



The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 80, December 1999

E-mail: madisonvalley@juno.com

President's View

by Gary Emslie

It's been a busy month. The city, specifically our Capitol Hill and Downtown neighbors, are still feeling the sting from the events of last week's WTO conference and resulting demonstration. Others worry about the looming uncertainties of Y2K.

Hard to find balance when busy and worried, but this month and its many points of celebration are all about family unity, helping neighbors, and finding moments of peace and grace within our community. As we think of the many gifts our friends and neighbors have shared with us

this past year, we send them a mental message of thanks in return. Think again of those around us who are less fortunate and could use our help. The needs are great and many opportunities are available.

On a more practical note, there will be no community meeting this month. Our next meeting will be held on January 18, 2000. Hope to see you there.

Looks as if our pleadings to have the drainage problems on 32nd fixed have finally been answered. Many thanks to all who sent letters and exchanged in the phone tag game with the city.

We are still looking for volunteers who are interested in helping create an

art show and sale to benefit the Martin Luther King Elementary School. If you have an interest or an idea, please call Celine (please see announcement on page 4.).

Looking forward to a new millennium and its many opportunities and to seeing you at our next meeting on January 18. ▼▼

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NOTICE

The Madison Valley Community Council and the Valley View have a new e-mail address. You can now reach us at:

madisonvalley@juno.com

The good news about this e-mail account is that it costs us nothing. The bad news is that it cannot accept attached files. This means that any letters to the editor or other submissions must appear in the body of your message, rather than as an attached file.

Be that as it may, we always love to hear from you. We welcome articles, letters, and guest commentaries.

Some people have ideas for a story or are curious about something in the neighborhood, but lack the time to flesh it out into a full article. If you're one of these folks, let us know your idea. We'll be glad to do some research and writing to help you find out what you want to know.

WTO Protests: A View from Ground Zero

by Celine Grenier

At 1:00 PM Tuesday November 30, three foreign students and I headed down from Seattle Central Community College on Pine Street to meet the anti-WTO marchers who had launched themselves from Memorial Stadium a half hour earlier.

We hit a relaxed police blockade at the edge of the Convention Center and detoured south in time to join a small band of protesters pulling a pyramid-shaped float covered with themes on the U.S. dollar (In Dollars We Lust?!) and hoisting aloft a huge puppet with a serene, vaguely indigenous looking face and sleeves nearly spanning the street. Their

drummers set our pace as we returned to Pine.

On Pine we found group after group milling about in intersections, but only stragglers in between. This was not the turnout I had hoped for. Noticing one large, smashed, store front window covered in green graffiti, I realized someone had forgotten his/her Gandhi. We turned south onto Fourth, but still saw only a scattering of people. We stopped and waited. Behind huge plate glass windows stood shop owners and their employees, arms crossed, looking nervous and grim. My students and I made small talk for a while.

(Continued on page 2)

WTO Protests, continued

Then we heard it: a cheer or a roar from farther away than we could see. "Oh my God," one student said, "Here they come." And they came...wave after wave of union representatives smiling and talking, shouting their slogans, carrying their banners and signs that read: "A Trade Deal That's Isn't Good for Working Families is a Bad Deal" and "How Does Global Trade Support Community" and "An Injury to One Is an Injury to All." From where we stood, unionism appeared to be a great force in America. Between them marched the "independents": turtles, porpoises on sticks, skeletons on stilts, a father with his daughter on his shoulders, and, arms locked, a street-wide band of large breasted, topless women with black stars painted on in strategic places.

We turned to go with the flow of the march, and back around the corner found three Asian people meditating stone-still on cushions, their arms held gracefully in front of them. Incense filled the air. After we'd walked a little farther, one student said, "Well, are we going to march or not?" I was happy to get into the middle of the street behind a union group. I asked one burly, dark bearded guy, "So who are YOU?" "Union!" he responded. "But what ARE you?" I asked. "Union!" he responded again. "But what do you DO?" I asked. One of his brothers turned and said, "We are laborers!" He pointed up at a building under construction and said, "We raised those forms! We poured that cement!" Another brother chimed in, "We dug that hole!" and they all burst out laughing. Just ahead of us, ricocheting back and forth across the street, came the shout, "UNION!" "POWER!" "UNION!" "POWER!" More drummers came up along side us and we began to dance-walk to the beat.

We came upon a group of break dancers; we came to an intersection in which a large group of young people were simply sitting. We turned north to enter an absolute crush of people going in both directions muttering, "Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me." Above us on a window ledge stood solemn faced young people in long coats. We circled a block and joined a group near the Paramount theater. Spotting some delegates in the distance, the crowd began to hiss and yell, "Shame, shame, shame!" We surged forward, but found ourselves pressed up against a police line. I looked around and said, "Well, I'm not planning to bust through this barricade," and we all moved back.

I was tired, cold and hungry. The numbers present were sufficient to me. I said good-bye to my students, who wanted to stay, and headed around and back up Pine. As I turned into an art supply store, I glanced back down the street and saw a pale puff of gray smoke rise and four bright flashes of light. ▼▼

BOOK COMMENT

The Professor and the Madman: A Tale of Murder, Insanity, and the Making of the Oxford English Dictionary, by Simon Winchester

comment by Miriam Roskin

More than 100 years ago, in 1871, an American physician and army veteran named William Chester Minor shot and killed a brewery worker named George Merrett. The murder occurred in the murky night streets of a London slum. The police quickly arrested Dr. Minor. The jury found him not guilty for reasons of insanity, but committed him to a mental institution outside of London — for life.

Over the following 20 years Dr. Minor became the singlemost prolific expert volunteer contributor to the first edition of the enormous and exhaustive Oxford English Dictionary. Dr. Minor answered a call for volunteers that he had seen in a newspaper. He began preparing slips of paper that defined hard words, easy words, any words, through context. Dr. Minor pulled quotations from the vast library he was permitted to maintain within his rooms at the insane asylum.

The remarkable thing is that none of his partners at Oxford had any idea that the return address on Dr. Minor's submissions indicated that he was an inmate of a mental institution. They would not find out for nearly 20 years.

The Professor and the Madman tells this story, and more. This tale of dictionary-making becomes a page-turner thanks to a gentle but gripping writing style and a cast of characters who are all the more extraordinary for being real. Simon Winchester's book is really wonderful, and it's heartening to know that this book has become a best seller. It's perfect gray-day reading.

Why comment on this particular book in *The Valley View*? In part, because it's a fine book that we think all our readers will enjoy. But also because the book offers one peculiarly local angle.

William Chester Minor's parents were American, with roots in New England, but Dr. Minor himself was born in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where his father and mother served as missionaries. William's father later wound up in Singapore and then Bangkok with a new wife named Judith. Soon they had six children, providing William with six half-siblings. One of the half-brothers was named Thomas T. Minor. As Simon Winchester writes:

Thomas T. Minor died in peculiar circumstances many years later. He moved to the American West. ... and finally on to Port Townsend and Seattle, where he was elected mayor. In 1889, still holding the post, he took off on a canoe expedition to Whidbey Island with a friend, G. Morris Haller. Neither man ever returned. Neither boats nor bodies were ever found. A Minor Street and a Thomas T. Minor School remain.

Surely you've been by T.T. Minor School many times, at 1700 E. Union. Who knew that its namesake's half-brother was a madman who helped write the O.E.D. half a world away?? ▼▼

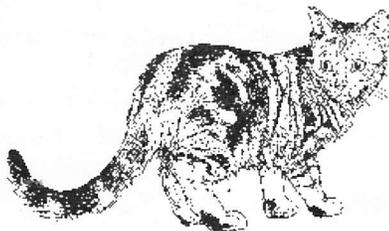
Reception for Nelson Mandela

We tagged along with King School Principal Euhania Butler to hear Nelson Mandela on December 7 at Benaroya Hall. The audience, a thousand strong, were thrilled to hear two school choirs and the Seattle Symphony perform the South African national anthem under President Mandela's baton. Then Mr. Mandela gave an impressive speech about his perception of America's leading role in the world. He offered some criticism as a friend, outlined his country's grave tasks in health and education, and expressed gratitude for the freedom fighters of the world. We responded with tears and applause for this great and modest man. ▼▼

A Cat Lover's Report

by Susan Stam

It was a lucky day for nine cats in our neighborhood when a kind and sensitive woman named Theresa stopped to help three starving kittens who were heading into the street looking for food. They had been living under shrubs near the new bus shelter at 34th and Denny. This led her to three more cats, slightly older and also hungry. One of these was the mother. There were many people outside that day and no one seemed to notice. She asked someone passing by to help and this person called me. I am an animal lover and hate to see animals abandoned and neglected. Hereabouts people refer to these cats as the "wild" cats. Sometimes they forage in the greenbelt.



We caught the kittens and took them to Rainier Veterinary Hospital. With the help of Mary, who works there, we were able to find homes for all the kittens. She also encouraged us to catch the older cats and get them fixed. With some difficulty we caught the three older ones and took them in, got them fixed, and decided they should be re-released where someone would feed them. This is when I met Judy, another kind woman who offered to let these cats live in her yard. She had already been feeding a number of strays.

The last cat is a little black cat that everyone said was too wild to touch. Yet when I found him near the bus stop he just let me pick him up. I also took him to the Rainier Vet Hospital where he proved to be a loving, gentle cat. We just placed him in a fine home.

This is an emotional story for me because all these animals are better off for the help of a few people who cared. It really isn't that much work. The Rainier Hospital made the job so much easier by offering their services without hesitation. Many thanks for their help in our community. ▼▼

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 November 16, 1999

The meeting was opened at 7:36 PM with introductions all around. A quorum was present.

Angel gave her Treasurer's Report. About \$300 was earned free and clear from the Spaghetti Dinner Friendraiser. The current treasury balance is \$7,818.

The minutes of the October meeting were approved as printed in the November newsletter with a correction in the last paragraph changing "...encouraged to submit proposals to the Central District Neighborhood Council" to "...are encouraged to participate in the Sparks program."

Cathy Nunneley explained her issue with the City's fall yardwaste pick-up reductions. The Council voted to send a letter asking that weekly yardwaste pick-ups be extended through the end of November.

The whole group discussed the issue of the WTO and decided that individuals could sign a resolution opposing expansion of the powers of the WTO and asking that governments review the undemocratic structure and decision-making processes of the WTO and mandate the enactment of a system that protects our sovereign right to make law.

There was a brief discussion of the upcoming Arts and Crafts Fair. People who wish to participate should call Celine at 323-5801.

Gary expressed dissatisfaction with the non-responsiveness of the City concerning the erosion and runoff on 32nd Ave. E between Denny and John.

Chuck Pearman reported that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Arboretum is scheduled to be issued in February with a 45-day comment period.

Betsy Grava spoke to the Council about the starting by a few neighbors of a disaster preparedness group.

Adrienne gave a wide-ranging report of local activities.

Addie, a representative from the National Coalition Building Institute, asked if we would participate in a survey at our next meeting. It was voted that the regular December meeting would be cancelled for the holidays.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM. ▼▼

THE VALLEY VIEW
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Community Council Federation

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Your submissions are appreciated! Mail to the address above.

1999-2000 Officers

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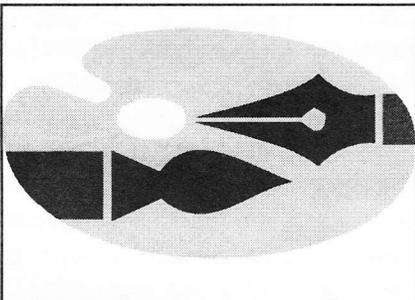


Greater Madison Valley Neighbors & Supporters
201 31st Ave E
SEATTLE, WA 98112-4822



Next Community Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 18, 1999, 7:30 p.m.
Martin Luther King School
in the portables
3201 East Republican St. (parking available on playfield)



Arts and Crafts Fair

Here's a call to all artists and craftspeople who would like to show and sell their work in the community this spring, with a percentage of profits going to Martin Luther King School. If interested, please call Celine at 323-5801.

Support the Valley View Newsletter

Name: _____ Phone: _____

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- I am not receiving the Valley View; please add me to the mailing list.
- Please contact me for mailing parties, writing, reporting, artwork, or other. My interests are: _____

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