



The Valley View

Newsletter of the Greater Madison Valley Community Council

Issue 95, June 2001

E-mail: madisonvalley@juno.com

President's View

by Gary Emslie

This session of our Council ends with the June 19 meeting. We don't meet in July or August but you can contact us by U.S. post or email any time. We resume regular meetings in September. Our land use committee is actively planning renovation of the brick fieldhouse just by the Arb soccer field. In time it will become our regular meeting place and a great facility for school and commercial groups throughout our neighborhood. If you'd like to be part of the fieldhouse project, call Jerry at 325-6308.

We will devote the June 19 meeting almost wholly to neighborhood traffic woes on Dorffel Drive, Lake Washington Blvd., and 32nd Ave. E., and ways to address them. What proposals are in the works? How do we prevent traffic reductions in one corridor from spilling over to alternative routes? What hard data do we currently have on traffic levels throughout our neighborhood? And how can our community best

work together as a whole? Interest and opinion is diverse; come to share or come to listen.

Many thanks go out to Angel Chaffin who served three years as the Council's treasurer. Angel has now moved; we thank her heartily for her service and wish her well.

Mark the calendar for July 7: the annual GVMCC courtyard sale is on its way. If you have items to donate or would like to help out please call Gary Emslie at 324-7139 or 326-7754 or Jerry Sussman at 325-6308. We can pick up your items given enough advance notice. We also need pricers, sorters, and workers for the day of the sale, but most important are donations of items you no longer need.

We are all saddened to hear that another one of our neighbor's lives has ended too soon and in a violent manner. We pray for the families suffering the loss, and also recognize that as a community we must find ways to end violence regardless of the intent or antagonist. While Seattle's Night Out Against Crime on August 7 and programs like Weed and Seed and Block Watch are valuable, we still find far

too many guns in our neighborhood and ultimately too many victims of all ages – including children. How can we make our neighborhood safe for all? How do we keep our parks and ballfields free from violence? This is a critical problem that must be solved, and we need initiative from every corner of our neighborhood. Sorry to end the newsletter year on such a somber note, but these matters can't be ignored. As Thomas More said, "silence is consent," and we cannot be silent. Our neighborhood and our children's well-being are at risk.

A good summer to all; see you again in September. ▼▼

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Traffic Dilemmas for Dorffel Drive

by Jonathan Drachman

Do you take the "shortcut" between Madrona Drive and Lake Washington Boulevard to shave a few seconds off your commute? If so, you are not alone. Each day approximately three thousand cars use Upper Maiden Lane and Dorffel Drive E., weaving in and out of parked cars, dodging pedestrians, and honking if they are forced to wait.

Approximately fourteen years ago, a neighborhood effort led to the installation of a traffic island at Dorffel Dr. and John St. as well as a chicane (narrowing of the road) near Lake View Park. Despite those measures, those who lived on this route and the surrounding streets noticed traffic continued to increase and worried about the safety of their children, pets, and neighbors.

During the past three years, neighbors have again been working with the City of Seattle (SeaTran) and received a grant from the Department of Neighborhoods in order to help pro-

tect residents. From our studies of the traffic we've learned that:

- During peak hours there are approximately 300 cars per hour on Dorffel Drive (average of one every 12 seconds).
- Over 80% of these cars begin and end their trips outside of the neighborhood.
- Despite the narrow road and congested street, 10% of the cars exceed 30 M.P.H.
- Remarkably, 3-5% exceed 40 M.P.H.

According to SeaTran the average residential street has 800 to 1000 trips per day and the maximum level for a residential street is around 1000 to 1500 trips per day. The traffic counts for Dorffel Drive confirmed what many of us thought was the case: The street was bearing substantially more traffic than the maximum for a residential street.

Working with SeaTran and a traffic consultant over the last few years, we have been developing a proposal designed to

(Continued on page 3)

Gardening with the Natives

Hummingbirds

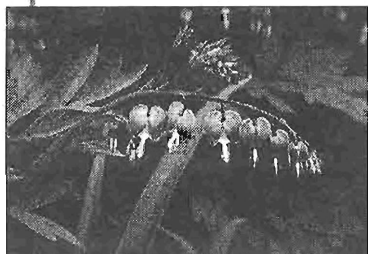
by Cathy Nunneley



I saw my first hummingbird of the season about 3 weeks ago--always a personal thrill for me. I love their sudden and unexpected appearance heralded by the low hum of rapidly beating wings. It seems infinitely more pleasurable to attract these fascinating creatures by natural flowers instead of the artificial syrup feeders so prevalent today. We in the northwest are fortunate to have a number of native plants that appeal to hummingbirds.

For shade and wet areas consider *Aconitum*, or Monkshood. It is a spectacular member of the buttercup family and displays luminous purple hooded flowers on tall spikes carried above green and hairy leaves. *Aquilegia* (Columbines) is another favorite among the buttercups. The *A. formosa* with its nodding red flowers, is the most common form and hummingbirds thrive on its nectar. Although considered to be mostly invasive, some species of thistles, notably *Cirsium edule*, may be used successfully in a moist area. Bunches of tiny flowers compose a graceful purple head above sophisticated foliage.

Sunny gardens will welcome the addition of *Camassia leichtlinii* (Camas). It has long slender leaves surrounding tall yellow roundish flowers. The *Campanulas*, especially *C. rotundifolia* are the common bluebells we see among sunny hillside wildflowers.



Dicentra formosa

For mixed sun and shade try *Delphiniums*. The tall flower stalks bear many flowers in hues ranging from red to purple. Also, not to be missed are the *Dicentras*, or bleeding hearts. The most common variety, *D. formosa*, has the usual charming flowers in shades of pink and white.

Enhance your viewing pleasure this summer with native flowers that lure and feed the world's tiniest birds. ▼▼

Community History

Denny-Blaine Centennial: 1901 – 2001

by Joseph C. Baillargeon

This June marks the centennial anniversary of the City's acceptance of Charles and Viretta Denny's plat dedicating the Denny-Blaine neighborhood's five parks, one-hundred fourteen building lots, its network of streets, and other public facilities to "the public and the City of Seattle, forever." The Denny-Blaine Lake Park Addition to Seattle was the City's first neighborhood not designed on a grid, an engineering feat that has been attempted only rarely since then.

In fact, the layout of the community seems the antithesis of scientific city planning. Survey crews, even today, can seldom find the locus of the curvatures of Denny-Blaine's meandering streets. Artistry and practical necessity combined to conform the public roadways of Denny-Blaine to the natural hillside contours of this old logging property. Survey records of the 1880s refer to a donkey steam engine located on rails in what is now upper Viretta Park and on the lots immediately to its south. The logs were probably hauled to the lake front at Denny-Blaine Place Park (where the water was about fourteen feet higher than it is today) and from there towed to Leschi and dragged over the skid road to Yesler's mill.



LWB switchbacks; formerly Blaine Blvd....

The designer of the Denny-Blaine plat was one Martinius Stixrud, a Norwegian immigrant, whose accomplishments included numerous projects for both the Northern Pacific and the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railways. In 1894, Stixrud was commissioned by the State to establish the Seattle harbor line which even a century later remains the definitive horizontal datum for the location of Seattle's downtown streets.

Stixrud died suddenly in late 1901 but earlier the Dennys honored him by naming the curved stretch of roadway running north between 39th Avenue and Denny-Blaine Place Park (platted as "Whitman Place" – commemorating Marcus, not Walt) as "Stixrud Drive."

Of course, those streets are now part of Lake Washington Boulevard. They achieved that designation only after going through a couple of intermediate steps. The main portion of the boulevard south of Denny-Blaine park originally was named 40th Avenue North. To the north it terminated in a dead end in the cul-de-sac north of the Park, just as 40th Avenue East does today.

In 1914, however, after 40th Avenue North via Stixrud Drive had become integral with the switch-backs through Lake View Park and beyond, the entire street system from Madrona Drive to Madison Street was re-named "Blaine Boulevard," in honor of E. F. Blaine, an associate of Mr. Denny. Blaine Boulevard, as envisioned by the Olmsted Brothers, ultimately connected with the drive through the Arboretum and the boulevard along the lake shore to the south to help form the current Lake Washington Boulevard system. ▼▼

This is the first installment of an ongoing series. Future articles will deal with area parks and place names.

Dorffel Traffic, continued

increase pedestrian safety and reduce traffic to a the level that's closer to the maximum level for residential streets (1,000-1,500 cars/day) without adversely affecting other residential streets.

We are currently awaiting approval to begin a trial period of 3-6 months, during which time follow-up measurements will be made to assess the effects of the proposed configuration on neighboring residential streets. This will involve making Dorffel Drive E. into a one way street between Lake Washington Boulevard and E. John St. (southbound only). Furthermore, we have joined with others in the community, requesting that SeaTran redesign the dangerous intersection at 37th St., Harrison St. and Lake Washington Blvd in order to accommodate pedestrians, perhaps adding a sidewalk and crosswalk.

We recognize that traffic is a growing problem for every neighborhood and encourage people to bicycle, walk, and carpool whenever possible as well as use designated arterials. ▼▼

P-Patch Update

by Sarah Trethewey

Mostly good news from the Madison Valley P-Patch and a little bit of bad. Let's get the bad out of the way first: early in May \$200 worth of garden tools, plants, and containers lent to the P-Patch were stolen from my driveway. Most belonged to me, but a few were lent by others for the duration of the construction period. If anyone has an extra posthole digger or hoe and is willing to donate these items so that we can compensate the rightful owners, please give me a call at 325-3734. If not, perhaps we can use a portion of the grant money to reimburse the nice people who lent their personal tools to the P-Patch only to have them stolen away.

On to the good! Believe it or not, the P-Patch is almost complete. Over the next couple of weeks we will finish building the fence, landscaping, and cleaning up. During the last few weeks we received a donation from City People's Nursery and a great discount on plants purchased from Bert's Red Apple in Madison Park.

Closer to home, all sorts of things have been donated by gardeners, including flowers, bulbs, raspberries, herbs, dahlias, shrubs, and bird houses. To top this off, I spoke with Sandy, our P-Patch representative from the City of Seattle, and she says that there are already 26 people on the waiting list to get a plot. I have also noticed an increase in neighbors strolling by the site at 30th Ave. E. and E. Mercer and chatting with the P-Patchers as they tend their gardens. I really think that this is a great addition to our community. Watch our garden grow! ▼▼



Community Council Minutes

GMVCC Meeting of May 22, 2001

Charles called the meeting to order at 7:40.

First, Sarah gave us a P-Patch update. The shed is completed, the fence almost finished, and planting has begun! Unfortunately, someone has stolen a number of tools used to build the P-Patch from in front of Sarah's house; most were on loan from neighbors or belonged to Sarah.

Angel was not present at the meeting, so Charles reported that our total balance is \$8,235.24.

Jerry then told us about the progress on the field house. We have submitted a "small and simple" grant. If we receive the grant, we will use the money to renovate the field house at Washington Park. We will soon hear about the grant.

Bill Baillargeon made a presentation on the history of balancing traffic levels throughout our neighborhood. The presentation led to a group discussion of traffic proposals for Dorffel Drive (see related article, page 2). Miriam moved that the next Council meeting be devoted principally to discussion of proposed changes; the motion passed unanimously.

Next, the candidates for office were voted on. The slate nominated at the April meeting was approved by acclamation (see list on page 4 of this newsletter). Sarah Trethewey will succeed Angel Chaffin as treasurer.

Greg Nickels, a candidate for mayor, joined us to share his ideas about what he would do for our city if elected. A lively question period followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00. ▼▼

King School Update

End of School Year Notes

by Bob Edgerton

Volunteer Opportunities: MLK Summer School needs volunteers of all ages and abilities from July 2 to August 3. Hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily. Contact Alma Brown, volunteer coordinator, at 726-6660.

Update: Dr. Euhania Butler will serve as Vice Principal of Aki Kurose Middle School starting Sept. 2001.

Graduation: Fifth Grade graduation is scheduled for June 5 at 6:30 P.M. The public is welcome.

Camping: The 7th annual camping trip to the Olympic Peninsula is scheduled for June 11-15. Volunteers are needed, especially men to share cabins with the boys. 90 students with at least 10 parents and teachers will make the trip. The Olympic Park Institute provides programs emphasizing the environment, nature, and outdoor experiences. Trips to Solduc Hot Springs and Marymeer Falls, skits, and other camp experiences are planned. Call Alma at 726-6660 to volunteer. ▼▼

THE VALLEY VIEW
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President - Gary Emslie
Vice President - Charles McDade
Secretary - Miranda and Claire Levy
Treasurer - Sarah Trethewey
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Next Community Council Meeting
 Tuesday, June 19, 2001, 7:30 p.m.
 Martin Luther King Elementary School Portables
 3201 E. Republican Street
 (parking available on playfield)

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Please contact me for mailing parties, writing, reporting, artwork, or other. My interests are:

GMVCC ▼ 2802 E. Madison Street, #184 ▼ Seattle, WA 98112

*Community Policing Action Council
 Seeks Your Input*

Join the Seattle Police Department in developing new programs and solving problems.

The SPD's Community Policing Action Council is looking for new members. This group of citizens represents the people of Seattle, developing programs and strategies to enhance positive community police partnerships.

Help make Seattle a safer place to live, work, and play! Call Ginny Heller at 206.615.0062 for more information.

Make a difference in your community.

GMVCC Annual Courtyard Sale

Saturday, July 7, 2001
 at Bush School Courtyard
 36th Avenue East and Harrison Street

Donations Sought: Time to clean the closets and garage and make a donation to the GMVCC's most important fundraiser; proceeds support schools, neighborhoods, and newsletter. Clothes, books, furniture, toys, knickknacks, kitchen items are all welcome. *To donate, please call Peggy at 325-6308 or Cathy at 329-4083.*

Your Time Is Helpful Too: Please call Peggy or Cathy at the numbers above if you can help with pricing, set-up, and clean-up.

And Come Shop: 7/7/01, from 10:00 am. GMVCC is a nonprofit corporation; all donations are tax deductible.