

leschinews

Leschi Community Council is a participating member of the Seattle Community Council Federation

February 7 at 7pm




Join us for a tour with the artist, Lawrence Pitre, of his current works. His focus is on who we are in the Central District, where he grew up and learned to appreciate the many ethnicities and cultures that make up this diverse district. Our art critic, Susan Platt, has featured Pitre and his art in this month's Culture Column.

Grace United Methodist Church (lower level hall)
722 30th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98144

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SAVE THE DATE

MAR 6 AT 7PM
Public Safety
(See page 4)

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President's Message

Hello Fellow Leschi Dwellers,

Amazing that Spring is almost upon us and it's leap year... February will have 29 days and those born on that day will only technically have birthdays every fourth year.

This month's program will be a special treat. Lawrence Pitre, local artist extraordinaire, will be showing many pieces of his art and having discussions with guests about his art and its creation. Wednesday, February 7, 7-8:30pm and the venue is the lower level of the Grace United Methodist Church, 722 30th Ave, S.

As I write this, we've only experienced a slight inconvenience (compared to other parts of the country) courtesy of our weather. As Spring approaches, it is my wish we have an early one and it's warm.

Coming up in May will be our election of Board members who have filled their mandatory terms. The President and Vice President positions will be opening. Please feel free to ask what these positions entail; we will be voting at the May meeting.

I will continue to co-produce our annual ArtWalk in 2024, and I'm looking for helpers to assist me—no matter how little or how much time you have, you are welcome. We will start having meetings monthly soon for the 2024 event on Saturday, September 14.

Please reach out to neighbors, friends, and those who may be alone and/or infirm. When one is sequestered for any reason, it can get lonely. Take good care and remember to be kind. A smile goes a long way.

Kind Regards,

Janice Merrill Brown

President, Leschi Community Council



"The best way to predict the future is to invent it." -Frank Maquire

COMPASS

Hi Neighbors,



Homes sales in Leschi, Mt Baker, Madrona, Madison Park and Seward Park have been very slow since October.

That's about to change, as Sellers prepare their homes for the busy Spring market and Buyers grow tired of sitting in the wings waiting for new inventory and rates top drop.

If you'd like to strategize how to maximize the sale of your home or bid and win the one you've been looking for, please reach out. I'd love to help.

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Scott Lennard is a real estate broker affiliated with Compass. Compass is a licensed real estate broker and operates by Equal Housing Opportunity laws.

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THE WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE

By the time you read this, the Policy committee will have passed its cutoff date. It has always amazed me that a state this size with its important tech industry, wine and tourism businesses and airline industry (if currently faltering) has a part-time legislature. It seems there are so many things to work on and this year we even have a short session. Is it no wonder that it takes forever to make incremental changes like moving from the most regressive tax system in the country to the fourth from the bottom? This session ends March 7 and much of what they are working on right now is proposed legislation from last year's session. When these very important jobs are part-time, it limits the number of individuals who might want to do this work.

As I was writing this, the U.S. government announced that 2023 was the hottest year ever recorded—"by far." "Global temperatures in 2023 were on average 1.48 degrees Celsius (2.66 degrees Fahrenheit) higher than pre-industrial times—nearly at the 1.5-degree-Celsius threshold beyond which—if sustained—the effects of global warming could become irreversible." (Quote from government announcement.) I wondered how much attention would be paid to global warming in a 60 day session.

A quick search (app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo) showed a number of bills on climate...too many to process in a 60 day period. One bill to watch is HB 1368 which proposes to transition the state's school buses to electric zero emission vehicles. This would not only reduce air pollution but provide a healthier space for students and reduce respiratory illness.

It must be frustrating for new Senators and Representatives who approach the job eagerly only to discover how limited they are in making change before the cutoff dates that occur much sooner than the actual 60 days allowed in the session.

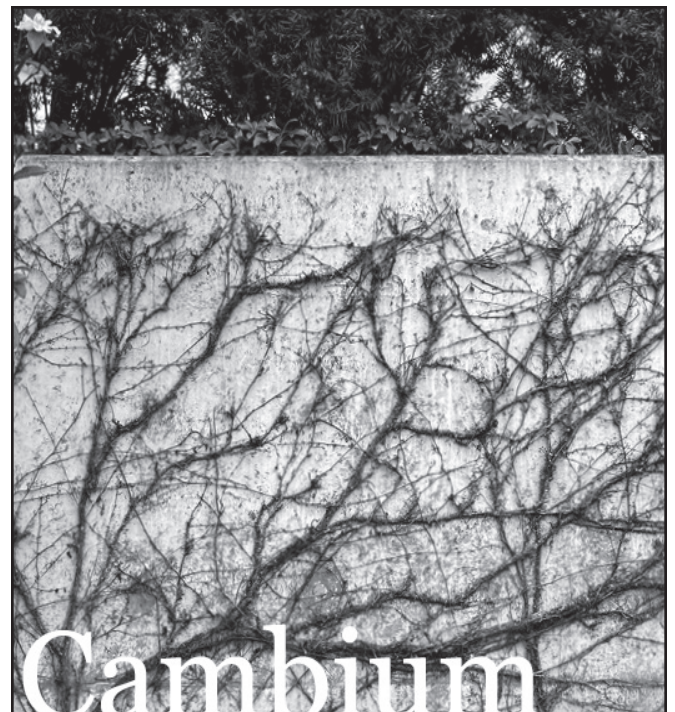
Even expanding the short session to the longer one every year would increase costs and increasing income (read "taxes" here) to pay for the change would take as long as it has to rise from the regressive bottom. (See Danny Westneat's

comprehensive article on what the regressive tax system means to those who earn the least: *Sunday Seattle Times*, January 21, 2024.)


I have often wondered how much our national representatives make per hour; it's very difficult to figure out with all the breaks and the fact that they don't work a 5 day week, but it is surely many times more than the national minimum wage of \$7.25 reserved for ordinary folks. One must have to pay their babysitter more!

On a lighter note, 2 interesting bills from the 2023 session became law this January 1: employers cannot ask for drug tests on job applicants before hiring but can request a test later if there is a performance issue on the job and the other refreshing bill adds a 10 day wait period after a background check for a firearms purchase. A small step but in the right direction.

-Diane Snell



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Neighborhood and Beyond

MARCH MEETING

We invite you to join us at our March community meeting on Wednesday, March 6, to discuss public safety in Leschi. We hope to bring together residents and local business owners for this discussion. Similar to last year, we plan to host meetings with Seattle organizations this year (Parks, SDOT, SPD, etc.) and last year the public safety conversation provided good context for those meetings. We would also like to assess interest in forming a Leschi public safety committee to make progress on the public safety issues throughout the year. (Venue is Grace United Methodist Church, 722 30th Ave S at 7pm)

-Ashley Martin

SEATTLE GIRLS' SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL: FROM CLASSROOM TO COURTROOM

On December 14th, 7th-grade students from Seattle Girls' School convened at the Judge Patricia H. Clark Children and Family Justice Center ready to present a case before a real judge and a live jury of volunteers for their annual mock trial. This highly anticipated event stemmed from a two-week "Law School" intensive, where students delved into trial procedures, analyzed facts and witness statements, formulated case theories, and collaborated within prosecution or defense teams.

The mock trial not only provides a hands-on experience of the justice system but also embodies a community effort. Every year, families, judges, lawyers, and high school students



unite to ensure the success of this event. Gabi Robbins, a volunteer and co-captain of the Franklin High School mock trial team, and an SGS Alum, shared her perspective: "Participating in SGS's 7th-grade Mock Trial ignited my passion for law. It influenced my consideration of attending law school. Returning to initiate this experience for current 7th graders means a lot. I want them to understand that with hard work, they can pursue any path."

Wendy Ewbank, Social/Global Studies teacher and one of SGS's founding members, expressed that one skill emphasized in the 7th-grade curriculum is "the ability to see multiple perspectives on a topic. Preparing a legal case really necessitates understanding both sides of the dispute. Another goal is to increase students' awareness by providing a hands-on experience of our justice system in an actual courtroom setting with real life judges."

The enduring success of the mock trial is rooted in its reflection of SGS's mission: to learn joyfully, work collaboratively, think independently, and champion change. Its integration into the 7th-grade curriculum solidifies its status as a rite of passage for students, making it a truly memorable event, one that equips students with skills that help them well after their time in high school. Jing Redman, board member and SGS Alum who sat on the jury, shares how mock trial shaped her skillset today: "It [mock trial] helped me clearly communicate my point of view in a logical, fact-based manner. Being taught this skill as a young woman helped me become confident in my opinions and ideas and help others see my point of view as well. To me, this skill can set you apart from good to great in any situation." A huge thanks goes out to all volunteers and community members who helped make this year's mock trial a huge success. We're looking forward to another successful mock trial next winter!

-Will Wickizer, Communications Specialist



CENTRAL AREA SENIOR CENTER NEWS

The month of February is shaping up to offer several major programs featuring love-themed activities to help us recognize the joys of partnerships in a variety of forms. Mark your calendar for a fun and happy-themed February month of love. Activities include:

- Chinese New Year Celebration: February 12.
- Mardi Gras and Valentine's Day Celebration: February 14.
- Green Dolphin Lounge, Friday February 16 featuring Blues Man CT Thompson.
- Black History Dating Game: February 21, 11 am.
- Music Bingo later in the week.
- Wine Tasting and Chocolate Pairing: February 28, 2:30pm. Volunteers are needed; call the CASC at 206.726.4926 to sign up as a volunteer.
- Movie screenings: Starting March, every 2nd and 4th Wednesday, CASC will host movies at 1:30pm; a wonderful selection of recent movies will be featured. Brochures have been created and are available at the front desk.
- CASC "new" website, casrcenter.org launching at the end of January.

Call 206.726.4926 if you have questions about the programs as the website is being updated.

-Dian Ferguson

LESCHI SCHOOL UPDATE

The 2023 Leschi Elementary Giving Garland, supporting people in our community...thank you for another year of generosity and support!

The Leschi Elementary Giving Garland, a charitable program, is in its 14th year of supporting Leschi Elementary families in need of help during the winter months and holidays. On behalf of the families who received help, we extend a tremendous THANK YOU to everyone who gave so generously and willingly!

This year the Giving Garland supported nearly 50 families with more than 150 children, with toys, athletic and art supplies, musical instruments, books, games, clothing, bedding, diapers, car seats, groceries, warm winter coats and more. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our school, greater Leschi and surrounding neighborhood communities, we were able to distribute **more than \$8,000 in gift cards for specific gifts, groceries, and clothing as well as approximately 600 gifts!** THANK YOU!!!!

Your kindness made a huge difference in so many lives...

"This is such a blessing, times are just so difficult right now—it's hard to thank you all enough."

"Our family came to Seattle (the USA) with very little, the generosity at Leschi has made the transition so much easier for my family."

"We are grateful for anything and everything we receive, but when my kids get something they asked for, it is truly special."

A special thank you for all the years of making it come together goes out to Jennifer Marquardt, Katie Busby, the Leschi Community Council, Grace United Methodist Church, Melvin the Mail Carrier, Broadmoor Golf Club, Herzl-Ner Tamid Conservative Congregation, Mercer Island Presbyterian Church, generous anonymous donors, and all of the GG volunteers.

-Jennifer Marquardt

DO YOU WANT INPUT INTO LAND USE?

On Tuesday, January 9, the Central Area Neighborhood District Council's Land Use Review Committee (LURC) held an open meeting with council member Joy Hollingsworth to discuss the merits of public meetings as part of the design review process. One goal of the design review process is to ensure that new housing or commercial developments consider the needs of the community.

Public input, however, has come under fire in recent years as an obstacle to necessary development. The argument goes that the process is used by not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) neighbors to slow down or stop development. Secondly, feedback is usually provided by a group of engaged neighbors who have the time to show up at review meetings and who are generally not representative of the community members affected. And lastly, the people who currently live in the neighborhood can't represent the interests of those who need housing and are



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looking to move into the neighborhood. As such many states have been looking to streamline public input or eliminate public input altogether.

At this meeting, however, attendees' main concern was that development plans are often submitted without regard for how a building fits within the larger space and plans for the community. Besides affordability, does the building provide space for families and for people who want to live in the neighborhood long term or just studios and one-bedroom apartments? How is the building connected to public spaces? Does its curb invite pedestrian traffic or leave room for trees?

LURC provided Joy Hollingsworth with several examples of major projects in the Central District where public input improved the development for the better. Jeff Floor, the committee chair, pointed out that in Seattle a study commissioned by the city found that public meetings had a negligible impact on the total turnaround time for a Master Use permit. Lastly, a way to streamline the process may be to address adherence to good urban design principles upstream. What if city planners established relationships with the community and pushed developers to adhere to design guidelines, rather than helping developers make just enough changes to obtain a permit?

As the city is working this year towards establishing a new comprehensive plan for the decades to come, the committee asked council member Hollingsworth to advocate for a neighborhood-friendly design review process and reject a process that would let developers simply focus on buildings over how a building enhances the neighborhood.

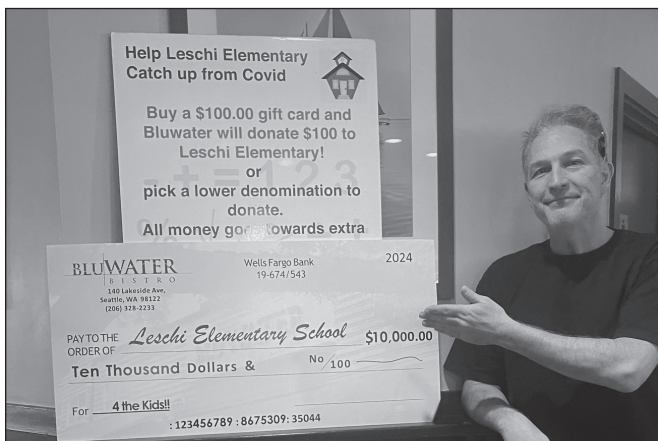
Should you have concerns about land use in Leschi or public input for the design review process, bring it to our attention at leschicouncil@gmail.com. We will connect you with LURC or help facilitate the dialog with the city.

-Matthias Linnenkamp

BLUWATER GIFT TO LESCHI ELEMENTARY

A huge THANK YOU to BluWater Bistro and all the generous patrons and donors who together raised \$10,000 for Leschi Elementary School.

On January 24, Bart Evans, owner of Leschi's BluWater Bistro, delivered a \$10,000 check to Leschi Elementary. For the last few months, when diners at the BluWater bought gift cards, the restaurant dedicated matching funds for the



school. This is the fourth year that Evans has delivered such a welcome gift to the school. One year funds raised went toward purchasing Chromebooks. Last year the annual donation supported additional pay for hourly staff who helped students with extra reading and math skills. This year Leschi Elementary plans to use the BluWater monies to pay for an additional tutor. Evans enjoys directing fundraising efforts toward a neighborhood concern where the impact on young people can be felt immediately.

-Anne Depue

LEAP DAY

As well as everything else, 2024 is a Leap Year. What we will leap into—or out of—is yet to be determined.

Leschi residents seeking to do both might try Lake Washington, which is forecast to be a bracing 45 degrees on Feb 29.

Those of us of a more sanguine disposition might prefer to brace ourselves for events later in the year potentially involving a leap of faith or into the unknown.

Leaping to conclusions would seem premature—not that this will stop anyone.

-Malcolm Harker

LIFE AND TIMES IN LESCHI: FRINK PARK, PART 3

A couple of bits of Frink Park history that did not survive the ages were two clay tennis courts. One was on South King Street, just below 31st Avenue. Built in 1911, it was beset by weeds and required continuous maintenance, leading to its abandonment by 1935. Perhaps due to the demands of tennis players, it was restored in 1941. But by the late 1940s, most tennis courts were asphalt or concrete. It was abandoned permanently by 1956. I have only known it as an open but shaded site that seemed like it would be a good picnic place on a hot day, except that I never saw anyone gather or even walk there. Just in the past year it has been partially filled in with some plantings.

Another clay tennis court is much less known or visible. One of the add-ons to the original Frink land donation was a triangle on the east side of Lake Washington Boulevard South, between the King Street and Lane Street stairways. Looking down from the Boulevard, one would have to strain to see a flat area through the foliage below. According to Ariel Stout, who lived nearby and played tennis there as a child in the 1920s, it had a concrete wall and “had always been there.” She honed her skill at an early age by hitting tennis balls against that wall. Searching for the wall, I was rewarded after bushwacking through the low foliage just south of King Street. I found the original wall, about three and a half feet high and a hundred feet long, holding up the steep embankment coming down from the Boulevard. The tennis court must have been carved out of the ground below. It has long since been abandoned, leaving no evidence of its former use save for the flatness, covered with soil. Alder trees, which enjoy that kind of damp, open space, have



The century-old concrete wall along the former tennis court



The bridge at Frink Creek in early days

been growing for a while. A few years ago, the space was cleared of weeds and replanted with native species, including cedar trees that are now thriving.

While we're on Lake Washington Boulevard, what about those decaying wooden bollards along the curves just south of the intersection with Frink Place? They were visually pleasing, made of sections of what look like telephone poles, and they lasted 40-some years. Now they are mostly lying on the ground, decomposing. I reported them to the city using the Find It, Fix It app and got no response. A member of Friends of Frink Park explained why. The bollards were installed in the 1980s with Parks Department approval but private funding and labor. Now, since the city itself didn't install them, it doesn't want to be bothered with maintenance.

Another of the few human-made things in the park along the Boulevard is the attractive concrete bridge over the outflow of Frink Creek. Never seen by motorists, or by most pedestrians, are the engravings on the sides of the bridge walls facing away from the road. They are worth a look, while out on a leisurely stroll on a bright day.

At one time there were stairs up the hill to the north of the bridge, where the rhododendron grove is now. There was a sidewalk just above the road on the west side, as shown in the old photo above. The bridge was built between 1909 and 1911.

Above the bridge is a waterfall, also created by humans. Trails from the road allow for up-close appreciation.

The organization Friends of Frink Park works to preserve the park as a natural urban forest. To get involved with the group's preservation efforts, see frinkpark.org.

-Roger Lippman

The author writes monthly about Leschi history and his experiences over his 48 years in the neighborhood.

THE CATHOLIC LADDER

Why were early Roman Catholic Missionaries so successful in the Pacific Northwest? My college history courses described the adaptability of priests, nuns, French Canadian voyageurs, and fur trappers in mingling with Native tribes. The voyageurs and trappers often took Native wives, were rarely accused of land-grabbing, and quickly learned the Indians' methods of survival. "Blackrobes," as priests were called, represented a hardy lot and carried extraordinary religious training and spartan experience.

In 1838 Fathers Francis N. Blanchet and Modest Demers arrived in the Oregon Country from eastern Canada. A few years later Father Pierre-Jean de Smet founded a mission among the Flathead people. These men and others had carte blanche to provide religious instruction and secular help to both the Natives and the white pioneers. The Hudson's Bay Company and its white-maned Chief Factor, John McLoughlin, served as an arm of the Roman Catholic church in reaching and serving Oregon residents.

Catholic missionaries created another ally to aid their work, described as follows: A simple strip of cloth on rude paper was unfurled and shown to the curious Natives. One such visual aid, found at Fort Nisqually, was made of thick paper pasted on heavy cloth. Simple black cartoons revealed a "story" or progression of events which were patiently explained to Native listeners. Father Blanchet may have used the first such a "ladder" in 1842 at the Cowlitz. This diagrammatic tool was fascinating to the unsophisticated eye. Here was a step-by-step tale of mankind, adventure, imposing structures and distant places.

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The co-called “Catholic Ladder” described the following: at the bottom were the six days of creation; a circle represented Sunday, or the Seventh, the Holy Day. The trees represented knowledge; other symbols suggested Good and Evil. Parallel black bars represented Great Periods of Time: e.g.) Adam to Noah; Noah to Abraham; Abraham to the completion of the Temple; and from the Temple to Augustus Caesar. Then the priests moved their fingers up the scale (or ladder) to indicate Jesus’ life, and the Christian story followed. The ladder conveniently ended in 1842, or whatever year the seminar was presented.

Such imposing figures! Noah, Augustus Caesar, Jesus. This simplified history lesson, given by a “Blackrobe” surrounded by his emblems of office – books and crosses – was an exciting diversion for Native listeners. The “Catholic Ladder” helped a Native recruit remember, think, and perhaps dream about the strange new powers that seemed to guide these dedicated white visitors.

Today, reproductions of the “Ladder” are a curiosity, a remnant of pioneer days. Early Protestant missionaries had a difficult time matching the Roman Catholic version. Soon, however, life in the Oregon Country, with religious and national rivalries at every turn, resulted in confusion and anger among Native groups. The “Catholic Ladder” served a different time and was eventually forgotten.

–Junius Rochester



Junius Rochester, whose family has shaped the city for many generations, is an award-winning Northwest historian and author of numerous books about Seattle and other places.

NOTHING HAS CHANGED?

A friend in her 80s often blurts, “Nothing’s changed. Nothing’s changed. They do the same thing they always did.”

I regularly reply, “I must disagree. Some things have changed, not enough, not quickly enough, but don’t tell me nothing has changed.”

We are talking about race, race relations—the plight of Blacks in the USA. Because this is Black History Month, I knew I had a subject for this article when I saw the January 3, 2024, *Seattle Times* editorial “Investigate at Federal Level Why Justice Failed Manuel Ellis.” I wanted to call my friend and say, “See? This is change!” There was a time when the police officers would not have been tried. And though many disagree with the not

guilty verdict, all must agree that the trial is a step—a meager step say some—toward equal justice under the law. When I heard that the judge was allowing material about Ellis’s criminal record and toxicology report, I thought the officers would be found innocent. (Read the editorial for more details.)

Another change I always notice is the coverage of an incident by the media. Though little happened for a long time in the Ellis case (police case?), I was surprised at the space the trial received in the newspaper and on television. There was a time when such would never have happened anywhere in the country. The conviction of policeman Derek Michael Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd comes to mind.

The consent decree against the Seattle Police Department—and other police departments across the country—is a change. Rarely do the decrees go as far as I think they should go, but usually they make a few positive changes. You may remember that the Department of Justice decreed in 2012 that Seattle “implement reforms ‘with the goal of ensuring that police services are delivered to the people of Seattle in a manner that full[ly] complies with the Constitution and laws of the United States, effectively ensures public trust and officer safety, and promotes public confidence...’” What stood out to me was the acknowledgment of the use of excessive force by the police. As far back as I can remember I have heard stories of police mistreating and/or killing people of color. So often it seemed only other people of color listened, believed, and agreed. In 2023, the “core” of the SPD decree was terminated because the police had satisfied most of the requirements. However, SPD still has work to do.

During the Obama Administration, Attorney General Eric Holder issued at least fifteen consent decrees to police departments. These decrees rarely satisfy anyone, but often make the public aware of the actions of the departments and allow victims of police unfairness to have their say. Some surveys report that officers themselves admit they perform their jobs better as they progress through the stipulations of a decree. The Trump Administration curbed the decrees; Attorney General Merrick Garland rescinded the curbs.

Police departments are not the only segments of the population expected to comply with consent decrees. Many decrees are issued to educational institutions. During the Sixties, for instance, ten states were handed consent decrees demanding the end of their dual systems of education. Consent decrees, for example, correct violations of the Constitution in antitrust cases, the jail system, the environment, the Disability Act, and other areas where there is discrimination. While the decrees do not solve all problems, the publicity they arouse always alerts and informs some citizens and provides improvement.

Affirmative action, always opposed by some, initiated other changes. Brown vs. the Board of Education may be the biggest change. Though it often took years to be implemented in some parts of the country and some schools and school districts are as segregated as ever, other places have made progress despite the Supreme Court’s decisions in the Bakke (1978) and Students for Fair Admissions at Harvard (2023). Attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) abound, yet individuals whose goal is to make the United States a more perfect Union recognize the necessity of such action. For centuries, in numerous ways, many Americans have been excluded: Native Americans, African

Americans, Jews, more people of color than can be named here, women, the poor, LBGQTQIA+. These individuals were excluded from everyday activities and life-changing opportunities. Says the LBGQTQIA Resource Center, the acronym stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), intersex, and asexual (or allies, aromantic, or agender. I never forget “accomplices” because in every moment of every movement people not in the oppressed groups recognized/recognize the need to end the unfairness or, at least, make a diligent attempt to end the unfairness. Courts have always had members who saw/see this unfairness but preferred/prefer the inequity and exclusion, the status quo. As employees and governing boards become more diverse, more change will come. I have been in many conversations, meetings, groups where my voice did not always sway a decision but raised questions, made listeners examine long-held beliefs or never-considered possibilities. Careful, keen observation often births revelations.

Sports is yet another area where there are changes. Great Black high school players once went to Grambling College, Southern University, or another of the Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs). According to *The Ringer*, 1972 was the first year all “white” schools played “Black schools.” Now students at Black schools are often pursued by the larger universities. The first Black Heisman Trophy winner was Ernie Davis, in 1961. In 2024, three of the four Heisman Trophy finalists are Blacks. Louisiana State University’s Jayden Daniels won though most of us in this area would have voted for University of Washington’s Michael Penix, Jr. And in 2023, eleven Black quarterbacks began the season in National Football League (NFL) games. Thanks to token Griffey, Jr., a greater change: the Major League Baseball All-Star Game invited students from HBCUs to play a game the week of the All-Star Game. Students who may never have been seen by a scout got a chance to play in front of many scouts. Debbie Thomas, Tiger Woods, Venus and Serena Williams, Coco Gauff, Simone Biles, the list of champion athletes continues. The number will grow as more barriers are removed.

Change in entertainment steadily mounts also. The number of African-American stars and hosts on television rises steadily. Seeing several African Americans, Asians, and Hispanics/Latinos—in one show—is not the rarity it once was. Servile nor buffoon describes these roles. Taraji. P. Henson weeps because of her treatment in the business, the pay, and having to audition; so many remember how long it took to have the story of Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughn, and Mary Jackson told. Stephen Spielberg and Quincy Jones produced *The Color Purple* in 1985; Spielberg, Jones, Winfrey, and Scott Sanders produced the film in 2023. Byron Allen and Tyler Perry made their dreams as well as the dreams of many others materialize. Success in music may be the most obvious area of success.

As would be expected, becoming president of a predominately white school may have required more time. In the 2000s, at least fifteen appointments have been made. An Ivy League university would take more time. Dr. Ruth Simmons became the President of Brown in 2001. It took 387 years for African American Dr. Claudine Gay to become president of Harvard and one press conference to have her exit the position six months later. She arrived but could not stay. She reminded me of a 1994 national conference I attended at

the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—“Defending Our Name: Black Women in the Academy, 1894 -1994.” Many institutions of higher learning had no African Americans for more than a century after their founding. (See *Complex*, *The First Black Students Admitted to 15 Prestigious U. S. Universities, and Their Stories.*”) Though the numbers are often small, and students often face bigotry and intolerance, African Americans are all over the country majoring in all areas.

The greatest change during contemporary times may be the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Becoming first-class citizens predates the Emancipation Proclamation; Blacks have constantly fought to become first-class citizens. Many people paid a high price to vote; some lost their lives. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was the biggest boost. Sarah Pruitt in *History* quotes historian James Cobbs: “... by the mid-1980s there were more Black people in public office in the South than in the rest of the nation combined.... In 2012, turnout of Black voters exceeded that of white voters for the first time....66.6% of eligible Black voters turned out to help re-elect Barack Obama.” In 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that states no longer needed “pre-clearance” to change voting laws. The Brennan Center says, “14 states have enacted [22] laws making it harder to vote while 23 states have enacted laws making it easier.” Because of the gutting of the Voting Rights Act in 2013 and gerrymandering, Blacks and allies must continue the right-to-vote battle and have our votes counted.

In every instance, I believe African Americans have made outstanding contributions and could have filled the above and numerous other positions much earlier and been as successful had they had equal access to opportunities. Despite the many obstacles—lack of heritage, education, and wealth plus the addition of segregation and discrimination in countless cases—millions have overcome. And millions of these millions help others to overcome. I cannot forget nor ignore life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness or that all of us should have these. I see room for tremendous improvement. But, no, my friend will not get me to agree nothing has changed; I will always point out changes. I will clamor for more change.

-Georgia S. McDade

Georgia S. McDade, a charter member of the African-American Writers' Alliance (AAWA), writes stories, essays, poems, and plays. Her works include Travel Tips for Dream Trips, questions and answers about her six-month, solo trip around the world; four volumes of poetry called Outside the Cave; a collection of stories and essays entitled Observations and Revelations; and her latest book of poetry The Unlevel Field. Visit her website at georgiasmcdade.org.

Culture Corner

LAWRENCE PITRE: AN ARTIST OF OUR TIMES

Lawrence Pitre is an artist for our times. His artwork brings together people at a time when everybody seems to be isolating themselves into separate identities and those identities are fragmented as well.

For his long series of paintings called “Who We Are” (visible in a small version at 12th and Yesler), Pitre did a lot of research to find many aspects of the history of the Central District that have not been acknowledged in art before.

He begins with Chief Seattle but comes back to Indigenous peoples later in the series. We see the effort to assimilate Native Americans in boarding schools and the Duwamish in 1890 preserving their culture.

He then depicts the Denny family and the Yesler lumber mill (called Skid Row, because the logs were “skidded” to the water).

Pitre moves on from the founding white families to Chinese Coal miners and Japanese Farmers. He depicts Jewish and Chinese grocery store owners, Filipinos and Irish.

Another focus is individuals like the Gang of Four, (Roberto Maestas, Bernie Whitebear, Bob Santos, and Larry Gossett).

Pitre based one panel on a photograph of James W. Washington, Jr. with his *Fountain of Triumph* sculpture (recently restored and now at 24th and Union). Others feature Bruce Lee, De Charlene and Earl’s Cuts and Style as well as his own parents.

Several panels address gentrification, and inequity particularly in housing, but there are also celebratory subjects like a Japanese Wedding.



Lawrence Pitre. “Seattle Curtain Manufacturing Co. 1960, operated by the Capeluto family which produced custom textiles for nearly nine decades, despite the restrictive covenants in the Central Area” from the series “We Are One.” 30x24in acrylic painting done on canvas.

Pitre grew up not far from all of these places. His trajectory to become an artist is unusual and reminds us of the privilege especially white artists enjoy in gaining access and opportunity. At an art class his teacher singled him out and he did go to the UW School of Art where he was fortunate to take classes with Jacob Lawrence. Lawrence said to him “promise me you won’t ever quit.” There is an affinity

with Lawrence's "Migration" series, but Pitre's paintings are larger in scale and focus on Seattle as an immigration hub for many different ethnic groups.

Pitre tried to find work in the arts in the 1980s, graphic design on a Mac, but nothing worked out, so he joined the military for 13 years: he had three deployments to Iraq and even volunteered to go there! Fortunately, he came back whole. Then he worked for the Veteran Benefit Administration for 10 years

He took art classes toward a Masters at Seattle University because his children nagged him into it. As a thesis project he proposed "How does art affect communities?" and that was the springboard for his work.

In addition to the series "We Are One," he is currently working on 14 signs for a path in Beer Shiva Park in Rainier Valley, scheduled to open to the public this spring. In another project he worked with Hawthorne Elementary School students. Each grade level was asked "what does culture mean to you and your family." He put their drawings on a canvas which now hangs over the library door. A project for the new Africatown apartment building on 23rd is also in progress and he has completed a work for the Bob Santos building in the International District.

"Jazz," a large 3 panel work, appears as you enter the parking garage for the Amazon grocery store at 23rd and Jackson (which sadly is supposed to make up for destroying the beloved Red Apple that was there for so many years – the subject of another one of Pitre's panels). As you go into the garage (I walked in), you can easily see his multi-panel series, with the theme of music that honors a few of the many musicians who performed in this area.

Pitre has created more than ten different series each one with twelve works, including recently the "Stations of the Cross." He also experiments with different media such as painting on burlap or compost (!).

Pitre is an artist who brings communities together and thinks about the place of art in our lives. What a wonderful endeavor. Lawrence Pitre shares both the joys and sorrows of urban life.

Lawrence Pitre will be presenting his art at our monthly meeting February 7 at 7pm, Grace United Methodist Church 720 30th Ave. S 98144,

-Susan Platt, PhD

www.artandpoliticsnow.com

LONGTIME JAZZ GURU RETIRES

After 41 years of hosting Art of Jazz, Ken Wiley has retired. Ken had a collection of oldies (often on old LPs which could be as scratchy as his voice; Paul de Barros felt Ken's voice became raspy as he aged; I was a latecomer to Art of Jazz and felt the memorable voice was just Ken.

But where else would you hear the giants of yore? Paul de Barros wrote a comprehensive review of Wiley's career in the *Seattle Times* Sunday edition of January 14, 2024. He told how more supporters called in with donations during his show than any other show except for the Car Guys, Click

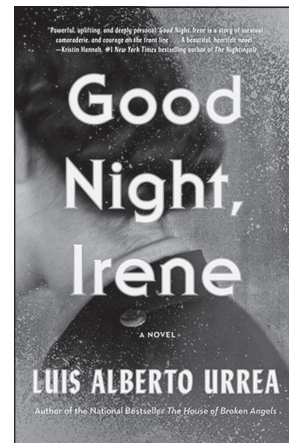
and Clack. The station is not replacing him as some people are not replaceable, but one can listen to old shows online at KNKX On Demand.

-Diane Snell

WINTER IS A TIME FOR READING!

During the cold, gray winter, we find ourselves neglecting the yard in favor of reading a book in some cozy nook. I recommend *Goodnight Irene* by Luis Alberto Urrea. He paints a tribute to his grandmother as she volunteers for the Red Cross Donuts and Coffee buses during WWII to escape an abusive relationship.

What have you been reading? Send your recommendations to leschinews@comcast.net. We'll pass them on in the March *Leschi News* when the weather will still be miserable!



-Diane Snell



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Seeking Sustenance...

WINE WE LOVE

Love is in the air all month long, and what better way to celebrate than compiling many of our favorite wines. Following is a Top 10 List from the last several months, combining Staff Picks and Customer Picks, to create Wines We Love. Pablo Picasso may have said, “Love is the greatest refreshment in life,” however, this list may challenge that line of thinking!

Red Wine

2019 Gravel Bar Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley \$16.99

Full-bodied, with flavors of black cherry, mocha, currant, and plum. Subtle and elegant, complex and concentrated. –*Winemaker notes*

2022 Violet Hill Pinot Noir Rogue Valley \$17.99

Medium-bodied, with primary aromas of dark cherry, mocha and floral, that are echoed on the satiny palate, with a bright finish. From the Rogue Valley AVA in Southern Oregon. –*Winemaker notes*

2021 Rocks of Bawn Pinot Noir Yamhill Carlton \$19.99

Pinot Noir from the Yamhill Carlton area in the Willamette Valley tends to be bolder than those from neighboring regions. Darker than many Pinots—this delicious wine will satisfy your inner rockstar. Enjoy with a whole roasted animal with a cacophony of friends! –*Winemaker notes*

2018 Chateau Laffitte Carcasset Saint-Estephe \$25.99

Good complexity on the nose, chocolate, cherries, plums and blackcurrants. Succulent straight away, the tannins are abundant and fill the mouth but with a soft, juicy chewiness that’s really pleasant. –*Decanter, 93-points*

2019 Travaglini Gattinara \$38.99

Marked minerality and complexity. On the nose, aromas of red fruit, blackberry, plum and licorice with hints of vanilla and leather. Full-bodied palate, with intense flavors of cherry, raspberry and spice culminating in a long and smooth finish. –*Winemaker notes*

2015 Moscone Barolo Bussia \$39.99

Intense red fruit jam and berries, floral aromas of dried rose and violet, followed by more complex hints of spices, licorice, leather, and undergrowth. Long persistence in drinking, thanks to the smooth and harmonious tannins. –*Importer notes*



White Wine

2019 Didier Dagueneau Pur Sang Pouilly-Fume \$142.99

Price is not a typo – Leschi only received a few bottles of this rare gem from an iconic producer. The compact, light bodied core carries masses of fragrance across the palate and beyond on the long finish. There’s clarity and freshness, with a thread of acidity and minerality pulling the wine through like a needle and thread. –*Vinous, 96-points*

2022 Cherrier La Croix Poignant Sancerre \$30.99

You can taste the sea salt, smell the crushed oyster shells and savor the citrus-bright energy and suave texture with each and every sip. Aromas of citrus zest, lime juice, crushed stones, sea spray, preserved lemons. Richly aromatic, light on the tongue. Fresh notes of citrus, white fruit, fresh hay. –*Winemaker notes*

2022 Terlan Pinot Grigio Alto Adige \$25.99

Pleasant aromas of ripe melon and freshly picked MacIntosh apples. Crisp and light on the palate with lovely pineapple, Bartlett pear and apple flavors that harmoniously mingle with orange zest and almond notes. The finish lingers with spicy tropical fruit. –*Winemaker notes*



...in the Wilds of Seattle

2022 Leschi Cellars Sagemoor Collection Chardonnay White Bluffs \$21.99

Leschi Cellars created a single vineyard Chardonnay from Sagemoor’s Gamache Vineyard in the newly appointed White Bluffs AVA. This wine is bright and focused. Meyer lemon citrus leads the way, followed by subtle oak, balanced creaminess, and a long, dry, zippy finish.

-Kenneth Benner

Kenneth Benner, a Seattle area native, is a trained chef and has worked in such restaurants as Barbacoa, B.O.K.A. Kitchen + Bar, and Dablia Lounge. Ken is the wine buyer at Leschi Market. He has a passion for learning, a meticulous palate, and a tenacity for searching out the best for his customers while offering some of the most highly coveted wines in the area. His monthly column is intended to inspire and explore new choices in wine, learn about wine with his readers, and share his knowledge and experience in the wine world. Check out the latest at www.LeschiMart.com or to request to be added to email updates at wine@leschimarket.com.



CACTUS: AN ADVENTURE IN TASTE

4220 E Madison 206.324.4140; Hours: Mon. 11:30am-9pm; Tues.-Thurs. 11:30am-9:30pm; Fri. 11:30am-10pm; Sat. 10am-10pm; Sun. 10am-9pm; Weekend Brunch 10am-2pm

If you’re seeking a rejuvenating getaway amidst this interminably dreary winter, you need not look further than neighboring Madison Park for the original Cactus. This beckoning establishment offers its diners a warm and vibrant vacation, if only for a meal. Opened in 1990, Cactus quickly became a hot spot for those searching for innovative Southwestern cuisine. With humble origins, it was reviewed as “a small restaurant with a lot of promise,” according to *The Seattle Times* food critic John Hinterberger. Just seven years later, he called it “an uncommon success story,” and in the 2000s onward, it continued its ascent with new locations sprouting up all over the region.

Today there are six locations. It should be no surprise then that the food is tasty and filling. Should you choose the Sonoran Spa Chicken, an entrée, it will become immediately evident that it is an inviting masterpiece of enticing and perfectly balanced aromas, while simultaneously an elegant, artistic visual presentation on the plate. As you dig in, you’ll discover that it’s a totally delicious, satisfying, and flavorful adventure of a meal. The chicken is well-seasoned, mouthwatering, and tender, served with an array of umami bearing vegetables, including sautéed spinach and tangy escabeche. One large, meaty portobello mushroom serves as an interesting textural and flavor counterbalance to the

chicken. The sprinkled pepitas and cotija cheese will make you smile, binding you to the fantasy that’s realizing itself in front of your eyes: that brighter days lie ahead—and are indeed here now today at Cactus! With each indulgent, delightfully fulfilling bite, the sunshine mojo and lime chimichurri ensure that the monochromatic world outside regains its spectral beauty.

The space itself has high ceilings and a tiled floor yet is somehow still cozy with a whimsical charm. Starburst lighting fixtures abound, and kitsch art adorns brightly colored walls. It has maintained an offbeat decor despite its sibling locations having been through-composed with precise, modern, and upscale design sensibilities. For some, this might evoke a sense of sentimentality: It’s Old Seattle in its purest form, representing a simpler time that doesn’t conform. The restaurant celebrates this ethos on its website to the core, “We’re not authentic. We’re uniquely Cactus.” You can’t help but adore. Cactus may become your favorite place to experience again and again.

-Brian Ward, Leschi resident





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LESCHI COMMUNITY COUNCIL

LESCHI CC BOARD MEETING 1/11/24 AT DOUGLASS-TRUTH LIBRARY

Attending: Janice Brown, Trevor Lalish-Menagh, Yun Pitre, Mathias Linnenkamp, Ashley Martin, Diane Snell and new Leschi resident, Gino Carmello.

In January our board meeting focused on 2024 planning. We aligned our priorities for 2024 and walked through a first draft of initiatives to support said priorities, including outlining a first draft of our 2024 community calendar.

Our 2024 priorities are:

1. To continue community leadership through a fully staffed board, by growing our core committees (Parks, *Leschi News* and Public Safety) and delivering on our key events (ArtWalk and the Candidate Forum).
2. To increase community engagement as shown through robust community meeting attendance and growing our email subscriber list.
3. To better support community organizations by increasing revenue (*Leschi News* advertisers and subscribers) and donations.

After this discussion our immediate next steps are to focus on building awareness and attendance for the Wed, Feb 7th community meeting, which will feature an art show by Lawrence Pitre and to communicate board and volunteer opportunities via the *Leschi News*. More work to come on revamping our website and email marketing, filling board positions, engaging with the Leschi business community, efforts to increase membership, subscriptions, and advertisers. We also discussed shifting some of our community meetings to 6pm instead of 7pm for more location availability, any such changes will be proactively communicated in the *Leschi News*, in our emails and on our website.

-Ashley Martin

LCC 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT

Unfortunately, this year the Leschi Community Council ran a deficit. The cost of producing and distributing the *Leschi News* increased over previous years. Normally, advertisements cover this cost, but we fell short this year.

Additionally, donations were less than in the previous year and therefore did not cover operating expenses and make up the deficit. As such, we had to dip into our reserves this year and were not able to make donations to local organizations from any donation surplus. A detailed financial overview for the year 2023 can be found on page 14.

While we are looking at potential cost savings and other measures to balance the budget, please consider donating if you enjoy our monthly programming and the *Leschi News*. The Leschi Community Council is a non-profit, fully volunteer run. We finance all our efforts beyond the *Leschi News* through membership dues and donations. This includes paying for room rentals, insurance, and technology.

You can donate via PayPal (pay **leschicc**) or send a check to Leschi Community Council, 140 Lakeside Ave, Suite A #2, Seattle, WA 98122.

If you donate \$25 or more as an individual or \$35 as a family, you will be considered a member of the council. There are no obligations, but you will get to enjoy some key benefits. First, you will receive the *Leschi News* in your mailbox, every month, hot off the press, for an entire year. You will also have a vote, not just a voice, on council resolutions or and for electing board members.

Should you only want to donate and not be considered a council member, please say so when you submit your payment.

-Matthias Linnenkamp, Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Tips on understanding our financial report:

1. Our monthly expenses for newsletter, rental costs for meetings, etc. must come from Unrestricted funds.
2. Restricted Funds consist of donations to specific projects.
3. The CD which makes us look financially solid actually is restricted to Officer Brenton Memorial expenses.

AND be sure to thank our advertisers for supporting the *Leschi News*!

	Income	Expenses	Balance 12/31/23
General Fund			
Ad Revenue	\$4,634.12		
Dues	\$2,371.62		
Donations	\$3,676.16		
Reimbursement		(\$82.04)	
Insurance		(\$732.00)	
Printing and postage		(\$9,226.43)	
Other Expenses		(\$2,774.88)	
Totals	\$10,681.90	(\$12,815.35)	\$15,317.20
Restricted Funds			
ArtWalk	\$904.55	(\$3,584.19)	\$473.40
Cherry Street Corridor			\$635.76
Flo Ware Park			\$686.53
Friends of Powell Barnett			\$1,068.06
Friends of Street Ends	\$1,244.53	(\$1,253.09)	\$4,546.31
Frink Park			\$1,979.43
King Street			\$1,270.00
Leschi Gateway Project			\$51.03
Leschi Natural Area			\$6,345.39
Officer Brenton Fund		(\$584.58)	\$2,527.27
Steve Shulman Memorial			\$65.00
String of Pearls			\$2,130.38
SW Frink Park		(\$1,233.08)	
W. Vaughn Memorial Fund			\$1,200.00
Wading Pool			\$3,006.13
West Sheridan Street End			\$649.92
Whitebear DreamCatcher			\$201.64
Totals	\$12,830.98	(\$19,470.29)	\$42,153.45
Certificate of Deposit	\$1.13		\$11,258.68

Support your community by joining the Leschi Community Council!

The Leschi Community Council works with the community to make Leschi a great place to live and visit. Your financial support helps us bring this mission to life.

- LCC produces the *Leschi News* to keep you informed. You can find all past issues and many other resources on our website, leschicommunitycouncil.org.
- LCC puts on monthly community meetings, providing opportunities to engage with public service organizations, the city and our lawmakers to address local issues of concern and make change.
- LCC also uses these monthly meetings to connect you with local artists, historians and indigenous culture, honoring Leschi's heritage.
- LCC organizes and provides a conduit for volunteer efforts, from park maintenance to local events. One of our major events is the popular annual ArtWalk in September in the Leschi business district.
- LCC supports the Leschi Business Association, Leschi Elementary School, and the Central Area Senior Center.
- LCC sponsors committees dedicated to pursuing local causes on an ongoing basis, such as parks and public safety.
- LCC supports our local schools and the Senior Center.

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All donations are tax-deductible as we are a non-profit 501(c)(3).

My check is enclosed: \$35 family membership \$25 individual membership

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How to use PayPal:

Search for [@leschic](https://www.paypal.com/leschic) or use <https://paypal.me/leschic>. In the notes, please include your mailing address and let us know if the amount paid is for dues, a donation or both. Pay LCC dues now!



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business card, \$35; 1/4 page, \$70;
1/2 page, \$140. Contact Diane Snell
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leschinews

The next Leschi News deadline is **FEBRUARY 19**. Mail all articles, comments, letters, advertisements and membership dues to this address:
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or email Diane Snell at leschinews@comcast.net

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FEBRUARY CALENDAR

» **February 2**

Groundhog Day

» **February 7, 7pm**

Leschi meeting, featuring artist
Lawrence Pitre, at Grace United
Methodist Church, 722 30th Ave S in
lower level hall

» **February 10**

Chinese New Year

» **February 13**

Mardi Gras; Leschi Board meeting
via Zoom at 6pm



» **February 14**

Valentine's Day

» **February 16**

Green Dolphin at Senior Center
featuring longtime favorite C.T.
Thompson; call 206.726.4926 for details.

Join us on Facebook: LESCHI or see our website: leschicommunitycouncil.org or leschinews.com