

# Northern Lights illuminate Roslyn

## Festival puts town's textures on display

By **MARY SWIFT**  
staff writer

ROSLYN — Students in the University of Washington's Storefront Studio shined some light — literally — on Roslyn last weekend.

It was all part of the city's first-ever Northern Lights celebration, offered in conjunction with the Mountains to Sound Trust's annual Greenway Days observance.

This spring, for the second year in a row, 14 students — 10 undergraduates and four graduate students — came in with professor Jim Nicholls of the Department of Architecture to identify community assets and develop a potential list of projects, based on public input and interaction, to enhance the community and create

economic sustainability.

The students also planned an art event as part of their work. On Saturday night, in keeping with the Northern Lights theme, the UW students used strategically placed theater spots with colored lens and LED lights inside frosted jars to illuminate the textures of Roslyn — from the weathered wood of an old cabin, lit from within, to stone and brick walls and wood fences to an aging, and no longer running, lumber delivery truck overgrown with weeds.

Think of it as an art walk with light, says Jenny Aurit, vice president of the Roslyn Downtown Association and liaison with the Storefront Studio.

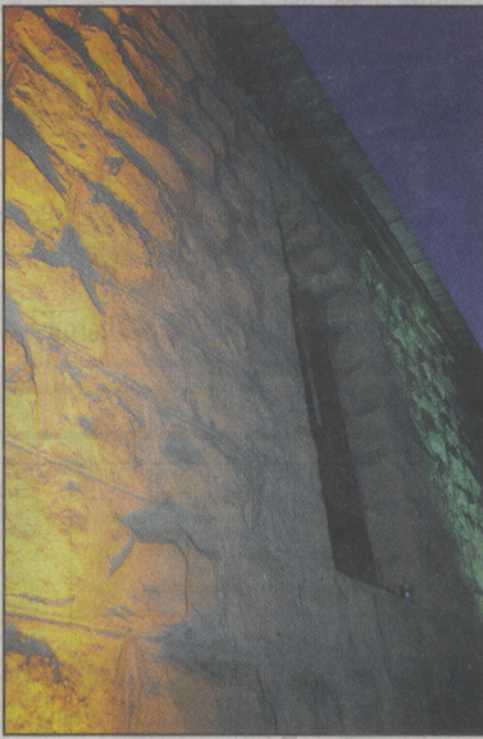
There were mixed reactions.

"Some thought it would be bigger and grander with lights in the sky," she said. "Other people thought it was very cool. The downtown was lit so that you could pick out textures."

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Mary Swift  
/ Daily Record

Colored lights play against the wall of Stonehouse 101 in downtown Roslyn. University of Washington students used theater lights and small frosted glasses to illuminate the textures of Roslyn.



Courtesy of  
University of  
Washington

Colored lights play against the wall of Stonehouse 101 in downtown Roslyn. University of Washington students used theater spotlights and small frosted glasses to illuminate the textures of Roslyn.



## Ideas for Roslyn

Jim Nicholls of the University of Washington's Department of Architecture said Roslyn is a good place for his students to explore ways to enhance a community.

"As a small town, Roslyn is the living history of the Northwest. It is surrounded by mountains, rivers and trees, not suburban sprawl," Nicholls said. "For the students, this makes a perfect study in how to create a walkable, authentic and potentially economically and environmentally sustainable community."

"The steps it would take in Roslyn only require existing assets to be enhanced, rather than new things invented. That makes it easier for the students to propose enhancements that are understood and desired by the community."

Among projects the students have suggested are markers for the Coal Mines Trail, a kiosk for the town's historic cemeteries and a welcome park. The city and different groups are looking at ways of getting grant money to make some of the projects possible, said Jenny Aurit, vice president of the Roslyn Downtown Association and liaison with the Storefront Studio.

"When you see the 'Welcome to Roslyn' sign, you can't really stop and get your picture taken there. We're trying to think where we could put a 'welcome park' where people could pull over and park," Aurit said.

## LIGHTS

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### Everything illuminated

Between two Harper Lumber buildings, the cab of an old truck was illuminated. To the left, red lights shined through the windows of a tiny old house with a weather beaten wood exterior that Aurit said was once a house of ill repute.

Yellow and green light illuminated the sides of Stonehouse

101, a stone building that is being turned into an event center. A few blocks away, a swathe of pink light bathed the corner of a brick building.

Nicholls said students used 30 theater spotlights positioned at various locations around town for the event.

Next time "we know we'll probably need some genera-

tors. There were some electrical problems," Aurit said. "But overall, it was thrilling for the merchants."

Besides seeing "Northern Lights" happen again next summer, she's also hopeful a similar event will take place this coming winter.

"We'd like to see the lights cast against the snow," she said. "We think it would be beautiful."