



The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 136

April 2006

Neighborhood Announcements



Spring Art Walk and Sale

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

For more information, contact Karrie Baas
karrie@baasartgallery.com
206-324-4742

Next Community Council Meeting:

Wednesday, April 15th, 7:30 p.m.

MLK Elementary School

In the Portable Classroom (the small structure next to the playground) 3201 E. Republican Street

Topics:

- Update on flood control and plans for the park
- Impact of MLK elementary school closure
- Future of Community Council
- Summer fundraising

Earth Day is April 22nd! The Student Conservation Association is holding an Earth Day Service Project on Sat. April 22nd, 9am to 2 pm at the Washington Park Arboretum. Trail work, invasive removal, and educational activities for kids. Contact Kristine at 324-4649 ext. 29 or krobson@thesca.org.

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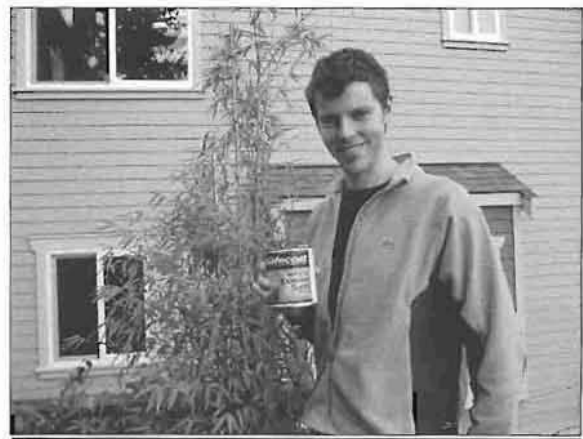
One of Our Neighbors

Building "Green" Is His Dream

By Cathy Nunneley

Our neighbor, Sloan Ritchie, is a Seattle native who loves this city. After graduating from Roosevelt High School and University Prep, he went on to study sociology at Whitman College in Walla Walla. After college, he taught English in Slovakia. Later, he indulged in his love for the outdoors by working as a deck hand on Alaskan cruise ships in the summer and spending the winter months on the ski slopes. "Serious" work followed in the telecommunications industry. Last year, he decided to pursue his real dream of building environmentally sound homes.

Continued on page 6



Seattle native, Sloan Ritchie is a "green" builder.

GMVCC Contact Information

Council Affairs: Gary Emslie, President

Email: gary.emslie@bush.edu

Council business, agenda requests, inquiries, concerns

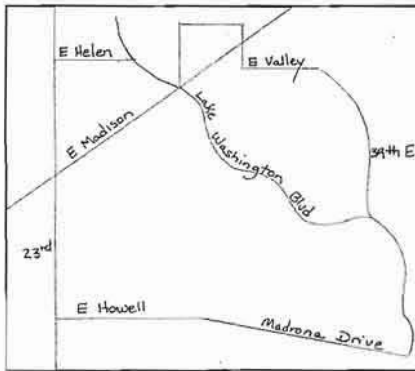
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Valley View Newsletter: Heather Scarce

Email: heathers@speakeasy.net or 206-388-2389

Article submissions, suggestions, volunteers

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GMVCC Meeting

March 15, 2006

Gary Emslie, President, called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Introductions were made. The minutes of last month's meeting were approved as read.

Treasurer's Report: Gary Emslie reported that since The Bush School will be printing the newsletter, it should break even on monthly revenues received.

Martin Luther King Jr. School Report: Barry Dorsey, Principal, spoke about the consolidation between MLK Elementary T. T. Minor Elementary School this Fall. The School Board's approval is expected. The merger will benefit both schools by providing more resources for the students (See article on pg. 3). Seventy percent of the teachers and staff at MLK will be transferring to the new school. A formal letter will be sent to all parents. Andy Goulding is drafting a letter of support from the GMVCC.

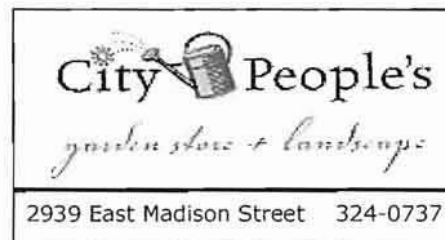
Gypsy moth spraying: Claude Ginsburg and M. Reynolds, representing the group No Spray Zone, voiced their concerns about the aerial spraying currently scheduled by the State Department of Agriculture (See related article on pg. 4). The group's concern is that no long-term studies have been done on the effects of the pesticides being used. They argued that alternative methods such as simply using traps are both cheaper and less dangerous. They say there is no procedure for citizens to voice their opinions to the Dept. of Agriculture. More information is available at their website: www.nosprayzone.org.

Friends of Madison Park: Nancy Robertson spoke about the planned redesign of the Madison Park Playfield. The plan is to include more paved walkways to improve access, attract older kids by adding a rock climbing wall, and add more seating. The tennis courts will remain the same. A public meeting took place at Madison Park Bathhouse on Thursday March 16th at 7pm.

Madison Valley Merchants: Three businesses were robbed on E. Madison St. at closing time in the last few weeks.

Flood Victims: An adjacent neighbor to the proposed retention pond expressed his concern for lack of information available to date on landscaping, final decisions on short term and long-term repairs, as well as starting dates for the pond construction. Gary Emslie will contact the flood victims association to get an updated report for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.



MLK Elementary School Closing

MLK Elementary Will Close

By Cathy Nunneley

Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, located at 3201 E. Republican St., will close its doors at the end of this academic year. After years of declining enrollment, the Seattle School District has indicated that it can no longer support MLK Elementary and many other small schools throughout the city.

Instead of waiting for the inevitable closure announcement, Principal Barry Dorsey has engineered a merger between MLK Elementary and T. T. Minor Elementary, which will ensure students a place at T.T. Minor (located at 1700 E. Union Street). Without the merger, students could have been randomly assigned to schools throughout the district. Now, families can at least make plans for their children for the 2006-2007 school year. As he announced the closure to the community council meeting, Dorsey reassured everyone that "it's a great opportunity for the kids" and said, "It's clearly in the best interests of our students."

The successful Montessori Program initiated this year will continue at the T.T. Minor School location. It is expected to draw a number of new students to the school. Principal Barry Dorsey will be reassigned to Garfield High School on a special appointment during Garfield's renovation process. Principal Gloria Mitchell of T. T. Minor will take over as principal of the new school. At this time, it is unknown what plans the District has for the MLK Elementary school buildings and property.

Many parents, staff, and community members who worked so diligently to keep the school open were saddened by the closure announcement. Our hope is that the students will have an expanded academic experience as more services (including a full-time counselor, technical worker, and social worker) will become available at the larger facility.



MLK Elementary School, at the corner of E. Republican and 32nd Ave E., is closing its doors.

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A silhouette illustration of a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities holding hands in a line, symbolizing unity and community.

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Bush School Construction Tours

New Construction Tours at Bush School

By Cathy Nunneley

The Bush School has extended an open invitation to everyone to tour the construction site of their new addition. **The next tour is on Thursday, April 27th, at 4:00 pm.** The tour begins at the site on 3400 East Harrison St.

Bill DeJarlaes, the senior project engineer, is the informative and entertaining tour director. If you are at all curious, don't miss out on this fun, educational opportunity!

Participants don bright orange vests, hard hats, and safety goggles and troop through the rain and mud into the new parking garage. The attire lends a theatrical dash to the tour. A word to the wise: wear appropriate shoes!

The new underground parking garage will provide enough spaces for the school's faculty and staff. This will drastically improve parking congestion on the street. Hallways from the garage will lead directly to locker rooms, staff offices, and a physiology classroom. A large trophy room will also include a concession stand.

Above the garage, a gym, classrooms, and a new library will grace the second story. The school has also included a very large community room that they will offer to the neighborhood for events and community meetings. Outdoor play areas complete the space.

The construction is admirable for its use of sustainable materials such as metal and concrete. The new kindergarten includes radiant floor heating, and huge windows everywhere provide maximum natural light and air circulation to minimize energy costs.

To participate in a tour, contact Susan Grayce at susan.grayce@bush.edu.



Participants don hard hats, safety vests, and goggles before touring the construction site.

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"No Spray Zone" Urges Alternatives to Spraying

By Lindsay Felcyn Zaccara

Are you concerned about the aerial chemical spraying planned for our neighborhood in April and May? Representatives from the group "No Spray Zone" presented alternatives to the City's eradication plan for the gypsy moth at March's Community Council meeting. The grass-roots group was formed in 2000 in response to an aerial spraying over Ballard, Magnolia, and Salmon Bay.

Gypsy moth infestation is a potential threat to our ecology, but No Spray Zone's plea is that the City use other methods to kill off the moths. They contend that the chemical used, Foray 48B, is not necessarily a safe chemical and contains undisclosed ingredients that are possibly harmful to people, especially those with suppressed immune systems, respiratory illnesses, as well as small children. They state that the King County Health Department has recommended that "residents of spray areas, especially persons with compromised immune systems and persons with respiratory illness, take precautions to minimize their exposure to the spray."

While the spraying is planned for a specific, one hundred acre site (from 21st Ave. E. to Martin Luther King, east to west, and E. Howell to E. Republican, north to south), wind patterns may cause the chemical to travel up to a mile. No Spray Zone reported that spraying may cause digestive tract reactions similar to food poisoning or other allergic reactions.

The group presented the following alternatives. The moths could be sprayed with Foray 48B from the ground instead of using a helicopter. Pheromone pellets that confuse the moths' scent and make them unable to find a mate could be aurally dispersed, as well. While these pellets are a chemical, they are specific to the gypsy moth and would not affect butterflies. Or, the City could continue to trap the moths with the green bait traps that have been used in the past several years for detecting the infestation. Each of these alternatives may be less expensive than the aerial helicopter



"No Spray Zone" formed in response to the spraying over Ballard, Magnolia, and Salmon Bay in March, 2000.

spray. No Spray Zone also pointed out that in order to legally spray the area, Governor Christine Gregoire will have to declare a state of emergency in the spray zone.

The City has already held open meetings about the spraying and the April-May spraying will almost assuredly happen. However, if you are interested in voicing your objections, No Spray Zone recommends that you contact your local representative.

To learn more about the opposition to the spraying, go to No Spray Zone's website: www.nosprayzone.org For more information about spraying provided by the City, go to the King Co. Public Health website: www.metrokc.gov/health/env_hlth/Gypsy.htm. If you would like to be notified 24 hrs before the spraying occurs so you can take precautions such as closing your windows, call the Washington State Department of Agriculture's gypsy moth hotline at 1-800-443-6684.



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After observing the current building frenzy in Madison Valley, Sloan began to think about its impact on our community. While the mayor encourages high density housing to provide for our increasing urban population, many of these new housing units are made with poor quality materials that do not take the environment into consideration. Seeing design flaws in neighborhood townhouses inspired him to do better; Sloan decided to join the ranks of northwest builders known as "green builders" who use high quality, environmentally friendly materials.

Sloan is committed to quality workmanship, rather than cheap and wasteful construction. He favors sustainable materials such as bamboo for wood floors and paperstone countertops in place of granite. He uses Low VOC (volatile organic compound) paints such as "Safecoat," which are non-toxic and cause no off-gas problems like nausea or dizziness. He also speaks highly of integrated concrete forms covered in stucco and pre-engineered panels as possible alternatives to traditional wood construction. Even the basic stick-built construction used in most homes can be replaced.

According to this northwest builder, enhancing natural light and using radiant floor heating are crucial to comfortable northwest living. He also includes solar panels with grey water recycling as a means to reduce energy costs. In

his next project, Sloan hopes to include a living, "green rooftop." The roof will be strong enough so that the homeowner can meander through the paths in the greenery on his own rooftop! With adequate preparation, the roof will use our plentiful rainfall to good advantage.

The United States Green Building Council (USGBC) develops standards to measure "green" construction. These voluntary, consensus-based standards, known as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) promote high-performance, sustainable buildings. Sloan and his construction team, including an architect and contractor, work with this organization to ensure their work meets industry expectations.

There is some hope that Sloan and like-minded builders will be mindful of the impact of the housing boom on our community. Instead of cheaply rendered, "quick-fix" homes, we can anticipate environmentally friendly buildings that enhance our neighborhood now and for the future.

For more information on green building, visit the USGBC website at www.usgbc.org or contact Sloan Ritchie asloan@casca debuilt.com.

Please let us know about your interesting neighbors! With their permission we will feature them in an upcoming issue of *The Valley View*! We all benefit from learning about our community.

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Bella Dolce Café & Bakery

By Jennifer Karkar Ritchie

While enjoying the unseasonably warm weather this month, I decided to check out a tiny, European-inspired café and bakery for a mid-morning coffee and treat. A retreat is what I found.

Located at 2711 E. Madison Street, near All the Best Pet Care and The Pregnant Pause, **Bella Dolce** — which means “beautiful sweets” in Italian — is my latest *find*. It’s a combination of warm colors on the walls, clanking pots in the very visible kitchen, antique furniture and mosaic tables, and a glass case of desserts that draws visitors in from the doorway.

Owner and pastry chef Joanne Corsi opened Bella Dolce in Madison Valley nearly three years ago, after successfully establishing a wholesale dessert business. Bella Dolce specializes in desserts that invoke the memories of yummy pastries you might have enjoyed as a child, or for me, the fond memories of a trip I took to Paris.

While it was hard to decide between the delicious looking cakes, cupcakes, and pastries, I chose to indulge in a ham and cheese brioche and a caffè Americano. Both were perfect. While brioche can be tricky, this delicate, yet savory treat embodied a taste and texture that was both light and rich. I’ll also confess that I sampled the raspberry walnut bar and chocolate pecan bar, which were both divine, particularly if you like something a bit sweeter than brioche. And at a reasonable \$6, Bella Dolce is right in line with other area cafés. The café is closed on Sunday and Monday to bake. I’d highly recommend a visit to this spot for some “beautiful sweets.”



Photo by Sloan Ritchie



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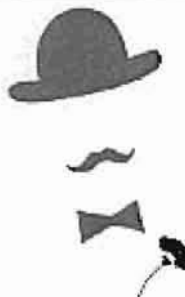


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