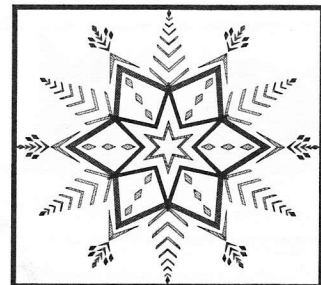


The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 70, December 1998

E-mail: valleyview@altadata.com



President's View

by Gary Emslie

Our neighbors have been busy this Fall. Have you noticed the new playground structure being erected in the M. L. King schoolyard? Lisa St. George and a small group of very dedicated neighbors and community volunteers spent November 21 and 22 in rain, wind, and ankle-deep mud to construct M. L. King's new playground structure. The Department of Neighborhoods' matching grants program made the purchase of the structure, chess board, and new play surface a reality for our area children. Great work neighbors. Our children will enjoy the new structure for many years to come.

While our current newsletter looks great, we still need help to make it even better. Presently, we'd love to have an advertising director. If you or someone you know could share 4 to 10 hours per month, please call Jerry Sussman or Gary Emslie at 324-7139.

The Annual Spaghetti Dinner was a big hit again this year. A big thank you goes out to the many volunteers who helped make this year's event a wonderful friend raiser.

As I look toward the new year, I'm reminded of how lucky we are to live in a neighborhood with so many thoughtful and helpful neighbors. Enjoy the year-end with friends and family as always, and if you have an idea/project or concern (jet noise?) that you'd like the community council

to help you with, remember, it's your community council and the voice of each community member is important. Call or write. Even better, we'll see you at the January community council meeting on the 19th at 7:30 p.m.

Sweet Sounding Notes Nearby

by Katie Posey

All kinds of music and dance flourish in our community. Down the street on 31st Avenue East is a good example. Although I've known Dan Schmitt and his wife Angie Bolton for several years, I did not know the extent of their talents.

Besides being executive director of Very Special Arts Washington, a non-profit organization by and for people with disabilities, Dan finds time to perform with a folk-rock band called the Warren/Vick Conspiracy, with whom he plays bass. He also sings, composes, and is a percussionist. This year he was invited to play with an English group at the Folklife Festival. Other players in the Conspiracy are Dan Ochipinti, Brad Warren, and Jim Vick. Perhaps we'll hear soon of the band's electrifying new CD, as a recording session is in the works.

Angie has worked eighteen years with the group Tickle Tune Typhoon, singing, dancing, acting, and playing percussion. It is a marvelous theater

In This Issue

President's View	1
Sweet Sounding Notes Nearby	1
The Spaghetti Event	2
On Parks and Potholes	2
Letter from Africa	4
October GMVCC Minutes	4
November GMVCC Minutes	5



CAFE FLORA

2901 EAST MADISON
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
98112
(206) 325-9100
(206) 324-9783 (fax)



We here at the Newsletter were deeply affected by the sad, untimely death of Superintendent John Stanford. We shared in the gatherings of mourning and remembrance. We were heartened by the two bright youngsters who read their eulogies at the memorial in Edmundson Pavilion, and the Stanford family were deeply impressed by them.



The Spaghetti Event

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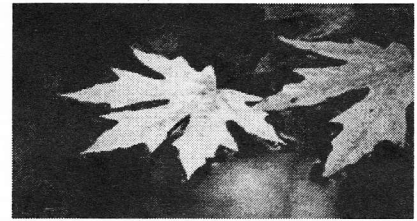
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including rich desserts, mostly homemade.

At \$3.50 a dinner (a price we have held for ten years), this is surely the best offering in town. The meat sauce is Pearl Castle's recipe, cooked in King School's venerable 60-gallon steam kettle by Charles McDade. Vegetarian sauce is prepared at home by Marilyn Henry. Each year we double her quantity but it never seems enough. The table decorations were overseen by Suzanne Wilson.

Our entertainment came from Meany Middle School: Wadie Ervin and his lively jazz band played great standards, and Leenar Fong brought an elegant group of Chinese ribbon and fan dancers. The audience loved it all, amazed at these sixth to eighth graders.

Everyone went home happy, some carrying quart jars of the precious sauce that we sold cheap. See you next year!



On Parks and Potholes

Some schemes of Seattle's bureaucracy work out happily and others just can't shake their bad smell. An example of the first was the Open Space program, that secured for us precious woods, green slopes and outlooks of beach and mountain. The second kind confronts us in the Parks Department support of the Arboretum Foundation plan to revamp the Arboretum.

Parks has been host of a series of public meetings aimed at softening the opposition to the grandiose project. The University of Washington and elements of the city's horticulture community are intent on creating a professional

(Continued on page 3)



Sweet Sounding Notes

(Continued from page 1)

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(Continued from page 2)

botanical garden that will attract the tourist trade. The plan entails buildings, paved parking lots, and eventually gates and admission fees. The citizens who attended these meetings generally favored better maintenance of the tree and plant collections, but were vehement against cutting native trees or constructing new buildings. The official facilitators of these meetings preferred not to hear direct comments on the Arboretum plan; instead they manipulated us into small groups to ponder often inane questions like: "Can the Arboretum serve an educational purpose?" Our group came up with creative ideas like renovation of the brick fieldhouse at the soccer field for park use, and closure of the on-ramp to the 520 bridge to ease the heavy traffic in the Arboretum.

The proponents of the Big Plan are working toward an environmental impact statement next year. Our active representatives like Nancy Knapp, Adrienne Bailey, and Wallis Bolz are watching the process. We'll keep you informed. The ultimate decision will rest with the City Council and the University of Washington, who are co-managers of the park.

The Potholes Around Us

Our favorite busted roadway to holler about is 32nd Avenue East near John Street. Now that Lake Washington Boulevard is closed for repairs near the lake, 32nd has become the detour route to Madrona. That's the rub. This street is below the Harrison Ridge greenbelt which sheds rainwater in torrents and kills the roadway. Temporary asphalt patches do not hold, and the new traffic load makes the craters worse. Some of the valley flooding originates right here.

We have written, phoned, and squawked about all this to the Parks Department (who manage the greenbelt) and to Engineering who are responsible for streets. These two do a lot of finger pointing: "It's their job, not ours," and may even make a promise to do something in writing. Nothing happens.

The latest word is that the real remedy, a drainage pipe on 32nd East to catch the runoff, and permanent repairs to the ruined sidewalk and roadway, will be accomplished in the spring of 1999. Put this on your calendar and don't hold your breath.

Bush Students Work in the Community

On December 15, the students at the Bush Middle School were found working in a dozen different social service agencies. For the past 20 years, Bush middle schoolers have worked in the neighborhood, and they are proud of their efforts to help others in need.

This past year, students worked at:

- Providence Regina House
- NW AIDS Foundation
- Chicken Soup Brigade
- Ronald McDonald House
- Northwest Harvest
- Arboretum Foundation
- Boyer Children's Clinic
- Forgotten Children
- St. Mary's Food Bank
- Leschi Elementary.

Future service dates are anticipated this Spring. If you know of families or seniors who could benefit from the able hands and hearts of a group of students and their teacher, please contact Teresa Mitchell at the Bush School, 326-7755.

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Please contact me for mailing parties, writing, reporting, artwork, or other. My skills are: _____

GMVCC

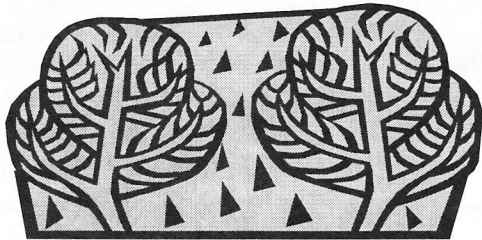
M. L. King
School Notes
will appear in the

Letter from Africa

[Our friend Sara D. is an ESL teacher who is on a one-year assignment in Rwanda. She is at a small college in Butare, a town about 90 miles south of Kigali, the capital, near the border with Burundi. Her job is to teach instructors-in-training in English language. These are excerpts from a series of e-mails.]

...The countryside is beautiful and the climate delightful. They need English teachers really badly here, but the commitment and motivation of the people is impressive. I am surrounded by men, as all but two of the teachers and most of the students (600 plus) are male. Butare is tiny, and the hotel is bang in the middle of the main street. It took me a while to get the courage to go out for a walk, as I am of course a novelty and get lots of stares. (Whites are called "mzungus" in Kinyarwanda, the local language, corresponding to gringo in Mexico or boalay in Indonesia.)

Try to imagine soft air cool in the morning, building to hot midafternoon and tapering to warm in the evening, the smell of eucalyptus, jacaranda



trees in purple flower, bougainvillea, hibiscus, poinsettias the size of our photinias, and papayas growing outside the library on campus. Terracotta brick everywhere. Lizards scuttle across the cobblestones as I walk back to my room. There is quite a menagerie with mice and spiders inside and cows and hens outside. I saw a gorgeous butterfly on campus today. It had blue wings with orange dots. F. says the big birds that sail around like eagles are in fact kites, a kind of hawk.

Today I saw two men carrying large iron gates on their heads and a boy with six or seven chickens hanging upside down from his hands, the usual mode of transport. The sound of bleating goats is common as they are dragged reluctantly to market where butchers work out of little holes in the wall and the meat is covered with flies. I saw a man ironing a skirt of some synthetic material with a heavy iron containing burning charcoal.

French is the European language commonly spoken here. I am struggling to build up my vocabulary in both local languages.... I taught six hours and observed two yesterday, so I was bushed. The students seem to enjoy my style, probably its novelty. The classrooms have a raised step along the walls, so the instructor stands above the students. The blackboard is merely painted concrete. Women students tend to be self-effacing and passive. This afternoon we discussed all kinds of things like sex, woman's emancipation, and U.S. culture. I had a lot of fun and was impressed by their interest and level

(Continued on page 6)

October GMVCC Minutes [for meeting held October 20]

President Gary Emslie opened the meeting at 7:30 PM with a welcome and introductions. A quorum of 12 was reached at 7:45.

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as printed in the October newsletter. Adrienne Bailey, who represents the GMVCC at the Central Area Neighborhood District Council, reported on what's been happening there lately. She announced the "Livable Communities Festival" at Seattle Center on Nov. 6 & 7, as well as tours of examples on the 8th.

Gary, reporting for Lisa St. George, asked 15-

20 neighbors to volunteer on November 21 and 22 around 9 AM to help put together playground equipment on the MLK playground. Hours worked by neighbors serve to meet matching grant requirements. Please call Lisa St. George to volunteer any hours (323-8295).

In a discussion of the upcoming Spaghetti Dinner (Nov. 6, 6:30 PM), it was noted that more volunteers would be welcomed. Call Eli at 322-7196 or Peggy at 325-6308 to volunteer.

Nancy Knapp reported on events surrounding the Arboretum Plan. Sixty-five to one hundred concerned

(Continued on page 5)



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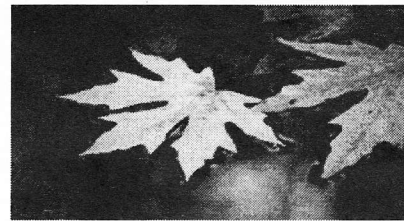
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THE VALLEY VIEW

2802 East Madison St., Box 184
Seattle, WA 98112
Greater Madison Valley
Community Council
Member of the Seattle
Community Council Federation

Newsletter Staff

Celine Grenier
Eli Stahlhut
Jerry Sussman
Maggie Seymour
Miriam Roskin

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Your submissions are appreciated!
Mail to the address above.

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President - Gary Emslie
Vice President - Celine Grenier
Treasurer - David Foecke
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Phone - 206/328-0058
E-mail - valleyview@altadata.com

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Next Community Council Meeting

Date/Time/Place: Tuesday, January 19, 1999, 7:30 p.m.
Martin Luther King School Portable
Building
3201 East Republican St. (parking available on playfield)

Letter from Africa



(Continued from page 4)

of thinking and conversation. One student asked me to be a kind of ambassador to the U.S. and let people know more about Rwanda other than the terrible genocide time. Many wanted to talk about Bill and Monica, which got us on to fidelity. I was glad to hear one woman say, "I'd tell him to take his cows and go," when I asked what she would do if her husband were unfaithful.

Editor's Note: Sara is a steady correspondent. If you'd like to read more of her experiences, let us know. We'll print more of her letters in future issues.

Book Donations

Anyone who has books, especially up-to-date non-fiction, that he or she would like to donate to the King County Prison Library, please bring them to the next Community Council meeting, 7:30 PM, January 19, corner portable in the MLK School yard.

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