BLACK LIVES MATTER AND OCCUPATIONS

What a summer it has been! Immediately after my last column went to press on the COVID-19 murals all over town, George Floyd was murdered by the police in Minneapolis on May 25. An outpouring of protests against racism and police violence erupted all over the United States and around the world.

Here in Seattle we had nightly marches that escalated into direct confrontations with the police on Capitol Hill when they were not permitted to march past the 12th Ave precinct on Pine. At the same time, we had huge Black Lives Matter Marches. I went to two of them, one called “We Want to Live” beautifully organized without a police officer in sight in South Seattle. The second was the enormous silent march, organized by BLM, that started at Judkins Park. It was incredibly moving to be with 60,000 people who were all silent, both at the start for 8 minutes and 46 seconds to honor George Floyd, and on the march itself.

Meanwhile, back on Capitol Hill on Pine Street between 12th and Broadway, the resisters took over the area. The police left (no one is quite clear on who gave that order), and Capitol Hill Organized Protest (CHOP) set up. It was a utopian moment. The community poured out donations, the people were peacefully talking to one another, gardens were planted.

At the same time, the demands were clear: 1. Defund the Police by 50 per cent 2. Fund Community Restorative Justice, Housing, Healthcare 3 Freedom for all Protestors.

As everyone knows, utopia is hard to maintain, and by the time I went back it had deteriorated from a Black Lives Matter protest to a disorganized combination of homeless persons, activists of various stripes, and the original BLM occupiers. It got increasingly white. The police and the city put up wooden boxes as barricades, all of them were covered with graffiti.

So as your culture columnist I documented a lot of the art www.artandpoliticsnow.com/2020/06/capitol-hill-occupied-protest/ I also documented the intersection of BLM with COVID murals in the International District as the two huge events collided there in stunning murals. www.artandpoliticsnow.com/2020/06/intersections-in-the-international-district-murals-fish-vegetables-black-lives-matter/

Much less reported (indeed so far, I am the only writer on this subject) is the current occupation of the Northwest African American Museum entrance. The Colman School, site of the Northwest African American Museum, has been occupied since Juneteenth by Omari Tahir, Earl Debnam, and others to declare.
that they are the rightful owners of the property based on a purchase agreement and loan agreement from January 1998, a copy of which they provided to me. Tahir and Debnam were involved in the original occupation in the 1980s and 1990s. They state that they are the “real museum” with the name of African American Heritage Museum and Cultural Center. They have a report from the Mayor in 1994, that was Norm Rice, outlining the programs for the museum that included a visual arts center, musical center, artist in residence program, intimate performing/workshop space, practice space, instrument library, and a recording studio.

They occupied the school for an amazing 13 years between 1985 and 1998 during which they created an exhibition of displays of African artifacts that Omari brought from Africa, “led workshops, held concerts, engaged with youth to be proud of their heritage so they would not turn to the streets.” That was a huge motivation for both their original occupation and their current occupation: as shootings of black youth continue to escalate, their desire to connect to youth through African heritage is re motivating them to continue their campaign.

As stated in a July 7 article in Seattle Met that does not mention the current occupation: “After an eight-year occupation, disputes between city leaders and activists related to the site’s functions and funds kept NAAM from opening until 2008, according to Trevor Griffey, the co-founder of UW’s Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project.” That article compares the occupation to that at the Centro de la Raza struggle (also a former school occupation, but only for three months), and Daybreak Star, by the famous Bernie Whitebear who “won” land from Fort Lawson (of course it was all indigenous land).

Omari and Earl with new supporters have returned to NWAAM. They state that the current museum is not “supporting the community.” I asked them what the NWAAM response to the occupation had been. The chair of the board called the police to evict them three times, but the program director has, according to their account, been more amenable to listening.

I went back just before this press deadline (August 18) to get an update and the occupation had expanded! It has spread over the two gravel courtyards on either side of the museum entrance. The occupiers are enacting their vision of a community-based cultural center: raised beds (as well as free plants to take away), a hand painted people’s library, Earl Debnam’s painting studio, the Jimi Hendrix Musical Academy (I saw some instruments available for people to play), an announcement of Jimi Hendrix 50th Anniversary Celebration Sept 18-20, 2020. Hanging to the other side was a row of celebratory flags and an announcement of another festival, September 11-13 online by the International People’s Democratic Uhuru Movement. [https://inpdum.org/]

So, what will happen next? Perhaps by October NWAAM will want to reopen and then we will see.

CHOP was dismantled on July 1, but the garden has survived. When I went back on August 15, some of the memorials were still there, many have been removed or painted out. Some of the art is being cataloged with the city

Cal Anderson Park still has a garden with raised beds run by Black Star Farmers [https://blackstarfarmers.org/] with lots of inspiring signs about African American and Indigenous history. But everyday something changes! Last week it was temporarily closed, and all the signs gone, this week it is open, with new signs. Drip irrigation has been set up.

“End Police Brutality” and “Latinos for Black Lives”, June 7, courtesy Susan Platt

George Floyd Mural June 24, 2020 now painted over, courtesy Susan Platt

“Why Do you See Me as a Crime?” at We Want to Live March, June 7 in South Seattle, courtesy Susan Platt

cut in pay, she resigned. My personal opinion is that the police need massive retraining and lots more money can go to community services. But singling out our African American police chief for a huge pay cut that led her to resign was a big mistake. As with the NWAAM occupation, negotiation is the way forward. But given our national mood, negotiation is not happening. We are all too angry, stressed and anxious.

~Susan Platt, Ph.D.,
www.artandpoliticsnow.com
Dear Leschi Neighbors,

Here we are at the beginning September and we are still living in an alternate universe.

Our world has tilted and many of us wonder, how did we get to this place? I know many people don’t want to admit that they feel blue, depressed, sad and distraught at different times. I don’t believe any of us ever imagined such an outcome. We need to remember what we are grateful for now. We live in a country where free speech is a given. We may or may not like the results, but it is a gift we have.

Our little village of Leschi is a happy place with caring residents. Read our stories of the heartfelt work of those who were front and center in Leschi during the beginning and ongoing journey of being in business and there for our neighbors.

Leschi Market, BluWater Leschi, and Grocery Outlet all were the core of caring for us. Those of you who have reached out to neighbors, making sure everyone is safe and has their needs met… thank you.

For the months of September and October this year we will have our monthly community meeting via a Zoom call. We will be posting log in information on our website, our Facebook page and will post the sign in at the Senior Center.

September we will check in with a meeting to express our concerns, gratitudes and opportunities and challenges. This will be Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 7 p.m. In October we will have a program, as well.

Thank you for helping make Leschi one of the crown jewels of the Seattle area.

Warm regards,

Janice Merrill Brown
President, Leschi Community Council
Editorial

Leschi’s Long Hot Summer

One hardly knows where and what to start discussing with all that is going on, but of course I do have opinions and that is what the editorial is all about.

Defunding the Police: I understand that the police are asked to do many things that are not actually what we consider public safety issues and very definitely they don’t receive enough training to be stepping into situations that call for Crisis Intervention. There are many people who would be alive today if experienced professionals had intervened in cases like Charleena Lyles. Newspaper reports indicate she was a small woman and was dealing with two armed police officers. News reports also say she had a knife but did not describe the knife; there are many knives in most kitchens from paring knives to butcher knives. As we know, the pregnant Charleena was shot and killed in front of her four children who are now damaged for life.

When I was the oldest student at the School of Social Work, we had an assignment in Nancy Amidei’s class to work on some issue and present our solutions to appropriate authorities. I was working with a middle-aged man and a younger man whose brother had a mental health diagnosis; the family was in constant fear that if he had an episode in public, he would be a victim of the police. This was an issue that had recently appeared in the newspaper where a man with mental health issues was shot in his grandparents’ back yard on Yesler. We did a lot of research, especially with the new crisis intervention team in Los Angeles. The City was trying to avoid this type of killing and were experimenting with a new team trained to intervene in situations where mental illness was a factor. The initial results were good, but they needed to expand the team as these calls came in over the entire 24-hour period 7 days a week and the newly formed team could not handle all the cases. We arranged a meeting with then City Councilwoman Jane Noland and a police liaison officer, Clark Kimmeter. They were interested in our report and took both the report and the statistics to the Mayor and City Council. The result was the formation of a Crisis Intervention team here, but just as in LA, this one team could not always be available and for some reason, steps to increase the team weren’t taken. The three of us students moved on to other classes and eventually graduation and we did not pursue it unfortunately. Soon I was working and dealing with my own cases and we were raising a grandchild at that point, so I was not paying attention either… until now.

I feel that starting out by defunding the police is not the way to tackle this; instead, develop a plan of what you want to see first so the money is transferred into a more appropriate service. Just cutting it out of the police budget may mean it drops into that black hole where no one can find it, or it is used for a pet mayoral project.

We also know that the public wants the police to step out of the homeless sweeps and leave this to social workers but provide resources. Homeless individuals seem to do better in the tiny house villages than shelters, which do seem dangerous in this pandemic. It may not be necessary to lay off large numbers of police; some might want to transfer into the Crisis Team, and we know that some officers have graduated from the School of Social Work and have some of the necessary skills. These folks are generally used in public relations jobs for the police.

One of my favorite reporters and a watchdog of the City Council and Mayor’s office is Maria Tomchick. She said that the police department has successfully lobbied for increased funds due to increased population and while we have grown, the numbers are very different. The population is one third larger during this same period and the police budget is 3 times larger! Maria can be heard on Saturdays at 1pm on KODX FM; it can be streamed. KODX is a low-powered station that has picked up the interesting programs that used to be broadcast on KEXP as Mind over Matters.

So, I would say to the City Council, take your time and use your listening skills to determine what the ideal police force would look like and what auxiliary services are needed to absorb some of the services. The “defunding” will take care of itself once the auxiliary services are fully funded. And I would say to the public, put your creative caps on and forward your ideas to your District Council representative.

~Diane Snell
WHITE MALE PRIVILEGE

Many of you have probably seen this letter from Ben Cohen, former owner of Ben and Jerry’s ice cream. He demonstrates white privilege but when I read it, I felt it should be labeled White Male Privilege as I’m not sure women feel as safe in some of these situations. But this is helpful if you are not sure what white privilege is, but it’s an everyday 24-hour privilege and we need to be aware of this. Ed.

My name is Ben.

I am a 69 year old white American man.

I can do, say, and be all of these things without fear (as can my family).

I stand with my black brothers and sisters.

I will not be killed.

I can go jogging (#AmaudArbery).

I can relax in the comfort of my own home (#BothemSean and #AtatianaJefferson).

I can ask for help after being in a car crash (#JonathanFerrell and #RenishaMcBride).

I can have a cellphone (#StephonClark).

I can leave a party to get to safety (#JordanEdwards).

I can play loud music (#JordanDavis).

I can sell CD’s (#AltonSterling).

I can sleep (#AiyanaJones).

I can walk from the corner store (#MikeBrown).

I can play cops and robbers (#TamirRice).

I can go to church (#Charleston9).

I can walk home with Skittles (#TrayvonMartin).

I can hold a hair brush while leaving my own bachelor party (#SeanBell).

I can party on New Year’s (#OscarGrant).

I can get a normal traffic ticket (#SandraBland).

I can lawfully carry a weapon (#PhilandoCastile).

I can break down on a public road with car problems (#CoreyJones).

I can shop at Walmart (#JohnCrawford).

I can have a disabled vehicle (#TerrenceCrutcher).

I can read a book in my own car (#KeithScott).

I can be a 10yr old walking with our grandfather (#CliffordGlover).

I can decorate for a party (#ClaudeReese).

I can ask a cop a question (#RandyEvans).

I can cash a check in peace (#YvonneSmallwood).

I can take out my wallet (#Amadou Diallo).

I can run (#WalterScott).

I can breathe (#EricGarner).

I can live (#FreddieGray).

This is reality.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Change the first two lines to your name and your identity and share with as many people as you can.

Silence kills.

~Ben Cohen
(co-founder of Ben & Jerry’s) neighborhood & Beyond
THE LONG HOT SUMMER COMES HOME TO LESCHI

The sun and the heat energized our gardens and produced zucchini to feed an army, but it also produced some other worrisome situations. Residents worried about the young people sunning and swimming at Leschi dock with no masks and no social distancing. We know that young people feel they are invulnerable, but this is an uncomfortable development in a pandemic. It is a parental issue however; the rest of us should continue wearing our masks and maintain social distancing. In the evening, another situation develops with older folks gathering and taking up parking spots, blaring loud music, harassing customers, threatening at least one BluWater employee and blocking handicapped parking. LCC President Janice Merrill Brown sent a memo to city officials and Bart Evans, Bluwater owner, scheduled a meeting with the Seattle Police department. The police said that they did not have the staff to provide support in the evenings. Ultimately Bart has hired off duty police to provide that protection and it became quieter for a while.

Now it seems that someone has set up a 10 x 10 tent at the south end of the parking lot and is blaring music and picnicking. We are not sure how they obtained a permit as permits are not being issued until November 1 due to the pandemic. And perhaps they don’t have a permit! This story will be continued.

There was a dramatic event near Bluwater as a seaplane nose-dived into the water and flipped over with pontoons sticking up! Nearby boaters were able to rescue the occupants, but it must have scary for them! Jason Snell took picture below of the crane rescue of the plane.

LIFE AND TIMES IN LESCHI

Over my four years living in a rental on Alder near 35th, I had various housemates. For a while I had one who had been around Leschi a while and knew the characters. In those days, the former ferry boat Skansonia was moored around the south end of the Leschi marina, near the old Casa Leschi apartments. It was a party boat, owned by a guy who had made money running a big concert venue downtown. My friend would climb aboard and raid the owner’s liquor stash. Eventually the city made him move the boat because he was afoul of zoning regulations, and it ended up on north Lake Union, where it remains. He owned another ferry, docked in Kirkland. That was illegal too, and he couldn’t find a place for it. One day it mysteriously burned to the waterline. No one knew why, but plenty of people thought they did.

In 1977 I made a new friend. After a few months he showed up, desperate for a place to live, having just split up with his girlfriend of six years. We hit it off well and fixed up the house a bit, tearing out the wretched carpet from the front room and finding a lovely oak floor that we refinished.

One could drive down Lake Dell/Alder and get lost in the woods. That happened to me. I was working at Black Duck Motors, the collective auto repair shop, in the International District. It seemed that anyone doing something interesting in Seattle eventually became one of our customers. I liked the tips – when customers picked up a car at the end of the day, sometimes they would get us
high. (Some of them would turn us on before we worked on their
cars. Go figure.) So, driving home down Alder, I actually did miss
my house under those circumstances.

Inevitably, as Seattle’s economy improved in the late ’70s,
developers discovered our little chunk of paradise. Behind my house
and up Spruce Street a bit was a nice patch of land just as Chief
Seattle would have left it for us. One day, after I noticed survey
stakes down there, I checked with the city and found no permits had
been issued to build a road. So, being a good citizen, I pulled out
the stakes. I should have been a little smarter and filled in the holes.
Then I wrote up a petition to the city and went door to door getting
signatures against the developer’s illegal activity. It must have been
early 1979, because my neighbors were watching the Sonics in the
finals, the year they won everything. People couldn’t be bothered
to miss the action and read the petition – they just signed it. That
wad of signatures got the city’s attention, and they put a stop to the
development until the proper permits were issued. Which, of course,
happened eventually. Knowing nothing about hydrology, the get-rich
quick developer probably built a bunch of houses with rivers through
the basements, like mine.

-Roger Lippman

FRIENDS OF STREET ENDS

This is our monthly update and a call to action regarding a
few important issues. First and foremost, thank you for your
stewardship of our shoreline street ends!

1. This is an especially challenging time as we don’t have to remind
anyone. Due to the fact that fewer of our citizens are traveling
out of town for the summer AND that many of our waterfront
parks are closed, our street ends are getting more than their share
of use – and in some cases – abuse! PLEASE steward your local
street end – including trash pick-up with gloves, pulling invasives
and generally keeping an eye out on your site. In addition,
contact our Shoreline Street End Manager Omar Akkari if more
aggressive maintenance is needed.

2. Provide support for two street ends that are currently in process:
Terry Pettus Park (a street end and a park) is being completely
renovated/transformed with four exciting designs presented at
the last meeting. See details below and a contact to be added
to the communication list. S Massachusetts Street (Mt. Baker
Neighborhood) has been permitted thanks to the tremendous
leadership of Daniel Collins and work will begin (in small
groups) this fall. Daniel is copied above if you are interested
and able to help.

3. Help improve our Friends of Street ends Website! Laura Perry
has been our volunteer website creator and Zach Stednick
just volunteered his time and talent to create the new map
for the website. Still needed are photos of your favorite street
end – especially photos that highlight public enjoyment
and stewardship

4. Remember that our next Friends of Street Ends
meeting is Monday September 14 from 6 to 8 via zoom.
Invitations to follow.

If you have any questions or comments, please forward them!
And thank you!

-Karen Daubert, Friends of Street Ends
206-310-1792

Terry Pettus Park: From Libby.hudson@seattle.gov: The July 29, 2020
community meeting presentation and meeting summary are up on
our project web page and a link to the video of the meeting is also
provided: https://www.seattle.gov/parks/about-us/current-projects/terry-
pettus-park-renovation. Please share with others that were not able to
attend and look for announcements on the project web page for the next
meeting later in August.

MT. BAKER RIDGE NEWS

The Mt. Baker Viewpoint Park experienced some significant
graffiti, but leader David Berger is working with the
Parks Department to get it removed and to trim some
overgrown bushes.

-Karen, 206-310-1792
n urban tree canopy is made up of the leaves, branches, and stems of our trees that obscure the view of the ground from above. This system of trees reduces air pollution, lowers the City’s temperature, and provides beauty and wildlife habitat in our neighborhoods. The evening will be moderated by Seattle Times writer Lynda Mapes and features a panel including Woody Wheeler (Conservation Catalyst), Mari Batayola (Beacon Hill Council), June Bluespruce, and David Moehring (UW - Bothell) will give the current state of Seattle’s tree canopy and the goals for canopy coverage. You’ll also find out how your voice can make a difference in the growth and protection of this critical resource.

**SEATTLE’S TREE CANOPY**

Thursday, September 3, 6–8pm
All Ages, Free
Learn more and register at https://sewardpark.audubon.org/events.

**LESCI PARKS**

The Leschi Community continues to provide leadership in all its public spaces.

Leschi’s parks continue to be used and loved — and stewarded — but any and all help is greatly appreciated including simply picking up trash (use gloves!) on your walks.

Leschi’s shoreline street ends have been used way more than usual due to the fact that nearby waterfront parks have been closed. It is good news that neighbors are discovering these special places. But the bad news is that some have collected trash and other debris. Fortunately, there are some wonderful volunteers that have been visiting the sites and helping with maintenance throughout this unique and challenging summer. Here is a little summary:

**KING STREET:** has been a particular challenge as people have been “camping out” and abusing the small special area. John Barber continues to steward this site but any help with patrolling and pick up is greatly appreciated!

**DEARBORN STREET:** the main challenge here is the blackberries on the slope which requires some tenacious weed pulling. The area is generally looking good!

**CHARLES STREET:** adjacent neighbors help here as well as some volunteers, but additional stewards are also needed.

**NORMAN STREET:** Jeb Fowler and his daughter are our new stewards as he visits weekly to pick up trash, pull tenacious blackberries and haul everything home. Other help is always welcome!

**FLORA FLEET REALTOR**

CELL  206.818.1487
FLORA@WINDERMERE.COM
FLORA.WITHWRE.COM

**JUDKINS STREET:** this site is also a challenge with extra heavy usage throughout the summer. No one person has volunteered to steward this site, so any help is especially needed. The adjacent property owner has been helpful. Thank everyone for their help!

~Karen Daubert

**THE FIRE OUTLOOK FOR 2020**

This article missed the June issue by just a few days, and we felt it was important enough that we print it in September; we can already see that there are serious fires in the west.

It is no secret that the Pacific Northwest has had a string of more active-than-usual fire seasons lately. 2019 was pretty minor for the Pacific Northwest, but 2018 and 2017 were both very active seasons. August 2018 featured easterly winds that dropped smoke and ash from billowing fires over the Cascades right over the highly populated Puget Sound megalopolis on multiple occasions, creating an apocalyptic scene for citizens enshrouded in the earthly exhaust. 2017 was capped by the Eagle Creek Fire in the Columbia River Gorge, a raging September firestorm that burned approximately 45,000 acres of timber, and 2014 and 2015 were also extraordinarily active fire seasons for the entire Pacific Northwest. And who could forget about the devastating fires of 2017 and 2018 for California, as well as the unprecedented public safety power shutoffs during 2019?

Over the past decade, the sheer amount of Pacific Northwest wildfires hasn’t increased, but the acres burned has increased dramatically. The reasons for this are multifold; the last several summers have been some of the warmest and driest on record, and 2017 was particularly bad because it followed the wettest winter/spring on record, meaning there was a ton of fresh growth that became tinder dry in the summer and provided fuel for fires to spread.

We’re also seeing more acreage burning now simply because our decades of fire mitigation have resulted in unnaturally thick forests in fire-prone locations, allowing fires to grow more easily than they otherwise would if we had just let them naturally burn out on their own accord.

Most Pacific Northwest fires are caused by humans, though the disparity isn’t as extreme as it is in California or east of the Rockies. However, most acres burnt in the Pacific Northwest are due to fires ignited by lightning. Lightning-ignited fires often burn in remote, hard-to-reach regions and away from humans and property, so they are not only often harder to fight but take a back seat to those threatening structures.

When the original ‘Smokey the Bear” campaign came out in the 40s, the standard procedure was to extinguish both lightning and human-caused fires, but since the 1980s, the standard practice has been to let lightning-caused fires burn out unless they are threatening structures as people realized (particularly after the mega-destructive Yellowstone Fire of 1988) that fire plays a natural role in the ecosystem and that mitigating natural fires only results in the buildup of fuel and an increased probability of catastrophic wildfires going forward.

**Summer Fire Outlook**

Unfortunately, all indications are that we will have a more active-than-normal fire season. Our one saving grace (from a wildfire perspective) is that there may be less outdoor recreation this summer due to COVID restrictions and thus fewer opportunities for human ignitions, but the current conditions and long-range climate models suggest that we’ll have higher-than-average fire danger this summer.
Much of Oregon and Eastern Washington is now in a “moderate” or “severe” drought, and some spots even have an “extreme” designation. I believe (and I think most people would agree) that the US Drought Monitor uses hyperbolic language, but it’s the standard used by the Climate Prediction Center and, in my opinion, is the best holistic indicator of drought because it takes a wide range of variables across a wide range of timescales into account when making its designations.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, we are in both a short-term (<6 month) and long-term (>6 month) drought and are experiencing effects from both. With short-term droughts, finer fuels such as twigs and grasses are drier-than-average and there may be a decrease in top-level soil moisture, while long-term droughts have a greater effect on the large-scale hydrology and ecology of the affected area. With regards to fire danger, both short-term and long-term droughts dry our fuel of various sizes and, if severe enough, can kill vegetation, making them more susceptible to fires. The California drought from 2011-2016 was most severe from 2011-2014, but over half the estimated 102 million trees that died in California during the drought died in 2016 alone.

Snowpack also plays a significant role in summer fire danger. A substantial snowpack, particularly one that melts late into the spring, increases danger by keeping fuels moist and stifling the development of grass, shrubs, and other ‘fine fuels’ that inevitably dry out and burn during the summer. There are exceptions; the 2011-2012 winter was snowier-than-average, and the spring was wetter and cooler-than-average, with March being the snowiest month of the entire year for many spots. Still, below-average snowpack is often a harbinger of an above-average fire season, and snowpack is currently below-average for the eastern slopes of the Washington Cascades and nearly all of California and Nevada.

A third factor that plays a significant role in summer fire danger is the amount of ‘fine fuels,’ such as grasses and shrubs, that grow during the spring and subsequently dry out in the summer. In this manner, wetter-than-average spring weather can actually lead to increased summer fire danger, as wetter-than-average springs allow more grasses to grow. It’s rare to have above-average fine fuels and drought conditions, but according to the National Interagency Coordination Center, the Western US has above-average fine fuels at lower elevations for the third year in a row due to our previous wet winters.

So, with widespread short-term and long-term drought over the West, below-average snowpack, and above-average fine fuels, fuels have an above-average chance of being drier and more plentiful than average this summer. And that’s a pretty bad combo for fire danger. But at least our seasonal forecast points to cooler and wetter-than-average summer weather, right?

Sigh... I wish I could say otherwise, but the Climate Prediction Center is pretty gung-ho on us seeing warmer-than-average weather this summer, and they even have a slight chance of drier-than-average weather for the Pacific Northwest. Needless to say, hot and dry summers are associated with an increased risk of large, destructive fires.

We can’t do anything about how much rain will fall or how high temperatures will rise this summer. And lightning will ignite forest fires throughout the West this summer, just as it has done since trees first appeared nearly 400 million years ago. But we CAN do our part by preventing human-caused fires. With the world entrenched in arguably the most disruptive social and economic crisis since World War II, let’s help our first responders and fellow humans out and not burn down any forests!

Charlie Phillips, a Madrona resident, received his B.S. in atmospheric sciences from the University of Washington and works in Portland as a meteorologist. Check out his weather website at Charlie.weather.together.net.

LA NIÑA ARRIVES, BLOB STRENGTHENS

Global sea-surface-temperature (SST) anomalies as of 8/14/2020. Note the massive Blob in the A Northeast Pacific and a developing La Nina in the Tropical Pacific. The strongest parts of the Blob have sea-surface-temperature anomalies exceeding 5oC (8oF). Credit: NOAA

Seasonal forecasting is the Achilles Heel of weather forecasters. Despite the plethora of seasonal forecasts offered by various government, educational, and commercial institutions, these forecasts have relatively little skill, and they have made minimal improvements over the last decade.

However, there are a few key features that can make seasonal forecasting a bit easier, at least for the Pacific Northwest. One is the status of the tropical Pacific and whether it is in an El Nino, Neutral, or La Nina state. The other is the “Blob” – the area of warm, sterile water that occasionally forms in the Northeast Pacific. We currently have a burgeoning La Nina in the tropical Pacific...
that is predicted to strengthen into a weak-to-moderate La Nina this winter, and we have an extraordinarily strong Blob of warm water in the Northeast Pacific well offshore.

La Nina and the Blob effect our weather in vastly different ways. La Nina events have well-documented effects on global atmospheric circulation and affect the location and strength of storms that impact the West Coast in the winter. More specifically, La Ninas tend to create an anomalous ridge of high pressure in the Northern Pacific, which then results in the jet stream sliding down into the Pacific Northwest from the WNW and giving us cooler and wetter-than-average weather with well-above-average mountain snowfall.

The Blob, on the other hand, is a result of persistent ridging over the Northeast Pacific and has relatively little effect on the location and strength of the jet stream. But at a more local scale, the Blob increases temperatures for the West Coast by warming and moistening the air that passes over it. The 2014-2015 winter was the warmest on record for many spots in the Pacific NW due to an extraordinarily strong Blob just off the coast, and the 2019 summer saw much warmer-than-average overnight lows due the onshore flow from the Pacific passing over the blob and picking up more water vapor in the process, as water vapor is a strong greenhouse gas and prevents heat from escaping at night.

**La Nina and Blob Forecast**

The Climate Prediction Center currently has a “La Nina watch” and forecasts a 60% chance of La Nina conditions developing by autumn and persisting through the winter. If a La Nina does develop, it is expected to be weak. However, even weak La Ninas tend to bring wetter, cooler, and snowier-than-average weather to the Pacific Northwest. There are notable exceptions – for example, the 2000-2001 weak La Nina was one of the worst snow years on record for the Cascades. But generally speaking, La Ninas translate to good skiing, ample spring hydro resources, and a parade of cool, wet, moderate storms throughout the winter and early spring.

The Blob tends to be far more fleeting than La Nina or El Nino. With the exception of extremely strong Blobs like the 2014-2015 “Super Blob,” most Blobs only last a few months and can disappear within a matter of weeks if storms move over the warmer-than-average water and erode the Blob by mixing the relatively warm water at the surface downward and allowing cooler water to make it to the surface. It’s tough to know how the current Blob will evolve over the next several months, but given its current strength, it is a force to be reckoned with and needs to be watched closely. If it retains its strength and migrates eastward, it could warm us significantly this winter and overwhelm any cooling effect from La Nina. Additionally, it would have disastrous effects for marine life by decreasing the amount of food and nutrients off our coast.

As a salmon fisherman and skier, I’m hoping the Blob stays well offshore and La Nina delivers the heavy mountain snows its famous for. Even if ski resorts aren’t open due to the coronavirus pandemic, a cool, wet, snowy winter would do wonders to help alleviate our current drought and ensure ample water resources for summer 2021.

~Charlie Phillips.

Charlie Phillips, a Madrona resident, received his B.S. in atmospheric sciences from the University of Washington and works in Portland as a meteorologist. Check out his weather website at Charlie.weather together.net.
LESCHI ARTIST’S MAP IS THE COVID PUBLIC ART PROJECT YOU’VE BEEN WAITING FOR

Celebrating public space, Libby L. Gerber invites viewers to look for views of Mount Rainier in mundane public spaces, using her hand-drawn map as a guide.

Leschi artist, Libby L. Gerber, created a public art project mapping the views of Mount Rainier in the Leschi Elementary School attendance area (which includes Leschi and parts of the Central District neighborhoods) in public spaces. The public spaces represented include grand views like the breathtaking end-of-street overlook at 35th Ave. & E. Conover Ct. However, Gerber is most interested in ordinary, often overlooked places where Mount Rainier pops up. Some of the more mundane places marked on the map include the busy intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Dearborn, the city parking lot adjoining Leschi park and the intersection adjacent to the Central Area Senior Center.

Gerber has made the map available to the public to download from her website and use as a “treasure map” to find the views in the area. She invites viewers to capture the views on camera or in drawings and submit those drawings to be included. The project isn’t limited only to the neighborhoods represented in on the map. The map is just a starting place and an invitation to encourage the public to rediscover their neighborhoods.

She made the map by walking and biking all the streets in the area on the clear days when “The Mountain” was out. Once she had collected all the data of where the views were located, she created a bright-colored mixed-media map that includes the contour lines of the area and is marked with a small icons of each public place from which you can view Mount Rainier.

Libby L. Gerber is a Seattle-based artist who explores the intersections between urban life, the environment, and society. She exhibits her work in both traditional and unconventional public spaces as well as in formal galleries. She has shown work at the Center on Contemporary Art, Chaffey College, LAUNCH, The Audubon Center at Debs Park, The Milagro Allegro Community Garden, Gallery 825, Santa Ana College, The City of Brea Municipal Gallery, and the Angel’s Gate Cultural Center to name a few. She holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Public Art and Sculpture from California State University, Northridge and a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Visual Arts from Occidental College. Contact: Libby L. Gerber, 206-245-8606, libby@libbygerber.com, www.libbygerber.com, Instagram: @libgerber @PublicViewsofMtRainier

NEW COZY MURDER MYSTERY BY LOCAL AUTHOR


Overworked medical intern Sarah James and the spunky Fog Ladies are back, this time puzzling over matters of family. Why would a man kill his wife, the mother of his child? With kitchen shears? Was it their troubled marriage? Her one-million-dollar insurance policy? This question haunts Sarah, who meets the man at a family resort on Big Sur.

Frances Noonan, level-headed Fog Lady leader, knows his mother from years ago. Murder does not fit.

Sarah and the elderly amateur sleuths delve deeper and uncover more murders, more temptingly high insurance policies, more families destroyed. Similarities abound, leading the Fog Ladies to visit incarcerates at a women’s prison to meet a murderess herself.

Similarities also ensnare Sarah’s friend Helen, with her new baby twins, unhappy marriage, and high insurance policy supplied by the hospital.

Helen is in danger. The Fog Ladies race to save her, with twisty curves, an empty gas tank, fog, and cricked toes impeding their heroic effort.

Set in their elegant apartment building in San Francisco and along the gorgeous but treacherous Northern California coast, this second novel is full of fun and joy, and also reflection and heartache. Each of the older Fog Ladies brings her own voice, from calm but grieving Frances Noonan to feisty and opinionated Enid Carmichael, spying on the city street and seeing all. This cozy murder mystery is sure to please and will the leave the reader remembering these characters and waiting for the next installment.

Susan McCormick is a writer and doctor who lives in Madrona. She graduated from Smith College and George Washington University School of Medicine, with additional medical training in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. Susan served as a doctor in the U.S. Army for nine years before moving to the Pacific Northwest. In addition to the Fog Ladies series, she also wrote Granny Can’t Remember Me, a lighthearted picture book about Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. Visit Susan McCormick online at: www.susannmccormickbooks.com
LESCHI MARKET ZOOM TASTINGS

Hello, Happy September, and welcome back Leschi! Thank you for your support throughout the summer as we navigate these unchartered times.

One very interesting development has occurred, born out of customer feedback. Virtual Wine Wednesdays! If you haven’t heard of them, or been able to join us yet, it’s never too late to uncork the fun!

Leschi Market usually has two or three tastings worth of wine available for purchase at any given time. There are 3 wines per tasting, at an already discounted price. Once you purchase the wines, you’ll be given the Meeting Code and Password. The tastings begin in the comfort of your own home (or deck) every Wednesday at 5:05pm via Zoom. We walk our guests through the 3 wines and usually incorporate a guest speaker or two as well. Importers, sales representatives, distributors and even wine makers have joined in the fun to talk about their wares. The Zoom Tastings are really a lot of fun, educational, professional, but not too serious at the same time. The group ranges from new wine drinkers to very experienced- and all are welcome.

Come by for one, learn something, share an experience, or just taste some great wines with neighbors in a safe, virtual setting.

At the Leschi News deadline, there have been 15 unique Episodes, with more to come! Here are some examples of past Wine Wednesdays. If you are interested in a past Episode, let me know, we do have the Episodes recorded and archived. I see potential of wines being purchased to taste along with the recording. Let me know if that interests anyone!

September 2: Bubbly for Bubbles: Taste 3 Champagnes, complete with Sabering demonstration: $60

August 26: Out Back to the Outback: Australia! $40, Viognier, Shiraz, Nebbiolo


August 12: Godforsaken Grapes: Grapes You’ve Never Heard Of! Italy: $40: Falanghina, Sciava, Susumaniello

August 5: Parade of Pinot: Three Pinot Noirs from 3 different countries: Chile, Oregon, France

July 29: Summer Sippers: A Rose and two chillable reds, killer for summer! $45

July 22: Spain Reign: Verdejo, Tempranillo, and Rioja Reserva $45

July 15: South Africa: Chenin, Pinotage and Bordeaux-style Red $50

Join our email list or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram for the latest updates at the Market and our weekly Zoom Wine Tastings!

Cheers! Enjoy!

-Leschi Market’s Wine Guru, Ken Benner
IN LIEU OF DINING OUT!

In this time of social distancing and qualms about eating out, we look for alternatives when we write about food. One bright spot was the opening of PCC at the corner of 23rd & Union. On the morning they opened, our grandson went in to join and told them his grandparents had been members since 1979. He was given royal treatment including a large bouquet of flowers and a card welcoming him and expressing their excitement about joining “this wonderfully diverse community.”

The grandson often drifts in looking for lunch and recently came home raving about a pizza slice he had: spinach and Kalamata olives. We ended up ordering this pizza on one of those hot, lazy evenings when no one felt like cooking. It is delicious! It has a white base rather than tomato and the crust is terrific.

Our Madrona based restaurant critic, Malcolm Harker, offers his perspective on PCC.

The young seagull was standing mutely on the dock, waiting for its next meal delivery. But the normally caring (and regurgitating) parents were nowhere to be seen. Maybe Uber has a Re-Eats App in development, but meantime the bedraggled young bird was experiencing foodlessness.

My dock neighbor Nick said it had been hanging around and uncharacteristically silent all morning. The only nutrition I had to offer was a chunk of Steph’s Tofu, my PCC lunchtime staple, along with the tandoori variant and their sublime Turkish garbanzo salad. Tandoori and garbanzo beans seemed a risky combination for an already large bird which could be airborne over the dock after lunch, but it seemed happy enough with Steph’s. A crumbled ginger snap was also examined and eaten gingerly.

It was still there when I left for the day.

The next morning, Nick told me he’d provided an all-you-can-eat gull supper: Sardines, Bread and Watermelon. The protein and carb courses were gulped down greedily, but the fruit had been briefly pecked before being tossed disdainfully aside.

The bird had swum over to the next dock during the night. I could see it hanging around Warren’s boat, trying to make eye contact with another gullible meal ticket.

There’s a new PCC at 23rd & Union. Try the Turkish garbanzo salad - the tofu too. And try PCC’s Syrian Pomegranate Spread too - great on their Bavarian Pumpernickel.

Maybe you’ll find another forlorn fledgling to share it with?

~Malcolm Harker

OTHER FARE

Karen Daubert sends these suggestions for the Mt. Baker area:

Iconiq Restaurant is open with creative take out and dining. Their black cod and salmon are extremely fresh and delicious. See https://www.iconiqseattle.net/

Heyday Restaurant is open with daily drink specials and seasonal menu items. And old favorites like their Saigon Burger are superb.

Sustenance with safety!
LESCHI CC BOARD MEETING 6/11/20

Attending on Zoom: Trevor, Janet, John Barber, Tracy Bier and Diane Snell. (President Janice Merrill Brown was with a client and not able to attend.)

Thanks to Janet for getting the Zoom option for our meeting.

Approved donations for various organizations as follows:

Leschi Elementary School PTA: $250 to the Family Support program
Central Area Senior Center: $250
Rainier Valley Food Bank: $100
St. Mary's Food Bank: $100

Discussion of whether a list exists for restaurants with black owners. (Diane has one and will attach to minutes.)

Janet expressed concern that messages are coming through to us from the website and they are not being answered. Diane said she had been denied entry to the program and something needs to be worked out with Google.

Trevor expressed concern that the website is not being updated and mentioned the Community Council Federation; Diane pointed out that the Federation has not met in several years and there isn’t anything to add to the website except to add that again. She will ask Kirsten about updates.

John expressed concern about the height of grass in park spaces; it is not being cut. Diane mentioned an email re: tall grass in Seward Park area (Pritchard Beach) harboring ticks.

-Respectfully submitted: Diane Snell

LCC BOARD MEETING 7/6/20

Attending: Janice Merrill Brown, Trevor Menagh-Lalish, Janet Oliver, John Barber, Tracy Bier, Diane Snell

Janet presented the June treasury report. This does not include the recent donations we agreed upon; those will be reflected in the next report.

Leschi Star Nominations were reviewed and voted on. As soon as it is safe for us to meet again in the fall, we will invite the "Stars" to our meeting. Feedback from residents suggest that some nominations should be enhanced to honor the entire establishment and those changes will be made. Janice agreed to write up *********. Diane will enhance the nomination for ******** to include the entire staff. John has one to submit.

Leschi Elementary School: concern expressed about the abrupt dismissal of Lisa Moland with no reasons being given. Diane will put together a letter for Denise Juneau, Seattle School district head.

Resident Concern: CASC transfer of title & Board composition. John said that he had not seen any bylaws for the “new” Senior Center which would explain the Board make-up. The plans for the Senior Center have yet to be presented to the neighbors and it was felt by this resident that there would be resistance to any expansion. Tracy agreed to contact Dian Ferguson and pursue the concerns.

Website: Kirsten has agreed to add articles to the website at the hourly rate. Board is encouraged to bring any website additions to the next meeting in August.

CASC room rental: an invoice has still not been rec’d. Although John suggested that Secretary could try to figure out the charges, the Secretary declines to do so.

NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 10 AT 6PM (PRESUMABLY BY Zoom)

-Respectfully submitted: Diane Snell, Secretary

LESCHI CC BOARD MEETING 8/10/20

This meeting was held in two Zoom sessions as we needed more time.

Session 1: Janice Merrill Brown, Trevor Lalish-Menagh, Janet Oliver, Tracy Bier, Diane Snell

Session 2: Trevor had to leave for another meeting, but John Barber joined the group.

Janet: Treasury report. Donations recorded in this report.

Janice and Tracy have been working with Bart Evans of Bluwater Bistro re: disturbing activities in the parking lot each evening. Unruly groups have been harassing customers and made a threat to one of BluWater’s employees. Bart met with police who do not have the staff to be there each evening. Bart has hired two off-duty policemen to provide security and the evenings are quieter. Attached: email that Janice sent to the Mayor, Police Chief Carmen Best and District 3 City Council member, Kshama Sawant. Janice and Tracy are working on a project to get funds to help Bart pay for the extra security. Diane said she would want someone to check whether LCC can donate to a project without jeopardizing our non-profit status. All our donations have gone to non-profit organizations.

Letter to Denise Juneau re: LCC concern about dismissing Leschi School principal, Lisa Moland, with no causes cited. Was approved and Janice will sign and send. (Letter attached)

Diane: September deadline is August 17. We have been asked to distribute Hopscotch flyers in our neighborhood; it will take place Labor Day weekend. Janice willing; Diane will make arrangements to

Certificate of Deposit

$11,254.72

LESCHI COMMUNITY COUNCIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Balance 7/31/2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Revenue</td>
<td>$4,927.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dues</td>
<td>$1,305.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>$1,190.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>($903.00)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and postage</td>
<td>($3,569.03)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>$7,539.50</td>
<td>($5,147.03)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Restricted Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Balance 7/31/2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ArtWalk</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>($396.36)</td>
<td>$51.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leschi Natural Area</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
<td>$5,595.39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer Brenton Fund</td>
<td>$3,287.85</td>
<td>$2,253.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>String of Pearls</td>
<td>$2,130.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SW Frink Park</td>
<td>$1233.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Vaughn Memorial Fund</td>
<td>$1200.00</td>
<td>$3006.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wading Pool</td>
<td>$201.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitebear DreamCatcher</td>
<td>$40,074.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Totals                     | $9,939.50   | ($5,543.39)    | $40,074.22        |

$11,254.72
LESCHI COMMUNITY COUNCIL
140 LAKESIDE AVE. SUITE A #2 SEATTLE, WA 98122
August 10, 2020

Seattle Public Schools
2445 3rd. Ave. S
Seattle, WA 98134
Attn: Denise Juneau, Superintendent

Dear Ms. Juneau,

The Leschi Community Council Executive Board wishes to express its concern over the abrupt dismissal of Lisa Moland, Leschi Elementary School Principal. No causes for this action have been cited.

Ms. Moland, a woman of color, is a resident of the Leschi Community and most important, she reached out to the Leschi Community Council and wanted to work together for the success of the school.

Leschi is a small community but it has a long history of supporting its two public institutions: the Leschi Elementary School and the Central Area Senior Center. The Council was formed in 1958 with the goals of ending redlining and improving the school. We have seen improvement in the school over the years and were especially gratified to have a principal who understood the importance of community involvement.

The Council keeps the community informed of progress at the school by providing an update in each issue of the Leschi News. The Council, as well as individual residents, have contributed financially to the various needs of the school and the families of the students. With our financial and emotional connections to the school, we were quite naturally appalled at the district’s actions in the case of Ms. Moland.

We are writing in the hope of gaining a better understanding of this decision and some indication that the district recognizes the importance of community support.

Sincerely,

Janice Merrill Brown
President, Leschi Community Council

get the flyers. More Star awards need to be ordered. The Halloween
Spooktacular needs to be cancelled, no park permits or Special Event
permits will be issued until November 1st (and beyond depending on the
pandemic.) The new post office for 98122 will open in about 2 weeks.

~Respectfully submitted by Diane Snell

NEXT BOARD MEETING IS SEPTEMBER 7th (Labor Day).
**ENGAGE**

Where to begin? George Floyd, a 49-year-old Black man is on the ground outside of Cup Foods on Chicago Avenue South in Minneapolis around 8 p.m. “I can’t breathe,” he says. A police officer is kneeling on his neck. He pleads for his life. “They’re going to kill me,” he says… They did. The callousness and indifference of his killing captured on a bystander’s cell phone video camera.

I do not have words for what I feel or think about this. Hollow, empty, exhausted, outrage - perhaps? Incredulous? (Yet again) as my mind runs through the long list of unarmed Black men, women, and children killed by the police since Michael Brown’s killing in 2014. That is only the recent past. What about those going farther back in time, from the Jim Crow Era, let’s say, whose names we do not know and numbers we cannot count when the preferred method of extra-judicial execution was lynching? Racial terrorism and White supremacy live on.

This screening of SHOT is needed and is right for this moment. It is also intended for WHITE ALLIES and those White people who say they stand with and want to PARTNER with Black and People of Color in the struggle to dismantle racism and White supremacy. In probably one of the most hopeful and optimistic speeches ever given by a Black leader, then-Senator Barack Obama spoke in his “A More Perfect Union” speech on March 18, 2008, of an “unyielding faith in the decency and generosity of the American people.” A belief that morality, the “right thing to do,” would win out. The “American people” he speaks of are White people. The truth and reality of SHOT to Black and Brown people is already known and it is White people that are being asked to be decent, generous, and to do the right thing, as a moral imperative.

In an effort to ENGAGE you and be ENGAGED with you, we are asking that before you view SHOT you ask yourself the following questions, then again after the viewing:

- What are you DOING to move the needle forward toward racial equality?
- What are you DOING to dismantle racism and White supremacy?
- Do you think you need to DO something?
- If you think you are already DOING, do you think that is enough?
- Do you want to begin to DO or DO more to end the violence directed towards Black and Brown people?

Do not take these questions as a way to make you feel guilty or to shame you. That is not their intention. Think of them as tools for you to begin to measure where you are and how you might move into ACTION. We need you to share in the heavy lifting of this demolition project.

~Donald Byrd

---

Join us on Facebook: LESCHI or see our website: [leschicommunitycouncil.org](http://leschicommunitycouncil.org) or [leschinews.com](http://leschinews.com)