SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



SEPTEMBER STORIES: COMMUNITY, LEADERSHIP, AND GROWTH

September brought together stories of civic service, cultural celebration, and community partnership. This issue highlights Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Week, National Preparedness Month, Bothell's Award of Excellence for the North Creek Trail, the opening of Samma Senior Apartments, and Malabar Gold & Diamonds' new Bellevue showroom.

At City Hall, the Council advanced key initiatives, including Bothell Way improvements. I was also privileged to host Congresswoman Suzan DelBene for a conversation with regional leaders. This issue also features moments from the Indian American Tech CEOs Forum, where I met Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella; highlights from the 30th Annual Golden Tennis Shoe Awards; and reflections on sacred Hindu traditions.

MONTH AT A GLANCE



SAMMA OPENS AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOMES



WOMEN LEADING THE FUTURE



30TH ANNUAL AWARDS OF GOLDEN TENNIS SHOE AWARDS, 2026



A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY: PREPARING NEIGHBORS FOR EMERGENCIES



RUDRABHISHEKAM BRINGS BOTHELL TOGETHER

CITY UPDATES



Photo credits: City of Bothell

SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION

In the Bothell city council Meeting, the City Council recognized National Suicide Prevention Week, observed September 13 through 19, highlighting the concerning increase in suicide cases in Washington and the importance of mental health awareness to prevent it, particularly among young people. Representatives from NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Eastside shared the realities and causes of suicide in the region, including perspectives drawn from personal experience. NAMI also marked its 25th anniversary and advocated for mental health awareness to youths, families and survivors. If you or your loved ones are struggling with mental illness and seeking support, please visit NAMI Eastside.

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY


Photo credits: City of Bothell

PREPARING NEIGHBORS FOR EMERGENCIES

Every small step makes a bigger difference. That's what preparedness teaches us. With a few precautions, essential kits, and survival tips, one trains oneself to be prepared for the worst that could happen. Following the importance of national preparedness in emergencies and disaster management, the City Council recognized September as National Preparedness Month, observed each September to promote readiness for disasters and national emergencies.

The proclamation emphasized that preparedness is a shared responsibility among government, residents, and neighbors. Being prepared includes staying alert, sharing information and resources, and helping one another respond to emergencies and natural disasters. Acknowledging this year's theme as "preparing neighbors" to make a bigger difference in disaster preparedness, King County elaborated on connecting cities and residents with preparedness resources and information to support the theme.

NORTH CREEK TRAIL RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

September culminated in a bigger victory for our city as Bothell received a WSDOT/Federal Highway Administration Award of Excellence for the North Creek Trail project, which was completed in 2025 after nearly 20 years of work.

The federal chairs felicitated the City council during the council meeting, highlighting the milestones of the project which includes six bridge crossings and non-motorized transportation mobility, expanding access to urban transportation and regional connectivity.

Thank you to everyone whose work helped bring this long-term project to completion.





BOTHELL WAY MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS

The City Council has approved additional funding and property acquisitions for the Bothell Way Multimodal Improvements Project.

The project now has a $20 million budget amendment to support its funding, with the goal of improving transportation, reducing traffic bottlenecks, and making the corridor capable of supporting future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service.

However, rising construction costs and challenges in securing grant funding have led the city to continue evaluating the project timeline. The project remains a priority as the city works toward moving it forward in the coming years.

Strengthening Regional Fire and Medical Coordination

The Council also appointed representatives to coordinate with Fire District 10 through the Joint Fire and Medical Advisory Board. The partnership will support an annual joint meeting and continued communication and oversight of fire department operations and regional safety.

WELCOMING WEEK

September was Welcoming Week in Bothell - a time to bring community members together and build neighborhoods where everyone feels seen and heard.
Gaby Kuna, the city's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) coordinator, shared insights from a successful community survey conducted during the month in order to learn about diverse perspectives and to understand residents' needs as Bothell continues working toward a more inclusive future.

PROTECTING OUR WATERWAYS

Puget Sound and the region's waterways are shared natural resources that depend on continued stewardship.

The city provided an opportunity for residents to learn how they can help improve local and regional water quality by reducing water pollution and taking steps to protect waterways and natural resources.
Environmental stewardship remains an important part of building a healthier and more sustainable Bothell.

DELBENE IN CONVERSATION WITH LOCAL LEADERS





It was a privilege to host Congresswoman Suzan DelBene, joined by Senator Derek Stanford and regional entrepreneurial leaders at her fundraising.

The conversation reflected on Congresswoman DelBene's sustained commitment to immigrant families across our region, allowing skilled individuals to put their education to work while strengthening local businesses in the process.

Her record also speaks to the everyday realities families navigate: championing the expanded Child Tax Credit, which reached an estimated 131,000 children in Washington's First Congressional District in November 2021 alone, and supporting the law capping monthly insulin costs at $35 under Medicare — offering relief to more than 28,000 Washington beneficiaries.

Closer to home, her advocacy secured a $19 million federal grant for improvements to Bothell Way, a corridor carrying roughly 15,000 to 17,000 daily vehicle trips, and $741,000 for backup power at Bothell's Emergency Coordination Center — investments in both everyday safety and emergency readiness. Following the Oso landslide, she also championed the National Landslide Preparedness Act to help communities better understand and prepare for such risks.

Grateful for Congresswoman DelBene's continued partnership with Bothell, and for the opportunity to bring our community together for this conversation.

CONNECTING TECHNOLOGY, TALENT, AND COMMUNITIES



Photo credit: South Asian News

The **Consulate General of India, Seattle** hosted the **Indian American Tech CEOs Forum**, bringing together more than 40 technology CEOs, founders, and innovators from across the region. I was honored to join the conversation on the future of technology and the growing India–US technology partnership.

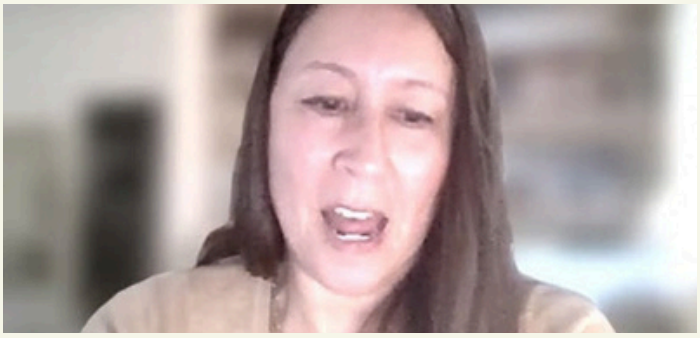
The forum brought together leaders from **Microsoft, Amazon, Boeing, Anthropic**, and other leading technology companies. I was inspired to hear from **Satya Nadella, Chairman and CEO of Microsoft**, and **Indian Ambassador Vinay Kwatra** on AI, innovation, talent, and the opportunities ahead for both countries. One message that stood out was that technology creates the greatest impact when it reaches everyone from farmers and small businesses to communities and countries.

During conversations with technology leaders, I also shared two opportunities close to my heart. **Bothell has become home to thousands of technology professionals and their families over the past two decades**, creating an opportunity for the city to be part of the region's future technology growth and innovation.

I also highlighted the potential for stronger **public-private partnerships**. Bothell is home to parks, urban forests, trails, and natural spaces, and partnerships with companies can help create lasting impact in the communities where their employees live and families build their lives.

The future of technology is not only about building great companies. It is also about building stronger communities and creating opportunities for people.
Thank you to **Consul General Prakash Gupta** for bringing technology leaders together for this meaningful conversation, and to **Chaitra Vedullapalli** for sharing her perspective and leadership.







WOMEN LEADING THE FUTURE

On September 10, the DEI Committee hosted Women Leading the Future, a virtual program celebrating women in leadership, public service, and civic engagement.

Congresswoman Suzan DelBene delivered special remarks recognizing women leaders and encouraging continued civic participation.

The program brought together an inspiring group of leaders, including **Senators Manka Dhingra and Vandana Slatter, Mayor Katie Wilson, Representative Davina Duerr, Mayor Angela Birney, King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci, Snohomish County Councilmember Megan Dunn, Sheriff Susanna Johnson, School Board Director Hân Trần, and Washington Democrats Chair Shasti Conrad.**

Through lightning talks and interactive Q&A, leaders shared their journeys, experiences, and lessons in public service reflecting the DEI Committee's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, representation, and creating pathways for more women from diverse backgrounds to lead and serve.

NEW HOME FOR BOTHELL SENIORS

Samma Senior Apartments has opened in Bothell, bringing 76 affordable homes for seniors aged 55 and above. Located next to the Northshore Senior Center and near a future rapid transit connection, the new community is designed to help older adults remain connected to the services, transportation, and community they rely on.

I was pleased to join the ribbon-cutting and celebrate a project that represents a significant investment in affordable housing for our growing senior population. All 76 homes are reserved for households earning up to 50% of the Area Median Income. The approximately $36 million development was made possible through a partnership involving Imagine Housing, the City of Bothell, King County, ARCH, Amazon, and other public and private partners.

For seniors, affordable housing is about more than having a home. It can mean being able to remain in the community they know, stay close to services and friends, and maintain independence as they age.

Grateful to everyone who worked together to make Samma possible and to create a place where our seniors can live with dignity, stability, and a sense of community.



Photo credits: City of Bothell

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Senator **Patty Murray's** 30th Annual Golden Tennis Shoe Awards, an evening recognizing local leaders, activists, and changemakers whose work strengthens communities.

The event brought together people from across Washington who are contributing to their communities through public service, advocacy, and civic engagement. **Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester** also joined the gathering and spoke about the importance of community leadership and service.

It was a pleasure to join **Jake Johnston** at the event and connect with **Mayor Steve Woodard, Councilmember Hannah Oliver, Councilmember Randy West Jr., Councilmember Kyoko Matsumoto Wright, Commissioner Jan Hendrickson, Jim Oschmann, Sara Morris of the Diabetes Patient Advocacy Coalition, and Paul E. Nelson.**

Events like these are a reminder that strong communities are built through the everyday work of people who choose to serve, advocate, and make a difference.









EL GRITO 2026

September marks the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, for communities across Latin American nations. Among them, the Mexican community is one of the largest in Washington. This September, we came together to celebrate Mexican Independence and honor the indigenous spirit and heritage that continue to shape the nation.

I was pleased to join the Mexican community for **El Grito 2026**, hosted by Consul General **Víctor Hugo López Ortega** at the Mexican Consulate, marking its 10th anniversary.

El Grito de Dolores refers to the historic call for Mexican independence. Being part of the Mexican community's celebration reminded me of the diversity and inclusion that make our state stronger. Hearing the words *¡Viva México!* and *¡Viva la unidad!* mean "Long live Mexico!", "Long live unity!"—also reflecting the importance of belonging and staying connected to one's roots.

These connections help us build more inclusive communities where everyone feels they belong.

I had much to learn from **El Grito 2026** and was honored to meet **Amanda Fisher** from the Office of *Governor Ferguson* and connect with **Diana Peregrina**, **Miguel Uribe**, and **Iñigo Esteban** at the event.

There were incredible performances, art, crafts, music, and traditions depicting and educating us about Mexican roots that continue to thrive beautifully.

MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS OPENS IN BELLEVUE





Malabar Gold & Diamonds has opened its new showroom in Bellevue, bringing one of India's well-known jewelry brands to the Pacific Northwest. The showroom was inaugurated by **Prakash Gupta,** *Consul General of India in Seattle,* in the presence of **Abdul Salam K.P**., *Vice Chairman of Malabar Group*, and **Shamlal Ahamed**, *Managing Director of International Operations at Malabar Gold & Diamonds*.

I was glad to join the grand opening ceremony with my beautiful wife, Anu, and celebrate this new addition to the community.

Founded in India, Malabar Gold & Diamonds has grown into a global jewelry brand with showrooms across countries. While jewelry has long held a special place in Indian culture. Gold, in particular, is part of many important moments - from wedding gifts and family celebrations to blessings for prosperity and new beginnings. It carries not only value, but also memories, culture, and tradition.

It was wonderful to see the community come together to welcome Malabar Gold & Diamonds to Bellevue and learn more about a brand that connects Indian jewelry traditions with a growing global audience.





LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS

Pratham USA's Seattle Chapter hosted its "Learning Without Limits" Gala, bringing the community together to support education for children and young people in underserved communities. I was glad to join this Gala, which raised **$500,000. Thanks to Sharmili Ghosh for inviting me as a TIE Seattle member.**

Pratham works across India and globally to improve foundational learning, support young people with employable skills, and create opportunities for girls and women to continue their education. Its **Second Chance** program gives girls and women who have left school an opportunity to return to learning and complete their Grade 10 certification. The program combines academic support with life skills, digital literacy, and career guidance, helping learners move toward further education and employment.

Since its launch in 2011, the Second Chance program has helped thousands of girls and women resume their education. In the 2025–26 academic year alone, almost **20,000 girls and women** enrolled to pursue Grade 10 certification.

Pratham's work goes beyond classrooms. It works with communities, educators, and governments to bring learning opportunities to children and young people who may otherwise be left behind. The Seattle chapter contributes to this mission through community engagement, fundraising, and support for Pratham's work in India and globally.

I was inspired to see the Seattle community come together around education and grateful to be part of the evening.

Congratulations to **Meenakshi Ramesh, CEO of Pratham Education Foundation**, and **Sharonyka Kumar Narayan and Payal Tiwana, Gala Co-Chairs**, for bringing the evening together and continuing to build support for this important work.

ICONIC LEADERSHIP

I was honored to join the global launch of ICONIC Leadership at the World Trade Center Seattle, an inspiring gathering that brought together leaders from technology, business, entrepreneurship, and community to reflect on what leadership must look like in the AI era.

My sincere thanks to Chaitra Vedullapalli for including me in this important milestone and for her continued work to expand opportunity through innovation, leadership, and community impact.

What resonated with me most was the belief that technology alone will not define our future. As AI continues to transform the way we work and live, we will need trusted and inclusive leaders who can bring people together, create opportunity, navigate change with clarity, and lead with purpose.

The ICONIC Leadership framework brings together the perspectives and experiences of accomplished global leaders, including Edie Fraser, Anand Eswaran, Gillian Muessig, Tama Smith, Gavriella Schuster, **Chaitra Vedullapalli**, and many others. Their collective insights offer a practical framework for developing trusted, inclusive leaders prepared to lead effectively in an increasingly AI-driven economy.

It was especially meaningful to see this global movement begin here in Washington, a state known for innovation, and carry forward a vision focused not only on technological progress, but also on people, opportunity, and responsible leadership.





GANESH CHATURTHI: A FESTIVAL OF NEW BEGINNINGS

September was an auspicious month for us as we celebrated Ganesh Chaturthi in Bothell, one of India's most widely celebrated festivals, marking the birth of Lord Ganesha, revered as the remover of obstacles and the deity of wisdom and new beginnings. The festival falls during the Hindu month of Bhadrapada, usually in August or September. For many families, Ganesh Chaturthi is a time to welcome Ganesha into their homes and communities, offer prayers, and seek wisdom and strength for the journey ahead. We celebrated this Ganesh Chaturthi through prayers, music, food, cultural gatherings, and the installation of Ganesha idols.

The celebration also carries an important lesson: before beginning something new, we pause to seek clarity, wisdom, and the strength to overcome challenges. This is why Ganesha is traditionally worshipped at the beginning of important occasions and new ventures.

The festival concludes with **Ganesh Nimarjan**, when the idol is immersed in water. The ritual reminds devotees of the temporary nature of physical forms and the importance of carrying the values and blessings of the celebration forward.

For Indian American families, festivals such as Ganesh Chaturthi can also become an opportunity to introduce younger generations to India's traditions, stories, and values while sharing that heritage with the wider community.

ONE COMMUNITY, ONE FAMILY



Hundreds of individuals came together in Bothell for Sāmūhika Rudrābhiṣekam, creating a meaningful celebration of faith, culture, and community.

The gathering brought families together for prayers, chanting, and the traditional worship of Lord Shiva. But beyond the rituals, it created a space where generations could experience and share a living tradition together.

The idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — "The World Is One Family", captured the spirit of the gathering. For many Indian American families, events like this offer a way to remain connected to cultural roots while building a shared community here in America.

It was especially meaningful to see children participate and experience these traditions firsthand. Cultural traditions can become a bridge between generations, helping young people understand the values of seva, compassion, peace, and community that accompany them.

I am grateful to Prashant Sri and the A4H Washington team, along with the priests, volunteers, supporters, community organizations, and families who worked together to bring the gathering to life. Sacred items brought from Kashi added a special connection to one of India's most important spiritual centers.

It was also wonderful to see civic and community leaders join the celebration, including Consul General Prakash Gupta, Senator John Lovick, Senator Derek Stanford, Representative Davina Duerr, Councilmembers: Julie Hsieh, Menka Soni, Jugal Thakor, and Amber Wise.

Celebrations like this show how culture can bring people together across generations and communities.

UPCOMING EVENTS - OCTOBER 2026

1. October 7, 10:30 AM–2:00 PM Startup 425 CoWorking City Hall, Room 107
2. October 10, 10:00 AM–1:00 PM. Fire Prevention Week Open House
3. October 10, 10:30–11:30 AM Arbor Day Celebration East Norway Hill Park
4. October 17, 2 p.m to 4 PM Glorydays: Tabletop Roleplaying Game, Bothell Library
5. October 28, 3:00–6:00 PM Northshore Green Careers Expo, Kenmore City Hall

FULL CALENDAR: WWW.BOTHELLWA.GOV/CALENDAR.ASPX

Disclaimer: This newsletter is shared in a personal capacity to provide updates on public service work and to stay connected with the community. The views expressed are my own and do not necessarily represent the official positions of the City of Bothell or the Bothell City Council.

THANK YOU !

FOR BEING PART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Thank you for taking the time to read this month's newsletter and stay connected with what's happening in Bothell.
Our community thrives because of informed, engaged, and compassionate residents like you. Whether it's celebrating our culture, preserving our history, supporting local businesses, or working together on the road ahead— we're better when we do it together.
I'm honored to represent you and grateful for the trust you place in me to serve our beautiful city.

Let's keep building a stronger, more inclusive, and vibrant Bothell.

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