



The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 110, March 2003

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Guest View

How Healthy is our Health Care System?

By Bob Crittenden

Dr. Bob Crittenden is a longtime resident of the community and has worked in health policy for most of that time. This is the second of a series of three articles on the state of our health care system. He would welcome any comments.

Our health care system can be improved. As discussed in the last article, our health system is expensive,

has the worst record of health outcomes among developed countries, excludes a lot of working people, erodes wages, and is a major cause of bankruptcy. This article will touch on two short-term actions that would push us in the right direction. We can make medications less costly -especially for the elderly and people without good coverage. Also, we need to support public programs that form the basic fabric of the safety net.

People in Washington State have an opportunity to reduce prescription drug costs and ensure they have the most effective medicines available.

Prescription costs are driving health care costs more than any other segment. People without drug benefits, especially elderly people, are finding medications unaffordable.

We can work the marketplace to remedy this. A proposal that came out of the House sponsored by Rep. Cody uses good information to enable

individuals, employers, and the state to buy pharmaceuticals more effectively. Basically, a board of disinterested experts reviews the literature and determines which drugs in the major classes (like stomach acid medicines etc) are similar. Then the major purchasers in the state contract for the best medicine at the lowest cost. That cost is available for anyone in the state wishing to purchase through this process. A similar process is being done here at Harborview and we can get medicines for up to one-twelfth the cost of the more expensive (and more heavily advertised) look-alikes.

The governor is proposing cutting Medicaid benefits for poor people and eliminating 110,000 slots from the Basic Health Plan - a state subsidized insurance for low income workers and one of the few bright spots in our safety net.

A recent report based on analysis from the Merrick School of Business at the University of Baltimore estimates that

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LOST HAT

A black beret with red inside lining went missing at last November's spaghetti dinner at Martin Luther King School. The word BASQUE appears inside the beret.

The owner is very sad about this loss. Did you find it? If so, please call Ilana at 320-7972.

Focus on Education

Take a Fresh Look at Meany Middle School

by Cathy Nunneley

The halls of Meany Middle School are immaculate. The walls are tastefully decorated with student work. The quiet murmur of learning, punctuated by occasional laughter, can be heard through the open classroom doors. First impression? This is a nice school.

Principal Christi Clark and her staff have been working hard to scrub the tarnish off this neighborhood school. Ms. Clark comes to us after many successful years as principal of Montlake Elementary. Now in her fourth year at Meany, she speaks proudly of her dedicated and talented teachers. The students are well-behaved learners and she has no disciplinary concerns.

"Literacy and Race are our primary focus," she explains. A generous private grant has enabled Ms Clark to develop a curriculum around these ideals. After investigation studies and teacher education, the project—now in its third year—has reached the implementation phase.

Evidence of the literacy efforts is everywhere. The classrooms are print-rich

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Neighborhood Events Neighborhood Events Neighborhood Events Neighborhood Events

Upcoming Events at the Neighborhood Academy

by Miriam Roskin

February and March are shaping up to be active months at Safeco's Neighborhood Academy at 23rd and Jackson. Here are a few of the offerings that you may want to sample. The classes run from 7 to 9 p.m., and all are free.

MARCH

11: Conflict Resolution: Working It Out. Petty or not, conflicts happen and they cause a lot of stress and tension. Don't get mad; get creative with new strategies for dealing with conflicts in a fast, effective, and collaborative way.

15: Home Improvement Workshop. DCLU representatives show you how to find your way through the permitting process; inspectors will offer one-on-one consultations on your remodeling projects. Bring your plans and your questions!

20: Filling in Your Family Tree. Learn how to research your family history and how to find genealogy resources — who knows what you'll find?

29: Women and Money: A Guide to Financial Well-Being. This program follows a 10-chapter financial planning guide covering goal setting, basic budgeting, managing credit risk assessment, and diversification, securing insurance, and retirement and estate planning.

AND DON'T FORGET THE BOOK GROUPS!

March 25: *We Were the Mulvaney's*, by Joyce Carol Oates. Covering the music, products, politics, and social norms of the late 1950s through the early 1990s, this immensely readable book is an examination of the American dream and how it has transformed over these last decades.

Classes and book clubs meet at the Neighborhood Academy, located in Safeco's Jackson Street Center, 306 23rd Avenue South, Suite 200, in Seattle.

All sessions are free, but please pre-register by calling 206/521-1100 or emailing hocr@safeco.com.



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Friends of Madrona Ravine

By Linda Hanson

The Friends of the Ravine in Madrona have applied for a Phase II grant from Department of Neighborhoods Small and Simple Matching Funds. The Phase II grant will focus upon expanding the removal of invasive plants in the ravine and replanting with native species that will help restore the area for wildlife. Consistent with the Madrona Drive Ravine Vegetative Management Plan prepared in Phase I, this work will concentrate on bird, bat and butterfly populations that may be viewed and enjoyed from the Pine Street Pedestrian Bridge. Linda is currently talking to a Helen Bush School science teacher about involving a class in building bird and bat houses as a community service project.

FORM members will learn whether their application will be funding in March. Community support for the ravine work has been wonderful. ▼▼

Annual Summer Courtyard Sale

by Eli Stahlhut

It's not too early to begin planning the summer courtyard sale. This annual event is a major fundraiser for the Council and enables us to print the newsletter and provide other services to the community. This year's sale will be held on **June 28, the last Saturday of the month**. The sale takes place in the Bush School Courtyard on East Harrison between 32 Ave E and Lake Washington Blvd.

We accept all **usable** donations and can arrange for pickups, if necessary. Anyone interested in helping with the sale is most welcome. Many hands make the task easier and fun! We need volunteers to sort and price objects for a couple of weeks prior to the sale as well as helpers on the actual day.

For information call either Eli Stahlhut at 322-7196 or Cathy Nunneley at 329-4083 or email at cjnnunneley@yahoo.com.

Winter is a great time to clean out those closets before Spring calls us to our gardens. Your reusable items are our treasures and will help support the community! ▼▼

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School News

News from Garfield

The Annual Fund campaign is going well. Over 350 parents have contributed to raise \$87,200 toward the goal of \$100,000. Additional donations of paper, office furniture, and supplies have done much to offset the budget crisis.

In team news: Garfield's Chess Team took first place at the Scholastic Class Action tourney. Volley ball players have won many honors with their coach Leslie Hamann, who was named coach of the year by the P-I. And the Garfield Math Team is looking for business sponsors for its annual Math Extravaganza. Email elisfarmer@seattleschools.org or call 252-02374.

Finally, tutors from the community are always in demand. If you can spare a couple hours a week, give the school a call and make a difference!▼▼

Good Works

Season Opening for Feral Kittens

During the winter months of January and February, feral cats are busy making kittens. The new kittens usually begin to make their appearance in March. Help is available to those of us interested in the welfare of these cats.

The most obvious step to assist these animals is to spay or neuter them. In Seattle, groups of cat lovers practice TNR (trap/neuter/return). Complete information is available online from the feral cat project (feralcatproject.org). The PIMA Medical Institute will provide free services for up to 5 cats/person. Reservations are necessary for the monthly clinic. The telephone is 206-528-8125. The feral cat web site also provides complete information for trapping the cats. Humane live traps may be borrowed or purchased.

Details regarding immunizations and other health care issues for feral animals as well as house pets is available from VeterinaryPartner.com. Local information is also available from Campus Cats: (campuscats.org or 206-442-2051). Campus Cats helps with adoption and foster care for feral cats.▼▼

Something to Think About: Teenage Driving Contracts

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death in people age 16-20, accounting for approximately one-third of all deaths in this age group. Some experts feel that negotiating a driving contract with your teen is a helpful safety tool.

Family rules that are clearly defined and enforced could do much to keep your son or daughter out of harm's way. To find a model teen driving contract, visit: www.parentingteendrivers.com/contract.htm.▼▼

Health Care, continued

Governor Gary Locke's proposed budget cuts to health care alone will decrease overall business activity in the state of Washington by \$751 million. It will result in the loss of more than over 7000 jobs and cut salaries in the state by \$278 million. The Governor has proposed cutting 60,000 people out of the Basic Health Plan, foregoing an increase of 50,000 people through already dedicated tobacco taxes (I-773), and reducing the benefits for many people on Medicaid. All this at a time when the state's economy is floundering in recession and many thousands have lost their jobs.

To give the economy of the state the biggest stimulus, Medicaid and the Basic Health Plan should not be cut and taxes should not be increased. But, the Legislature cannot take that course of action. We must have a balanced budget. What then is the way to stimulate (or at least cause the least harm) to our economy?

Joseph Stiglitz, the 2001 Nobel prize winner in Economics, and Peter Orzag of the Brookings Institution recently noted that the second best choice for states in the short run, if they really want to help their economy, is to increase taxes on

(Continued on page 5)

Meany Middle School, continued

environments. The grant has enabled the school to purchase books to build classroom libraries. Literacy is emphasized across the integrated curriculum. Most importantly, the students are learning.

Race is addressed through a program of "Courageous Conversations." With a population of 80% minority students, this is an important issue. The teachers focus on personalized relationships with their students and strive to involve families in the academic life. Meany draws from elementary schools throughout the district so involvement of families presents challenges.

Visit Meany in March!

March 12: 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

March 27: 12:30 PM

Meet in the school library

"Right now, we are working on recruitment and neighborhood involvement," says Ms. Clark. "We have invited the principals and teachers of all our feeder schools to an informational breakfast." Meany ambassador teams of a teacher and two to three students are visiting elementary schools. Additionally, Meany hosts field trips for interested students. These students are treated to video presentations, a fashion show of the school uniforms, a band performance and a much-appreciated lunch!

An enrollment of 467 lends a feeling of personalized community to the school. With the ring of the lunch bell, students pour into the halls, jubilant in their freedom. They greet Ms. Clark happily and she smiles back, calling each student by name.▼▼

Wellness

Reach Up to Spring

by Rebekkah Dinaburg, Santosha Yoga

A friend of mine once told me that unless she is reaching up to get a box a cereal off the top shelf, she hardly reaches up during the course of an entire day. I was surprised to hear this because I spend a lot of my day reaching up. But when I started to think about all the times I reach up throughout the day I realized that they are mostly while teaching or practicing yoga, plus that rare box of cereal on the top shelf.

Reaching up enlivens us! When we reach up our lungs expand into the open spaces of our stretched torso. Our lungs don't move of their own accord. They move into the space we create for them. Stretching upward for that cereal box lets our lungs move into allows our upper chest and the sides of our rib cage.

Try out this simple demonstration for yourself. Sit comfortably and take in a normal breath. Notice how full your lungs feel. Now try taking a breath in while you are reaching up. Really extend your arms fully upward. Did you notice any difference? Were you able to take a more full breath? What you may have experienced is a deeper breath caused by the increased space in your rib cage. When we reach up we have the potential to take a longer, fuller breath than when we are sitting.

Ancient yogis taught that it is our breath that gives us life. I have heard it explained like this: If you took a corpse and fed it food, it would not come back to life, so food does not give us life. If you moved its arms and legs around it would not be alive, so movement is not what gives us life. But if you could get that corpse to breathe, then it would surely be alive. So it is breathing that gives us life!

During these brisk March days when a jumpstart into spring could be helpful, breathe to wake yourself up. Maybe you'd like to try reaching up to point at a new blossom, or at the patches of blue in the sky.

Stretch up to greet the new spring. Much of life is slowly rising from its winter slumber. And as you do stretch up, notice how full and enlivening that breath can be.

If you are new to yoga we have an 8-week introduction to yoga class that begins March 3rd and 5th. For more info, call 264-5034, see www.santosha-yoga.com, or stop by our studio at 2812 East Madison St. on the 2nd floor. ▼▼

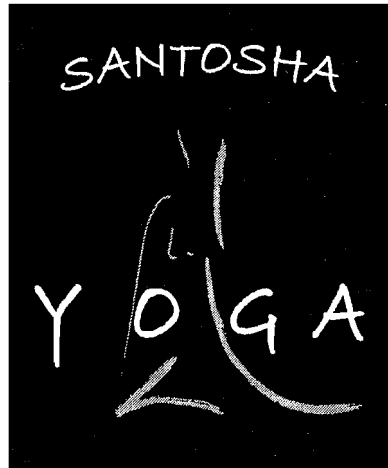
Film Review

One Hour Photo

by Jenny McKinney, Island Video

Welcome to the world of Sy Parrish, a lonely, middle aged, one hour photo operator. Sy at first seems a little strange, brooding, implosive, and really, *really* dedicated to his work.

As the film continues, it becomes clear that Sy is a little creepy, mentally putting himself into his customers' pictures and stalking them.



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The more I see of Robin Williams, the more I cannot deny that he is an extremely talented actor. His stand up comedy makes me want to hurl myself off the Aurora Bridge, but his acting is undeniable. Though Williams is delving into mystery these days, playing a psychopath is not something he does regularly.

Overall, the film worked well and was enjoyable, but I found the director Mark Romanek a little heavy handed, especially when it came to background music. For the first part of the movie, we see Sy interacting with his customers. All the while creepy music is playing in the

background. The things that Sy does later are a little jarring, but would have been much moreso had there been less music earlier to give it away. Also, the narration used throughout the film, and especially the narration Sy uses to explain the pictures he develops, was completely unnecessary. Let the pictures do the talking and the viewer's brain do the walking. It's more fun that way.

The things that work in this film do so very well: uncomfortable pauses, Williams' creepiness, and wonderful photography. The cinematography, in particular, helps us know that Sy's world is stark and white, while the life he lives through his photographs is in brilliant Technicolor.

Watch "One Hour Photo." It is at the very least provocative and surely will give you something to talk about at the water cooler. ▼▼

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Community Council Minutes

GMVCC Meeting of February 18, 2003

Charles called the meeting to order at 7:35; there was not a quorum present. Jerry informed us about the Council's new address: P.O. Box 22278 Seattle, WA 98122-0278.

Next, Barry Dorsey, the principal from MLK, let us know about the progress on the reader board for the school. The second half of the sign and the permit to put it up are paid for. The council has agreed to donate \$1,200 toward this project. The school hopes that the sign will be up within the next ten days.

Treasurer Candis Poncedeleon was not at the meeting, so Jerry Sussman gave the treasurer's report. Our balance, not including withdrawals for the reader board and newsletter, is \$6,858.

The fieldhouse project is also in progress. A letter of intent was sent to the City's Department of Neighborhoods on February 3. The full application for the grant will be due by May 3. We are asking for a \$100,000 grant and we must match that through volunteer hours and fundraising. Each hour of volunteering accounts for \$12, but we can raise only 25% of the money through volunteering; the rest must come from fundraising. Other communities have hired professional fundraisers and the GMVCC has included this as a possible expense.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. ▼▼

Minutes prepared by Claire Levy, GMVCC co-secretary.

Health Care, continued

upper income people. The worst thing they can do is cut programs like Medicaid and the Basic Health Plan. There will be a loss of over \$350 million that comes to this state from Federal taxes that we will lose if we cut Medicaid.

We must keep Medicaid and the Basic Health Plan funded. We need to bite the bullet of taxes and not fool ourselves. Our economy, our neighbors, and our communities will be healthier for it. ▼▼

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Valley Business Highlight

Italian Cycling at Home in our Valley

by Cathy Nunneley

Cycling enthusiasts can now indulge in their passion without leaving the neighborhood. Local racer Troy Critchlow and his designer partner Guiseppe Cramerotti opened the specialty Italian bike shop on Madison this past

July. The focus at Grande Ciclismo (Great Cycling) is road and track racing with some touring.

Guiseppe currently lives in Vancouver B.C. where he has made Cramerotti the best selling Italian crafted frame in Canada. Grande Ciclismo is the first American shop to offer his designs. The aluminum frames are made in Italy. Custom fitted orders are delivered in an amazing 8 weeks and cost the same as the standard frames.

Northwest native Troy spent his youth as a pro racer for

BMX. He was an elite racer in Italy and France where he met Guiseppe. Although still racing after 20 years, Troy has followed Guiseppe's lead and turned his attention to bike design and service.

Jeremy Bader, locally renowned mechanic, completes the team at Grande Ciclismo. Jeremy is a certified USA cycling mechanic and his services are always in demand.

Although the shop caters primarily to serious racers and triathletes, they service bikes of all types. Wheel building, tune-ups and repairs are a few of the services offered.

Grande Ciclismo sponsors the Supersquadra racing team. The cyclists compete throughout the NW and Canada with some members going on to the national championships.

Unlike some specialty bike shops, the atmosphere at Grande Ciclismo is not intimidating. Troy strives to put customers at ease. He is enthusiastic about providing cycling services to the community. Current discounts on 2002 models are an excellent incentive to give the shop a try.

Grande Ciclismo is located at 2921 E Madison 325-RACE (7223), grandeciclismo@qwest.net. The company's web site is currently under construction. ▼▼



THE VALLEY VIEW

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Next Community Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 18, 2003, 7:30 p.m.
Martin Luther King Elementary School Portables
3201 E. Republican Street
(parking available on playfield)

The following poem was submitted by Jerry Sussman. It is from a book of Native American poetry.

Battle Won Is Lost
by Phil George

They said, "Your are no longer a lad."
I nodded.
They said, "Enter the council lodge."
I sat.
They said, "Our lands are at stake."
I scowled.
They said, "We are at war."
I hated.
They said, "Prepare red war symbols."
I painted.
They said, "Count coups."
I scalped.
They said, "You'll see friends die."
I cringed.
They said, "Desperate warriors fight best."
I charged.
They said, "Some will be wounded."
I bled.
They said, "To die is glorious."
They lied.

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