



The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 79, November 1999

E-mail: valleyview@altadata.com

President's View

by Gary Emslie

November's rains did not deter the neighborhood from coming out in full force to support the 11th annual Greater Madison Valley Community Spaghetti Dinner at the M. L. King Elementary school. [See article appearing on page 2.] Special thanks go out to the entire crew for all their hard work in preparing for this event. Diners were entertained by the Senior Sliders and the Meany Jazz band, masterfully conducted by Wadie Ervin. The dessert crew baked some fantastic confections for all to sample.

With this month's rains the neighbors on 32nd, I wonder if the fix will work or if the spring in the

greenbelt will again spill out onto 32nd, making driving a trickier than usual proposition. We had urged the City to install a large-capacity drain system. They did dig a pit as a sump to slow the runoff, but we observe that the moderate rains of November 12 are now flowing right alongside that sump. I have written Ken Bounds of the Parks Department, but he's been too busy to respond to the community's safety concerns.

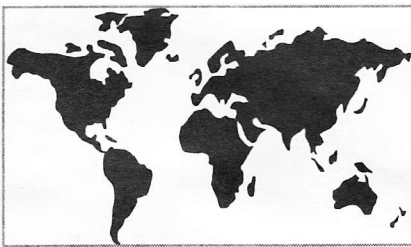
Many of our neighbors are not as fortunate and certainly appreciate our support of neighborhood food banks. Seems as if I-695 has cut into the collection efforts of some agencies. They need our help. Call the food bank or social service agency near your home or work today.

The next Community Council

meeting is scheduled for November 16, 1999 (Tuesday) at the M. L. King portable at 7:30 p.m. We realize that this issue of the newsletter goes out too late to provide advance notice of the upcoming meeting; the dinner took all our energy. We'll do better in December. ▼▼

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Foray in Europe

by Celine Grenier

For those who didn't make it to Eastern Europe this summer, I report my random, necessarily superficial impressions from 2.5 weeks on a tour bus with my seventy-plus-year-old mom and her friends.

The first striking impression is of solid roofs, some in the double curvy east-west style. Formerly Communist Eastern Germany is simultaneously wrecking itself with graffiti and cleaning itself up splendidly. Graffiti is well tolerated as an explosion of repressed self-expression, and it's everywhere. By contrast, in Leipzig a guide told us that they hadn't known they lived in a very beautiful city until their finest buildings were stripped of their finest grey coats

and painted in their original colors. Not my favorite colors - not Venetian - but very beautiful!

A lot of renewed beauty is owed to improvements made by former owners, mostly West Germans, who are reclaiming property - a mixed blessing, at best, to the former owners and inhabitants.

Otherwise regarding Eastern Germany, the church on which Martin Luther posted his complaints is in a fine, modest town. There are long side streets composed of tall, narrow, stately, rather ornate, solid stone townhouses connected to each other. Berlin has a very cool youth underground scene and one or two construction cranes per hectare. The Berlin State Museum holds some, if not most, of the finest pieces of

(Continued on page 2)

Welcome to our first annual Armchair Travellers' Edition of The Valley View.

In this issue we publish letters from two neighbors who spent time this summer in two very different parts of our world:

Eastern Europe (this page) and Indonesia (page 3).

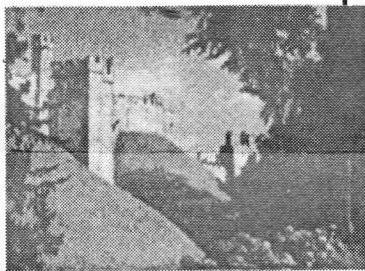
We hope you enjoy these international reports. Please write us at 2802 East Madison St., Box 184, Seattle, 98112, or email us at valleyview@altadata.com to let us know if you would like to see more of this kind of reporting and if you have any travel tales you'd like to tell.

Eastern Europe, continued

the Northern European Renaissance paintings (consult your art history texts), and the displays at Auschwitz rip your heart out.

Poland, more Western looking all the time, is not what you might expect. While some, and especially older, people have the synthetic-clad peasant look, others are stunners, like the stately young mini skirted women in high heels with impeccable skin and makeup. The middle-aged buildings are grim and crumbling, utterly depressing, and the massive-scaled 60's architecture looks even worse than it did in the 60's (ditto Eastern Germany). However, the historic buildings, including innumerable churches, town halls, concert venues, etc., are impressive if somber, and we were reminded of the Poles' contributions to civilization, including those of Copernicus.

We stopped only once, for a picnic, in Slovakia (of former Czechoslovakia) but the land we saw was beautiful, largely agricultural, with a section that looked all the world like the foothills of the Alps. The towns were very quaint, but the people said to be generally poor.



Budapest, Hungary, is divided into old and new sections either side of the Danube. The old, hillier side is full of gorgeous old buildings on cobbled streets, but the fairy-tale fantasy parliament is on the "new" side, Pest.

Outside of Prague, the Czech Republic appeared to be stirring; there is crumbling industrial rubble between thriving agricultural acres. Prague was very warm and vaguely muggy. Everywhere young people kissed spontaneously. From cathedral and castle tower tops you could see rural areas beyond a ring of monstrous apartment complexes. The subways, trams, and buses took us wherever we wanted to go in a city of cafes, golden ochre walls, a wide, winding river, large statues, and architecture from Gothic to solid 50's.

From the haze of my impressions, Prague gets my vote for the all-around most atmospheric place on our itinerary. I hope Eastern Europe can maintain its unique qualities and values as it merges with the West. ▼▼

Scandal in the Lunchroom

by Jerry Sussman

Many Seattle public schools, including M.L.King, serve fast food type meals that are prepared elsewhere, packed in plastic boxes, and shipped out to be re-heated on site. In the old days food was cooked from fresh ingredients (plus federal surplus commodities) by a team of cooks in each kitchen. No more. A combination of district, federal, and union rules have fallen hard on the schools so that commercial mass production values have locked up the status quo. The trouble is that children get a limited and I believe inferior fare in the current system.

We borrow serving trays and utensils from Bush School for our spaghetti dinner. That gives us an opportunity to see how that other half lives. Lo, it is far superior. They have fresh foods cooked every day, served on plates. Hamburgers, french fries, and pizzas are not the standard; the variety, attractiveness and nutritional levels are higher than what we see at King. I complained about this to the Seattle schools nutrition director who responded that private schools simply have more resources, meaning money. I can't accept that!

The kids in our public school can and should have as good a daily offering as the kids up the block. The budget can be found — there are big grants for planting trees, for crying out loud. King has fine kitchen equipment that should be put to use.

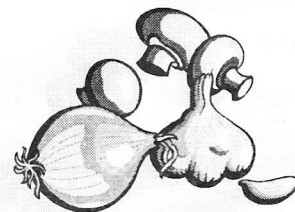
We are teaching our kids that school fare is like McDonald's — and not even as good. We must do better! If you want to join in an effort to provide far better food service at King and other schools, please call me at 325-6308. ▼▼

The King School Spaghetti Wonder

by Jack Irwin

The community's November Spaghetti Dinner is always a celebration. Three hundred locals packed the place. Listening to jazz standards by the 20-piece Meany Jazz ensemble, we put away almost 50 pounds of steaming pasta (an 11-year record), 40 gallons of Pearl Castle's unparalleled meat sauce plus 10 of the vegetarian, and 30 loaves of garlic bread.

Charles McDade made the pasta sauce in King School's 70-gallon steam kettle; Gary Fujita and Gary Emslie worked on the spaghetti cookers; Suzanne Wilson, Winnie Coleman, Peg Sussman, and Celine Grenier decorated the tables; John Coleman sold tickets; Mike and Maggie Seymour served and carried; Eli and Fred Stahlhut made desserts and labored on the line; and Cathy Nunneley tossed the salad and served at tables. Multiple jobs were done by Molly and Clayton O'Brien-Smith and Bob Crittenden.



The Senior Sliders danced onstage and there were smiles and tapping feet all around. The crowd stayed till almost 9:00 p.m. as we scrubbed up the kitchen and put away the tables. Incidentally, this dinner reflects our neighborhood very well; it is one of the best integrated events in town.

See you next time! ▼▼

Report from Indonesia

a letter from our friend Charles Angell

[Charles and Ini Angell live near the Harrison greenbelt. They are currently in a coastal town on the island of Java. Charles is working on an eight-month aquaculture project there. -Ed.]

Dear friends,

It has been a fascinating experience witnessing the election of the new president of Indonesia and the reformation of its political system. There is still a long way to go before the system has become truly democratized, but there is reason for optimism. One has to realize we are talking about the world's fourth most populous country and one of the most ethnically diverse regions of the world.



The president is Abdurrahman Wahid. (He is known here by his nickname, Gus Dur.) He is from the moderate Islamic community and is reaching out to all ethnic and religious groups. The vice-president, Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of Sukarno, is the vice president and leader of the major party.

The withdrawal of the Indonesian army's most notorious units from Aceh and his secret meeting with separatist leaders are promising, as well as increasing autonomy for the provinces of the country. Hopefully the day will come when governors, district heads and mayors are elected.

The economy is still in very bad condition. Here in Cilacap district many people cannot get enough food. The Catholic Church, through its local foundation, is distributing rice provided by USAID through Catholic Relief Services. Wages for those working are very low... 50 cents a day!

The events which transpired in East Timor were a tragedy culminating 25 years of oppression and abuse. The UN will establish a civilian administration there for 2 years, which will lead to elections. You may recall that Ramos Horta and Bishop Belo, who spoke for Timor's independence, won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Indonesians are only now beginning to learn what went on there in their name. Many are in a state of denial, as many of us were when the truth of Viet Nam and our role there came to light.

The rainy season has started. There are sun breaks between the showers and downpours. The rice fields are brilliant green after the long, hard dry season. Our stay here is drawing to an end as we will leave next month and return home after visiting Ini's brother for a few weeks. ▼▼



We Need Your Natural Talent

Martin Luther King School is putting out a call to the community for tutors. The children are wonderful, and you will enjoy working with them. Call 726-6660 to volunteer.



Minutes of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

for October 19, 1999

The meeting was called to order by President Gary Emslie at 7:40 p.m.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved as printed in the October newsletter.

Treasurer Angel Chaffin was absent due to illness.

There was discussion of a possible Arts Festival this spring. Anyone who would like to participate or encourage others to participate should call Celine at 323-5801. The fair could possibly be held at M. L. King School or Bush School.

With regards to upcoming events, the Candidates Forum was announced and jobs were distributed for the Spaghetti Friendraiser, to be held Friday, November 5.

Jerry announced that a return address stamp for the Council had been bought. He also got sense-of-the-group agreement for the purchase of a trolley for newsletter transport and other Council uses.

Gary said that Bush School invites neighbors to visit its Long Range Facilities Plan on its website at www.bush.edu in advance of Bush School beginning its long range planning with a hired outside consultant. Community participation is welcomed early in the planning process.

New business was raised by Jerry, who said that the food served to students at M. L. King School was not good enough and that steps needed to be taken to see what could be done to make the food better. He is already starting to explore this issue. [See article, page 2. -Ed.]

Adrienne Bailey, President of the Central District Neighborhood Council, said that over the summer, the City instituted Small Sparks Grants, with the Central Area ending up with the Spark for the year. Community Councils are encouraged to submit proposals to the Central District Neighborhood Council. She still needs people to form a committee to screen such applications. She also asked the GMVCC to sign a letter in support of the Central Area's application for a Technology Matching Fund Grant. Finally, she spoke of the "burnout" experienced by citizen volunteers; this could be alleviated if more people would get involved in civic life. Gary mentioned that the Air Noise Committee could use more participants.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM. ▼▼

Minutes prepared by Celine Grenier, Secretary

THE VALLEY VIEW

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The Valley View is published 10 times each year.

Deadline: First of each month.

Your submissions are appreciated! Mail to the address above.

1999-2000 Officers

President - Gary Emslie
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Secretary - Celine Grenier
Treasurer - Angel Chaffin
Site Council Reps. - Volunteers Needed
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Next Community Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 16, 1999, 7:30 p.m.
Martin Luther King School
in the portables
3201 East Republican St. (parking available on playfield)

WTO Comes to Seattle: Politics and Protests
by Peggy Sussman

Seattle is host to the World Trade Organization in late November. Government delegates from over a hundred countries will meet to set policies for furthering the great global economy. Labor, human rights, and environmental rights groups are preparing to protest WTO actions they say ignore wage and work conditions, pollution curbs, and food safety regulations that prevail in many places.

Is the WTO set up to protect international corporations, forgetting the rest of us? Watch the media reporting the big WTO summit. Churches and community councils are organizing many events, e.g., urging cancellation of poor countries' debt (St. James Cathedral, 297-0311) and attacking world arms sales (Plymouth Congregational Church, 547-0952). ▼▼

Fall Yard Waste Schedule
by Cathy Nunneley

Neighborhoods like ours, surrounded by so many trees, need regular weekly yard waste pickup throughout November and the first two weeks of December. Yet just as the great leaf-fall begins, the Solid Waste Utility has cut down the pickup schedule to every other week.

The great number of leaves quickly fills the plastic containers, and people must purchase the approved Kraft paper bags for the excess. We see 10 or 15 of these bags set out on collection day. All that is heavy to move around, and a two-week accumulation could overwhelm the collection trucks. Now is the time for pruning rose and berry bushes, and the maximum fall of leaves. I have called the Solid Waste Utility (684-3000) and written them to urge continued weekly pickup. No answer yet. ▼▼

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