



THE VALLEY VIEW

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 158

madisonvalley.org

October 2008

One of Our Neighbors: Building Changes and Getting Muddy

By Pippa Kiraly



Betsy Lieberman with her husband, Richard Groomer

Before seven most mornings, Betsy Lieberman closes the door of her little green house near the Arboretum and goes off to swim at Seattle Athletic Club by the Pike Place Market. By 8:30, she's in her office at 20th and Madison, where she is executive director of Building Changes (most of us still know it by the more familiar name of AIDS Housing of Washington). "We changed the name to be more inclusive," she says, since the organization now works with homelessness in general.

Lieberman has had only two jobs since she finished school, the second and momentous one being when she was hired by the Seattle/King County public health department in 1987 to develop a long range plan for looking after people with AIDS. A year later, this morphed into the organization she was asked to head, and its mission then was to build Bailey-Boushay House.

"My job was getting it built and licensed, and to raise the money," she says, thinking her job would be finished when that was done. Anything but true. Now, Building Changes provides technical assistance to organizations across the country trying to house people with AIDS, it runs a fund in the state to support homeless families—"about 5000 families to date"—and is currently working on prevention, linking the employment system with the homeless system with a view to ending homelessness in Washington state. "A daunting mission," says Lieberman. The organization now has 180 AIDS housing units in Seattle and more coming on board.

Lieberman got Bailey-Boushay built with a staff of four. Today she has 28 people, and her days are long and full.

She values her evenings, when she arrives home to be met by her husband of 11 years, Richard Groomer, and Maggie Louise, an old and gentle Airedale Terrier. "We know more people in the neighborhood because of her," says Lieberman, "She used to take off and go visiting, and people would bring her back. We love living here, we feel proud to be in this neighborhood with its diversity of incomes and people who've lived here for decades."

Please see *Our Neighbors* on page 2

Determining What Happens at MLK

By Andy Engelson



MLK, Future site of Neighborhood Community Center?

The City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods is leading the process to determine what uses the neighborhood feels would be allowable at the site of the now-closed Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School (MLK). Their School Use Advisory Committee (SUAC) of five voting members gathers input and makes recommendations that set the zoning. The third SUAC public meeting took place in September, and they tackled a number of zoning issues related to the future use of the site.

The committee addressed various potential arts and commercial uses, agreeing to allow most uses except retail. In the next meeting, our group may seek to get an allowance for small-scale retail (for example, an espresso cart) with the understanding that rents would be applied to additional community center uses. These meetings do not determine what will happen at MLK, but set the ground rules for what would be allowed in the zoning.

Many neighbors spoke up during the process, and several representatives from Citizens for a Community Center at MLK (CCC@MLK) were there to continue to voice support for an arts and community center at MLK. We're happy with how the process is moving, and I encourage all members of the Greater Madison Valley community to attend these meetings and make your voice heard.

Please see *MLK* on page 3

Events Calendar

Madison Valley Merchants Association. Wednesday, October 8, 8:30 a.m. Café Flora, 2901 E. Madison St.

Greater Madison Valley Community Council. Wednesday, October 15, 7:30 p.m. Bush School (entrance on E. Harrison St. and 34th Ave. E.)

"It's Not About The Hair" Book Reading. Sunday, October 19, 6:00 p.m. Conscious Body Pilates, 3317 E. Union St. See p. 6.

School Use Advisory Council for MLK. Tuesday, October 21, 7 p.m. T.T. Minor Elementary (1700 E. Union). See p. 3.

Greenprints Meeting. Thursday, October 23, 7 - 9 p.m. The Valley School (309 31st Ave E). See p. 4.

East Precinct Crime Prevention Coalition. Thursday, October 23, 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Seattle Vocation Institute, Room #401, 2120 S Jackson St.

Trick or Treating with Madison Valley Merchants. Friday, October 31. Participating businesses. See p. 3.

GMVCC ID Statement

The Valley View

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Our Neighbors, *continued from p. 1*

Lieberman and Groomer cook together almost every evening, spending evenings in their small garden, weather permitting.

Groomer retired from his job as a Boeing microscopist a few years ago. Asked what a microscopist is, he explains: "Every scientific discipline has a specific area of microscopy. For instance, geologists want to know the structure of crystals; fine arts conservators are interested in pigments and fibers. We're people who can identify soot, and tell you what particles are in that soot. An analytical microscopist uses all the disciplines so any given sample may have something that leaps out at you, so criminologists use microscopists too."

Groomer volunteers at the Burke Museum about 20 hours a week, studying and identifying the diatoms which live in the mud under Puget Sound. He's enthusiastic about them: "They're beautiful, they look like little gems, they come in infinite varieties." He finds them completely absorbing and has discovered several never before described. "They look like crumpets, Mickey Mouse ears, wheels, hubcaps, sunbursts..."

Groomer is doing this for the Washington State Department of Ecology, which is undertaking a 10-year sampling of the mud to see how it changes. "It's a snapshot of the ecosystem."

In his spare time, he does metal sculpture, builds instruments and is the bass player in a group which plays conjunto Mexican dance music. The band is named Tres Muchachos Deseables, which makes him laugh as all three members—the others play accordion and drums—are in their 50s or 60s. They play for their own enjoyment, and sometimes, if invited, for others. "It's beer-drinking, toe-tapping music. A couple of weeks ago, we played at a Friday dinner for homeless people, the most fun gig we ever did," he says.

You can find out more about Tres Muchachos Deseables at www.ctchew.com/music.



What's Up on Madison?

By Ann McCurdy

Designed Dinners (511 28th Ave. E.) has a new owner! After being a loyal customer for over a year, Cindy Rockwell took over the business on September 1 from Shana Perrina, giving Shana more time with her family. Cindy says menus and other features will "Absolutely stay the same! Why mess with a great thing?"

Café Flora (2901 E. Madison St.) is a winner—again! NWSOURCE People's Pick voted it "Seattle's Best Vegetarian Restaurant" five years in a row. Food so good, you carnivores won't even miss the meat.

Harvest Vine (2701 E. Madison St.) is ten years old! As their new sign says, they've been "Basque-ing in Seattle since 1998." Happy Birthday! I love having a restaurant this good within walking distance to my house.

Sugarlump (2709 E. Madison St.) got written up in the Seattle P-I! I'm glad to see that at least some of their reporters know where Madison Valley is. Check out the nice article about their "trendy children's" clothes and toys at http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/business/378897_retail13.html

The Law Offices of B. Craig Gourley and Park Point Escrow have closed their doors. Their location (a cute house at 3141 E. Madison St) is now available. Maybe if they'd advertised with us, they'd still be in business around here...

Madison/Madrona Farmers Market had its last day of the year on September 26. Thanks to **Grocery Outlet** for donating their parking lot each Friday afternoon for the event. See you back at the market in May!



WANTED | Copy Editor

Like to nitpick? Good at proofreading? I'd like someone once a month to help edit incoming articles. If you're interested, e-mail editor@madisonvalley.org. Thanks!

GMVCC Meeting Minutes for September 17

By Lindy Wishard, Secretary

Treasurer's Report: Balance is over \$13,000. September's *Valley View* ad revenue was very low—only \$848—due to some businesses not renewing some large ads. October should be much better.

Pot Luck Dinners: Vice President Charles McDade suggested the council support potluck dinners. Several people agreed. At the next meeting we will discuss specifics of regular potluck dinners.

The Fate of MLK: The School Use Advisory Committee (SUAC) meetings are underway to determine the community's desires related to the MLK Elementary School. For more information see p.1.

Stormwater Detention Pond: Seattle Public Utilities held their meeting concerning landscape designs for "the pit" immediately before this meeting. For more information, see p. 8.

Congress of Residential Architecture (CORANW): Guest Speakers David Neiman and Brad Khouri of CORANW gave a presentation about changes to the Seattle Department of Planning and Development code for multi-family housing developments. The presentation focused on the details of the code and importance of community design reviews. For more information visit <http://coranw.blogspot.com/>



MLK, continued from p. 1

CCC@MLK's effort to create a center for arts and community at the site is moving forward at an amazing pace. I'm humbled at the response we've been getting, and our steering committee is a talented and energetic group. We're making great progress!

It will be up to groups such as CCC @ MLK and neighbors to continue to work with the city, state, nonprofit partners, and the school district to create a plan for a financially sustainable community center on the site.

To that end, CCC @ MLK has made great progress. We're currently in talks with potential arts organizations and service providers to get a more firm commitment on who might help provide programming and rent space at MLK. Spectrum Dance has expressed a serious interest in a dance studio on the site to supplement its existing programming in Madrona. We're continuing to meet with partners and shaping our plan, which we'll formally present to the School District after the completion of the SUAC process.

The fourth SUAC meeting took place just as this newspaper was going to press and the fifth meeting will be October 21 at 7 p.m. at T.T. Minor Elementary (1700 E. Union). If you'd like to express input on our proposal, volunteer, or be added to CCC@MLK's mailing list contact Andy Engelson at aengelson@speakeasy.net or 484-9823.



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greenprints

By Wallis Bolz

Join us for a public meeting to preview the GreenPrint—the Green Footprints Neighborhood Action Plan. Be the first on your block to find out what projects we have identified that will “Reduce our ecological footprint and build connections among neighbors.”

Green Footprints Action Works received a grant from Seattle’s Dept. of Neighborhoods to map our neighborhood’s ecological features and identify opportunities to create our green future. With input from neighbors, we have identified projects which could engage the community, enhance public open space and reduce our environmental footprint.

Our neighborhood boundaries: E Madison St. to the south; 23rd Ave E, Turner Way E, and 24th Ave E to the west; E Galer St to the north; and Lake Washington Boulevard to the east. For more information, see www.greenfootprintsactionworks.org.

Greenprints Meeting: Thursday, October 23, 7 – 9 p.m., The Valley School (309 31st Ave E). RSVP to info@gfaw.org.



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Crime—Up or Down?

By Ann McCurdy

While recent articles in the major Seattle newspapers have shown statistics that crime is down in the city, at least anecdotally in this area it is not. In September, the Madison Valley Merchants Association invited Crime Prevention Coordinator Michael Yasutake from the Seattle Police Department to a meeting. Businesses in the area have been victims of break-ins, attempted break-ins, and even the theft of an employee's car. Most of these occurred at night, although one thief brazenly opened a cash register and stole the contents while an employee was momentarily in the back of the store. Yasutake claimed that many of these thefts, as well as daytime break-ins at neighborhood residences, could be attributed to juveniles, especially during the summer when school is out. They have already caught some juveniles. Yasutake gave the merchants some suggestions, which all of us can follow:

- Call 911 if you see anything suspicious. For residential break-ins, someone will often knock on the door to verify no one is home, while friends then go in the back yard to look for a window to break. If you answer the door, they may give a lame excuse such as accidentally going to the wrong house to see a friend.
- Call 625-5011 for any incident you feel should be reported to police, but does not require an officer to be dispatched to the scene. Precincts which generate the most calls get the most officers assigned to them.
- Trust your instincts, and get a good description. If you suspect someone, or see a crime, remember as much as you can about them—clothes, hairstyle, age, height, weight.
- Consider lights for dark spaces at night. Trim or remove bushes and trees which someone could hide behind.

Is crime up or down in your neighborhood? Send in your comments and/or incidents to editor@madisonvalley.org.




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It's Not About The Hair: Book Reading

By Carla Granat



Author, Debra Jarvis
photo by: Marilyn Morgan

We invite our Madison Valley neighbors to attend a free book-reading and discussion with Debra Jarvis, author of "It's Not About The Hair: And Other Certainties of Life and Cancer," at Conscious Body Pilates, 3317 E. Union St. at 6:00 p.m. Sunday, October 19th. (Note this is the Madrona Conscious Body, not the Madison Valley location.)

When not doing Pilates at Conscious Body, Debra has been a frequent commentator on NPR, and is an entertaining and engaging speaker. Her humor animates her exploration of what it means to be faced with a

diagnosis of breast cancer, and to get her care at the very place where she was employed as an oncology chaplain. This unique perspective is captured in her book, released this month in paperback.

I am honored to know Debra, and have already read her book. Debra's moving, inspiring, truthful, and sometimes hilarious accounts of her journey through cancer speak even to those of us who have not been dealt such a blow. The broad appeal of this book is due in large part to the wit and wisdom with which she recounts the challenges of her diagnosis, and her physical and emotional roller coaster ride.

Please join us in sharing an enjoyable and enlightening evening.

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Pumpkins Everywhere!

By Ann McCurdy



Little Feet Preschool students with their masterpieces.

Every October about this time, large hand-painted paper pumpkins decorate the storefront windows along Madison. Where do they come from? After some investigative sleuthing (OK, I made two phone calls), I found the answer. For the past three years, the 24 toddlers (ages 2 1/2 - 4 1/2) at Little Feet Preschool have been making these pumpkins. Each child makes two pumpkins—one to bring home, and one to hang along E. Madison Street. Little Feet owners Christine and Britt Carlon, (partnering with Megan Scott) got this tradition from their mother Frannie, who has been running Frannie's Preschool and supplying Madison Park paper pumpkins for over thirty years. "We grew up making these, and they were my favorite project," Christine explained. Once Little Feet opened on E. Dewey Pl three years ago, Christine was delighted to expand the tradition to Madison Valley...and beyond. "Some of our pumpkins go in Boom Noodle, Blue C Sushi" and other restaurants as far as West Seattle—wherever the children have family connections.

Once the pumpkins are up, the parents often take their children on dates to the restaurants or stores where they're hung up. The children are excited about seeing their artwork in store windows. October isn't the only month the Little Feet children decorate our street. In February, look for their festive pink hearts for Valentine's Day.




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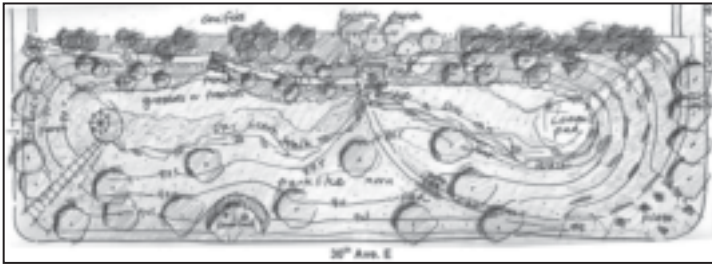


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Making a Prettier Pit

By Ann McCurdy



How do you make a pit prettier? On September 17, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) unveiled its initial design proposals for “Phase 1 of the Madison Valley Long-Term Solution”—i.e., what to do with the Pit. The stormwater facility at 30th Ave. E. and E. John St. is currently nothing more than a large, grass-covered sloping pit with a large sewer drain at the north end, and a large lot next to it. At the well-attended meeting, SPU presented two major design ideas, discussed their approach, and gathered feedback.

The two designs, which are variations of each other, basically involve expanding and landscaping the pit. (See diagram, above). Landscaping plants that will survive occasional flooding must be chosen. Thus, in both designs wet-tolerant grassy perennials (iris, etc.) would be used in landscaping the bottom areas, while conifers would be on the upper edge. One plan included a dry “creek”-bed, while another included a central circular platform, where one could stand on damp days and “celebrate wetness” according to one presenter. The presentation included many photos of landscaping around the world which had provided inspiration.

After the presentation, there were many questions and comments. When asked why neither design capped the pit—something many residents initially expected—SPU Project Manager Brent Middleswart claimed that the discovery of peat and soft soil at the location made capping prohibitively expensive. GMVCC President, Peter Triandafilou, reminded SPU that Madison Valley deserves a decent solution to its flooding problems and that the location should be a community asset. Other requests included: 1) adding a play area (since there are none in the area); 2) discouraging off-leash dogs (some neighbors are dismayed at the number of dog owners currently using the area as an off-leash site, even though it’s not fenced in); and 3) making sure there are no places to hide. There were mixed responses to the idea of a covered shelter on the site. Former GMVCC President, Wallis Bolz, questioned the health risk for children and adults after the area had been flooded with potentially contaminated water, but SPU’s response was that the floodwater would be stormwater, not sewer water.

SPU will be having additional meetings, and is encouraging feedback. For more information, or to provide feedback, go to [http://www.seattle.gov/util/About SPU/Drainage & Sewer System/Projects/MadisonValleyProject/index.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/util/About%20SPU/Drainage%20&%20Sewer%20System/Projects/MadisonValleyProject/index.htm).



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 COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING**

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Agenda includes:

- Community Potlucks
- Latest on SPU’s flooding proposals
- What will happen to MLK school?

Bush School (Entrance on E. Harrison St. and 34th Ave. E.)