight signs on roadsides and two signs on garbage trucks. Recently, Island County approved the placement of five signs in each of the four jurisdictions. We should see those signs being installed in the New Year.



Litter and It Will Hurt signs installed throughout Oak Harbor

In the last three months, gate security personnel have distributed nearly 400 car litter bags to sailors and their families at NAS Whidbey. The Command Master Chief displayed 20 posters in different work centers to promote litter awareness on the base. Five-hundred (500) "Secure Your Load" brochures have been provided to Island County Solid Waste for distribution to the public at all Island County solid waste transfer stations. Garbage bags, window clings, and stickers have also been distributed to the Island County Waste Wise volunteer program. The Soroptimists of Oak Harbor received 75 car litter bags to distribute in the city. It is anticipated that additional materials will be distributed to the private-sector as partnerships are developed.

In addition to distributing LIWH campaign materials, EHAT partnered with Island County Solid Waste to promote Whidbey Freecycle™ in the *Whidbey Marketplace*. Whidbey Freecycle™ is a local yahoo group that helps divert waste from landfills by creating an online space for members to post unwanted items for free. Since publishing the ads, the group has grown by nearly 40%. EHAT also developed an outreach flyer to attract volunteers and partners in the community for its different project activities. This flyer has been widely circulated in the community to organizations, such as Boys and Girls Club, Big Sisters/Big Brothers, Armed Service YMCA, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire USA, and Central Whidbey and South Whidbey Youth Connection. Ferry terminals, libraries, and chambers of commerce have posted the flyer. The flyer has been presented at board meetings and chamber luncheons, and is appearing in the Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce email newsletter. Some of EHAT's partnerships are a result of this flyer. ■

WALKABILITY FORUM

What can we say about the 1st Walkability Forum, but....Hurray, what a huge success! It was amazing to see so many people in one room that were all interested in achieving a walkable Island County. The forum was attended by nearly 50 people from over 20 different organizations, and included 5 out of the 6 Board of Health Commissioners and a mayor. Commissioner Mike Shelton chaired the forum, and Commissioner Mac McDowell, who was unable to attend, extended a written invitation to forum participants. The forum identified 3 focus areas: safe routes to school, connectivity, and recreation, and additional priorities within those areas. EHAT is planning a follow-up forum on solutions in early 2007 to establish priorities for action. Once we have decided on an agenda and coordinated the inclusion of guest speaker(s), we will settle on a date, time, and location. ■

Do you know someone that would benefit from attending the 2nd Walkability Forum? Can you think of something missing at the 1st Walkability Forum? Please let us know. We would love to have your input.



**Broad View Elementary is
up to the challenge**

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY FREQUENT WALKER CHALLENGE

On October 18th, EHAT sponsored Walk to School Day at three Oak Harbor elementary schools: Broad View, Hillcrest, and Oak Harbor. The event kicked off the Frequent Walker Challenge, a program encouraging kids to walk to school at least 10 times by November 30th. Nearly 200 children pledged to participate, with Broad View showing the most support for the program by enrolling almost 100 students. The kids completing the challenge were awarded with pedestrian safety flashers, also known as Globe Strobes. The schools have since expressed an interest in continuing Safe Routes to School projects, including Walking Wednesdays and Walking School Bus. ■

EHAT IN THE FUTURE

EHAT has an exciting year ahead. In the early part of next year, we are planning to hold our second forum on identifying solutions to a walkable Island County. This forum is garnering support at the federal level from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and will draw on expertise from organizations and other local communities who have implemented successful projects in each of our three priority areas—Safe Routes to School, Convenience & Connectivity, and Recreation. Based on feedback from the first forum, we are developing a pocketbook of maps to share EHAT's health message on the importance of walking. The design for the pocketbook, as well as the marketing and communication plan and evaluation program, will be modeled after Clark County's highly successful *Walkaround Guide*. In addition, we are working to establish a website on walkability and to improve communication through the EHAT website to strengthen our informational outreach efforts. We encourage you to take advantage of several training opportunities to enhance your knowledge of the built environment and public health including a Safe Routes to School workshop in January and an Active Communities conference in March. Additionally, we will prioritize goal-setting and priority-setting with our elected officials, since political will defines our ability to promote walkability. The interdisciplinary nature of our walkability activities will also require us to work closely with Island County's Planning and Public Works Departments. To inform future walkability

projects, we need your help to complete walking audits, using lessons learned from the Moses Lake Healthy Communities Project to guide us in this process. After completing installation of "Litter and It Will Hurt" signs along roadsides in the City of Oak Harbor, our next step will be to install signs countywide and along SR20. Currently, county roads are slated for 5 signs in each jurisdiction; county road shops are coordinating the effort to identify appropriate locations for the signs. We will track progress of the solid waste code review by the Island County prosecutor and encourage the Board of Health to adopt the code once it has undergone legal appraisal. Island County Public Health will research the feasibility and cost of implementing a solid waste voucher plan in line with EHAT's goals. It is also time for EHAT to develop action plans for its remaining priorities—West Nile Virus and arsenic in drinking water. With the end of Homecoming and high school football season, we now have the opportunity to work with the local high schools on our litter prevention efforts, beginning with a meeting on January 10 at Coupeville High School.

We would like each EHAT member to devote time in the coming months to identifying EHAT's legacy. At the end of this grant cycle, it is our hope that there will be a mechanism in place to foster the sustainability of EHAT's project activities. In the meantime, we look forward to your continued involvement in supporting the Island County Environmental Health Initiative. Thank you for volunteering your time. Have a wonderful holiday season! ■

Don't miss the next EHAT meeting!
Join us: Thurs., January 11, 5:30 PM, NWRC