



# The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 128 March 2005

E-mail: [gmvcc@hotmail.com](mailto:gmvcc@hotmail.com)

## Neighborhood Announcements

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### Spring Art Walk

Along Madison Street

Saturday, May 7th

See page 7 for details

\*\*\*\*\*

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Please consider placing an ad in the newsletter or making a tax deductible donation.

Due to finances, our future appears cloudy.

please see page 2 for donation info

\*\*\*\*\*

### Courtyard Sale in Peril

The Bush School theater space will not be available to store and sort our donations for the courtyard sale this summer. We need to think of alternatives for this important and ONLY fundraiser of the year.

One suggestion has been to change the format. We could "rent" tables to individuals who could sell their own items at the courtyard. These individuals could give a percentage of their profits to the GMVCC. The Council could organize the event with publicity and arrange for pick up of the leftovers. Please contact us with your ideas.

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## These Are Your Neighbors

### She Shares her Passion for Gardening

Rolande Chesebro is a woman who loves this neighborhood. As her contribution to the quality of life in the community, she has been spending her free time beautifying East Madison Street. She accomplishes this endeavor through her passion for gardening.

Rolande initiated the landscaping department during a four year tenure at City Peoples Garden Store before branching out into her own business, Chesebro Garden Design in 1995. She has brought her considerable experience and insight into both her business and in the public spaces she has voluntarily planted and maintained.

The first community project undertaken by Rolande was to approach the owners of the Shell Service Station on the corner of Madison and the entrance to the Arboretum. She offered to redesign and plant that triangle under



the big Shell sign. In the past, you probably dismissed this pitiful group of plantings while refueling your car at the station.

Previously, this place was a sad collection of

(Continued on page 7)

Here is Rolande at the site of her next volunteer community project: the triangle at ML King and East Madison Street.

## GMVCC Contact Information

Council Affairs: Gary Emslie, President

Email: [gary.emslie@bush.edu](mailto:gary.emslie@bush.edu)

Council business, agenda requests, inquiries, concerns

\*

Valley View Newsletter: Cathy Nunneley

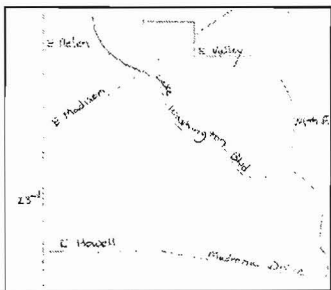
Email: [cjnunneley@yahoo.com](mailto:cjnunneley@yahoo.com) or 329-4083

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# The Illustrated GMVCC

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# Community Council Minutes

## February Minutes

Gary Emslie, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Roll call of council and visitors was completed.

The minutes of the January 2005 meeting were approved as reported.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

The report for the year 2004 showed that expenses exceeded revenue by nearly \$1,400.00. January 2005 expenses show we are approximately \$700.00 in the red. The treasurer is working off reserves from previous functions. Ideas were tossed around to create a future fundraiser. The discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

### CITY FEDERATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS

David Alvord reported that the Department of Planning and Development, along with the Mayor, are preparing to propose some land use code changes. It appears that it favors development for neighborhood business districts. Nothing has been finalized at this point.

### THE LATEST 520 BRIDGE ALTERNATIVES

An exciting presentation by two board members from the **Montlake Community Council, Rob Wilkinson and Jonathan Dubman** showed their rendition/proposal for a new suspension 520 bridge and ramps on a three-dimensional scale. This rendition was written up in last Sunday's Seattle Times. The plan by Seattle's DOT calls for a 14 lane toll way across the lake with a huge lid over portage bay. The concern from the GMVCC was the on/off ramp leading to the Arboretum. No stand was taken by the GMVCC, although the suggestion was made that the on/off ramp be closed and re-connected to 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave. A presentation to the DOT on the Montlake design is scheduled for Thursday Feb. 17. The DOT has been working on its own plan for five years, but appears very interested in this plan. It will be making a recommendation this June.

### FLOODING:

Continues to be a concern with flooding occurring during recent rains. See "Around the Neighborhood, pg.3 for more details of the progress.

### UW REGIONAL BIOCONTAINMENT LABORATORY

Public forums are scheduled to discuss the public's concern about the facility. The meetings are from 7:00-9:00. The February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be at Kane Hall, Room 220 on UW campus. The second meeting on March 1, 2005 is at Magnuson Park Community Center Auditorium, Magnuson Park at 70<sup>th</sup> and Sandpoint Way NE. A panel of experts will be answering questions and concerns.

### UNION STREET RED APPLE GROCERY CLOSING

It was reported the grocery store on Union and MLK will be closing soon. The owner plans to sell the property. Hopefully, employees will find work at other Red Apples in the area.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.



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## Around the Neighborhood

**ML King Elementary School** continues to struggle for survival. The district extended the deadline for the Montessori proposal by a few days. Volunteers and staff have worked countless hours to inform the neighborhood about the proposal and encouraging families to sign on for the program.

**Flooding:** Reports by **Zachary Self** and **Barbara Lynn** indicate that progress is being made. An engineering study has begun with residents participating as part of the team with Seattle Public Utilities. Additionally, residents have hired an independent engineer to oversee the City's plans and represent their position. Only 6 out of 52 claims are still outstanding. The City gave each household \$4000 for "pain and suffering" damages. The residents continue to hold monthly meetings.

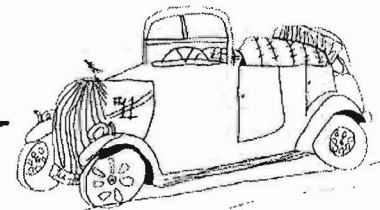
**Shoplifting:** The Madison Valley Merchant Assoc reports that a repeat thief has been apprehended. The business owners have contacted private security guards to patrol the street and protect property.

**Parking:** More difficulties have arisen in the surrounding neighborhood regarding parking on side streets during business hours. Hostile, computer written notes are being left on cars presumably by irate residents. Please respect the parking rules when using side streets. Residents: please share street space. We do live in a crowded city. Neighbors that have concerns and ideas about the parking problems are encouraged to come to the Council for assistance.

*continued on page 4*

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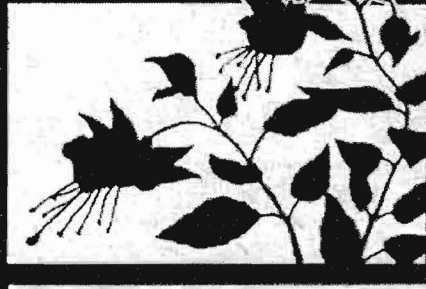
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*Around the Neighborhood, continued from page 3*

**Pancake Breakfast:** On Saturday, February 12th, the GMVCC hosted the yearly free pancake breakfast in celebration of the citywide **Neighborhood Appreciation Day**. Our **VP Charles McDade** welcomed the hungry crowd and directed them to the food. The directions were probably unnecessary as the inviting aroma of blueberry pancakes with maple syrup, sausage, and coffee was wafting from the kitchen of the **Bush School** lunchroom. Neighbors tucked into the endless supply of pancakes and discussed the issues of the day with City Councilman, Richard Conlin. As usual, it was a fun morning for everyone!

**Mercer Street End:** The landscaping plan has been approved and the committee now awaits the City Council's hearing of the decision to open the waterfront space to the public.

**Community Food Drive:** The Merchant Association reports that the food drive was a great success with a large collection of non-perishable donations for **Northwest Harvest**. Thanks a bunch to our business community for bringing this opportunity to us.



Our Perennial Pancake Chefs:

**Don, Juan and Gary**



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# Madison Valley Traffic Woes

The Greater Madison Valley Community Council was visited by city councilman Richard Conlin at the February meeting. He came to hear our concerns about increasing density in the neighborhood and resulting traffic and parking difficulties. The problems discussed were:

1. parking
2. speeding vehicles and congestion during commute
3. scarcity of crosswalks along Madison.

A number of suggestions were made but as you all know, the City has little money to address many of our problems. However, as chairman of the council's transportation committee Mr Conlin did leave us with some hope.

**Parking:** Conlin promised to look into Metro's allocation of buses to determine if an increase in frequency of service for the #11 bus was possible. This step would allow more people to commute via bus instead of by car. Specifically, the employees of businesses may be encouraged to not drive to work unless necessary and therefore, ease the parking congestion.

It may be possible to extend the limited parking times all the way along Madison to Lake Washington Blvd. This move would allow for more visitors to the area instead of the all day parking of employees and others. We also discussed obtaining neighborhood parking stickers like Montake does to ensure that residents are able to park near their homes. Parking on side streets has been a concern of Madison's nearby neighbors.

**Speeding/congestion:** Conlin let us know that the plans for revision of 520 are being considered. It is possible that the interchange at the Arboretum to 520 could be closed and the traffic could be rerouted to a more appropriate street. This plan was greeted with great enthusiasm among the council members. The **Montlake Community Club** has devised their own scheme for the 520 revision which has been widely reported in the press. In general, council members liked the Montlake plan except for the Arboretum interchange. It was felt that the park is vulnerable to the terrible traffic during commute times and is inappropriate as a major throughway.

In the neighborhood, speed bumps along Harrison may be installed. The neighbors of King and Bush Schools as well as the school children are subjected to dangerous speeding motorists on a daily basis.

**Crosswalks:** The City does not wish to add crosswalks at this time. Conlin suggested that we place containers of flags at the legal and unmarked crosswalk intersections for pedestrians to carry and assist them crossing Madison. He said that other desparate neighborhoods have used this method successfully. We are not sure about this particular idea.

Obviously, the true solution lies in the hands of the people that frequent our neighborhood. **SLOW DOWN**, please! Let pedestrians cross the street. Use public transportation whenever possible and be respectful of homeowners. Sharing space is an ongoing challenge in our increasingly dense city. We need to make the effort.



Is a suspension bridge the solution to the 520 remodel? Are YOU concerned about maintaining the Arboretum as a park and not a freeway? Let the Council know your views.

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# The Valley Views the Past

## The Harrison Ridge Greenbelt: a History of Preservation, Part 2

In the February issue of *The Valley View*, we presented the story of the first attempt to develop the hillside along 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue E between E Denny and E John. During the late '60s and early '70s the community rallied together to block the building of a low income housing project. Then, after ten years of quiet, another threat to the woods brought the community together.

In the early 1990's, a neighbor across the street from the Greenbelt contacted community activists reporting that a sign had been posted. The sign stated a lot owner's intent to begin building a house. The owner was contacted and after hearing the community's wish to preserve the site, agreed to sell his lot to the City.

At that time, the City of Seattle had funds to acquire undeveloped land to preserve green spaces in the neighborhoods. Communities were becoming aware of a development boom and were concerned that their beautiful green city would someday be lost to construction. In those days, \$6,000 was the cost of an average lot. This acquisition effort of the City has resulted in the many green spaces you see throughout Seattle neighborhoods today.

One lot owner was not moved by the community's spirit and refused to cooperate. Again, the appearance of




a sign along the street alerted neighbors of an intent to develop the site. The owner had applied for his property to be replatted from 3 into 2 lots and intended to build 2 large houses. When he realized that the community was moving against his plans, he brought in bulldozers and began clearing the property. After contact with the City a stop work order was issued. Subsequent hearings with the City Council resulted in a judgment against the owner.

In an unprecedented move, the City condemned the property under the right of eminent domain. This Washington State constitutional law allowed the government to acquire and preserve pieces of undeveloped property as parks or green spaces. The City was required to pay a fair market value for such land and negotiated a price with the property owner. Several other lot owners agreed to sell to the City and the 6.2 acres of the wooded hillside became officially known as the Harrison Ridge Greenbelt.

Now that the community had realized its goal of preserving the green space, the next step was to care for this property. That part of the Greenbelt history will be presented in the April issue.



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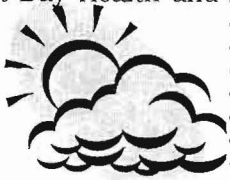


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stunted, struggling rhodys with an occasional line-up of red geraniums along the edge. Today we have a lush group of unthirsty plant life that beautifies the space.

The classic approaches to successful garden design guide Rolande's work. First, dirt is transformed into fluffy nutritious soil. Secondly, the plants are selected as bedmates. This step cannot be overemphasized. Plants grown together must thrive under the same environmental requirements of sun exposure, watering needs, and hardiness to temperature and pests. When the "right plant is chosen for the right place" maintenance costs are reduced dramatically. Additionally, tolerance to air pollution from cars must be considered for public areas exposed to traffic. Lastly, the plants are tenderly tucked into their new beds and babied somewhat during their first year. After becoming established, the now thriving garden should be independent with occasional visits for light pruning and weeding.

Rolande's next project is the triangle at Madison and MLK Way, East of Bailey-Boushay. The Madison Merchant Association and the Community Council display signs there. In cooperation with the City and Bailey-Boushay, Rolande will revise the planting to bring beauty to that much used

intersection. She is collaborating with Andy Goulding the designer of the community display board we hope to have built in the near future.

One admirable aspect of Rolande's work is her awareness of the impact of pollution in today's ornamental landscaping business. She factors in the environmental impact of high polluting 2-cycle engines, water usage, toxic and polluting herbicides, pesticides and chemical fertilizers. She views driving around to maintain improperly planted landscapes as a waste of energy. When working with her clients, Rolande offers the education which is necessary for the best garden choices.

Privately, Rolande provides all gardening services for her clients. She consults and designs spaces, plants the beds and has maintenance schedules. The installation of patios, pathways, arbors, ponds and other garden enhancements round out her services. If you are interested in her work, Rolande may be reached at 324-1802.

Thanks so much, Rolande for sharing your talents with the community. **We all benefit when we work together to make the neighborhood our home.**





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### Spring Art Walk

The Springtime art show is destined to become an annual celebration of the amazing array of talent that we have in the neighborhood. Last year the GMVCC hosted over 30 artists from the community to display and sell their art on the Saturday before Mothers' Day. The Bush School permitted us to use their space for the show. This year the **Madison Valley Merchant's Association** has graciously offered to host the show along Madison Street.

We are still in the planning stages but do have some general ideas. Artists will be invited to show their work inside designated shops along the street. Participating merchants will be identified with balloons or banners.

Interested? Please contact me if you would like to participate in the planning.

Cathy Nunneley 329-4083 or  
[cjnunneley@yahoo.com](mailto:cjnunneley@yahoo.com)



