



The Valley View

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER MADISON VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

September 2009 • issue 166 • madisonvalley.org

History of the Old Farmhouse

By Robert Dunshee

A few months ago, my wife Marcia was "Googling" our address and came across a history of the Montlake neighborhood written by Jim Gould. Here is an excerpt from that article which caught our eye.



"The annexation of Union City to Seattle occurred in 1891. There are few structures still standing from this era. The only certain one is at 2600 E. Helen, built about 1890, perhaps the oldest house in Montlake. Nearby at 2516 E. Helen is another, built about 1900. The second oldest house is 2445 E. Valley, built in 1895."

Our own address is **2600 East Helen Street**, and the house that Gould refers to was on the property that Marcia and I bought 28 years ago. The house sat on a little less than half an acre. We had intended to restore the old house, but found that, most seriously, the foundation would have to be replaced. The job would have been, for us, prohibitively expensive. Before we had reluctantly come to that conclusion, we spent some time, with a little help from our friends, cleaning and exploring the old house.

The architectural style of the old farmhouse is called "rural vernacular". The walls of the upper floor were made by placing 12 inch wide boards vertically. There were no double walls with insulation in between. As "insulation", old newspapers were crumpled up and used. We found, for instance, Post-Intelligencer comic pages dating back to 1893.

On the property was also a barn of sorts – more like a large garage really. Before the previous owner, Rena Enstone, had vacated the barn, we saw there a buggy and a steamer trunk that had come around the Horn! No Panama Canal yet... I presume these items still exist somewhere.

We eventually replaced the barn with a small Cape Cod house for Marcia's mother to live in. But we still find horse shoes on the property. Mrs. Enstone's husband told us that **the original owner (the very first owners) used draft horses to help build the causeway that now crosses Madison Valley at the south end of Washington Park.**

In that context, the following 2001 article by Junius Rochester might be of interest. It can be found listed under Madison Valley, at the Seattle Neighborhoods History-Link website:

SEE FARMHOUSE ON PAGE 5



By Adrienne Bailey

The Community Potluck Dinner on Saturday, July 25th was a real blast with a Community Drumming Circle! Musically inclined neighbors brought their drums of varied sizes and shapes and drummed to our hearts delight - it was a special treat. We had drummers of all ages, and those without drums just clapped, hummed and shook our groove things. **Please mark your calendars for the Final Community Potluck Dinner of the year.** It will be held on **Saturday, Halloween Day, October 31st, from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. at the Valley School**, located at 309 31st Avenue East. Some community members would like to reenact the **Halloween Costume Parade** that many of us who attended M. L. King Jr. Elementary School as children remember fondly. For more information please contact Charles McDade at (206) 325-3518. If you want to help with the Costume Parade or Potluck, feel free to email me at kismit_2000@yahoo.com, and type *Community Potluck Dinner* in the subject line. 🏠



events calendar

Tues, Sept 1, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. – Merchants Association Monthly Meeting, at FastFrame. Banners, Holiday Lights, and Crime Prevention will be discussed.

Fri, Sept 11, 9:30 a.m – 3:00 p.m. – United Way Day of Caring event. A Community Cleanup Work Party, meeting at the M. L. King, Jr. Elementary School Grounds.

Tues, Sept 15, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. – SPU Stormwater Project Public Meeting, at the Bush School, Community Room, 3400 East Harrison Street.

Weds, Sept 16, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. – GMVCC Monthly Meeting, at The Bailey-Boushay House, 2720 E. Madison St. Officer Elections will be held, so please attend!

Sat, Sept 26, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. – Arboretum's Park in the Dark Program, for families. Meet at the Graham Visitor's Center, \$6 pp, pre-registration required. Also hosting "The Halloween Spooktacular" event on Sat, Oct. 31st. See website for details!

Tues, Oct 6 – Merchants Association Monthly Meeting. Time and location tbd.

Thurs, Oct 29, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. – The Olmsted Legacy of the Arboretum. Lecture by Brooklyn Botanical Garden President Scot Medbury. At Center for Urban Horticulture.

Sat, Oct 31, 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. – Halloween Community Potluck, at the Valley School. Please join in the final potluck party of the year, and don't forget to wear your costumes!

Progress Continues for Community Center

By Kimberly Larson-Edwards



MLK Elementary - The grounds of the decommissioned school now look tidy and well-tended after dedicated community volunteers spent an entire day in late August pulling weeds and cleaning up the site.

Over the summer months, the steering committee and volunteers of *Citizens for a Community Center at MLK (CCC@MLK)* continued to make progress in forging partnerships, conducting outreach to the School Board and to city and state officials, and by continuing to build community support for a future community center at the currently closed elementary school.

See COMMUNITY CENTER on page 6



GMVCC ID Statement

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Valley View Updates

By Nori Hawkins

Publication Changes – Over the summer, the community council officers voted to shorten the publication schedule of the *Valley View* in an effort to save on printing and mailing costs. The newsletter will be published six times a year, rather than nine, on a regular, bi-monthly basis. We can assure you the *Valley View* remains an important aspect of our shared community history, and will continue to arrive at your doorstep every other month, bringing you insightful stories, current events and special features that highlight our beloved Madison Valley neighborhood. Thanks for your continued support of our newsletter – we are always looking for new writers to join the team...

Welcome Richard Sloniker – We'd like to welcome our new Graphic Design Layout person, Richard Sloniker! The *Valley View* operates on the volunteer work of all its contributors, and we are especially grateful that Richard stepped forward to replace Elena Johnson when she moved away from the Valley this summer. Richard is married to our Copy Editor, Serin Ngai, and proves that goodwill runs deep in their family!

Website Design Help – Peter Triandafilou is looking for computer-savvy volunteers to help him redesign the GMVCC website into a more user-friendly, accessible and up-to-date online resource. Please contact him to discuss the project at (206) 720-0488, or via email at president@madisonvalley.org. This is an exciting opportunity to get involved in the development of our council website and connect with your community.

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Hot Times in the Summer

By Adrienne Bailey



As the old song goes “Summertime, and the living is easy” – That wasn’t what happened this summer, but it sure was full of fun and variety! Many of us were quite busy with Neighborhood Planning, elections, Community Potlucks and the Martin Luther King Jr. School. Here are some recaps to keep you apprised of all the summer action.

NPAC Neighborhood Planning – Even though everyone is enjoying the beautiful warm weather, we at NPAC (Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee) were quite busy working on the community’s behalf. At the beginning of summer, NPAC and the Planning Commission began drafting the *Neighborhood Plan Status Reports*. Meetings for these are billed as opportunities for the public to express feedback and concerns on our Neighborhood Plans. The City solicits comments and input to help them complete a formal Status Report on the Neighborhood Plans, and to document what has been achieved thus far, and what work remains.

Unfortunately, the City scheduled many of these public meetings without coordinating with those Central Area community members active in NPAC. Specifically, the City failed to solicit location preferences or to identify scheduling conflicts with other community events. As a result, only three people turned up at the Central Area NPAC event this summer, due in part to its southeastern location, and also because another community event (the Candidates Forum) was also happening the same evening.

With much consternation I was able to get a new NPAC meeting scheduled for the Central Area. I also included the Pike/Pine Corridor and Capitol Hill neighborhoods in this feedback session, although their participation was cited as “unofficial” according to the City. Many people who work on the Central Area, Pike/Pine Corridor and Capitol Hill Neighborhood Plans want to continue working together, because of our mutual boundaries and common issues. **The rescheduled NPAC meeting will take place on September 3rd, at the Miller Community Center.**

Many members of NPAC, particularly the Outreach Subcommittee, have actively supported the effort to have the three neighboring communities work together in convenient, centralized locations. Many NPAC members also feel that all meetings related to Neighborhood Planning should be more community driven. Hopefully this year we can get more people involved with the Central Area Neighborhood Plan.

Please consider attending the NPAC meetings this fall, as they are open to the public and held on the third Tuesday of every month at the Bertha Knight Landes Room of City Hall, 6:15 - 8:30 p.m. You can find more information about NPAC and its role in Status Reports and Plan updates at: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/npi/npac.htm>

As a member of NPAC, I really encourage everyone to become a part of the Neighborhood Planning process. We are looking into hosting an educational series on the Central Area Neighborhood Plan. So, please stay tuned!

Candidates Forum – Mount Zion Baptist Church was the setting for the Central Area and Capitol Hill *Seattle Candidate Forum*. Being one of the hottest days of summer, we were extremely lucky to have almost every candidate for the Seattle Primary attend. We also need to extend a special thank you to the new pastor at Mount Zion Baptist Church, Pastor Aaron Williams. The turnout was so good that many people were asking if we were going to have one for the November election!

MLK Community Center – I am sure you’ve already read about the work to convert the former Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School into a much needed Community Center for Madison Valley and the Central Area. This is a reminder to mark your calendars to participate in the **United Way’s Day of Caring**. The CCC@ MLK group has partnered with United Way to host a *Day of Caring* event at the M.L.K. Jr. School for a **Grounds Clean-Up and Beautification Project on Friday, September 11, 9: 30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.** Go to the United Way website for more information at: <http://www.uwkc.org/volunteer/dayofcaring> 🏠

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MLK School Clean Up A Success

By Libby Sinclair

The former Martin Luther King Elementary School got a lot of community love on Saturday, August 22nd. Neighbors and friends, kids and parents, all gathered to weed, rake and tidy up the unkempt school grounds. Sponsored by the neighborhood group *Citizens for a Community Center at MLK School*, the clean-up attracted lots of hard-working volunteers who want to keep our neighborhood school looking presentable, and support development of a community center at the site.

Along the entrance at Republican Street, volunteers pruned shrubs and painstakingly weeded the beds, even weeding the cracks in the sidewalks. Neighbors also dumped wheelbarrow after wheelbarrow of wood chips under the bushes and trees, mulching the grounds to keep new weeds at bay. The group filled close to thirty yard-waste bags, which the School District will haul away and compost.

The north and west sides of the building are now cleaned up, yet there is more to be done along the school front on Harrison Street and areas along 32nd Avenue. Thankfully, the hardest work is done thanks to all those hardy volunteers who turned out in August.

During the clean-up, some neighbors met each other for the first time, while old friends enjoyed working together, side-by-side. The Shambala Center on Harrison and 31st Avenue sent four wonderful volunteers who introduced themselves and worked many hours along-side our crew.

All in all, it was an exhilarating morning of work and we took pride in the vast improvements made to the grounds. Many, many thanks to everyone who rolled up their sleeves to keep our neighborhood school looking so good. 🏠



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FARMHOUSE, continued from page 1

"The increased activity at the lakeshore caused McGilvra and friends to found the Madison Street Cable Railway Company. In summer the cars ran every two minutes. During rainy winter months removable glass panels protected the passengers. The cars themselves were covered with advertisements. Construction of the cable railway resulted in more right-of-way clearing and the building of a large trestle through the core of Madison Valley. The valley was then a "pass-through" area, despite its wild salmon stream and lush growth. Passengers enjoyed the view, but were looking forward to reaching the waters of Lake Washington.

When the Olmsted brothers were hired by the city in 1902-1903 to design parks and boulevards in anticipation of the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, they suggested bypassing Madison Park. Judge McGilvra's settlement had become a somewhat raucous amusement center. Lake Washington Boulevard was then routed uphill from the lake through what is now called Lake View Park. The new route more or less followed Harrison Street, through the fringes of Madison Valley, into what is today's Arboretum. The route was to be a southern entrance to the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific grounds on the University of Washington campus. At about this time the Madison Street trestle over the stream was replaced by an earthen dam and became a permanent road. The rushing salmon stream dried up, the remaining trickle was routed through a pipe, and Madison Valley residents were cut off from Union Bay and from the wild growth that would become the Arboretum."


We hope that by using our property at 2600 East Helen Street mostly for vegetable and ornamental gardening, we have preserved some of the spirit of the original homestead. 🏡



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In July, the Seattle School District announced their draft request for proposals (RFP) for the MLK Elementary School. They also held a meeting and comment period to solicit community input for the RFP guidelines for lease or purchase of the property. CCC@MLK sent postcards to Madison Valley neighbors to generate comments in support of a community center and phone-banked volunteers asking them to turn out at the July 29th public meeting. We were successful in getting the School District to conduct a new appraisal of the building, as well as extending the proposal deadline from four to eight weeks. Thanks to everyone who attended the public meeting or sent in comments in support of a community center at the MLK Elementary School.

We will be submitting a proposal by the School District's deadline of October 15th. Also in July, Mayor Greg Nickels announced support for "community organizations to convert surplus schools... into community gathering places" by asking for up to \$1 million for each project. In his announcement he specifically named MLK Elementary School as an example of such a project. We will be conducting outreach to the City Council and to the mayor's office to urge the City to include this proposal in the upcoming budget this fall.

Throughout the summer the steering committee met with several organizations that have an interest in being a part of the community center programming, including possible daycares, childcare facilities and other organizations providing opportunities for children, adults and families. We also continued our work with the architectural firm Environmental Works, which we have hired to conduct a feasibility study of the building and site. We wrapped the summer by conducting a successful clean-up on the school grounds (see separate article by Libby Sinclair).

Finally, we said goodbye to one of our steering committee members, Andy Engelson. Andy and his wife Joanie have lived in Madison Valley for several years with their two daughters, but moved to Vietnam in August. Andy has been a key steering committee member and helped lead the charge on many vital projects including outreach to programming partners, working to secure our *Small and Simple* grant from the Department of Neighborhoods, and lining up design consultants. He will be greatly missed, but is staying in touch via email to help with our efforts from afar!

If you or others are looking for how to get involved, please visit our website www.mlkcommunitycenter.org to sign a letter to the School Board in support of our community center, to check out our upcoming events, and to find out more ways to volunteer. 🏠

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What's Up on Madison

By Ann McCurdy

For some reason, despite the economic woes we constantly hear about, the Valley business corridor is doing well and has three new businesses opening up! **LeeAnn Baker Interiors Ltd.** has taken over the cute house at 3141 E. Madison Street, the former home of Park Escrow. LeeAnn started the business in 2003 and is moving here from its Greenwood location. Her home interiors are designed to "meet the individual needs of each client". In looking at the photos on her web site, each client invariably says, "Make my home gorgeous!"

Also of note, **Café Char** at 2314 E. Madison Street opened its doors over the summer, bringing caffeine and baked goods to the folks near the top of the hill. Since the local Starbucks closed up shop at Safeway, the area has needed a good coffee shop. Proprietress Charnita Baseden hopes Café Char will become a neighborhood institution with baked goods, coffees, teas, smoothies, and more.

Classic Image Photography is now located at 3121 E. Madison Street, just above Canopy Blue. They have been in Seattle for 25 years but just recently moved to the Madison Valley location. They specialize in personal portraits for family, children, weddings, students, and even beloved family pets. A great gift idea for the impending holidays!

Finally, the **Shell Station** at the corner of East Madison and Lake Washington Blvd. has added a small convenience store for those last minute purchases. Maybe not the most exciting news...but ever so convenient! 🏠

Valley View Available Online

BY PETER TRIANDAFILOU, GMVCC PRESIDENT

Did you know that this newsletter is available online? The current issue of *The Valley View*, and prior issues as well, are posted on the community council's website: www.madisonvalley.org. We have done some polling, and many of your neighbors have told us that they would be willing to read the newsletter online, and do not need to continue to receiving a hard copy of the newsletter mailed to their homes. Obviously we can save money, through lower printing, handling and postage costs, if we mail out fewer copies. So this is a call-out to those of you who would like to read the newsletter online and do not need to continue receiving a hard copy. Please send an e-mail to president@madisonvalley.org to let us know that we can stop mailing the newsletter to your home (be sure to give us your address). This is one small way that you can pitch it to help the organization with its finances in these difficult economic times.

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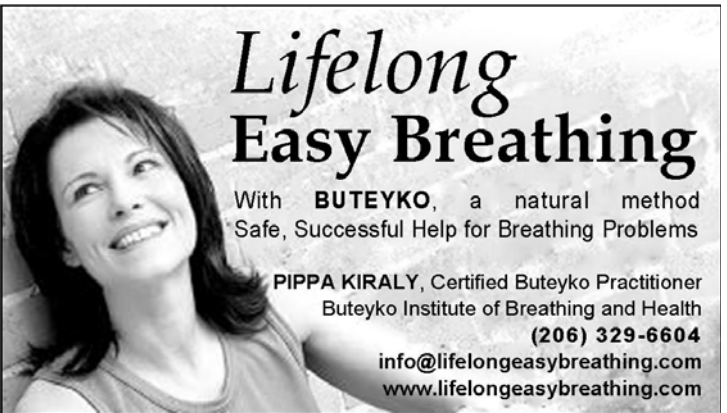
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Madison Valley Stormwater Project Update

By Elaine Young, Seattle Public Utilities

There is a **Public Meeting on Tuesday, September 15th for the Phase 2 - Stormwater Pipeline and Storage Project, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** The location of this Public Meeting is The Bush School, Community Room, at 3400 East Harrison Street.

At the meeting you can hear about the new 6-block long stormwater pipeline, the new underground stormwater storage tank, and landscape elements in Washington Park. Also to be discussed are construction plans, project schedules, and preliminary art elements for Phases 1 and 2. Materials for the public meeting will be posted for review on the project website at www.seattle.gov/util/Madison-Valley as of September 1.

200 Block Drainage Improvements (in vicinity of 31st Ave E & E Denny Way): On August 11, 2009, the City Council's Environment, Emergency Management and Utilities Committee approved the bill authorizing the acceptance of six easements on five real properties known as 201, 205, 209, 215 and 217, 31st Avenue East, Seattle, Washington for stormwater drainage purposes. These drainage improvements are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2009.

Phase 1 - Stormwater Storage Facility at 30th Ave E and E John St: Crews have completed major excavation work. They will continue some grading activities, begin irrigation work and drainage work on the southeast corner of East John Street & 30th Ave. East in preparation for the new catch basin. 🏠



Stormwater Update – Large-scale grading and excavation work began early this summer, to expand the existing stormwater basin in the lower valley. The Community Kiosk remains accessible, but the sidewalks around the basin are closed due to construction.

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