



THE VALLEY VIEW

SEPTEMBER — OCTOBER 2010 · ISSUE NO. 172 · www.madisonvalley.org

Swanson Family Found

By Jerry Sussman

The power of the neighborhood paper is wonderful. As soon as the story of our alley appeared, the wires and wirelesses began to hum. Our friend Elsa around the corner called excitedly. She knew the Swansons in the 1940's and could tell us about a grandson who lives up on Capitol Hill and his phone number! Indeed, Charlie Swanson could tell us some of the family story and was happy to meet with us. He arrived at the house, a big hearty man, retired from the steel business. The grandfather who founded the family here was Elof Svenson; the name later became Swanson in America. Elof was a teenage laborer, a Swedish immigrant who spoke little English.

I had one detail wrong: he was not a carpenter but a landscape worker who specialized in rockeries. He put in all the bulkheads that hold the ground above the Harrison greenbelt. He was good at it, and prospered. Elof married and the family joined the Swedish Covenant Church at 12th and Pine. The church is no longer there, but was a mainstay of the Scandinavian community back then. I learned about a rival rockery man named Jensen who erected a wall in the alley. He had carved a "J" on one of the stones, still visible today. Elof, however, was not an admirer of Jensen's work.

Charlie brought an album with pictures of himself as an eight-year-old at his Grandpa's house in 1944. There's the house number and the light fixture by the door that can be seen today. We walked down the street past the namesake sign to which he made an appreciative nod. He pointed out five or six houses Swanson had built—the variety of styles is remarkable... *Cont'd on page 6.*



Deer in the Valley — Max Morris took this photo of a deer (at back center) behind his house on August 29th, in the Alder Creek Natural Area. Efforts of Green Footprints Action Works are making a difference in preserving wildlife habitat in the urban core. See GFAW article on page 3.



Fall Events Calendar

Wed, Sept 15, 7:30p.m. — **GMVCC Monthly Meeting** at the Valley School, 309 30th Avenue E. **Council Elections** will be held, so please bring family, friends and neighbors!

Fri, Sept 24, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. — **Green Footprints Work Party.** Join ZGF Architects for a United Way Day of Caring "Blackberry Smackdown" at Alder Creek Natural Area!

Sat, Sept 25, 10:00-11:30 a.m. — **Meet with School Board Director Kay Smith-Blum, District V.** Community meeting open to the public, held at the Douglass Truth Library.

Wed, Oct 20, 7:30 p.m. — **GMVCC Monthly Meeting** at the Valley School. On the Agenda: Planning the Community Potluck, the 520 Bridge Expansion, MLK School, and much more!

Sat, Oct 30, 4-7:00 p.m. — **Community Harvest Potluck** hosted by the GMVCC at the Valley School. Costumes & musical instruments are encouraged, but holiday spirit is required. Contact Charles McDade for more information at 206-325-3518.

Sat, Nov. 13, 10:00-11:30 a.m. — **Meet with School Board Director Kay Smith-Blum, Dist V.** Community meeting open to the public, held at the Douglass Truth Library.

GMVCC ID STATEMENT



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 **GMVCC Autumn Agenda**

**Monthly Meetings Resume:
Wednesday, September 15th, 2010
7:30 - 9:00 p.m. at the Valley School.**

On the Agenda: Officer Elections!

There were not enough present at the June Meeting for a Quorum of voters, so Officer elections have been rescheduled for September. The Council urges you to attend the September meeting and participate in officer elections for 2011. Adrienne Bailey has volunteered for Treasurer and Charles McDade will continue as Vice-President. The offices of Secretary and President remain open for volunteers or nominees.

**October GMVCC Meeting:
Wednesday, October 20th, 2010
7:30 - 9:00 p.m. at the Valley School.**

Please consider attending one of the fall meetings listed — the council needs your presence and your voice represented on many important issues that affect our quality of life in the valley.

* * * * *

News Briefs & Bulletins



Congratulations to Jason Wilson — owner and chef of the acclaimed restaurant **Crush**, located just up the hill at E. Madison St. and 23rd Avenue E. This past May in NYC, Wilson won the pres-


tigious **2010 James Beard Award for "Best Chef Northwest"**. He bested serious competition from other Seattle Chefs like Tom Douglas and Ethan Stowe, to win the highly prized honor. Stop by to see why!

Birth and Beyond Expands — the locally owned maternity store expanded its footprint in August to provide additional classes and workshops which cater to expectant moms and new families. The store has leased additional space on the south side of the building at 2719 E. Madison, directly behind the existing store. Birth & Beyond celebrates 16 years in Madison Valley in 2010! See their complete autumn events calendar at the website: www.birthandbeyond.com.

Find Us On Facebook



The Valley View has joined the online community at Facebook with a new webpage for Madison Valley neighbors, friends, fans, community groups and merchants. Please check us out at

www.facebook.com — a great way to get the latest scoop on what's happening in and around Madison Valley every day of the week. We encourage our readers to post their stories, news bulletins, sales, events, work parties, photos, anecdotes, and general neighborhood happenings on *The Valley View* page. How does it work? Once you're a member of Facebook, just select the "Like" feature and you'll be able to post directly onto our wall. Or, if you prefer not to join Facebook, you can still peruse our public profile to see what your neighbors are saying. 

Backyard Habitat Classes at the Zoo

By Jenny Mears

Would you like to create habitat for wildlife in your backyard, schoolyard or community garden? At this series of five classes, you'll learn from experts from Seattle Audubon, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Native Plant Society and Woodland Park Zoo about how to attract birds and other wildlife to your backyard, select and care for native plants, recognize and remove invasive plants species, coexist peacefully with the wildlife you attract, conserve water, manage your backyard without the use of chemical herbicides and pesticides, place feeders and bird houses, and get your yard certified as a Backyard Habitat.

Classes are held at the Woodland Park Zoo and designed to build on each other as a series, but may also be taken separately. The cost is \$25 per person for each class, or \$100 for the five-part series if you register before 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 21st. For more information or to register, please see the Backyard Habitat page on the zoo's website at: <http://www.zoo.org/Page.aspx?pid=545>

Introduction to Backyard Habitat: Site Analysis and Design, Tuesday, Sept. 28th, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Join Allen Howard, Woodland Park Zoo horticulture staff, to learn the basic principles of creating habitat for wildlife, with a focus on planning, site analysis, and design.

Natural Yard Care in the Fall

Saturday, October 9th, from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Join E.J. Hook, Woodland Park Zoo horticulture staff, to learn seasonally appropriate sustainable gardening practices, including composting, mulching and proper fall planting.

Fall Plants and Planting

Saturday, October 9th from 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Join Monica Vander Vieren, Washington Native Plant Society Native Plant Steward, and David Selk, Woodland Park Zoo horticulturist, to discover how different plants in your garden can provide for the basic needs of wildlife. The class includes a plant walk around zoo grounds focusing on aesthetic and size considerations, as well as proper planting techniques.

Backyard Habitat Class Schedule is Cont'd on p.6...

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Updates From CCC@MLK

By Kimberly Larson Edwards



Thanks to the leadership of Speaker Chopp, Reps. Pettigrew and Tomiko Santos, and Senator Kline, the WA State Legislature and Governor Gregoire have allocated additional funds for a non-profit to purchase the MLK School and

create a community center. This was a significant step given tight economic times. This allocation brings the total state funds available for this project to \$2.5 million.

In May the District issued a statement extending the deadline for proposals until the June 30th because the state has allocated additional money. CCC@MLK submitted a new update to our proposal and added several new partners including the Seattle Chefs Collaborative, Green Plate Special, Neighborhood Cooking Foundation (St. Cloud's cooking for the homeless program), the James W. Washington Jr. and Janie Rogella Washington Foundation, and Garfield Teen Life Center.

The Bush School and F.A.M.E church also submitted proposal updates and the Central Area Development Association (CADA) submitted a brand new proposal. All proposals are posted on the School District's website. Notably, the Bush School "reluctantly" proposed a third option: the School District could subdivide the property so that Bush could use 74% of the site for their private playfield. We are not encouraged by this option, since 26% of the current site is simply not enough space for a viable, vibrant community center and public playground. The School District Selection Committee will present an analysis of the recent proposals to the Board's Finance Committee in September. We expect the Board to vote in late 2010, most likely by December.

The Selection Committee is asking citizens to contact the School Board directly to voice support for a public community center in Madison Valley. You can email the members below, or see our website for additional info: <http://mlkcommunitycenter.org/default.aspx>

Finance Committee:

Sherry Carr, Chair sherry.carr@seattleschools.org
Peter Maier, Member peter.maier@seattleschools.org
Michael DeBell, Member michael.debell@seattleschools.org
Pam Oakes, Sr. Admin. Asst pjoakes@seattleschools.org

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Summer Snapshots

from the
 Community Rummage Sale & Summer Potluck
 July 31, 2010





The Bush School
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Grades Kindergarten-Fifth: Monday, November 1, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Grades Ninth-Twelfth: Wednesday, November 3, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Grades Sixth-Eighth: Thursday, November 4, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Grades Kindergarten-Twelfth: Sunday, January 9, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

FOR INQUIRIES AND INFORMATION: WWW.BUSH.EDU OR CALL (206) 326-7736

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Swanson Family Cont'd from p. 1...

Several Swansons worked at the Isaacson Iron Works and a daughter married into the Wright construction family. Charlie told us about a cousin who would remember more of those days in the alley, and gave us his number. Charlie, Elsa, and I had tea together (he would have much preferred coffee). We thanked Elsa for finding him, and with a handshake he was on his way. 

Backyard Habitat Cont'd from p. 3...


Attracting Birds to Your Yard

Wednesday, October 27th from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Join Neil Zimmerman, Seattle Audubon Outreach Chair and Master Birder, to learn how to attract and care for birds in your yard through plant selection, placement & maintenance of bird feeders and nest-boxes, and use of water features.

"Problem" Plants and Animals

Tuesday, November 16th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm

Join Sasha Shaw, King County Noxious Weed education specialist, and Chris Anderson, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife biologist, to learn how to identify and eradicate problem weeds and coexist peacefully and legally with all wildlife that are attracted to your backyard habitat. 

Editors Note: Jenny Mears is a member of Green Footprints Action Works. The GFAW citizens' group volunteers countless hours of work in our community greenbelts, most notably at Alder Creek Natural Area. Earlier this year the group submitted an application to the "Parks and Green Spaces Levy 2010 Opportunity Fund" to fund the purchase of the vacant lot at 203 24th Ave E. The vacant lot abuts the Madison-Miller Urban Village boundary and is one of very few undeveloped lots in the Central Area, with a beautiful canopy of Sweet Chestnut trees. GFAW envisions development of the site as an orchard/pocket park, and converting the adjacent planting strip (from E. John to E. Thomas) into a Bio-swale site. It would also link the orchard to Prentis Frazier Park at 24th Ave E and E Harrison St. Green-minded neighbors can attend a GFAW work party this fall to get involved in preserving natural habitats in our neighborhood. Please see our Events Calendar on p. 1 for the next work party.



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Donate to the GMVCC

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Please accept my donation to the Greater Madison Valley Community Council, to help support the continued publication costs of *The Valley View* and other GMVCC Sponsored events like potluck parties, spaghetti feeds, lectures, and more in 2011.

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A HARVEST CELEBRATION

The last Community Potluck of 2010 will take place on **Saturday, Oct. 30th** at the Valley School. **4-7 pm.** Bring a favorite dish or treat and share the bounty of harvest with your neighbors! Don't forget to **Wear a Costume!** The most original costume will be featured in a photo in the November Holiday Issue. Sponsored by your GMVCC.



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