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ON A WALKING TOUR OF ROSLYN with the Mayor and other representatives, helped Nicholls become familiar with the downtown. Roslyn Revitalization photo

Roslyn Revitalization Vice President Jenny Aurit discusses achievements of a town she's come to love

by Lyn Derrick
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ROSLYN - A family commitment brought Jenny Aurit to Roslyn in the spring of 2007. "I arrived in town in the late afternoon," she said, "caravanning my two cars up here with a friend. On entering Roslyn, my friend's comment was, 'I've got three more days to give you, let's turn around and go back - it's not too late.'"

Aurit promptly took her friend to the airport and settled into Harry's Inn above Village Pizza. "I immediately started a job at Inland Telephone, a job I'd secured while in California."

Aurit added, "So, this was people and sight unseen as well."

She said the next two weeks of her life had a surreal quality, as Aurit explored Roslyn, met locals and became familiar with the history of the area.

Coming from Southern California, now Aurit was commuting from Village Pizza to Inland Telephone - on foot. "Is that technically a commute?" she smiled and asked.

"Lo and behold, during those two weeks I fell in love with Roslyn. The people at Inland were wonderful. I developed a strong appreciation for the historic integrity, and lack of development that often changes the historic footprint of a town."

Aurit's work experience was in local government, in particular marketing and economic development related to business attraction and retention, tourism, filming and redevelopment.

"So, having a passion for local government," she said, "I was anxious to roll up my sleeves and get involved."

That started with an invitation to meet with the Roslyn Revitalization

Board. "I brought a Roslyn marketing brochure I'd drafted, and some event ideas. Shortly thereafter I joined the board, and now I'm vice president."

Aurit said she's honored to be part of a board that serves Roslyn. "They, along with the city, are involved in a strategic and mindful process with a sense of responsibility to the history of Roslyn and a responsibility to do things right."

Aurit is proud of the accomplishments she's seen and been a part of over the past year and a half. The Roslyn Walkabout Brochure and the community's involvement in the Mountain to Sound Greenway Days are two accomplishments Aurit looks back on with pride.

But, they quickly join a long list of achievements like the Artwalks, Miss Northwest Passage and the downtown dinner held during that weekend. "One of the comments we heard about the dinner was, 'there was such a feeling of unity in the downtown, it felt just like in the old days,'" Aurit said.

"I'm used to things taking years and years of planning," Aurit added. "Here people are so good at making things happen. There's been a ton of support for many of the projects, which is fabulous. It's an honor to be involved in all of this."

Looking both at recent accomplishments and plans for the future, Roslyn Revitalization is holding a Fall Mixer, on Monday, Nov. 17. "It's at 7:00 p.m. at KitchenSink," Aurit said. "It's going to be a really fun event, and if you haven't been to KitchenSink, I guarantee you'll be glad you visited. For those who are interested, we'll have presentation areas set up to provide an opportunity to learn more about Roslyn Revitalization's accomplishments for 2008, the B & O Tax Credit Program and an upcoming partnership with

the University of Washington." The partnership with UW involves the Department of Architecture's Storefront Studio Program. "Jim Nicholls of UW met and spoke to Mayor Jeri Porter, representatives of the historic commission, the city council and planning commission last Saturday [Nov. 8]," said Aurit. The group took a walking tour of the downtown to familiarize Nicholls with the area.

According to Nicholls the Storefront Studio Program "is dedicated to investing the academic capital of the University of Washington in close partnership with the social capital of local communities. Our goal is to strengthen the connections between members of a community and their physical setting, providing anchors for emergent identities, economic growth and social interaction."

"They bring in 12 graduate students," Aurit explained, "and create a studio within hours. They do a ton of research on the architecture and documentation, and over a 12-week period they come up with suggested improvements."

Storefront Studio was involved with the revitalization efforts of other Washington communities like White Center, Kent, Carnation and Des Moines. It will be interesting to see what they come up with for Roslyn. "The whole thing hasn't been presented to the entire city council, yet," said Aurit, "but it's possible they'll be here sometime in the spring."

A little closer on the calendar is Winterfest, scheduled for Friday and Saturday, Nov. 28 and 29. On Friday the Artwalk through local businesses runs from 5 - 8:00 p.m. "On Saturday in the NWI Building, there will be crafters, artists and children's craft opportunities," said Aurit. "Santa will be there, warm cocoa and lots of holiday cheer."



TWELVE GRADUATE Department will set up like the one pictured in their research, student have suggestions for R



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