



The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 137

May 2006

Neighborhood Announcements

Valley View Suspending Production!

Dear Readers: The Valley View plans to suspend production after June of this year. We have had difficulty raising money within the community as well as recruiting volunteers to staff the newsletter. To continue production we need your **MONETARY DONATIONS!** We are also in great need of volunteers for the following newsletter functions: writers, advertising coordinator, layout editor, printing technician, hand-delivery to area businesses. Please email heathers@speakeasy.net or call 206-388-2389

Do you Value the Valley View? Please donate! Even as little as \$5 or \$10 helps. Send to: **GMVCC P.O. Box 22278 Seattle, Washington 98122**



Madison Valley Flood Site Meeting

Wednesday, May 17th, 6:00 p.m.
MLK Elementary School Cafeteria

Meet with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). Plans will be updated based on community input. Your input is needed!

Next Community Council Meeting

Wednesday, May 17th, 7:30 p.m.
MLK Elementary School portable classroom
Agenda: Nominations for officers and prioritizing neighborhood projects



Spring Art Walk and Sale

Sat. May 13th 12 to 3pm
Along E. Madison St.

One of Our Neighbors

A Place of Honor in the Hearts of All Who Knew Her

By Cathy Nunneley

Peggy Sussman, a Northwest native, was a treasure of our community and widely beloved. Our Peggy died on March 26th. Her husband, Jerry, her family, and many friends have been remembering her with sighs and tears.



Longtime resident, Peggy Sussman, died March 26th.

Peggy was born to Abby and Elmer Allen in Port Angeles on June 22nd, 1930. Unbelievably, her father kept every piece of paper that ever crossed his hands, and had saved the hospital bill for Peggy's birth. The total cost for a week's "confinement" and baby delivery, with all meals, came to \$40.50! This document had always been a great source of amusement to the family. Peggy was the middle of three children which included older brother, Frank, and little sister, Patsy.

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*

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Article submissions, suggestions, volunteers

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Your Community Council

The purpose of your neighborhood's community council is twofold. First, the Council serves as a forum in which neighbors come together to discuss problems and invite solutions. Second, the Council fosters a sense of community in our neighborhood by sponsoring social events and publishing an informational newsletter. There are four volunteer officers who make up the Greater Madison Valley Community Council, and each one is dedicated to maintaining the organization's structure.

The GMVCC encourages citizens with concerns to solicit like minded neighbors and form a group dedicated to a particular issue, such as crime, traffic, or urban planning. Based on past experiences, the Council leadership can offer direction in approaching the issue. They can also write letters of support, as well as invite City of Seattle leaders to address the membership.

As a citizen of the greater Madison Valley, you may have participated in some of the community success stories that originated from a Community Council meeting. The new cross walk on Madison Street at 29th Avenue, the Pea Patch at the north end of Dewey Place East and 30th Avenue, and the undeveloped Harrison Ridge Greenbelt all resulted from many of your efforts. In fact, the GMVCC was initially created because our local citizens gathered together in order to stave off development of the Harrison Ridge Greenbelt.

Your Council strives to promote community spirit through annual social events such as the fall spaghetti dinner, the winter pancake breakfast, the spring art walk, and the summer rummage sale. Your volunteerism, fresh ideas, and enthusiasm help promote and run these fun events. The Valley View, read and appreciated by most of the community, is our conduit for information and a podium for citizen concerns.

Please consider participating within our community to make this neighborhood one in which you are happy to be a member. Perhaps you could find time to address one concern or help with an event that you might enjoy. A little commitment goes a long way when we share it together.

Advertising in The Valley View

We have a circulation of 2500.

Approximately 2 X 3 inch ads or announcements:

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Contact: Cathy Nunneley, Advertising Editor
329-4083 or cjnunneley@yahoo.com

Community Council Minutes

Minutes of GMVCC Meeting

April 19th, 2006

Gary Emslie, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. Introductions were made.

Treasurer's Report: A positive cash flow of nearly \$500.00 was netted last month from advertising revenues and printing the paper at the Bush School's facilities. A motion was approved to open a safe deposit box.

MLK Painting: With the imminent closure of the Martin Luther King, Jr. School, a valuable painting by Bill Cummings on display there will revert to the GMVCC, which has to determine where the painting should be displayed in the future.

Madison Valley Flood Update: Representatives from SPU and the neighborhood liaison spoke of the progress made over the last two years towards a fix for the water/sewer flood issues:

- The short term fix, an interim solution, will start in May/June, and will involve relocating 3 of four homes at 30th and E. John to a site of Habitat for Humanity. The other home will be demolished. The end result will be a retention pond/open space allowing for the collection of future water runoff. Completion for the short-term fix is September. The relocation and removal of some of the street trees is a community concern.
- The long-term, final fix may take up to 8 years to complete. It involves SPU and park department interaction. There are three options being considered. Community involvement and further studies will determine the best plan.

The next scheduled neighborhood meeting on the flood project progress is Wed. May 17th at 6:00 PM at the MLK cafeteria. (This is the same day as the next GMVCC meeting.)

Dept. of Neighborhoods: Emma Moreno spoke about how communities and organizations such as the GMVCC can request matching funds for projects from the city. The four levels of funding are \$250, \$750, \$15,000 and \$100,000. Matching funds are required for some projects, and they can take the form of volunteer work, donations, and in-kind work.

Bush School/ MLK/Community Concerns: With the probable closure of MLK School, The Bush School sent a letter to the Seattle School District, asking if they may possibly lease the property until the School District decides the school property's future and offering to patrol it. There is concern regarding what would happen to the vacant and unattended buildings.

MLK/School Board Letter from the GMVCC: A letter has been drafted showing support for the consolidation of T.T. Minor and MLK. The letter was modified to inform the School District that the community wants to be involved with the District's progress on the future of the MLK School property.

Continued on next page

GMVCC Minutes (continued)

Valley View Newsletter: No volunteers have stepped forward to take over publication, but it has been arranged to print the valley news as a section of the Madison Park Times. The newsletter thus will be suspended after the June issue. No fundraisers are planned for this year.

Mercer St. End Update: Anita Rowe is looking at the property to turn it into a park.

Director's Insurance: Gary Emslie will get quotes for next month's meeting.

Elections: To be taken up at the next GMVCC meeting, election of 2006-07 officers.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15.

Be a Part of Your Community! Become a GMVCC Officer

The Greater Madison Valley Community Council (GMVCC) holds elections for officers in June, with nominations taken at the May meeting. Please consider volunteering for a position as your contribution to the community. Your council members are ordinary neighbors who have volunteered to be responsible for the management of the Council's affairs. Most positions do not involve a huge commitment of time. The four positions are as follows:

President: Attends and conducts GMVCC meetings once a month. Signs official letters and documents. Offers general support and guidance to the community.

Vice-President: Assumes duties of the President when that person is absent.

Secretary: Keeps minutes of each meeting and emails them to the Valley View editor for inclusion into the newsletter.

Treasurer: Keeps records of financial transactions, pays bills, and deposits income into our bank account.



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Gardening Notes from City People's

Gardening in May

By Kyra J. Butzel



Impatiens brighten shady areas.

May is my favorite month to garden. The days are long, but not too warm, and the ground is still easy to work with — moist and ready for planting. It's also the time when garden stores are loaded with tempting plants to try. And color is everywhere. Sprucing up the yard, balcony, and

front steps is especially easy with the expansive selection of inexpensive, colorful annuals that become available.

Every year, I try something new in my containers on my front steps. Because annuals are a one season plant, I feel more free to experiment, knowing I can replace my choices next year, or even mid season. It's taken me almost ten years, but I finally know what kind of light and soil structure I have in the various areas of my garden, so I choose plants accordingly and am rewarded for it with color all summer long.

Old fashioned impatiens are wonderful flowers for brightening up a shady area. I've seen a relatively sleepy front bed become memorably lit up with a cluster of red impatiens. These traditional flowers can last well into fall with good compost, regular watering, and occasional deadheading. In fact, most annuals will do well all season with just a little maintenance and regular fertilizer. You can find good organic fertilizers to help your plants bloom all season such as Maxicrop Liquefied Seaweed, available at City People's Garden Store.

In hot sunny spots, the selection of texture, height, flower size, and color is vast. Mix something bright and upright with something subtle and trailing. For inspiration, look at some of the hanging baskets and planted containers around town. Then create your own and present it to mom on Mother's Day.

And don't forget, annuals also include tomatoes and basil! If, like me, you didn't start your edible garden from seed, vegetable starts are available. There's no shame in getting a little help from your local nurseries or farmer's markets.



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Flood Site Solution: Pit or Park?

Pit or Park?

By Russell Kerwin

As most of you know, change is coming soon to the four flooded properties that were purchased last year by Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) right in the heart of the valley. The first change is expected to occur this summer when three of the four homes are torn down, and one home is demolished, and a stormwater overflow facility (described by many as a "pit") is constructed at the site, located at 30th Ave East & East John Street.

Though depicted as an "interim solution" to the sewer capacity problems (that had some residents fearing for their health and safety after a downpour of rain flooded their basements,) the long-term solutions for the drainage issue and for the site itself are far from clear. According to SPU, a permanent fix is likely five to ten years away.

While I will leave the long-term utility fixes to the city engineers, as a neighbor and frequent dog-walker, I am eager to share my input on the appearance and functional characteristics of the site. And I found that I am not alone. Through the Madison Valley Community Council and the Madvalleywatch neighborhood email group, I have conversed and met with a handful of neighbors who shared a range of ideas for both the interim and long-term solutions. Overall, most people griped about the bland design of the facility and suggested adding features for children to play on—particularly natural elements such as large rocks and logs to climb and sit on, which could be reused in any final design for the site. Most also felt that it is important to keep the existing planting strips, fir trees, and street trees, in addition to providing a garbage can, lighting for the path, and low-maintenance plantings rather than grass.


Above all, residents wanted an assurance that the city would move forward with a permanent and more pleasing solution for the site. In my opinion, the best way to ensure such a solution is to become more vocal and engaged as a community in developing our short- and long-term vision for the site. Just think of the possibilities: a sculptural art installation, a children's play area, a site for neighborhood block parties...

To contact Russell Kerwin with your ideas, send email to russkerwin@gmail.com.


*The next meeting to gather community input for the flood site solution will be held on **Wed. May 17th at 6:00 PM at the MLK Elementary school cafeteria.***



The flood site at 30th Ave E. and E. John St.



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The Great Depression hit the Port Angeles area very hard in those early years. Abby was an Irish immigrant, and had worked as a housemaid before her marriage. Elmer, who was skilled at many trades, found work wherever he could. To make ends meet, seaside residents of the area would trade freshly caught salmon to their woodsy mountain neighbors in exchange for venison. Electricity was a luxury few could afford.

Elmer moved his family to Seattle a few years later in his search for work. They lived in several locations, but primarily in "Garlic Gulch" (a.k.a. Rainer Valley) among the Italian and Japanese immigrants. Peggy loved to tell of riding the ferry over to Kirkland as a teenager just for the entertainment. The ride cost 5 cents. She and her sister used to sit up on the hill above the Sick's Stadium baseball park where the present day Lowe's is located. They could watch the game for free.

At the age of 24, Peggy suddenly found herself as a single mother with two very small sons, John and Allen. In an effort at matchmaking, her children's pediatrician introduced her to Jerry Sussman, himself a single father with a small son, David. They were smitten at once. Jerry recalls his first sight of Peggy with delight: "She was a lovely, slender, young woman with luxurious chestnut hair." Soon after, they were married. Their youngest child, Barbara, was born the next year. The new, blended family lived in Madison Valley and never left.

Over the years, Peggy worked hard at raising her four children and participated in the community. She helped found a co-op nursery school at the Cherry Street YMCA. She attended peace rallies during the Vietnam era and was a life-long liberal. When many neighbors fled during the racial strife of the 1960s, the Sussmans remained in the community, embracing their multi-cultural and multi-racial friends. Peggy was very active in the Harrison School (now Martin Luther King) PTA. Later, she worked independently as a picture framer.

In the 1960s, the family joined with several others in the neighborhood and purchased land on Cypress Island. It is a cooperative arrangement. The Sussmans built a little cabin on their share of the property. Their boat, the Puffin, ferried them to their island retreat for 40 years.

Peggy is remembered as soft spoken woman who never raised her voice. "She had a very mild manner and simple casual style," reminisces Jerry. "I feel that she was a model for many of the young women in our family. Our door was always open to anyone in need. We had great gatherings of friends and family, at which she would prepare wonderful food." She loved dancing and singing, along with old songs from the 1940s. Niece Maureen says, "She was my guardian angel. I spent many nights on her couch when I needed a place to think about things."

Peggy Sussman didn't have a high profile career or make a lot of money. What she did accomplish as a loving wife, mother, and steadfast friend has won her a place of honor in the hearts of all who knew her. To what greater legacy could any of us aspire?

Peggy was remembered at a memorial gathering at her home on April 29th. Afterwards, her family carried her to her final resting place on Cypress Island. We wish Jerry, her husband of 50 years, heart's ease.




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Izilla Toys

By Jennifer Karkar Ritchie

With the arrival of May, everyone will be thinking about Mother's Day. Madison Valley is full of gifts for moms, including one spot where moms and kids alike win. Located at 2840 East Madison Street, **Izilla Toys** is set back from the street in a cute little blue craftsman house.

Owners Jude Larene and wife Jennifer Schneeweis opened Izilla Toys in 2003. They aspired to do something as a family along with their young son. The couple also sought to play a role in building their neighborhood. The result: an imaginative place where kids can have fun, and adults can be kids again.

The store wisely uses each of the rooms in the house to help parents find specific categories of toys that are organized by types of play, instead of age. The goal: bringing out a child's fullest imaginative potential. There's a Pretend Play Room, a Construction or Building Play Room, a Science, Art and Game Room, and a Socialization Play Room - particularly useful as they grow older and begin to play with other children. In talking with co-owner Jude Larene, I learned that the store's layout was a purposeful decision, designed to help customers think about play as developmentally important - no matter what age.

My first visit to Izilla Toys was inspired by the need to buy a newborn baby gift for a friend. When I walked in, I was a bit overwhelmed by the many choices of colorful, fun, creative toys that surrounded me. Close to the entry, one particular toy caught my eye, though I couldn't help but continue to wander around the store in amazement at the toy-filled rooms.

The toy that caught my eye was a book and a puppet all packaged together with fun name - "Scooter the Cat." I consulted with Jude to ensure it was appropriate for a newborn, and learned in detail about the many uses of this adorable toy. Created by a woman named Lisa LeLeu, "Scooter the Cat" is just one of many animal themed puppet show books. Others included a cow, a dog, a frog and more.

"Scooter the Cat" is perfect for babies whose parents, when reading to them, will bring the book to life with the adorable puppet, but also a great book for growing children who can use the book to make up their own story about Scooter's adventures. It was perfect, and at under \$25.00 - including beautiful green and orange gift wrap - just right on the wallet.

See you next month with another great find!

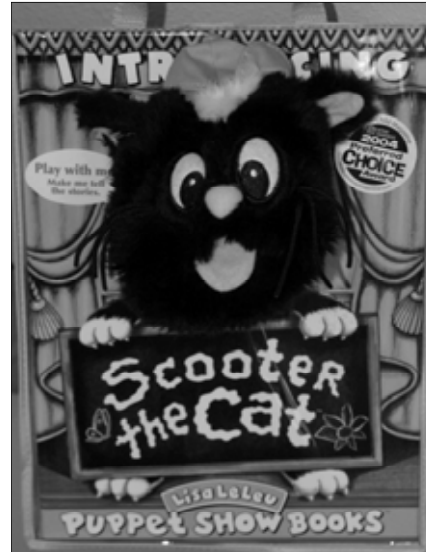


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