

## CAMANO ISLAND LIBRARY OPENING REMARKS

by Jackie DeFazio, Trustee

Sno-Isle Libraries Board

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What a privilege it is for me to be here today on behalf of the Sno-Isle Libraries Board of Trustees to welcome all of you to this grand opening of the now permanent Camano Island Library!

Truth to tell, there were a few times over the past eight years when I wasn't so sure this day would ever come. But come it has—and there are many people to thank for its arrival. We wouldn't be here today were it not for the vision of Jonalyn Woolf-Ivory and her leadership team, who in 2007 came up with the idea of establishing a 3-year pilot project here on Camano to assess the public interest in and support for a permanent library.

We wouldn't be here today were it not for the hard work, energy, and enthusiasm of the Camano Island Library Friends, who formed almost immediately after the opening of the pilot project and went straight to work to raise funds to support that project, most notably through an auction in 2010 which raised over \$40,000 under the leadership of chair Connie Hall. That was the year when the pilot project was slated to end, but 2008 had intervened with its disastrous economic impact.

We wouldn't be here today were it not for the unfaltering support of the Sno-Isle Libraries Board of Trustees, who not only supported the concept of the demonstration project, but who agreed in 2010 to extend that pilot project at the request of the Friends, who used the money raised from that

auction to demonstrate their determination to continue to work towards generating the support necessary for a permanent library.

We wouldn't be here today without the support of the Citizens for a Camano Library, the political action committee that was established in 2011 to promote a bond issue for that library and that worked tirelessly for the next three years to pass that bond. It took two elections, hundreds of volunteers, a courageous decision by the Board of Trustees to purchase this piece of property in advance of the election, a dedicated library staff providing excellent customer service every day, and 62% of the vote to bring us to this day

And we literally wouldn't be here today were it not for the determined efforts of the Building Committee, composed of Sno-Isle staff and local citizens under the leadership of Jeanne Crisp, and our architects and builders, all of whom worked tirelessly to complete this project on time and on budget.

So thank you, thank you, thank you to all of you who have worked so hard to make this day possible. In the end, it took an island working together to build this library, but the message today, is not "mission accomplished." Rather, it is full speed ahead.

We can't wait for you all to see what's inside—a larger collection of materials, expanded computer resources, our beautiful new reading room, the dedicated children's room, a teen area, and a wonderful multi-purpose community room.

All of which goes to demonstrate that this library is more than a legacy: it's a living entity. Libraries archive our history. They level the playing field by providing equal access to information and to the tools and resources

required for everyone to flourish in today's economy. They serve as centers of our communities and promote civic engagement. Your shared support for them and all they do has made this wonderful opening possible. So let's all enjoy this special day and this special place, knowing that it will be here tomorrow and the next day and the next day—because we all intend to keep working together to ensure its bright future. So let's see what's behind this ribbon.